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Kurukshetra seeks to carry the message of Rural Development to all people. It serves as a forum for free, frank and serious discussion on the problems of Rural Development with special focus on Rural Uplift.

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Editorial

In India, more than 65 per cent of the population is below the age of 35 years. This favorable demographic dividend has unlocked ample opportunities for India to channelize the energy of youth in the right direction.

It is evident from the various schemes being implemented by the present government for empowerment of the youth, in particular rural youth, that it is committed to reap the benefits of this favorable demographic dividend. The focus of the present government, right from the beginning, is on empowering rural youth through various rural-centric schemes. Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin, MGNREGA, Start-Up Village Entrepreneurship Programme (SVEP), Make in India, Skill India, Start-Up India, Stand Up India are some of the major schemes.

The empowerment of rural youth depends largely upon the development of villages. Present government has taken constructive measures for the development of villages by empowering Gram Panchayats financially. Increased flow of funds to Gram Panchayats has boosted the pace of development of infrastructure in rural areas, setting up of small scale manufacturing units, food processing centers, and small scale business units. This has provided alternative employment opportunities to rural youth and their dependence on agricultural activities as the only employment avenue has been reduced to some extent.

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana- Gramin has motivated the rural youth to live in the villages by providing housing facilities like urban areas and contribute to local development instead to migrating to cities to seek employment. Large scale construction activities under the scheme have opened enormous employment opportunities for youth in rural areas. Through MGNREGA ,non-agricultural activities are being promoted in rural areas which not only provide alternative employment opportunities ,but also increase income of the youth engaged in such activities.

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in India have the potential of providing employment to a large number of youth every year. Realizing this vast potential, particularly of micro enterprises, the present government is paying special attention to Entrepreneurship Skill Development Programme which promotes setting up of such enterprises by giving them several incentives. Start Up Village Entrepreneurship Programme (SVEP), a sub component of National Rural Livelihood Mission , of the Ministry of Rural Development aims at helping the rural poor, including artisans and weavers, to set up enterprises at the village level generating employment opportunities for rural youth. Village Adoption Programme (VAP) is another such unique programme under Ministry of Food Processing Industries ,which promotes entrepreneurship in food processing and agri-business in rural areas thus empowering rural youth.

In education sector, Samagra Shiksha launched by the government aims at enhancing learning outcomes at school level with the use of technology to empower teachers and students both. This scheme provides adequate opportunities for rural youth to participate in technology based educational and teaching programmes. To impart digital literacy among the rural youth , PMGDISHA has been launched which is proving to be a boon to rural youth.

There are several such measures taken by the present government in all possible fields aiming at empowering of rural youth. PM MUDRA Yojana is one such path breaking scheme through which crores of youth have gained employment. Taking advantage of the loans distributed under this scheme, the youth of rural India have not only set up their own enterprises ,but they have also become employers by providing employment to many others in their micro enterprises.

The present government is of the firm conviction that the need to empower rural youth for a better tomorrow is connected to their financial empowerment as well as improving the quality of living. Various schemes of the government for rural youth aim at empowerment of villages leading to the empowerment of rural youth which is imperative for all round development of the country.

EMPOWERMENT OF RURAL YOUTH

Narendra Singh Tomar

The pace of development of our villages has accelerated and it has positively impacted the empowerment of youth in rural areas. The need of the hour is not only to provide rural youth education and skill training at par with international level and maintain current pace of providing them suitable employment and self-employment, but also take the pledge to enhance the momentum constantly.

Today, population of India is more than 130 crore and 62 per cent of it is below the age of 59 years. More than 65 percent of the country's population is of the youth below the age of 35 years. This makes India the youngest country in the world. The largest section in its population comprising of vibrant youth is a clear proof that at present, India has enormous wealth in the form of youth power and dynamic human resource. Youth is the most energetic and capable period of life. While most developing countries are facing the challenge of ageing population, India's demographic situation is very favourable in this regard.

It is estimated that by the year 2020, the population of India would have a median age of 28 years only as against 38 years for United States, 42 years for China and 48 years for Japan. In fact, this favourable situation of demographic dividend in itself has opened the floodgate of vast opportunities for India, but to tap its full potential, it is crucial that the

country's economy has the capacity to handle this increase in labour force. Besides, youth should be equipped with appropriate education, skill, positive work attitude, the spirit of commitment and devotion for innovative contribution in the economy. But such imaginative thinking cannot lead to its realization in true sense. For this, the whole nation must show commitment for the holistic development of youth power of the country, especially in the rural areas. Only then will they be able to assess their abilities and become capable to make significant contribution towards the nation-building process. This is only possible through active and effective implementation of the programmes of youth empowerment.

Our country has a vast reservoir of natural resources, capable of fulfilling the dream of building a "New India". India has 19,94,555 square kilometre agricultural land which is 56.76 percent of the total area of the country. Our country is also blessed with natural wealth in the form of mountains, rivers and



forests. India also has the distinction of being the fourth largest country in terms of coal resources. In fact, India can be called as a country of huge opportunities and immense possibilities, in which abundant resources are available for all. It is no exaggeration that there is no shortage of resources in our country, to fulfil every kind of need of everyone. In this context Mahatma Gandhi had rightly said that “There are enough resources for everyone’s need but not for anybody’s greed”.

It is a matter of great pride that under the dynamic leadership of Shri Narendra Modi, the present government is making efforts to fully utilize this favourable demographic situation. However, the main challenge on this course is how to develop the youth population of rural areas as a dynamic, educated, trained and skilled human resource? Economists are of the view that India’s favourable demographic potential is in a position to bestow unexpected benefits to the country’s economy due to which by the year 2020 India’s GDP is expected to grow by 2%. Economists also estimate that developed countries may have to face a shortage of more than 5 crore 70 lakh semi-skilled human resources while in India, there is a possibility of generation of about 4 crore 70 lakh manpower in surplus. This will not only meet the requirements of the domestic industry sector, but India will also be able to contribute significantly in meeting the demand of manpower at the global level. About 70 percent of the country’s population lives in villages and agriculture is one sector which is providing employment to the largest number of people. Despite this, the contribution of agriculture sector in the country’s gross domestic product is only 13 percent.

In post independence period, for many decades, the lack of any concrete and effective policy concerning unequal access to opportunities, education and skill training, appropriate and constructive use of the youth in the rural areas could not be achieved. It is a known fact that youth living in urban areas have better access to adequate and good opportunities for education and training as compared to the youth in rural areas. Non-NDA Governments which ruled for long in the past, did not take any concrete steps to overcome this imbalance. As a result, only that section of rural youth, which could afford to spend or stay in cities, was able to take advantage of government schemes pertaining to youth entrepreneurship or skill-training. Not only

this, due to the limited and inadequate facilities of skill-training and failure of these schemes to provide suitable employment to the youth, government efforts in this regard failed to fulfil their objectives. The present government led by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has made sincere efforts to bridge this gap effectively.

The population of youth comprises about 40 percent of the total population of India. This section, besides being the most energetic, active and ambitious, is a valuable resource for the country. The majority of our country’s population has been dependent on farming and related activities from the very beginning. It is also natural because India is a country of agrarian economy. It is another matter that the effect of modernization and industrialization has increased with the change of time. Thereby, the central government and various state governments have been focusing on promoting self-employment and skill development for the past few years. On the occasion of “National Youth Day”, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi had meaningfully said we want our young people not to seek employment, but to become employers.

On the one hand, unskilled workers are required to be given appropriate skill-training in our country, while the workers of the vast unorganized sector are required to be brought under the ambit of the organized sector so that they can get the benefits of social security.



In fact, empowerment of rural youth is directly related to the empowerment of villages. The faster the pace of village empowerment and the wider its scope, the empowerment of rural youth will be as comprehensive and effective. However, in present time, there is an issue that has emerged in this regard that, after getting higher education, rural youth does not want to live in village. He migrates to the cities, even though his standard of living there is much lower as compared to the village. This causes double damage to the country. On one hand, there is an unnecessary burden on the already limited infrastructure and resources of the urban area, while on the other hand, his own village becomes a victim of neglect. If that young man uses his education and skills to develop and uplift the village, it can speed up the progress of the village, suggest a new path of progress to the whole village and contribute to its prosperity. If the village youth gets education only for earning a good job or higher degree for himself, then realizing the dream of village-empowerment will not be an easy task, and in such a situation, the empowerment of rural youth will remain a mirage.

After the economic reforms, the country's rural areas have witnessed a rapid transformation and in this era of technological revolution, the youth of rural areas have access to communication and other facilities. In India, there is a constant increase in the number of paved roads, shops, schools, health centers and villages with electricity facilities. Now, in the villages, the kachcha houses with thatched roofs are rarely seen because the number of pucca houses is increasing rapidly.

The Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin has truly transformed the landscape of villages. In fact, with this massive change in the nature of villages today, there has been a significant change in the nature of the whole country. The spirit, which the Prime Minister Awas Yojana (Rural) has kindled in the rural youth to live in the village and contribute to local development by providing the rural youth housing facilities as in a city in the village itself, is praiseworthy. Rural Housing Scheme has increased the pace of construction activities that led to creation of large-scale employment opportunities. Under this scheme, there is a target to build one crore houses by March 2019. Till November, 2018 construction of 52.26 lakh houses under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Rural) has been completed. This scheme has contributed to providing livelihood to a large number of youth in rural areas.



Today, rural youth are getting enough opportunities to study in arts, science, commerce and agricultural science as well as specialized professional courses like engineering, pharmacy, management, law and medicine. This has become possible due to the rapid expansion of the network of educational institutions in small towns and rural areas. Now the income of the people of the villages as well as their capacity and willingness to spend have increased. Wages are also getting higher from time to time.

The 14th Central Finance Commission has increased the grant for village panchayats to Rs 2,00,292.20 crore for the development of villages for a period of five years which is three times the grant sanctioned by the 13th Finance Commission. Gram Panchayats are expected to get almost the same amount from MGNREGA. Today, for the development of rural areas and empowering the rural youth, the Gram Panchayats have access to the funds of the Central Finance Commission and the funding of State Finance Commission. Besides, the funds are also being received by Gram Panchayats through convergence of a number of other schemes. In this way, there is now no issue of lack of funds for the development of infrastructure in the villages. Increased flow of funds in the rural areas has helped in the economic progress of rural areas and prosperity and empowerment of the youth. There is no exaggeration in the fact that Indian villages have become stronger, more prosperous and financially more empowered than ever before and it has catalysed the empowerment of rural youth. Dependency on agriculture as a major employment avenue of rural youth has reduced, and the income of the rural households is now supplemented by activities like small scale manufacturing, construction, food processing, repair and semi-skilled or unskilled services. Agriculture Clinics, Agri-Business Centers

and Common Service Centers are also helping in the socio-economic empowerment of rural youth.

We are marching towards building a “New India”, in which the youth and in particular, the rural youth will be the key participants. The creation of “New India” is focussed on two important aspects “Make in India” and “Swachh Bharat”. In such an India, along with freedom of work for every individual, optimum use of the talent of young entrepreneurs in nation building and skill development of as many individuals as possible, facilities like toilets, cooking gas connection, electricity and internet connections in all the households of the country have been envisaged. It also includes commitment to bridge the gap between urban and rural areas and to equip rural areas with urban facilities.

The concept of “New India” free from poverty, unemployment and corruption is intrinsic to our culture and national values, but to achieve this, every Indian will have to come forward with strong determination and willpower. Nearly half of our country’s population is dependent on agriculture or allied activities and this sector provides only partial employment. Thus, full or proper use of capable man-power in the form of rural youth is not being made. Providing skill training to such a large unskilled human resource is no less than a challenge. If efforts are made to showcase agriculture as a profitable business, a large number of educated and trained youth will be drawn to this business. For this, it is necessary to give industry status to agriculture.

In the report of the NITI Aayog on “Skill Development and Productivity of the Workforce”, it has been mentioned that 70% of India’s labour force inhabits the rural areas, which is dependent on low productive agricultural activities and where employment opportunities are very less. This causes decline in quality of production. The Report has expressed happiness over the fact that it is through MGNREGA, efforts are being made in rural areas to coordinate laid down priorities for rural development with the training system and promotion of those non-agricultural activities which might increase the income of the rural people. Efforts are also being made to remove the difficulties arising out of seasonal fluctuations in the agriculture sector.

Through the use of new technologies, alternative crops and labour-intensive crops, the concept of high yield in minimum agricultural land, better income and satisfactory employment is being envisaged. This report also affirms that most of the rural households engaged in farming have disguised unemployment. It is such a situation in which large part of the labour force has no work or it is working in an unproductive and redundant manner. In only a few employments, more than required workers are engaged. Such labour force should be prepared to move from direct labour to allied activities such as food processing. It is a matter of satisfaction that the Government of India is giving adequate emphasis on allied activities of agriculture.

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises are the backbone of the Indian economy. These enterprises



have to play a decisive role in making India an economy worth 50 trillion US dollars by 2022 and providing employment to 1.20 crore youth every year. National Manufacturing Policy estimates that MSME has the potential to provide employment to 10 crore youth of the country by 2022. In view of this, the present Government is paying special attention to the “Entrepreneurship Skill Development Program”.

The government has implemented two-point program for making micro, small and medium enterprises and start-ups as engines of development for India. Under the first program, with the aim to improve country’s large economic indicators, emphasis was given on ease of doing business and on top to bottom improvement programs. It has benefitted all entrepreneurs especially MSMEs and startups. As a second step, a policy was adopted to give special incentives at the lower level of these enterprises and startups so that they can accelerate the pace of development, and mobilize employment opportunities for nearly one million Indians who emerge as labour force every month.

Initiatives like introduction of Goods and Services Tax (GST), institutional mechanism for settlement of debt relief and bankruptcy cases, liberality in FDI, strict and effective action in the case of bad debts of banks and massive investment in infrastructure have proved as life giving force for MSMEs and startups. The ‘e-market place portal’ has been launched to streamline the government procurement system. It facilitates smaller companies to bid online for government contracts on competitive rates. On the basis of GST filing, re-classification of these units has ended the inspector rule. The reduction of corporate tax rates from 30 percent to 25 percent for companies whose annual turnover is upto Rupees 250 crore has benefitted more than 6 crore MSME units. Apart from this, under long-term government purchase policy of the Government of India, it is now mandatory for every Central Ministry/ Department / Public Sector Undertaking to procure at least 20 per cent of the total annual procurement of goods and services from Micro and Small Enterprises. There are 358 items which can be procured from MSMEs only. In order to ensure that these enterprises have easy access to the capital, the present government has taken several measures. The Government has ensured that new economic opportunities are available to all sections of society, including second and third tier towns. For instance, “Department

of Industrial Policy and Promotion” has launched a startup tour program, under which a mobile van is sent to second / third tier towns to identify and promote entrepreneurial talents there.

At present, an estimated 633.32 lakh units are installed in MSME sector. The largest number of these is micro-units. The total number of micro units alone in the country is 630.52 lakh, which is 99 percent of the total MSME sector. Of this, 324.09 lakh micro units are in rural areas. Together, in micro, small and medium sectors, there are 324.88 lakh units (51%) operating in rural areas and 309 lakh units (49%) in urban areas. In rural areas, 77.76% of enterprises are owned by men and 22.34% by women. In rural areas, 15.37% enterprises are owned by entrepreneurs belonging to Scheduled Castes, 6.70 percent enterprises by entrepreneurs belonging to Scheduled Tribes and 51.59 percent enterprises are owned by other backward class entrepreneurs.

According to the survey of the National Sample Survey Organization, 2015-16, the MSME sector has created approximately 11.10 crore employment opportunities. Out of these, 4 crore 97 lakh 78 thousand are in rural areas and more than 6 crore 12 lakh in urban areas. In manufacturing, there is an estimated 45 percent share of this sector while in India’s export, the share is about 40 percent. Recently, its growth has been recorded in double digits. It is clear with this, that MSME sector has helped in the empowerment of rural youth of all sections.

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) has played an important role in enhancing the livelihood security of families in the rural areas of the country. Under this scheme, a minimum of 100 days of guaranteed wage employment is being provided to the adult members of each rural household who wish to undertake unskilled manual labour work. MGNREGA has had substantial and positive impact on the rural economy. During the financial year 2018-19, till December 3, 2018, 165.78 crore labour days were generated and the average number of work days per household was 46. In this, participation of women was 53 percent and that of Scheduled castes / Scheduled tribes was 39 percent. This scheme has helped increase the agricultural productivity as well as the income of rural households.

Rural connectivity is an important component of the socio-economic development of the villages.

It provides facilities like education, health and marketing. Through Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, availability of at least one, all weather road-link is being ensured for every eligible settlement in all the districts of the country. Under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, out of eligible 1,78,184 habitations, 1,68,394 have been linked to the road by the middle of November, 2018, which is 94.5 percent of the target. This has ensured easy access to amenities like education, health and market for the rural areas and its youth. This has remarkably contributed in empowering the rural youth.

Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana- National Rural Livelihood Mission is being implemented with the aim to improve the quality of life of seven to eight crore poor rural households in more than 647 districts, 6,559 blocks, about 238,000 village panchayats and around 640,000 villages. Under this, special attention is being given to the rural poor families, people who carry human faecal waste, victims of human trafficking, deprived tribal groups, differently-abled and legally released bonded labourers. At least one female member of the specified rural poor family is included in Self-Help Groups and related organizations in a time bound manner.

So far, more than 46.45 lakh Self-Help Groups have been formed. The number of women members in them is about 5.27 crore. About 86,000 Federations have been formed. A loan of 1.41 lakh crore has been made available to SHGs from 2014 to 2018. Under this, through introduction of the Startup Village Entrepreneurship Program (SVEP), rural poor are being supported to set up enterprises, thus bringing them out of the poverty line. During the first phase, from the year 2015 to 2019, about 1.82 lakh enterprises are to be set up in 125 blocks of 24 states to empower rural poor. This step is expected to create jobs for about 3.78 lakh rural youth. Under this, assistance has been provided to 25,088 enterprises. Under Deen Dayal Upadhyay Gramin Kaushalya Yojana, 5.73 lakh rural youths have been trained from 2014-15 to February 2018. Out of this, 3.54 lakh youth were provided employment. Through the years 2014-15 to February 2018, 17 lakh rural youth were trained for self-employment through rural self-employment training institutes. Out of this 12.65 lakh persons got employment. During the financial year 2017-18, training was provided to 4.23 lakh people as against the target of 3.97 lakh. 3.49 lakh people were provided employment.

Pradhan Mantri Yuva Udyamita Vikas Abhiyan (PM-YUVA) is an ongoing scheme of Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE). Under the scheme, entrepreneurship education is given to encourage entrepreneurship and help people to become self employed within the country. So far, 22,308 students have been enrolled and around 12,000 students have been oriented for entrepreneurship under the scheme.

Further, an end to end customized entrepreneurship orientation module has been integrated under the Life Skill Course module in the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) Courses so that candidates undergoing PMKVY skill training receive orientation in entrepreneurship. In Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) courses, the module on Entrepreneurship is already integrated as a section in the employability skills.

Among several measures of youth-empowerment, MUDRA Yojana is the one through which crores of youth have gained employment. Since its inception in the year 2015, the government has distributed loans to over 12 crore entrepreneurs and beneficiaries. Under this, women in large number have also adopted self-employment. The youth of rural India have not only set up enterprises for themselves, but they have also become employers by providing employment to many others in their micro enterprises. This scheme has immensely helped fruit or vegetable vendors, small craftsmen, small shopkeepers engaged in repair works and people engaged in catering services.

With this, the youth of the rural areas got a good opportunity to start a small trade or restart the business once closed due to lack of funds. It is clear from all these facts and figures that the pace of development of our villages has accelerated and it has positively impacted the empowerment of youth in rural areas. The need of the hour is not only to provide rural youth education and skill training at par with international level and maintain current pace of providing them suitable employment and self-employment, but also take the pledge to enhance the momentum constantly.

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EMPOWERMENT OF YOUTH THROUGH SKILLING

A. Srija

For long term employability of the rural youth, it is essential to ensure that youth complete at least the required secondary level schooling that is essential for pursuing skill development courses that would provide sustainable employment. In the era of rapid technological development, the emphasis of skilling should shift from short-term courses to long term courses so that the youth are able to sustain in the rapidly evolving job market.

Youth refers to a person between the age of leaving compulsory education and the age when they find their first employment. India has the largest youth population in the world with around 27 per cent of the population in the age bracket of 15-29 years. India is experiencing a demographic advantage due to this youth bulge. In today's technology driven labour market, there is an immediate need to integrate ICT knowledge into formal school learning to facilitate school drop outs and the early job seekers to imbibe skills online as well as be aware of the avenues for employment both within the country as well as globally. The employers also have a major role in providing skill training and exposure to latest technology through apprenticeship and on the job training.

Some of the Government initiatives in this regard are:

National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS) was launched on 19th August, 2016, with the objective of providing Apprenticeship Training to 50 lakh youth by 2020. Under the scheme, the Government will share 25% of prescribed stipend subject to a maximum of Rs 1500/- per month per apprentice with the employers. Government also shares upto a maximum of Rs 7500/- per fresher apprentice (without any formal trade training) the cost of basic training with Basic Training Providers. Among the features of the scheme are: A user friendly on-line portal (www.apprenticeship.gov.in) designed to facilitate easy processing of entire apprenticeship cycle. The Portal facilitates:

- Registration of establishments, candidates and basic training providers.
- Establishments can declare their apprenticeship seats/vacancies.
- Establishments can search & shortlist candidates specific to sector, trades, region etc.
- Establishments can submit their on-line returns and records along with their claims.
- Apprentices can receive and accept the offer letters from establishments online.
- Process all necessary contractual obligations online.
- Time bound approval of apprenticeship contracts.
- Creation of centralized database for compliance and monitoring.
- On-line examination system including generation and issue of hall tickets.

State Apprenticeship Advisers (SAAs) and Regional Directorates of Apprenticeship (RDATs) act as implementing agencies in their respective State/Regions. It is mandatory for establishments having manpower strength of more than 40 to



engage apprentices through apprenticeship portal. Establishments having manpower strength in the range 6-40 may also engage apprentices through the apprenticeship portal. The portal also allows registration of apprentices and submission of contract of apprenticeship.

Apprentice training in Optional trades are delivered by the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC). As of 17th December, 2018 under Optional trades, there are 74,520 establishments, 28,296 apprentice opportunities, 11,10,510 candidates and 4,73,445 apprentices engaged by NSDC¹.

To improve the industry connect, Directorate General of Training (DGE&T), M/o Skill Development & Entrepreneurship has adopted the German model of Vocational Education system in India by introducing Dual System of Training (DST). Dual System combines practical training in the industry and theoretical training along with foundation practical in ITI(s) which leads to better ITI – Industry linkage. Under this, ITIs are required to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with industries under information to the respective State.

Start-Up Village Entrepreneurship Programme (SVEP): Government is implementing the Startup Village Entrepreneurship Programme (SVEP) with the objective of helping the rural poor including artisans and weavers to set up enterprises at the village level in non-agricultural sectors. Start-up Village Entrepreneurship Programme (SVEP), a sub-scheme under the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) was launched with the objective of helping rural poor by helping them set-up sustainable enterprises.

Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs): Ministry of Rural Development has been implementing the Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs) for rural youth which seeks to diversify household income of rural poor. RSETI is a three-way partnership amongst Ministry of Rural Development, State Government and Banks. There are 31 participating banks, which have set up 586 RSETIs in the country. RSETIs provide training in Agriculture, Process, Product and General Entrepreneurship Development Programmes (EDP) courses to candidates leading to self-employment. Some candidates take up wage employment also.

National Employability Enhancement Mission: The objective of National Employability Enhancement Mission (NEEM) is to offer on-the-job practical training to enhance employability of a person either pursuing his or her graduation/



diploma in any technical or non-technical stream or discontinued studies of degree or diploma course to increase their employability. Till date, 29 NEEM Agents are registered under NEEM Scheme. The training modules under NEEM training are NSQF compliant. NEEM agents are persons who have linkage with small industry etc., who have knowledge of the demand for skills and hence can play a role in sourcing the requisite persons with appropriate skills. In 2017-18, the NEEM Agents have been able to provide industry apprenticeship for more than 43,000 candidates.

National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC): NSDC has entered into a strategic partnership with Facebook to empower youth and entrepreneurs with digital skills in India. The partnership, signed in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, will enable Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) to incorporate Facebook's training on Digital Marketing Skills in its courses, besides providing trainees with access to local, domestic and international markets. The programme includes courses on digital marketing, online safety and financial literacy in regional languages with Facebook imparting training to people nominated by the NSDC. This will up-skill job seekers and increase their prospects of employment.

Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PKVY): A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on July 2, 2016 between the Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) for implementation of the Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PKVY). The scheme aims at enhancing the skill sets of potential emigrant workers in select sectors and job roles, in line with international standards, to facilitate overseas employment. The initial focus of the scheme is on sectors that are in demand in Emigration Check Required Countries (ECR countries) including domestic workers, drivers and construction workers.

Subsequently, the scheme will be expanded to cover other parts of the world.

As part of the scheme, India International Skills Centers (IISCs) have been set up in various parts of the country to exclusively focus on skilling, assessment and qualifications that are internationally acceptable. In the pilot phase, 16 centers have been launched across various sectors including Domestic Workers, Retail, Tourism & Hospitality, Capital Goods, Healthcare, Construction, Automotive and Security. The Pre-Departure Orientation Training (PDOT) aims at enhancing soft skills of potential emigrants in terms of culture, language, traditions and local rules and regulations of the destination countries. They are also briefed about the Indian regulatory framework for overseas employment and schemes for their welfare and protection. A longer, 160 hours PDOT programme is offered at all IISCs which consists of country orientation, language and digital literacy. A shorter, one day PDOT programme is offered to all migrant workers who are likely to depart soon and register for the training through registered recruitment agents. Since inception, over 8,000 candidates have received training (as of 15th April 2018) under One-Day PDOT programme.

Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS): Jan Shikshan Sansthans earlier known as 'Shramik Vidyapeeth' have been established to concentrate on empowerment of unskilled persons, women, persons belonging to SC/ST/OBC communities and Minorities. JSS organizes two types of activities: (i) Vocational Courses: Training programmes involving skills/practical application leading to market demand and income generation. Main trades are Cutting & Tailoring, Bag making, Beauty culture, Food processing, Welding, Auto repairing, Plumbing etc. (ii) Conduct suggestive activities other than Life Enrichment Education components. The unique advantage of JSS is that it is able to deliver skill training; vocational training at the doorsteps of beneficiaries and it is also present



in a lot of interior parts of the country. JSSs are set up under the aegis of NGOs/Universities and registered under Societies Registration Act, 1860. At present 248 JSSs are functional. Per annum coverage is around 3-4 lakh beneficiaries. Government of India provides 100% (lump sum) financial assistance to the Sansthans.

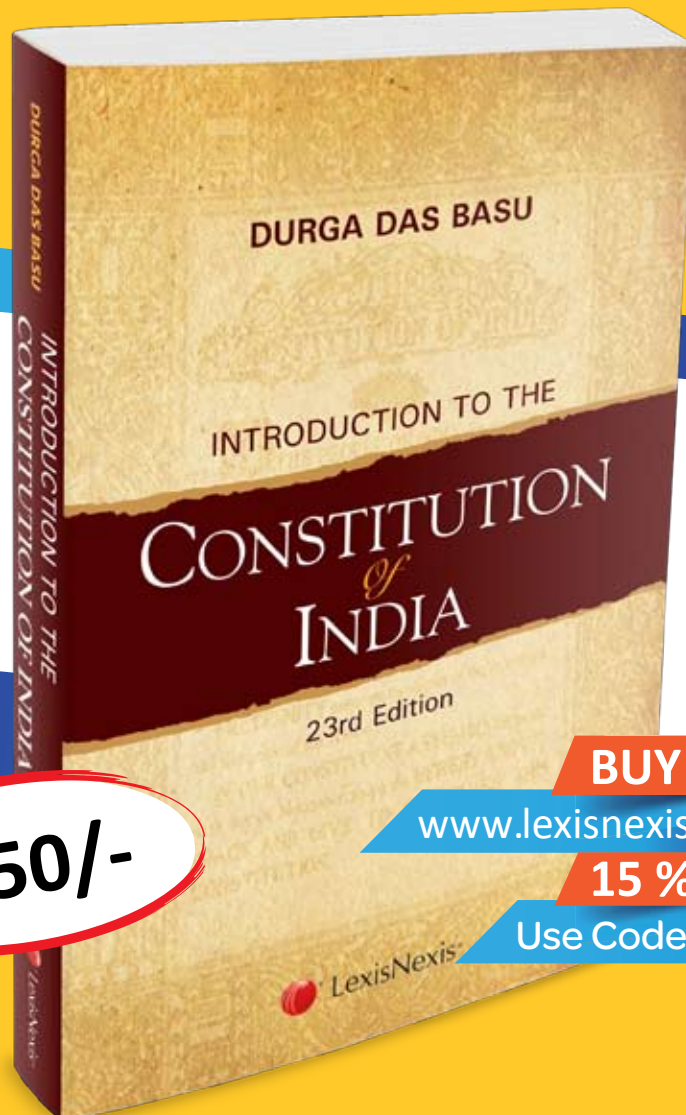
National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET): The Union Cabinet approved the merger of the existing regulatory institutions in the skills space viz; National Council for Vocational Training (NCVT) and National Skill Development Agency (NSDA) into the National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET). NCVET will regulate the functioning of entities engaged in vocational education and training, both long-term and short-term and establish minimum standards for the functioning of such entities. The primary functions of NCVET include: (i) recognition and regulation of awarding bodies, assessment bodies and skill related information providers; (ii) approval of qualifications developed by awarding bodies and Sector Skill Councils (SSCs); (iii) indirect regulation of vocational training institutes through awarding bodies and assessment agencies; etc. Regulatory functions being carried out by the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) through the Sector Skill Councils (SSCs) would henceforth be housed in the NCVET.

This institutional reform will lead to improvement in quality and market relevance of skill development programmes lending credibility to vocational education and training encouraging greater private investment and employer participation in the skills space. It would enhance aspirational value of vocational education and increase availability of skilled manpower making India the skill capital of the world.

To sum up, for long term employability of the rural youth, it is essential to ensure that youth complete at least the required secondary level schooling that is essential for pursuing skill development courses that would provide sustainable employment. In the era of rapid technological development, the emphasis of skilling should shift from short-term courses to long term courses so that the youth are able to sustain in the rapidly evolving job market.

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EDUCATION INITIATIVES FOR RURAL YOUTH

Dr Anupriya Chadha



At this time, when India is governed by the targets laid down in Sustainable Development Goals, development without the active involvement of youth may not be possible. Their ideas are the key to harness the demographic dividend and would pave the way to hold human rights, gender equality, human capital, and dignity at the center of all investments.

Empowerment is the “process by which individuals and groups gain power, access to resources and control over their own lives. In doing so, they gain the ability to achieve their highest personal and collective aspirations and goals.” The United Nations Human Settlements Program (UNCHS-Habitat) defines youth empowerment as “the circumstances and factors which enhance the development of citizenship and productiveness among young people as they move into adulthood. It is concerned with the adaptation of government structures and institutions to protect and deliver children’s, youths” and human rights, including the right to participation”. The word ‘empowerment’ means giving power.

Empowerment through education has two key strands. First, education is a powerful driver for effecting cultural change. Education is the key to developing and delivering an equitable society. Second, among other things, education helps

individuals prepare themselves for the challenges they might later face in life. Education aids economic independence, enhances the ability of decision making and provides opportunities to connect and communicate.

“The Youth represent the most dynamic and vibrant segment of the population. India is one of the youngest nations in the World, with about 65 per cent of the population being under 35 years of age. While most of the developed countries face the risk of an ageing workforce, India is expected to have a very favourable demographic profile.

This ‘demographic dividend’ offers a great opportunity. However, in order to capture this demographic dividend, it is essential that the economy has the ability to support the increase in the labour force and the youth have the appropriate education, skills, health awareness and other enablers to productively contribute to the economy. This demands the commitment of the entire nation

to all-round development of the youth of India, so that they can realize their full potential and contribute productively to nation-building process. For this reason, Government of India formulated the National Youth Policy.

The Government has developed various schemes and programmes for the empowerment of youth. Some of these are Rashtriya Yuva Sashaktikaran Karyakram, National Service Scheme, Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development, Pradhan Mantri Yuva Yojana, Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalaya Yojana, Skill India, etc. This article will particularly deal with initiatives taken in education for youth empowerment.

Samagra Shiksha:

Under this Scheme, school education is treated holistically from pre-nursery to Class 12. Samagra Shiksha has been prepared with the goal of improving school effectiveness measured in terms of equal opportunities for schooling and equitable learning outcomes. It subsumes the three Schemes of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and Teacher Education (TE). Two very critical components of this programme are **Digital Education** and **Skill Development**.

The focus of digital education is on technology based classrooms. It also implies enhanced use of digital technology in education through smart classrooms, digital boards and DTH channels and strengthening of ICT infrastructure in schools from upper primary to higher secondary level. Technology

would also be used to improve access and for provision of quality education. Another feature of this Scheme highly connected to youth empowerment is **skill development**. In the endeavour to reinforce emphasis on 'Kaushal Vikas', the skill development aspect focuses on strengthening of vocational education at the secondary level by integrating it in the curriculum. Vocational education at this stage would also be made more practical and industry oriented. Industry oriented education is an approach to learning from an industry perspective where traditional subjects such as maths, physics and science are taught in the context of application of that knowledge to product design, development and operation. The idea is to enable Students to graduate from high school with industrial oriented learning experience prior to their first job.

Saakshar Bharat Programme :

Saakshar Bharat Programme: Another initiative of Government of India, goes beyond '3' R's (i.e. Reading, Writing & Arithmetic). It seeks to create awareness of social disparities. It aims to create a literate society through a variety of teaching learning programmes for non-literate and neo-literate of 15 years and above. The objective of the Scheme is achieving 80% literacy level at national level, by focusing on adult women literacy so as to to reduce the gap between male and female literacy. The four key elements of the programme are imparting functional literacy and numeracy to non-literates; acquiring equivalency to formal educational system; imparting relevant skill development programme; and promote a learning society by providing opportunities for continuing education. However,

A flagship programme aimed at all-round development of school children

Samagra Shiksha

Department of School Education & Literacy
Ministry of Human Resource Development
Government of India



the principal target of the programme is to impart functional literacy to 70 million non-literate adults in the age group of 15 years and beyond.

Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS):

The scheme of Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS) is a unique scheme of Government of India. The Jan Shikshan Sansthan are unique in that they do not provide just skill development, but link literacy with vocational skills to provide Life Enrichment Education (LEE) to the people. The aim is to shape their beneficiaries into self-reliant and self-assured employees and entrepreneurs. The Jan Shikshan Sansthan are unique also because they offer quality vocational skills and technical knowledge at a very low cost. They also provide need based and literacy-linked vocational training in most courses without insisting on age limit or prior educational qualifications; reach out to the clientele in their areas; offer a multi-faceted skill-knowledge-awareness enhancement and outlook formation trainings and inputs and empowerment-oriented interventions in respect of social, economic and health status improvement of women and adolescent girls.

Today, there 221 Jan Shikshan Sansthan in the country and they are expected to act as district level resource support agencies especially in vocational training and skill development programmes for the neo-literates and other target groups of the continuing education programme. The current aim is to have 50% of their beneficiaries from amongst the neo-literates.

Digital India:

Another programme linked to youth empowerment is the Digital India campaign. Launched by the Government of India, it aims to ensure that the Government's services are made available to citizens electronically by improved online infrastructure and by increasing Internet connectivity or by making the country digitally empowered in the field of technology. The initiative includes connecting rural areas with high-speed internet networks. Digital India consists of three core components: the development of secure and stable digital infrastructure, delivering government services digitally, and universal digital literacy. **Digital India is a Programme to prepare India for a knowledge future.** The aim is to prepare India for the knowledge based transformation and delivering



good governance to citizens by synchronized and coordinated engagement with both Central Government and State Government. Digital empowerment of citizens will pay emphasis on universal digital literacy and availability of digital resources/services in Indian languages. The overall goal is to make every household digitally literate to make India the Global Knowledge hub, with IT being a major driver and engine of growth.

National Scholarship:

It is a well-known fact that the cost of higher studies has only increased over the years and this cost is likely to continue moving upwards. Many deserving students in India are not able to afford the cost of higher studies due to financial challenges. To aid the cause of such talented and deserving students, the Government of India has stepped in to provide a level-playing field to all students irrespective of their socio-economic backgrounds. The National Scholarship Portal is the Government of India's initiative to provide financial assistance to deserving students by awarding them scholarships to pursue higher education. The National Scholarship Portal (NSP) is a unique and simplified platform to help students get benefits of educational scholarships in an efficient and transparent manner. It is a one-stop solution through which a number of services like student application, application receipt, processing, sanction, and disbursement of various scholarships to students are enabled. National Scholarship Portal is taken as Mission Mode Project under the National e-Governance Plan (NGP).

The initiative aims at providing a Simplified, Mission-oriented, Accountable, Responsive, and Transparent (**SMART**) System for faster and effective disbursement of scholarships applications and the delivery of funds directly into the beneficiaries' account without any leakage. The primary objectives are to ensure timely disbursement of scholarships to students, to provide a common portal for



various scholarships schemes of Central & State Governments, to create a transparent database of scholars, avoid duplication in processing and harmonization of different scholarships schemes and norms.

National Apprenticeship Training Scheme:

The National Apprenticeship Training Scheme in India is a one year programme equipping technically qualified youth with practical knowledge and skills required in their field of work. The Apprentices are imparted training by the organizations at their place of work. Trained Managers with well developed training modules ensure that Apprentices learn the job quickly and competently. During the period of apprenticeship, the apprentices are paid a stipend amount, 50% of which is reimbursable to the employer from Government of India. At the end of the training period, the apprentices are issued a Certificate of Proficiency by Government of India which can be registered at all employment exchanges across India as valid employment experience.

The apprentices are placed for training at Central, State and Private organizations which have excellent training facilities. National Apprenticeship Training Scheme is one of the flagship programmes of Government of India for Skilling Indian Youth. It is a Central Government Scheme for Degree and Diploma holders. The Scheme is implemented by the Ministry of Human Resource Development and Under the Department of Higher Education. The Scheme is only for Freshers. Candidates who are

already having work experience can not undergo Apprenticeship Training and the Apprentice can join for Apprenticeship Training only once in his lifetime.

Schemes under All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE):

AICTE has various, schemes and special scholarship to promote technical education. Some of these Schemes include **Post Graduate Scholarship** is for qualified students admitted to M.E./ M. Tech/ M. Arch and M.Pharm courses in AICTE approved Institutions/Colleges; **Prime Minister's Special Scholarship Scheme (PMSSS)** which aims to build up capacities in youth of J&K; **Pragati Scholarship** for girls pursuing Diploma and Undergraduate Degree level AICTE approved institution programmes / courses; **Saksham Scholarship** for differently abled students; **AICTE-Inae Travel Grant Scheme** for engineering students who want to present papers abroad; **Prerana Scheme** for preparing SC/ST students for higher education; **Samriddhi Scheme** for SC/ST students for setting start-ups; **National Doctoral Fellowship (NDF)** for scholars who seek admission to Ph.D. in AICTE approved Technical Institutes/University Departments for carrying out research; **Support to Students for Participating in Competition Abroad (SSPCA)** aims to provide travel assistance registration fees to a team of students for attending competition at international level; **Smart India Hackathon** and **M.Tech Projects as Internship with Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMES)** Scheme to nurture an innovation ecosystem.

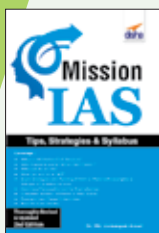
Some other Schemes which would be useful to youth include **Post-Doctoral Research Fellow (Scheme)**, **Junior Research Fellowships** and **DBT junior research fellowship (DBT- JRF) Programme**. The National Post Doctoral Fellowship (N-PDF) is aimed to identify motivated young researchers and provide them support for doing research in science and engineering. This is given by the Department of Science and Technology. The Department also has a Women Scientists Scheme wherein women are given Fellowships to conduct research in the area of science and technology. The fellows will work under a mentor, who helps them to develop as an independent researcher. Junior Research Fellowships are given by Indian Council of Medical Research to candidates in the areas of biomedical sciences, life sciences and social sciences. Department of Bio - Technology JRF program provides fellowships for biotech students pursuing research in universities and / or research institutions in the country. 250 fellowships can be awarded every year under this Scheme.

Conclusion:

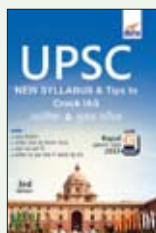
Young people in all countries are both a major human resource for development and key agents for social change, economic development and technological innovation. Hence, investing in them is essential for the continuous development of nation and societies in which they live. Since they are the essential workforce of a country, the problems that young people face as well as their vision and aspiration are essential components of the challenges and prospects of today's societies and future generations. There is also a critical need to involve young people in decisions that will affect them. At this time, when India is governed by the targets laid down in Sustainable Development Goals, development without the active involvement of youth may not be possible. Their ideas are the key to harness the demographic dividend and would pave the way to hold human rights, gender equality, human capital, and dignity at the center of all investments.

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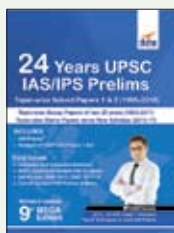
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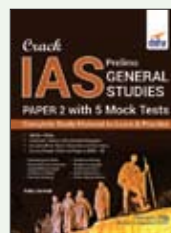
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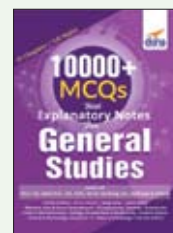
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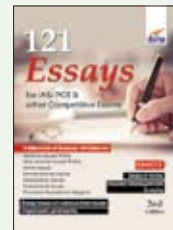
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FINANCIAL INCLUSION FOR RURAL YOUTH

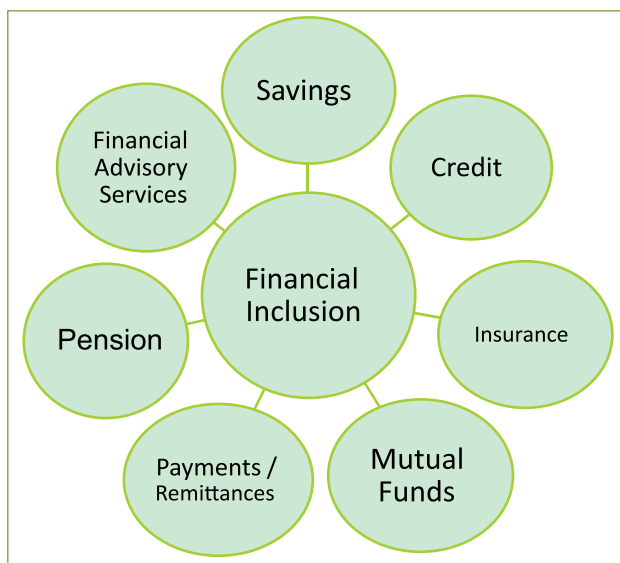
Dr Maram Srikanth and Ms. Sadhanala Navya Sridevi

The current need of the hour is more to do with educating people, disseminating financial and digital awareness in the society, and making the beneficiaries aware about the scope of expanding rural enterprises using their rights to borrow and duty to repay bank loans. There should be less emphasis on collaterals (Bank side), more emphasis on timely repayment of loans without expecting loan waivers (Borrowers' side). In this way, we can achieve not just financial inclusion but economic inclusion too.

Globally, financial inclusion is considered as the most effective tool for development and well-being of all sections of the society especially, the youth. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) recognized the role of financial inclusion in achieving 15 out of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which include alleviation of poverty, creation of jobs, gender equality, good health, etc. Hence, India is committed to achieve inclusive development goals (Sab ka Saath, Sab ka Vikas).

One of the main goals of financial inclusion is inclusive and sustainable economic growth, by freeing the poor sections of the society from the clutches of the money lenders. remunerated savings, and an easy way to make payments and remittances. It means insurance and pensions. It means financial literacy and consumer protection'. In his opinion, there are five 'P's to achieve this:

Financial inclusion can be depicted in the following diagram.



(Source: Adopted from Thingalaya N K (2010))

According to Financial Inclusion Committee (2008), "Financial Inclusion plays an important role in the process of inclusive growth of the poorer sections of the economy by enhancing higher disposable income of the rural households. Again it is proved that the large scale access of financial services like credit, savings, insurance facilities and easy cash by way of ATM facility have positive impact on household consumption, self employment, poverty as well as overall well-being of the common people (Banerjee, Duflo, Glennerster & Kinnan, 2013).

The Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) initiated by the government is an addition to this long term mission of financial inclusion.

In the era of digital financial inclusion, one of the main challenges faced by the policymakers is to provide affordable, instantaneous and user-friendly access to financial products and services to the common man. There has been an impressive growth in terms of bank branches, Business Correspondents and Kisan Credit Cards amongst others during the last five decades. The Brookings Institution estimates that India's GDP would increase by US\$ 1 trillion by the year 2020 if all Indians go online. However, India's digital inclusion depends on 'BharatNet', a project expected to provide high-speed ubiquitous broadband connectivity on optical fibre to Gram Panchayats at low tariffs.

The latest edition of the Global Findex (GFX), which was conducted by the World Bank in 2017, shows that 515 million adults worldwide opened an account at a financial institution or through a mobile money provider between 2014 and 2017. India's GFX was at 35 in 2011, which increased to 80 in 2017. Interestingly, China's GFX too stood at 80 in 2017. This reflects a speedy improvement in financial inclusion suggesting that relevant Indian policies in the last few years worked well.

According to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), financial literacy is: understanding of financial products and concepts by consumers/investors, their ability and confidence to appreciate financial risks and opportunities, capability to make informed choices, and enable them to take other effective action to improve their financial well-being.

Some Policy Initiatives of the Government:

There are various initiatives taken by the Government of India and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in the past which include: introduction of lead scheme (1969), nationalisation of Scheduled Commercial Banks (1969), regulation of interest rates on the bank loans extended to weaker sections (1972), establishment and expansion of Rural Credit Co-operatives (1980), establishment of Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) in (1975), nationalisation of another six banks (1980), launching of Self Help Group Bank Linkage Programme (SHG-BLP) in 1992, issuance of licenses to new private sector banks (1993) and implementation of PMJDY (2014) in order to achieve financial inclusion.

Realising the difficulties of Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs), RBI has been constantly focussing access to finance to MSEs through technology, new business practices, and new organizational structures to foster inclusive growth in India.

i) Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana (PMJDY):

PMJDY is a major policy initiative of the government of India in the realm of financial inclusion, which was announced by our Hon'ble

Prime Minister on August 28, 2014. The scheme offers incentives such as insurance coverage, RuPay cards, and over draft (OD) facility apart from Direct Benefit Transfers (DBTs). The six pillars of the PMJDY are:

- Universal access to banking services.
- Providing basic banking accounts with OD facilities and a RuPay debit card.
- Financial literacy.
- Creation of a Credit Guarantee Fund.
- Providing micro insurance.
- Providing unorganised sector pension scheme.

Financial inclusion initiative was successful with a record of 8.76 crore savings bank accounts opening within 100 days from the launch of PMJDY. However, mere opening of account is not financial inclusion. There should be a continuity and consistency in use of banking services at a reasonable cost to every citizen of the nation.

Besides PMJDY, there are three social security schemes namely Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY) and Atal Pension Yojana (APY) targeted especially for the poor and the underprivileged. PMJJBY covers life insurance worth Rs.2 lakh at just Rs.330 per annum for any citizen of India in the age category of 18 -50. PMSBY covers accident insurance worth Rs.2 lakh at just Rs.12 per annum per head.

In addition to the above, the Government of India launched Make in India, Skill India, Startup India and Stand-up India with a view to building an ecosystem for sustainable economic growth, promotion of entrepreneurial opportunities, and generates large scale employment opportunities especially for the youth. The Stand-Up India provides a digital platform based on 3 pillars to support enterprises among entrepreneurs from Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST) and Women category through:

- Handholding support.
- Providing Information on financing.
- Credit Guarantee.



ii) Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency (MUDRA) Loans:

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector is the most vibrant and dynamic sector, promising high growth potential for the Indian economy. There are close to 51 million MSME units in the country which employ about 11.7 crore people across various sectors, constituting 40 per cent of the total workforce. The MSME's share to the total non-agricultural Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is about 37 per cent and they also contribute to 43 per cent of India's exports. Most of these MSMEs are owned by people belonging to SC, ST and Other Backward Classes.

MUDRA, a financial institution was set up by the Government of India for development and refinancing of micro enterprises. The scheme was announced in 2016 and it is aimed at providing micro-finance to the non-corporate small business sector through various last-mile financial institutions. It covers credit plus services including financial literacy and other social support services, in order to achieve the goal of "Funding the Unfunded".

Analysis & Discussion

The progress of Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) a flagship programme in Financial inclusion, is captured in the following table.

Beneficiaries as on December 5, 2018
(All figures in crores)

Type of Banks	Number of Total Beneficiaries	Deposits in Accounts	Number of Rupay Debit Cards issued
Public Sector Banks	26.91	67803.72	21.72
Regional Rural Banks	5.51	14589.20	3.75
Private Sector Banks	1.04	2421.62	0.97
Grand Total	33.46	84,814.54	26.44

(Source: PMJDY Website)



As per the above table, PMJDY was instrumental in mobilizing an amount of Rs.84,815 crore in the form of savings bank accounts (33.46 crore bank accounts), 26.44 crore RuPay debit cards have been issued to the beneficiaries till December 5, 2018. The Government of India's latest initiative of issuance of licence to Payments Banks is mainly to encourage micro savings and inculcate banking habits among the rural poor and the financially excluded. The Postal Payments Bank is expected to achieve the last mile in financial inclusion given its wide office network of more than 155000 branches mainly in remote and far-flung areas. The performance of MUDRA loans during the FY 2017-18 is given below.

Progress of MUDRA Loans in India

Loan Category/Amount (Rs.)	Sanction Amount (2017-18) (Rs. in Crore)	No. of Loan Accounts (2017-2018)
1. Shishu (loan of up to Rs.50,000)	1,06,002 (41.78)	4,26,69,795 (88.65)
2. Kishor (loan of above Rs.50,000 and up to Rs.5 lakh)	86,732 (34.19)	46,53,874 (9.67)
3. Tarun (loan of above Rs.500,000 and up to Rs.10 lakh)	60,943 (24.02)	8,06,924 (1.68)
Total	2,53,677	4,81,30,593

Among the three categories, Shishu loan had the highest share of 42 per cent in terms of sanctioned loan amount which was followed by Kishor (34%) and Tarun (24%). While the average loan size of Shishu was Rs.24,883/-, it was Rs.1,88,548 in case of Kishor and Rs.7,61,792/- in respect of Tarun. Recently, the Government of India announced a scheme for sanction of loan of up to Rs.1 crore



within 59 minutes for MSMEs, which are registered under Goods & Services Tax (GST), in order to boost entrepreneurship and increasing access to institutional credit to MSMEs. The following table shows the progress of financial inclusion in India.

Progress of Financial Inclusion in India

Financial Inclusion Data as on	Mar 31, 2010	Mar 31, 2018
i) Total banking outlets in villages (Nos.)	67,694	569,547
ii) Total basic savings bank deposits (no. in million)	73	536
iii) Total basic savings bank deposit accounts (Rs. In billion)	55	1,121
iv) Kisan Credit Cards (no. in million)	24	46
v) KCCs (Rs. in billion)	1,240	6,096
vi) General Credit Cards (no. in million)	1	12
vii) GCCs (Rs. in billion)	35	1,498

(Source: RBI website)

While the total number of savings bank accounts witnessed a phenomenal growth of over 20 times, savings bank deposits increased by more than 7 times during the period 2010 – 2018, thanks to PMJDY. Similarly, there is a healthy growth in KCCs as well as GCCs which shows that credit to the individual farmers picked up during the same period. Besides, banking outreach increased from 67,694

outlets to 569,547 outlets during the last 8 years, a booster dose to last mile financial inclusion.

Policy Implications & Conclusions:

It is essential to achieve financial inclusion in every aspect namely savings, credit, insurance, pension, remittances, and financial advisory services. This is the pathway to empower the rural youth and the financially excluded. The rural youth have to be extended proper skilling support (DDU – GKY model may follow the BRAC, Bangladesh while extending pre-placement and post-placement support to the youth and the unemployed in India. BRAC’s training programme is very successful in terms of placement (close to 80%) as it conducts door to door survey, prior to commencement of the training, to identify the trades/services which are in high demand. Similarly, Grameen Bank, Bangladesh supports the unemployed and qualified graduates to start their own enterprise. Till date, it is instrumental in starting more than 100,000 micro enterprises in this way through the unemployed youth).

Financial institutions, with local control and staffed by knowledgeable local people, could be more effective at providing financial services to the excluded. Further, major policy thrust should be on encouraging more Business Correspondents (deposits), Certified Credit Counsellors (loans), Trade electronic Receivables discounting system and scope for digital lending to MSMEs, Rural Self Employment Training Institutes - RSETIs (capacity building for the rural youth), and Farmers Producers Organizations

(supply chain management for the farmers, artisans, and the like) in the rural India.

Imparting financial literacy and ensuring consumer protection are very important in the journey of financial inclusion since credit without skills and financial knowledge may result in debt trap for the poor. RBI and banks should coordinate with institutions such as State Education Boards (SEBs), Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), University Grants Commission (UGC), and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), to include financial inclusion as a mandatory subject at different educational levels right from school to higher levels of education. Having developed infrastructure for financial inclusion, the next milestone should be to bring about a mindset and cultural shift among newly connected beneficiaries to derive benefits from the formal financial system by borrowing from banks and repaying loans in

time. Therefore, the current need of the hour is more to do with educating people, disseminating financial and digital awareness in the society, and making the beneficiaries aware about the scope of expanding rural enterprises using their rights to borrow and duty to repay bank loans. There should be less emphasis on colaterals (Bank side), more emphasis on timely repayment of loans without expecting loan waivers (Borrowers' side). In this way, we can achieve not just financial inclusion but economic inclusion too.

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International Youth Exchange Programme

Youth from India are sent to a few friendly countries and vice-versa under the "International Youth Exchange Programme" for promoting exchange of ideas, values and culture amongst the youth of different countries and also to develop International understanding. The objective of this programme is to create an International perspective in the youth and to involve them in promoting peace and understanding.

After finalization of dates for exchange programmes with the partnering countries, the delegates visiting a particular country are finalized after shortlisting names from the nominations received, depending upon the requirement of the Programme. These names are finalized with due approval of competent authority in the Department of Youth Affairs.

Under the Youth Exchange Programme conducted by Department of Youth Affairs, nominations are sought from reputed institutions viz. IITs, IIMs, NITs through Ministry of Human Resource Development; AIIMS; Youth Organizations of Ministry viz. NSS (National Service Scheme), NYKS (Nehru



Yuva Kendra Sangathan), RGNIYD (Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development); National Youth Awardees etc. and also from other Premier Institutions concerning with the subject matter of the Programme which are further considered for various delegations.

NABARD: BUILDING CAPACITY OF RURAL YOUTH

Dr B. B. Sahoo

The mandate of the organization is promoting sustainable and equitable agriculture and rural development through participative financial and non-financial interventions, innovations, technology and institutional development for securing prosperity. The functions of the organization are aimed at building an empowered and financially inclusive rural India. During the last 36 years, NABARD has made meaningful intervention for achieving rural development through micro finance, inclusive growth, rural infrastructure, climate change and scaling up Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs). In the process, NABARD could touch the lives of millions in rural India.



India is predominantly a rural based economy where more than 66 per cent of its population and 70 per cent of the workforce live in rural areas¹. Understanding the impact of rural economy on India's economic growth, policy planners always give priority on the progress and prosperity of the rural people. Although agriculture is the main occupation of the rural people, most of the rural people depend on other activities such as animal husbandry, dairy development, fishery, handlooms, handicrafts, carpentry, small scale industries and business for either full-time or part-time occupation. Further, most of the farmers in the country follow traditional method of farming.

Under such a situation, it is believed that youth can be the torch bearer in infusing innovation, confidence and knowledge among the farmers and others in rural areas. By doing so, they can bring prosperity home. National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), an apex development bank, plays an important role in skill formation and

capacity building of the young men and women in rural areas.

Youth & Rural Development:

Of late, India is emerging as a major power with the economy registering high growth rates. Due to the advancement of knowledge, science and technology, the method of production of farm and non-farm products have been changing. Consumers' choice and preferences have been changing. The young men and women are the most valuable segment of the population. When nourished well, they can do wonders. In the present day economy, science, technology, market information and innovation play important roles in the development of farm and off-farm products.

As the employment avenues in rural areas are limited, many young people migrate to towns and cities for work. With change in consumers' preferences, technology, product and price, agriculture is changing. They need to remain prepared

to rise to the new challenges and opportunities. They must be trained and equipped to take care of the new agriculture practices and use of technology in various farm and non-farm activities. Empowerment and skilled training provides young people an avenue to gain practical knowledge, build confidence, greater understanding of things and capabilities for their livelihoods. When every youth contributes to the best of his/her capacity and ability, India can be a developed country. The new agriculture and rural industries require trained workforce and agricultural professionals. Young mind is fresh with ideas and innovation. Greater understanding on the various schemes, greater understanding and competency enable them to be successful entrepreneurs. For sustainable livelihoods in rural areas, NABARD has been undertaking various capacity building measures for the rural youth.

National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD):

NABARD is an apex development bank formed by an Act of Parliament in 1982 and it is wholly owned by the Government of India. The mandate of the organization is promoting sustainable and equitable agriculture and rural development through participative financial and non-financial interventions, innovations, technology and institutional development for securing prosperity. The functions of the organization are aimed at building an empowered and financially inclusive rural India. During the last 36 years, NABARD has made meaningful intervention for achieving rural development through micro finance, inclusive growth, rural infrastructure, climate change and scaling up Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs). In the process, NABARD could touch the lives of millions



in rural India. Some of the initiatives of NABARD in empowering rural youth are as under:

I. Capacity Building through Microfinance Movement:

NABARD had launched the *Self-Help Group-Bank Linkage Programme* (SHG-BLP) in 1992 with a target of linking 500 SHGs in a year's time. The programme aims at improving access of the weaker and other sections from formal financial institutions and also their livelihood. It has been built around a simple but basic aspect of human nature – '*the feeling of self-worth*'. Over the last two and half decades, the microfinance initiative of NABARD has assumed the shape of a movement in the country by forming 87.4 lakh SHGs, collecting savings of Rs.19,592 crore and with a credit outstanding of Rs.75,598 crore by 31 March 2018.

The programme has also enabled more than 10 crore poor Indian households to gain access to micro-finance from the formal banking system. Studies conducted by experts show that the programme has helped the social and economic empowerment of rural people, especially women, causing significant up-scaling of social capital while at the same time delivering financial services. Today, this savings-led, women-centric, door-step, self-managed micro-finance programme has emerged as one of the world's largest movements of organizing the poor into groups and linking them with banks for credit facilities.

Enabling SHG members to take up income generating activities for livelihood involves intensive training and hand holding on various aspects including understanding market, potential mapping and ultimately fine tuning skills and entrepreneurship to manage the enterprise. It was felt that skill-specific and location-specific skill building measures for the matured SHG members would upgrade skill and transform them into micro entrepreneurs. Therefore, since 2006, NABARD has started enabling graduation of SHG members to the next higher level of livelihoods through the *Micro Enterprise Development Programmes* (MEDPs). It was understood from the experience of MEDPs that skill training is successful when it is combined with right selection of trainees, proper hand-holding and motivation, timely credit, marketing support and mentoring by NGOs, Banks and Government agencies. Therefore, from December 2015, *Livelihood Enterprise Development Programme* (LEDP), a holistic approach form livelihoods and

enterprise development for creating sustainable livelihoods among SHG members was introduced on a pilot basis in select States. Cumulatively, 324 LEDPs have been supported through with grant sanction from NABARD up to 31 March 2018.

The success of LEDP depends primarily on proper selection of the livelihood activity, the Project Implementing Agency and the SHG members. Livelihood mapping, identification of the trainees, Community Resource Person, Tie-up arrangement, hand-holding support, giving training on select farm and non-farm activities and constant follow-up are the keys to the success of the programme. The skill training to the identified SHG members is given in batches of 25-30 members drawn from 5 to 6 SHGs in cluster of contiguous villages. Along with the training, demonstration of the livelihood activity is also a part of the programme. As on 31 March 2018, 15,382 SHG members had been supported through 203 LEDP programmes. Similarly, around 4.68 lakh SHG members have received training through 16,406 MEDPs by the year ending 2017-18. In all these formats of microfinance movement such as SHG-BLP, MEDPs and LEDPs, training and capacity building is an important component. The SHG members are given training on both farm and non-farm activities so that they can take up the activities for self-employment and increasing their family income. When skill training is given, the SHG members become socially and economically empowered.



Similarly, Joint Liability Group (JLG) is another innovative microfinance product developed by NABARD. This programme has emerged as one of the easiest and collateral-free mode of purveying institutional credit to the landless and tenant farmers/artisans by the formal banking system. As on 31 March 2018, a total of 9.49 lakh JLGs have been promoted and linked with banks.

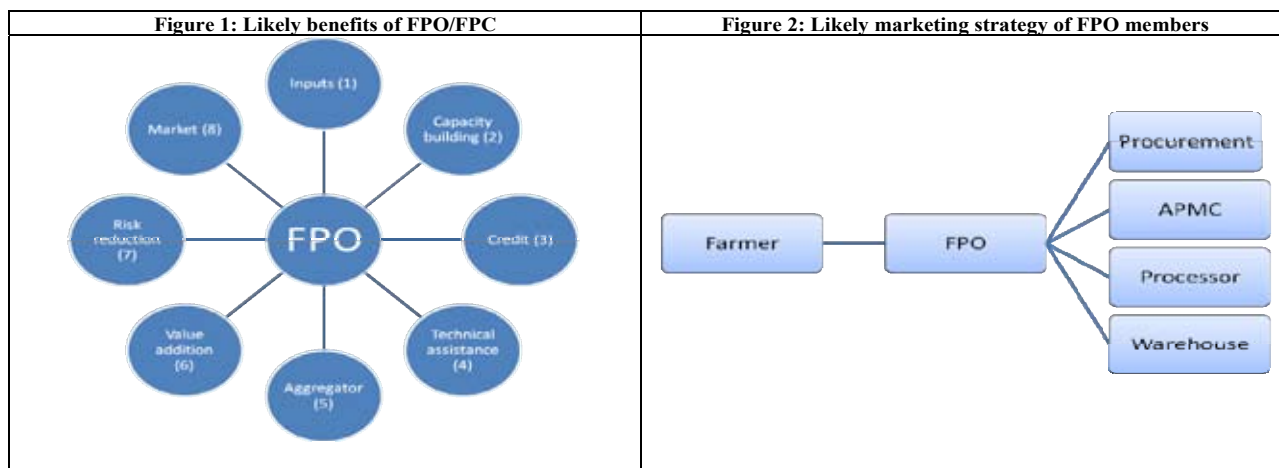
II. Capacity building in Farm Sector:

Farmers Clubs:

NABARD has been implementing the Farmers' Club (FC) Programme aimed at forging linkages of farmers with banks and agricultural technologies. In 1982, Vikas Volunteer Vahini (VVV) programme was introduced to propagate the five principles of "Development through Credit" viz.

1. Credit must be used in accordance with the most suitable methods of Science & Technology.

Farmer Producer Organisation (FPO)



1. After harvest, the farmers may sell a part of their surplus {APMC, Procurement, Processor or Wholesaler}
2. A part of the produce, they may clean and grade and then sell to the processing units, open market or wholesaler
3. A part of the produce, they may store in the warehouse in a lot, avail pledge loan and participate in on-line trading and release for sale at a time when the market price is attractive
4. Depending on the price, collectively, the FPO members may sell the produce to the processing unit



2. Terms & Conditions of credit must be respected.
3. Work must be done with skill so as to increase production & productivity.
4. A part of additional income created by credit must be saved and.
5. Loan installments must be repaid on time and regularly so as to recycle credit.

In 2005, the VVV programme was renamed as Farmers' Club Programme. The goal of this programme is capacity building and empowerment of the farming community and more particularly the small and marginal farmers across rural areas. This is a grass root level informal forum of farmers in the village organized by rural bank branches with support and financial assistance from NABARD. The club organizes meeting of the farmers, guides and educates local farmers by inviting experts from Agriculture Universities, Krishi Vigyan Kendras, Non Governmental Organizations and Line Departments. Through workshops, training programmes and formation/nurturing of village level community based organizations like Village Watershed Committees, NABARD has been providing guidance/education, skill and insight to the rural people. During the year 1998-99, NABARD has introduced the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) Scheme in conjunction with Commercial Banks, Regional Rural Banks and Cooperative Banks to smoothen and strengthen the credit delivery system and to make available timely and hassle-free bank credit to the farmers. As on

31 March 2018, data of 23,000 Farmers' Clubs had been digitized.

Agri-Clinic & Agri-Business Centre (ACABC):

The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India, in association with NABARD has launched the programme on Agri-Clinic and Agri-Business Centre to take better methods of farming to each and every farmer across the country. The Agriculture Graduates can set up their own Agri-Clinic or Agri-Business Centre and offer extension services to farmers. Of late, start-up training is also offered to graduates in Agriculture or any subject allied to Agriculture like Horticulture, Sericulture, Veterinary Science, Forestry, Dairy, Poultry Farming, Fisheries, etc. Select Graduates interested to open the Centre are given intensive training on various aspects of agriculture such as method of practices, entrepreneurship, management and skill improvement. After completion of the training, they can apply for special start-up loans for their venture. These centers provide expert advice and services to farmers on payment basis to enhance crop/animal productivity and increase their incomes. The centers give advice to farmers on crop selection, best farm practices, post-harvest value added options, price trends, risk mitigation mechanism, crop insurance, credit and inputs access etc.

Tribal Development Fund:

Under this Fund, assistance is given to tribal households to have a wadi (small orchard), allied and

off-farm activities. Training and capacity building, processing, marketing, micro enterprises for women/landless, community health improvement, women empowerment and building community organizations are the other components of the TDF projects. As on 31 March 2018, cumulatively the project had benefitted 5.21 lakh families with 712 projects across 28 States and Union Territories. Similarly, support for watershed development by NABARD has enabled the rural community to build resilience against climate variation, climate proofing, management of dryland resources through soil and water conservation, livelihood development of women/landless through income generation and other interventions.

Farmers Produce Organisations (FPOs)

FPOs that can be promoted under various legal provisions including under Section IX A of the Companies Act, 1956 (as amended in 2013). The FPOs have the ability for improving farmers' welfare, and reducing risks. NABARD set up Producers' Organisation Development Fund (PODF) with a corpus of Rs.50 crore from its operating profit during the year 2011-12 and assisted 221 existing Producer Organisations (POs). As on 31 March 2018, NABARD has helped in formation of 4,004 FPOs, out of which, 2,044 have been registered under Companies Act (1,465 numbers), Society Act (118 numbers), Cooperative Act (322 numbers) and others (139 numbers). These FPOs, spread across the country covering more than 25,000 villages, have around six lakh shareholder members. In all, 790 Producer Organisation Promoting Institutions (POPIs) have partnered with NABARD. The likely benefits of farmers joining and promoting Farmer Producer Organisation/Company are the following:

- Brings farmers together and gives them strength and confidence.
- Provides a platform to collectively voice their opinions and concerns.
- Helps the members in negotiating for a better position.
- Supplies crop inputs to farmers at a reduced rate.
- Offers financial, technical and extension support.
- Improves capability by demonstration, training and exposure visit.
- Aggregates the crop produce and improves the bargaining power.



- Helps in reducing distress sale by providing pledge loan facility.
- Provides additional employment by adding value to the produce through cleaning, grading, processing and packing.
- Links with processors, wholesaler and consumer for direct sale.

Skill Development in Non-Farm Sector:

NABARD has been promoting non-farm sector activities as alternate livelihood options. Several promotional schemes have been designed for the rural entrepreneurs. The focus has always been on skill updating and capacity building of the rural entrepreneurs on different activities such as small, cottage and village industries, handloom, handicrafts and other rural crafts and service sector. Building an entrepreneurial culture and necessary skills among the rural youth and women has been a priority area for NABARD along with developing markets for non-farm sector.

Rural Entrepreneurship Development Programme (REDP) is one of the important Non-Farm Sector (NFS) promotional programmes supported by NABARD for creating sustainable employment and income opportunities in a cost-effective manner for the benefit of educated unemployed rural youth. The objective of the programme is to develop entrepreneurial and activity-oriented skills among unemployed rural youth willing to set up small/micro-enterprises by assisting Voluntary Agencies (VA)/ Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO)/ Development Agencies (DA)/ RUDSETIs etc. with good track record in conducting REDPs. NABARD is playing a very prominent role in the process of developing entrepreneurs in rural India. For generating self-employment and wage employment opportunities in rural areas, NABARD has been supporting Rural Entrepreneurship Development

Programmes (REDP) and Skill Development Programmes (SDP) since the early 1990s. As on 31 March 2018, NABARD has cumulatively supported training of more than 8.37 lakh rural youth through 32,520 REDPs/SDPs.

NABARD supports and provides marketing platform to rural artisans and producers to exhibit their traditional art crafts, produce and products through exhibitions and melas, which facilitate the artisans in increasing their sale and also income. To enable the artisans to sell their products, NABARD extends financial assistance by way of grant for setting up of Rural Haats and Rural Marts. NABARD also provides support to specialized institutions such as RUDSETI/RSETIs for providing entrepreneurship development and training to rural entrepreneurs, which can generate better livelihood options. Besides, NABARD through its three training establishments, i.e., Bankers Institute of Rural Development (BIRD) – Lucknow, Mangalore and Bolpur, offers skill training and capacity building of bankers and officials of NGOs in farm, off-farm and micro finance sectors that would have the potential to promote livelihood opportunities and employment in rural areas.

Gramya Vikas Nidhi:

Promotion of off-farm sector assumes significance for the overall development of rural areas. Off-farm sector has the ability and potential to offer additional employment and income to farmers and others in rural areas. In 2014, NABARD jointly with Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (NABARD-SDC) had created Rural Innovation Fund to support innovative and risk friendly experiments in farm, non-farm and microfinance sectors that would have the potential to promote livelihood opportunities and employment in rural areas. After the expiry of RIF, another fund in the name of “Gramya Vikas Nidhi” was introduced during the year 2016-17 by NABARD for supporting promotional activities under off-farm sector activities. Various components of the Gramya Vikas Nidhi are entrepreneurial culture, innovation, capacity building, development and promotion of clusters and livelihood options.

Stand Up India Scheme:

The Government of India has launched the ‘Stand Up India scheme’ in April 2016 with an objective to facilitate bank loans between Rs.10 lakh and Rs.1 crore to at least one Scheduled Caste (SC) or Scheduled Tribe (ST) borrower and at least

one woman borrower per bank branch for setting up green-field enterprises. A corpus for credit guarantee for individual loans under the scheme and refinance through SIDBI has been approved. NABARD is a supporting agency of the scheme and the District Development Manager (DDM) offices of NABARD along with SIDBI offices have been designated as ‘Stand Up Connect Centres’ (SUCC).

Agri Business Incubation Centers:

Agri business incubators nurture innovative early stage enterprises that have high growth potential to become agribusiness by adding value and linking to producers and markets. The significance of Agribusiness Incubation Centers in facilitating an ecosystem conducive for the growth of Agribusiness enterprises is recognized worldwide. Besides creating direct employment opportunities, it also helps in increasing agricultural productivity and entrepreneurship development by supporting startups and enterprises, which are attempting to commercialize innovations.

The Way Forward:

Sustainable rural development is vital to the economic and social viability of a country. It is essential for poverty eradication. Therefore, strategies to deal with rural development should take into consideration the achievable potentials and the ways to achieve it. As agriculture is the mainstay of livelihood for a majority of people living in rural areas, a healthy and dynamic growth in the sector will be an important foundation of rural development.

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SKILLING YOUTH THROUGH SURYAMITRA

Nimish Kapoor

Suryamitras with the help of NISE ensure standard functioning and servicing of Solar PV and thermal systems to all customers. NISE has checks and controls in place to ensure that all Suryamitras offer quality service at reasonable price to their customers. NISE has fixed a price Rs 150/- per visit as visiting charges for Suryamitra Services and for installation and operation and *maintenance* charges Suryamitra's would charge standard charges as per MNRE advised rates. It is hoped that Suryamitra Mobile App would act as an effective catalyst in creating demand for solar products in the country and in offering employment and business opportunities for Suryamitras.

Ememployability skills are necessary for getting, keeping and being successful in a job. Skills and attitudes enable youth to make critical decisions, solve problems, develop new things and ultimately become strong ambassadors and asset for the organisation. Skilling India is one of the major initiatives for creating job opportunities. It is a flagship program of the government to create 500 million skilled manpower by 2020.

Renewable energy is one of these targeted sectors, and National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE), an autonomous institute under the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE) is assigned with the responsibility to execute the various skill development programmes throughout the country in the field of renewable energy technology. NISE is conducting "Suryamitras" training program to provide skilled technicians for installation, commissioning, operation & maintenance in the field of solar technology. The objective of this program is to provide employability and

entrepreneurship to rural and urban youth & women.

Government of India intends to achieve the target of 175 GW which includes 100 GW from Solar Energy by 2022. "Make in India" is an initiative of government to encourage multinational and domestic companies to manufacture their products in India. Suryamitra initiative is also a part of Make in India. Suryamitra Programme is a Solar PV Technician course which has been designed to develop skilled and employable workforce (Suryamitras) catering to the needs of Solar PV industries and EPC Projects in installation, commissioning, and operation & maintenance of solar power plants and equipment. The Suryamitras should be able to perform the jobs related to design, component procurement, site survey, installation, commissioning and operation & maintenance of a Solar PV system in EPC projects. The Suryamitras are capable to take positions as SPV Technicians as well as other supervisory and managerial posts in Solar PV component manufacturing organizations.

The qualification required to participate in the program is ITI (Electrical & Wireman) / Diploma in Engineering (Electrical, Electronics & Mechanical). Higher qualified participants such as B.Tech etc. are not eligible. The course teaches the basics of electrical, SPV applications and solar power plant including standards, preventive maintenance, trouble shooting etc. To achieve and maintain the target of 100 GW solar power



plants for 25 years, India requires about 6.5 lakh personnel, trained in solar energy sector (estimated by CII). This course is designed and oriented as per requirement of solar industry.

Suryamitras are also capable of taking assignments as entrepreneurs for self employment. The main objective of this program is to train the 10+2 passed, ITI/diploma holders/ as field technicians to execute National Solar Mission (NSM) programmes across the country. Suryamitra programme is focussing to provide employability and entrepreneurship to rural and urban youth & women. MNRE set a target of 50000 Suryamitras of skilled manpower in solar energy sector. It is funded completely by Union Government and is a residential programme that is implemented by NISE across India. NISE is identifying a network of institutions through State Nodal Agencies (SNAs) to conduct training programs, arranging funds to them, and also monitor them for proper execution. Separately, NISE is also organizing Suryamitra program in its own campus.

Surya Mitra mobile App has been launched to connect Suryamitras with entrepreneurship and larger section of society. The Surya Mitra Mobile App is currently available in Google play store, which can be downloaded and used across India. This App is a high end technology platform which can handle thousands of calls simultaneously and can efficiently monitor all visits of Suryamitras. The trained Suryamitras who opts for entrepreneurship have joined in the Mobile App in several states. These Suryamitras are once again sensitized by NISE on soft skills like customer relations management, punctuality and are now ready to deliver the services.

This innovative mobile approach shall enhance the employment of trained youth in solar PV technology and also improve the businesses of solar entrepreneurs because of quality servicing, maintenance and repairing professionals are now available to customers at the click of a button on their mobiles. Under NABARD scheme of Off grid Solar PV system, few lakhs of off-grid systems have been installed and systems do require regular



maintenance. To keep the system in good condition skilled manpower is required, therefore, the proposed technical platform of Suryamitra Mobile App can be utilized for this purpose too. MNRE has an ambitious target of installing 100,000 solar PV pumps in several states. Suryamitra Mobile App would come handy with respect to operation and *maintenance*, repair and maintenance of solar pumps. Similarly, millions of square meter of solar water heater systems are already installed in various states. In order to maintain the existing system and to install new systems properly, Suryamitra App would be very useful to serve customers at their doorsteps with quality installation, repair, and O&M services.

Suryamitras with the help of NISE ensure standard functioning and servicing of Solar PV and thermal systems to all customers. NISE has checks and controls in place to ensure that all Suryamitras offer quality service at reasonable price to their customers. NISE has fixed a price Rs 150/- per visit as visiting charges for Suryamitra Services and for installation and operation and *maintenance* charges Suryamitra's would charge standard charges as per MNRE advised rates. It is hoped that Suryamitra Mobile App would act as an effective catalyst in creating demand for solar products in the country and in offering employment and business opportunities for Suryamitras.

The National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE), an autonomous institution of Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), is the apex National R&D institution in the field of Solar Energy. NISE



is organizing “Suryamitra” skill development programmes in collaboration with State Nodal Agencies, at various locations across the country. The programme aims to develop the skills of youth, considering the opportunities for employment in the growing Solar Energy Power project’s installation, operation & maintenance in India and abroad. The Suryamitra Programme is also designed to prepare the candidates to become new entrepreneurs in Solar Energy sector. The Suryamitra Skill Development Programmes are sponsored by Ministry of New & Renewable Energy, Government of India.

Suryamitra is a residential program which is 100% funded by Govt. of India and implemented by NISE across the country. The institutes like universities, polytechnics, ITIs etc. are executing the Suryamitra skill development program at various locations in the country. So far, more than 125 institutes in 25 states are implementing the Suryamitra program and creating job opportunities to the unemployed youth. About 80% of the Suryamitras are placed in various solar industries with decent salaries. The rest are becoming entrepreneurs in the field of solar energy.

Suryamitra Programme is of 3 months duration (600 hrs) & covers all aspects of Solar PV system procurement, installation, commissioning, testing & maintenance. The course covers the syllabus as per NISE-MNRE Guidelines. To enter Suryamitra

Programme, the candidate should be 10th pass and ITI in Electrician /Wireman/Electronics Mechanic/ Fitter/ Sheet Metal, not below 18 years. During the selection of trainees, special emphasis to be given to the persons coming from rural background, unemployed youth, women, SC/ST candidates. Presently, there shall be 30 seats for each batch of training program. At the end of the course, proper assessment shall be made and certificates shall be issued.

The State Nodal Agencies of the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy and the host institute advertise about the batches of the program including dates and the venue of the training in the print and/or electronic media. The training program is residential with a clear daily time table which would preferable include early morning physical exercise such as Yoga/PT etc. The practical hours of the course are designed with for hands on exercise in the lab sites, experiments, class room exercises, software simulations and to conduct the regular quizzes/class test and industrial visits. The host institute provides one set of uniform and an access to proper toolkits for working in the lab/site to all the Suryamitra participants. Participants must attend the session in proper uniforms only. The jacket, safety helmets and boots provide to all participants, and may be retained by the host institute after the training. No fee is charged from the trainees.

During first two months of Suryamitra programme, visits to medium or large industry to know power transmission, distribution, loads, cabling etc. and one visit to 33 kV substations are planned. Course covers basic electricals, electricity, energy aspects, electron theory, voltage, current, resistance, measurement units and electrical lab work. Suryamitras are trained to operate tools like pliers, nippers, hammers, hacksaw, cutters, chisels, allen keys, hand drill, drill bit, try square, gimlet, ratchet, pipe vice, bench vice, pin vice, plumb bob, centre punch, wrench, blow lamp, pipe cutter, reamer, box spanner, crimping tool, measuring tape, pulley puller, neon tester, mallet, wire stripper. Types of wires and cables, insulating materials, standard wire gauge, specifications of wires and cables, colour coding, low and high voltage, precautions in using cables, wire ferrules, continuity / continuity tester, meggar electrical lab & yard visit are also part of the training. Course also includes generation, transmission and distribution of electricity, introduction to renewable and solar energy, introduction of photovoltaic technology and its applications, components of a PV system: battery,

inverter and charge controllers, fundamentals of pv system sizing, trouble shooting of pv modules, troubleshooting of batteries, inverters and charge controllers, importance of tools and its applications , preparations and pre-requirements of installation, structure erection and civil works, installation of solar power plant, cable tray and cable laying: scada and control system, commissioning and testing, operation and maintenance, soft and entrepreneur skills.

At the end of the Suryamitra program, the host institute arrange for placement of the “Suryamitra” by inviting, solar industries, EPC companies, marketing companies, large contractors working with Transco, Discoms etc. Maximum number of the participants provide employment at the end of the program. Thanks to Skilling India initiative and Suryamitra programme, solar companies will no longer have to worry about skilled manpower to provide quality service to their customers.

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ICTs FOR EMPOWERING RURAL YOUTH

Dr Dibakar Lenka

By 2020, India's population is expected to become the world's youngest. This means that a growing number of India's youth need the right educational infrastructure to develop skills and adequate opportunities to get employed or become entrepreneurs. ICT can address these issues by conceptualizing and providing necessary infrastructure.

Today's youth will lead tomorrow's India. Every third person in India today is a youth. India has the largest population of youth in the entire world. More than half of the total population in the country is below the age of 35. Nearly 40 per cent of the Indian population is aged 13 to 35 years. The working population of India is expected to increase to 592 million by 2020, next only to China (776 million). By 2020, India's population is expected to become the world's youngest. This means that a growing number of India's youth need the right educational infrastructure to develop skills and adequate opportunities to get employed or become entrepreneurs. ICT can address these issues by conceptualizing and providing necessary infrastructure.

Information and Communication Technology:

The Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) consist of hardware, software, networks, and media for the collection, storage, processing, transmission, and presentation of information (voice, data, text, images), as well as related services. Communication technologies consist of a range of communication media and devices, including print, telephone, fax, radio, television, video, audio, computer, and the internet.

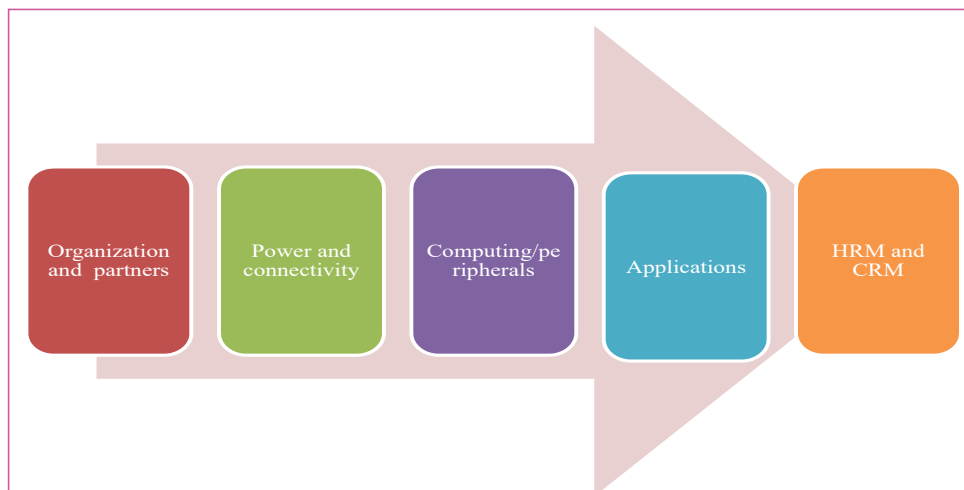
Young people who are given early access to Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) tend to become early adopters of the technologies, spurring innovation and economic growth. With the Internet, young people have acquired a powerful new tool to connect, communicate, innovate and take action on things that matter to them.

ICT Technology, Infrastructure, Applications:

There are various stages of decision-making and delivery of ICT-based services in terms of a typical value chain, as shown in Figure 1. At each stage of the chain, the ICT components include a mix of hardware, software and services. For example, an Internet kiosk would have a computer, printer, web cam, modem, power back up, and software to enable standard Internet browsing, as well as handle specialized tasks such as education in the local language, agricultural information, e-governance and entertainment etc.

The organizational structure necessary for the delivery of rural IT services typically requires commercial goals of profitability for its sustainability. All rural ICT projects require some degree of initial subsidization by the Government for its sustainability. To handle the infrastructure for rural ICT service delivery requires youth with skills and talent. It requires training of rural kiosk operators, whether they are formal franchisees or independent farmer operators.

Figure 1: Value Chain for IT-Based Services



ICT empowering Agriculture:

ICT is successfully used in entire range of farm operations. Information can be provided for better input use, cropping decisions, management of pests and

diseases, animal husbandry, and marketing. ICT is a big boon to access credit and insurance products of various companies. Radio and television have long been used to broadcast agricultural information for farmers. Farmers, who can afford, use cellular phones for obtaining price information in a timely manner.

Skymet is one of the largest weather monitoring and agricultural risks Solutions Company of the country. They measure, predict, and minimize climate risk to agriculture, thereby limiting losses incurred due to weather abrasions. This website forecast weather information, suggests for crop insurance and related risk management. Forecast of weather can help farmers for preparing against possible hazards to farming and help them to take befitting preventive measures. They claim to be accurate in their prediction.

Frontal Rain Technologies is accessible through computer and mobile devices. It is useful for firms dealing in commodities like groceries, basmati rice, seeds, cattle feed, sea food, dairy products and edible oil. The website creates a scope for demand and supply of agricultural products on the cloud. Rain+ solution helps companies at different stages of the value chain, starting from sowing, growing, processing, logistics, wholesale and retail trade and exports.

Agrostar provides genuine agricultural inputs to the farmers at their doorstep. It is a Pune-based e-commerce platform, directly linked to the farmers. Agrostar helps farmers to procure agricultural inputs such as seeds, plant nutrition, plant protection and agriculture equipments by simply giving a missed call on the company's toll free number, 1800 or through their mobile app to prevent hardship of unavailability of products. Substandard and spurious agricultural inputs can be easily avoided.

Ekgaon Technologies is an IT based network integrator. It provides a technology platform to the farmers with provision of range of services. They provide financial counseling, guide for agricultural input availabilities and provision of government assistance etc. They have mobile banking platform for delivery of financial services. It also provides information and counseling of credit, savings, remittance, insurance, investment and mortgage etc at the door step and information regarding microfinance institutions available in the locality.

They also provide local language base agriculture advisory services to the mobile users through interactive voice response system (IVRS). They also provide web based information on weather, market, price, soil health management etc.

MITRA (Machines, Information, Technology, Resources for Agriculture) is a set up, aims to improve mechanization at horticulture farms with the use of highly effective farm equipments. These are created through research and development and launched after rigorous field trials. They have developed air blast sprayers. It is very useful for fruits and vegetables crops. It is also effectively utilized for grapes and pomegranates. The sprayers are used to spray hormones that help the growth of crops. It considerably reduces the expenditure on manual labour and is less time-consuming.

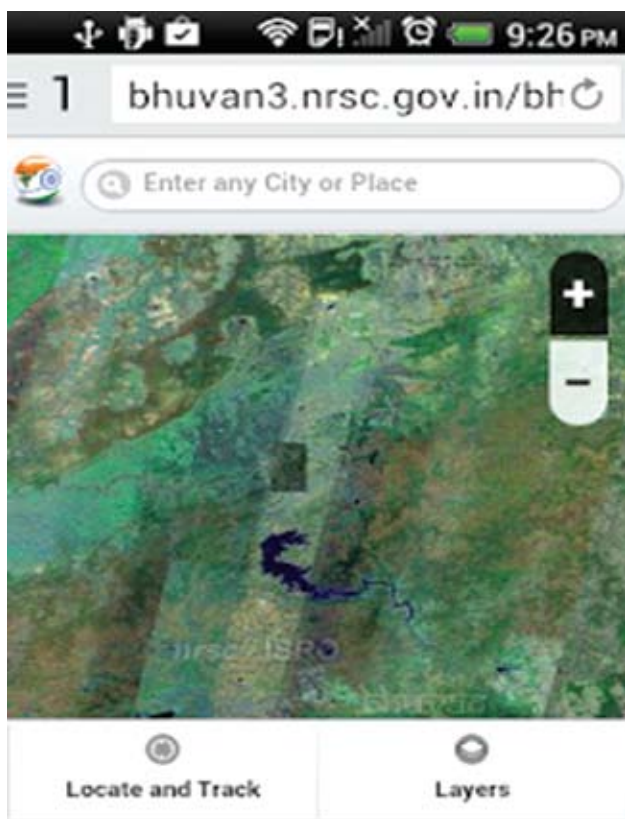
CropIn Technology Solutions offers information on a cloud-based platform through mobile base application. It is known as 'Smart Farms'. It allows companies to track status of the crops around the country. It helps companies to remotely monitor farms, interact with farmers and make every crop traceable and visible. It also helps farmers in adopting advance farm practices and improves productivity by providing high yield methods and productivity forecasts. It provides smart and safe food supply for consumers around the world by considering agriculture as a business.

Eruvaka Technology is a unique way to measure and control water health. It is solar-powered floating equipment that measures oxygen level, temperature and pH range of water and suggests conduciveness of aquaculture and possible remedies. This is very crucial for the growth and survival of fishes. The information collected by the equipment are uploaded on the cloud and transmitted to individual farmers through mobile app, SMS, tele-call or the internet. Farmers can rectify the water body by remotely controlled equipment such as aerators and feeders.

BHUVAN is a satellite based reach to the rural people. It acts like a clearing house for satellite data. It is essentially a humongous software that integrates and processes ground inputs with satellite data for diverse needs

Three prominent applications are there which have remote reach for use of rural population:

- **CHAMAN** (Coordinated program on Horticulture assessment and Management using geo-informatics. It helps in:



- Digital inventory of all horticulture zones in the country.
- Deciding cold storage hubs.
- Managing inflation through accurate data of food stock.
- FASAL (Forecasting Agricultural output using Space, Agro-meteorology and Land based observations).
- Monitor crop health.
- Use to directly study crop locations.
- NADAMS (National Agricultural Drought Assessment and Monitoring System).
- Remote sensing real time information on current or developing drought at state, district and sub district level.

Many Android Apps are new tools in the hands of the officials and farmers:

- **CCE Agri:** Revenue officials now use this android app to estimate crop damage and yield loss at 1100 locations in 12 states.
- **Ground Truth:** To monitor crop health being used by 18 state governments.
- **Bhuvan Hailstorm App:** being used to capture hailstorm losses in states such as Madhya Pradesh.

- **mKisan:** It provides farm advisories, such as weather and pest updates on phones to the farmers.

ICT improving Market Efficiency:

In rural market, intermediaries exert considerable market power over Indian farmers. For physical goods and services, including farm inputs and outputs, ICTs have the potential to reduce search costs and improve price discovery. This can lead to new or better matches between buyers and sellers.

By reducing search and other transaction costs, ICTs can integrate geographically fragmented markets, thereby reducing their “thinness.” This can increase the quality of buyer-seller matches that take place. In addition, it is possible that this integration can increase the competitiveness of the markets.

In the context of ongoing economic reforms, empowering farmers with information access may be extremely beneficial. Knowledge of more distant markets and demands for more varied products would be particularly important. Knowledge of new practices, especially emergency practices such as accelerated ripening techniques, rapid evacuation in case of untimely rains, and packing methods can be critical for mitigating risks with high value commercial crops serving distant markets.

Drishteehaat kiosk operators are trained to use ICT, identify local handicrafts that might be marketed on the Internet, and to create the relevant



content for advertising these products. Farm inputs such as fertilizer and pesticides, available in the choupal, illustrates another aspect of market power and efficiency in rural India.

National Agriculture Market or eNAM is an online trading platform for agricultural commodities in India. The market facilitates farmers, traders and buyers with online trading in commodities. The market is helping in better price discovery and provides facilities for smooth marketing of their produce. The market transactions stood at ₹36,200 crores by January 2018, mostly intra-market. Over 90 commodities including staple food grains, vegetables and fruits are currently listed in its list of commodities available for trade. The eNAM markets are proving popular as the crops are weighed immediately and the stock is lifted on the same day and the payments are cleared online. In February 2018, some attractive features like MIS dashboard, BHIM and other mobile payments are added features to empower producers.

ICT in Rural Employment:

ICT kiosks have been demonstrated to provide attractive job opportunities for such people, particularly young women. In addition to direct income and employment generation, confidence of these young people is boosted tremendously and they serve as attractive role models for others in rural areas. ICT has made online job search and skill training easier.

ICT in Education:

Rural ICT kiosk operators are working as teachers with smaller educational modules in many

places of MP. The role of ICT kiosks is complementary to that of conventional schooling. The use of ICTs allows for interactive, visually appealing content that creates and enhances student interest, learning and retention.

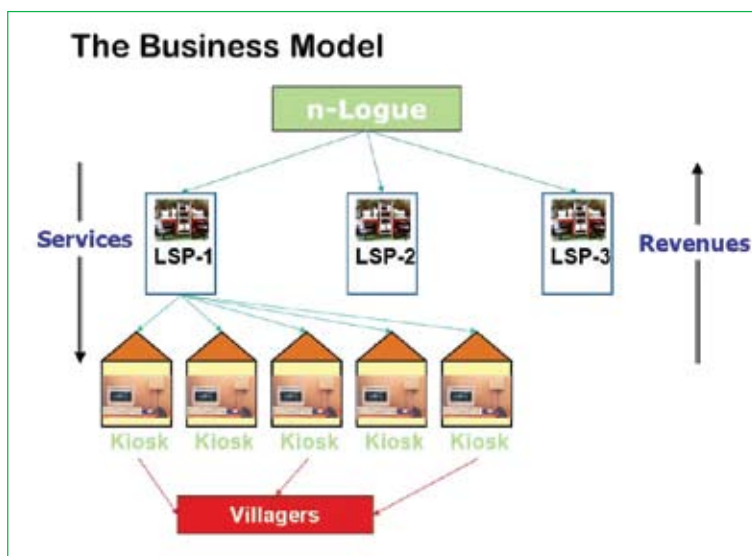
Development of appropriate educational materials can also be achieved economically, if target markets are defined. Traditional textbook model can be substituted by cheap CDs and the Internet. In this context, even computer games have educational value. Several of the initiatives have demonstrated that children are very quick to assimilate and use all kinds of ICT tools for mix of entertainment and education. Rural ICT kiosk operators can provide such educational services at low cost. One area where ICT-kiosk based rural education may have a significant role to play is in adult education, ranging from basic literacy to very specific skills for those who have received conventional school education.

ICT in Health Services:

The role of ICTs in health services is multidimensional. Basic medical information is available online and on CDs, even in local languages. Online list of information about availability of health care facilities and fixing appointments, providing health histories. Video conferencing software can allow for basic health consultations, where bringing doctors and rural patients physically together are costly enough. Many kiosks are working on this line and providing lot of employability.

Economic Development through ICT:

ICT helps in efficient use of scarce resources. This gain is through more effective and lower cost of information storage, processing and communication. Dynamic gains come from higher growth, potentially raising the entire future stream of consumption. ICTs can also spur innovation, which is a key factor in economic growth. The potential benefit comes from reductions in economic inequality by common use of resources. The focus on using ICTs for rural development is supportive of reduced inequality along with increased efficiency and growth. The government may therefore provide information goods and services because they are shareable and non-excludable.



Overview of ICT Initiatives for Empowerment

- **Drishtee:** Drishtee.com had its origins in Gyandoot, a government project in Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh. Gyandoot is offering a range of e-governance-related services in villages by intranet. The most prominent of these is land record certificates, and sale or leasing of land. Drishtee has over 100 rural Internet kiosks in several states.



- **Aksh:** Aksh is essentially a fiber optic cable company, with its core competence in laying and maintaining cable. Its revenue model is driven by the content and data that can be delivered over this cable.
- **n-Logue:** While Aksh and Drishtee are mostly active in north India, n-Logue has its origin and presence in the south. It is a profit oriented corporation. The main impetus for n-Logue came from the IIT Chennai research group. This group has been responsible for a stream of hardware and software innovations that enable rural IT-based service delivery, through connectivity and applications. This group is working in the fields of education, health and agriculture.
- **ITC:** ITC's kiosks are called e-choupals, and they have several differentiating features. The key distinguishing factor is that the e-choupals are totally designed to support ITC's agricultural products supply chain. There are four kinds of e-choupals, tailored very specifically for four different products: shrimp, coffee, wheat and soybeans. The first two of these involve large commercial farmers, and the focus is on creating Internet access to global market information to guide production and supply decisions.

TARahaat: TARahaat has achieved well-publicized success with Internet kiosks in Bundelkhand, a relatively backward region of Uttar Pradesh. TARahaat's long-range plans include a comprehensive portal for rural information services and an extended vision of its 'TARAkendras' as

community centers. TARahaat does have an educational content partner, called TARAgyan. In association with various partners, TARAgyan is developing local language content and software for use in TARAkendras. Basic IT education is an important part of TARAgyan's actual and potential offerings.

Akshaya: Akshaya is located in Malappuram district in Kerala, and has many kiosks. Kerala has the advantages of high literacy rates, strong local governments, and high population density. The initiative for the project came from the district level local government, and strong support came from the state government. Village level governments were involved in the selection of kiosk operators, and significant funds were expended in training the local populations in computer use ("e-literacy").

Conclusion:

ICT is a boon in bringing rich information to the population of rural India. It empowers rural youth by adding value in agriculture, employment, education, market prices, market opportunities, knowledge that improves productivity, health and well-being, and have positive impacts on the material well being of the rural masses.

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OPPORTUNITIES IN VALUE CHAIN & FOOD PROCESSING

Dr Sanjay Bhayana, Dr Tribhuvan Nath

Rural youth entrepreneurs are vital as they can reallocate resources from the agricultural sector to the processing sector through knowledge, skills and food processing technology. Consequently, they may find their interests and talents are best aligned with agribusiness value chain and food processing rather than traditional agriculture and farming. The need is to engage rural youth by creating an eco-system and effective entrepreneurial policy framework for promoting entrepreneurship in food processing and value addition.

The future of any country lies in its youth. They are the most dynamic segment of population and each of them has infinite source of energy geared with limitless aspiration. Today's youth are the most creative, innovative, tech-savvy and have the power to transform the nation to build more powerful and prosperous world. According to the National Youth Policy (NYP-2014) of India, youth refers to people of both sexes aged 15 to 29 years which constitutes 27.5% of total population. India has the world's largest youth population, a very favourable demographic profile with a median age of about 28 years which suggests that youth will make a significant contribution to the economic development and prosperity of the country. Rural youth constituting over half of the youth population are the backbone of rural economy and equally capable of contributing to nation building through transforming the rural economy.

Rural Youth as Engine for Growth:

Rural development is the real development for an agrarian economy like India. Rural development was central to the national development agenda since the beginning. Our rural youth need to be strategically integrated in development process and be prepared to act as effective agent of change.

There is a strong need to call-to-action for engaging, energizing and empowering the rural youth to see the fruit of rural development. According to FAO, as future leaders, rural youth need to be prepared and advanced in :

- 1) Improving their capabilities to produce food and to conserve productive resources in the rural environment;
- 2) Improving their skills and abilities in carrying out income generating activities in rural areas;
- 3) Relieving population pressure and improving nutrition and the well being of farming families and;
- 4) Developing leadership and the ability to work well with others in group and community situations.

Rural youth of the country are the greatest asset who can be converted into an important resource for accelerating the pace of rural development. Youth provided with appropriate training and opportunities, have the capacity to play game-changing role in transforming the lives of the rural people and address many rural problems. India as being primarily an agriculture-based economy, investing in the future of rural youth through



creating opportunities in agribusiness value chain, food processing and entrepreneurship would be the right strategy to achieve rural economic growth and development goals.

Opportunities in Food Processing and Agribusinesses:

India had established itself as one of the world's fastest-growing economies. The rural areas are the most important economic and demographic components of the country, and path of 'sustainable' economic growth starts from there itself. The rural belt have to become thriving hubs of economic activities with the youth playing key role in the overall prosperity of the rural community.

Youth in rural society are the engine of growth of the rural economy. They can fuel the progress and growth of rural economy if proper guidance, support, motivation and right opportunities are given to them. The entrepreneurial potential of rural youth, as source of employment creation and economic growth, represents an important area of opportunity for Government to invest in rural youth. Creating an entrepreneurial spirit amongst the rural youth by providing them right mix of knowledge, technical & managerial skills, and mentoring through proper entrepreneurial policy framework can bring entrepreneurship-driven development which is more sustainable than traditional development approaches.

There is considerable potential for promoting entrepreneurship in food processing and agribusiness in the rural areas. The involvement of rural youth in agribusiness and food processing entrepreneurship can make India a world leader in the food processing sector. The food processing involves any type of value addition to agricultural produce including primary processing such as grading, sorting and packaging to increase marketability of food products. Whereas, secondary food processing involves the value addition by transforming raw produce from its original state to a more valuable state with enhanced food quality, safety and shelf life. The food processing and value addition activities predominantly offers a means to increase, rejuvenate and stabilize rural income and beyond that it ensures availability of food products throughout the year and add to food security by minimizing food wastage.



Training Session in Village Chhoti Ladha, Bihar

Linking Rural Youth to Entrepreneurship

Agriculture needs to be technologically advanced and further supported by food processing and value addition activities to exploit its full potential. Rural youth entrepreneurs are vital as they can reallocate resources from the agricultural sector to the processing sector through knowledge, skills and food processing technology. Consequently, they may find their interests and talents are best aligned with agribusiness value chain and food processing rather than traditional agriculture and farming. The need is to engage rural youth by creating an eco-system and effective entrepreneurial policy framework for promoting entrepreneurship in food processing and value addition.

The Village Adoption Programme (VAP) is a unique program designed by National Institute of Food Technology Entrepreneurship and Management (an institute under the Ministry of Food Processing Industry, Govt. of India) to empower rural youth and promote entrepreneurship in food processing. Each VAP team consisting of unique combination of 10-15 students from different programmes such as BTech (Food Technology Management), MTech (in five food related disciplines) and MBA (with mandatory specialization in food & agribusiness management) including a faculty, who adopt a village and identify and nurture entrepreneurial potential among rural youth. Although, the VAP has several pillars but promotion of entrepreneurship in food processing and value addition is a major focused area. The framework that VAP team follows is consisting of following important steps and activities:

The VAP team teaches the farmers and rural youth about 'good agricultural practices (GAP)', primary processing, scientific storage practices, and value addition techniques. In addition, team



facilitates potential entrepreneurs in preparing detailed project proposals, and creating backward and forward linkages for their enterprises. The programme has facilitated in empowering rural youth in many states and promoting food processing enterprises & counting.

The national recognition of VAP programme came with winning Agricultural Leadership Award-2015 for promoting entrepreneurship in farm sector which was judged by a jury headed by Prof. M.S. Swaminathan, the Father of Indian Green Revolution. The finding of the study has implications for institutions and universities to

undertake initiatives in their areas of working to promote the rural youth and contribute to rural economy and nation building. It is also suggested that rural outreach should be integral part of course curriculum in all levels of schools/colleges for mainstreaming rural youth.

Conclusion:

Promoting entrepreneurship in food processing and value addition among rural youth is an important way to utilize their energy to create large-scale employment opportunities, reduce poverty, minimize rural migration, and augment per capital income of rural people thereby reduces the income disparities between rural and urban people. The VAP case of NIFTEM gives lesson to learn & act by policy makers and institutions/universities to empower rural youth.

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ICAR organizes two-day conference on Motivating & Attracting Youth in Agriculture (MAYA)

In order to meet the challenge of providing sustainable livelihoods for a rapidly growing population and to motivate and attract youth in agriculture, a two-day conference was inaugurated at NASC, New Delhi from 30-31 August, 2018 on Motivating and Attracting Youth in Agriculture (MAYA). The two day conference provided an opportunity to all stakeholders to interact and discuss various options and avenues for not only attracting youth to agriculture, but even motivating them towards entrepreneurship in agriculture and allied fields. More than 200 participants including farmers from various States, senior research, development and policy related officials/managers from national and regional organizations, NGOs, the private sector, education and training institutions, and other members of civil society participated to discuss ways to motivate and attract youth in agriculture (MAYA). The regional conference attracted participants from Afghanistan, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

The conference was organized by the Trust for Advancement of Agricultural Sciences (TAAS), Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), MS Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF), Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI), Skill India, Agriculture Skill Council of India (ASCI), Young Professionals for Agricultural Development (YPARD) and National Bank For Agriculture And Rural Development (NABARD).

Realizing the importance of rural youth in agricultural development especially from the point of view of food security of the country, ICAR had initiated a program on "Attracting and Retaining Youth in Agriculture (ARYA) during 2015-16. Under this scheme, special efforts are being taken up to attract the rural youth under the age of 35 years in agriculture so that the increase in the migration of rural youth towards cities is controlled.

SANITATION: THE JOURNEY SO FAR..

Dr Dhurjati Mukherjee

The government has, no doubt, come forward in a big way by providing necessary financial resources, demonstrating its political will and commitment. The private sector should also play an active role in constructing toilets in schools and educational institutions in villages and also ensure that there is water availability in these toilets. The creation of a totally sanitized environment, which has already started with the blessings of the Prime Minister, can become a reality not just through dedicated action of the government, but also of the private sector through active involvement of the community.

The present government's initiative in sanitation has been hailed by the political leaders as remarkable with the resolve to make the country "open defecation free" by October 2, 2019 – a promise made by the Prime Minister just after assumption of office. The latest statistics reveal that the coverage of toilets has zoomed to 93 per cent by the end of September 2018.

According to reports in the last three years, about 50 million toilets have been constructed in rural India and 3.8 million in cities and towns. Moreover 2.48 lakh villages, 203 districts and five states – Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Uttarakhand and Haryana – are now open defecation free. And it is envisaged that 450 districts in 20 states and Union Territories would shortly be open defecation free. In fact, surveys undertaken show that 85 per cent of

toilets built under Swachh Bharat Mission are being used. Some of the states have been quite efficient in constructing toilets in the countryside, as per the national plan.

It may be pertinent here to mention that the date of October 2 was fixed keeping in view the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi always talked of a communitarian approach to life and living and preserving the local environment clean and healthy was the cornerstone of his approach to make life liveable among the masses. In fact, cleanliness was advocated by him which meant keeping not just one's house but also the neighbourhood clean.

Though it is understood that 53 million toilets have been built in rural areas in the three years since the launch of Swachh Bharat, the report further





pointed out, and quite rightly that “eliminating open defecation is not only about building latrines but requires adequate methods for behavioural change and sufficient water supply is a pre-requisite for the sustainable and safe use of adequate, low-cost latrines”.

The benefits of sanitation cannot be doubted. Re 1 invested in improving sanitation helps save Rs 4.30, according to a recent study by UNICEF, which was done to estimate the cost of benefits of government’s Swachh Bharat Mission. Sharing the findings of an independent survey carried out across 10,000 rural households randomly selected across 12 states, Chief of WASH (Water, Sanitation, Hygiene) UNICEF India said: “In a fully open defecation free (ODF) community, considering medical costs averted, the value of time savings and the value of mortality averted, the financial savings for each household is Rs 50,000 per year”.

The study of UNICEF, found the financial savings due to improved sanitation resulted in a cost benefit ratio of 430 per cent on average; this means that Rs 3 invested allows a saving of Rs 4.3”. Whatever be the usage, the benefits are obviously the highest among poor sections of the population. The UN agency has also observed that beyond the hundreds of thousands of toilets being built, “a genuine prioritisation of behaviour change interventions is taking place”.

A major thrust has been given to the sanitation sector as also, to some extent, to the water sector. Now around 70 per cent of the urban population has access to sanitation that is, safe disposal of human excreta while in rural areas the figure has jumped to around 40 per cent from the earlier figure of a mere just 20 per cent, obviously due to the special thrust provided by the present government. Presently,

over 55 to 60 per cent of households in the country have access to sanitation facilities.

This aspect needs to be given special attention and the government’s programme called the Rashtriya Swachh Ganga Mission (National Clean Ganga Mission) of cleaning the Ganga river and setting up treatment plants in the major towns to ensure that the river is not polluted may be positive steps, if action proceeds according to targets set. Similar action needs to be taken for the Yamuna river.

The government has, no doubt, come forward in a big way by providing necessary financial resources, demonstrating its political will and commitment. The private sector should also play an active role in constructing toilets in schools and educational institutions in villages and also ensure that there is water availability in these toilets. The creation of a totally sanitized environment, which has already started with the blessings of the Prime Minister, can become a reality not just through dedicated action of the government, but also of the private sector through active involvement of the community. ‘Swachhata Hi Seva’ campaign was also launched to make people feel that the work of cleanliness is a service to the community. While resources are, no doubt, essential, claims only cannot yield desired results as this has to become a people’s campaign. Moreover, adequate water supply has to be taken care of as sanitation and water go hand in hand. If things are carefully planned and executed, the face of the country may change if we care for our neighbourhood and cleanliness.

At this juncture, there is need for a programme of epidemiological research on environmental health impacts in the country related to water and sanitation, soil and ecology in order to create proper understanding.

The thinking and philosophy of Gandhiji would be achieved if the Swachh Bharat programme realizes the desired targets but the challenge would be to generate awareness, in a big way. There has been spectacular progress since the last 5 years, thereby fulfilling the target of reaching sanitation to the remotest village and realizing a significant facet of Gandhian vision.

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MURSHIDABAD MAKES GREAT STRIDES IN ODF-S

To prevent the practice of open defecation, the district administration of Murshidabad in West Bengal has planned massive ODF Sustainability and Re-verification activities. Over the last few months, as many as 5000 volunteers comprising of government officials, community facilitators have visited all households, met people through a transect walk, checked the functional status of toilets of institutions and inspected former common open defecation areas. This exercise brought in a population of more than 80 lakh under review and recorded their behavioral changes.

Commenting on this, District Magistrate, Dr. P. Ulaganathan said, “The mandated provisions of the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (MDWS) related to ODF Sustainability have been ensured in all 1944 ODF villages of the district by undertaking one of the largest survey activities, the district has ever seen.” Significantly, people were given the liberty to choose their toilet design, as long as they kept the sub structure as per the approved design. This helped a great deal in developing a sense of ownership among people towards their toilets. Today, as many as 388758 households have toilets, constructed through their own effort, money and according to their taste, culture and heritage. This is believed to be the biggest jump towards sustainability.

In addition, innovative triggering methods were used – such as Gandhigiri by offering flowers or sweets to those who resist; appreciating individuals who took the initiative to built their own toilets; Walk of Honour by the community, Nirmal Tea Stall, Nirmal Barber Shop, Safai Abhiyan, Morning and Evening follow up, Para Baithak by NRLM to discuss Sanitation, Nirmal Roll Call at Classes, Oath taking at assembly by students, etc. The numbers speak of the efforts made to ensure sustainability of its hard earned ODF status. There were more than 1000 Safayi Abhiyan, 1200 OD area cleaning, 15000 para triggering, and 2500 Re-triggering exercises.

Significant initiatives undertaken by sanitation teams:

Nazardari and Gandhigiri: Given that both individual efforts and collective action were required for ODF sustainability, Nazardari teams were formed comprising of natural leaders and Self Help Group (SHG) members. They regularly visited OD prone areas morning and evening to check this. They also visited homes to motivate people about toilet usage and cleanliness of toilets. Often, government officials, people’s representatives joined the community in these Nazardari activities, mostly to motivate the team members and get feedback of ground reality.

Toilets for all: A quick survey was carried out and community facilitators met with people from every single household and discussed with them the importance of toilet usage by every member of the family, including the elderly and children. To cater to the differently abled, solutions such as fixing a bar or ramp were suggested.

Kachha Toilet Todo Abhiyan: While people understood the need to use toilets, they also needed to know the importance of sanitary toilets. Towards this, after ensuring that all homes had access to safe toilets, a week long programme, ‘Kachha Toilet Todo Abhiyan’ (Demolish the unsafe toilets) was observed across the district when thousands of insanitary toilets were demolished and areas cleaned.

Focus on educational institutions and Anganwadi Centres: Based on the premise that hygienic practices of children were a key factor in sustaining ODF in long run, triggering was carried out at 2633 schools with the participation of nearly 8 lakh students with a view to changing their mindset. **This exercise was so powerful that students started writing letters to their parents pleading for toilets.**

Ongoing triggering of stakeholders: Post attaining ODF status, to remind people about toilet usage and cleanliness Gram Panchayat teams were formed, consisting of natural leaders and teachers. They

carried out triggering at village and school levels with activities such as oath taking, role play and collective decisions which helped in building community solidarity.

4th Saturday Meeting: Various Departments converged to effectively address ODF-S. In this regard, 4th Saturday Meetings were held regularly with Panchayat representatives, Officials, Health Department functionaries, ICDS Supervisors, NRLM members, etc. During these meetings, ODF Status was reviewed and plans for post ODF activities were made.

Penal measures for violation of ODF Norms: Considering that a few people continued to defecate in the open, even when they had access to toilets, the Gram Panchayats adopted a resolution to impose a fine on all open defecators; to make it mandatory for all new houses being constructed to have toilets; to set up community toilets for visitors and migrants.

Sanitation Cards: Sanitation Cards were issued to every household that was using toilets. While this created enthusiasm among toilet users, open defecations felt left out and eventually conceded.

MUKTI: Under the Mukti project, the district identified places of open defecation and made plans to transform and beautify those places by land reclamation, plantation and greenery through MGNREGS.

Child Cabinet: Child cabinets were formed in all schools with representation of students. The role of these child cabinets was to check hygienic practices among students and visit nearby villages and promote the continued use of safe toilets.

Addressing flood prone areas: During floods, it is common for people to take shelter in high schools or community halls. To address this, the district administration has started constructing sufficient toilet units for use during floods.

Monthly activity calendar at GP, block and district levels: The District has adopted a monthly activity calendar or ODF calendar. Activities have been designed in such a way, that different stakeholders of the community participate in the activities on assigned dates. These include Nirmal Vidyalay Saptaha, Nirmal Anganwadi Diwas, Nirmal Prabhat, Nirmal Jatra, etc. These activities contribute immensely towards ODF Sustainability.

SANITATION AWARENESS COMPETITIONS IN 1261 SCHOOLS OF KANCHIPURAM

With a view to ensuring sustainability of open defecation free (ODF) status, the district administration of Kanchipuram has conducted sanitation awareness competitions in as many as 1261 schools across the district. "We intend focusing on children to ensure ODF sustainability. Once the sanitation message reaches them, it will definitely reach their families and the community at large," District Collector, P. Ponniah said. According to ZSBP- Kanchipuram, Sankar N., competitions were carried out in drawing, oratory, essay writing, and painting, the topics being cleanliness, importance of toilet usage and safe sanitation practices. Over 40,000 students participated in the same.

Departments of Rural Development and Education joined hands with team Swachh Bharat to organize this massive exercise. On the competition days, the district wore a festive look with children hurrying to their schools, their faces beaming with ideas. Along with district staff, a huge workforce comprising of teachers and other school staff, officials and functionaries from the departments were present to take care of arrangements. Awards and shields were given to winners of the first two competitions on 15th August (Independence Day).

It has also introduced sanitation cards to monitor the regular usage of toilets in rural areas. The cards have been issued to beneficiaries who constructed toilets under SBM, MGNREGS, CSR, NGO etc. When an SHG member, a District or Block level officer or the Sarpanch visits a home twice a month, he/she will check if the toilet is being used. If a toilet is found functional during inspection, they will mark YES and NO if not in use. The card details are consolidated at village level.

INNOVATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AMONG RURAL YOUTH

Dr H.L. Sharma

Many schemes and programmes have been launched by the Government with special impetus to create scientific temper and foster the spirit of innovation among the rural youth. These schemes through their hand-holding support provide an excellent opportunity to the young rural entrepreneurs to initiate, establish and run their enterprises successfully. Rural youth are contributing enormously for sustainable development of agriculture and rural economy. With the help of various government initiatives, they will further strengthen rural development efforts of the government.

India has emerged as one of the leading economies of the world with an average growth rate of around 7% per annum in real gross value added (GVA) at factor cost during the last decade. There has been a good economic progress in the field of manufacturing, construction, transport & communication, real estate, information technology and service sector.

The young generation of the country particularly the rural youth can play an important role in accelerating the process of growth in rural areas and thus bridging the rural-urban economic divide. In fact, youth are more creative, innovative, enthusiastic, vibrant and dynamic in nature. They have strong will-power, passion and motivation to foster economic development. While most of the developed countries of the world face the risk of an ageing workforce, India is having a favorable demographic profile. On the basis of its demographic dividend, India is poised to become the fourth largest economy in the world after USA, China and Japan.

Government Schemes for Rural Entrepreneurship:

Realising the importance of rural youth in the process of economic development, Government of India has taken various steps and launched various schemes to empower them through developing their innovative entrepreneurial skills to achieve the motive of

continuous & sustainable income and employment generation in rural India.

Education and training is essential and basic requirement for promoting skill-oriented enterprises in rural areas. It is necessary to provide adequate opportunities for rural youth to participate in technology based educational and training programs. In this context, **Samagra Shiksha** launched by Government of India aims at enhancing the learning outcomes at the school level with the use of technology to empower both taught and teacher. It encompasses previous three schemes- Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and Teacher Education (TE) by unifying the learning from pre-school to class XII. It also focuses on promoting vocational education to make it more job-oriented.



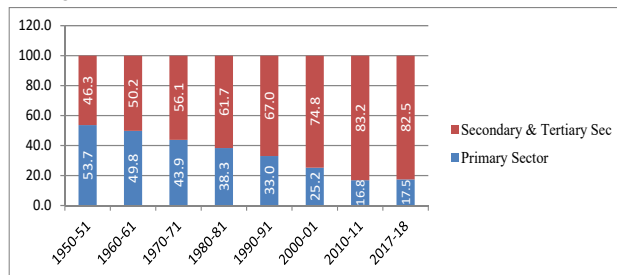
PMGDISHA
has now trained,
certified and
made 2 million
Indians digitally
literate.



Quality of human resources in the form of skill and knowledge is crucial for economic development of a country. In order to coordinate the efforts of all stakeholders in the field of skill development & entrepreneurship, the Government of India formed **Department of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship** on July 31, 2014 which subsequently led to the setting up of Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship on November 10, 2014. In a bid to improve employability of workers, **National Skill Development Mission** was launched on the occasion of World Youth Skills Day (July 15) in 2015. This mission aims at consolidating and coordinating the skilling efforts at the national level. The Mission aims at providing formal training to nearly 400 million people across the country by 2022. Further, in order to promote employment in agri-based vocational areas in agriculture & allied sector a programme named as **Skill Training of Rural Youth (STRY)** has been launched. It offers modular skill training opportunities to rural youths (above 18 years of age) in farm and non-farm activities in accordance with the requirement of local agro-based industries.

A skill training and placement programme of the Government named as **Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY)** was launched on 25 September 2014. It occupies a unique position among the skill training programs due to its focus on the rural poor youth in the age group 15-35 years. Under this programme, it is mandatory to give minimum 160 hours of training in soft skills, functional English and computer literacy etc. to

Figure 1: Share of Different Sectors in Real Gross Value Added (%)



(Source: Table 1)

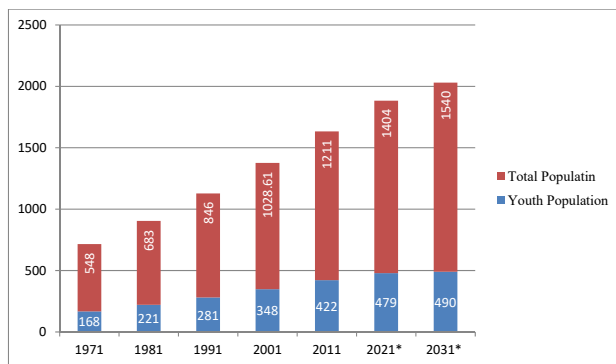
transform rural poor youth into an economically independent and globally relevant workforce. Additionally, it also emphasizes on the generation of sustainable employment through post-placement tracking, retention and career progression. Presently, DDU-GKY is being implemented in 568 districts of the country. Up to 30 November 2018, over 6.36 Lakh persons have been trained and nearly 3.5 Lakh have been placed in various jobs under this scheme.

Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) was launched by the Government of India under the National Skill Development Mission on 15th July 2015. Under this scheme, industry relevant short term skill training is provided to the youth to enable them secure a better livelihood. It is a reward based skill training scheme which provides financial incentive to the youth who successfully complete an approved skill training programme.

Another centrally sponsored project for Upgrading Skills & Training in Traditional Arts/crafts for Development, popularly known as **Project USTAD** has been launched by Ministry of Minority Affairs. It aims at capacity building and updating



Figure 2: Growth of Youth Population in India



(Source: Table 2)

the traditional skills of master trainers/artisans belonging to minority communities, BPL families in the traditional art/craft fields of their choice. The trainees should be between 14 to 45 years of age and at least class V pass. The project envisages preserving and promoting the rich heritage of traditional arts & crafts like wood & bone carving, zari work, phulkari, tie & dye, gems & jewellery, patch work, embroidery, durry making and so on.

On 7th October 2017, **Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Shiksha Abhiyan** (PMGDISHA) was launched to impart digital literacy in rural areas with the aim to empower at least one person per rural household with crucial digital literacy skills. Under this *abhiyan*, rural people between the age group of 14 to 60 years are being trained without any fees to operate computers, tablets, smart phones, etc and access government e-services, undertake digital payment, compose e-mails through the use of internet. PMGDISHA is expected to make around 40% rural households in country digitally literate by March 2019.

In an endeavour to promote the culture of innovation and entrepreneurship by creating a scientific temper among the youth, **Atal Innovation Mission** has been set up at NITI Aayog. It aims to improve vision of the students who can enhance their creativity and transform them into innovators of the new technology. Under the mission, selected schools are provided financial aid to establish tinkering laboratories where students from class VI to XII give shape to their innovative ideas and entrepreneurial skills. In the next step, Atal Incubation Centers are established to nurture innovative start-up businesses to become a successful entrepreneur.

Succinctly, it can be concluded that, agriculture & allied sector still continue to occupy a predominant position in providing livelihood to rural population, ensuring food security and providing impetus to the growth of other sectors

Many schemes and programmes have been launched by the Government with special impetus to create scientific temper and foster the spirit of innovation among the rural youth. These schemes through their hand-holding support provide an excellent opportunity to the young rural entrepreneurs to initiate, establish and run their enterprises successfully. To conclude, rural youth are contributing enormously for sustainable development of agriculture and rural economy. With the help of various government initiatives, they will further strengthen rural development efforts of the government.

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Khelo India Youth Games to be held in Pune

The first edition of Khelo India School Games was organised last year. These games are an initiative of the Central Government to promote the youth in various sports and games. This year its second edition will allow participants to compete in two categories, (Under 17) and (Under 21). This year will also allow students from colleges and Universities to compete. The other highlight of this year's games is that the national-level competition is moving out of the Capital and will be held in Maharashtra, which bid for the games, along with Assam and Jharkhand. This time, the games will be held in Pune, known as the city of students, from January 9 - January 20, 2019.



Prime Minister has always given priority to sports and athletes. It is his vision to make sports a priority in the lives of the youth. Last year, 1,500 children were chosen under this scheme, who are being funded with Rs 5 lakh each and are being provided the best training that they need to ensure that they win at the highest international levels, and make the country proud.

EMPOWERING RURAL YOUTH FOR NATION BUILDING

Dr Pawan Kumar Sharma

“My faith is in the younger generation, the modern generation, out of them will come my workers”

Swami Vivekananda

‘Strength is life and weakness is death’, said Swami Vivekananda. The history of the world is the history of a few men who had faith in themselves. ‘You can do anything’, if you have faith in yourself. You fail only when you do not strive sufficiently to manifest infinite power. It is only when a man or a nation loses faith, death comes.

Real India lives in the villages. If we travel across the length and breadth of the country in rural areas, the zest and enthusiasm of the youth who throng to schools, colleges and universities, organize events, and engage in social work prove their commitment to a strong and prosperous motherland.

The youth needs to have strong internal will power and the strength of internal clarity; this will give them the confidence and the courage to face all challenges that come their way and the ability to resolve their problems. As Swami Vivekananda said, “Take up one idea. Make that one idea your life; dream of it; think of it; live on that idea. Let the brain, the body, muscles, nerves, every part of your body be full of that idea, and just leave every other idea alone. This is the way to success, and this is the way great spiritual giants are produced.” For the sake of better job opportunities, better connectivity and other infrastructure, the rural youth need to focus on one social mission alone - to make India a country of their dreams and a better place to live in.

Rural youth are yet to unleash their full latent talent. Instead of merely depending on Government jobs, a large number of youth are turning to the private sector and self-employment thanks to major initiatives launched by the present Government such as Skill India and MUDRA Bank.

Education can be the means of rebuilding society. With reference to rural youth, it is all the more relevant to assert that education is futile if it cannot help in alleviating the travails of the public or develop character while instilling a sense of service as Swamiji used to say. If our youth spend some quality time in educating a poor child or imparting him with some skills which would enable him or her to earn a decent livelihood, it would be a great service to the nation.

Swamiji realized that the illiteracy of our farmers was the greatest drawback in our quest for rural economic prosperity and therefore, he laid great emphasis on education. Education, Swamiji sincerely believed, would enable the poor farmers to assert their rights and privileges. The poor farmers in India were victimized by all and sundry because they were illiterate,



ignorant and apathetic towards their misfortunes. Proper education was thought of by Swamiji, as the chief remedy. He also believed in imparting proper education to women, as ignorant mothers cannot rear a good family. The kind of education that he believed in imparting to the rural sections of society was one that would alleviate their economic situation. He is quoted as having said that, 'It would be better if the people got a little technical education that they might find work and earn their bread, instead of dawdling about and crying for service'.

Towards the fulfilment of this goal, he once said that, 'If I can get some unmarried graduates, I may try to send them over to Japan and make arrangements for their technical education there, so that when they come back, they may turn their knowledge to the best account for India. What a good thing will that be!... There, in Japan, you find a fine assimilation of knowledge, and not its indigestion as we have here. They have taken everything from the Europeans, but they remain Japanese all the same, and have not turned European'.

Our young women too are marching shoulder to shoulder with their male counterparts in taking the country ahead. The entire atmosphere is infused with a sense of pride as the daughters of the nation send across the message that they are second to none and Indian women are brave and bold enough to take on the world. Young girls are also doing exceedingly well in important national level examinations including the Civil Services. Some of the leading corporate heads and entrepreneurs in the country today are women.

Patriotism is about sharing a feeling of kinship with each and every citizen living in all parts of the country, treating their pains and pleasures as one's own. Swami Vivekananda had once stated that "So long as the millions live in hunger and ignorance, I hold every person a traitor who, having been educated at their expense pays not the least heed to them!"

True, career, job satisfaction, friendships, entertainment are all important in one's life but it is equally important that our youth spare a thought for the teeming millions in the country for whom two full meals a day continues to be a luxury. It was Swamiji's belief that a few whole-hearted, sincere, and energetic men and women can do more for the country in a year than a mob can in a century.

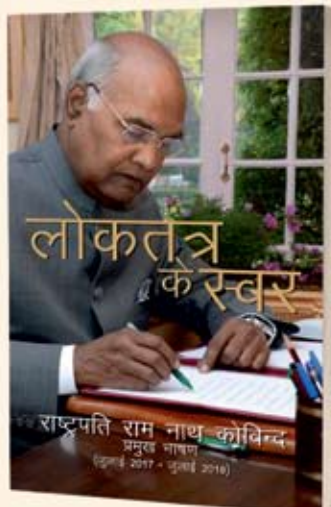
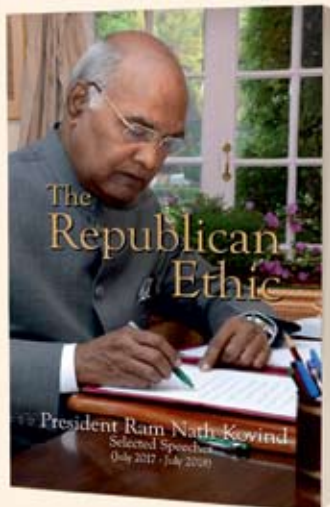
It is important that our youth travel across the length and breadth of the country to understand and assimilate the rich culture and diversity of the nation, they should savor the delicious food from different parts of the country, wear the colorful attires, read the rich literature and listen to enchanting music from all across the country. Only then and then alone, can the communication gap be bridged. The youth should come together in their crusade against poverty, unemployment, social evils and other such maladies. More often than not, it is the lack of understanding which leads to a sense of alienation. It is important that this chasm be bridged.

The youth should shed their indifference to the system and work towards improving governance through constitutional provisions such as Right to Information. Not everyone can be a soldier or administrator in the service of the nation. While one should be assertive about claiming one's fundamental rights, one should be equally conscious of one's fundamental duties as enshrined in the Constitution of India. One can effectively serve the nation by merely exercising these duties.

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"A Republic is its people. Citizens do not just make up and preserve a Republic; they are its ultimate stakeholders and in fact pillars " - Ram Nath Kovind



The Republican Ethic & Loktantra Ke Swar (Selected Speeches of President Ram Nath Kovind)

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Ravi Pokharna

Army in association with its training partner Centre for Social Responsibility and Learning (CSRL) and Petronet LNG runs Kashmir Super 40 initiative for coaching Jammu and Kashmir youth for engineering entrance exams. In fact, this year Super 40 broke all previous records when 26 boys and two girls from the state cracked the IIT-JEE Mains exam 2017. Achieving a success rate of 78 percent is the result of army's Kashmir Super 40 being at par with the best IIT coaching centers in the country.

Government has launched scores of initiatives in the field of education and skill development for the benefit of the youth belonging to far flung and remote regions. On one hand, government has expedited the implementation of already available existing schemes in these regions on priority, on the other hand, several innovative measures and interventions have been introduced to meet the specific needs.

North East:

Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region is coordinating central government departments initiatives for the North East.

The Skill Ministry has planned State Skill Development Mission for few of the North Eastern states under the chairmanship of the CM along with steering committee with industry representatives. The mission is working to train youth with the help of government ITIs and private

agencies. Additionally State Livelihood Mission as well as NULM schemes are also being deployed to skill the youth. The areas of training identified are as follows:

- Hospitality - (Cuisines, Food & Beverage, Pastry & Baking).
- Tourism – Tour operators, hotels, home stay, taxis to places of attraction etc.
- Nursing, Para medics.
- Wellness and beauty.
- Fashion designing and garments, handloom weaving.
- Essential technicians—Electrician, Plumbing, repair of ACs, Fridge, Mobile repair etc.
- Automobile – fitter, turner, mechanics, welding.
- Soft skills for employability in any sector.
- Retail Merchandising.

- Aviation – Cabin Crew, Air Hostess, ground crew etc.

Additionally, Department of North East region along with North Eastern Development Finance Corporation Ltd is also setting up a VC fund worth Rs 100 cr to promote startups in the North-Eastern states. Early and growth stage startups in the field of IT, ITES, Food Processing, Healthcare, Tourism, Retail, Aggregation of services would get boost with this fund. Many educational reforms through SSA and RUSA have also been introduced

DONER Ministry is also offering subsidy incentives in NER for industrial and other units generating employment. To implement the same, DONER's assistance to North Eastern Development Finance Corporation (NEDFI) will have a component of higher interest subsidy for such units which give more employment.

Jammu and Kashmir:

Government of India and the state government have been working together to skill youth and create livelihood opportunities for them. Few of the popular measures are enlisted :

UDAAN : The Special Industry Initiative (SII) for J&K is funded by Ministry of Home Affairs and implemented by National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC). It aims to provide corporate exposure to the youth as well as provide corporate India with the talent available in the state. The scheme has received overwhelming response and is making a considerable impact on ground.

Science & Technology Interventions in the North East Region (STINER)

STINER aims to bring relevant technologies developed by the academic, scientific and research institutions to the artisans and farmers especially women. The Ministry has sanctioned funds to disseminate some identified technologies developed by IITs such as Feed block machine, Eri-Cocoon opener, Hank to bobbin winding machine, Chaff Cutter, Dryer, Potter's wheel, Puffed Rice making machine and Fish cage structure.

Sadbhavna: Another very successful initiative is Sadbhavna which is run by the Army. Under Sadbhavna, Army runs several important programmes for the youth of Jammu and Kashmir. Army Goodwill Schools which is an education initiative works to provide middle and high school level education to over one lakh students. Presently, over 14,000 students are undergoing schooling in various army run schools in the state and over 1,000 children from the state are studying in institutions outside the state through scholarship programs facilitated by the army. Army also runs National Integration Tour under Sadbhavna where students get to visit other states of the country and get a first hand view of the culture of their fellow citizens. They come back motivated to become productive citizens of the country and actively leverage the growth trajectory for personal development. So far, more than 5000 people have benefited out of the 200 tours conducted under this scheme.





Army also runs vocational training centres and women empowerment centres spread across the state to provide practical skills to interested and deserving candidates. Sourced through Army's own budget, people friendly projects are executed year after year to ameliorate the conditions of people living in far flung regions of the State.

Another important and highly beneficial initiative run in Jammu and Kashmir is by Army only. Army in association with its training partner

Centre for Social Responsibility and Learning (CSRL) and Petronet LNG runs Kashmir Super 40 initiative for coaching Jammu and Kashmir youth for engineering entrance exams. In fact, this year Super 40 broke all previous records when 26 boys and two girls from the state cracked the IIT-JEE Mains exam 2017. Achieving a success rate of 78 percent is the result of army's Kashmir Super 40 being at par with the best IIT coaching centers in the country.

Himayat: Run under Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India's Deen Dayal Upadhyay Grameen Kaushal Yojana, the scheme endeavors to train 1.24 lakh local youth of Jammu and Kashmir in job intensive vocational courses.

(The author is currently Executive Head at Rambhau Mhalgi Prabodhini, a United Nations recognized unique training and research institute for elected representatives and socio-political activists.

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Central University of Jammu signed MoU with ISRO

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) signed an MoU with the Central University of Jammu (CUJ) in Jammu for setting up of the Satish Dhawan Center for Space Science in the University. Another MoU was signed between CUJ and the Central Scientific Instruments Organization (CSIR-CSIO) on October 11, 2018. This collaboration between ISRO and CUJ for establishing an ISRO Center at Jammu was a landmark achievement for the State.

The Center will help in tapping potential of Space Applications for the region of J&K in various fields like disaster management, health, education, communication, weather forecasting, land use planning, etc. This is the first of its kind institute coming up in Jammu and Kashmir and the building is proposed in an area of about 1,150 sq. m.

This Center would provide a great opportunity to the youth of the region to contribute to the field of space science as well as to the nation. The setting up of this Center will take care of the emerging Geospatial and Space Technology requirements for the development of the region.

The Satish Dhawan Centre for Space Science at CUJ will have facilities for Geospatial Data analysis that will help in sustainable use of natural resources and planning land-use pattern. It will have ground-based observations for Atmospheric Studies, research lab for astrophysics, Atmospheric Sensing and Glacier studies Lab for better use of large quantity of water stored in the form of seasonal snow, ice and glaciers in the rivers of North India. Apart from this, Disaster Management Center will also be set up here that would be able to take up research in the area of different disasters like flood, Landslides, forest fires, drought and climate change.

The establishment of Materials Sciences Lab for space applications as a part of the Satish Dhawan Center for Space Science at CUJ will be another outstanding feature of the Center where special focus will be to synthesize and design new sensors and materials for space applications.

About Our Books



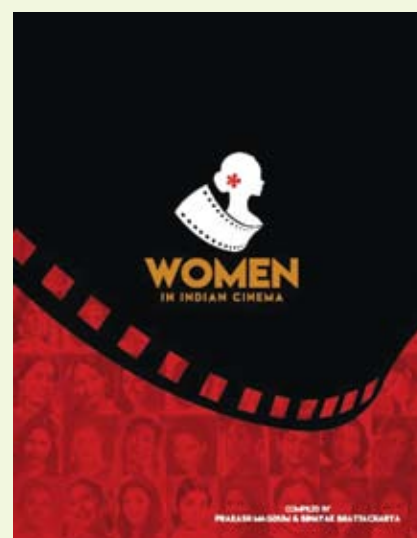
I&B Minister releases book “Women in Indian Cinema” during IFFI 2018

Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Information & Broadcasting and Youth Affairs & Sports Col. Rajyavardhan Rathore recently released the book “Women in India Cinema” during the inauguration ceremony of International Film festival of India (IFFI 2018) at Goa. The book has been brought out by Publications Division in partnership with National Film Archive of India, Pune.

In the Foreword of the book, the I&B Minister writes: “Conceptualised to act as a visual journey of the story of ‘Women in Indian Cinema’, her aspirations, struggles, triumphs and many shades of in-between, this book may reveal to its readers the interesting ways in which movies have been re-imagining the many ideas of womanhood, while shifting the many lenses, breaking the mould, and looking at possibilities beyond.”

Cinemas across the regions of India have mirrored the changing social and economic realities of the country and showcased the women characters in tandem. The book tries to touch upon these changing aspects too. The book portrays the stories and shifting roles of women through the lens of Indian cinema and the way different cinemas in India have depicted the idea of womanhood in varying ways. With chapters divided into themes such as ‘Myths being Retold’, ‘The Social Messenger’, ‘An Ode to the Creator’, ‘Many Battles to be Won’, ‘Feminine under Disguise’, ‘Uncanny is the Name’, and ‘Influenced by the West’, the book looks at a wide range of roles being represented by women.

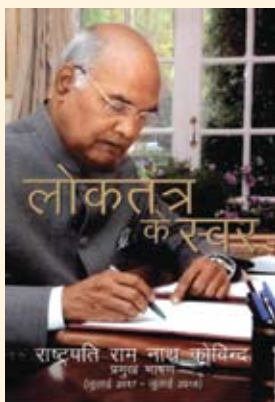
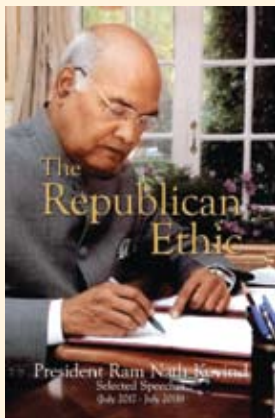
The book is available at Book Gallery, Publications Division, Soochana Bhawan, CGO Complex, New Delhi. Email at: businesswng@gmail.com to order your copy.



First copy of “The Republican Ethic” and “Loktantra ke Swar” presented to President Ram Nath Kovind

Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Information and Broadcasting and Youth Affairs & Sports Col. Rajyavardhan Rathore called on the Hon'ble President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind at Rashtrapati Bhavan on December 8, 2018 and presented the first copies of the books “The Republican Ethic” and “Loktantra ke Swar” to him. He was accompanied by Secretary I&B, Shri Amit Khare, DG, Publications Division and the editorial and design teams of the two books.

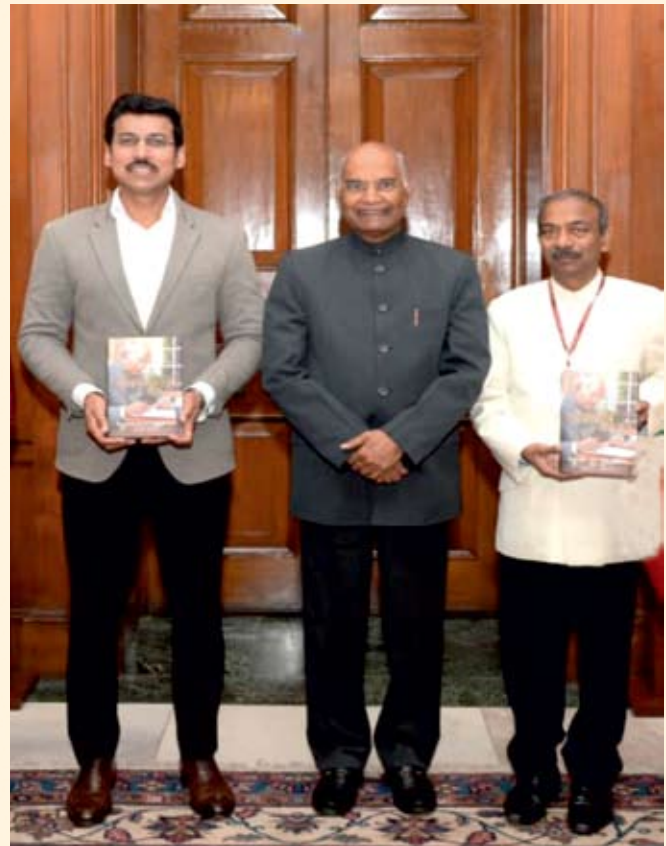
President Kovind complimented the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and Publications Division, for bringing out these titles in a time-bound manner with an aesthetic layout. Col. Rathore apprised the President about the availability of the books in print and electronic versions and efforts being made for wider dissemination of these important titles.



The book “The Republican Ethic” is a collection of President's selected speeches in English and has been divided into eight sections i.e. Addressing the Nation, Diversity of India, Window to the World, Educating India: Equipping India, Dharma of Public Service, Honouring our Sentinels, Spirit of the Law and Acknowledging Excellence. The book “Loktantra ke Swar” is a collection of the President's selected speeches in Hindi and has been divided into 10 sections and presents the multi-faceted perspectives of the world's largest democracy that India is.

The two books beautifully capture the spirit of the common man embodied by the President of India, while also capturing the distinct way in which he has been able to effectively communicate the vision of an erudite mind. The speeches, in Hindi and English, are a window to the story of India as a nation and the multi-fold challenges it faces while it strives to take its rightful place in the comity of nations. The building blocks of these books are equality, egalitarianism and education. They have been conceived to help the readers navigate through the vision and thoughts that the President delves upon, especially in relation to the vision of the nation and individual citizen's duty towards the nation.

Get your copy from Book Gallery, Publications Division, Soochana Bhawan, CGO Complex, New Delhi. The books are also available online at www.bharatkosh.gov.in; e-version available on Amazon and Google Play.



Hon'ble Minister of State (I/c) for Information and Broadcasting and Youth Affairs & Sports Col. Rajyavardhan Rathore presented the first copies of the books 'The Republican Ethic' and 'Loktantra ke Swar' to the Hon'ble President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind. Secretary I&B Shri Amit Khare is also seen.