VB-G RAM G: guidelines for district Ombudspersons

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News

The Union Ministry of Rural Development on 18 November 2026 issued guidelines for Ombudspersons and Appellate Authorities under the Viksit Bharat – Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G) Act, 2025 (PTI, DD News, News On AIR). A dedicated Ombudsperson in each district will hear complaints on job cards, provision of work, wage payments, delay compensation, worksite facilities, muster rolls and denial of statutory entitlements. Complaints of discrimination, harassment and violation of workers' rights, including those of women and vulnerable groups, are also covered. Each Ombudsperson must attend at least three social-audit public hearings or Gram Sabhas every month; field visits will be documented with geo-tagged, time-stamped photographs. A dedicated digital platform will handle online registration and tracking of complaints, recording of proceedings, uploading of awards and monitoring of action taken. The eligibility pool has been widened to people with experience in rural development, public administration, law, academics, social work and management, and the tenure and remuneration provisions have been revised. The scheme replaced MGNREGA from 1 July 2026; the Act's grievance redressal rules were notified earlier in November 2026.

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Issued by	Ministry of Rural Development
Date	18 November 2026

Point	Details
Law	VB-G RAM G Act, 2025 (replaced MGNREGA)
Ombudsperson	One in each district
Monthly duty	At least 3 social-audit hearings / Gram Sabhas
Evidence	Geo-tagged, time-stamped photos
Eligibility	Rural development, administration, law, academics, social work, management
Work guarantee	125 days a year (earlier 100)
Fund sharing	60:40; NE/Himalayan States 90:10

Background

- The law: the VB-G RAM G Act, 2025 repealed the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA, 2005). Every willing rural household gets 125 days of wage work a year; wages are paid weekly or within 15 days at the latest; an unemployment allowance is due if work is not given within 15 days. States may notify pauses in public works of up to 60 days in all each year during peak sowing and harvest, to avoid farm-labour shortages.
- Funding: the Centre–State sharing is 60:40 for general States, 90:10 for North-Eastern and Himalayan States, and 100% central for UTs without a legislature. 'Viksit Gram Panchayat Plans' prepared by panchayats are linked with PM Gati Shakti; Gram Panchayats carry out at least half the works by cost.
- History: MGNREGA was launched on 2 February 2006 at Bandlapalli village in Anantapur district, Andhra Pradesh. Under Section 17 of that Act, the Gram Sabha had to conduct social audits of all works; the new law also makes a social audit mandatory at least once every six months.
- The Ombudsman institution: it originated in Sweden in 1809. Its Indian forms are the Lokpal (Centre) and the Lokayuktas (States). An Ombudsman is an independent official who looks into citizens' complaints of maladministration.

Tamil Nadu link: The guidelines say nothing specific to Tamil Nadu. But since they apply to every district, all 38 districts of Tamil Nadu will need a dedicated Ombudsperson. As a general-category State, Tamil Nadu must bear 40% of the scheme's cost.

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

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What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Issued by: Ministry of Rural Development; Date: 18 November 2026; Law: VB-G RAM G Act, 2025 (replaced MGNREGA); Ombudsperson: One in each district.

What is the background to this news?

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Practice questions (with answers)

1. In which country did the institution of the 'Ombudsman', which hears citizens' complaints, first originate?

A) Norway

B) Sweden

C) Denmark

D) Finland

Answer: B – Explanation: Sweden (1809). In India its forms are the Lokpal (Centre) and the Lokayuktas (States).

2. Under the VB-G RAM G Act, what is the Centre–State funding ratio for general-category States?

A) 75:25

B) 90:10

C) 60:40

D) 50:50

Answer: C – Explanation: 60:40. It is 90:10 for North-Eastern and Himalayan States, and 100% central for UTs without a legislature.

3. MGNREGA, now replaced by the new law, was launched on 2 February 2006 at Bandlapalli village. In which State is it?

A) Andhra Pradesh

B) Rajasthan

C) Karnataka

D) Odisha

Answer: A – Explanation: Andhra Pradesh – Anantapur district. It began in 200 backward districts and covered the whole country by 2008.

4. Under Section 17 of MGNREGA, 2005, which body was required to conduct social audits of all works?

A) Block Panchayat

B) CAG

C) District Collector

D) Gram Sabha

Answer: D – Explanation: The Gram Sabha – every voter of the panchayat is a member. The new law also mandates a social audit at least once in six months.

5. Under the VB-G RAM G Ombudsperson guidelines (November 2026), at least how many social-audit public hearings or Gram Sabhas must an Ombudsperson attend every month?

A) One

B) Two

C) Three

D) Four

Answer: C – Explanation: Three. Field visits are documented with geo-tagged, time-stamped photographs; there is one Ombudsperson in each district.

Sources: Business Standard/PTI (18.11.2026) – business-standard.com; Deccan Herald (18.11.2026) – deccanherald.com; DD News (18.11.2026) – ddnews.gov.in; News On AIR (18.11.2026) – newsonair.gov.in; PIB backgrounder (22.12.2025) – static.pib.gov.in; PRS Bill summary – prsindia.org; Business Standard (11.05.2026, in force 1 July) – business-standard.com; Down To Earth (Bandlapalli) – downtoearth.org.in. © Shanmugam IAS Academy.