

# GOVERNMENT POLICY REPORT



- SUSTAINABILITY
- RENEWABLE ENERGY
- HEALTHCARE
- SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
- BIOTECHNOLOGY

# SUSTAINABILITY

## NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Ministry of Tourism, GOI has introduced the National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism to foster eco-friendly and socially responsible tourism practices in the country. **The strategy aims to balance tourism growth with environmental protection, cultural preservation, and empowerment of local communities, ensuring long-term sustainability.**



Source: <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseframePage.aspx?PRID=1831131>

Under this, a sustainable tourism certification scheme has been introduced to ensure smooth tourism business and encourage people to follow responsible and eco-friendly practices. **Further, programs like Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) and Capacity Building have been incorporated to raise awareness of sustainable tourism.** It will also encourage local communities to showcase their skills while managing eco-tourism.

This is crucial for promoting tourism that benefits both the economy and the environment by working on each aspect. **It aims to balance economic growth with environmental conservation, cultural preservation, and social equity.** The seven pillars under the strategy are diversely focussed on environmental sustainability, reducing carbon emissions, encouraging renewable energy usage, and conserving natural resources. Attention is also given



Source: <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseframePage.aspx?PRID=1831131>

to minimizing tourism's environmental impact through the promotion of eco-friendly infrastructure. **It works on safeguarding fragile ecosystems like mountains, forests, and coastal areas by developing sustainable tourism networks.**

It is equally encouraging inclusive growth by creating jobs and promoting local entrepreneurship, particularly in rural areas. This not only contributes to economic growth but also helps to reduce pressure on conventional tourist spots. Further, it ensures the preservation of local cultures and traditions through community-based tourism in which the locals form an integral part of the tourism value chain. Strong governance mechanisms have been adopted to ensure effective collaboration between government agencies, private players, and local communities to monitor and promote the implementation of this strategy on the ground.

It will reshape India's tourism landscape into a driving force for the country's sustainable development. By focussing on key pillars, the strategy aims to boost multifaceted positive impacts while creating a sustainable industry that benefits both current and future generations. Countries that have embraced such strategies, like Costa Rica and Bhutan, are models for balancing tourism development with sustainable goals. With continuous engagement and collaboration among stakeholders, the strategy will also create a resilient and thriving tourism industry in India.

## PILLARS OF NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM



Environmental Sustainability



Biodiversity Protection



Economic Sustainability



Socio-Cultural Sustainability



IEC and Capacity Building



Sustainable Tourism Certification



Governance



Source: <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1831131>

# RENEWABLE ENERGY

## OPERATIONAL GUIDELINE ISSUED BY GOI TO IMPLEMENT "MODEL SOLAR VILLAGE"

The GOI has issued guidelines for the effective implementation of the "Model Solar Village" initiative under PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana to realize its renewable energy vision for the country. **Approved on February 29, 2024, the scheme aims to enhance solar rooftop capacity and empower residential households to generate their electricity**, playing a crucial role in India's Green Energy transition. **With an allocated budget of Rs.75,021 Crore, the scheme will be implemented until the fiscal year 2026-27.**



Source: <https://insamachar.com/goi-issues-operational-guidelines-for-implementation-of-model-solar-village-under-pm-surya-ghar-free-electricity-scheme/>

The initiative will promote solar energy usage in rural India by establishing solar-powered villages in each district to demonstrate its benefits for domestic, agricultural, and public use. The **key objectives include reducing dependency on conventional energy, lowering electricity costs, and ensuring continuous clean energy access.**

### OBJECTIVES OF THE SCHEME

**Reduce Dependency on Conventional Energy Sources**

**Lower Electricity Cost**

**Uninterrupted Clean Energy Access**

**For a village to be recognized as a "Model Solar Village," it must meet key criteria, including being a revenue village and having a population greater than 5,000 as per the latest census. However, in special category states and union territories, the population requirement is reduced to 2,000.**

## CRITERIA, SELECTION, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INITIATIVE

### CRITERIA

- ◆ Villages must be revenue villages.
- ◆ Population greater than 5,000 as per the latest census, with reduced criteria of 2,000 for special category states and union territories.

### SELECTION

- ◆ Villages are selected through a competitive challenge mode, overseen by the District-Level Committee (DLC).
- ◆ The village with the highest installed solar energy capacity will be chosen as the "Model Solar Village."

### IMPLEMENTATION

- ◆ Managed by the State Renewable Energy Development Agency (SREDA) or designated entities by State/Union Territory Governments
- ◆ Approved on 29 February, 2024, with a budget of ₹75,021 crore, the scheme will be implemented until FY 2026-27.

The implementation of the scheme will be managed by the State Renewable Energy Development Agency (SREDA) or another designated entity by the State government or Union Territory administration.



Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/upsc-daily-current-affairs/prelims-pointers/model-solar-village/>

**The selection of the Model village is determined through a competitive challenge mode.** Villages are mobilized to install distributed solar energy systems, and the village achieving the highest installed capacity within its boundaries is chosen as the “Model Solar Village”. **A Central Financial Assistance (CFA) grant of Rs.1 crore will be provided to each selected village based on a Detailed Project Report (DPR) by the Implementing Agency.** This process is overseen by the district-level committee (DLC) to ensure fairness and effective implementation.



Source: <https://businessworld.in/article/government-unveils-rs-800-cr-initiative-to-create-model-solar-villages-529850>

This funding will facilitate the deployment of various renewable energy technologies, such as community solar plants, solar-powered equipment for livelihood generation, rooftop solar for government buildings, and solar-powered public lighting systems. Thus, this initiative is a significant step toward achieving widespread solar energy adoption in rural India, promoting sustainability, and enhancing energy security at the grassroots level.

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# HEALTHCARE

## JAN AUSHADHI SCHEME TO MAKE HIGH-QUALITY AFFORDABLE MEDICINES ACCESSIBLE IN INDIA

The Jan Aushadhi Scheme which is officially referred to as the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) seeks to enhance healthcare accessibility and affordability for everyone, with a special emphasis on the economically weaker groups in society. **It was launched in 2008 by the Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, and is managed by the Pharma & Medical Bureau of India (PMBI)** to ensure that the general public has access to high-quality, affordable medicines



Source: <https://www.india.gov.in/spotlight/pradhan-mantri-bhartiya-janaushadhi-pariyojana>

India, despite being one of the largest pharmaceutical industries globally, has a significant portion of its population struggling to afford even basic medications. However, **by offering generic medicines at significantly lower prices, often 50-90% less than their branded versions, the Jan Aushadhi Scheme eases the financial burden on families with limited income.** These medicines are accessible through a network of Jan Aushadhi Kendras (JAKs) or medical stores, which offer generic drugs that adhere to the same standards of efficacy, safety, and quality as their branded counterparts.

### 01 KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF THE JAN AUSHADHI SCHEME

#### NETWORK

- Aim of opening 25,000 JAKs
- 12616 JAKs are operational as of June 2024
- Over 2047 medicines and 300 surgical products available at affordable prices

#### SAVINGS

- Generic medicines are relatively 50-90% cheaper than branded versions.
- Over 20,000 Crore saved by Indian citizens in terms of healthcare expenses

#### IMPACT

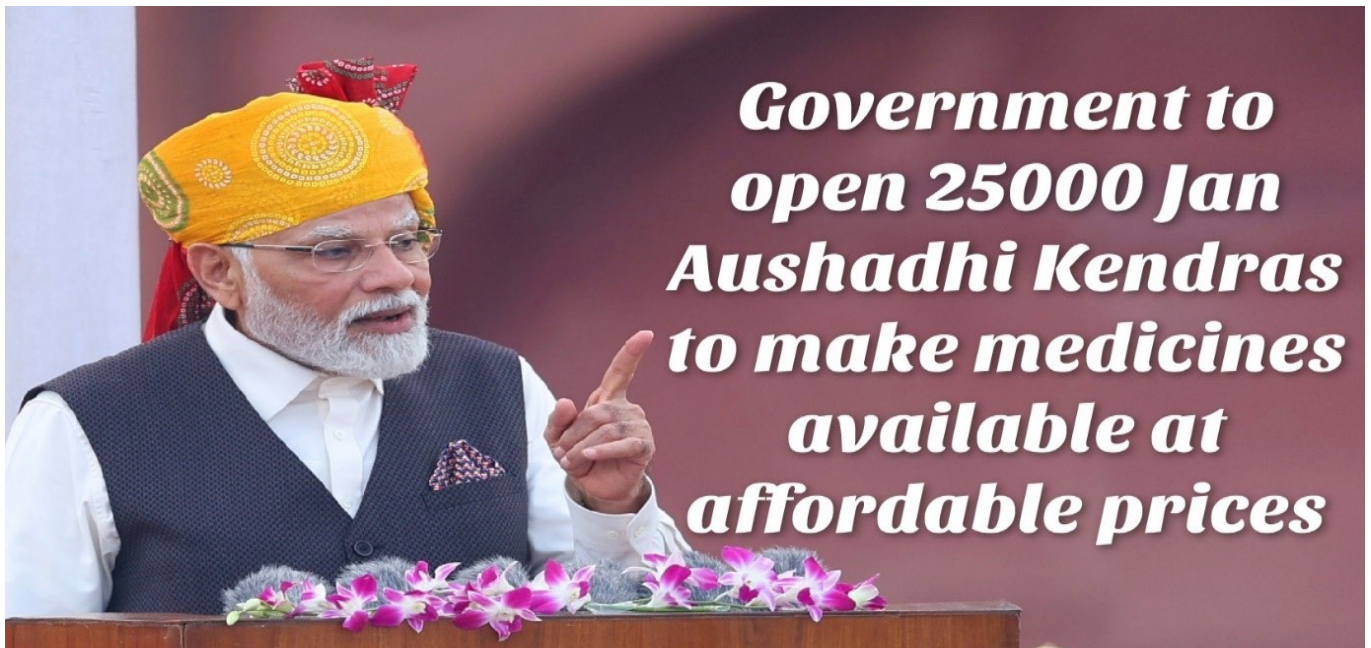
- Supports domestic manufacturing.
- Generate employment opportunities as individual entrepreneurs

As of June 2024, around 12,616 Jan Aushadhi Kendras are operating throughout India and their numbers are still increasing. **These stores offer over 2000 drugs and 300 surgical products at budget-friendly prices across India.** The initiative aims to educate consumers on the advantages of using generic medicines, which are frequently misunderstood as being of lower quality compared to branded drugs.



Source: <https://www.kartavyablogs.in/revolutionizing-affordable-healthcare-in-india-pradhan-mantri-jan-aushadhi-kendra/>

The scheme showcases its success through the significant savings it offers to countless patients throughout India. **Official data reveals that since its implementation, the initiative has enabled citizens to save more than Rs. 20000 Crore (\$2.7 billion) in healthcare expenses.**



Source: [https://www.pmindia.gov.in/en/news\\_updates/government-to-open-25000-jan-aushadhi-kendras-to-make-medicines-available-at-affordable-prices/](https://www.pmindia.gov.in/en/news_updates/government-to-open-25000-jan-aushadhi-kendras-to-make-medicines-available-at-affordable-prices/)

The initiative plays a crucial role in fostering self-sufficiency within India's pharmaceutical industry by supporting domestic manufacturing. It has also generated employment in the healthcare sector and engaged individual entrepreneurs. Thus, the Jan Aushadhi Scheme stands out as an outstanding effort that delivers affordable medicines while promoting fair access to healthcare to India's weaker and underprivileged sections of society.



# SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

## THE UNIFIED CENTRAL SCHEME 'VIGYAN DHARA' RECEIVED APPROVAL TILL 2025-26

The GOI has made a strategic move to boost the country's Science and Technology (S&T) capabilities by approving the unified central scheme 'Vigyan Dhara,' which will be in effect until 2025-26. **Approved by the Union Cabinet in August 2024, the scheme aims to strengthen India's research and innovation infrastructure, fostering a robust ecosystem for scientific advancements.**



Source: <https://static.pib.gov.in/WriteReadData/specificdocs/documents/2024/aug/doc2024828381901.pdf>



Source: <https://static.pib.gov.in/WriteReadData/specificdocs/documents/2024/aug/doc2024828381901.pdf>

**It will merge three key umbrella schemes into one comprehensive initiative under the Department of Science and Technology (DST).**

The scheme has a **budget allocation of Rs. 10,579.84 crore for the period 2021-22 to 2025-26**, aligning with the 15th Finance Commission. Its primary objectives include capacity building in S&T, enhancing Research and Development (R&D), and promoting technology development across key sectors like sustainable energy and water.



## FOCUS AREAS UNDER VARIOUS COMPONENTS

### Science and Technology (S&T) Institutional and Human Capacity Building

Focuses on strengthening India's scientific infrastructure by setting up advanced R&D labs and expanding the human resource pool for research.

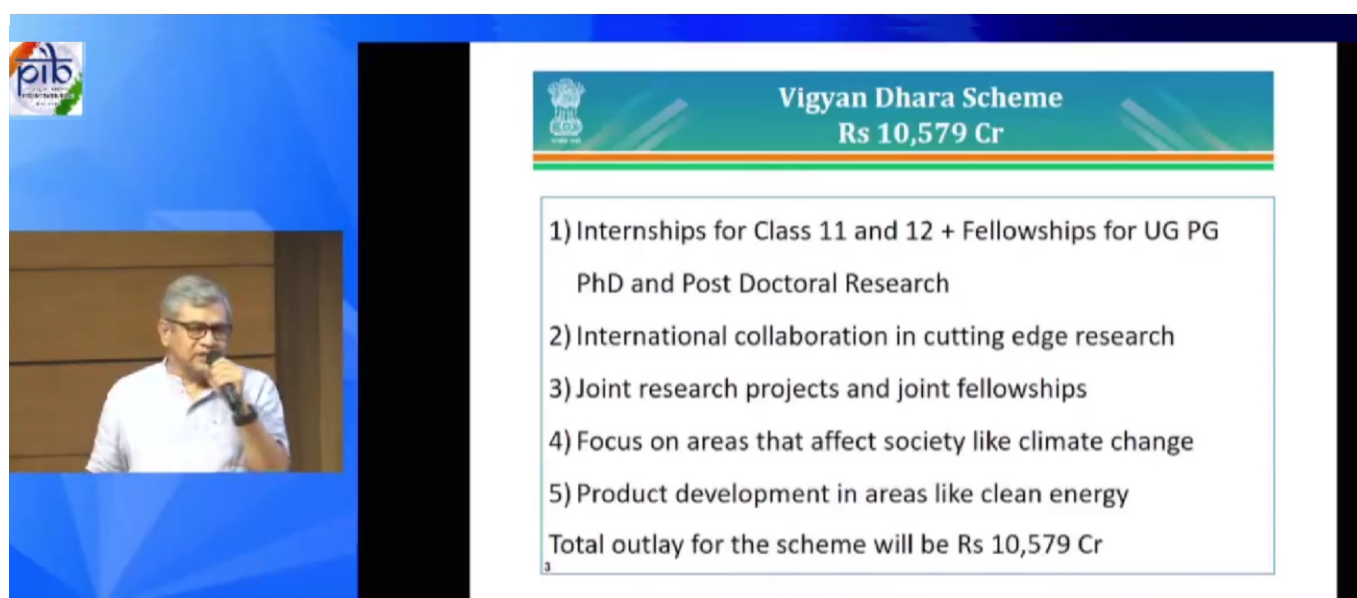
### Research and Development (R&D)

Encourages research in critical areas like sustainable energy and water, with emphasis on basic and translational research, while fostering international collaboration.

### Innovation, Technology Development, and Deployment

Aims to promote innovation across all levels, from education to industry, and enhance collaboration between academia, government, and startups for technology advancement.

**The initiative will improve the country's S&T infrastructure by setting up state-of-the-art R&D labs in academic institutions.** These labs will serve as hubs for cutting-edge research and innovation, facilitating technological advancements that can address both national and global challenges. Moreover, Vigyan Dhara places a significant focus on fostering collaboration between academia, government, and industry, promoting technology deployment and innovation from educational levels to startups.



**Vigyan Dhara Scheme**  
Rs 10,579 Cr

- 1) Internships for Class 11 and 12 + Fellowships for UG PG PhD and Post Doctoral Research
- 2) International collaboration in cutting edge research
- 3) Joint research projects and joint fellowships
- 4) Focus on areas that affect society like climate change
- 5) Product development in areas like clean energy

Total outlay for the scheme will be Rs 10,579 Cr

Source: [https://x.com/PIB\\_India/status/1827364033382773193?ref\\_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1827364033382773193%7Ctwgr%5E1ea9a6951690f74071c383127068c8a4292ddacc%7Ctwcon%5Es1\\_&ref\\_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.opindia.com%2F2024%2F08%2Fcabinet-approves-vigyan-dhara-scheme-with-outlay-of-rs-10579-crore-for-five-years%2F](https://x.com/PIB_India/status/1827364033382773193?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1827364033382773193%7Ctwgr%5E1ea9a6951690f74071c383127068c8a4292ddacc%7Ctwcon%5Es1_&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.opindia.com%2F2024%2F08%2Fcabinet-approves-vigyan-dhara-scheme-with-outlay-of-rs-10579-crore-for-five-years%2F)

**A key objective of the scheme is to significantly boost women's involvement in the domain, thereby fostering gender equality in the fields of Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI).** It aims to enhance India's research and development foundation by increasing the number of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) researchers, thereby contributing to the development of a highly skilled and capable workforce.



Source: <https://www.financialexpress.com/policy/economy-cabinet-approves-vigyan-dhara-scheme-with-outlay-of-rs-10579-crore-3591539/>

The scheme is poised to make a lasting impact on India's S&T landscape by promoting capacity building, and innovation through encouraging collaborations across sectors. It will not only strengthen the country's research capabilities but also position India as a global leader in scientific innovation and research. With its ambitious goals and substantial budget, the scheme is aligned with India's broader vision of becoming a developed nation by 2047.

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# BIOTECHNOLOGY

## BIOE3 POLICY APPROVED TO AIM ADVANCEMENT IN BIOTECHNOLOGY DOMAIN

The Union Cabinet under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, recently approved the BioE3 (Biotechnology for Economy, Environment, and Employment) Policy. **This landmark policy, proposed by the Department of Biotechnology, aims to revolutionize the biomanufacturing landscape in India** by fostering innovation, sustainability, and job creation, further cementing India's position as a global leader in biotechnology.



Source: <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2054228#:~:text=Underscoring%20that%20%E2%80%9CBio%2Drevolution%E2%80%9D,the%20leadership%20of%20PM%20Modi>

**The policy emphasizes Research and Development (R&D) and entrepreneurship in key thematic sectors to support India's Biotechnology development.** A major goal is to expedite the development and commercialization of cutting-edge biotechnology by setting up Biomanufacturing and Bio-AI hubs, along with Biofoundries. These hubs will play a crucial role in supporting the growth of regenerative economy models that focus on green growth, a central tenet of the policy. Additionally, the initiative is expected to expand India's skilled workforce significantly, providing new employment opportunities in the domain.

## FEATURES OF THE BIOE3 POLICY

### BIOMANUFACTURING HUBS

Establishment of Biomanufacturing and Bio-AI hubs to accelerate biotech innovation and commercialization.

### JOB CREATION

Focus on expanding the skilled workforce, driving employment across biotechnology sectors.

### GREEN GROWTH

Alignment with India's 'Net Zero' and circular bioeconomy goals for sustainable development.

### KEY SECTORS

Focus on bio-based chemicals, smart proteins, biotherapeutics, climate-resilient agriculture, and carbon capture.

**One of the policy's key contributions is its alignment with existing government initiatives such as the 'Net Zero' carbon economy and 'Lifestyle for Environment' (LiFE).** This will promote the country's climate change mitigation efforts to counter ongoing global challenges. By encouraging the circular economy, policy positions India at the forefront of green growth, aligning with the country's vision under "Viksit Bharat."



Source: <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2054228#:~:text=Underscoring%20that%20%E2%80%9CBio%2Drevolution%E2%80%9D,the%20leadership%20of%20PM%20Modi>

**Developing high-performance biomanufacturing is central to the policy.** This involves producing a range of bio-based products, from medicines to materials, while addressing challenges in food security, human health, and agriculture among others.



Source: <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2054228#:~:text=Underscoring%20that%20%E2%80%9CBio%2Drevolution%E2%80%9D,the%20leadership%20of%20PM%20Modi>

By integrating advanced biotechnological processes, the policy supports the creation of innovative products such as bio-based chemicals, biopolymers, enzymes, smart proteins, and climate-resilient agricultural solutions. **It also advances research in new fields such as carbon capture and utilization, marine science, and space biotechnology.**



Source: <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2054228#:~:text=Underscoring%20that%20%E2%80%9CBio%2Drevolution%E2%80%9D,the%20leadership%20of%20PM%20Modi>

Overall, the Bio-E3 policy promises to boost India's biotechnology sector and significantly support to creation of a resilient ecosystem. It aims to address critical societal challenges and drive economic growth to steer the country toward achieving its Bio-vision.

## RESOURCES

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