

Bihar Special

Railway Doubling Project in North Bihar

Why in the news?

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved the doubling of the following railway sections:

- ❖ Narkatiaganj-Raxaul-Sitamarhi-Darbhanga and Sitamarhi-Muzaffarpur sections.
 - It will cover a total distance of 256 kilometers.

Advantages of the Project:

- ❖ Doubling of railway lines on the Narkatiaganj-Raxaul, Sitamarhi-Darbhanga and Sitamarhi-Darbhanga routes will provide better connectivity to 12 lakh people in 168 villages of Bihar and 9 new railway stations will be constructed.
- ❖ This multi-tracking project will strengthen connectivity in two aspiring districts of the state, Sitamarhi and Muzaffarpur, and will benefit 9 lakh people in 388 villages.
- ❖ This route is very important for the transportation of products like agricultural produce, fertilizers, coal, iron ore, steel, and cement.

- ❖ It will strengthen connectivity from Mithilanchal to Nepal, North-East India, and border areas, facilitating the movement of both passenger and goods trains.
- ❖ A new Bagmati bridge is also part of the plan, which will significantly improve port connectivity to North Bihar and the Mithilanchal region.
- ❖ This will enable smoother transportation towards the North East and contribute to the development of a religious corridor.

Environment And Geography

Gram Panchayat Level Weather Forecasting

Why in the news?

The Union government has launched the Gram Panchayat-Level Weather Forecasting.

About this initiative:

- ❖ It has been developed in collaboration between the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) and the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES).
- ❖ It will provide Gram Panchayats with a five-day weather forecast and hourly updates.

❖ **Significance:**

- It marks a major step forward in climate preparedness at the grassroots level.
- It will enable rural communities to better plan agricultural activities and prepare for weather-related risks.



Science And Technology

New Missile Testing Range

Why in the news?

The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) has approved the establishment of a new missile testing range.

- ❖ It will be established in Nagayalanka, Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ **Objective:** To strengthen the country's defence capabilities, particularly in testing tactical missile systems.

About the new Missile Testing Range:

- ❖ It will support the testing of surface-to-air missiles, anti-tank missiles, and other projects under the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).



Venture Capital Fund for Space Sector

Why in the news?

The Union Cabinet has approved setting up of Rs.1000 crore Venture Capital Fund dedicated to the space sector, under the aegis of IN-SPACe.

- ❖ **Objective:** It aims to strategically position India as one of the leading space economies.

About the fund:

- ❖ It will boost investor confidence, attract private capital, and signal the government's commitment to advancing space reforms.
- ❖ It will serve as an Alternative Investment Fund under SEBI regulations, providing early-stage equity to startups and enabling them to scale for further private equity investments.

IN-SPACe

- ❖ The Government of India, as part of its 2020 space sector reforms, established IN-SPACe to promote and oversee private sector participation in space activities.

Defence And Security

SIMBEX 2024

Why in the news?

The 31st edition of the Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX) started at the Eastern Naval Command at Visakhapatnam.

- ❖ The opening ceremony to mark the beginning of SIMBEX24 was conducted onboard INS Shivalik.
- ❖ It will be conducted in two phases:
 - Harbour Phase from 23 to 25 October 2024 at Visakhapatnam.
 - Sea Phase from 28 to 29 October 2024 in the Bay of Bengal.
- ❖ Objective of the exercise
 - To further strengthen the strategic partnership between India and Singapore by enhancing interoperability, improving maritime domain awareness, and fostering cooperation to address common maritime challenges.
- ❖ History of the exercise: It began as 'Exercise Lion King' in 1994.



First India-Germany Maritime Partnership Exercise

Why in the news?

Indian Navy's Destroyer INS Delhi, German Navy's Frigate Baden-Württemberg and Tanker Frankfurt Am Main undertook a Maritime Partnership Exercise (MPX) in the Indian Ocean.



- ❖ It was the first India-Germany Maritime Partnership Exercise.
- ❖ Objective: To strengthen the maritime connection between the two nations and interoperability between the navies.
- ❖ INS Delhi is the lead ship of her class of guided missile destroyers and is part of the Eastern Fleet of the Indian Navy.

Sports

Highest Score in T20 Cricket

Why in the news?

Zimbabwe shattered the record for the highest total in men's T20I cricket.

- ❖ It scored a staggering 344/4 in their 20 overs against *Gambia* during the ICC Men's T20 World Cup Sub-Regional Africa Qualifier Group B.
- ❖ The previous record was held by Nepal, who scored 314/3 against Mongolia at the Asian Games in 2023.



Rani Rampal

Why in the news?

Indian women's hockey legend Rani Rampal has announced her retirement as a player.

About Rani Rampal:

- ❖ She made her debut at just 14 years old in 2008 during the Olympic qualifiers in Kazan.
 - She became the youngest woman to represent India at the senior level in hockey.
- ❖ She played 254 international matches and scored 120 goals since her debut.

Honor:

- In honor of Rani Rampal's remarkable contributions to Indian hockey, Hockey India retired her iconic No. 28 jersey.



Persons In News

Dr. Himanshu Pathak

Why in the news?

Dr Himanshu Pathak has been appointed as the Director General-designate of the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT).

- ❖ He currently serves as Secretary of the Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE) and Director General of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).

About ICRISAT:



- ❖ It is a pioneering, internationally recognized International Organization committed to:
 - Develop and improve dryland farming and agri-food systems to address the challenges of hunger, malnutrition, poverty, and environmental degradation.
- ❖ It was established under a Memorandum of Agreement between the Government of India and the CGIAR on 28 March 1972.
- ❖ It is headquartered in Patancheru, Hyderabad, Telangana.

- It will introduce the Arjuna Award Lifetime in its place in a bid to "rationalise" the various sporting honours of the country.
- ❖ Five-time singles Grand Slam champion Maria Sharapova and American twins Bob and Mike Bryan have been named to the International Tennis Hall of Fame's Class of 2025.

News in Short

- ❖ Indian men's football team has climbed one place to 125th position in the latest FIFA rankings.
- ❖ The Union sports ministry has announced that it will discontinue the Dhyan Chand Award for lifetime achievement from 2024



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