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Drishti, 641, First Floor, Dr. Mukherjee
Nagar, Delhi-110009

Inquiry (English): 8010-440-440

Inquiry (Hindi): 8750-187-501

Website: www.drishtias.com

Email: help@groupdrishti.in

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Gandak- Ganga River Link Scheme

Why In News?

On June 29, 2023, Bihar's Information and Public Relations cum Water Resources Minister Sanjay Kumar Jha told that the Gandak-Ganga river link scheme to be started on the instructions of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar will prove to be a boon for Gopalganj, Siwan and Saran districts of the state.

Key Points:

- In this scheme, starting from Gandak river near Hirapakad in Gopalganj district to Ganga river near Haispur in Saran district, a total of 170 km. Long link channel will be constructed. This includes sectioning and digging operations.
- Also, kms of Saran embankment. Anti flood sluice with 4 ports will be constructed as per the prescribed design at 139.59. The estimated amount of the scheme is Rs 69 crore 89 lakh 79 thousand.
- Residents of blocks like Gopalganj, Manjha, Barauli in Gopalganj district, Badharia, Goriyakothi, Maharajganj, Daronda in Siwan district and Dighwara, Sonpur, Khaira, Nagra, Baniapur, Madhaura etc. in Saran district will be benefited by this river linking scheme.
- Improvement in ground water level in these areas and also in terms of environmental balance will prove to be an important scheme.
- It is known that no high dam has been built in Nepal. Until the high dam is built, the water of the rivers of Bihar cannot be controlled. If a high dam is built in Nepal, then most of the areas of Kosi, Kamla, Bagmati, Gandak river in Bihar will become flood-free.
- Irrigation capacity will be increased by increasing the number of canals originating from Valmiki Nagar barrage of Gandak river in West Champaran district of the state. The Water Resources Department will prepare a plan after assessing it. Its purpose is to make maximum use of Gandak river water for irrigation. Along with this, it will also provide protection from the floods that occur every year in the Gandak river.
- At present, there is irrigation potential of about 11.50 lakh hectare in seven districts of Bihar through the canals coming out of this barrage.

- It is known that the maximum discharge capacity of Valmiki Nagar barrage is about 8.50 lakh cusecs, the maximum discharge from this barrage till date was about 6 lakh 19 thousand 750 cusecs on July 31, 2003.
- This barrage was constructed in 1967-68. Its length is about 739 meters. Half of it is in Nepal. It has 52 gates, 18 real ways, 12 under sluices, 8 river sluices, 18 head regulator gates.



Bagmati Beach will be Developed on the Lines of Marine Drive in Patna

Why in News?

On July 1, 2023, Bihar's Water Resources and Information & Public Relations Minister Sanjay Kumar Jha said that on the lines of Marine Drive built on the banks of river Ganga in Patna, the banks of Bagmati river will also be developed in Darbhanga.

Key Points:

- Sanjay Kumar Jha directed the officials to plant saplings in the direction of greening the surrounding areas.
- By planting trees around the Ghats, people will get a clean environment. Pollution will also be curbed. The pier will be further levelled, so that people will be able to walk easily.
- A pathway will be built like Marine Drive on the banks of the river. Chatariya village is an urban area. If it is constructed like Marine Drive, then people around will get a better option for walking.

Note:

Book Written on the Life of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar Inaugurated

Why In News?

On July 3, 2023, former Chief Minister of Bihar and Rashtriya Janata Dal President Lalu Prasad Yadav inaugurated the book 'Nitish Kumar: Antrang Doston Ki Nazar Se' written on the biography of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar in a program organized at Gyan Bhavan.

Key Points:

- An announcement was also made in the program to spend the royalty of this book on the disabled.
- The author of this book is Uday Kant, a friend of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and vice-chairman of the Bihar State Disaster Management Authority.
- Uday Kant, who has done PhD in engineering, is a very good friend of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar. He has a house in Bhikhanpur, Bhagalpur. Earlier he was a member of Bihar State Disaster Management Authority.
- Prior to this, Uday Kant has also been the Vice-Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor in-charge of Aryabhata Gyan Vishwavidyalaya, the dream project of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar.
- President of Rajkamal Prakashan Group, Ashok Maheshwari said that in this biography, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has a story of struggle from a person living in a normal town to reach the present position.



Approval of Bihar Biofuel Production Promotion Policy- 2023

Why in News?

The Bihar Biofuels Production Promotion Policy- 2023 was approved in the meeting of the Bihar State Council of Ministers on July 4, 2023. Along with this, the Council of Ministers took many other important decisions.

Key Points:

- Under this policy, the Bihar government will give a grant of 15% of the cost of plants and machinery to those who set up plants for biofuel production in the state. This grant will be up to a maximum of five crores.
- Sc, ST, OBC women, differently-abled, war widows, acid attack victims and third-gender entrepreneurs will be given 15.75 percent of the cost of plot and machinery and a maximum of Rs 5.25 crore.
- Additional Chief Secretary of Cabinet Department Dr. S. Siddhartha said that the last date for applying for stand-1 clearance to the units to get grants under this policy is June 30, 2024.
- Also, these entities will have to apply for financial incentive approval by June 30, 2025.
- This policy will remain in effect till March 31, 2028, from the date of issue of resolution.
- The additional Chief Secretary informed that the production of biofuels will reduce the national dependence on the import of fossil fuels. This will result in the saving of foreign exchange. The use of biofuels will reduce environmental pollution and farmers will get quick payment for sugarcane and grain production. Along with this, there will be a facility to convert waste into compressed gas, which will provide new business opportunities.
- Apart from this, the Council of Ministers has extended the last date of application for units applying under the Bihar State Investment Promotion (Textiles and Leather) Policy 2022 to June 30, 2024. It was earlier scheduled for June 30, 2023.
- The Cabinet has approved the last date for applying for financial approval by the units to June 30, 2025. After the implementation of the Bihar State Investment Promotion (Textiles and Leather) Policy 2022, investors in the textile and leather sector in the state have got encouragement.

Note:

- The Cabinet also approved the Bihar Architects Service Rules- 2014 to give 25% weightage in regular appointments to contractual employees.
- In the first phase, 59 units have been approved by the State Investment Promotion Board. The proposed investment amount is Rs 311.63 crore, after the implementation of this policy, the Muzaffarpur bag cluster started. In this, textile bags are being manufactured on more than 1100 industrial sewing machines.
- Textile bag-making units with more than 1000 stitching machines have also been set up in Muzaffarpur and Patna districts. In Muzaffarpur, textile manufacturing units are being set up by companies like RCS International and V-2. In the leather sector, seven companies are bringing the project to Madhubani at a cost of more than Rs 100 crore.

Approval of Bihar Unregulated Deposit Scheme Banning Rules- 2023

Why in News?

The Bihar Cabinet on July 4, 2023 approved the Bihar Enacted Deposit Scheme Prohibition Rules- 2023.

Key Points:

- Under this policy, the state government has got the right to investigate and take action against Chit-fund companies operating in Bihar.
- The state government has become the competent authority to take action against such companies for depositing money through illegal deposit schemes from the general public and depositors of the state.
- Additional Chief Secretary of the Cabinet Department, Dr. S. Siddhartha said that those who run the deposit scheme will be subject to the provisions of the Restrictions Rules- 2023 approved by the Cabinet.
- In this Manual, the Government of Bihar has been made the competent authority. This has empowered the state government to investigate, audit and take action against companies running deposit schemes after irregularities are found.

- All procedures for confiscation and sale of their properties to the state government will be followed under this rule. Small deposit schemes are run in the state, action will be taken against them under this.
- This new rule will protect the general public from illegal deposit schemes and fraud. The government has got the power to return or repay investors' deposits by confiscating the properties along with stringent punishment and heavy monetary penalties against the accused.
- Government lawyers working in different levels of courts will now be selected by a state-level selection committee. This committee will be formed under the chairmanship of the Advocate General. It will have a law secretary, special secretary of the law department or joint secretary as members.
- This committee will select PP, GP, APP AGP at the district level, Additional Advocate General Government Advocate for High Court, Pleader, Standing Council Public Prosecutor and Additional Advocate General and Standing Council for the Supreme Court.
- The Cabinet has approved the Bihar Law Officer (Commitment) Rules- 2023 for this.
- In the new rules, a provision has also been made about whether government lawyers will do private practice or not.
- The state government's law department has issued a notification regarding the Bihar Law Officer (Commitment) Rules- 2023. It shall come into force from the date of publication in the Official Gazette.
- Additional Chief Secretary of the Cabinet Department said that in view of the situation arising due to Covid-19 and the Ukraine war, students pursuing medical graduates from abroad will now get an opportunity to do internships in medical college hospitals of the state. Not only this but students graduating from such abroad will also be given scholarships equivalent to the National Medical Commission (NMC).
- Students pursuing medical graduates from abroad will get a chance to do internships on 7.5 percent of the total internship seats.
- According to the guidelines of the NMC, an internship facility is to be provided in medical college hospitals of the state for internship in order to register with the State Medical Council. For this, no amount or fee will be charged to those students.

Note:



Duration of Organic Corridor Scheme extended in Bihar

Why in News?

According to information received from the media on July 9, 2023, the period of the ongoing organic corridor scheme in 13 districts of Bihar has been extended. Now this scheme will run till 2025.

Key Points:

- It is known that earlier the period of the organic corridor scheme was till 2022-23.
- Under the organic corridor scheme, a total of 20,000 acres in selected 13 districts of the state will be made fully organic areas as per the standard of the National Program on Organic Production (NPOP).
- It is known that biological corridors have been made in Patna, Buxar, Bhojpur, Saran, Vaishali, Samastipur, Khagaria, Begusarai, Lakhisarai, Bhagalpur, Munger, Katihar and Nalanda located on the banks of river Ganga. Biological corridors have been made an important component of water-life greenery.
- Organic farming will be promoted as a cluster. Under this, the health and quality of the soil will be protected by agricultural ecosystem management, free from harmful substances. Infrastructure will also be provided to the farmers.
- At present, organic farming is being done in 17507.363 acres in these districts. The Bihar State Biological Mission is monitoring it.
- Under this scheme, farmers will be given a grant of Rs 11500 per acre in the first year. Also, in the second and third years, a grant of Rs 6500-6500 per acre will be given.
- Common Facility Center will be constructed under this scheme. Isolation vans, refrigerated vans will be provided at a 75 percent subsidy. Marketing of organic products will also be done through the agency. This will enable farmers to get a fair price for their produce.
- An organic incentive scheme will be run in 38 districts of the state to produce poison-free food. Under this, the cost price of crops will be reduced and productivity will be increased. This will increase the income of farmers.
- Under this scheme, farmers will get subsidies for the construction of vermicompost, and commercial

vermicompost units. For vermicompost, 50 percent of the cost or a maximum of Five thousand rupees per unit subsidy will be given.

- At the same time, a maximum grant of Rs 6.40 lakh will be given for commercial vermicompost manufacturing. The amount will be paid in three instalments to the beneficiaries of commercial vermicompost.

Financial Clearance to 19 Investment Proposals worth more than 2 Crores in various Industrial Areas

Why in News?

According to information received from the media on July 9, 2023, the Investment Promotion Council has given financial clearance to 19 investment proposals worth more than Rs 2 crore in various industrial areas of Bihar, in which an investment of Rs 156 crore is proposed.

Key Points:

- The investing entity has achieved financial convenience and eligibility for grants from the bank and the government. Now it can have financial help and bring the investment on the ground according to the proposal.
- In the field of food processing, some new investments are going to be made in Bihar, which will include chips and snacks in Daniyawan, Patna, juice and soft drinks in Barari in Bhagalpur and potato chips unit in Gaya.
- The highest investment is in the food processing and health sector. The financial proposals that have been given financial approval include areas of snacks, chips, crisps, soft drinks, fruit drinks and bakeries.
- **Investments will be made in these places:**
 - A chips and snacks-making plant will be set up at Daniyawan in the Patna district. Its investment proposal is Rs 66.99 crore.
 - An investment of Rs 38.61 crore has been proposed for the production of salty crispy potato chips in Hajipur industrial area of Vaishali district.
 - An investment of Rs 11.13 crore has been proposed in the field of fruit juice and soft drinks in Bhagalpur Barari Industrial Area.

Note:

- An investment of Rs 10.34 crore has been proposed for sweet, bakery and namkeen production in Pataliputra Industrial Area in Patna district.
- A plant worth about Rs 10 crore will be set up in Gaya district for potato chips production.
- An investment of over Rs 10.86 crore is to be made for the spread of rice in Berhampur area of Buxar district.
- In the healthcare sector, an investment of over Rs 23.35 crore has been proposed for the construction of a 65-bed hospital at Zoran Chhapra in Muzaffarpur and over Rs 4 crore for setting up a 100-bed hospital at Lahariaganj in Madhubani.
- Apart from this, green signal has been given to investment proposals of the general manufacturing sector in these proposals.

Arwal & Sheikhpura will become Districts with 100% Digital Transactions

Why in News?

According to the information received from the media on July 12, 2023, after Jehanabad district in Bihar, now Arwal and Sheikhpura are also going to be the districts with 100 percent digital transactions.

Key Points:

- About 88.31 per cent of savings account customers in Arwal and 92.84 per cent in Sheikhpura have been provided with a digital platform for transactions and are using it.
- Of the total 6.78 lakh active savings account holders in Arwal district, 5.99 lakh account holders are using at least one digital tool. At the same time, out of 6980 current account holders, 4397 account holders i.e., 62.99 percent are doing digital transactions.
- In Sheikhpura district, out of 5.32 lakh savings account holders, 4.94 lakh or 92.84 per cent of customers have at least one digital banking product i.e. internet banking, debit card, mobile banking, UPI and other similar facilities.
- In 2019, the Central Government and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) decided to make at least one district in every state of the country a district with 100 percent digital banking service.

- Under this, Jehanabad district in Bihar was selected and the State Level Bankers Committee worked with all the stakeholders strategically and Jehanabad was declared a district with digital banking. Now Arwal and Sheikhpura have been selected.
- The best thing about digital payment systems in financial transactions is that it does not require carrying cash. There are many discounts like 0.75 percent discount on buying petrol with the card, rail tickets, toll on highways and buying insurance.

Bihar Girl becomes Weightlifting Referee in Commonwealth Games

Why in News?

According to information received from the media on July 12, 2023, Srishti Singh, a resident of Maritar village under Guthani police station area of Siwan district of Bihar, has been selected for the role of referee in the weightlifting championship in the ongoing Commonwealth Games in Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh.

Key Points:

- It is known that Srishti Singh has won dozens of medals in weightlifting. Srishti Singh won the silver medal in the Junior Commonwealth Games held in the year 2008. Srishti also had a great performance in the 2010 weightlifting game.
- The Commonwealth Senior Men's and Senior Women's, Junior Men's and Women's, as well as Women's Weightlifting Championships, kicked off in Greater Noida on July 12. The game will run until July 16. This includes women, men, seniors, juniors, and young boys & girls.



Note:

CAG Report presented in Legislature: Bihar in top 3 in Revival of Economy

Why in News?

On July 13, 2023, Finance Minister Vijay Chaudhary tabled the CAG report in the Bihar Legislature, in which Bihar ranked 3rd among the top 10 states in the country that revived their economy after the Covid pandemic.

Key Points:

- As per the report, Bihar has recorded GSDP at a five-year high. During the financial year 2021-22, an increase of Rs 30630 crore i.e. 23.90 percent was recorded in revenue receipts due to an increase in the share of central taxes and self-tax revenue. Due to the increase in social services, the revenue expenditure increased by 19727 crores.
- During the financial year ending March 31, 2022, the state government spent only Rs 194202.20 crore i.e. 73.17 percent against the total budget provision of Rs 265396.87 crore.
- The supplementary provision of Rs.47094.17 crores was completely wasted as it was not even up to the level of the original provision.
- The report of local bodies for the financial year March 31, 2021, and financial management till March 31, 2022, was presented in the House. In this, questions have been raised on the functioning of Panchayati Raj Institutions and Municipal Bodies and the financial management of the State.
- According to the CAG report, Panchayati Raj institutions have not given utilization certificates worth about Rs 25,000 crore. Also, questions have been raised about the continuous increase in the budget size and the amount not being spent in that proportion.
- According to the CAG report, a fiscal deficit of Rs 25551 crore has been recorded, although this deficit is less than Rs 4276 crore in the previous year. During the year 2021-22, the state faced revenue deficit for the third time after 2004-05, which was 422 crores.
- According to the CAG report, the Urban Development and Housing Department had approved a grant of Rs 10,952 crore received between the financial years 2016-17 to 2020-21, but till March 2022, adjustment of Rs 4984 crore i.e. up to 46% of the utilization certificates were pending.

- Patna Municipal Corporation has suffered a loss of about nine crore rupees due to its failure to recover the user fee charged for providing door-to-door garbage collection services.
- It was found in the audit that between the years 2007-08 to 2020-21, the Panchayati Raj Department had issued a grant of Rs 42940 crore to the Panchayati Raj Institutions, but the institutions gave utilization certificates of only Rs 17917 crore. This was only 42% of the total amount, while a utilization certificate of about Rs 25,000 crore is pending.



Adya Singh of Patna topped in the First Round of the 11th Edition of Crossword Competition (CCCC) .

Why In News?

On July 16, 2023, the first round of the 11th edition of the Annual Inter-School National Cryptic Crossword Competition (CCCC) began with Adya Singh of Notre Dame Academy, Patna topping the list.

key points

- Adya Singh showed great speed in presenting the solution in 18 minutes of the start of the competition and got the top position.
- Dhara Mittal of The Mother's International School, New Delhi and L. Lakshmishree, who topped the practice round, missed the top spot by a narrow margin and finished second. This was a difference of less than a second between the first and second ranks.
- Anuj and Aditya Mishra of DPS, Bokaro Steel City got the third position. There was only a 32 seconds difference between these top 3 contenders.
- It is noteworthy that the second round of the first phase of this competition will be held on July 23 and the third round on July 30.
- The cumulative scores on the leaderboard after the third round on July 30 will decide which school teams qualify for the offline Phase II.

Note:

- The top team in a state or city in any of the three rounds automatically qualifies for the next round.
- The National Cryptic Crossword Competition (CCCC) 11.0 is the 11th edition in a series started in 2013, the centenary of the first published crossword.
- The objective of this competition is to inculcate in young students a spirit of exploration, analytical thinking and quality decision making.
- It is open to students of classes VII-XII from schools affiliated to any recognized board in India. It consists of two students in a school team.



5 Districts of Bihar got 'Bhoomi Samman 2023'

Why in News?

On July 18, 2023, President Smt. Draupadi Murmu presented 'Bhoomi Samman 2023' to Brajesh Mehrotra, Additional Chief Secretary, Land Records Department, Bihar and Collectors of 5 districts for their outstanding performance in the field of land management and administration at a function held at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

Key Points:

- President Draupadi Murmu presented awards to secretaries of 9 states and 68 collectors at a felicitation ceremony organised by the Union Ministry of Rural Development.
- The state-level team and district team of Bihar were awarded for their outstanding work in six areas. These include the computerization of land records, digitization of revenue maps of the state, cadastralization of rights records, linkage with maps, computerization of registration department, integration of registration office and land records and creation of modern zonal level modern archives.
- Brajesh Mehrotra, Additional Chief Secretary, Land Records Department of Bihar, Jai Singh, Director Land Records and Measurement Joint Secretary and Anand Shankar, IT Manager were honoured.

- Apart from these, Nalanda, Jehanabad, Lakhisarai, Bhojpur and Kishanganj districts were awarded land honours. Collectors of these districts were awarded platinum certificates for the Platinum Category.
- The Digital India Land Records Management Programme has been run by the Department of Land Resources since 2008-09 with 100 percent central government funding. The main objective of the programme is to develop a modern, comprehensive and transparent land records management system for the convenience of the citizens.
- Under the programme, a monthly grading system has been implemented based on the data recorded on the MISs of the programme to reward the districts that have done well since January 2022. It offers silver grades ranging from 90% to 95%, gold from 95% to 99% and platinum grades at more than 99% work efficiency.



24 Litterateurs selected for Official Language Award by the Government of Bihar

Why in News?

According to the information received from the media on July 18, 2023, the Bihar government has announced the Rajbhasha Awards, in which 24 litterateurs awarded Hindi Seva Samman for 2020-21 and 2021-22 will be honoured on July 31 at the Convention Building in Patna.

Key Points:

- An amount ranging from 50 thousand to 3 lakh rupees in cash will be given to the selected litterateurs.
- **Selected litterateurs for 2020-21:**
 - Vishwanath Prasad Tiwari has been selected for Dr. Rajendra Prasad Shikhar Samman. He will be given a prize of three lakh rupees.

Note:

- Dr. Ashok Kumar has been selected for the BR Ambedkar Award. He will be given a cash prize of Rs 2.5 lakh.
- Jannayak Karpoori Thakur Samman to Mrinal Pandey, BP Mandal Award to Sushila Takbhare, Nagarjuna Award to poet Satyanarayan, Ramdhari Singh Dinkar Award to Ramshrestha Dewan and Phanishwarnath Renu Award to Prof. Jabir Hussain will be given. All of them will be given Rs 2 lakh as cash prize.
- Mahadevi Verma Award to Dr. Poonam Singh, Babu Ganga Sharan Singh Award to Dr. K. Banerjee, Vidyakar Kavi Award to Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prasar Prachar Sabha, Vidyapati Award to Geeta Shri, Mohan Lal Mahto Viyogi Award to Dr. Rakesh Kumar Sinha Ravi, Bhikhari Thakur Award to Bhagwati Prasad Dwivedi, Dr. Grierson Award to Dr. Chhaya Sinha and Dr. Kamil Bulke Award to Anant Vijay. All of them will be given Rs 50,000 as cash prize.

➤ Selected litterateurs for 2021-22:

- Madhusudan Anand has been selected for the Dr. Rajendra Prasad Shikhar Samman. He will be given a cash prize of Rs 3 lakh.
- Balaram has been selected for the Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar Award. He will be given Rs 2.5 lakh as the prize.
- Jannayak Karpoori Thakur Award will be given to Dr. Chandra Shikha, BP Mandal Award to Dr. Irshad Kamil, Nagarjuna Award to Bholu Pandit Pranayai, Ramdhari Singh Dinkar Samman to Anirudh Sinha and Phanishwarnath Renu Award to Dr. Shahnaz Fatmi. They will be given two lakh rupees in cash.
- Mahadevi Verma Award will be given to Dr. Bhawna and Babu Ganga Sharan Singh Award to Dr. Gurmeet Singh. They will be given Rs 50,000 in cash.

Bihar's World Famous Rajgir Malmas Fair started

Why in News?

On July 18, 2023, the world-famous Rajgir Malmas Mela began at Rajgir in Nalanda district of Bihar. There will be many holy baths during the 1 month long fair. The fair began with traditional flag hoisting in the presence of saints and seers.

Key Points:

- It is believed in Hinduism that 33 crore gods and goddesses migrate to Rajgir during the month of Malmas. During this time, lakhs of devotees from different parts of the country and the state reach Rajgir to worship and take a holy bath in Brahmakund.
- The Malamas Fair is held every 3 years. It is believed that bathing in the hot water pool of Rajgir during Malamas eliminates all sins.
- It is believed that during the Malamas Mela, there is no worship and marriage ceremony and auspicious work anywhere in the country. It is also a belief that yellow clothes are worn while chanting mantras at the time of flag hoisting of Malmas fair, it gives benefits.



2 students of Kendriya Vidyalaya Motihari, East Champaran honoured in Fit India Quiz- 2022

Why in News?

On July 23, 2023, Union Minister of Youth Affairs, Sports and Information & Broadcasting Anurag Singh Thakur felicitated 2 school students of Kendriya Vidyalaya Motihari in East Champaran district of Bihar on their success in the second episode of Fit India Quiz State Round at BKC, Bandra, Mumbai.

Key Points:

- It is known that Anurag Singh Thakur felicitated 72 school students from 36 states and union territories including Bihar on their success in the second episode of Fit India Quiz State Round.
- These 72 students are going to top the state in their respective states and will now compete in the national round of the Fit India Quiz, which will be broadcasted on Star Sports and Disney Hotstar.

Note:

- In the Fit India Competition 2022, Sammi Jassi and Himanshu Kumar, students of Kendriya Vidyalaya Motihari in East Champaran district, made the district proud by winning the state finals.
- The winning school from each state/UT received a total prize money of Rs 2.5 lakh, while a team of 2 students from the school received a total prize of Rs 25,000.
- The first runner-up school received Rs 1 lakh and the students received a total prize money of Rs 10,000. Similarly, the State Second Runner-up School received a cash prize of Rs 50,000 and the participating students received a total prize of Rs 5,000.
- A total of 348 schools and 418 students were selected for the State/UT round. Of these students, 39% were girls. The selected schools formed a team of two students who competed for the State/UT Championship through a series of web rounds. A total of 120 rounds were conducted to identify 36 State/UT champions. Of the 36 schools identified as state/UT champions, 12 are government schools.
- The second edition of Fit India National Fitness and Sports Quiz for schools was launched on the eve of National Sports Day on August 29 last year by Anurag Singh Thakur and Minister of State, Youth Affairs and Sports and Home Affairs Nisith Pramanik in the presence of Union Minister of Education and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship Dharmendra Pradhan.
- The second edition of the Fit India quiz has seen a huge participation of 61,981 students from 16,702 schools across 702 districts of India. In comparison, a total of 36,299 students from 13,502 schools participated in the first edition of the Fit India quiz. There was a 70% increase in the number of students participating in the second edition of the quiz as compared to the first edition.
- The Fit India Quiz is India's biggest quiz on sports and fitness for school-going children. The quiz was launched in 2020 with an aim to propagate the message of Fit India among school children and strengthen its presence in schools.
- The Fit India Quiz is a part of the Fit India Movement, which was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2019. The aim of this initiative is to make India a fit and healthy nation.
- In the quiz, cash prizes totalling Rs 3.25 crore are given to the school and students. It provides a platform for students from every corner of the country to

showcase their knowledge in sports and fitness at the national level.

- After the national round, the winning school will get a total prize money of Rs 25 lakh, while the first runner-up and second runner-up school will get Rs 15 lakh and Rs 10 lakh respectively.

Sports University & Academy being built to promote Sports in Bihar

Why in News?

According to information received from the media on July 21, 2023, the state government is working at many levels to develop a sports culture in Bihar. For this, the process of setting up a sports university and sports academy in the state is underway.

Key Points:

- Apart from this, 31 posts for this sports university and 81 posts for the sports academy have been approved by the administration.
- Both the state's first sports university and sports academy are to be set up at Rajgir in Nalanda district. Both these institutes will be set up in the international cricket stadium complex being built in Rajgir.
- Bihar has become the sixth state to set up a sports university after Gujarat, Punjab, Assam, Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan. For this, the Bihar Sports University Bill 2021 was passed by the legislature.
- The Vice-Chancellor of this University will be selected from the experience of sports administration and sports management as well as the international level player. At the same time, the ex-officio Chancellor of this university will be the Chief Minister.
- There is a plan to study from diploma to postgraduate related to sports in this sports university being built in Nalanda district. In the initial phase, subjects related to physical education, sports physics, sports training, sports media, sports management and sports administration will be taught.
- The headquarters of this university will be in Rajgir. The State Sports Academy of Rajgir will also be part of it. A provision has also been made to reserve 33% of seats for women in all colleges affiliated with the university.

Note:



- With the opening of the Sports University, not only sports will get a boost in Bihar, but it will also create employment for the people. Along with this, the shortage of physical teachers and sports trainers in the state will also be overcome.
- Apart from this, preparations are also underway to open new physical training colleges in the state, which will also prepare a large number of sports trainers.
- It is known that the International Cricket Stadium-Sports Academy is being constructed on 90.765 acres of Thera Hindupur Mouja in Thera village of Pilkhi panchayat, just five kilometres from the tourist town Rajgir.
- After the construction of this international stadium, national and international level matches will also be played here. This cricket stadium and sports academy are being constructed at a cost of Rs 740.82 crore.
- Along with cricket, other sports will also be organized in this international stadium-sports academy being built in Rajgir. There will also be a sports library.
- This stadium will have an indoor and outdoor sports complex. The academy will have facilities like a playground, sports equipment, and library along with a research, fitness and motivation centre.

Agreement between IWAI & Bihar Tourism Department for Ganga River Cruise Tourism

Why in News?

According to information received from the media on July 24, 2023, a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) and the Bihar Tourism Department to promote river cruise tourism in the River Ganga in Bihar. Under this, two vessels named Ro Pax Vessel with a capacity of 300-300 tourists will run in Patna and Bhagalpur.

Key Points:

- The MoU was signed by Nand Kishore, Managing Director, Bihar State Tourism Development Corporation and K.L. Rajak, Director, Inland Waterways Authority of India in the presence of Tourism Department Secretary Abhay Kumar Singh.

- According to the MoU, tourist cruises, auspicious events and social gatherings as well as other meetings can be organized on this vessel.
- The first vessel will operate between Janardan Ghat, Digha, Patna to Kangan Ghat, Patna City in Patna and the second between Kahalgaon, Sultanganj, Bateshwar in Bhagalpur and Dolphin Sanctuary of Vikram shila.
- A total of two vessels (Ro Pax Vessel) with a capacity of 300 tourists each will be operated in Patna and Bhagalpur. This vessel will take a tour of the Ganga Ghats of Patna and Bhagalpur at a speed of about 15 km (about 9.32 mi) per hour.
- While walking through this vessel, tourists will also be able to see many tourist places. For example, tourists will be able to visit Sri Harimandir Sahib Gurudwara through Kangan Ghat of Patna. At the same time, tourists in Bhagalpur will also be able to visit the Ganga Dolphin Sanctuary while visiting the Ganga Ghats. Within two weeks, Ro-Pax will reach Vesel, Patna and Bhagalpur.
- The IWAI director said that within two weeks of the MoU, Ro-Pax vessels will reach Patna and Bhagalpur. After this, its operation can be started.
- BSTDC Managing Director said that the tender process for the operation of both cruises is going on. The cruise operations will be started from the tourism point of view by completing all the formal procedures as soon as possible.



Note:

Bihar Government Constituted Several State Commissions

Why In News?

On July 26, 2023, According to information received from the media, the Bihar government reconstituted several state commissions.

Key Points:

- **Bihar State Women's Commission:** Former MP **Ashwamedh Devi** has been made the **chairperson of the State Women's Commission**, while Prabhavati Manjhi of Jehanabad, Sujata Sumbrai of Siwan, Rabia Khatoon of Bhagalpur, Sunita Kushwaha of Gopalganj, Shweta Vishwas of Paliganj of Patna, Sulochana of Purnia are members. Devi and Saharsa's Prof. Geeta Yadav have been made a member of the State Women's Commission.
 - Social Welfare Department, Home Department and Bihar State Women and Child Development Corporation have been nominated as ex-officio members each.
 - According to the notification of the Social Welfare Department, the chairman and members of the commission **will serve a maximum of three years from the date of nomination or till the age of 65 years**, whichever is earlier. Will remain in office till that time.
 - Samastipur has got the post of State Commission for Women for the second time. Prior to this, former MLA Manju Prakash has been the chairperson of the State Women's Commission.
 - Ashwamedh Devi has also been an MLA from Kalyanpur assembly constituency. She has been associated with the party since the time of Samta Party. She became a Member of Parliament for the first time after the Ujjarpur Lok Sabha constituency was formed. After this she contested several Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha elections, but lost.
- **Bihar State Minorities Commission:** The government has also reconstituted the Bihar State Minorities Commission. According to the departmental notification, former **MLC Riyazul Haque alias Raju** has been made the president and **Naushad Alam of Kishanganj** has been made the vice-president.
 - Muzaffar Hussain Rahi of Jehanabad, Mahtab Alam alias Kabul Ahmed of Rohtas, Iftekhar Ahmed alias Munna Tyagi of West Champaran, Dr. Iqbal Sami of Muzaffarpur, Afroza Khatoon of Nawada, Murtaza Ali Kaiser of Siwan and Mukesh Jain of Begusarai i.e. a total of seven members. have been nominated.
 - The tenure of the office bearers nominated as Chairman, Vice Chairman and members of the Commission will be for the next three years from July 25.
- **Bihar State Madarsa Board:** This board has been reconstituted for three years. Former **Legislative Councilor Salim Parvez** has been made the chairman of the board. Five ex-officio members and the remaining seven members have been made in the total 13-member board.
 - The special members of the Madrasa Board include Mahboob Alam, Member of Legislative Assembly, Syed Ruknuddin Ahmed, Member of Legislative Council Khalid Anwar, Madrasa teacher Humayun Akhtar Tariq, Abdul Karim Ansari of Madhubani, Riazul Ansari of East Champaran and Shabbir Ahmed of Muzaffarpur.
 - Apart from this, ex-officio members include Director of Education in charge of Oriental Education, Director Arabic and Persian Post Graduate Studies and Research Institute, Patna, Principal of Madrasa Islamia Shamsul Hoda, Chairman of Bihar Sunni and Shia Waqf Board.
- **Bihar Sanskrit Board:** Senior RJD leader and former **MLA Bhola Yadav** has been made the chairman of this board.
 - A total of twelve members have been nominated in this board for **three years**. It will have **two ex-officio members** and nine nominated members. The ex-officio members include the Director of Education for Sanskrit Education and a representative of the Sanskrit University.
 - The nominated members include MLA Vinay Kumar Chowdhary, Lalit Narayan Mandal, MLC Prem Chandra Mishra, RJD leader and Chittaranjan Gagan of



Note:



Vaishali, Madan Sharma of Mokama, Ramsheesh Yadav of Madhubani, University Sanskrit teacher Acharya Siyaram Prasad Yadav, Narayan Mahto of Madhubani and Pratima Kumari of Patna is included.



ADB & GoI sign \$295 million loan agreement to upgrade SH in Bihar

Why in News?

On July 27, 2023, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of India signed a \$295 million loan agreement to upgrade about 265 km of state highways in Bihar with climate and disaster-resilient design and road safety factors.

Key Points:

- The agreement to enhance connectivity and stability in the Bihar road project was signed by Wumlunmang Wualnam, Additional Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Government of India on behalf of the Government of India and Takeo Konishi, ADB Country Director in India on behalf of the ADB.
- The project will support the Bihar government's programme to upgrade all state highways to standard 2-lane width and improve road safety. The upgraded roads will enhance connectivity in some of Bihar's poorest rural districts and boost access to health and education facilities and markets to improve people's lives.
- In addition to upgrading roads, the ADB project will build on the state road agency's earlier efforts to enhance management and implementation capacity and strengthen systems for planning, road safety and sustainability, said Takeo Konishi, ADB Country Director in India.
- The initiative to strengthen the State Road Agency, Bihar State Road Development Corporation Limited will include developing a road asset management system

which includes setting up of research laboratories at Bihar Road Research Institute to enable testing of materials including climate change and disaster risk information, reusable & sustainable materials, to mitigate the effects of climate change, Studies on congestion management & climate adaptation and road safety measures will include creating guidelines for gender-inclusive practices.

- The project will also encourage women's participation by providing employment to women workers in construction works. Women from communities in the project areas will also be given training on livelihood as well as making them aware of road safety, health, sanitation, abuse and harassment.
- Since 2008, ADB has provided five loans totalling \$1.63 billion to Bihar to upgrade about 1,696 km of state highways and build a new bridge over the River Ganga.

Bihar's girl Falak's film 'Champaran Mutton' included in Oscar race

Why in News?

According to the information received from the media on July 27, 2023, the film 'Champaran Mutton', starring Falak, the girl from Muzaffarpur district of Bihar, joined the Oscar race.

Key Points:

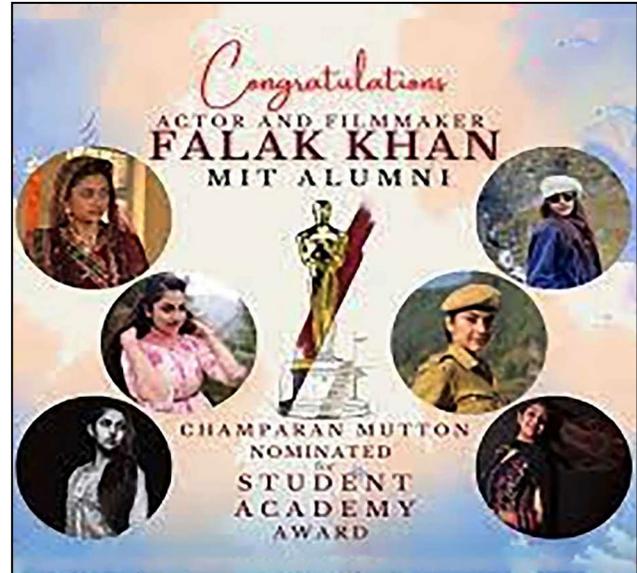
- Falak starrer 'Champaran Mutton' has made it to the semi-finals of the Student Academy Award along with films from countries like USA, France and Austria.
- The film has been selected in the semi-final round of Oscar's Student Academy Award 2023. Film training institutes from all over the world were selected for this award. Over 1700 films were selected.
- The film 'Champaran Mutton' is directed by Ranjan Kumar of Film and Television Institute of India, Pune. The film is only half an hour long.
- It is known that the Student Academy Award is given to students studying filmmaking, university training institutes and universities, it is a branch of the Oscars. Since 1972, this award is being given to good films. The Student Academy Award is given in four categories.
- 'Champaran Mutton' is included in three other categories including Narrative. This is the only Indian

Note:

film, which has been included in this award. It is known that the award-winning films here have been awarded the Oscar Awards.

- Here it is going to compete with 16 films in the semi-finals. This category also includes films from countries like Argentina, Belgium, and Germany.
- Actress Falak tells that this half-hour film inspires people to be honest in their relationships and not to give up in any situation. The story of this film is based on a person who lost his job after the lockdown.
- Its sensitivity touches people's hearts. This is the reason why the film has been nominated for the Student Academy Award at the Oscars.
- Significantly, from Indian cinema to every cinema, the Oscar award is special. It is considered the biggest award in the world of cinema. No extra money is given to the winner in this.
- After getting this award, any artist gets recognition in the whole world. The entire career of an actor benefits greatly from this. This also increases the market value of the actor significantly.
- According to the official website of the Academy Awards, it costs up to \$1000 to make an Oscar statuette.
- At the same time, till the year 1950, the ownership of the Oscar Award was with the artist, but now it has changed. According to the rules of the academy, artists can no longer value the award in rupees.
- If someone wants to sell his award, he has to return the award to Oscar for one dollar. Thus, the value of

this award cannot be put in rupees. This award gives recognition to the whole country as well as abroad.



Note:



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Key Points

Details

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Summary

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