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(CONSOLIDATION)

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Content

● Cold and Fog in Bihar Hits Rabi Crops.....	3
● Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK)	3
● NITISH Device	3
● Illegal Mining in Bihar	4
● Bihar Floor Test	5
● Bihar Government Tables Rs 2.78 Lakh Crore Budget.....	5
● Smart Gram Panchayat.....	6
● Ayush Regional Review Meeting	6
● No “Plus Two” Classes in Colleges in Bihar	7
● M Lays Foundation Stone for Redevelopment of Railway Stations.....	8
● Bihar Small Entrepreneur Scheme 2024.....	8
● World Bank Loan for Water Management Project.....	9

Cold and Fog in Bihar Hits Rabi Crops

Why in News?

According to agriculture department officials, **preliminary assessments** from various districts in Bihar indicated that intense **cold and fog damaged potato and mustard** the most, followed by lentils. However, there are **no significant reports of damage to wheat crops**.

Key Points

- Scientists at **Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK)** in different districts **confirmed damage of Rabi crops** due to the **cold wave and cold day conditions** that lasted for days.
 - They highlighted the **adverse effects of late sowing on yield and production**, particularly with the changing climate.
 - Late-sown potato crops reported damage ranging from 25 to 40%, while early-sown potato crops faced a 15% damage. Mustard crops also suffered damage between 10 to 15%.
- The challenge faced by farmers is that they harvest paddy until December and then begin sowing rabi crops, including mustard and potato, either in mid-December or early January, exposing them to severe cold conditions.
- The extended cold spell and reduced sunshine during the day have affected rabi crops. These conditions have negatively impacted the growth, flowering and yield-making process, leading to widespread reports of Jhulsa Rog in potatoes. However, wheat crops remain largely unaffected.

Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK)

- KVK is an integral part of the **National Agricultural Research System (NARS)**. The first KVK was **established in 1974 at Puducherry**.
- The mandate of KVK is technology assessment and demonstration for its application and capacity development.
- It aims at **assessment of location specific technology modules in agriculture** and allied enterprises, through technology assessment, refinement and demonstrations.

- KVKs also produce quality technological products (seed, planting material, bio-agents, livestock) and make it available to farmers.
- The KVK scheme is 100% financed by the Government of India and the KVKs are sanctioned to Agricultural Universities, ICAR institutes, related Government Departments and Non Government Organizations (NGOs) working in Agriculture.

NITISH Device

Why in News?

The Bihar State Disaster Management Authority has launched the **Novel Initiative Technological Intervention for Safety of Human Lives (NITISH) device**.

- It is an innovative **pendant-shaped device** designed to **provide timely alerts to farmers and the public**, specifically targeting **lightning, floods, heatwaves, and cold waves**.

Key Points

- The initiative was triggered by recurring deaths among farmers due to lightning and flash floods, emphasizing the device's role in saving lives.
- It is introduced in collaboration with **the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Patna**.
- The device is connected to the **Bihar Meteorological Service Centre**, ensuring **real-time and accurate weather-related alerts**.
- The pendant will get **charged from body heat**. The device **will sound an alert in three ways**:
 - It will send **voice messages**.
 - Its **colour will change from green to red**.
 - The **device will keep warming till its user switches it off**.

Bihar State Disaster Management Authority

- Bihar SDMA was set up on 6th November 2007, under Section 14 (1) of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 passed by the Parliament.
- Its aim is to build a safe and disaster-resilient Bihar by developing a holistic, proactive, multi-disaster and technology-driven strategy for Disaster Management.
- This will be achieved through a culture of prevention, mitigation and preparedness.

Note:



Illegal Mining in Bihar

Why in News?

According to the sources, **Enforcement Directorate (ED)** has turned its attention towards the **mining mafia in Bihar**, where large syndicates are allegedly involved in **illegal sand mining**, causing **environmental degradation** and huge losses to the state exchequer.

Key Points

- In the past eight months alone, ED has established that illegal sand mining has caused revenue loss worth ₹400 crore to the Bihar government.
- The first case under ED's scanner pertains to **Janata Dal-United (JD-U) MLC, Radha Charan Sah**, who was **arrested by the agency in September 2023**.
 - The second case pertains to a company, **Aditya Multicom Private Limited**, and its **directors Jag Narayan Singh and Satish Kumar Singh**.
- Earlier, ED has investigated illegal sand or coal mining cases in **West Bengal, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh**.

Sand Mining

- About:
 - It is defined as the **removal of primary natural sand and sand resources** (mineral sands and aggregates) from the natural environment (terrestrial, riverine,

coastal, or marine) for extracting valuable minerals, metals, crushed stone, sand and gravel for subsequent processing.

- This activity, driven by various factors, poses serious threats to ecosystems and communities.
- Initiatives to Prevent Sand Mining in India:
 - Mines and Mineral Development and Regulation Act, 1957 (MMDR Act):
 - Sand is classified as a “minor mineral”, under The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulations) Act, 1957 (MMDR Act) and administrative control over minor minerals vests with the State Governments.
 - The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2023 was recently passed by the Parliament to amend the MMDR Act, 1957.
 - 2006 Environment Impact Assessment (EIA):
 - The Supreme Court of India mandated that approval is required for all sand mining collection activities, even in areas less than 5 hectares.
 - Sustainable Sand Management Guidelines (SSMG) 2016:
 - Issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change (MoEFCC), the main objectives of these guidelines include environmentally sustainable and socially responsible mining, conservation of the river equilibrium and its natural environment.
 - Enforcement and Monitoring Guidelines for Sand Mining 2020:
 - The guidelines provide a uniform protocol for monitoring sand mining across India.

Directorate of Enforcement (ED)

- ED is a multi-disciplinary organisation mandated with investigation of offences of money laundering and violations of foreign exchange laws.
 - It **functions under the Department of Revenue of the Ministry of Finance**.
- As a premier financial investigation agency of the Government of India, the ED functions in strict compliance with the Constitution and Laws of India.
- The Directorate of Enforcement was established in the year **1956** with its Headquarters at New Delhi.

Note:

Bihar Floor Test

Why in News?

Recently, the Janata Dal (United) coalition government in Bihar won the **confidence motion** by 129 votes.

Key Points

- **Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD's)** three **Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs)** were seen sitting on the ruling party benches in the Bihar Assembly.
- The RJD leader raised a **point of order**, taking objection to party MLAs sitting among members of the ruling party, ahead of voting on a **no-confidence motion**.
- The RJD coalition government won the **motion of confidence** for his government after the resolution was supported by 129 MLAs.
- The **Bihar assembly** also passed the **no-confidence motion** against **Bihar Assembly Speaker** and RJD leader **Awadh Bihari Choudhary**.
 - The **no-confidence motion** against the leader was passed with the support of **125 members**.
- However, **no ruling** was given on the **point of order** by **Deputy Speaker Maheshwar Hazari**, who was in the Chair.

Point of Order

- A member can raise a **point of order** when the proceedings of the House do not follow the normal rules of procedure.
- A point of order should relate to the interpretation or enforcement of the Rules of the House or such articles of the Constitution that regulate the business of the House and **should raise a question that is within the cognizance of the Speaker**.
- It is **usually raised by an opposition member** in order to control the government. It is an extraordinary device as it suspends the proceedings before the House.
- **No debate is allowed on a point of order.**

No-Confidence Motion

- This is a motion moved in the **Lok Sabha** (and not in the Rajya Sabha) to test the confidence of the government.
- The motion needs the support of **50 members** to be admitted.

- If a **no-confidence motion** is passed, the government must resign.
- **No-confidence motions** are significant political events that usually occur when there is a perception of the government **losing majority support**.

Floor Test

- It is a term used for the test of the majority. If there are **doubts against the Chief Minister (CM) of a State, he/she can be asked to prove the majority** in the House.
 - In case of a coalition government, the CM may be asked to move a vote of confidence and win a majority.
- In the absence of a clear majority, when there is more than one individual staking claim to form the government, **the Governor may call for a special session to see who has the majority to form the government**.
 - Some legislators may be absent or choose not to vote. The numbers are then **considered based only on those MLAs who were present to vote**.

Bihar Government Tables Rs 2.78 Lakh Crore Budget

Why in News?

Recently, the **Bihar government presented a Rs 2.78 lakh crore budget**, making education its top priority by allocating over 22% of funds to the department.

Key Points

- The government also laid **special focus on information and technology, tourism** and earmarked over **Rs 1 lakh crore for sundry government schemes**.
- Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister Samrat Choudhary presented a **budget of Rs 2,78,725.72 crore**:
 - Allocating Rs 22,200.35 crore (22.20%) to the education department.
 - Rs 13,840.56 crore (13.84%) to the rural development department.
 - Rs 8,191.79 crore (8.19%) to the social welfare department.

Note:



- The rural works and health departments were allocated Rs 7,409.13 crore (7.41%) and Rs 7,117.56 crore (7.12%).
- The government would spend Rs 3,073.26 crore on several scholarship schemes alone.
- The government has estimated an expenditure of **Rs 5,040 crore** on good governance schemes under the **Saat Nischay, Part-II programme**.
- The budget has a **revenue surplus of Rs 1,121.41 crore** and shows a fiscal deficit of 2.98%. It also shows an outstanding debt of Rs 3.48 lakh crore.

Saat Nischay, Part-II Programme

- Nischay 1. Yuva Shakti - Progress of Bihar
- Nischay 2. Strong woman, capable woman
- Nischay 3. Irrigation water to every field
- Nischay 4. Clean Village - Prosperous Village
- Nischay 5. Clean City - Developed City
- Nischay 6. Easy Connectivity
- Nischay 7. Additional health facilities for all

Smart Gram Panchayat

Why in News?

Recently, 'Smart Gram Panchayat: Revolution towards Digitization of Gram Panchayat' Project was inaugurated at Paprou Gram Panchayat of Begusarai District, Bihar.

Key Points

- The project aims to extend the **PM-WANI (Prime Minister's Wi-Fi Access Network Interface)** Service to Gram Panchayats in Begusarai, marking a paradigm shift in rural connectivity.
- It is implemented by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, funded under the revamped **Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA)**.
- The project targets 455 Gram Panchayats across 37 Blocks in Begusarai and Rohtas Districts in Bihar.
- Emphasis is placed on **using technology to enhance access to online services** in critical sectors like health, education, and skilling, improving the quality of life in rural areas.
- The beneficiaries of this initiative are Students, farmers, artisans, and Women **Self-Help Groups (SHGs)**.

PM-WANI

- The Prime Minister Wi-Fi Access Network Interface (PM WANI) scheme launched by the Department of Telecom (DoT) in December 2020.
- It is one key scheme launched to bolster the penetration of public WiFi hotspots to establish a robust digital communication infrastructure throughout the nation, especially in rural areas.

Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA)

- The RGSA is a scheme of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, launched in 2018.
- Later it was revamped and the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of RGSA was approved for implementation from 2022-23 to 2025-26 for capacity building of elected representatives (ERs) of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs).
- The primary objective of Revamped RGSA is **to develop the governance capabilities of the Panchayats to deliver on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** which are covered within the purview of Panchayats.

Ayush Regional Review Meeting

Why in News?

Union Minister of Ayush and Ports, Shipping, and Waterways, Sarbananda Sonowal, stressed the importance of holistic healthcare on a global scale during **Regional Review Meeting** of six states: Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Uttar Pradesh, which was arranged by the **Ministry of Ayush** in Patna, Bihar.

Key Points

- The Ministry of Ayush is actively supporting state and union territory governments in implementing various initiatives outlined in their **State Annual Action Plans (SAAPs)** under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of the **National Ayush Mission (NAM)**.
 - With the vision of providing Ayush healthcare services across the country, the **NAM aims to strengthen and enhance Ayush healthcare facilities**, empowering the public with informed choices.

Note:

- The Ministry of Ayush has **allocated Rs 1712.54 Crores to seven states**—Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal—under the NAM.
 - It also supported the establishment of **58 Integrated Ayush hospitals**, with 14 already operational.
 - Out of the planned 12,500 Ayush Health and Wellness Centres (AHWCs), 4235 have been supported, with 3439 already functional in these states.
- The states were **urged to accelerate the construction of Ayush Educational Institutes** and integrated Ayush hospitals.
- The importance of implementing Ayush public health programs outlined in the NAM guidelines, focusing on various interventions for a holistic approach to health was highlighted.
- States like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh were specifically encouraged to undertake the National Program on Ayush for **Morbidity Management and Disability Prevention (MMDP) of Lymphatic Filariasis**.

National Ayush Mission (NAM)

- It was **launched in September 2014** by the **Department of AYUSH** under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, during the 12th Plan for implementation through States/UTs.
 - Now, it is implemented by the **Ministry of Ayush**.
- The scheme involves **expansion of the AYUSH sector** to promote holistic health of Indians.
- The Mission addresses the gaps in health services through **supporting the efforts of State/UT Governments for providing AYUSH health services/education in the country**, particularly in vulnerable and far-flung areas.

Lymphatic Filariasis (LF)

- LF, commonly known as **elephantiasis** and is considered as a **Neglected Tropical Disease (NTD)**. It is the second most disabling disease after mental health.
- It **impairs the lymphatic system** and can lead to the **abnormal enlargement of body parts**, causing pain, severe disability and social stigma.

- The lymphatic system is a network of vessels and specialized tissues that are essential to maintaining the overall fluid balance and health of organs and limbs and, importantly, are a major component of the body's immune defense system.
- Lymphatic filariasis is a **vector-borne disease**, caused by infection with parasites **classified as nematodes (roundworms)** of the family Filarioidea. There are **3 types** of thread-like filarial worms which causes lymphatic filariasis:
 - **Wuchereria Bancrofti** is responsible for 90% of the cases.
 - **Brugia Malayi** causes most of the remainder of the cases.
 - **Brugia Timori** also causes the disease.
- Drug Treatment:
 - The **World Health Organization (WHO)** recommends **three drug treatments** to accelerate the **global elimination of lymphatic filariasis**.
 - The treatment, **known as IDA**, involves a combination of ivermectin, diethylcarbamazine citrate and albendazole.
 - The plan is to administer these drugs for two consecutive years. The life of the adult worm is hardly four years, so it would die a natural death without causing any harm to the person.
- Scenario in India:
 - Lymphatic filariasis poses a grave threat to India. An **estimated 650 million Indians across 21 states and union territories are at risk** of lymphatic filariasis.
 - **Over 40% of worldwide cases** are found in India.
 - The government launched the **Accelerated Plan for Elimination of Lymphatic Filariasis (APELF) in 2018**, and as part of intensifying efforts towards elimination, **later rolled out IDA treatment (triple drug therapy)** in a phased manner.

No "Plus Two" Classes in Colleges in Bihar

Why in News?

Recently, the Bihar government announced the **discontinuation of plus two (intermediate) classes** being held in colleges affiliated to various universities in the state.

Note:

Key Points

- According to the notification, **the intermediate education** (in all three streams — arts, science and commerce) **will now be imparted only in higher secondary schools** from the new session.
- The delinking of intermediate from colleges has been recommended in the **Universities Act, 1956** but the same could not be enforced until now because of inadequate infrastructure and manpower in higher secondary schools.
 - In 2007 the government had taken a policy decision to phase out intermediate education from colleges in conformity with the **National Education Policy (1986/92)** and had introduced 10+2 format in plus two.
 - Under a special drive, the department has already developed large-scale infrastructure and recruited 67,961 teachers for higher secondary schools and another 65,737 teachers in secondary schools.
- The Bihar government had also taken a policy decision to have **one higher secondary school in every panchayat** and had upgraded the existing secondary schools.

M Lays Foundation Stone for Redevelopment of Railway Stations

Why in News?

Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually laid the foundation stone for **redevelopment of 33 railway stations** and construction of 72 other projects in Bihar under the **East Central Railway (ECR) zone**.

Key Points

- Under the **Amrit Bharat Stations scheme**, the project aims to **enhance connectivity, trade, and business** across the country.
- According to the official statement, **thirty-three railway stations** which will now be **redeveloped** in Bihar include: Barauni, Siwan, Munger, Thawe, Sabaur, Arariya, Shivanarayanpur, Dauram Madhepura, Dehri On Sone, Guraru, Karagola Road, Chausa, Laheria Sarai, Banka, Simri Bakhtiyarpur, Supaul, Nawadah, Raxaul, Motipur, Luckeesarai, Masrakh, Rafiganj,

Mairwa, Piro, Bikramganj, Labha, Janakpur Road, Chakia, Nabinagar Road, Ghorasshan, Salmari, Ekma and Shahpur Patoree.

- Under the project, stations will be redeveloped as **city centres with provision of amenities like a shopping zone, food court, kids play area, etc.**
 - There will be provision of segregated **entry and exit gates, multi-level parking, lift escalator, executive lounge, waiting area and travelator** at the redeveloped stations.

Amrit Bharat Stations Scheme

- The Amrit Bharat Station Scheme aims to **redevelop 1309 stations nationwide**.
- The redevelopment will provide modern passenger amenities along with ensuring well-designed traffic circulation, inter-modal integration, and signage for the guidance of passengers.
- The Scheme was launched in **February 2023 by the Ministry of Railways**.

The East Central Railway (ECR) Zone

- Its **Headquarter is at Hajipur (Bihar)** was formed on **1st October 2002**.
- It was established by carving out the Sonapur & Samastipur division of North Eastern Railway & Dhanbad, Danapur & Mughalsarai division of Eastern Railway.

Bihar Small Entrepreneur Scheme 2024

Why in News?

Recently, the Bihar government, under '**Bihar Small Entrepreneur Scheme 2024**' granted financial assistance of Rs 2 lakh per family to almost 94 lakh families.

Key Points

- The Chief Minister initiated the Bihar Small Entrepreneur Scheme **to assist financially struggling families in starting their own businesses**.
- Under the scheme **50 beneficiaries were selected** through a computer randomisation system.

Note:



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- According to the officials, 2.76 crore people in the state participated in a **caste-based census**, with 94 lakh families earning less than Rs 6000 per month.

Bihar Small Entrepreneur Scheme

- Launched in **2024**, the scheme offers financial support of Rs 2 lakh per person for self-employment and entrepreneurship.
- Under the scheme, **investors can fund small-scale/cottage industries**. Such as handicrafts, textiles, service sectors, and electrical items, under the scheme.
- In the **event of an unnatural or accidental death**, workers employed in unorganized sectors will now **receive compensation** of Rs. 2 lakhs (previously Rs. 1 lakh) and Rs. 1 lakh (previously Rs. 75,000).

World Bank Loan for Water Management Project

Why in News?

Recently, the **Department of Economic Affairs** under the **Union ministry of finance** has **granted its approval** to the state government's request for a loan from the **World Bank** for the ambitious **Bihar Integrated Water Resources Management Project (BIWRMP)**.

Key Points

- The BIWRMP, aligned with the state government's ongoing initiative **'Har Khet Tak Sinchai Ka Pani**

Nishay' and 'Jal-Jeevan-Hariyali Abhiyan', would be implemented in a span of six years.

- It has an estimated cost of Rs 4,415 crore, out of which 30% would be borne by Bihar, while the World Bank would provide loan for the remaining 70%.
- It will address the completion of the long-pending **Western Kosi Canal Major Irrigation Project**, but will also help restoration of age-old dams in Bihar.
- It includes crucial projects of interlinking of rivers, control of excess water flow from major rivers to mitigate floods and employing new techniques for long-term protection of river embankments.
- **Advanced measures** will be implemented in vulnerable areas along rivers like **Ganga, Gandak, Kosi, Mahananda, Burhi Gandak, Kamala, Bagmati**, etc. to safeguard them for long-term from erosion.

World Bank

- It was **created in 1944**, as the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) along with the IMF. **The IBRD later became the World Bank.**
- The World Bank Group is a unique global partnership of five institutions working for sustainable solutions that reduce poverty and build shared prosperity in developing countries.
- The World Bank is one of the **United Nations'** specialized agencies.

Note:

Key Points

Details

Summary

