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CURRENT STATUS, RESOURCE POTENTIAL, AND THE PATH TO VIKASIT BHARAT

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Abstract

India has set the goal of becoming a developed nation by 2047, the centenary of its independence. Achieving this goal requires accelerating economic growth, using natural and human resources efficiently, reducing social inequalities, and strengthening democratic institutions. This research paper reviews the current state of the Indian economy, the availability and use of national resources, and the realistic prospects of India becoming a developed nation by 2047 from economic, social, and political perspectives. India possesses a large population, a vast domestic market, agricultural and industrial capacity, digital technology, and growing entrepreneurial opportunities. However, unemployment, skill gaps, income inequality, unequal access to education and healthcare, environmental challenges, and administrative constraints must be addressed. The idea of Viksit Bharat should not be limited to high national income; it must be founded on inclusive, sustainable, and equitable development.

Keywords: Viksit Bharat, Indian economy, natural resources, human resources, social justice, democracy, sustainable development.

Introduction

India attained independence on 15 August 1947. Since independence, the country has progressed through several stages, including planned economic development, the Green Revolution, industrialisation, expansion of banking, economic liberalisation, and digital transformation. Today, India participates in the global economy and has established a significant presence in science, technology, pharmaceuticals, information technology, and space research. However, being a large economy and becoming a developed nation are not the same. A developed nation is expected to provide a high standard of living, quality education, healthcare, productive employment, social security, effective administration, the rule of law, and environmental sustainability. Therefore, increasing gross domestic product alone will not be sufficient to build a developed India by 2047; the benefits of economic progress must reach every section of society (Government of India, Ministry of Finance, 2026a; NITI Aayog, 2024).

Objectives of the Study

The principal objectives of this research paper are:

17. To review the current condition and structure of the Indian economy, its development opportunities, and its major challenges.
18. To assess the present status and use of India's natural, human, financial, and technological resources.

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19. To examine the realistic possibility of India becoming a developed nation by 2047 and suggest measures required to achieve this goal.

Research Methodology

The study uses descriptive and analytical methods and relies on secondary sources. These include the Economic Survey and Union Budget published by the Government of India, NITI Aayog's SDG India Index and transition-scenario reports, statistical publications from the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), and the Reserve Bank of India's statistical publications. The analysis considers the interrelationship between economic, social, environmental, and political factors. As a secondary-data review, the study does not generate primary estimates; its conclusions are therefore interpretive and depend on the scope, definitions, and reference periods of the cited sources (Government of India, Ministry of Finance, 2026a, 2026b; NITI Aayog, 2024, 2026; Reserve Bank of India, n.d.).

Current Status of the Indian Economy

The Indian economy is a mixed economy in which the public and private sectors jointly contribute to development. Agriculture, industry, and services are its principal sectors. Over recent decades, the expansion of services, industrial production, infrastructure, and digital transactions has contributed to economic transformation (Government of India, Ministry of Finance, 2026a; Reserve Bank of India, n.d.).

Economic Growth and National Income

According to the Economic Survey 2025–26, India's real gross domestic product (GDP) growth for the financial year 2025–26 was projected at 7.4% in the first advance estimates. This projection reflects the economy's growth potential, with services, domestic consumption, infrastructure investment, and technology-related industries contributing to activity (Government of India, Ministry of Finance, 2026a). India has also expanded digital payments, e-commerce, information technology, telecommunications, pharmaceuticals, and financial services. Nevertheless, growth in national income does not benefit all citizens equally in terms of per capita income, employment quality, or access to public services. Productive job creation and a fairer distribution of income are therefore essential.

Nevertheless, growth in national income does not benefit all citizens equally in terms of per capita income, employment quality, or access to public services. Alongside national income growth, productive job creation and a fairer distribution of income are therefore essential.

Status of the Agricultural Sector

Agriculture is important to India's economy because it supports food security, rural employment, the supply of raw materials, and rural demand. India produces rice, wheat, pulses, cotton, sugarcane, oilseeds, fruits, and vegetables. However, many farmers operate small holdings, while dependence on rainfall, unequal access to irrigation, rising input costs, market-price fluctuations, inadequate storage, and climate change remain significant challenges (Government of India, Ministry of Finance, 2026a; NITI Aayog, 2026).

To advance the Viksit Bharat goal, India needs to raise agricultural productivity, expand micro-irrigation, conserve soil, promote agro-processing, develop cold-storage facilities, and encourage Farmer Producer Organisations and cooperative institutions. Improving farmers' incomes should remain central to rural development (Government of India, Ministry of Finance, 2026a; NITI Aayog, 2026).

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Industry and Services

Industrial development can create employment, increase exports and productivity, and facilitate technology transfer. Priorities include expanding manufacturing, improving access to finance for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), supporting research and development, and increasing participation in global supply chains (Government of India, Ministry of Finance, 2026a).

India's services sector contributes through information technology, financial services, tourism, education, healthcare, transport, and professional services. However, relying on services alone may not be sufficient for broad-based development. Labour-intensive manufacturing, electronics, machinery, food processing, and green technology also need to expand (Government of India, Ministry of Finance, 2026a; Reserve Bank of India, n.d.).

Employment and Unemployment

India's young population offers an opportunity for economic development, but a gap can remain between educational outcomes and the skills required by employers. Some sectors need highly skilled workers, while some young people cannot find jobs suited to their qualifications. The Economic Survey 2025–26 discusses employment, skill development, and the quality of work as important policy concerns. Vocational education, apprenticeships, entrepreneurship, women's employment, non-farm rural enterprises, and small businesses should be encouraged (Government of India, Ministry of Finance, 2026a). Employment generation will be a key measure of progress towards Viksit Bharat.

Current Status of Resources

A country's development depends on more than capital alone. Natural resources, human capabilities, financial capital, and technology must be used together efficiently. Resource use and investment choices should also be considered alongside environmental sustainability and the social effects of economic transition (NITI Aayog, 2026; Reserve Bank of India, n.d.).

Natural Resources

India has fertile plains, rivers, forests, minerals, a long coastline, sunlight, and potential for wind energy. These resources support agriculture, industry, energy, tourism, and employment. However, population growth, urbanisation, industrialisation, and climate change increase pressure on land and water. NITI Aayog's transition analysis considers resource and energy choices in the context of India's development and net-zero pathways (NITI Aayog, 2026).

Measures such as watershed development, rainwater harvesting, wastewater reuse, water literacy, afforestation, and sustainable land-use planning are therefore necessary (NITI Aayog, 2026).

Human Resources

India's young population, skills across different fields, scientific capabilities, and entrepreneurial activity are important strengths. However, population does not automatically produce a demographic dividend. It can support growth when people have access to quality education, healthcare, nutrition, and employment opportunities. By 2047, sustained investment in education, research, digital literacy, skill development, and

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women's empowerment will be essential. Reducing educational disparities between rural and urban areas is also important (Government of India, Ministry of Finance, 2026a; NITI Aayog, 2024).

Financial and Technological Resources

The banking system, capital markets, public investment, private enterprise, foreign investment, and digital infrastructure are important instruments of economic development. Digital identity, online payments, and digitised government services have made some transactions more convenient. Productivity could improve through research and production in artificial intelligence, robotics, biotechnology, semiconductors, electric vehicles, and renewable energy. To ensure that technological benefits reach everyone, India must narrow the digital divide, protect information security, and equip workers with new skills (Government of India, Ministry of Finance, 2026a; Reserve Bank of India, n.d.).

Social Conditions Relevant to Viksit Bharat

Economic growth must be accompanied by social development for India to become a developed nation. The quality of development depends on education, healthcare, women's empowerment, social equality, and living standards. These dimensions align with the broader sustainable-development framework used in national SDG monitoring (NITI Aayog, 2024; Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, n.d.).

Education and Healthcare

India has made progress through the expansion of school education, increased access to higher education, digital learning, and health-related programmes. The Economic Survey 2025–26 reports that India's school system includes 246.9 million students and 1.471 million schools (Government of India, Ministry of Finance, 2026a). Nevertheless, dropout rates at the secondary and higher-secondary levels, differences in educational quality, and inadequate facilities in rural areas remain challenges. Greater investment is required in primary healthcare, nutrition, maternal and child health, medical personnel, and rural health facilities. Education and healthcare should be viewed not merely as social spending but as long-term investment in human capabilities.

Social Inequality and Women's Empowerment

Efforts to strengthen social security, financial inclusion, rural infrastructure, and poverty reduction are relevant to India's sustainable-development progress. NITI Aayog's SDG India Index 2023–24 reports that India's composite score increased from 57 in 2018 to 71 in 2023–24 (NITI Aayog, 2024). However, income inequality, the rural–urban divide, caste-based and social discrimination, barriers to women's employment, and regional disparities require further attention. Access for women to education, safe employment, property rights, credit, and entrepreneurship can expand the productive capacity of the economy.

Social Justice and Inclusive Development

The vision of Viksit Bharat must bring farmers, agricultural labourers, informal-sector workers, persons with disabilities, disadvantaged groups, and economically weaker citizens into the mainstream of development. Effective implementation of social-security schemes, quality public education and healthcare, affordable housing, and clean water can improve living standards. Development should therefore be assessed not only through national income but also through poverty, health, education, employment quality,

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and access to social opportunities (NITI Aayog, 2024; Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, n.d.).

Political Conditions Relevant to Viksit Bharat

Political institutions and administration directly affect economic development. India's democracy, Constitution, universal adult franchise, independent judiciary, and federal structure are important institutional features. Effective public institutions and implementation capacity also matter for translating development priorities into outcomes (Government of India, Ministry of Finance, 2026b).

Democracy and Policy Continuity

Long-term economic policies, a stable administrative system, and cooperation between the Union and state governments are necessary for Viksit Bharat. Policy continuity is needed in education, healthcare, infrastructure, industrial development, and environmental protection. Differences between political parties are part of democracy, but constructive discussion and consensus on fundamental development issues are also important. The effectiveness of development programmes depends not merely on announcements but on implementation, transparency, and outcomes (Government of India, Ministry of Finance, 2026b).

Good Governance and Administrative Efficiency

E-governance, direct benefit transfers, digital public infrastructure, and online government services create opportunities to make administration more accessible. Continuous improvement is nevertheless needed to control corruption, reduce delays in judicial processes, strengthen local self-government institutions, and ensure that government schemes reach intended beneficiaries. Public expenditure and macroeconomic conditions can be examined through official budgetary and statistical publications (Government of India, Ministry of Finance, 2026b; Reserve Bank of India, n.d.).

Federalism and Public Participation

Indian states differ in resources, industrialisation, education, healthcare, and employment opportunities. Cooperative federalism is therefore important for achieving Viksit Bharat. The Union Government can provide strategic direction nationally, while state governments implement programmes according to local needs. Participation by gram panchayats, municipalities, and district planning bodies should be strengthened. Public participation, social audits, and the Right to Information can improve public accountability.

The Realistic Prospects of India Becoming a Developed Nation by 2047

Whether India can become a developed nation by 2047 is the central question of this study. On the basis of the secondary sources reviewed, the goal appears possible but is not guaranteed. Sustained economic growth must be combined with rising per capita income, productive employment, and human development. NITI Aayog's study of pathways towards Viksit Bharat and net-zero emissions considers development scenarios alongside the 2070 net-zero objective, highlighting the need to integrate development with environmental protection (NITI Aayog, 2026). This paper's assessment is qualitative; it does not independently forecast GDP, income, or emissions.

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Required Direction of Economic Development

Over the next two decades, India needs to increase productivity, encourage private investment, expand exports, and develop high-value-added industries. Policy priorities include expanding manufacturing and employment-intensive industries; modernising agriculture and diversifying the rural economy; increasing investment in research, innovation, and modern technology; improving MSMEs' access to credit, markets, and technology; and balancing inflation control, financial stability, and long-term capital investment (Government of India, Ministry of Finance, 2026a, 2026b; Reserve Bank of India, n.d.).

- Expanding manufacturing and promoting employment-intensive industries.
- Modernizing agriculture and diversifying the rural economy.
- Increasing investment in research, innovation, artificial intelligence, and modern technology.
- Improving MSMEs' access to credit, markets, and technology.
- Maintaining a balance among inflation control, financial stability, and long-term capital investment.

Human Development and Employment Generation

To become a developed nation, India must transform education and skill development. Curricula should reflect industry requirements, coordination between colleges and industry should improve, research should be encouraged, and young people should receive support for self-employment. Increasing women's economic participation, providing social security to workers, and creating non-agricultural employment in rural areas can make growth broader and more inclusive (Government of India, Ministry of Finance, 2026a; NITI Aayog, 2024).

Sustainable Development and Energy Security

Economic development requires access to energy, land, and water. Excessive dependence on conventional energy sources and imprudent resource use can, however, cause environmental problems. Solar and wind energy, energy efficiency, public transport, electric vehicles, and waste recycling should be promoted. Renewable-energy projects should also protect land, water, and local livelihoods. These trade-offs are central to transition scenarios linking development and net-zero pathways (NITI Aayog, 2026).

Potential Obstacles to Viksit Bharat

India may face several challenges in achieving the 2047 goal. These include a shortage of suitably skilled workers relative to employment needs; regional disparities in education, healthcare, and infrastructure; climate-related uncertainty in agriculture and pressure on water resources; income inequality and unequal access to economic opportunities; uncertainty in global trade, technological competition, and geopolitical tensions; delays in policy implementation; administrative inefficiency; and weak institutional accountability. These risks support the need for measurable development targets and regular evaluation (Government of India, Ministry of Finance, 2026a; NITI Aayog, 2024, 2026).

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Major Recommendations

To develop the Indian economy by 2047, the following sector-specific measures are required:

Sector	Required Measures
Economy	Increase productivity, exports, investment, and industrial growth.
Agriculture	Expand irrigation and agro-processing; promote sustainable farming and higher farmer incomes.
Employment	Strengthen skill development, apprenticeships, and employment-intensive industries.
Education	Improve quality education, research, and digital skills.
Healthcare	Strengthen primary healthcare, nutrition, and public health expenditure.
Social justice	Empower women, expand social security, and reduce inequality.
Politics and administration	Improve transparency, Union–state coordination, and accountability.
Environment	Promote renewable energy, water conservation, and protection of natural resources.

Conclusion

'Viksit Bharat @ 2047' is not merely an economic target; it is a broad vision for India's social, political, and economic transformation. India's domestic market, workforce, digital infrastructure, agricultural and industrial capacity, and institutions provide important strengths. Economic performance and progress on social-development indicators provide relevant context, but neither guarantees that development outcomes will be inclusive (Government of India, Ministry of Finance, 2026a; NITI Aayog, 2024).

Nevertheless, major challenges include sustaining high economic growth over the long term, raising per capita income, creating quality employment, reducing social inequality, and using resources sustainably. Transparent administration, effective institutions, and cooperation between the Union and state governments must also be strengthened (Government of India, Ministry of Finance, 2026b; NITI Aayog, 2026).

This study concludes that India becoming a developed nation by 2047 is a realistic possibility, but it is neither certain nor guaranteed. Policy continuity, effective implementation, investment in human capital, productive employment, and social justice must receive equal importance. The vision of Viksit Bharat will become meaningful only when the benefits of development reach rural and urban citizens, farmers, workers, women, and disadvantaged groups. This conclusion should be interpreted as a qualitative assessment based on the reviewed secondary sources, rather than as a quantified prediction.

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