



Special Status | Bihar | 08 Jun 2024

Why in News?

In the aftermath of the [General Elections](#), the **Janata Dal (United)** and the **Telugu Desam Party** have emerged as influential players in government formation at the Centre.

- Their renewed emphasis on securing [special category status](#) for **Bihar and Andhra Pradesh** has reignited discussions on this crucial issue.

Key Points

- **Special Category Status** is a classification provided by the Central government to support the development of states facing **geographical and socio-economic challenges**.
 - Currently, 11 States in India have SCS which are **Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura, and Uttarakhand**.
- Special category status offers benefits to designated states such as **enhanced funding, with 90% of funds for centrally-sponsored schemes provided by the Centre**.
 - These states can carry forward unused funds from one fiscal year to the next and enjoy tax concessions. They also receive a higher allocation from the Centre's Gross Budget, amounting to 30%.

Special Category Status (SCS)

- The Constitution does not make a provision for SCS and this classification was later done on the recommendations of the **5th Finance Commission** in 1969.
 - Status was first accorded to Jammu and Kashmir, Assam and Nagaland in 1969.
 - SCS for plan assistance was granted in the past by the National Development Council of the **erstwhile Planning Commission**.
 - SCS is different from **Special status which imparts enhanced legislative and political rights**, while SCS deals with only economic and financial aspects.
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Haryana Government Removes Age Retention on Scheme | Haryana | 08 Jun 2024

Why in News?

Recently, the Haryana government lifted the age limit cap on a scheme aimed at providing [financial assistance to farmers and farm labourers](#) in the **event of death or disability** while **operating agricultural machinery**.

Key Points

- The government has decided to eliminate the age restriction under the '**Mukhyamantri Kisan Evam Khetihar Mazdoor Jeevan Suraksha Yojana**' for farmers, agricultural labourers, and market yard labourers.
 - Under this scheme, **financial assistance ranging from Rs 37,500 to Rs 5 lakh** is provided to farmers, agriculture labourers, and market yard labourers.
 - Previously, the scheme stipulated that the age of the beneficiary should be between 10 and 65 years.
 - Now, **children younger than 10 years and persons older than 65 years will also be eligible** for benefits under the scheme.
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IIIT-A Achieves QS World University Ranking | Uttar Pradesh | 08 Jun 2024

Why in News?

Indian Institute of Information Technology, Allahabad has achieved the worldwide ranking 1,401 and holds the **46th position** in the overall category in the [QS World University Ranking 2025](#).

Key Points

- QS World University Rankings are released annually by **Quacquarelli Symonds (QS)**.
 - The rankings evaluate the **performance and quality of universities worldwide**.
 - The methodology considers indicators such as academic reputation, faculty-student ratio, employer reputation, sustainability, employment outcomes, international research network, citations per faculty, international faculty ratio, and international student ratio.
 - They provide **rankings by subject, region, student city, business school, and sustainability**.
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Dehradun Litchis Hit by Heat | Uttarakhand | 08 Jun 2024

Why in News?

The extreme heat in **Uttarakhand**, with temperatures exceeding **42 °C**, has caused **litchis to dry out and suffer damage from cracking**.

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Key Points

- The rise in heat waves has affected the fruit's overall growth and maturation.
- **Litchi trees** takes **water from the soil, aiding in seed growth and aril development.**
- The tubercle's **red skin has been exposed to heat and cracked**, it has caused a **decrease in cell elasticity, impacting the fruit's juiciness, size, and succulence.**
- Ramnagar litchi, recognized with a [Geographical Indication \(GI\)](#) certificate, **is in high demand** in nearby states like **Chandigarh, Delhi, and Haryana.**
- [Pomologists](#) caution against harvesting litchis too soon because litchis from Bihar enter the market before those from Uttarakhand.
 - Picking them early may result in the presence of tart and undersized litchis.
 - To enhance the flexibility of the young litchi fruits left on the trees, it is recommended to water them in the morning and evening while also using boron and **gibberellic acid.**

Litchi

- **Botanical Classification:** Litchi belongs to the Sapindaceae family and is known for its delicious, juicy, translucent aril or edible flesh.
- **Climatic Requirements:** Litchi thrives in **sub-tropical climates and prefers moist conditions.** It grows best in regions with low elevation, up to an altitude of around 800 meters.
- **Soil Preference:** The ideal soil for litchi cultivation is **deep, well-drained loamy soil** rich in organic matter.
- **Temperature Sensitivity:** Litchi is sensitive to extreme temperatures. It does not tolerate temperatures above **40.5°C** in summer or freezing temperatures in winter.
- **Rainfall Impact:** Prolonged rain, especially during flowering, can interfere with pollination and affect the crop adversely.