

India Governance Watch

*Viksit Bharat's Policy, Economic And
Administrative Developments*



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Viksit Bharat's Policy, Economic And Administrative Developments

(1st December, 2025 - 15th December, 2025)

Executive Summary

This document tracks the various key economic and policy decisions made by the Central Government between **1st December 2025 and 15th December 2025**. Some of the important announcements and policy updates are as follows:

I. Economic Growth And Structural Reforms

- A. **Revised Definition of Small Company:** The Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) has **revised the definition of a "Small Company" by raising the financial thresholds** to ₹ 10 crore for Paid-up Share Capital and to ₹ 100 crore for the Annual Turnover limit.
- B. **The Central Excise (Amendment) Bill, 2025:** The Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha on 1st December 2025 and **subsequently passed by both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha**. It seeks to adjust tax structures on tobacco to offset the planned **discontinuation of the GST compensation cess**. The legislation significantly increases excise duty rates, **raising the tax on unmanufactured tobacco to 70%** and drastically hiking rates for cigarettes and chewing tobacco.
- C. **Health Security National Security Cess Bill, 2025: Introduced in the Lok Sabha on 1st December, 2025, the Bill passed both Houses of Parliament and received Presidential assent.** Bill levies a **monthly cess on manufactured goods like pan masala** to fund public health and national security initiatives. The legislation includes rigorous enforcement measures, featuring a three-tier appeal process and strict penalties, including up to five years of imprisonment for significant tax evasion.
- D. **RBI Cuts Repo Rate By 25 bps To 5.25%:** The RBI Monetary Policy Committee has reduced the repo rate by 25 basis points to 5.25% after a **five-month pause**, while deciding to continue with a neutral stance. The growth-inflation balance, especially the benign outlook on both headline and core, continues to provide room for supporting the ongoing growth momentum
- E. **Industrial Relations Code (Removal of Difficulties) Order, 2025:** The Central Government has issued the Industrial Relations Code (Removal of Difficulties) Order, 2025 clarifying that **Labour Courts, Industrial Tribunals, and National Industrial Tribunals constituted under the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 will continue to hear pending and new cases**. This arrangement applies until new tribunals are set up under the Code, ensuring continuity and avoiding any legal or administrative vacuum.

Executive Summary

II. Infrastructure, Technology And Sustainability

- A. **Cabinet Approves CoalSETU Policy For Flexible Coal Linkages:** The Union Cabinet approved the CoalSETU Policy, creating a new auction mechanism within the **Non-Regulated Sector Linkage Policy** to allocate coal for long-term industrial use and export.
- B. **TRAI-RBI Digital Consent Pilot For Promotional SMS:** TRAI and RBI have launched a **Digital Consent Acquisition (DCA) pilot** to centralise legacy promotional consents into a single, transparent digital registry. Select customers will receive SMS alerts from code 127000, allowing them to review, modify, or revoke permissions previously given to 11 participating banks.
- C. **Draft Use of Short Range Automotive Radar System Rules, 2025:** On 1st December 2025, the Department of Telecommunications released the Draft Rules exempting the 77-81GHz band for short-range automotive radar from spectrum assignment procedures. This **exemption enables rapid deployment of Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS) and other radar-based safety technologies in Indian vehicles.**

III. Human Development And Social Welfare

- A. **Draft Medical Devices (Amendment) Rules, 2024:** The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has published draft rules to amend the Medical Devices Rules, 2017, titled the Medical Devices (Amendment) Rules, 2024, for consideration after thirty days of public availability. A key change dictates that most **licences and registration certificates** will now remain perpetually valid, contingent upon paying a retention fee, unless they are suspended or canceled.

IV. National Security and Foreign Policy

- A. **Cabinet Approves ₹ 11,718 Crore For Digital Census 2027:** The Union Cabinet has approved a ₹ 11,718 crore allocation for Census 2027, 16th census and its first entirely digital one. The census will take place in two phases: the Housing Census in 2026 and the Population Enumeration in 2027. Data will be collected using secure Android/iOS mobile applications, supported by a **Census Management & Monitoring System (CMMS) portal** for real-time supervision.

V. Rural And Agricultural Transformation

- A. **Sujalam Bharat Digital Platform Launched:** The Ministry of Jal Shakti has launched Sujalam Bharat App for rural water governance. Unified digital database creates foundational policy framework for transparency. The digital platform integrates **water sources and asset inventories** and community feedback mechanisms have been embedded in platform design.

Executive Summary

- B. Withdrawal Of Petrochemical Quality Control Orders:** The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade has cancelled Quality Control Orders for p-Xylene, Toluene, Methyl/Ethyl acrylate, Vinyl acetate monomer, and Ethylene dichloride by Gazette notifications under the BIS Act, 2016. As a result, these petrochemicals no longer require compliance with Indian Standards or BIS certification, though standards may be reintroduced in future if needed.
- C. Minimum Support Price (MSP) For Copra For 2026 Season:** The Union Cabinet has approved the 2026 MSP for copra, increasing rates to ₹ 12,027 for Milling and ₹ 12,500 for Ball varieties. This adjustment ensures a **50% return** over production costs, reflecting a massive growth of over 125% in support prices since 2014. By maintaining the MSP at 1.5 times the cost of production, the Government aims to provide stable and remunerative prices for coconut farmers.

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I. Economic Growth And Structural Reforms

A. Policy Updates

1. Revised Definition Of Small Company - Ministry of Corporate Affairs

Status: Completed | **Impact Level:** High | **Source:** [Link 1](#), [Link 2](#)

The Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) has revised **the definition of a "Small Company" under Section 2(85) of the Companies Act, 2013** allowing more companies to qualify for "Small Company" benefits via a notification effective 1st December 2025. This is substantially increasing the financial thresholds: the maximum limit for Paid-up Share Capital has been raised from **₹ 4 crore to ₹ 10 crore**, and the maximum limit for Annual Turnover has been raised from **₹ 40 crore to ₹ 100 crore**. This revision of the definition, entitles them to various **reduced compliance burdens**, including exemptions from preparing mandatory cash flow statements, fewer mandatory board meetings, and more relaxed audit requirements. This change **reduces compliance costs**, enabling companies to scale and improves ease of doing business.

2. The Central Excise (Amendment) Bill, 2025 - Ministry of Finance

Status: Initiated | **Impact Level:** Medium | **Source:** [Link](#)

The Central Excise (Amendment) Bill, 2025 was introduced in Lok Sabha on 1st December 2025 and was passed in both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha. It seeks **to amend the Central Excise Act, 1944**. The Act governs the levy and collection of central excise duties on goods manufactured or produced in India. While most central excise duties were subsumed under the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime (2017), tobacco and tobacco products remain subject to central excise duty, GST, and GST compensation cess. With the planned discontinuation of the compensation cess, the **Bill revises central excise duty rates on tobacco and tobacco products to maintain overall tax levels**. Central excise duty on unmanufactured tobacco (such as sun-cured tobacco leaves) is increased from 64% to 70%. For manufactured tobacco products, the duty is enhanced from ₹ 200–₹ 735 per thousand cigarettes to ₹ 2,700–₹ 11,000 per thousand cigarettes. Duties on other tobacco products are also raised: chewing tobacco duty increases from 25% to 100%, hookah or gudaku tobacco from 25% to 40%, and smoking mixtures for pipes and cigarettes from 60% to 325%.

3. Health Security se National Security Cess Bill, 2025 - Ministry of Finance

Status: Initiated | **Impact Level:** Medium | **Source:** [Link](#)

The Ministry of Finance introduced the Health Security se National Security Cess Bill, 2025 in Lok Sabha on 1st December 2025 and subsequently on 5th December 2025, levies a cess on the production of goods such as pan masala and other notified products, with **proceeds earmarked for public health and**

national security expenditure. The cess will be payable by persons owning or controlling machines or manual processes used for manufacturing the specified goods, assessed monthly per machine or manual unit. For machine-based production, the cess will depend on the maximum rated speed and pouch weight ranging from ₹ 1.01 crore per month per machine (speed up to 500 pouches per minute, 2.5 g each) to ₹ 25.47 crore (speed 1,001–1,500 pouches per minute, over 10 g each) while wholly manual units will attract ₹ 11 lakh per month per factory. The Bill empowers **commissioners to conduct audits, recover unpaid cess with interest, and impose penalties** and also establishes a three-tier appeal mechanism.

4. **RBI Cuts Repo Rate By 25 Basis Points To 5.25% - Reserve Bank of India**

Status: Completed | **Impact Level:** High | **Source:** [Link 1](#), [Link 2](#)

The RBI Monetary Policy Committee voted unanimously to reduce the repo rate by **25 basis points to 5.25% after a five-month pause**, while deciding to continue with a neutral stance; however, Prof. Ram Singh favoured shifting the stance from neutral to accommodative. Low core inflation at 2.6% (excluding gold) and a sharp easing in headline inflation, driven primarily by exceptionally benign food prices, created a policy space to sustain credit expansion. Thus, the growth-inflation balance, especially the benign outlook on both headline and core, continues to provide room for supporting the ongoing growth momentum.

5. **Industrial Relations Code (Removal of Difficulties) Order, 2025 - Ministry of Labour & Employment**

Status: Initiated | **Impact Level:** Medium | **Source:** [Link](#)

The Central Government has issued the **Industrial Relations Code (Removal of Difficulties) Order, 2025** under section 103 of the Industrial Relations Code, 2020 to clarify the legal position after the Code was brought into force on 21st November 2025. The Order provides that existing Labour Courts, Industrial Tribunals and National Industrial Tribunals constituted under the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 will continue to adjudicate both pending and new cases until new Industrial Tribunals and National Industrial Tribunals are constituted under the Code, thereby **ensuring continuity of adjudication** and preventing any legal or administrative vacuum during the transition.

II. Infrastructure, Technology And Sustainability

A. Policy Updates

1. Proposed Amendments To The Post Office Act For DHRUVA Digital Address Framework – Ministry of Communications

Status: Initiated | **Impact Level:** Medium | **Source:** [Link 1](#), [Link 2](#)

The Department of Posts (DoP), under the Ministry of Communications, has proposed draft amendments to the Post Office Act, 2023, to provide the necessary legislative strength for the **Digital Hub for Reference and Unique Virtual Address (DHRUVA)**, a new initiative to establish an interoperable, standardised, and user-centric addressing system as part of national digital public infrastructure (DPI), enabling "**Address as a Service**" (AaaS). The proposed amendments specifically outline the creation of a **national Network Administrator**, establish a governance architecture, including a consent-based mechanism for the generation, exchange, and use of address information, alongside provisions for grievance redressal and penalties. This framework aims to simplify service delivery and efficient governance by allowing the use of unique Digital Address Identifiers (DAI) as proxies for physical addresses.

2. Cabinet Approves CoalSETU Policy for Flexible Coal Linkages - Ministry of Coal

Status: Initiated | **Impact Level:** Medium | **Source:** [Link 1](#), [Link 2](#)

The Union Cabinet has approved the CoalSETU policy, creating an auction-based window under the existing NRS Linkage Policy that **allows any domestic industrial buyer to obtain long-term coal linkages without end-use restrictions**. Coal obtained under this window can be used for own consumption, coal washing, group-company use and export, with up to 50% of the linkage quantity eligible for export, while resale within India remains prohibited. The policy is expected to **boost washed coal availability**, cut import dependence, and better align domestic coal supply with industrial demand, while advancing **coal-sector liberalisation** through a more flexible, **market-driven** linkage system that also enables structured coal exports.

3. TRAI-RBI Launches Digital Consent Pilot For Promotional SMS - Ministry of Communications

Status: Initiated | **Impact Level:** Medium | **Source:** [Link](#)

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, in collaboration with the Reserve Bank of India, has launched a **Digital Consent Acquisition (DCA) pilot**, under which select customers will receive SMS alerts from short code 127000 to digitally review, manage, and revoke legacy consents for promotional communications involving 11 participating banks across 9 Telecom Service Providers. The pilot aims to resolve fragmented and opaque legacy consent practices under the Telecom Commercial Communications Customer Preference Regulations, 2018 by migrating paper-based

and system-captured consents to a unified registry. This provides customers with a single digital interface to view, continue, modify, or withdraw consents at any time.

III. Human Development and Social Welfare

A. Policy Updates

1. Draft Medical Devices (Amendment) Rules, 2024 - Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

Status: Initiated | **Impact Level:** High | **Source:** [Link](#)

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has published draft rules to amend the Medical Devices Rules, 2017, titled the Medical Devices (Amendment) Rules, 2024, for consideration after thirty days of public availability. These amendments primarily **focus on updating labelling requirements for Class A** (Non-Sterile and Non-Measuring) Medical Devices by allowing the use of "Registration number" or "Reg. No." in addition to the existing import or manufacturing licence numbers. Crucially, most licenses and registration certificates will now transition to perpetual validity, remaining active indefinitely contingent upon the payment of retention fees provided they are not suspended or canceled. A new sub-rule is added to Rule 85 requiring registration certificate holders to furnish reports of medical device tests or evaluations in a newly introduced Form MD-44, which testing laboratories must also adopt for their reporting.

IV. National Security and Foreign Policy

A. Policy Updates

1. Cabinet Approves ₹ 11,718 Crore For Census 2027 - Ministry Of Home Affairs

Status: Announced | **Impact Level:** High | **Source:** [Link](#)

The Union Cabinet has approved an allocation of **₹ 11,718 crore to conduct Census 2027**, marking transition to the **first-ever digital census** and the 16th overall since independence. The census will be implemented in two phases: Phase I covering the Housing Census in 2026 and Phase II the Population Enumeration in 2027. Data will be collected using secure Android/iOS mobile applications, supported by a **Census Management & Monitoring System (CMMS) portal** for real-time supervision and a Houselisting Block (HLB) Creator web map tool to help charge officers digitally map and manage field operations. The census is expected to release data with improved, customisable visualisation tools and **village/ward-level data access** for all users, significantly enhancing how evidence is used in planning and service delivery.

V. Rural And Agricultural Transformation

A. Policy Updates

1. Sujalam Bharat Digital Platform Establishes National Registry For Rural Water Governance - Ministry of Jal Shakti

Status: Initiated | **Impact Level:** Medium | **Source:** [Link](#)

The Ministry of Jal Shakti has launched the **Sujalam Bharat App**, creating a unified, real-time digital registry of rural drinking water systems under Jal Jeevan Mission. The platform assigns a unique Sujal Gaon ID to every habitation scheme creating a digital profile integrating water sources, asset inventories, scheme designs, operational records, water quality reports and community feedback into a single repository. By integrating with **PM Gati Shakti GIS**, the platform enables precise mapping of rural water networks, helping states plan repairs, expansions and resilience investments more accurately over time. This initiative is expected to strengthen community oversight, **improve performance of local service providers**, and ensure that rural households continue to receive safe, reliable tap water on a sustainable basis.

2. Withdrawal Of Petrochemical Quality Control Orders – Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers

Status: Initiated | **Impact Level:** High | **Source:** [Link](#)

Through a series of **notifications issued under section 16 of the Bureau of Indian Standards Act, 2016**, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade has formally cancelled individual Quality Control Orders for p-Xylene, Toluene, Methyl acrylate/Ethyl acrylate, Vinyl acetate monomer and Ethylene dichloride, with each order explicitly superseding the corresponding 2021 notification and coming into force on the date of publication in the Gazette. The rescissions mean these **petrochemicals are no longer required to conform to specified Indian Standards or carry the BIS Standard Mark**, thereby lifting mandatory certification obligations on domestic producers and importers while leaving the government free to re-notify standards in future if needed based on market conditions, safety considerations, or further stakeholder consultation.

3. Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Copra for 2026 Season - Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare

Status: Announced | **Impact Level:** Medium | **Source:** [Link](#)

The Union Cabinet has approved the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for copra for the 2026 marketing season, setting the **rate for Milling copra at ₹ 12,027 per quintal (a ₹ 445 increase) and Ball copra at ₹ 12,500 per quintal (a ₹ 400 increase)**, ensuring a return of at least 50% over the all-India weighted average cost of production. This decision reflects a significant long-term growth of **approximately 129% for Milling and 127% for Ball copra** since the 2014 season, adhering to the Government's policy

of fixing MSP at 1.5 times the production cost to ensure remunerative prices for cultivators. To facilitate effective market intervention and price stability, the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd. (NAFED) and the National Cooperative Consumers' Federation (NCCF) will continue as the Central Nodal Agencies for procurement under the Price Support Scheme (PSS).

Annexure I : Miscellaneous Policy Updates

A. Policy Updates

1. Draft Rules On Gig And Platform Workers' Social Security – Ministry of Labour & Employment

Status: Initiated | **Impact Level:** High | **Source:** [Link](#)

The Ministry of Labour & Employment has issued draft rules **to operationalise social security provisions for gig and platform workers** under the Code on Social Security, 2020, detailing registration processes, contribution mechanisms for aggregators, and modalities for implementing schemes such as life, disability, health cover, and old-age protection. The draft prescribes data-sharing, reporting, and payment obligations on digital platforms and aggregators. It also invites stakeholder comments within the specified consultation period, aiming to formalise welfare coverage.

2. Banking Regulation (Co-operative Societies) Amendment Rules, 2025 Notified – Ministry of Finance

Status: Initiated | **Impact Level:** Low | **Source:** [Link](#)

The Ministry of Finance has notified the Banking Regulation (Co-operative Societies) Amendment Rules, 2025, effective from 15th December 2025, revising the 1966 rules under the Banking Regulation Act, 1949. The amendment introduces a formal definition of “**ineligible director**” and lays down a transparent process to identify ineligible directors who must vacate office. Statutory return reporting formats are revamped by replacing alternate-Friday cycles with standard fortnight-end, month-end, and quarter-end timelines. These reforms strengthen supervisory oversight, reduce scope for **entrenched misgovernance** on co-operative bank boards, and simplify compliance.

3. Inland Vessels (Design and Construction) First Amendment Rules, 2025 Notified – Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways

Status: Initiated | **Impact Level:** Low | **Source:** [Link](#)

The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways has notified the Inland Vessels (Design and Construction) First Amendment Rules, 2025, updating the 2024 design and construction standards **to address safety, stability, and technological requirements** for inland vessels, including provisions for modern materials, equipment, and, in some cases, autonomous and smart systems. The amendments refine technical norms, certification and survey requirements, and transitional arrangements, aiming to enhance navigational safety, environmental performance, and compliance clarity for vessel owners, builders, and state regulators across inland waterways networks.

B. Announcements

1. Use Of Short Range Automotive Radar System In The 77 To 81 GHz Band (Exemption from Assignment Requirement) Rules, 2025 - Ministry of Communications

Status: Announced | **Source:** [Link 1](#), [Link 2](#)

The Department of Telecommunications has issued “Draft Use of Short Range Automotive Radar System in 77-81 GHz band Exemption from Assignment Requirement Rules, 2025” on 1st December 2025 exempting **automotive radar spectrum** from traditional assignment procedures enabling Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS) technologies deployment in vehicles supporting connected car ecosystem and autonomous driving research. This exemption facilitates rapid **commercial rollout of radar-based safety features** such as adaptive cruise control, collision avoidance and automatic emergency braking, advancing Vision 2030 automotive safety goals while reducing compliance burdens and strengthening the country's position as a manufacturing hub for connected vehicles.

2. Mandatory Retail Sale Price On Pan Masala - Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution

Status: Initiated | **Source:** [Link](#)

The Department of Consumer Affairs has notified Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Second (Amendment) Rules, 2025 amending the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011 to require every pan masala pack, irrespective of size or weight (including packs of 10 grams or less), to **display the Retail Sale Price and all mandatory declarations, with the changes coming into force from 1st February 2026** for all manufacturers, packers and importers. The amendment strengthens consumer protection by ensuring clear, non-misleading pricing across all pack sizes and simultaneously facilitates effective implementation of Retail Sale Price (RSP)-based GST levy on pan masala, improving tax assessment and revenue collection on even the smallest retail units.

3. Appointment of New Chief Information Commissioner - Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions

Status: Completed | **Source:** [Link](#)

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has recommended and the President has approved the appointment of former Union Law and Justice Secretary **Raj Kumar Goyal** as the Chief Information Commissioner (CIC) under the Right to Information Act, 2005, following a selection process conducted by the Prime Minister-led high-level committee. The notification formalises his tenure as CIC, filling the top post in the Central Information Commission and is expected to impact pendency, adjudication consistency, and overall enforcement of transparency norms across central public authorities.

4. The following three bills have been introduced in Parliament but are yet to be passed in both Rajya Sabha¹ and Lok Sabha as on December 16, 2025.²

Name of the Bill	Description of the Bill
The Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) 2025	Aims to provide statutory backing to employment and livelihood guarantee schemes for rural areas under the broader Viksit Bharat (Developed India) mission, ensuring job creation, skill development, and sustainable income generation at the village level.
The Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhithhan Bill, 2025	The Bill seeks to establish a national institutional framework for educational excellence under Viksit Bharat, focusing on research, innovation, and technology-driven higher education reforms across states and central universities. It has been referred to the Joint Committee of Parliament (JPC) for further scrutiny.
The Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India Bill, 2025	Proposes a comprehensive framework for expanding India's nuclear energy capacity, encouraging public-private partnerships in advanced reactor technologies, and ensuring sustainable and safe utilisation of nuclear power to support national energy transition goals.

¹ Rajya Sabha

² Lok Sabha



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