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Legal Strategies on Access to Justice & Digital Infrastructure for Rural Development in a Viksit Bharat: Reimagining Sardar Patel's Vision

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Abstract

In the past few decades, India has emerged as the epitome of cultural, technological, infrastructure, defence, foreign, and agricultural policies, and many other aspects. Emerging as a strong superpower has made the country reach greater heights globally. Holding on to its soil, heritage, and values has always been a virtue in its citizens. After India's independence, the establishment of democracy has structured the governance and intentions of India time and again. Through the sacrifices of various freedom fighters, India is determined to realise their dream of becoming 'Sone ki Chidiyaa' very soon. One of them was Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, whose contribution to the development of society, participation in politics, and law is pivotal in shaping the governance structure in India. Unfortunately, the dreams that our forefathers and freedom fighters saw earlier have not been able to make them a reality. In India, a few cities are modernised and are on the journey to be developed into 'smart cities.' Still, the rudimentary reality of rural India has seen no change. There are still a few villages, such as Koolegoundenpudur in Tamil Nadu and Manibeli in Maharashtra, where electricity is still not regular! On the one hand, India is pushing towards Digital India and Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) as best practices. Still, on the other hand, the rural population cannot access necessities and justice. This paper intends to recall Sardar Patel's vision of India in the 1940s and evaluate its positioning in 2025, specifically in access to justice mechanisms and digital infrastructure. The paper will analyse the present vision of the government, namely 'Viksit Bharat @2047', and how this translates to the required change in existing policies to mitigate justice and the digital divide. Along with this target of 2047, the paper will also evaluate India's positioning at the international level through Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Overall, the paper will suggest how the gap between urban and rural India can be reduced in aspects of justice and digital infrastructure in the best possible way. This paper will act as a policy draft that correctly analyses existing development policies in rural India and evaluates whether they are beneficial or relevant to the rural population. It is high time that we bridged the gap between two drastically opposite realities in our country, which we categorise as urban and rural.

Keywords - Governance, Digital, Justice, Rural, and Policy

I. INTRODUCTION

Over the past few decades, India has risen as a symbol of cultural richness, technological progress, infrastructure growth, defence strength, diplomatic influence, agricultural advancements, and more. Its emergence as a formidable global power has propelled the nation

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to new heights, while its citizens have remained deeply rooted in their heritage, traditions, and values. Since gaining independence, the establishment of democracy has shaped the governance and vision of India time and again. The sacrifices of countless freedom fighters continue to inspire the nation's determination to realise its dream of becoming more sustainable again. Among them was Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, whose contributions in politics, law, and societal development played a pivotal role in shaping India's governance structure.³⁶²

Since independence, the nation has witnessed significant transformations, particularly in digital technology and infrastructure. While India retained the justice system inherited from the British, its limitations are still evident today. Unfortunately, many of the aspirations envisioned by our forefathers remain unfulfilled. Digital and infrastructural growth benefits are largely confined to urban India, leaving rural areas behind. As per the 2011 Census, rural India accounted for 833 million people—around 68% of the total population.³⁶³ The next Census in 2026–27 will offer fresh insights, especially in light of events such as COVID-19, global conflicts (Ukraine–Russia, Israel–Palestine, the Myanmar Civil War, the Syrian Civil War, and others), rising unemployment, and demographic shifts.³⁶⁴

While certain cities are advancing toward modernisation and being developed into 'smart cities,' the harsh realities of rural India remain unchanged.³⁶⁵ In some villages, the electricity supply is still irregular. On one hand, India champions initiatives like Digital India and promotes Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms as best practices; on the other, a significant section of its rural population struggles to access basic necessities and justice. This paper intends to suggest relevant legal strategies and changes required in rural India of 2025, while considering the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their implications in Indian governance systems, mindsets of Viksit Bharat@2047 and the teachings of Sardar Patel. Through this study, the author seeks to reiterate and highlight these issues and advance the vision of making India on par with the developed countries we praise today.

II. BACKGROUND OF ISSUES & RATIONALE OF STUDY

In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, "*We are inheritors of a rural civilisation... To uproot it and substitute for it an urban civilisation seems impossible, unless we are prepared by some drastic means to reduce the population from three hundred million to three or even thirty.*"³⁶⁶ In continuation of the speech, he suggested that the divide between rural and urban could be reduced if the young population started residing in the rural areas. The solution remains today, as villages do not excite the present generation. With the advent of globalisation and the information & technology sector, capitalism has dug deeper into the mindsets of society.

³⁶² D.A. Desai, *Framing of India's Constitution: Contribution of Sardar Patel*, 30 J. Indian L. Inst. 1 (1988), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43951141>.

³⁶³ Press Information Bureau, *The Next Big Step for India: Census 2027* (Press Release, July 11, 2025), <https://static.pib.gov.in/WriteReadData/specificdocs/documents/2025/jul/doc2025711583801.pdf>

³⁶⁴ Id. at 4.

³⁶⁵ Press Information Bureau, *Smart Cities Mission Achievements: 91% of Projects Completed, ₹1.47 Lakh Crore Invested* (Press Release, Dec. 18, 2024), <https://static.pib.gov.in/WriteReadData/specificdocs/documents/2024/dec/doc20241218474201.pdf>.

³⁶⁶ Mahatma Gandhi Official Website, *Gandhiji on Villages: Upliftment of Villages* (Young India, Nov. 11, 1929), <https://www.mk gandhi.org/gandhionvillages/upliftmentofvillages.php>

One of the most integral reasons for chaos in India is its population. In 2023, India reached the mark of the most populous country in the world.³⁶⁷ As nature has limitations in offering things for every living being's survival, every government also has limitations in catering to the needs of the people. The limitation pertains to the number of employment opportunities, quality services, physical & digital infrastructure and access to justice & redressal systems. As the entire population cannot be given benefits, they turn towards other countries for a livelihood. The skill population moving outside the country for decent and respectable livelihood is brain drain.³⁶⁸ Every year, millions move to countries such as the USA, Canada, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, South Korea, Singapore and Japan.³⁶⁹ Today, the generation desires a well-maintained system to work and prosper, but India is unfortunately unable to provide such a structure, which is making them leave. The exodus, which can be observed, is not only from rural India to urban areas, but also from India as a country to other countries. The sad state of affairs makes one question the progress of India from 1947 and how far we have been able to carry forward with the vision of the freedom fighters.

As the author intends to study the situation of digital infrastructure and access to justice in rural India, and study different countries' approaches that India could adopt, there are three parameters on which the paper focuses. Firstly, SDGs, specifically 1st (No Poverty), 4th (Quality Education), 8th (Decent Work & Economic Growth), 11th (Sustainable Cities & Communities), and 16th (Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions) goals, are aligned with the problem statement at hand. Secondly, intentions set by the government under the 'Viksit Bharat' campaign align with Sardar Patel's vision.

Recently, China and the USA have emerged at the top in technology, artificial intelligence (AI), and pharmaceuticals.³⁷⁰ The exponential growth in these areas has led to various research and innovation initiatives and collaborations at a global level. There are many future research opportunities, and the Indian rural situation could improve if the proper thought process is attached.

III. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS & THEIR IMPLICATIONS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL INDIA

It has been a decade since all the member countries have been working on achieving the SDGs.³⁷¹ Some countries have seen significant improvement, while others are still in the process of developing

³⁶⁷ Hannah Ellis-Petersen, *India Overtakes China to Become World's Most Populous Country*, The Guardian (Apr. 24, 2023), <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/apr/24/india-overtakes-china-to-become-worlds-most-populous-country>.

³⁶⁸ S. Mohapatra & A. Mitra, *Viksit Bharat and the Brain Drain Dilemma*, Deccan Herald (Sept. 11, 2024), <https://www.deccanherald.com/opinion/viksit-bharat-and-the-brain-drain-dilemma-3185176>.

³⁶⁹ World Migration Report 2024 (Marie McAuliffe & Leonard A. Oucho eds., Int'l Org. for Migration 2024), file:///Users/surabhimathur/Downloads/pub2023-047-l-world-migration-report-2024_11.pdf.

³⁷⁰ R.D. Atkinson, *China Is Rapidly Becoming a Leading Innovator in Advanced Industries* (Information Tech. & Innovation Found., Sept. 16, 2024), <https://www2.itif.org/2024-chinese-innovation-full-report.pdf>

³⁷¹ U.N. Dep't of Econ. & Soc. Affs., *Sustainable Development Goals*, <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

infrastructure.³⁷² As per the annual report issued by United Nations- Department of Economics & Social Affairs (UNDESA), on 14th July 2025, out of 169 goals, only 139 are at the stage of being assessed and 18% are progressing on track, 17% on moderating progressing, 31% on marginally progressing, 17% are on stagnation and 18% are regressing.³⁷³ The figures show the sad state of affairs across the globe, but a ray of hope can be seen in the next five years.

When analysed individually, 1st Goal has five targets: International poverty, National Poverty, Social protection, Access to basic services, and Resilience to Disasters.³⁷⁴ Of these, four have been projected as having marginal progress, and one is moderately progressing.³⁷⁵ However, acceleration and significant improvement are required worldwide in both cases. As per the Indian database on SDGs (last updated 2023-24), kept by NITI Aayog, the majority of the states and union territories are in the category of 'Frontrunner', and the overall score is 72 out of 100.³⁷⁶

On analysing the 4th Goal, it has seven targets: Effective learning outcomes, Early childhood education, TVET and tertiary education, Skills for employment, Equal access to education, Adult literacy and numeracy and Sustainable development education.³⁷⁷ Out of these, the first three are seen to be regressing, three have insufficient data, and only one, equal education, is progressing on track.³⁷⁸ As per NITI Aayog data, India's score is 61 out of 100, which is considered in the 'Performer' category.³⁷⁹

On analysing the 8th Goal, it has 10 targets, namely- Economic growth, Economic productivity, Formalisation of SMEs, Material resource efficiency, Full employment and decent work, Youth NEET, Child and forced labour, Labour rights and safe working environment, Sustainable tourism and Access to financial services.³⁸⁰ Out of these, four are regressing, one is stagnant, child & forced labour are marginally progressing, and access to financial services is moderately progressing.³⁸¹ Only two are progressing on track: material resources and full employment. As per Indian data, the score is 68 out of 100, which is considered in the 'Frontrunner' category.

On analysing the 11th Goal, there are seven targets under it: Housing and basic services, Public transport systems, Sustainable urbanisation, Cultural and natural heritage, Human and economic losses to disasters, Urban air quality and waste management and Urban green and public spaces.³⁸² Out of these, data are insufficient in four, housing and basic services stagnate, and human & economic disasters are marginally progressing. Only one of these is progressing and is

³⁷² 'A Compass Towards Progress'—But Key Development Goals Remain Way off Track, U.N. News (July 14, 2025), <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/07/1165388>.

³⁷³ U.N. Dep't of Econ. & Soc. Affs., *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2025* 4 (July 14, 2025), <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2025/The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2025.pdf>

³⁷⁴ U.N. Dep't of Econ. & Soc. Affs., *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2025* 6, 44 (2025), <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2025/The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2025.pdf>

³⁷⁵ Supra note 12, at 6.

³⁷⁶ NITI Aayog, *Sustainable Development Goals Dashboard 2023–24*, <https://sdgindiaindex.niti.gov.in/#/ranking>.

³⁷⁷ The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2025, supra note 13, at 6.

³⁷⁸ The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2025, supra note 13, at 6.

³⁷⁹ NITI Aayog- Sustainable Development Goals. (2023-24), supra note 15, at 6.

³⁸⁰ The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2025, supra note 13, at 6.

³⁸¹ The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2025, supra note 13, at 6.

³⁸² The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2025, supra note 13, at 6.

on track: urban air & waste management. India has given itself a score of 83 out of 100, putting it in the 'Frontrunner' category.³⁸³

In the 16th Goal, there are 10 targets: Reduction of violence and related deaths, Human trafficking, Justice for all, Illicit financial and arms flows, Corruption and bribery, Effective institutions, Inclusive decision-making, Inclusive global governance, Legal identity and Public access to information.³⁸⁴ This goal is specifically of more significance to the study regarding peace and justice. Out of these, data are insufficient in 5 targets, two are marginally progressing, and one is moderately progressing.³⁸⁵ Two targets show stagnation in progress: justice for all and inclusive global governance. None of the targets show progress or are on track. India stands with a 74 out of 100 score, putting itself in the 'Frontrunner' category.³⁸⁶

Table Indicating Worldwide Progress of Targets under Goals 1,4,8,11 & 16 of SDG and India's Progress in the Goals

Goal No.	Total No. of Targets	No. of Targets going 'On Track or target met' (As per 2025 Report by UNDESA)	Percentage 'On Track or target met'	India's Score by NITI Aayog (Out of 100)	Category Assigned by NITI Aayog
1	5	0	0%	72	Frontrunner
4	7	1	14.28%	61	Performer
8	10	2	20%	68	Frontrunner
11	7	1	14.28%	83	Frontrunner

³⁸³ NITI Aayog- Sustainable Development Goals. (2023-24), supra note 15, at 6.

³⁸⁴ The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2025, supra note 13, at 6.

³⁸⁵ The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2025, supra note 13, at 6.

³⁸⁶ NITI Aayog- Sustainable Development Goals. (2023-24), supra note 15, at 6.

16	10	0	0%	74	Frontrunner
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The table, as mentioned above, indicates an overall summary of the progress of all nations in all the targets under the Goals 1, 4, 8, 11 and 16. The point to be highlighted is that, even after ten years, the percentage of targets moving on track is less than 40%! The author chose these goals specifically to address the issues raised in the paper. According to the Goals selected, at the global level itself, the performance is below average; India's progress is far-fetched. SDGs were made with the anticipation that they have the potential to bring change or overhaul the development of the world, but as of July 2025, the progress is not up to the mark.

As far as India is concerned, the fact that the last data uploaded to the official website is from the year 2023-24 reflects the seriousness of the research bodies. This not only shows India's seriousness towards global affairs but also the lack of a strong will to make a change in its domestic governance systems. Also, the marking and scoring systems used by NITI Aayog seem skewed and unjustified by the research data. The rural parts can only be improved if the government has rigour and intention to bring change. It is high time that the relevant bodies at national and international levels start taking the SDGs seriously and develop Standard Operating Protocols to create the updated database and ensure that the targets are met. Another possible step could be for nations to maintain individual timelines to meet every target individually and maintain strict compliance.

IV. 'VIKSIT BHARAT' MISSION & ITS IMPLICATIONS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL INDIA

As the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi pronounced the mission's name in his speech on Independence Day in 2021 from the Red Fort, a moment of pride and faith ran through all the listeners.³⁸⁷ In the last quarter of the century, bringing all government schemes under one campaign and mission was a remarkable step for independence. Soon, NITI Aayog drafted and released the Viksit Bharat @2047 as a '*Sankalp*' or pledge, and the mission finally moved to all states.³⁸⁸ As all the aims and schemes under the mission are getting streamlined, the dream of making India a \$30 trillion economy by 2047 sounds slightly utopian.³⁸⁹

³⁸⁷ Press Information Bureau, *The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi Addressed the Nation from the Ramparts of the Red Fort on the 76th Independence Day* (Press Release, Aug. 22, 2022), <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1852024>.

³⁸⁸ NITI Aayog, *Work for Viksit Bharat*, <https://workforbharat.niti.gov.in/>.

³⁸⁹ L. Dinkar, *India's Growth Under PM Modi: Viksit Bharat 2047, \$30 Trillion Goal, Key Reforms and Welfare Milestones*, *Economic Times* (June 17, 2025), <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/indias-growth-under-pm-modi-viksiti-bharat-2047-30-trillion-goal-key-reforms-and-welfare-milestones/articleshow/121914078.cms>.

Digital and access to legal aid have been on the government's mind for the past two decades.³⁹⁰ With everything turning digital, from legal documentation to food deliveries, it is time for law and justice to get wings through the internet and become capable of reaching everyone. With the advent of 'Digital India' and Reliance Jio mobile networks, a 180-degree turn is visible in how India uses digital space these days.³⁹¹ Digitising all judgments and enabling e-filing and tracking cases in all the courts and tribunals is a remarkable step. For instance, the 'eSCR' portal is the Supreme Court of India's initiative, and all the reportable judgments pronounced by the Supreme Court can be accessed for free.³⁹² Another database for easy accessibility of cases is the National Judicial Data Grid, where all the cases and judgments from district courts can be found for free.³⁹³ Each state's high court website can provide information on the case status. During COVID-19, all court proceedings shifted to the YouTube platform, which everyone could view.³⁹⁴

Digital Lok Adalat and online Alternate Dispute Resolution systems, such as Arbitration and mediation, are some of the methods adopted regarding legal aid through digital means. However, the affordability of these methods and the accessibility of justice, in general, are questionable.³⁹⁵ In none of the official sources of Viksit Bharat can be found any reference to the transformation of the judicial system. Does that imply the system is full-fledged and does not require any changes? Or does it mean the government has forgotten the country's law and order system when making Viksit Bharat announcements? The reasons or justifications are best known to them, but the issues in the underlying system do not seem to change anytime soon for rural India.

The judiciary and judicial system are an indivisible part of governance. A separate committee at the central level must be set up to make an exhaustive list of issues that have the potential to be included in the Viksit Bharat mission. The committee's ultimate goal must be to create a robust system and overhaul the procedural aspects of the system. The committee may comprise professionals from all occupations of law, practising advocates, corporate lawyers, academicians, students and others, who can bring forth their concerns and pledge to change the existing culture.

When we talk about digital infrastructure in rural India, many villages do not have internet; if there is, the connection is patchy. In 2011, the Union Cabinet approved the 'BharatNet' project to connect 2.5 lakh gram panchayats through the internet, but the project, after 14 years, is still

³⁹⁰ R. Singh, S. Deva Rao, P. Rai & A. Singh, *Access to Legal Information & Research in Digital Age* (Nat'l L. Univ. Press 2012), <https://www.nludelhi.ac.in/download/publication/2015/Access%20to%20Legal%20Informationa%20and%20Research%20in%20Digital%20Age.pdf>.

³⁹¹ Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology, *Digital India – Power to Empower*, <https://www.digitalindia.gov.in/>.

³⁹² Supreme Court of India, *eSCR: Reportable Judgments*, https://judgments.ecourts.gov.in/pdfsearch/?p=pdf_search/index&escr_flag=Y.

³⁹³ District Courts of India, *National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG)*, https://njdg.ecourts.gov.in/njdg_v3/.

³⁹⁴ E. Nir & J. Musial, *Zooming In: Courtrooms and Defendant's Rights During the COVID-19 Pandemic*, 31 Soc. & Legal Stud. 725 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.1177/09646639221076099>.

³⁹⁵ Charles P. Sabatino, *Access to Justice: The People's Principle*, 43 Generations 6 (2019–20), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26908286>.

(Note: "Generations" is the journal published by the American Society on Aging.)

incomplete.³⁹⁶ Even when the internet reaches people, how many people can use it properly? Along with connections, adequate digital literacy is also required.³⁹⁷ In October 2011, the Ministry of Human Resources & Development unveiled a digital tablet, 'Aakash Tablet', which was supposed to be the cheapest in the world, and it was proposed that the device would be distributed to students and young professionals for free.³⁹⁸ The initiative was intended to reduce the gap in the digital divide among people. After a few months, there were multiple complaints about its faulty designs, such as systems getting hung, low memory, inability to install a few computer applications, etc.³⁹⁹ In 2012, another better version of the tablet was introduced, named 'Aakash-2', but it did not get the appreciation. Indian research and development projects, especially those of technological inventions, fail to address the industrial requirements and get involved in creating theoretical databases of the same old knowledge.⁴⁰⁰

Today, the 'Digital India' campaign has made some progress in creating an ecosystem of well-connected cities with better bandwidth.⁴⁰¹ As an irony, many government websites also do not open or get hacked.⁴⁰² Recently, an outburst and protest by aspirants of Staff Selection Commission (SSC) Examinations shows the state of affairs of how online examinations and the tenders given to private third party (in this case, Eduquity Career Technologies Pvt. Ltd.) are digging a hole in the pockets.⁴⁰³ The servers were down at a few examination centres, systems got hung, and questions leaked online. The mission for Viksit Bharat is a remarkable thought, but the implication is far from reality.

Regarding access to legal aid, courts and commissions have always been far from the villages, making them inconvenient to approach. In the world of upcoming AI technology, it is predicted that a computer will be capable of doing clerical work and drafting case pleadings with a precise prompt.⁴⁰⁴ AI technology can help make procedures systematic, such as deciding the roster of judges, numbering and listing cases, drafting notices and many more. Technology integration in the legal field is a must, or systems will become obsolete and society will lose trust.

³⁹⁶ Dep't of Telecomms., *Digital Bharat Nidhi – BharatNet Project*, <https://usof.gov.in/en/bharatnet-project>.

³⁹⁷ A.D. Sood, *How to Wire Rural India: Problems and Possibilities of Digital Development*, 36 Econ. & Pol. Wkly. 4134 (2001), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4411303>.

³⁹⁸ N. Pahwa, *Aakash Tablet RTI: Only 572 Tablets Distributed to 19 Colleges*, Medianama (May 28, 2012), <https://www.medianama.com/2012/05/223-aakash-tablet-rti-college-datawind/>.

³⁹⁹ S. Singh, *What Went Wrong with the Aakash Tablet*, Forbes India (June 25, 2012), <https://www.forbesindia.com/article/real-issue/what-went-wrong-with-the-aakash-tablet/33218/>.

⁴⁰⁰ R. Basant & B. Fikkert, *The Effects of R&D, Foreign Technology Purchase, and Domestic and International Spillovers on Productivity in Indian Firms*, 78 Rev. Econ. & Stat. 187 (1996), <https://doi.org/10.2307/2109920>.

⁴⁰¹ Digital India, *supra* note 30, at 10.

⁴⁰² *50 Government Websites Hacked, 8 Data Breaches in 2022, Says IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw*, Times of India (Feb. 4, 2023), <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/gadgets-news/50-government-websites-hacked-8-data-breaches-in-2022-says-it-minister-ashwini-vaishnaw/articleshow/97602572.cms>.

⁴⁰³ Press Trust of India, *Cancellations, Server Crash: SSC Students Hold Protest over 'Mismanagement' at Exam Centres*, NDTV (Aug. 1, 2025), <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/cancellations-server-crash-ssc-students-hold-protest-over-mismanagement-at-exam-centres-8995447>.

⁴⁰⁴ Maura R. Grossman, Paul Grimm, Dan Brown & Molly Xu, *The GPTJudge: Justice in a Generative AI World*, 23 Duke L. & Tech. Rev. 1 (2023), <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4460184> (Duke Law School Public Law & Legal Theory Series No. 2023-30).

V. APPROPRIATE LEGAL AND POLICY REFORMS NEEDED IN UPLIFTING RURAL INDIA

In consonance with the vision of Sardar Patel, many things must be adopted to uplift rural India towards a Viksit Bharat. Firstly, if the governance system and leadership are streamlined, the rest of the government bodies will follow the trend.⁴⁰⁵ For instance, the Gram Panchayat must have the power to process and make real decisions in cases of resources and village-level issues. Patel was an advocate of empowering village self-governments. Secondly, the regional development in the world must be uniform, and resources must be equally distributed. Presently in India, states such as Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, New Delhi, Gujarat, and Telangana have cities that observe a tremendous amount of migration because of multinational companies, IT hubs and better employment opportunities.⁴⁰⁶ But states such as Bihar, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, and mostly the north-eastern states have limited employment opportunities for people. This is the result of unequal distribution of resources. Additionally, India is full of culture and heritage, and the government must utilise this uniqueness by organising inter-state programmes for artisans, farmers, and young people. Connectivity among people can be the biggest strength in building a nation. This will surely uphold Sardar Patel's ideology of unity and integrity. The works of artisans with local art knowledge must be put forward, and their work must be promoted on e-commerce platforms. The local art forms must be protected from machines and work requiring low human effort.

While addressing the upliftment of villages, Patel's and Gandhi's Kheda and Bardoli Satyagraha cannot be forgotten.⁴⁰⁷ Just like the way farmers' rights were given importance and their financial loss was considered, similarly, even today, they need attention. Regrettably, the agriculture industry is still not as organised as it should be. The constant involvement of intermediaries is making the farmer poorer, and they cannot get out of the debts of landowners.⁴⁰⁸ Due to migration to cities, very few communities farm locally today. In 2020, when farmers' laws were introduced in the parliament, there were mass protests observed by the farmers, and till now, no fruitful result or law has come.

Lastly, Sardar Patel was a big advocate of young energy and enthusiasm. A youth brigade must be created in every village as a tribute to him. It will be responsible for organising awareness programs and workshops to inform them about technological developments, legal relief and aid mechanisms. Periodically, camps must be put up for legal awareness and empowered to approach the court and other authorities in case of any dispute.

Digital literacy is one of the most necessary skills that rural India must know. Such knowledge will not only help them involve technology in day-to-day work but also help them avoid getting scammed or having cyber attacks. A mandatory course must be available in all

⁴⁰⁵ Puay Tang, *Institutional Instability, Governance and Telematics*, 2 Rev. Int'l Pol. Econ. 567 (1995), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4177163>.

⁴⁰⁶ Ravi Srivastava et al., *Internal Migration in India and the Impact of Uneven Regional Development and Demographic Transition Across States* (Inst. for Hum. Dev. 2020), <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342068878>.

⁴⁰⁷ H. Spodek, *Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel at 100*, 10 Econ. & Pol. Wkly. 1925 (1975), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40740155>.

⁴⁰⁸ N. Balyan, *Contextualising Agrarian Change in India: Debates and Themes*, 49 Indian Anthropologist 75 (2019), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26954860>.

vernacular languages for them to understand. This mission must continue until we achieve 100% literacy and the gaps in rural and urban areas are reduced. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting must draft a policy draft, to bring in call to action forces and focus on executing already made laws and policies, instead of drafting new policies and piling up more papers.

The judiciary is an independent and one of the most essential organs of the government. It should ensure that each and every corner of the country receives justice and that every village and taluka has circuits or branches of district courts and tribunals. Tribunals specialising in a particular subject matter have the disadvantage of being located in bigger cities, creating a lack of knowledge in rural areas. Creating branches and benches of Tribunals will uphold the objectives better, such as activism for a better environment, which can be done better if farmers and tribal communities have access to Green Tribunal, similarly small startups and Self Help Groups will flourish better if they have access to Intellectual Property Rights offices (Trademark and Patent registrations) and procedures involved. They will know better and benefit immensely.

To create the maximum impact and accountability, biannually, rural audits must be conducted by the Ministry of Rural Development and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology. State-wise reports must be submitted to the central government till we achieve all targets in 2047. In the era of social media, these audits must be posted on relevant social media and websites for public viewing. The more the government projects and promotes a mindset of change and intentions to develop, the more citizens will feel accountable for bringing change in themselves.

VI. CONCLUSION

Development of rural India is not merely a political agenda, but the hope of every citizen. The national mission of Viksit Bharat has the potential to bring out the best in every field and make people resilient and inclusive. Rural India is the foundation of the country's existence, and seeing it get quality digital infrastructure, sustainably developed, empowered local government, and a proactive legal dispute resolution mechanism will be a dream come true. The glorious examples set in the past by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel stand relevant even today, and his teachings on leadership, governance, rural management and development shall always be remembered and brought into practice. Every citizen must be sensitised and motivated to bring back the change required, after all, "*Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikash*" can only be achieved by joining hands.