



World's Longest River Cruise- MV Ganga Vilas in Varanasi | Uttar Pradesh | 14 Jan 2023

Why In News?

- On January 13, 2023, Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off the **world's longest river cruise - MV Ganga Vilas** - and inaugurated the Tent City in Varanasi via video conference.

Key points

- On the occasion, the Prime Minister also inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of several other inland waterway projects worth over Rs 1,000 crore.
- The Prime Minister said that the longest river cruise from Kashi to Dibrugarh will put north India's tourist destinations on the world tourism map.
- The Prime Minister also said that other projects worth Rs 1,000 crore being dedicated in Varanasi, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Assam will boost tourism and employment prospects in eastern India.
- Highlighting the experience of river cruise, the Prime Minister said that there is something special for everyone in it. Destinations like Kashi, Bodh Gaya, Vikramshila, Patna Sahib and Majuli will be covered for those interested in spirituality.
- Tourists looking for a multinational cruise experience will have the opportunity to pass through Dhaka in Bangladesh and for those who want to see the natural diversity of India, it will pass through the Sundarbans and the forests of Assam.
- The Prime Minister said that this cruise will pass through 25 different river streams, so this cruise has special significance for those who have a keen interest in understanding India's river systems.
- MV Ganga Vilas will start its journey from Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh and travel about 3,200 km in 51 days to reach Dibrugarh in Assam via Bangladesh, crossing 27 river systems in India and Bangladesh.
- MV Ganga Vilas has three decks with all luxury amenities, 18 suites with a capacity of 36 tourists. In the first trip, 32 tourists from Switzerland are going for the entire journey.
- The MV Ganga Vilas Cruise has been designed to showcase the country's best performance to the world. The 51-day cruise tour is planned for world heritage sites, national parks, river ghats and major cities like Patna in Bihar, Sahib Ganj in Jharkhand, Kolkata in West Bengal, Dhaka in Bangladesh and Guwahati in Assam.
- The visit will give a great experience to the tourists and an opportunity to get involved in the art, culture, history and spirituality of India and Bangladesh.
- In line with the Prime Minister's endeavor to promote river cruise tourism, the launch of this service will enable it to reap the benefits of river cruises' vast untapped potential and usher in a new era of river cruise tourism for India.
- Tent City in Varanasi is envisaged on the banks of river Ganga to tap the tourism potential of the area. The project has been developed in front of the ghats of the city which will facilitate accommodation in Varanasi especially since the inauguration of Kashi Vishwanath Dham and cater to the growing number of tourists.
- It has been developed by Varanasi Development Authority in the model of Public Private Partnership. Tourists will reach the Tent City by boats from various ghats nearby. The tent city will continue from October to June every year and will be removed for three months due to rise in the water level of the river during the rainy season.
- On the occasion, the Prime Minister inaugurated the Haldia Multi-Modal Terminal in West Bengal. Developed under the Waterway Development Project, the Haldia Multi Model Terminal has a cargo

handling capacity of about 3 million metric tonnes per annum (MMTPA) and the berth is designed to handle vessels up to about 3000 deadweight tonnes (DWT).

- The Prime Minister also inaugurated four floating community jetties at Saidpur, Chochakpur, Zamania in Ghazipur district of Uttar Pradesh and Kanspur in Ballia district. Apart from this, the Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of five community ghats at Digha, Nakta Diyara, Barh, Panapur in Patna district and Hasanpur in Samastipur district of Bihar.
- More than 60 community ghats are being constructed along river Ganga in the states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal to boost economic activities and improve the livelihood of local communities in the region. Community jetties will play an important role in improving the livelihood of the people by providing simple logistic solutions for small farmers, fish units, unorganized agro-productive units, horticulturists, floriculture and artisans focusing on economic activities in the hinterland of river Ganga.
- The Prime Minister also inaugurated the Maritime Skill Development Centre for the North East in Guwahati. It will help in carving the rich talent pool in the North Eastern Region and provide better employment opportunities in the fast growing logistics industry.
- The Prime Minister also laid the foundation stone for a ship repair facility and an elevated road at Pandu Terminal in Guwahati. The ship repair facility at Pandu Terminal will save precious time.

PK Shahi became the New Advocate General of Bihar | Bihar | 14 Jan 2023

Why In News?

- According to information received from the media on January 13, 2023, the Bihar government has appointed **former state minister and senior advocate of Patna High Court Prashant Kumar Shahi as the new Advocate General of the state**. The notification for their appointment has been issued.

Key points

- It is noteworthy that Prashant Kumar Shahi will replace former advocate Lalit Kishore. Lalit Kishore was appointed as the 21st Advocate General of the Patna High Court on July 31, 2017.
- Advocate Prashant Kumar Shahi has also been the Advocate General of Bihar in the past. From 2005 to 2010, he was the Advocate General of the state government. He was also made education minister in Nitish Kumar's government. After stepping down from the post of minister, he again started practicing in the Patna High Court.

Rajasthan became the First State in the Country to Implement the Policy for Control of Blindness | Rajasthan | 14 Jan 2023

Why In News?

- On January 13, 2023, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said that in an innovative initiative

towards realizing the vision of healthy Rajasthan in the state, the Medical and Health Department of the state has **implemented the blindness control policy for the first time in the country** with the objective of **'Right to Sight Vision'**.

Key points

- Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said that the policy document has been released by the Medical and Health Department for the prevention of blindness. This policy has been brought with an aim to bring light in the lives of more than three lakh people suffering from visual impairment in the state.
 - It is noteworthy that the prevalence rate of blindness in the country was 1.1 percent in the year 2020, which will be worked towards bringing it down to 0.3 percent through the **'Right to Sight Vision' policy**.
 - Under the state government's blindness control policy, keratoplasty centers and eye banks will be compulsorily operated in all government medical colleges. Under this policy, corneas collected by private organizations and NGOs receiving financial assistance will be made available to government institutions on priority.
 - Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said that efforts will be made in collaboration with voluntary organizations, trusts, hospitals and other charitable institutions working in this field in the districts of the state.
 - The state government will run a campaign for eye donation on a large scale with the help of private institutions. Special training will be given to eye specialists, eye surgeons, postgraduate students, counsellors and eye assistants working for eye donation.
 - Secretary of Medical and Health Department. Prithvi said that under this policy, public awareness and various technical improvement activities related to blindness control will be organized.
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Madhya Pradesh Leading State to Make Aadhaar Based Payment in Treasuries | Madhya Pradesh | 14 Jan 2023

Why In News?

- On January 13, 2023, Madhya Pradesh Finance Minister Jagdish Deora launched a new system to **facilitate payment to beneficiaries through Aadhaar-based payments in treasury**, making the state one of the leading states in the country that provide this facility.

Key points

- Speaking on the occasion, Finance Minister Jagdish Deora said that new dimensions are being added for some time to make the Integrated Financial Management Information System implemented in the treasury more efficient. Digital accounting dispatches, e-sign in passing bills, all payment options have been provided in e-invoice to pay tax/revenue to the common citizen. This has not only made financial dealing easier but has also succeeded in bringing financial discipline.
- Now, in order to make the financial system more simple, strong and beneficiary oriented, the new system of Aadhaar-based payment will be implemented in all the treasury of the state from January 16, 2023. With the new system, double benefit can be identified and prevented. At the same time, unsuccessful payments will also decrease.
- The Finance Minister said that under the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS) of the state, all the beneficiaries are being made e-payment directly in their bank account since the year 2010. In view of the need of the hour and the changes in financial management, it has now become possible to make Aadhaar based payments to the beneficiaries along with the bank account, making the e-payment system effective.

- The Finance Minister said that now bank account based e-payment along with Aadhaar based payment is being started directly in the entire treasury from January 16, 2023 through the e-Kuber system of the Reserve Bank of India.
- With the implementation of e-Kuber, all e-payments of the state will be received rapidly in the bank account of the concerned beneficiary. This system will be available 24 hours on all working days.
- The Finance Minister said that with the implementation of the new system, the matching of data will be easier. In the past, the information of receipts and payments by banks was physically given to the treasury, which was sent to the Reserve Bank of India and the Accountant General, in which there were many problems of data variation. With the introduction of e-Kuber, the Reserve Bank of India will be directly treated and the problem of matching the data of financial transactions will end.
- Moving forward in this direction, the contribution of the state in the Digital India program will be further increased. IFMIS Next Gen is being developed in place of the present Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS) with the objective of implementing faceless, paperless, contactless and cashless financial transactions and developing a user friendly system incorporating modern technological innovations.

Brochure Launches of 8th Indian International Science Festival | Madhya Pradesh | 14 Jan 2023

Why In News?

- On January 13, 2023, Minister of Science and Technology and Micro, Small, Medium Enterprises of Madhya Pradesh Om Prakash Sakhalecha launched the brochure of the Science Festival under the curtain raiser program of the **8th India International Science Festival (IISF)** at Madhya Pradesh Council of Science and Technology Mapcast .

Key points

- The 8th Science Festival will be held in Bhopal from January 21 to 24 for the first time in Madhya Pradesh. So far, seven events of this festival have been held in different cities of the country.
- A special exhibition based on the progress made in the field of science will be set up at the India International Science Festival. The exhibition, spread over two lakh square feet, will showcase the achievements of over 300 Indian science institutions, including ISRO, Department of Atomic Energy and Department of Space, Ministry of Earth Sciences, DRDO.
- Along with this, Run for Science will be organized on January 19, 2023. With the aim of creating awareness among people about science, this run will start from T.T. Nagar Stadium and end at MANIT campus.
- Arvind Ranade, Executive Director, Indian National Science Academy (INSA) said that the India International Science Festival started from IIT Delhi in the year 2015 . Students Science Village program will also be held during this festival. The Science Village will include 1500 children from different remote areas of Madhya Pradesh, who will be able to see science and its wonders up close. There will also be activities like Scientific Science Literature Festival, Startup Hub.
- Sanjay Mishra, senior scientist in the Department of Biotechnology, said that this festival is not a seminar or conference. It is an event that will be attended by distinguished scientists from the country, from school students to retired officers.
- It is noteworthy that this is an event of wide publicity of science. The festival will have 15 activities such as Artisan Technology, Village Vocal for Local, New Age Technology Show, Mega Science and Technology Exhibition, International Science Film Festival, Science Through Games and Toys, Startup Conclave. More than 10 thousand participants will participate in this.

Traffic Police will Work on the Lines of Maharashtra in Haryana | Haryana | 14 Jan 2023

Why In News?

- On January 13, 2023, Haryana Home Minister Anil Vij informed that the state government is preparing to implement a police system on the lines of Maharashtra to prevent road accidents in the state, so the system of traffic police in the state is being changed.

Key points

- It is notable that the IG Traffic in the state has sent a proposal to the government to post SP level officers in the traffic police on the lines of Maharashtra. Union Surface Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari had written a letter to all the state governments recommending implementation of police system on the lines of Maharashtra to prevent road accidents.
- Home Minister Anil Vij told that at present the traffic system of Haryana is running very lax. The state government has created the post of IG Traffic, but IG Traffic has almost no powers. The IG cannot even transfer an SHO. SHOs and DSPs come under the superintendents of police in the district. The IG must give instructions only through the Superintendents of Police.
- He told that under the blueprint prepared for the new system, IG traffic will be in charge. Superintendent of Police level officers will be posted in the traffic police. There will be four or five districts under one SP. Traffic DSPs will be working in the districts. SHO traffic will be under these DSPs.
- It is known that in the last year 2022 in Haryana, 4516 people lost their lives and 8447 people were injured in 9951 road accidents. The Transport Department has set a target of reducing accidents by 20 per cent by 2023.
- To reduce accidents, the Transport Department will appoint Road Safety Associates on contract basis for all the districts. The state government has given instructions for marking on the roads. It has been asked to install reflectors on vehicles like tractor trolleys and reflective tapes on the horns of stray animals as soon as possible.

Two MoU's Signed with Private Companies for Setting up Nutritional Supplements, Fortified Rice and Ethanol and Power Plants | Chhattisgarh | 14 Jan 2023

Why In News?

- On January 13, 2023, Chhattisgarh Industry Department signed two MoU's with private companies for setting up nutritional supplements, fortified rice and ethanol and power plants at Udyog Bhawan Raipur in the presence of Chhattisgarh Industries Minister Kawasi Lakhma.

Key points

- Chhattisgarh Industries Department and Suruchi Foods Private Limited, New Delhi signed an agreement for supplementary nutrition and fortified rice, in which the company will invest Rs 111.7 crore. This industry will provide employment to 800 people.
- Chhattisgarh Industries Department and Unity Industries Private Limited signed an agreement for ethanol extraction from table based corn starch and damaged rice and power plant, in which the company will invest Rs 183 crore. About 120 people will get employment from this industry. Thus, MoU's worth Rs 294.7 crore were signed.
- The MoU was signed by Bhupesh Yadav, Secretary, Chhattisgarh Industries Department, and Himanshu Gupta, Director, Suruchi Foods Pvt Ltd, for food supplements and fortified rice, while for ethanol extraction from table-based corn starch and damaged rice and power plant, Chhattisgarh Industries Department Secretary Bhuvnesh Yadav and Unity Industries Pvt Ltd Director Basant Kumar Agarwal signed the MoU.
- With the signing of these agreements, grains like rice, wheat, barley, maize and jowar can now be used in the making of ethanol.
- Fortified rice is nutritious and healthy. It is rich in iron, folic acid, vitamin B-12. Nutrients like iron, folic acid, vitamin B-12 present in it do not allow blood loss in adults and children and help in blood formation and proper functioning of the nervous system.
- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, had approved the plan to set up grain-based furnaces for ethanol production and expand existing grain-based furnaces. About 175 lakh metric tonnes of grains (rice, wheat, barley, maize and jowar) will be used when ethanol is produced from the grain, a release issued about the meeting said.
- Ethanol is a type of alcohol that can be mixed with petrol and used as fuel in vehicles. Ethanol is mainly produced from sugarcane crop but can also be prepared from many other sugary crops. This benefits both agriculture and the environment.
- Apart from this, ethanol is used to make varnish, polish, medicine solutions and their extraction, ether, chloroform, artificial colors, transparent soaps, perfume and fruit fragrance extracts and other chemical compounds. It is used as various drinks for drinking, as a bactericide in washing wounds and as a solution in the laboratory. It is added to drinking medicines and is also used to preserve dead organisms.
- Ethanol is prepared by two methods. The first is the synthesis method and the second is the fermentation method. Synthesis method: By absorbing ethylene gas into concentrated sulfuric acid, ethyl hydrogen sulfate is formed, which when boiled with water, hydrolyzes and gives ethyl alcohol. The prevalence of this method is not high yet.
- On the other hand, through fermentation method, alcohol is made in commercial quantity from any sugary substance (cane sugar, glucose, saltpetre, mahua flower etc.) or starchy substance (potato, rice, barley, corn etc.).

Kanker District Got Eighth Place in the Country in the Index of Aspirational District | Chhattisgarh | 14 Jan 2023

Why In News?

- On January 13, 2023, Kanker District Collector Dr. Priyanka Shukla said that Kanker district has **performed better and secured the eighth position in the entire country** in the indices of aspirational district released by NITI Aayog.

Key points

- It is noteworthy that 112 districts of the country have been declared as aspirational districts. Various schemes and programs conducted in these districts such as health, nutrition, education, agriculture, infrastructure, financial inclusion and skill upgradation are reviewed by NITI Aayog and

ranked on achievements, in which Kanker district has secured the eighth position.

- With this, Kanker district has secured the sixth rank in the indices of health and nutrition.
- Kanker District Collector Priyanka Shukla has directed all the officers of the district to benefit the people of the district by better implementing all the public welfare schemes run by the government.

Rural Uttarakhand Entrepreneurship Summit-2023 - 'Gullak' | Uttarakhand | 14 Jan 2023

Why In News?

- Recently, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama inaugurated the **Uttarakhand Entrepreneurship Summit-2023 'Gullak'** in Dehradun, which will enable businessmen in rural areas to get information about the schemes being run by the government in various sectors.

Key points

- Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama said that this program named '**Gullak**' organized for rural entrepreneurs is the first of its kind in the country, in which investors will be able to directly interact with rural entrepreneurs and invest in their enterprises.
- He said that in order to accelerate entrepreneurship development in rural areas, the state government had set up '**Rural Business Incubators**' last year at Hawal bagh in Almora district and Kotdwar in Pauri district. At present, various types of services are being provided to rural entrepreneurs through these 'Rural Business Incubators'.
- In view of the good results of the incubators, 'Rural Business Incubator' spocks will be set up to make this scheme operational in 11 other districts of the state under the Hub and Spock model. Through these incubators, entrepreneurs will get new opportunities.
- The Chief Minister said that with the development of rural entrepreneurship, the youth of the state will be connected to self-employment and will become job givers instead of getting jobs. The focus will be on better marketing of products of rural entrepreneurs.
- He said that the state government is working specially to get rid of the problem of migration in rural areas. In order to provide self-employment opportunities to the citizens of the state by staying in their place, the government is operating various types of centrally funded, state-funded and externally aided self-employment schemes in remote areas of the state.
- Keeping in mind that the participation of women in the business in rural areas is high, the state government is making special efforts for the empowerment of women in the field of self-employment and has planned to make 1.25 lakh sisters Lakhpati Didi, efforts are also being made to connect them with entrepreneurship.
- Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama said that under the direction of the Government of India, it has been ensured that 'Mission Antyodaya Survey' will be done through mobile app for the next one month. The survey will focus on topics related to economic development, village infrastructure, services and social justice by women of the community cadre.