

# Innovative initiatives – Union Budget 2014-15

Budget 2014-15 includes a number of new schemes and initiatives. This brief aims to provide a glimpse into some of them, by drawing information from similar schemes that have been implemented before

## 1. Deendayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana

**Objective:** To provide 24x7 uninterrupted power supply to all homes in rural India

**Fund Allocation:** Rs 500 crore

**Background:** “Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana” for feeder separation will be launched to augment power supply to the rural areas and for strengthening sub-transmission and distribution systems.

The initiative for feeder separation was first taken by the Government of Gujarat under the ‘**Jyoti Gram Yojana**’ in 2006. The scheme was launched to provide uninterrupted three phase quality power supply to rural areas. Initially, this programme was funded through nominal tariffs levied on users, but has subsequently been converted into a **100% grant scheme**. All the 18000 villages and 9700 peta-paras are covered under the scheme. The average expenditure per village in this scheme is **Rs. 6.72 lac**.

After Gujarat, this initiative has subsequently been implemented in many other states like Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and U.P.

### Observed benefits

- Villages in Gujarat saw a reduction in **distribution loss** and distribution transformer failure rate.
- The program led to a promotion of industrial and commercial activities in villages and subsequent **local employment generation**, while better health and education services led to some **improvement in living standards**.
- Separate feeders reduced cases of power theft and increased **revenue** for the government.
- Improved quality of power supply led to higher **agricultural productivity** while conserving ground water resources.

## 2. Smart Cities

**Objective:** To develop 100 Smart Cities across India that use technology (especially ICT) for better management of urban areas.

**Fund Allocation:** Rs 7060 crore for 100 cities

**Background:** A Smart city project has been initiated in Surat, Gujarat. The first phase of the Surat Smart City Project has been completed at a cost of Rs 10.5 crore. 104 CCTV cameras have been installed at important locations in the city and monitored at a single command-control center. Upon completion of the project, the city of Surat will have 5000 CCTV cameras installed at 500 different locations, and covering a total area of 150 square kilometers. The CCTVs are planned and placed in consultation with departments involved in law and order issues. In addition to cameras, a combination of **cloud technology, mobile applications and data analytics** would be used to provide **real-time data on civic services**.

GIFT (Gujarat International Financial Tech) is a different type of Smart city. The GIFT City, envisaged as a financial hub, is being developed as a satellite township of Ahmedabad, located 18 kilometres off Ahmedabad airport. The city would use **renewable energy** to meet its power needs, employ state-of-the-art **solid waste management systems**, and efficient command-and control structure to manage traffic movement.

While the concept of smart cities was mooted by the previous government as a possible extension of JNNURM, a separate budgetary allocation for the same has been made for the first time in this Union Budget.

### Potential benefits

Though tangible benefits from such smart cities can only be realized after a while, the concept holds great potential.

- **Creating jobs in newly planned cities**, like in the case of GIFT in Gujarat
- **Ensuring safety of citizens** through the effective use technology for surveillance, like in Surat and GIFT.
- **Making urban living sustainable** through the use of modern waste management systems and renewable energy.
- **Providing easy access to urban services** through the use of e-governance.

### 3. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Rurban Mission

**Objective:** To provide efficient civic services (such as water treatment and waste management) and create employment opportunities in rural areas.

**Fund Allocation:** Rs. 100 Crores

**Background:** The Rurban Mission of the Central government would subsume the previous government's scheme of PURA (Provision of Urban Amenities in Rural Areas), which was allocated Rs 50 crore in the last financial year. Apart from Resource Mapping to identify the specific requirements of each rural cluster, the new Mission would also focus on **skill development**. A variety of services would be delivered in an integrated manner through convergence of funds from different ministries.

Rurbanization as a strategy has been launched in pilot mode in Gujarat for providing modern amenities to rural India, with a focus on development of "Rurban Centres" and "Rurban Clusters". All talukas and villages with a population of more than 10,000 people and tribal villages with a population above 7,000 have been defined as Rurban Centres in Gujarat. A Rurban Cluster is defined as a group of villages within a 15km influence zone and catering to a population of 50000 or more. The **private sector is envisaged to** play an important role through financing and technical expertise in providing a variety of "city-like" amenities, such as **quality housing, better physical and digital connectivity, mass transportation facilities, power and water supply and sanitation facilities**.

### Potential benefits

- Rurbanization improves the **quality of life** in rural India by providing modern amenities to the rural population.
- Focus on skill development can contribute to **economic empowerment**, particularly of disadvantaged sections such as women, SCs and STs.
- It can **check distress migration** from rural to urban areas in the long run, and decongest existing urban spaces.

### 4. Van Bandhu Kalyan Yojana

**Objective:** To ensure welfare of our tribal population through creation of employment opportunities.

**Fund Allocation:** Rs. 100 crore

**Background:** In 2007, the government of Gujarat initiative a similar scheme for the development of 43 ITDP (Integrated Tribal Development Projects) taluqas in 11 south-eastern districts of Gujarat. The programme aimed at ensuring very high quality social and civil infrastructure to create sustained employment and income sources for every tribal family. The programme was launched in **public private partnership (PPP) mode in agriculture diversification, horticulture, dairy, service sector, art-craft based enterprise and sports related activities**, amongst other areas.

### Observed benefits

The initiative in Gujarat has offered the following tangible benefits:

- Helped **2.37-lakh tribals** through skill development
- Created self-employment opportunities for **86,300 youth**, lifting 3.45-lakh tribals out of poverty.
- **145 secondary schools** and 33 **technical centres** have been opened in tribal areas.
- 1.95-lakh tribal people have been brought under **pension scheme**
- 2.75-lakh BPL families have been provided **pucca houses**.

### 5. Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao Yojana

**Objective:** To curb the apathy toward the girl child by generating awareness and in improving the **efficiency of delivery of welfare services** meant for women.

**Fund Allocation:** Rs.100 crore

**Background:** In 2005, the Government of Gujarat initiated a “**Beti Bachao Abhiyan**” where it government focused on enforcement of natal diagnostic techniques and intensively campaigned to change community mindsets. The Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostics Technique (PCPNDT) Act prohibits sex determination except in specified cases. It also regulates prenatal diagnostic techniques for detection of genetic abnormalities restricting their use to registered institutions and clinics possessing Ultrasound machines. To check misuse of the technology, the Gujarat Government had also set up the State Inspection and Monitoring Committee.

### Impact and Benefits

- As many as **137 ultrasound machines** have been confiscated by the Government,
- Legal action initiated against **89 defaulting practitioners and clinics** since 2005. These actions have had a salutary effect on the effective implementation of the law.

## 6. Solar Energy

The Budget speech has acknowledged the need for harnessing solar energy as a solution to the power crisis in India. Multiple initiatives related to solar energy utilization were announced in this budget:

- a) Rs 500 crore allocated to **Ultra Mega Solar Power Projects** in Rajasthan, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Ladakh.
- b) Rs 400 crore set aside for launching a scheme on **solar power driven agricultural pump sets** and water pumping stations for energizing one lakh pumps
- c) Rs 100 crore allocated for the development of **Solar Parks of 1MW capacity on the banks of canals.**



The state of Gujarat has been the frontrunner in tapping the solar power potential in the country. The first **canal-top solar power plant in India** was installed on a branch canal of the Narmada River in Gujarat's Mehsana district. The contract for construction was awarded to a private company through a process of competitive bidding.

### Potential Benefits

- Solar energy is a clean source of energy and is important from the perspective of **environmental sustainability**.
- The Gujarat initiative for a solar park on a canal stream offers significant **cost savings**, as no expenditure is incurred on land acquisition.
- The solar panels on canals can help in **water conservation** as it prevents the evaporation of water during the dry season. This can be extremely beneficial in dry regions of the country, especially north and west India.

## 7. Virtual Classrooms

**Objective:** To setup virtual classrooms as Communication Linked Interface for Cultivating Knowledge (CLICK) and online courses.

**Fund Allocation:** Rs. 100 Crores

**Background:** In 2009, the Office of the Commission of Higher Education (OCHE), Gujarat, set up webcams in Universities in Gandhinagar so that people from backward areas could also participate in lectures delivered by distinguished professors. Remote linking of classrooms/‘virtual classrooms’ were accompanied by audio connections by phone, through which students could also ask questions. The Bhaskaracharya Institute of Space applications and Geoinformatics (BISAG) is responsible for implementing the project in Gujarat. OCHE provided financial assistance to the respective colleges for the purchase of DTH televisions for the project. In the final budget of 2014-2015, virtual classrooms have also been introduced in the primary schools for teaching English and mathematics.

### Potential Benefits

- Remote teaching through the use of latest technology enables access to quality classroom modules to students from backward areas.