



UPSC &amp; STATE PCS CURRENT AFFAIRS · UJIYARI.COM

**EDITORIAL ANALYSIS**

# Rural Development Needs Real Cooperative Federalism, Not Central Targets

 **DOWN TO EARTH**28 June 2026 · **POLITY** · **GS2**

CURATED &amp; WRITTEN BY

**Bharat Choudhary**

UPSC Educator &amp; Content Creator

 [linkedin.com/in/epicbharat](https://www.linkedin.com/in/epicbharat)**ALSO FROM THE CREATOR****BharatNotes**Free UPSC notes, MCQs, PYQ analysis. **100% Free.**[bharatnotes.com](http://bharatnotes.com) → **ADVERTISE****Advertise with Ujiyari**

Reach thousands of UPSC aspirants daily.

 [epicbharat@gmail.com](mailto:epicbharat@gmail.com)



# Rural Development Needs Real Cooperative Federalism, Not Central Targets

Down to Earth 28 June 2026 **GS2**

Source: [ujjyari.com](http://ujjyari.com) — researched, fact-checked & UPSC-mapped



## INTERVIEW ANGLE

*"The Centre sets rural targets and States deliver them. Does converging schemes from the top improve outcomes, or do States need untied funds and real flexibility to make convergence work?"*

Source: [Original editorial](#) [Down to Earth](#)

✓ Every fact web-verified against primary sources (<https://ujjyari.com/how-we-verify/>)

## WHY THIS MATTERS NOW

The **first National Rural Development Conference** (New Delhi, June 28-29, 2026), chaired by the Union Rural Development Minister under the vision “**Viksit Gram, Viksit Bharat**,” reviews **PMAY-G, PMGSY, DAY-NRLM and NSAP** together. Looking at housing, roads, livelihoods and social assistance as a whole is a genuine advance. But for an aspirant, the deeper GS2 question is one of **cooperative federalism** (<https://ujjyari.com/terms/cooperative-federalism/>): outcomes depend on **untied funds, State capacity and convergence** (<https://ujjyari.com/vocab/convergence/>), not on targets driven from the Centre. That is where this editorial digs.

## THE CRUX IN 60 WORDS

Reviewing **PMAY-G, PMGSY, DAY-NRLM and NSAP** together is welcome, but rural outcomes turn on **untied funds, State capacity and district-level convergence**, not central targets. Most are **centrally sponsored schemes** with rigid guidelines that limit State flexibility. Real **cooperative federalism** (<https://ujjyari.com/terms/federalism/>) means trusting States, strengthening **Panchayati Raj** (73rd Amendment), and measuring **outcomes**, not expenditure. Convergence cannot be ordered from Delhi.

## THE ISSUE, DECODED

Ujjayari Current Affairs - [ujjayari.com](https://ujjayari.com) - Free Daily Current Affairs for UPSC & State PCS

CONCEPT	WHAT IT MEANS	WHY IT MATTERS
<b>Centrally sponsored scheme</b>	Cost-shared, central guidelines and targets	Scale, but limits State flexibility
<b>Untied funds</b>	Money States can deploy by local priority	Enables convergence at the ground
<b>Cooperative federalism</b>	Centre and States as partners	Frames who designs and delivers
<b>73rd Amendment</b>	Constitutional status to panchayats	Capacity for last-mile delivery
<b>Convergence</b>	Aligning schemes around a household or village	Turns silos into outcomes

## THE ANALYSIS: WHY TARGETS ARE NOT OUTCOMES

- ❶ **Silos to a single view is progress.** Reviewing housing, roads, livelihoods and assistance together is a real improvement over scheme-by-scheme administration.
- ❷ **Tied conditions constrain States.** Detailed central guidelines and uniform targets leave little room to match local terrain, livelihoods and gaps, weakening convergence.
- ❸ **Capacity, not targets, delivers.** Outcomes depend on State administration and on panchayats, whose [devolution](https://ujjayari.com/terms/devolution/) of funds, functions and functionaries remains uneven despite the 73rd Amendment.
- ❹ **Measure outcomes, not spending.** Targets met and money spent are not the same as houses occupied, roads used and incomes raised.

## DATA AND INSTITUTIONS VAULT

Ujivari Current Affairs - [ujivari.com](https://ujivari.com) - Free Daily Current Affairs for UPSC & State PCS

**PMAY-G** (rural housing; revised target around 4.95 crore houses by 2029; funding 60:40, and 90:10 for NE and hilly States); **PMGSY** (rural roads; **PMGSY-IV** approved for 2024-29); **DAY-NRLM** (livelihoods, self-help groups, **Lakshpati Didi**); **NSAP** (social assistance). **NSAP components: IGNOAPS** (old-age pension), **IGNWPS** (widow), **IGNDPS** (disability), **NFBS** (family benefit), **Annapurna**; constitutional anchor **Article 41** (DPSP). **Panchayati Raj: 73rd Constitutional Amendment, 1992** (in force 1993); **Part IX, Articles 243 to 243-O; Eleventh Schedule** lists **29** subjects. **Scheme types: Centrally Sponsored Schemes** (cost-shared, tied) versus **Central Sector Schemes** (fully central). **Federal levers: Finance Commission** (<https://ujivari.com/terms/finance-commission/>) tax devolution; the debate over tied versus untied transfers. **Conference: first National Rural Development Conference, New Delhi, June 28-29, 2026, theme “Viksit Gram, Viksit Bharat.”**

## THE DEBATE

**Argument for central targets and conditions:** Conditional, cost-shared transfers ensure accountability, protect national priorities, prevent diversion and maintain equity across rich and poor States. Loosening conditions risks dilution and uneven delivery.

**Argument for untied funds and State flexibility:** States know local needs best; rigid guidelines force one-size-fits-all delivery and block convergence. Real outcomes need flexible funds, strong panchayats and trust in State capacity.

**The balanced verdict:** The choice is not conditions versus no conditions, but **input conditions versus outcome accountability**. Give States **more untied and flexible funds**, enable **district-level convergence**, strengthen **panchayat capacity**, and hold them to **outcomes** rather than expenditure. That is cooperative federalism in practice, not in slogan.

## HOW TO THINK ABOUT THIS (TRANSFERABLE SKILL)

*Many governance answers improve by separating the three. Here, the Centre designs and funds, States deliver, but accountability is tied to inputs (targets, spending) rather than outcomes. The strong answer proposes shifting accountability to results while devolving design flexibility to the deliverer. This “design, deliver, account” lens sharpens any question on federalism, schemes or service delivery.*

## DIAGRAM-IN-WORDS

Ujjyari Current Affairs - [ujjyari.com](http://ujjyari.com) · Free Daily Current Affairs for UPSC & State PCS

Central scheme + rigid guidelines + physical targets -> States constrained -> silos, low convergence -> spending up, outcomes uneven. The fix: untied flexible funds + strong panchayats + district convergence + outcome accountability -> houses occupied, roads used, incomes raised.

## THE WAY FORWARD

- ❶ **Increase untied and flexible funds** so States can converge schemes around local priorities.
- ❷ **Strengthen State and panchayat capacity** through devolution of functions, funds and functionaries.
- ❸ **Enable bottom-up convergence** at the district and village level rather than top-down targets.
- ❹ **Measure outcomes, not expenditure**, occupied houses, used roads, raised incomes, as the test of success.

## THE TAKEAWAY BOX

*“Rural development outcomes depend less on central targets and more on State capacity, untied funds and convergence.” Critically examine in the context of cooperative federalism. (250 words)*

*“Convergence cannot be ordered from Delhi; it must be enabled where delivery happens, the real test is whether the Centre will give States funds, flexibility and trust.”*

*PMAY-G · PMGSY-IV · DAY-NRLM and Lakhpati Didi · NSAP (IGNOAPS, IGNWPS, IGDPS, NFBS, Annapurna) · Article 41 · 73rd Amendment, Part IX, Eleventh Schedule (29 subjects) · centrally sponsored versus central sector schemes.*

*Is conditional central funding a safeguard of accountability or a check on the autonomy that genuine federalism requires?*

*Connects to GS2 PYQs on cooperative federalism, centrally sponsored schemes and local government; probable forward question is the “targets versus outcomes” framing above.*

*static GS2 on federalism, Panchayati Raj, Finance Commission and welfare delivery.*

**Sources:** *Down To Earth* (<https://www.downtoearth.org.in>), *Ministry of Rural Development* (<https://rural.gov.in>), *PIB* (<https://pib.gov.in>)

Source: Rural Development Needs Real Cooperative Federalism, Not Central Targets — Ujjyari.com | Free UPSC & State PCS Editorial Analysis

**KEY ARGUMENTS AT A GLANCE**

 Ujjiyari Current Affairs · [ujjiyari.com](http://ujjiyari.com) · Free Daily Current Affairs for UPSC & State PCS

**Reviewing PMAY-G, PMGSY, DAY-NRLM and NSAP together at a national conference is welcome, but rural outcomes depend on untied funds, State capacity and genuine convergence, not on centrally driven targets imposed from above.**


**SUPPORTING**

- The first National Rural Development Conference rightly looks at housing, roads, livelihoods and social assistance as a whole rather than in silos.
- Tied, centrally sponsored schemes with rigid guidelines limit State flexibility to match local needs, weakening last-mile convergence.
- Outcomes hinge on State administrative and panchayat capacity, with the 73rd Amendment and Eleventh Schedule, more than on uniform national targets.


**COUNTER**

Some argue central targets and conditional transfers ensure accountability and prevent States from diverting funds, so loosening conditions risks diluting national priorities and equity across States.


**WAY FORWARD**

Move toward more untied and flexible funds, strengthen State and panchayat capacity, enable bottom-up convergence at the district level, and measure outcomes rather than expenditure to make cooperative federalism real.


**MAINS ANSWER FRAMEWORK**

 Ujjyari Current Affairs - [ujjyari.com](http://ujjyari.com) · Free Daily Current Affairs for UPSC & State PCS

**QUESTION**

*"Rural development outcomes depend less on central targets and more on State capacity, untied funds and convergence." Critically examine in the context of cooperative federalism. (250 words)*

**INTRODUCTION**

A national conference that reviews rural schemes together is a welcome shift from silos. But the harder question is who designs and delivers, and whether States have the flexibility to make schemes fit local realities.

**BODY**

India's flagship rural programmes, PMAY-G for housing, PMGSY for roads, DAY-NRLM for livelihoods and self-help groups, and NSAP for social assistance, are largely centrally sponsored, cost-shared but governed by detailed central guidelines and targets. This design has scale and visibility, but it constrains States, which understand local terrain, livelihoods and gaps far better.

Outcomes ultimately depend on State administrative capacity and on Panchayati Raj Institutions, given constitutional status by the 73rd Amendment with 29 subjects in the Eleventh Schedule, yet devolution of funds, functions and functionaries remains uneven. Real cooperative federalism would give States more untied and flexible funds, let them converge schemes at the district level around local priorities, and judge success by outcomes such as completed houses occupied, all-weather roads used, and incomes raised, rather than by expenditure or physical targets met.

The counter-view, that conditions ensure accountability and equity, is valid; the answer is not to abandon conditions but to shift from input conditions to outcome accountability, trusting States while measuring results. Convergence cannot be ordered from Delhi; it must be enabled where delivery happens.

**CONCLUSION**

Reviewing schemes together is the easy part. The real test of cooperative federalism is whether the Centre is willing to give States the funds, flexibility and trust to deliver, and to measure outcomes rather than targets.


**RELATED DAILY ARTICLES**

27 Jun [52nd PRAGATI Meeting Reviews Projects and Governance](#)

26 Jun [Current Affairs Today, June 26, 2026](#)

25 Jun [Current Affairs Today, June 25, 2026](#)

25 Jun **Samvidhan Hatya Diwas: 51 Years Since the 1975...**

Ujjari Current Affairs · [ujjari.com](http://ujjari.com) · Free Daily Current Affairs for UPSC & State PCS

Ujiyari Current Affairs · [ujiyari.com](https://ujiyari.com) · **Free Daily** Current Affairs for UPSC & State PCS

CURATED &amp; WRITTEN BY

## Bharat Choudhary

UPSC Educator &amp; Content Creator

[linkedin.com/in/epicbharat](https://www.linkedin.com/in/epicbharat)[Read Full Article on Ujiyari →](#)<https://ujiyari.com/editorials/2026/06/dte-rural-development-cooperative-federalism-2026/>

### ALSO FROM THE CREATOR

## BharatNotes

Free UPSC study platform — subject-wise notes across all 4 GS papers, Prelims MCQs, Mains answer frameworks, PYQ analysis & progress tracking. **100% Free • No Login Required.**

[Start Preparing → bharatnotes.com](https://bharatnotes.com)

### 📌 OPPORTUNITY

## Advertise with Ujiyari

Reach **thousands of serious UPSC & State PCS aspirants** daily through our PDFs, website, and social channels.

**Ideal for:** Coaching institutes • EdTech platforms • Book publishers • Exam prep apps

[✉ epicbharat@gmail.com](mailto:epicbharat@gmail.com)

Write to us for rates & media kit

Free UPSC & State PCS Current Affairs · [ujiyari.com](https://ujiyari.com) · [bharatnotes.com](https://bharatnotes.com)