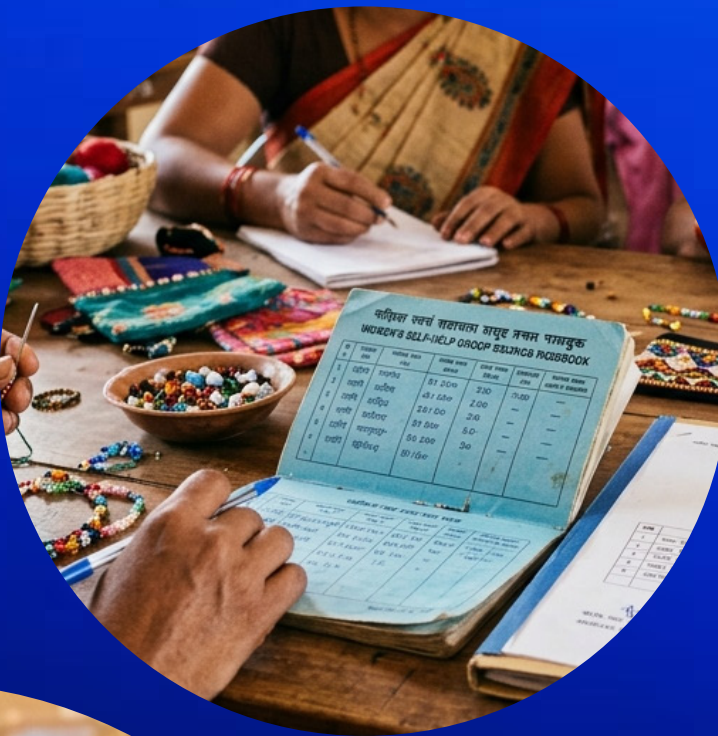




PadhAI

# Kurukshetra

January 2026 Edition



# Welcome to PadhAI

## KURUKSHETRA MONTHLY COVERAGE

You are here because you understand a fundamental truth of UPSC preparation: ***it's not about reading everything – it's about reading what truly matters, in the right way, at the right time.***

Magazines like Kurukshetra offer deep insights into rural development, governance, social schemes, and grassroots policy implementation. Yet for many aspirants, the challenge lies in separating exam-relevant content from general narratives.

PadhAI's Kurukshetra coverage is designed to do exactly that - ***filter, structure, and align policy discussions with UPSC requirements.***

## Why This Kurukshetra Coverage Matters

At PadhAI, we don't reproduce articles. We ***extract core themes***, map them with the syllabus, and connect them with ***Prelims and Mains PYQs***.

Every topic included here:

- carries relevance for ***GS Papers or Essay***,
- strengthens understanding of ***developmental and governance issues, and***
- builds ***analytical depth*** rather than surface-level knowledge.

Nothing is added for volume.

Everything is added for value.

## Part of the PadhAI Preparation Ecosystem

This Kurukshetra coverage forms part of a larger, integrated learning system that includes:

- early and concise ***monthly magazines***,
- ***daily PIB summaries*** with exam-focused clarity,
- ***monthly compliance tracking***,
- complete ***Prelims & Mains PYQs with structured answers***,
- relevant ***news article summaries***, and
- ***personal tutor chat support*** for continuous guidance.

The aim is simple:

***one trusted ecosystem instead of multiple scattered sources.***

## Our Guiding Philosophy

At PadhAI, everything is built around one belief:

- *Learn only what matters.*
- *Learn it the right way.*
- *Learn it at the right time.*

We don't believe in shortcuts.

We believe in clarity, consistency, and cumulative preparation.

## A Final Note

UPSC preparation is demanding and often overwhelming.

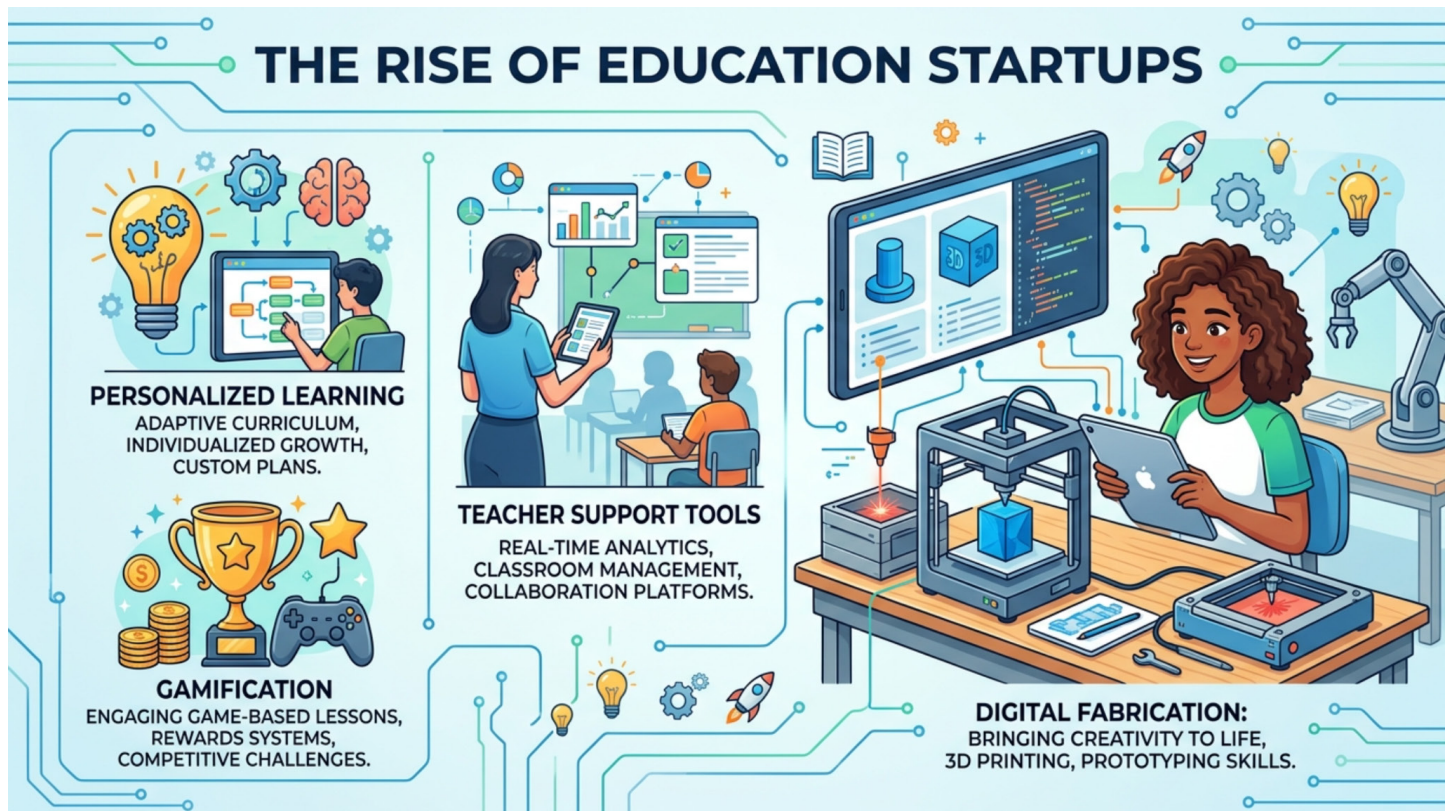
PadhAI exists to ensure you prepare with *direction, relevance, and confidence* — never blindly, never alone.

If this [Kurukshetra](#) coverage helps you save time, connect policy with practice, and strengthen your answers, then it has served its purpose.

**Welcome to PadhAI.**

**A community built to prepare — not to overwhelm.**

## Topic 1: Startups in Education and Skill Development



**Summary:** Driven by the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**, Indian startups are revolutionising education through AI-driven personalised learning and digital infrastructure. These ventures aim to transform the system from rote learning to one that cultivates an innovation culture, effectively turning job seekers into job creators.

**Background:** Traditionally, there has been a disconnect between education and livelihood opportunities. The **Skill India Mission** was launched to address this by providing industry-relevant training through schemes like **PMKVY** and a network of **ITIs**, while startups bridge the final gap through specialised digital courses.

### Key Points:

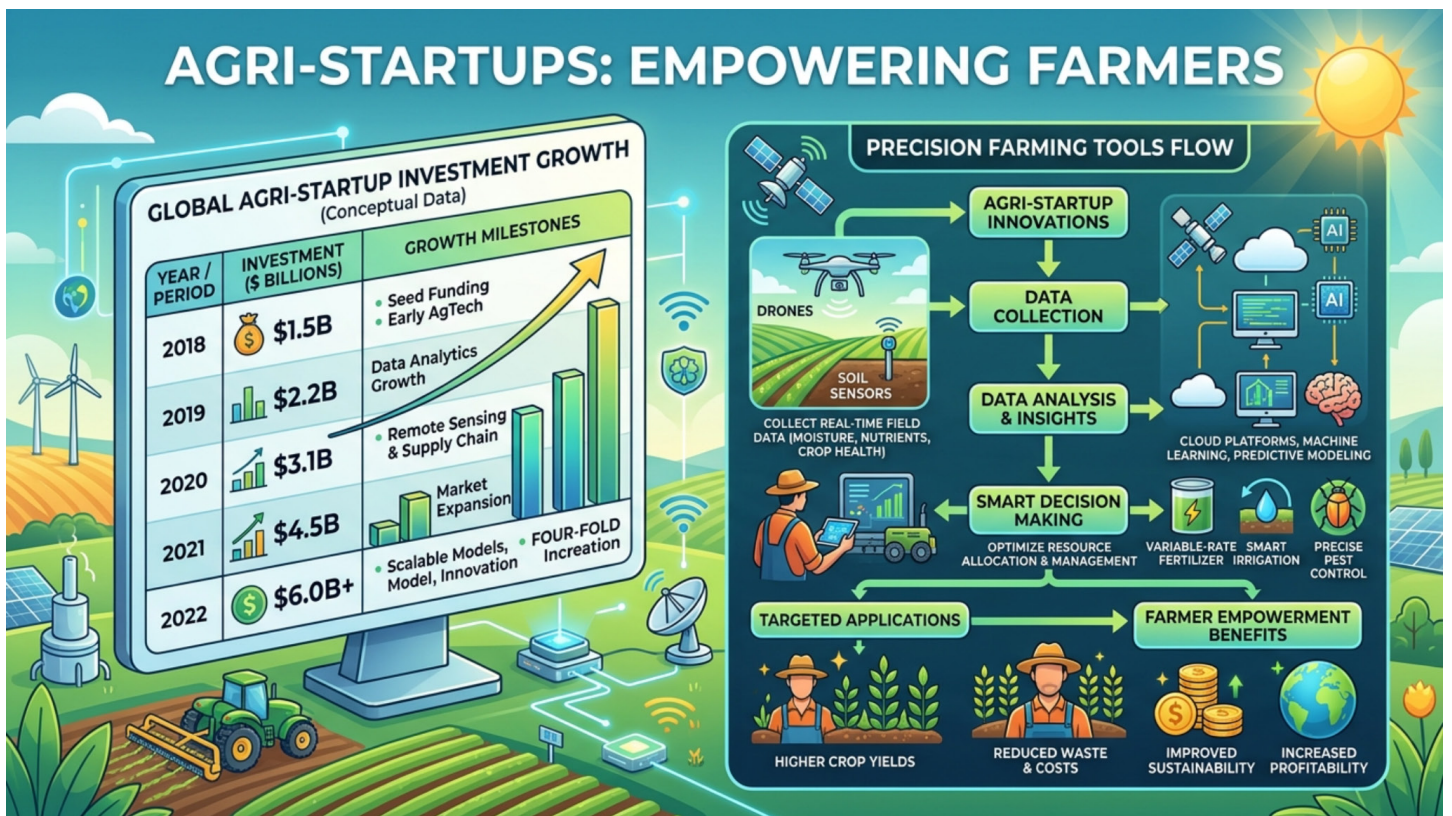
- **Personalised Learning:** Startups use adaptive algorithms and AI to tailor customised content to individual student paces, boosting retention and engagement.
- **Inclusivity and Accessibility:** Assistive-tech startups like **Tinkerbelle Labs** empower Children with Special Needs (CWSN), while others provide affordable resources to marginalised groups.
- **Skill Pathways:** Platforms like **UpGrad and Unacademy** offer project-based learning in high-demand fields such as **coding, AI-ML, and data science**.

### Prelims Facts (One Liners):

- India is home to the world's third-largest startup ecosystem with 118 unicorns by mid-2025.
- The NEP 2020 introduces flexible entry/exit options to remove the stigma associated with 'dropouts'.

**MCQ Practice:** Q. Which initiative focuses specifically on providing skill, re-skill, and up-skill training through a network of ITIs and Jan Shikshan Sansthanas? A) Digital India B) Skill India Mission C) Startup India D) NEP 2020 **Answer: B** ( )

## Topic 2: Agri-Startups: Empowering Farmers



**Summary:** Agri-startups are leveraging technology to address structural constraints in Indian agriculture, such as supply chain inefficiencies and low productivity. With over **3,000 registered agri-startups**, the sector is transitioning toward a resilient, data-driven farming model.

**Background:** Agriculture employs **42.3% of India's population** but faces bottlenecks like input price volatility and labor shortages., Government initiatives like **RKVY-RAFTAAR** have provided the necessary incubation and grants to foster innovation in this space.

### Key Points:

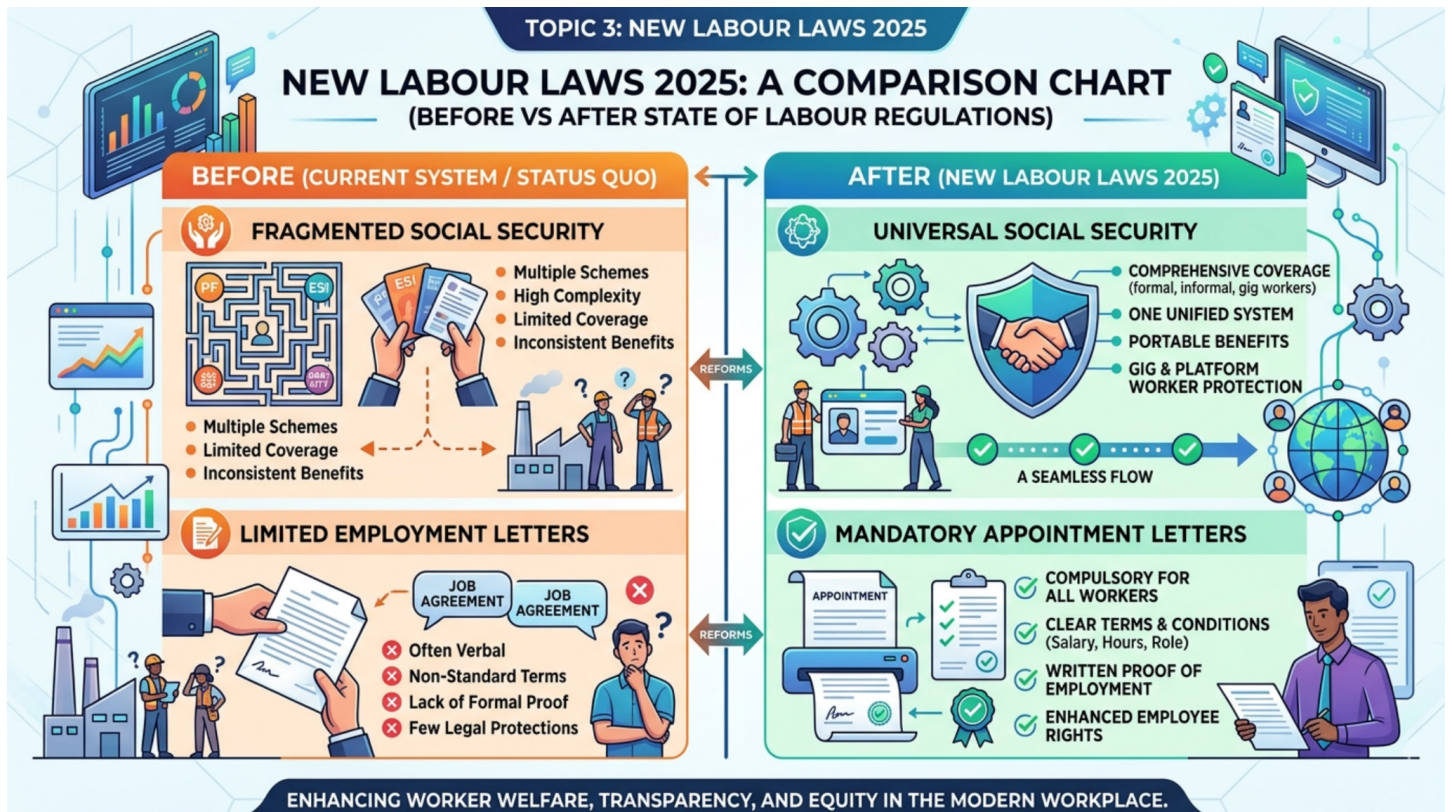
- **Precision Farming:** Ventures like **Fasal and Cropin** use IoT and satellite imaging to increase water efficiency and crop yields.,
- **Market Linkages:** Startups like **DeHaat and Ninjacart** reduce post-harvest losses by streamlining farm-to-fork delivery.,
- **Agri-Fintech:** Companies like **Samunnati** provide collateral-free loans using AI-based risk profiling, reducing dependence on informal credit.,

### Prelims Facts (One Liners):

- Investment in agri-startups surged from USD 66.3 million in 2018 to an estimated USD 215 million in 2024.
- Karnataka and Maharashtra contribute nearly 50% of all agri-tech startups established in the last five years.

**MCQ Practice:** Q. The "Innovation and Agri-Entrepreneurship Development Programme" is implemented under which government scheme? A) PM-Kisan B) RKVY-RAFTAAR C) PM-FME D) Startup India **Answer: B** ( )

## Topic 3: New Labour Laws 2025



**Summary:** India is consolidating **29 outdated laws into four modern codes** (Wages, Industrial Relations, Social Security, and OSHWC)., This paradigm shift aims to simplify compliance while extending legal protections to modern work models like the gig economy.,

**Background:** Many of India's previous labor laws dated back to the British era, leading to inconsistent rules and an "inspector raj.", The new codes align India with global standards, particularly regarding gender-neutral wages and occupational safety.

### Key Points:

- **Gig and Platform Workers:** For the first time, 'gig work' is defined, and aggregators must contribute to a social security fund for these workers.
- **Women's Empowerment:** Women are permitted to work night shifts with consent and safety measures; the definition of 'family' is expanded to include parents-in-law.
- **Work from Home:** Remote work is now formally recognized as a legal mode of employment.

### Prelims Facts (One Liners):

- The new labor codes are scheduled to be fully implemented by April 2026.
- Gratuity eligibility for fixed-term workers is reduced to just one year under the new codes.,

**MCQ Practice:** Q. Under the New Labour Codes 2025, what is the maximum weekly limit set for working hours? A) 40 hours B) 44 hours C) 48 hours D) 52 hours **Answer: C** ()

## Topic 4: Social Startups: Catalyst of Change

### TOPIC 4: SOCIAL STARTUPS: CATALYST OF CHANGE



BAREFOOT COLLEGE: SOLAR ENGINEERS TRAINING FOR RURAL WOMEN.



### SOCIAL STOCK EXCHANGE

PLATFORM FOR IMPACT INVESTING & SOCIAL ENTERPRISE FUNDING

**Summary:** Social startups are blending purpose with enterprise to solve challenges like poverty, healthcare, and climate resilience. These ventures leverage **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)** like UPI and the JAM trinity to scale their impact in underserved regions.

**Background:** Traditional welfare models often lacked the scale or sustainability required for deep impact. Social entrepreneurship treats community members as active contributors and stakeholders rather than passive beneficiaries.

#### Key Points:

- **Barefoot College:** Has improved 10 million lives by training rural people as solar engineers, teachers, and doctors,.
- **Inclusive Innovation:** Startups like **Trestle Labs** provide assistive technology for the visually impaired, used by over 600 institutions,.
- **Climate Action:** Social ventures are driving innovation in renewable energy and circular economy models through initiatives like **Mission LiFE**.

#### Prelims Facts (One Liners):

- The Social Stock Exchange (SSE) launched by SEBI provides a platform for social enterprises to raise capital.
- Over 40% of UDYAM-registered MSMEs are now women-owned,.

**MCQ Practice:** Q. Which digital backbone component has been a primary catalyst for social startups to expand rapidly in underserved geographies? A) SWAYAM B) JAM Trinity and UPI C) e-NAM D) PM-GatiShakti

**Answer: B ( )**