



Rajasthan CM Approves Land for Petrozone | Rajasthan | 15 Jan 2025

Why in News?

In a significant move to bolster the industrial landscape of Rajasthan, Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has **approved the allocation of land** for the establishment of a dedicated [petrozone](#).

- This strategic decision aims to attract substantial investments and foster economic growth in the region.

Key Points

- **Approval for Land Allotment:**
 - Approvals have been granted for **land allotments to the [Rajasthan State Industrial Development and Investment Corporation \(RIICO\)](#)** for establishing the **Rajasthan Petrozone** and new industrial areas, to **Rajasthan Solar Park Development Company Limited** for a **solar energy project**, and for a large-scale **[Chambal River](#)-based drinking water scheme**.
 - The **proposed petrozone** is expected to house various **petrochemical industries**, creating a hub for **manufacturing and processing activities**.
- **Conducive Environment and Manufacturing:**
 - This initiative aligns with the state's vision to enhance its **industrial infrastructure** and provide a **conducive environment** for businesses to thrive.
 - The development of the petrozone is anticipated to **generate numerous employment opportunities**, contributing to the **socio-economic upliftment** of the **local population**.
 - Additionally, it will pave the way for **technological advancements** and **innovation in the petrochemical sector**.
 - This move is likely to attract **both domestic and international investors**, further boosting the state's economic prospects.
- **Hydrocarbon Sector of the State:**
 - Rajasthan has significant resource potential of hydrocarbons under **4 Petroliferous Basins**.
 - These **4 basins (Jaisalmer Basin, Barmer - Sanchore Basin, Bikaner - Nagaur Basin, Vindhyan Basin)** fall in the **14 Districts** of the State namely Barmer, Jaisalmer, Bikaner, Ganganagar, Hanumangarh, Jalore, Jodhpur, Kota, Jhalawar, Baran, Bundi, Bhilwara, Churu and Chittorgarh spread over an area of 1,50,000 sq km.
 - **Mangla Oil discovery of Barmer-Sanchore Basin** has been rated as **one of the biggest** on-land discoveries of the country in over three decades.

Uttarakhand to Mandate 10 Subjects for Class X Students |

Uttarakhand | 15 Jan 2025

Why in News?

A draft has been prepared by the **Uttarakhand's State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT)** has proposed **Class X students** to study **10 mandatory subjects**, replacing the current practice of five.

- This decision follows the framework set by the [National Education Policy \(NEP\) 2020](#) and the [National Curriculum Framework](#).

Key Points

- The **State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT)** has prepared a draft of the **state curriculum framework**, aiming to enhance educational standards and better prepare students for future challenges.
 - The new curriculum marks the first major implementation since the **NEP of 1986**, which succeeded the **policy of 1968**.
- The draft of the state curriculum framework, prepared through various committees, will be reviewed by the state government.
 - It includes only those subjects that have been recommended by the NEP.
- All children studying in government schools will be required to take these subjects. They will have the option to change subjects starting from the 11th grade.
- The inclusion of new subjects under this policy will foster an entrepreneurial spirit among students. These will include courses in **beauty and wellness, drone technology, and various IT-related programmes**.

National Education Policy, 2020

- **About:**
 - The NEP 2020 aims at making "India a global knowledge superpower". It is only the 3rd major revamp of the framework of education in India since independence.
 - The two earlier education policies were brought in 1968 and 1986.
- **Salient Features:**
 - Ensuring Universal Access at All Levels of schooling from pre-primary school to Grade 12.
 - Ensuring quality early childhood care and education for all children between 3-6 years.
 - New Curricular and Pedagogical Structure **(5+3+3+4)** corresponds to the age groups of **3-8, 8-11, 11-14, and 14-18 years** respectively.
 - It covers four stages of schooling: Foundational Stage (5 years), Preparatory Stage (3 years), Middle Stage (3 years), and Secondary Stage (4 years).
 - No hard separations between arts and sciences, between curricular and extra-curricular activities, between vocational and academic streams;
 - Emphasis on promoting multilingualism and Indian languages
 - Setting up of a new National Assessment Centre, [PARAKH \(Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development\)](#)
 - A separate Gender Inclusion fund and Special Education Zones for disadvantaged regions and groups.

Why in News?

The Royal Mint of Britain has issued a coin to honor George Orwell, born in Motihari, East Champaran, Bihar, marking his **75th death anniversary**.

- The **commemorative £2 coin** features a design symbolizing **Orwell's legacy**.

Key Points

- **George Orwell**, the **great English novelist**, was born on **25 June, 1903**, in **Motihari, Bihar**.
- His father was a **British civil servant**, and his mother was of **Burmese descent**.
- Orwell's famous novels **1984** and **Animal Farm** are considered landmarks in **English literature**, and he is often referred to as a "**century writer**".
- Orwell's work, particularly the concept of "**Big Brother**" and **totalitarian control**, remains relevant today.
- The **coin** highlights Orwell's deep connection to **themes of truth, power, and privacy**, and serves as a tribute to his enduring influence in **literature** and **global discourse**.



Village Rejects Union Carbide Waste Incineration | Madhya Pradesh | 15 Jan 2025

Why in News?

The controversy over the disposal of hazardous waste from the [Union Carbide India Limited \(UCIL\) plant](#) in Bhopal has come into focus as **hazardous material** has been transported to **Tarpura village** in Madhya Pradesh's Pithampur town for incineration.

Key Points

- **Hazardous Waste Relocation:**
 - **337 MT of toxic waste** from the **UCIL Bhopal plant** has been moved to **Pithampur** for disposal.
 - Containers are parked at a **private treatment, storage, and disposal facility**.
- **Protests and Opposition:**
 - Local residents, businesses, and activists have opposed the incineration of the waste.
 - A general strike was observed in the region because of concerns including **environmental degradation, groundwater contamination,** and **inadequate regulation**.
- **Government Response:**
 - The Dhar district administration has launched an awareness campaign to address concerns.
 - Outreach includes farmers, workers, and industrial associations, emphasizing adherence to environmental norms.
- **Local Environmental Challenges:**
 - Pithampur's industrial area is already heavily polluted, affecting air, water, and soil quality.
 - Reports of increased **groundwater salinity** and related health issues such as skin problems.

The Bhopal Gas Tragedy 1984

- The **Bhopal gas tragedy** was one of the worst industrial accidents in history that occurred on the night of **2-3 December 1984** at the **Union Carbide India Limited (UCIL) pesticide plant** in Bhopal, MP.
- It exposed people and animals to the highly toxic gas **methyl isocyanate (MIC)**, causing immediate and long-term health effects and deaths.

Makar Sankranti and Amrit Snan (Shahi Snan) | Uttar Pradesh | 15 Jan 2025

Why in News?

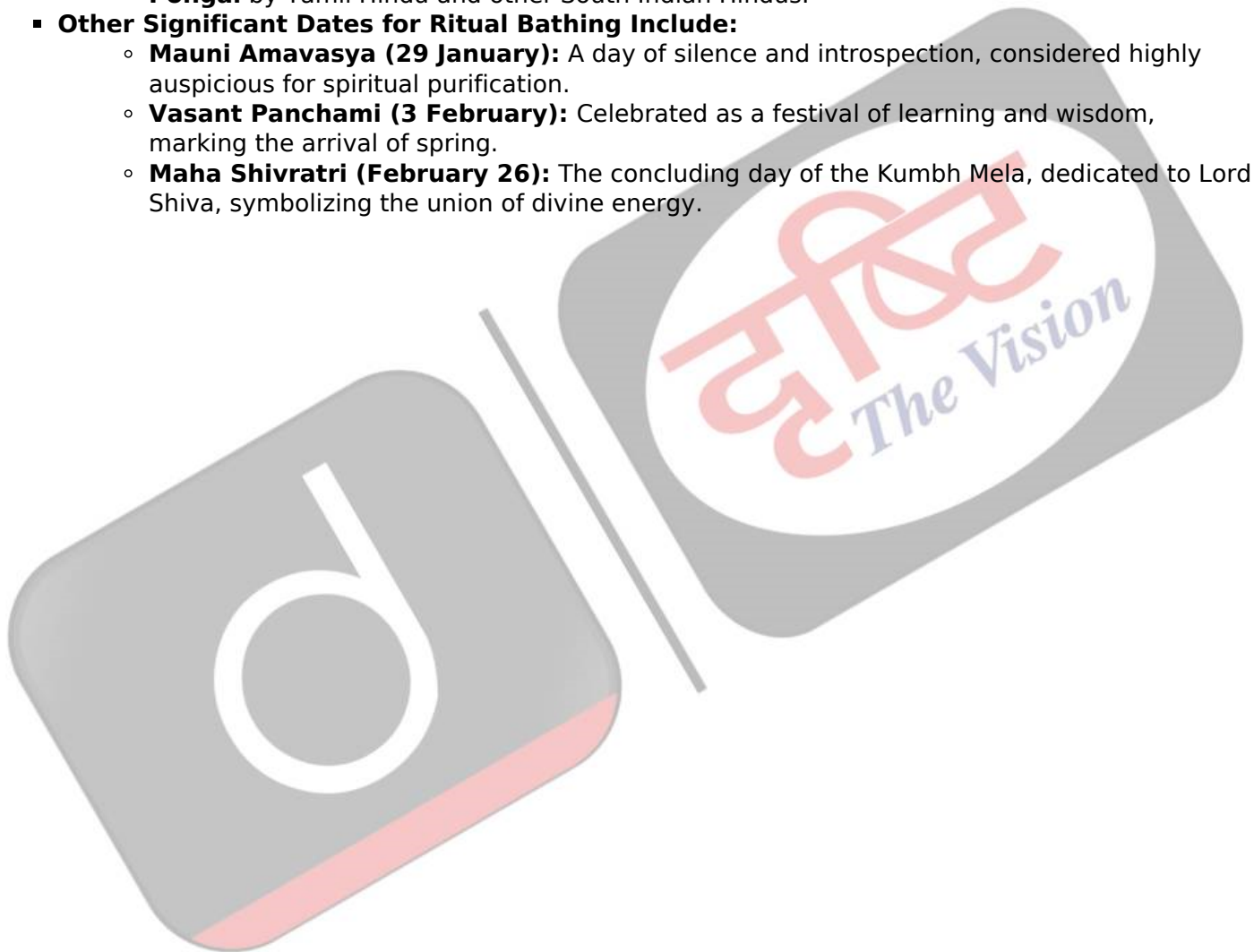
The [Mahakumbh Mela 2025](#), currently underway in **Prayagraj**, witnessed its first **amrit snan or shahi snan** on 14th January, coinciding with the auspicious occasion of [Makar Sankranti](#).

- This ritual bath marked the beginning of a series of sacred dips in the confluence of the [Ganga, Yamuna,](#) and the mythical **Saraswati rivers**.

Key Points

- **Significance of Makar Sankranti:**
 - Celebrated on 14th January, the festival marks the **Sun's transition into Makar raashi (Capricorn)**. This transition, known as **Sankranti**, is particularly special as it signals the **Sun's northward journey**, known as **Uttarayan**.

- This movement heralds the **end of the harsh winter months** and the **onset of warmer, longer days.**
- In Hindu mythology, **Uttarayan** is regarded as the **gods' daytime**, signifying an auspicious period for celebrations and spiritual endeavors.
 - **Bhishma Pitamah** of the **Mahabharata** chose to pass away during Uttarayan to attain spiritual liberation.
- The festival is also significant as it **ends the karmas, a month-long period during which auspicious events are avoided.**
- The Sun's entry into Capricorn, the house ruled by Shani (Saturn), who is considered the Sun's son, is celebrated as a familial reunion, a key theme in Hindu traditions.
- The festivities associated with the day is known by different names in different parts of the country:
 - **Lohri** by north Indian Hindus and Sikhs.
 - **Sukarat** in central India.
 - **Bhogali Bihu** by Assamese Hindus, and
 - **Pongal** by Tamil Hindu and other South Indian Hindus.
- **Other Significant Dates for Ritual Bathing Include:**
 - **Mauni Amavasya (29 January):** A day of silence and introspection, considered highly auspicious for spiritual purification.
 - **Vasant Panchami (3 February):** Celebrated as a festival of learning and wisdom, marking the arrival of spring.
 - **Maha Shivratri (February 26):** The concluding day of the Kumbh Mela, dedicated to Lord Shiva, symbolizing the union of divine energy.





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