CURRENT AFFAIRS — 18 November 2026

Wednesday, 18 November 2026 • Asia/Kolkata (IST) • Bihar + National • BPSC Prelims & Mains digest

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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS FOR BPSC CCE

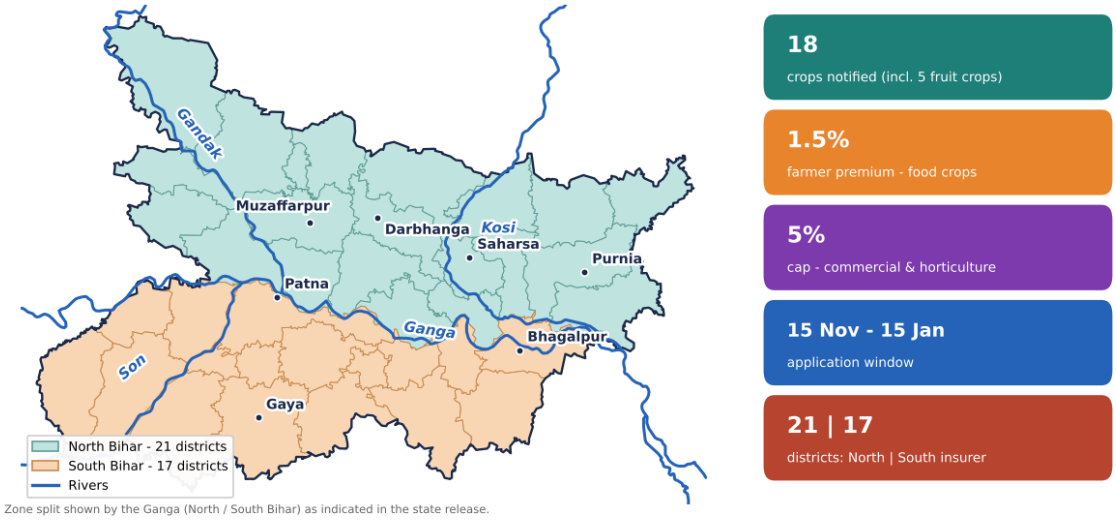
TODAY AT A GLANCE — 10 THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Bihar implements **PMFBY** from **Rabi 2026-27**; applications **15 Nov 2026 - 15 Jan 2027**.
- Farmer premium: **1.5%** (food crops), max **5%** (commercial/horticulture); **18 crops** covered.
- **Nitish Setu** (Kachchi Dargah-Bidupur): **19.76 km**, **₹5,571.69 crore**; PM to dedicate on **21 Nov**.
- CM **Samrat Choudhary** flagged off **40 Ganna Vikas Raths** on **17 Nov**; **10** sugar mills running.
- **Bihar Building Bylaws 2026**: map approval in **30 days** or **deemed approval**; base **FAR 3.0**.
- **Sankalp Sandhya** evening classes for **Classes 9-12** in all **38** district HQs (**5:00-7:30 pm**).
- **Quad Manila summit (17 Nov)**: **$85 mn AI Accelerator**; first Business Leaders' Forum in **Mumbai, 2027**.
- UNGA adopted death-penalty moratorium resolution **133-33-16**; **India voted against**.
- **Mahanadi Coalfields** IPO: **₹8,981 crore OFS**, price band **₹129-136**, opens **19 Nov**.
- **Voyager 1** reached **one light-day (~25.9 billion km)** from Earth on **18 Nov 2026**.

SECTION A — BIHAR SPECIAL

State schemes • policy • administration • state economy

Bihar returns to PM Fasal Bima Yojana (Rabi 2026-27): insurer zones



Zone split shown by the Ganga (North / South Bihar) as indicated in the state release.

Bihar rejoins PM Fasal Bima Yojana from Rabi 2026-27

BIHAR BPSC: Prelims + Mains GS-II (Bihar Economy - Agriculture)

Syllabus Linkage	Mains GS-II: **Bihar economy - agriculture, risk & farm income**; Prelims: **central schemes, crop insurance terms**.
Context	The Agriculture Department formally launched **PMFBY** in Bihar on **17 Nov 2026**, after the state announced (14 Nov) that the central scheme will replace the **Bihar Rajya Fasal Sahayata Yojana** from the **Rabi 2026-27** season.
Key Facts	■ Application window: **15 Nov 2026 to 15 Jan 2027**; **18 crops** incl. wheat, maize, pulses, oilseeds and **5 fruit crops** (mango, **litchi**, banana, jackfruit, guava). ■ Farmer premium: **1.5%** of sum insured for food crops; **5%** (or lower insurer rate) for commercial/horticulture crops; **no ceiling** on insured area. ■ Both **Raiyat** (landowner) and **Gair-Raiyat** (sharecropper) farmers eligible; Farmer ID via **AgriStack** needed for KCC and non-loanee Raiyats. ■ Insurers: **ICICI Lombard - 21 districts (North Bihar)**; **Agriculture Insurance Co. of India - 17 districts (South Bihar)**. ■ Apply via banks, **PACS**, **Vasudha Kendras** or the **National Crop Insurance Portal**; announced by Cooperation Minister **Ram Kripal Yadav**.
Way Fwd	Fast **tech-based yield estimation** and timely claim settlement in flood-prone **Kosi-Gandak** districts will decide farmer trust.
Concept	**PMFBY** launched **2016**: farmer premium **2% Kharif, 1.5% Rabi, 5% commercial/horti**; balance shared by Centre and state. Bihar had **exited PMFBY in 2018** for its own **no-premium** assistance scheme.

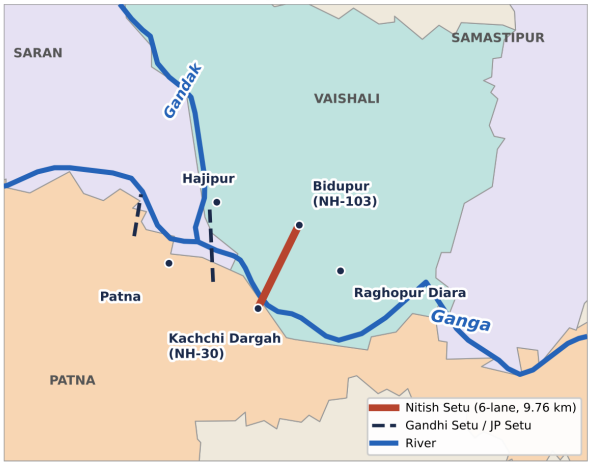
Nitish Setu: six-lane Ganga bridge ready for 21 November dedication

BIHAR BPSC: Prelims + Mains GS-II (Bihar Geography & Infrastructure)

Syllabus Linkage	Mains GS-II: **Bihar geography, infrastructure & regional connectivity**; Prelims: **bridges over Ganga, NH numbers**.
Context	PM **Narendra Modi** will dedicate the **Kachchi Dargah-Bidupur** six-lane bridge, named **Nitish Setu** after former CM **Nitish Kumar**, to the nation at **Vaishali** on **21 Nov 2026**.
Key Facts	■ Links **Kachchi Dargah (Patna, NH-30)** with **Bidupur (Vaishali, NH-103)**; also links **Sabalpur** to the **Patna-Bakhtiyarpur bypass**. ■ Total **19.76 km**: **9.76 km** bridge over the **Ganga** + about **10 km** approach roads. ■ Cost: **₹5,571.69 crore** (Road Construction Department); a **greenfield** project, central nod for **ADB loan** in **2014**. ■ Gives **Raghopur Diara** direct road link to Patna; eases load on **Mahatma Gandhi Setu** and travel to **Samastipur-Darbhanga**.
Way Fwd	Integrate with the **Bakhtiyarpur-Tajpur** bridge and ring roads so north-south freight (litchi, banana, maize) moves faster.
Concept	Key Ganga bridges in Bihar: **Rajendra Setu (1959, Mokama-Simaria; first)**, **Mahatma Gandhi Setu (1982, Patna-Hajipur)**, **Vikramshila Setu (Bhagalpur)**, **J.P. Setu (Digha-Sonepur, rail-road)**.

Nitish Setu: Kachchi Dargah - Bidupur

Total 19.76 km incl. approaches | Rs 5,571.69 crore



40 Ganna Vikas Raths launched to revive Bihar's sugar belt

BIHAR BPSC: Prelims + Mains GS-II (Bihar Economy - Agro-industry)

Syllabus Linkage	Mains GS-II: **Bihar agriculture & agro-based industry**; Prelims: **sugarcane schemes, FRP**.
Context	CM **Samrat Choudhary** flagged off **40 Ganna Vikas Rath-2026** vans from Patna on **17 Nov** to carry modern cane farming know-how and scheme information to all **38 districts**.
Key Facts	■ **15 raths** run a **30-day** campaign in **Madhubani** and **Darbhanga**; **25** cover the other **36** districts. ■ **10 sugar mills** are running; **5 more** to start soon; state goal of **25 new mills** and revival of closed ones. ■ Agreement with **Indian Potash Ltd** to set up mills at **Sakri (Madhubani)** and **Raiyam (Darbhanga)**. ■ Digital tools: **Ganna ID** and **Ganna Saathi AI chatbot**; investor pitch via **Sugarcane Industry Investment Promotion Policy-2026**. ■ Schemes: **Ganna Yantrikaran Yojana** (machinery subsidy), New Area Expansion, **Mukhyamantri Ganna Vikas Karyakram**.
Way Fwd	Timely **cane-price payment**, better varieties and **ethanol** linkage can make sugar a job engine for north Bihar.
Concept	**FRP** of sugarcane is fixed by the **Centre** on **CACP** advice (Sugarcane Control Order, 1966); states may add a **SAP**. **West Champaran** is Bihar's main cane district.

Ganna Vikas Rath-2026: numbers to note

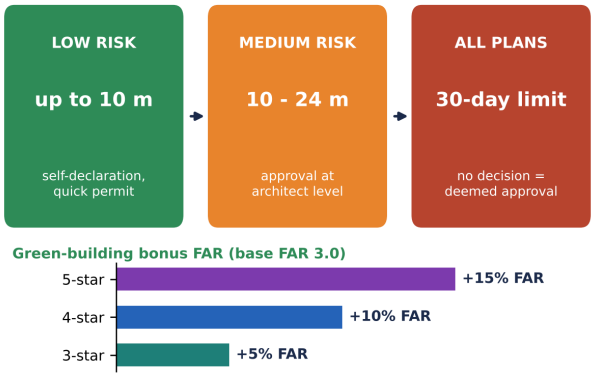
40 raths flagged off (17 Nov)	**38** districts covered	**15** raths for Madhubani & Darbhanga (30 days)
10 sugar mills running now	**5** more mills to start soon	**25** new mills (state goal)

Bihar Building Bylaws 2026: 30-day map approval with deemed clearance

BIHAR BPSC: Prelims + Mains GS-II (Governance & Urbanisation)

Syllabus Linkage	Mains GS-II: **urban governance, ease of doing business in Bihar**; Prelims: **FAR, deemed approval**.
Context	The **Urban Development & Housing Department** has readied the **Bihar Building Bylaws 2026** (cleared by the cabinet on 10 Nov) to replace the **2014 bylaws** and make permits **time-bound**.
Key Facts	■ Map decision within **30 days**, else **deemed approved**; map validity **5 years**; **Fire NOC** built into the permit. ■ Base **FAR 3.0**; risk-based: **up to 10 m - low risk (self-declaration)**, **10-24 m - medium risk (architect-level approval)**. ■ Setback **3.7 m** for buildings up to **15 m**, with relief for small plots. ■ Green-building bonus FAR: **+5% (3-star)**, **+10% (4-star)**, **+15% (5-star)**.
Way Fwd	Pair self-certification with **random audits** and seismic checks, since Bihar lies largely in **Seismic Zones IV-V**.
Concept	**FAR (Floor Area Ratio)** = total built-up floor area / plot area. **Deemed approval** = automatic clearance when an authority misses a deadline (a **Right to Service** tool).

Bihar Building Bylaws 2026: risk-based permits



'Sankalp Sandhya' evening classes start in all 38 districts

BIHAR BPSC: Prelims + Mains GS-II (Bihar Governance - Education)

Syllabus Linkage	Mains GS-II: **Bihar social sector & human development**; Prelims: **state education initiatives**.
Context	The **Education Department** began **Sankalp Sandhya** remedial evening classes on **17 Nov 2026** for academically and economically weaker students of **Classes 9-12**.
Key Facts	■ Pilot from **17 Nov 2026 to 31 Mar 2027**, in **1-3 government schools** at each of the **38 district headquarters**. ■ Daily **5:00-7:30 pm**: **English, Maths, Science, Computer Science and AI**, plus homework and exam help. ■ Retired **IAS/BAS/BES** officers (under **70**) may teach **voluntarily, without honorarium**; DEOs monitor, DMs review.
Way Fwd	Track learning outcomes before board exams and scale to block level if results improve.
Concept	Remedial learning is stressed in **NEP 2020** and **Samagra Shiksha**. Bihar's literacy rate was **61.8%** (**Census 2011**), the **lowest** among states.

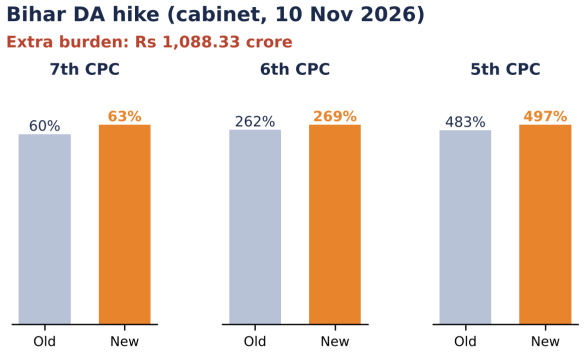
SECTION B — DATA POINT OF THE DAY

EXTRA BURDEN ON BIHAR FROM THE LATEST DA HIKE

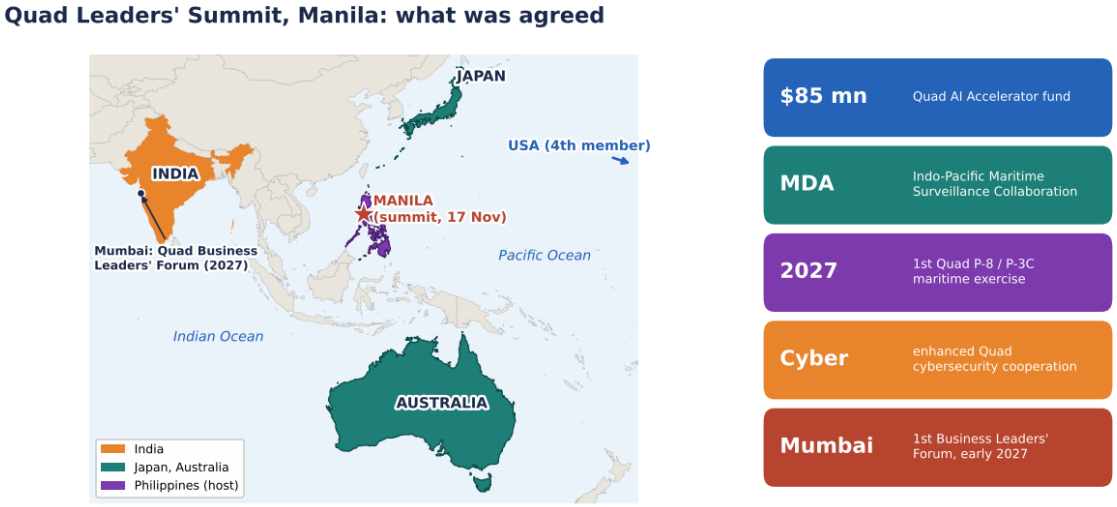
₹1,088.33 crore

Cabinet (10 Nov 2026) raised DA: **7th CPC 60% to 63%**, **6th CPC 262% to 269%**, **5th CPC 483% to 497%** for employees and pensioners.

Exam angle: DA is revised twice a year and linked to the **All-India CPI-IW** (Labour Bureau); higher committed expenditure (salaries, pensions, interest) squeezes Bihar's **capital expenditure** space.



SECTION C — NATIONAL & WORLD Polity • economy • sci-tech • IR for BPSC



Quad Leaders' Summit in Manila backs AI, maritime and cyber package

IR BPSC: Prelims + Mains GS-I (Current Events - International)

Syllabus Linkage	Mains GS-I: **current events of international importance**; Prelims: **groupings, Indo-Pacific**.
Context	Leaders of **India, the US, Japan and Australia** met in **Manila** on **17 Nov 2026**, alongside the ASEAN meetings, in the first Quad leaders' meeting since **2024**.
Key Facts	■ Approved the **Quad AI Accelerator** with an **$85 million** fund for trusted AI in the Indo-Pacific. ■ **Indo-Pacific Maritime Surveillance Collaboration**; first Quad **P-8 / P-3C** patrol-aircraft exercise in **2027**. ■ Inaugural **Quad Business Leaders' Forum** in **Mumbai** in **early 2027**; enhanced **cybersecurity** cooperation. ■ Opposed **unilateral status-quo changes** and **economic coercion**; condemned **cross-border terrorism**.
Way Fwd	India should use the Quad for **undersea cables, critical minerals** and maritime awareness while keeping **ASEAN centrality**.
Concept	**Quad** began as the **2004 tsunami** core group, met in **2007**, revived in **2017**; first leaders' summit **2021 (virtual)**.

India votes against UNGA call for death-penalty moratorium

POLITY BPSC: Prelims + Mains GS-II (Indian Polity)

Syllabus Linkage	Mains GS-II: **Indian polity - judiciary, rights, criminal justice**; Prelims: **key judgments, Articles 72 & 161**.
Context	The **UN General Assembly** adopted the resolution **'Moratorium on the use of the death penalty'** by **133 votes to 33**, with **16 abstentions**; **India voted against**, citing its sovereign right to decide its legal system.
Key Facts	■ Others voting against included **China, the US, Japan, Pakistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia**. ■ India retains death penalty only in the **'rarest of rare'** cases (**Bachan Singh v. State of Punjab, 1980**). ■ **574** prisoners were on death row on **31 Dec 2025**; last executions in India were in **2020**. ■ **Law Commission's 262nd Report (2015)** urged abolition except for **terrorism** and **waging war**.
Way Fwd	Better **sentencing guidelines**, mitigation inquiry and legal aid can reduce wrongful death sentences.
Concept	Pardon powers: **President - Art. 72**, **Governor - Art. 161**. The **Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR** (1989) aims at abolition; **India is not a party**.

Mahanadi Coalfields IPO: ₹8,981 crore offer for sale opens 19 Nov

ECONOMY BPSC: Prelims + Mains GS-II (Indian Economy)

Syllabus Linkage	Mains GS-II: **Indian economy - disinvestment, energy**; Prelims: **IPO/OFS terms, PSUs**.
Context	**Coal India** is selling part of its stake in subsidiary **Mahanadi Coalfields Ltd (MCL)** through a **100% offer for sale**, one of several Coal India subsidiaries being listed.
Key Facts	■ Size **₹8,981 crore**; **66.18 crore shares**; price band **₹129-136**; lot **110 shares**. ■ Bidding **19-23 Nov**; tentative listing **27 Nov 2026** on NSE and BSE; valuation about **₹90,001 crore** at the top end. ■ MCL mines the **Talcher** and **Ib Valley** coalfields of **Odisha**; **17 mines** (14 opencast, 3 underground). ■ FY26: income **₹33,899 crore**, profit **₹10,698 crore**.
Way Fwd	Listing can improve **transparency** and valuation; proceeds help the fiscal deficit, but energy-transition risks need disclosure.

Concept	**OFS** = existing shareholder sells, company gets **no fresh money**. **Disinvestment** is handled by **DIPAM** (Finance Ministry). Coal India is a **Maharatna**.

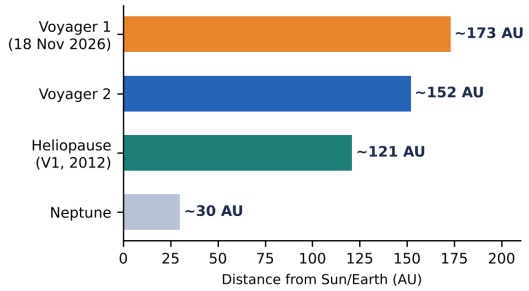
Voyager 1 becomes first spacecraft one light-day from Earth

SCI-TECH **BPSC: Prelims + Mains GS-II (Science & Technology)**

Syllabus Linkage	Mains GS-II: **role of science & technology - space**; Prelims: **space missions, units of distance**.
Context	NASA's **Voyager 1** crossed **one light-day** (about **25.9 billion km** or **173 AU**) from Earth on **18 Nov 2026**, about **49 years** after launch.
Key Facts	■ Launched **5 Sept 1977**; entered **interstellar space** after crossing the **heliopause** in **2012**. ■ A radio signal now takes about **24 hours** one way; most instruments are off to save **RTG** power. ■ **Voyager 2** is about **3.2 billion km** closer and should reach one light-day around **2035**. ■ Both carry the **Golden Record** with sounds and images of Earth.
Way Fwd	Long-life **nuclear power sources** and deep-space networks matter for India's future interplanetary missions.
Concept	**1 AU** = **~149.6 million km** (Earth-Sun). **Heliopause** = boundary where solar wind meets interstellar medium. **RTG** = radioisotope thermoelectric generator.

Voyager 1 hits one light-day

1 light-day = ~25.9 billion km = ~173 AU



India re-elected to ITU Council for 2027-2030

IR **BPSC: Prelims (International Organisations)**

Syllabus Linkage	Prelims: **UN specialised agencies**; Mains GS-I: **India's role in global bodies**.
Context	At the ITU **Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-26)** in **Doha, Qatar** (till **27 Nov**), India was re-elected to the **ITU Council** from **Region E (Asia & Australasia)**.
Key Facts	■ Council has **48 seats**; **Region E** has **13** seats. ■ **Doreen Bogdan-Martin** re-elected **ITU Secretary-General**; **Seizo Onoe** re-elected TSB Director. ■ India has ITU Council backing to host the next **Plenipotentiary Conference in 2030 (PP-30)**.
Way Fwd	Use the seat to push **6G standards**, affordable satellite spectrum and Global South digital public infrastructure.
Concept	**ITU**: founded **1865** (Paris), **HQ Geneva**, oldest **UN specialised agency**; sets global telecom standards and allocates **radio spectrum** and satellite orbits.

SECTION D — PRELIMS RAPID-FIRE

1. Bihar cabinet approved revised cost of **₹4,572.53 crore** for the **Bakhtiyarpur-Tajpur Ganga bridge**.	**2.** **Bihar Ki Beti Startup Challenge Yojana**: **2,100** students, **₹88.20 crore** (2026-27 to 2029-30).
3. **Bihar AI Mission** approved; industry partner from **Singapore** (Global Finance & Technology Network).	**4.** CM directed a **100% digital e-Cabinet** for faster, paperless cabinet decisions.
5. **Cyclone Akvan** intensified into a **severe cyclonic storm** over the **Bay of Bengal**; Andhra-Odisha coasts on alert.	**6.** **CM Balika PhD Fellowship**: **₹126 crore** sanctioned for **2026-27 to 2029-30**.

SECTION E — PRACTICE CORNER BPSC-pattern questions

Q1. With reference to the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) in Bihar, consider the following statements: 1. Bihar will implement PMFBY from the Rabi 2026-27 season. 2. The farmer's premium for food crops is 1.5% of the sum insured. 3. Only landowning (Raiyat) farmers are eligible. Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only
(b) 1 and 2 only
(c) 2 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b) — Statements 1 and 2 are correct. **Gair-Raiyat (non-landowning)** farmers are also eligible with a self-declaration, so statement 3 is wrong.

Q2. The newly built 'Nitish Setu' over the Ganga connects which of the following?

(a) Digha and Sonepur
(b) Kachchi Dargah and Bidupur
(c) Bakhtiyarpur and Tajpur
(d) Mokama and Simaria

Answer: (b) — Nitish Setu links **Kachchi Dargah (Patna, NH-30)** with **Bidupur (Vaishali, NH-103)**. Digha-Sonepur is **J.P. Setu**; Mokama-Simaria is **Rajendra Setu**.

Mains Practice Question

Bihar has returned to the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana after running its own crop assistance scheme. Examine the merits of an insurance-based model over a compensation-based model for a flood-prone agrarian state like Bihar. (BPSC Mains GS-II)

Hint: Intro: exit in **2018**, return in **Rabi 2026-27**. Body: insurance pools risk, central subsidy, covers **sharecroppers**, wider crop list (litchi, makhana-belt horticulture); concerns: claim delays, yield estimation, insurer profits, awareness. Way forward: **remote sensing**, **AgriStack**, PACS outreach, flood-specific add-ons. Conclude with farmer income stability.

ONE-LINE REVISION: PMFBY in Bihar from Rabi 2026-27 (1.5% premium, 18 crops) | Nitish Setu 19.76 km, ₹5,571.69 cr, 21 Nov | 40 Ganna Raths, 10 mills | Bylaws: 30-day deemed approval, FAR 3.0 | Quad Manila: $85 mn AI | UNGA 133-33-16 | Voyager 1 = 1 light-day

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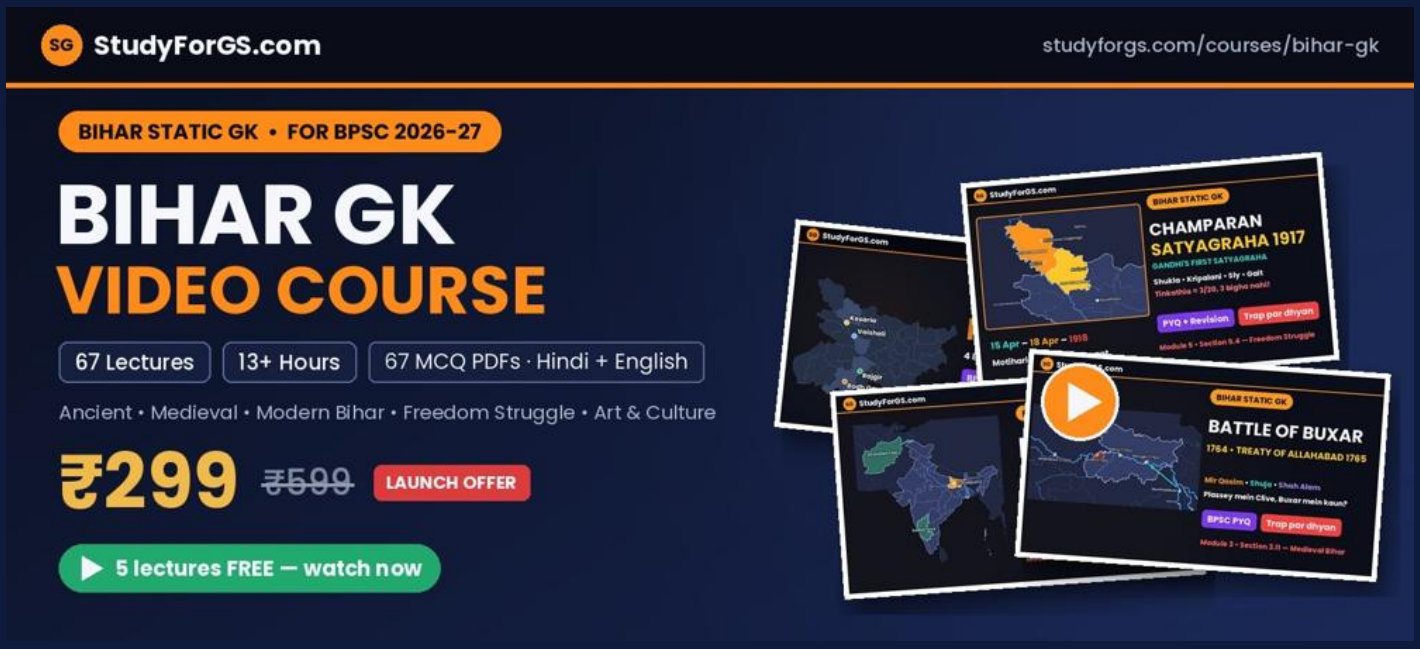

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