



World's Largest Ramayan Temple in Bihar | Bihar | 12 Jul 2024

Why in News?

Recently, The second phase of construction of the “[world's largest Ramayan temple](#)” began in **East Champaran district of Bihar**. The construction of the three-storey temple, spread over an area of 3.76 lakh sq.ft., **began in June 2023 and is expected to be complete in 2025**.

Key Points

- The **Viraat Ramayan Mandir** will be **three times larger than the [Ram Mandir in Ayodhya](#)**.
 - Constructed at a cost of Rs 500 crore, it will **feature a 33-foot-tall [Shivling in the arghya \(sanctum sanctorum\)](#)**.
 - There will be **22 sanctum sanctorum** for different deities in the temple complex.
- The **second phase will include the construction up to the plinth level**, which will go up to a height of about 26 feet from the ground level.
- In the **third phase**, the construction of **shikhars (spires) and the final finishing touches** of the entire temple will be completed.
 - The temple will have a total of **12 shikhars, with the main shikhar reaching a height of 270 feet**.
- The temple's architecture draws inspiration from [Cambodia's Angkor Wat](#), the **Ramanathaswamy temple in Rameswaram, Tamil Nadu**, and the **Meenakshi Sundareswarar temple in Madurai**.

Angkor Wat Temple

- **Angkor Wat is a temple complex in Cambodia** and one of the **largest religious monuments in the world**.
- It was **originally constructed as a Hindu temple** dedicated to the god Vishnu for the Khmer Empire, it was **gradually transformed into a Buddhist temple** towards the end of the 12th century.
- It was **built by the Khmer King Suryavarman II in the early 12th century** in Yaśodharapura (present-day Angkor), the capital of the Khmer Empire, as his state temple and eventual mausoleum.

Meenakshi Sundareswarar Temple

- It is a **historic Hindu temple** located on the southern bank of the **Vaigai River, Madurai** in Tamil Nadu.
- The temple is dedicated to **goddess Meenakshi, a form of Shakti/Parvati** and her consort **Shiva in the form of Sundareswarar**.
- It was **built by Pandyan Emperor Sadayavarman Kulasekaran I (1190 CE-1205 CE)**.

Ramanathaswamy Temple

- It is a **Hindu temple dedicated to the god Shiva** located on **Rameswaram island in the state of Tamil Nadu**.
- It is also **one of the twelve Jyotirlinga temples**.
- It was **built by King Muthuramalinga Sethupathiy**.

- The temple was **expanded during the 12th century by the Pandya Dynasty**, and its principal shrine's sanctum was **renovated by Jeyaveera Cinkaiariyan and his successor Gunaveera Cinkaiariyan**, monarch of the Jaffna kingdom.

Special Grants for Chhattisgarh from Finance Commission | Chhattisgarh | 12 Jul 2024

Why in News?

Recently, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai requested **special central grants highlighting the state's large tribal population, challenging geographical conditions, and Naxal activities in certain areas.**

- This appeal was made during a meeting with a delegation from the [16th Finance Commission](#).

Key Points

- The CM informed the commission about **rapid development** works being carried out in **Naxal-affected areas** and effective **measures being taken to curb Maoist activities.**
 - Under the '[Niyad Nellanar Yojana](#)' basic facilities such as education, health, roads, electricity, and water are being provided in these regions.
 - However, **challenging geographical conditions** in these areas **lead to additional expenditure** on infrastructure development.
- The additional expenses incurred to **address concerns on environmental damage and health impacts caused by mining activities** in the mineral-rich state.
 - Due to the [GST \(Goods and Services Tax\)](#) as a **consumption-based destination tax system**, the **actual benefits of mining activities are accruing to states** where mineral value addition and consumption occur **rather than to Chhattisgarh.**

Niyad Nellanar Yojana

- Niyad Nellanar, meaning **“aapka achcha gaon” or “your good village”** is the local Dandami dialect (spoken in south Bastar).
- Under this scheme, **amenities and benefits** will be **provided in villages located within 5 kilometers** of security camps in Bastar region.
 - **14 new security camps have been set up in Bastar.** These camps will also **help to facilitate the implementation of the new scheme.** Around 25 basic amenities will be provided in such villages under Niyad Nellanar.

Finance Commission

- The Finance Commission in India is a constitutional body established under [Article 280 of the Indian Constitution](#).
 - Its primary function is to **recommend the distribution of financial resources** between the central government and the state governments.
- The [Fifteenth Finance Commission](#) was constituted on **27th November, 2017**. It made recommendations covering the period of six years commencing on **1st April, 2020** through its Interim and Final Reports.
 - The recommendations of the Fifteenth Finance Commission are valid up to the financial year **2025-26.**

Ultra High-Performance Concrete (UHPC) | Uttar Pradesh | 12 Jul 2024

Why in News?

According to the sources, The [Uttar Pradesh public works department \(PWD\)](#) will have a tie-up with **IIT-Kanpur** to **develop ultra high-performance concrete (UHPC)** after research and development.

Key Points

- Currently, **M60 cement grade** is used in most civil works in the state.
- UHPC, which has a **longer shelf life** and can be **4-6 times stronger than M60 grade**, and can significantly **reduce the department's carbon footprint**.
 - This reduction would be achieved by **using thinner sections and lower deck heights** during the construction of bridges, flyovers, elevated roads, railway overbridges, and other concrete-intensive **infrastructure projects**.
 - The product, developed using [nanotechnology](#), is expected to be ready in three years.

Carbon Footprint

- According to the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#), a carbon footprint is a **measure of the impact people's activities** have on the amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂) produced through the burning of fossil fuels and is **expressed as a weight of CO₂ emissions produced in tonnes**.
- It is **usually measured as tons of CO₂ emitted per year**, a number that can be supplemented by tons of CO₂-equivalent gases, including [methane](#), [nitrous oxide](#), and other [greenhouse gases](#).
- It can be a broad measure or be applied to the actions of an individual, a family, an event, an organization, or even an entire nation.

Uttarakhand Breaks Rainfall and Heat Records | Uttarakhand | 12 Jul 2024

Why in News?

As per a **report by Climate Trends**, Uttarakhand has been witnessing **extreme weather events** for the past two months, ranging from record breaking temperatures to extremely heavy rainfall triggering [flash floods and landslides](#).

Key Points

- The rise in global average temperatures has **increased atmospheric moisture**, leading to the **formation of intense clouds and triggering heavy rains**.

- As temperatures continue to rise, these intense rain events are likely to become more common.
- In Uttarakhand, the **warming temperature trend is worsening forest fire** events to a greater extent.
- **Human-caused climate change is influencing weather** and climatic extremes in higher elevation places, and many recent studies have reported on the increasingly prevalent **Elevation-Dependent Warming (EDW)**.
 - EDW influences the **Himalayan rivers and glaciers** (changes in the glacial mass balance, river discharge, snowfall), which is the only water source for the hilly region's livelihood.

Flash Floods

- These are **sudden surges in water** levels generally during or following an intense spell of rain.
- These are **highly localised events of short duration** with a very high peak and usually **have less than six hours** between the occurrence of the rainfall and peak flood.
- The flood situation worsens in the presence of **choked drainage lines** or encroachments obstructing the natural flow of water.

Landslide

- A landslide is defined as the **movement of a mass of rock, debris, or earth down a slope**.
- They are a **type of mass wasting**, which denotes any downward movement of soil and rock under the direct influence of gravity.
- The term landslide encompasses **five modes of slope movement: falls, topples, slides, spreads, and flows**.

Eradicating Invasive Aquatic Weeds | Madhya Pradesh | 12 Jul 2024

Why in News?

Recently, An **exotic beetle named Cyrtobagus salvinia** has **successfully eradicated** an **invasive weed species, *Salvinia molesta*** from **Sarani reservoir (Satpura dam)** built on the **Tawa river** in the **Betul district** of Madhya Pradesh.

Key Points

- Scientists at Jabalpur-based **Indian Council of Agricultural Research-Directorate of Weed Research (ICAR-DWR)** revealed that *Cyrtobagus salvinia*, a **Brazilian bioagent specifically targeting *Salvinia molesta***, was imported to India after thorough research and with the necessary governmental approvals.

Salvinia molesta

- It is an **aquatic fern** that is indigenous to **south-eastern Brazil**. It is also known as gigantic *Salvinia* or **Kariba weed** since it contaminated a sizable area of **Lake Kariba between Zimbabwe and Zambia**.
- ***Salvinia's* characteristics include Small, floaters with branching**, creeping stems that have hairs on the papillae of the leaf surfaces but **no true roots**.
- The **leaves are arranged in trimerous whorls**, with one leaf being finely divided, petiolate, rootlike, and pendant, while the other two are green, sessile or short-petioled, flat, **whole, and**

floating.

Indian Council of Agricultural Research

- It is an autonomous organisation under the **Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE), Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.**
- It was established on **16 July 1929** and was formerly known as the **Imperial Council of Agricultural Research.**
- It is headquartered at **New Delhi.**
- It is the apex body for coordinating, guiding and managing research and education in agriculture including horticulture, fisheries and animal sciences in the entire country.

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