



Survey completed for Cruise Operations across Varanasi & Prayagraj | Uttar Pradesh | 24 Apr 2023

Why in News?

On 23 April 2023, the Director of the Inland Waterways Authority of India, L. K. Rajak informed that the Inland Waterways Authority of India has completed the survey between Varanasi-Prayagraj for the operation of cruise service under PM Gati Shakti Yojana.

Key Points

- L.K. Rajak said that preparations are on to start in July. If the trial is successful, the number of vessels on this route will be increased. Along with this, there is also a plan to operate cargo ships.
 - The cruise plying between Varanasi and Prayagraj will take the tourists to Ganga Darshan as well as visit tourist places.
 - In this survey, the obstacles to water transport have been identified in many places. Along with this, jetties will also be constructed at tourist places including Chunar, Vindhyachal, and Sitamarhi. After the success of this experiment, the Waterways Authority will also increase cruise services.
 - To promote religious tourism, the Waterways Authority is engaged in preparing a new route connecting all the tourist places between Prayagraj and Varanasi. There is a plan to operate the one-way journey through PPP mode (Public Private Partnership), which will be completed from morning till evening.
 - For this, many private companies have also shown interest in the scheme. In this, after the selection of the private company, a decision will be taken on the rent and other facilities. In this, by constructing jetties from Varanasi to Chunar, Vindhyachal, Sitamarhi and Prayagraj, arrangements will be made to stay here.
 - The Waterways Authority will share its action plan with the local administration for the development of tourism facilities at these places. In fact, under the PM Gati Shakti Yojana, Ganga Ghats will also be developed to reach Chunar Fort, Maa Vindhyavasini Dham and the place where Sita resided, through new cruise operations between Varanasi and Prayagraj.
 - Under the PM Gati Shakti Yojana, Varanasi is being made a new centre of waterways. There is a plan to connect Ramnagar Multimodal Terminal by road. The cargo vessel is already operating from Varanasi to Haldia. Varanasi has been connected to the world's longest river route through Ganga Vilas Cruise. Preparations are being made to develop Varanasi as a hub through cruise operations till Prayagraj.
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Khurma, Tilkut and Balushahi of Bihar will get GI Tag | Bihar | 24 Apr 2023

Why in News?

According to the information received from the media on 23 April 2023, the application for giving GI tag to Bihar's famous sweets Khurma, Tilkut and Balushahi has been accepted after preliminary examination. The competent authority will now take further action in this direction.

Key Points

- According to the information, the demand for GI tag has been approved for Bhojpur's Udwanthnagar's Khurma, Gaya's Tilkut, Sitamarhi's Balushahi, Hajipur's famous Chiniya Banana, Nalanda's famous Bawan Booti art and Gaya's stone-cut art.
- The GI tag is given to link the origin of a product primarily to its region of origin.
- Sunil Kumar, Chief General Manager, NABARD said that Bhojpur's 'Khurma' and Gaya's 'Tilkut' made from jaggery, and sesame are widely liked not only in the country but also abroad. At the same time, the sweet 'Balushahi' of Runnisaidpur of Sitamarhi is also in great demand across the country.
- Sunil Kumar said that the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development NABARD has helped the producer unions in filing applications for GI tags for these famous dishes and products of Bihar. Experts have also been included in this.
- Apart from the process of GI registration, NABARD is also playing a key role in branding, promoting and providing market linkages to these products in the market.
- NABARD has expressed hope that getting a GI tag on these dishes and products will help farmers, producers and artists associated with them to earn more.
- It may be noted that recently GI tag was given to the state's famous 'Mircha Rice', which is known for its aroma and taste. Zardalu Mango and Katrani Paddy of Bhagalpur, Magahi Paan of Nawada and Shahi Litchi of Muzaffarpur have already got GI tags.



Rs 592 Crore sanctioned for Various Schemes for Farmers' Progress | Rajasthan | 24 Apr 2023

Why in News?

On 23 April 2023, Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot approved a proposal for a financial provision of Rs 592 crore under various schemes for the all-around development of agriculture and farmers.

Key Points

- With this decision of Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, spraying of nano urea by drone will cost Rs 4.50 crore, for which a subsidized rate of 75% of the cost or a maximum of Rs 4,500 per hectare has been kept in a 10,000-hectare area.
- On the other hand, 5 lakh landless labourers will be given a grant of Rs. 5,000 per family to buy manual agricultural machinery. In this, the state government will spend Rs 250 crore.
- In the financial year 2023-24, the state government will provide agricultural machinery worth Rs 250 crore to one lakh farmers, and manual/power-operated chaff cutter machines at a subsidized rate to 50,000 animal husbandry farmers.
- Agriculture graduate unemployed youth will also be given a grant of up to Rs 4 lakh each for providing 1000 drones. Drones will also be made available to Farmers' Production Organizations (FPO) and Custom Hiring Centers.
- A provision of Rs 588 crore has been made from the Farmers Welfare Fund and Rs 4.60 crore (state share) under the National Agriculture Development Scheme in all these schemes by the state government.
- With the approval of the Chief Minister, lakhs of farmers and cattle herders of the state will benefit. It is worth mentioning that the Chief Minister had made an announcement in this regard in the budget for the year 2023-24.

Inauguration of Raj Matsya Yojana Portal | Rajasthan | 24 Apr 2023

Why in News?

On April 21, 2023, Rajasthan's Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Minister Lalchand Kataria inaugurated the Raj Matsya Yojana portal online at Pant Bhavan. Now the application process for schemes related to fisheries departments in the state will be completely online.

Key Points

- Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Minister Lalchand Kataria said that through the portal, farmers of the state will be able to apply online for departmental schemes sitting at home through their own SSO ID or e-Mitra, along with this, they will be able to get information about the progress of the application through the portal.
- From the receipt of the application in the department to the approval of the grant, the farmer will receive information about each stage through SMS on his registered mobile number.
- You will be able to get the benefits of the following schemes run by the department:
- Construction of a pond on private land for Fish Rearing,
- Expenditure on the material to be incurred in the first year of Fish Rearing,
 - Construction of pond for Shrimp Farming in Brackish Water,
 - Establishment of Fish Seed Hatchery,
 - For the purchase of Fishing Craft and Equipment/Boat,
 - Subsidy scheme for Recirculatory Aquaculture System, Fish Feed unit, Cage Culture,
 - Scheme for Construction and Renovation of Ice Plant/Cold Storage,
 - Scheme for development of Retail Fish Market and Resources,
 - Scheme for establishment of Mobile/Retail coloured Fish selling centre KIOSk,
 - Scheme for purchase of Refrigerated trucks and Insulated trucks,
 - For purchase including Motorcycle Ice Box,
 - Cycle Ice Box Scheme,
 - Saving cum Relief Scheme,
 - Fishermen Group Accident Insurance Scheme,

- Training and Skill Development Scheme.



District Burhanpur gets honoured with 'PM Excellence Award' under Jal Jeevan Mission | Madhya Pradesh | 24 Apr 2023

Why in News?

On 21 April 2023, Prime Minister Narendra Modi awarded the 'Prime Minister's Excellence Award' to the best performing Burhanpur district in the country in the implementation of the Jal Jeevan Mission at a dignified ceremony on Civil Services Day in New Delhi.

Key Points:

- Burhanpur District Collector Ms. Bhavya Mittal received the award from the hands of the Prime Minister.
- Burhanpur district has achieved an unprecedented and proud achievement of providing pure drinking water by tap to every household through the Jal Jeevan Mission. Burhanpur has got the distinction of becoming the first Har Ghar Jal-certified district in the country.
- Burhanpur has shown a new direction to the country by providing water to every village. Till now, under the Jal Jeevan Mission, tap water has been made available to more than 51 lakh 15 thousand rural families of the state. Water is being supplied to all 254 villages through the 'Har Ghar Jal' scheme.
- Jal Jeevan Mission 'Har Ghar Jal' scheme in Burhanpur district is being maintained and operated by Panchayats. A Jal Swachhata Ad-hoc Committee has been constituted in each village, which maintains and implements the scheme. All the village watermen and plumbers have been duly trained.
- For skill development in panchayats, a booklet 'Nal Jal Prabandhan' has been prepared by the administration, in which detailed information about the operation of the scheme is given.

- Under the scheme, the work of recovery of water tax is being done by the women of self-help groups. This work has given employment to women while the economic condition of their families has also improved.
- Panchayats are making the villagers aware of the benefits of conserving underground water and showing ways to save it. Burhanpur district has hoisted its flag in the country with the enthusiastic participation of common people in governance and administration.



Third Gender social worker Sanjana Singh appointed as State Level Election Icon | Madhya Pradesh | 24 Apr 2023

Why in News?

On 21 April 2023, Madhya Pradesh's Chief Electoral Officer Anupam Rajan said that the Election Commission of India has appointed third gender social worker Sanjana Singh as the state-level icon of Madhya Pradesh elections.

Key Points

- Social worker third gender Sanjana Singh is a resident of Pushpa Nagar Bawdi Chandbad.
 - Chief Electoral Officer Anupam Rajan said that third-gender voters residing in the state should participate more & more in the voting process, for this third-gender Sanjana Singh has been made a state-level icon.
 - It is notable that Sanjana Singh was earlier selected as the first Transmentor by the Madhya Pradesh State AIDS Control Committee. She was the first third gender of Swachhta Abhiyan Madhya Pradesh in Swachh Bharat Mission, who became the brand ambassador.
 - Apart from this, Sanjana Singh has also been honoured by the megastar of the century, Amitabh Bachchan, in the Dettol Swachh Bharat Banega Bharat live show in the year 2017.
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Central Region Electricity Distribution Company to be the country's 1st company to collect bills through WhatsApp | Madhya Pradesh | 24 Apr 2023

Why in News?

On 21 April 2023, the Managing Director of Madhya Pradesh Central Region Electricity Distribution Company, Ganesh Shankar Mishra said that it is the country's 1st government electricity distribution company, which has started an innovative effort of online electricity bill payment through WhatsApp-pay.

Key Points

- Managing Director Ganesh Shankar Mishra said that taking forward the digital innovation of payment of electricity bills, the company has provided more than a dozen bill payment options to consumers in the direction of convenient and secure payment. In this series, a new option will be available to consumers through WhatsApp-Pay. In this new way, consumers will be able to pay electricity bills from their homes using their smartphones.
 - 'WhatsApp-Pay' is a digital payment feature that allows users to send money through the messaging app. It is secure and easy to use, requiring just a few simple steps to complete a transaction.
 - Consumers can use their existing WhatsApp account and link it with their bank account to make payments without any hassle.
 - Consumers who do not have a 'WhatsApp-Pay' facility can also pay through WhatsApp through other UPI modes like Google Pay, PhonePe or Paytm. This innovative payment method does not require any additional download or registration.
 - Not only will this new mode of payment make it easier for consumers to pay their bills but it will also save time and effort.
 - With WhatsApp-pay and other online payment options, consumers no longer need to visit cash collection centres to pay their electricity bills. It is a fast and efficient solution, which will simplify the payment process and improve customer satisfaction.
 - It is worth mentioning that Central Region Electricity Distribution Company is the first electricity distribution company to implement a WhatsApp chatbot for its consumers, through which one can view electricity bills, pay, receive and complain, knowing the status.
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Approval of 8 Development Projects worth more than Rs 131 crore | Haryana | 24 Apr 2023

Why in News?

On 22 April 2023, in the meeting chaired by Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar for approval of development projects worth more than Rs 10 crore, 8 development projects of the state worth more than Rs 131 crore were approved.

Key Points

- The projects which were approved include 2-2 projects from the Public Works Department & Public Health Department and 3 projects from the Faridabad Metropolitan Development Authority.
- The Chief Minister approved a canal-based water project at Dalamwala village in Jind district. With this drinking water project of more than Rs 13 crore, the population of 5 villages including Behatwala, Khokri, Haibatpur, and Mando villages will have uninterrupted access to drinking water, and water will be supplied from the Hansi branch.
- The Chief Minister approved the construction of a new disposal for stormwater drainage at Guru Nanak Pura in Rohtak City. This will get rid of the problem of water logging in Mahabir Colony, Sanjay Nagar etc. and will cost more than Rs 23.75 crore.
- The sanction was given for 3 rain well-based drinking water schemes to be set up by the Faridabad Metropolitan Development Authority. These three drinking water projects will be of 10 MLD capacity each, which will be set up in the village Bhikula, Mothuka, adjacent to the Yamuna Canal. These will cost more than Rs 51 crore.

Mata Kaushalya Alankaran will be given to the women of Manas Mandali | Chhattisgarh | 24 Apr 2023

Why in News?

On 22 April 2023, Chhattisgarh's Culture Minister Amarjit Bhagat, while formally inaugurating the Mata Kaushalya Mahotsav organized in Chandkhuri, announced to give Mata Kaushalya Alankaran to the women of Manas Mandali who are doing good work in their area.

Key Points

- Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel inaugurated the Mata Kaushalya Mahotsav being organized from 22 April to 24 April 2023 at Chandkhuri in the Arang assembly constituency.
- Mata Kaushalya Alankaran is a special initiative of the state government for women empowerment.
- It is worth mentioning that Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, under continuous efforts to promote art, culture & tourism of the state and to establish the glory of Mata Kaushalya Janmabhoomi on the world stage & women empowerment, protection of working artists, announced to celebrate Mata Kaushalya Mahotsav at the national level in the Vidhansabha for promotion & continuous development of art parties.



Women and Child Development Minister released the Book 'States of Women' | Chhattisgarh | 24 Apr 2023

Why in News?

On 22 April 2023, the Women and Child Development Minister of Chhattisgarh Smt. Anila Bhendia released the book 'States of Women' written by Smt. Abha Prasad at Circuit House, Raipur.

Key Points

- Women and Child Development Minister Smt. Anila Bhendia said that the law, procedure and rules related to women have been mentioned in the book 'States of Women', which every woman should be aware of.
- The author of the book Dr. Abha Prasad said that most women do not know about their rights. Various laws related to women have been included in 'States of Women', so that they can get information about all the rights in one book.



River Rafting Fare waived on all rivers except The Ganges | Uttarakhand | 24 Apr 2023

Why in News?

On 23 April 2023, Uttarakhand Tourism Secretary Sachin Kurve said that to promote river rafting and kayaking activities in the state, the state government has waived the river rafting fee for three years on all rivers except Ganga.

Key Points

- Sachin Kurve said that there is a lot of potential for river rafting under adventure tourism in the state. In view of this, the state government has given an exemption in fees for three years. This will also provide employment to the local people.
- For river rafting on the rivers, a fee is charged by the operators on behalf of the tourism department. Presently more than 526 river rafting guides are registered in the state. Tourists from all over the country and worldwide come to Rishikesh for river rafting in the Ganges. Rafting is done from Kaudiyala to Rishikesh.
- The state government has waived the fee for promoting river rafting on other state rivers and providing employment to the local people. This will encourage water sports activities in Bageshwar, Tanakpur, and Ramnagar region besides Kali, Saryu, Ramganga, Kosi, Tons, Yamuna, and Alaknanda rivers.



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