Cabinet approves ‘Viksit Bharat Initiative for Statistical Transformation, Analytics & Research (VISTAR)’, a central sector scheme for the period 2026-27 to 2030-31

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The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, today approved the ‘Viksit Bharat Initiative for Statistical Transformation, Analytics & Research (VISTAR)’ Scheme for the period FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31 with an outlay of Rs.4,371.10 crore.

Aligned with the central objective of Viksit Bharat 2047, the VISTAR Scheme is designed to establish a dynamic, real-time and future-ready official statistical architecture for enhanced timeliness, data granularity, interoperability with harmonised and AI ready datasets.

The VISTAR scheme will provide the strategic flexibility to dynamically allocate resources based on immediate policy needs, fostering a holistic approach to large-scale survey execution, methodological research, digital transformation, and national data governance. VISTAR Scheme will encompass all statistical and data management activities of MoSPI and it will play a crucial role for upgrading the official statistical system of the country. The three components of the VISTAR scheme are as follows:

1. Component 1: Comprehensive Statistical Operations and Strengthening of Ecosystem
2. Component 2: Support for Statistical Strengthening (SSS)
3. Component 3: Economic Census (EC)

Under the Comprehensive Statistical Operations and Strengthening of Ecosystem component, MoSPI proposes conducting 59 surveys during the 16th FC cycle, as compared to 43 major surveys conducted previously, potentially filling up critical data gaps in various sectors, thereby, improving decision-making and enabling timely and targeted policy interventions. In addition, building on recent digital transformations in technology enabled data collection and user-centric dissemination, MoSPI will focus on the end-to-end digitalization of statistical processes and embedding Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning into regular workflows, primarily for data processing, validation, and analysis.

MoSPI is planning to release new metrices, including the Headline Index of Services Production, the Index of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises. MoSPI will build upon the foundational pillars of data harmonisation such as data cataloguing, machine readability,

interoperability, sharing protocols, and privacy by design etc. to dismantle silos and improve programme targeting, reduce duplication, and pave the way for AI-driven decision-making across government levels. By mainstreaming alternate sources—like mobile phone, scanner, and e-commerce data—MoSPI will aim to complement traditional surveys, reduce respondent burden, fill data gaps, and strengthen evidence-based policymaking. Furthermore, MoSPI will ensure capacity building and enhanced opportunities for youth and researchers through Internship Scheme for students and research proposals from academic & research institutions.

Under the Support for Statistical Strengthening (SSS) component, funds are to be provided to State/UT Governments for transforming the statistical capabilities of States and Union Territories through a redesigned, deliverable-linked framework (SSS 2.0). The vision focuses on building state-level capacity to generate high-quality, granular data at the district and other disaggregated levels, developing indigenous data processing capabilities, and embedding data use cases into localized policymaking. MoSPI will provide technical support to scale up generation of district-level estimates and million-plus city level estimates in flagship national surveys (e.g., PLFS, HCES, ASUSE) as well as in compilation of State/District level GDP and State level IIP.

Under the Economic Census (EC) component, MoSPI will undertake the 8th Economic Census (EC) in collaboration with the States / UTs which will provide granular data and activity details of all the non – farm establishments and workers hired, therein, upto Gram Panchayat and Ward level, providing an assessment of the unorganized sector of the economy and will serve as the baseline for developing National Statistical Business Register (SBR) to facilitate targeted enterprise surveys and strategic interventions. The economic census data will be extremely useful for planners and policy makers at national and sub-national levels, which will pave way for estimating the contribution of unorganized sector to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

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