CURRENT AFFAIRS — 19 OCTOBER 2026

Monday, 19 October 2026 • Asia/Kolkata (IST) • Bihar + National • BPSC Prelims & Mains digest

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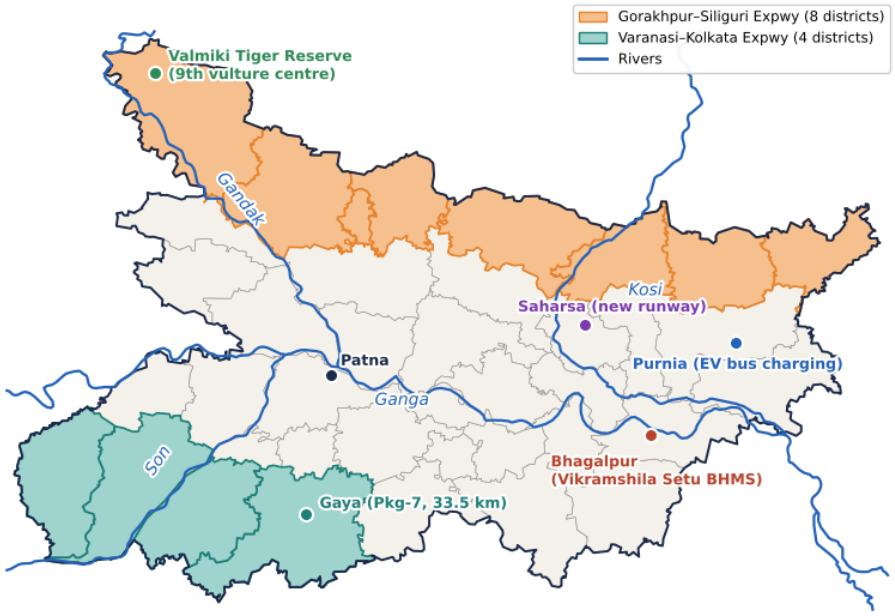
DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS FOR BPSC CCE

TODAY AT A GLANCE — 10 THINGS TO REMEMBER

- **32 NH projects** (**2,424 km**, **Rs 1,64,518 cr**) cleared for Bihar under Annual Plan **2026-27**.
- **Gorakhpur–Siliguri Expwy**: ~**417 km** in Bihar across **8 districts**.
- **Varanasi–Kolkata Expwy**: ~**162 km** in Bihar (Kaimur, Rohtas, Aurangabad, Gaya).
- **Valmiki TR** (W. Champaran) to be India's **9th vulture breeding centre**.
- Bihar forms **State-level Incident Response Team**; Chief Secretary supervises.
- **Vikramshila Setu** (Bhagalpur) to get IoT-based **Bridge Health Monitoring**.
- Patna court: Bihar's **first triple talaq conviction** (2 yrs RI).
- Ethanol **ESY 2026-27**: sugar route **zero**; maize price **Rs 68.86/L**.
- India approves accession to **SIOFA** (secretariat: **Réunion**).
- **INS Samarthak** — Navy's **first indigenous Multi-Purpose Vessel**.

SECTION A • BIHAR SPECIAL state schemes • policy • administration • state economy

BIHAR: NEW HIGHWAY CORRIDORS & PLACES IN NEWS



32
NH projects cleared (Annual Plan 2026-27)

2,424 km
total length

Rs 1,64,518 cr
estimated cost

417 km
Gorakhpur–Siliguri in Bihar

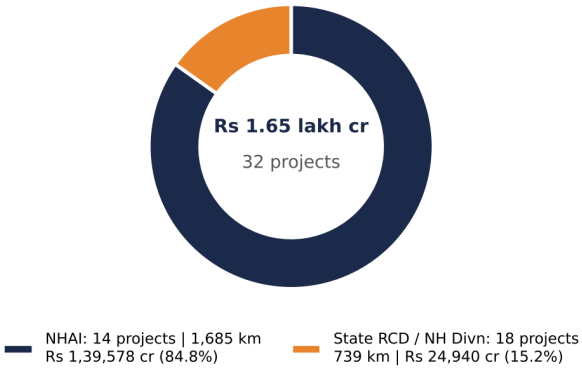
162 km
Varanasi–Kolkata in Bihar

Centre clears 32 NH projects (2,424 km) for Bihar under Annual Plan 2026-27

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

Syllabus Linkage	GS-II: Bihar economy – infrastructure & connectivity. Prelims: expressway routes, districts, NH corridors.
Context	At a Ministry of Road Transport & Highways meeting in New Delhi chaired by Secretary **V. Umashankar**, the Centre approved **32 National Highway projects** for Bihar covering ~**2,424 km** at an estimated **Rs 1,64,518 crore** (reported **17 Oct 2026**).
Key Facts	■ **NHAI**: **14 projects**, ~**1,685 km**, **Rs 1,39,578 cr**; State **RCD / NH Division**: **18 projects**, ~**739 km**, **Rs 24,940 cr**. ■ **Gorakhpur–Siliguri Expressway**: **568 km** total, ~**417 km in Bihar** via **W. & E. Champaran, Sitamarhi, Sheohar, Madhubani, Supaul, Araria, Kishanganj**. ■ **Ram Janaki Path**: packages **3 & 4** (~**Rs 8,600 cr**) approved; packages 1 & 2 already under construction. ■ Other corridors: **Raxaul–Haldia**, **Buxar–Bhagalpur**, **Patna Northern Ring Road**, **Muzaffarpur–Barauni**; ROBs on **NH-120** & **NH-727**.
Way Fwd	Fast-track **land acquisition** and forest clearances; plug corridors into industrial clusters for logistics gains.
Concept	**Bharatmala Pariyojana** (2017) – economic corridors & expressways; **NHAI** set up under the **NHAI Act, 1988**; **PM Gati Shakti** (2021) = integrated infra planning.

Bihar NH Plan 2026-27: cost share by agency



Varanasi–Kolkata Expressway: 162 km Bihar stretch via Kaimur, Rohtas, Aurangabad & Gaya

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

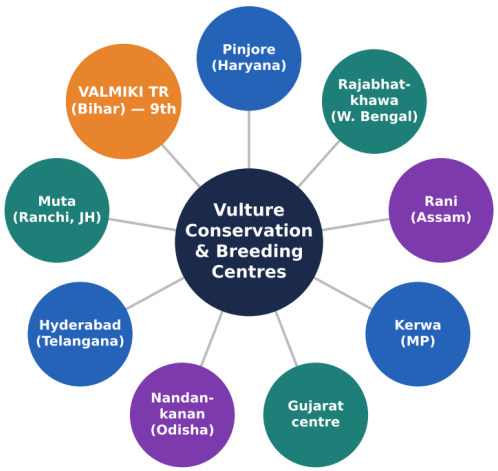
Syllabus Linkage	GS-II: Bihar geography & infrastructure. Prelims: districts on new expressways; GT Road history (GS-I link).
Context	NHAI officials (**16 Oct**) briefed on the **six-lane greenfield Varanasi–Ranchi–Kolkata Expressway**; its **Gaya section (Package-7)** of **33.5 km** costs **Rs 1,248.37 crore** and is ~**28.2%** complete.
Key Facts	■ Bihar length ~**162 km** through **Kaimur, Rohtas, Aurangabad, Gaya**; Bihar section target **March 2028**. ■ Package-7 runs from **Dumaria** to **Imamganj** blocks (Gaya); started **1 July 2025**, due **30 June 2027**. ■ ~**5 km** passes through forests in Kaimur & Gaya → **wildlife over/underpasses**; ~**50,000 trees** to be planted. ■ **CCTV every 1 km**, **trauma centre every 30 km**; link planned to the **Dobhi industrial corridor**; decongests **NH-19**.
Way Fwd	Synchronise with industrial nodes in Gaya; ensure eco-sensitive design across the **Kaimur plateau**.
Concept	**Greenfield** = new alignment on fresh land; **brownfield** = upgrading an existing road. **NH-19** follows the historic **Grand Trunk Road**, renewed by **Sher Shah Suri** of **Sasaram** (Rohtas).

Valmiki Tiger Reserve to become India's 9th vulture conservation & breeding centre

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

Syllabus Linkage	GS-II: Bihar geography – forests & wildlife. Prelims: protected areas of Bihar, IUCN status, diclofenac.
Context	**Valmiki Tiger Reserve (VTR)** in **West Champaran** is being developed as **India's 9th vulture conservation and breeding centre**; work is under way in the **Gonauli forest range** (reported **18 Oct 2026**).
Key Facts	■ Nests now mainly in the **core area**; aim to expand to the **buffer zone** in **4–5 years** (field director **Gaurav Ojha**). ■ Existing centres include **Pinjore** (Haryana), **Rajabhatkhawa** (WB), **Rani** (Assam), **Kerwa** (MP), **Nandankanan** (Odisha), **Muta** (Ranchi). ■ Key threat: veterinary drug **diclofenac** → fatal **kidney failure**; VTR will screen carcasses for contamination. ■ VTR hosts **300+ bird species**; Bihar's **only tiger reserve**, contiguous with Nepal's **Chitwan NP**, along the **Gandak**.
Way Fwd	Declare **Vulture Safe Zones** (diclofenac-free radius) with cross-border cooperation with Nepal.
Concept	**Action Plan for Vulture Conservation 2020–25**; veterinary diclofenac banned in **2006**. White-rumped, Indian & slender-billed vultures = **Critically Endangered** (IUCN); **Schedule I**, **WPA 1972**.

India's vulture centres: Bihar set to be 9th

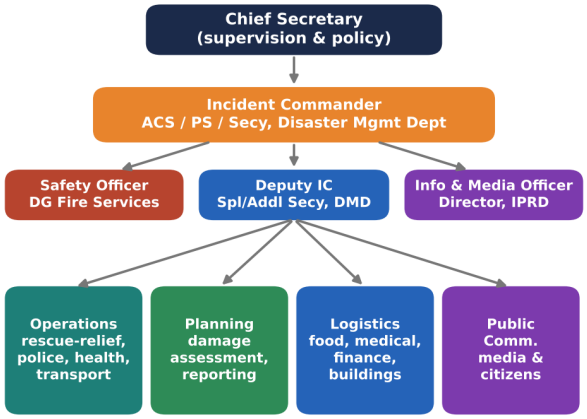


Bihar constitutes State-level Incident Response Team for disasters

BIHAR **BPSC: Prelims + Mains GS-II (Disaster Management & Bihar Administration)**

Syllabus Linkage	GS-II: Bihar administration; disaster management (floods). Prelims: DM Act 2005, IRS structure.
Context	Bihar's **Disaster Management Department** has set up a **State-level Incident Response Team (IRT)** to coordinate rescue and relief during natural and human-induced disasters, following **NDMA** and **MHA** guidelines (**17 Oct 2026**).
Key Facts	■ **Chief Secretary**: overall supervision; **Incident Commander**: ACS/Principal Secretary/Secretary, **Disaster Management Dept**. ■ **Safety Officer**: **DG, Fire Services**; **Information & Media Officer**: Director, **IPRD**. ■ Sections: **Operations** (rescue, police, health, road-rail-water-air transport), **Planning** (damage assessment), **Logistics** (food, medical, finance). ■ Crucial for Bihar, where ~**73%** of the area is **flood-prone** (Kosi, Gandak, Bagmati, Ganga basins).
Way Fwd	Pre-monsoon **mock drills**; integrate with **SDRF**, district IRTs and flood early-warning systems.
Concept	**Incident Response System (IRS)** – NDMA guidelines adapted from the US Incident Command System. **DM Act, 2005**: NDMA (PM), **SDMA (CM)**, DDMA (DM).

Bihar State-level Incident Response Team



Based on NDMA / MHA Incident Response System guidelines

Vikramshila Setu to get IoT-based Bridge Health Monitoring System

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

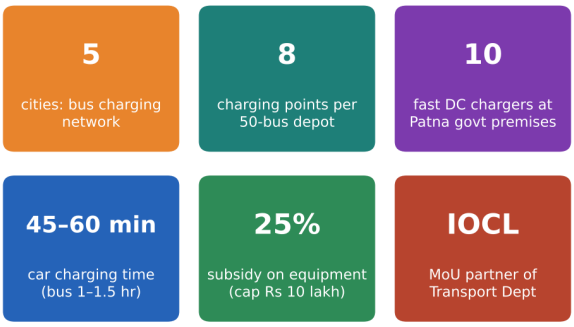
Syllabus Linkage	GS-II: role of S&T in development; Bihar infrastructure. GS-I: Vikramshila Mahavihara (Bihar heritage).
Context	The **Vikramshila Setu** over the **Ganga** at **Bhagalpur** will get a **Bridge Health Monitoring System (BHMS)** for real-time digital tracking of its structural condition, as damaged sections undergo restoration (**18 Oct 2026**).
Key Facts	■ **Sensors**, **IoT devices** and **data analytics** to track **stress, vibration, bending and displacement**. ■ Automatic **alerts** to authorities when readings cross set limits; complements physical inspections. ■ Covers the **old bridge**; a BHMS was already planned for the **parallel four-lane bridge** under construction. ■ Setu (~**4.7 km**, opened **2001**) links **Bhagalpur–Naugachia**, joining **south and north Bihar**.
Way Fwd	Make BHMS mandatory for all major **Ganga & Kosi bridges**; publish public safety dashboards.
Concept	**Vikramshila Mahavihara** (Antichak, Bhagalpur) founded by Pala king **Dharmapala** (8th–9th c.). **Structural Health Monitoring** = IoT + AI-led predictive maintenance.

Bihar expands EV charging to 5 cities; fast DC chargers at 10 Patna govt sites

BIHAR BPSC: Prelims + Mains GS-II (Bihar Economy, Energy & S&T)

Syllabus Linkage	GS-II: Bihar economy – energy & transport; S&T (green mobility). Prelims: EV schemes.
Context	The **Bihar Transport Department** is expanding **EV charging** across **5 cities**; under an MoU with **IOCL**, **fast DC chargers** are coming up at **10 government premises** in Patna (**17 Oct 2026**).
Key Facts	■ Bus charging: **Purnia** complete; **Patna, Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga, Gaya** under way; depots at **Phulwarisharif, Rajgir, Muzaffarpur** operational. ■ **8 charging points** per **50-bus depot**; e-bus charges in **1–1.5 hr**, cars in **45–60 min**. ■ Patna sites include **Chief Secretariat, Bihar Vidhan Sabha, Vikas Bhawan, Visvesvaraya Bhawan, Beur Mor**. ■ **Bihar EV Policy 2026**: **25% subsidy** on charging equipment, capped at **Rs 10 lakh**.
Way Fwd	Pair chargers with **solar rooftops**; extend the network to highways and tier-2 towns.
Concept	**PM E-DRIVE** (2024) succeeded **FAME-II**; **PM e-Bus Sewa** (2023) for city e-buses. Fast DC charging (CCS2) vs slower AC charging.

Bihar EV Policy 2026: charging push in numbers



Patna court records Bihar's first conviction under triple talaq law

POLITY BPSC: Prelims + Mains GS-II (Polity & Social Justice)

Syllabus Linkage	GS-II: Indian polity – rights, judiciary; Bihar law & order. Prelims: 2019 Act, Shayara Bano case.
Context	A Patna court (**ADJ-24**) delivered what is reported as **Bihar's first conviction** under the **triple talaq law**, sentencing a man from **Bihta** to **2 years' rigorous imprisonment** and a **Rs 6,500** fine (**17 Oct 2026**).
Key Facts	■ Charged under **Section 4**, **Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act, 2019**, plus IPC **Sections 323 & 341**. ■ Acquitted of the attempted acid-attack charge for lack of evidence; appeal to the **Patna High Court** possible. ■ The Act makes instant **talaq-e-biddat void and illegal**; punishment up to **3 years** + fine. ■ Rooted in SC's **Shayara Bano v. Union of India (2017)** verdict (**3:2**) striking down instant triple talaq.
Way Fwd	Legal aid and awareness for women; **speedy trials** to ensure deterrence.
Concept	The Act also gives the wife **subsistence allowance** and **custody** of minor children; offence **cognizable** and **compoundable** at the wife's instance. **Art. 44** (UCC) is a DPSP.

SECTION B • DATA POINT OF THE DAY

Rs 1,64,518 crore

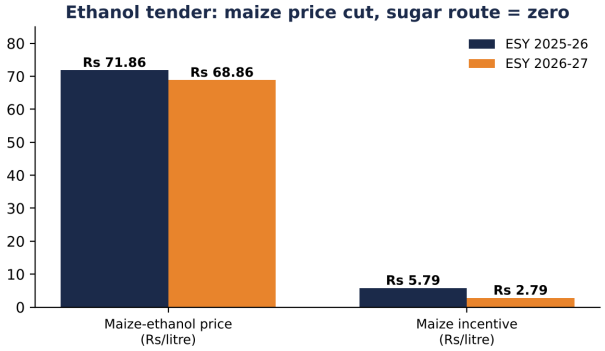
Bihar's NH outlay under Annual Plan 2026-27
For **32 projects** covering **2,424 km** — about **Rs 68 crore per km**; **NHAI** carries **84.8%** of the cost (**Rs 1,39,578 cr**, 1,685 km).

SECTION C • NATIONAL & WORLD polity • economy • IR • defence

Ethanol tender for 2026-27 bars sugar route; maize-ethanol price cut

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

Syllabus Linkage	GS-II: Indian economy – energy, agriculture; Bihar agriculture (maize). Prelims: E20, biofuel policy.
Context	**BPCL**, on behalf of oil marketing companies, floated a tender on **16 Oct 2026** for ~**11 billion litres** of ethanol for **ESY 2026-27** (Nov–Oct), excluding all **sugar-based feedstocks**.
Key Facts	■ Barred: **cane juice, sugar/sugar syrup, B-heavy molasses**; allowed: **maize, broken rice, surplus FCI rice, C-heavy molasses**. ■ **Maize-ethanol** price cut **Rs 71.86 → Rs 68.86/litre**; maize incentive **Rs 5.79 → Rs 2.79/litre**. ■ Trigger: poor rain in **Maharashtra & Karnataka** → risk of lower sugar output and higher prices. ■ Bihar angle: a leading **maize** state (Kosi–Seemanchal belt) with grain distilleries under its **Ethanol Production Promotion Policy, 2021**.
Way Fwd	Push **2G ethanol** from crop residue; protect maize farm-gate prices while balancing food–fuel needs.
Concept	**E20** = 20% ethanol in petrol; **National Policy on Biofuels 2018** (amended 2022); **PM JI-VAN Yojana** for 2G ethanol. **Ethanol Supply Year: 1 Nov–31 Oct**.



SC: Full professional-course fee must be fixed before admission

POLITY BPSC: Prelims + Mains GS-II (Polity – Judiciary & Education)

Syllabus Linkage	GS-II: Indian polity – judiciary, education policy. Prelims: landmark fee cases, Concurrent List.
Context	In **Dr. B.C. Roy Engineering College v. State of West Bengal** (**14 Oct 2026**), a bench of Justices **P.S. Narasimha** and **Alok Aradhe** held that students must know the **entire course fee at admission**.
Key Facts	■ Mid-course hikes allowed only for **unforeseeable/extraordinary economic conditions** or **statutory changes**. ■ **Fee regulatory committees** must function as **continuing bodies**. ■ Court noted **professional course fees** run **711% higher** than general programmes. ■ Judgment draws on **AICTE Regulations, 1994** and **NEP 2020**.
Way Fwd	States should notify **full-course fees upfront** on public portals and strengthen fee committees.
Concept	**TMA Pai (2002)**: unaided institutions may fix fees but no **profiteering/capitation**; **Islamic Academy (2003)** created fee committees. Education moved to the **Concurrent List** by the **42nd Amendment (1976)**.

INS Samarthak: Navy commissions first indigenous Multi-Purpose Vessel

DEFENCE BPSC: Prelims + Mains GS-I (Current Events – National)

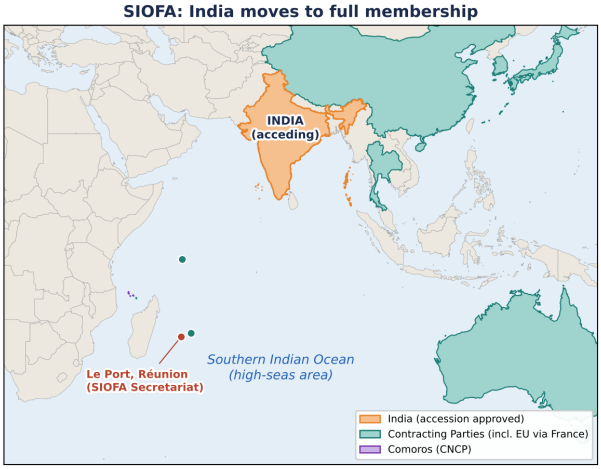
Syllabus Linkage	GS-I: current events of national importance; GS-II: indigenisation in defence S&T. Prelims: naval bases, ship classes.
Context	Vice-President **C.P. Radhakrishnan** commissioned **INS Samarthak**, the Navy's **first indigenously built Multi-Purpose Vessel (MPV)**, at **INS Kadamba, Karwar** (Karnataka) on **16 Oct 2026**.
Key Facts	■ Built by **L&T** at **Kattupalli** (Tamil Nadu); **75%+ indigenous content**; ~**107 m** long. ■ **First of 4** MPVs; lead ship of the **Samarthak class**. ■ Roles: **surveillance, patrolling, training**, weapon & sensor **trials**, **unmanned systems** support and **HADR**. ■ Commissioning attended by Navy chief **Adm. Krishna Swaminathan**.
Way Fwd	Deepen **private-sector shipbuilding**; scale indigenous auxiliaries under **Aatmanirbhar Bharat**.
Concept	**INS Kadamba** (Karwar) is being developed under **Project Seabird**. **Positive Indigenisation Lists** under **DAP 2020** curb defence imports.

India approves accession to Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA)

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

Syllabus Linkage	GS-I: current events of international importance. Prelims: RFMOs, UNCLOS, Indian Ocean bodies.
Context	The Union Government approved India's **accession to SIOFA**, moving it from **Cooperating Non-Contracting Party** (since **2022**) to **full Contracting Party** (Ministry of **Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying**).
Key Facts	■ Signed in **Rome, 7 July 2006**; in force **June 2012**; secretariat at **Le Port, Réunion**. ■ **10 Contracting Parties** incl. **Australia, China, EU, France, Japan, S. Korea, Mauritius, Seychelles, Thailand, Cook Islands**. ■ Covers high-seas **fish, molluscs, crustaceans**; excludes **highly migratory species** such as **tuna** (managed by **IOTC**). ■ Indian vessels gain access to **squid, toothfish, alfonsino** with a vote in rule-making.
Way Fwd	Modernise the deep-sea fleet and vessel monitoring; align with **Blue Economy** and **MAHASAGAR** vision.
Concept	**RFMO** = Regional Fisheries Management Organisation under **UNCLOS 1982**. **High seas** lie beyond the **200-nm EEZ**. **IOTC** HQ: **Seychelles**.

SIOFA: India moves to full membership



Census (Amendment) Rules, 2026: private teachers, bank & company staff can be enumerators

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

Syllabus Linkage	GS-II: governance; GS-I statistical analysis link (Census data). Prelims: Census Act 1948, Census 2027.
Context	The **MHA** notified the **Census (Amendment) Rules, 2026** on **16 Oct 2026**, widening the pool of enumerators for **Census 2027**.
Key Facts	■ Now eligible: teachers of **government, aided and unaided private** institutions and those run by **societies/trusts**. ■ Also clerks/officials of **Centre, States, local bodies, PSUs, statutory bodies, banks and companies**. ■ States/UTs may appoint **other suitable persons**; aim: ease the load on **government school teachers**. ■ Framed under the **Census Act, 1948**, amending the **Census Rules, 1990**.
Way Fwd	Train new enumerators on digital tools; ensure strict **data confidentiality**.
Concept	**Census 2027**: India's **first digital census**, with **caste enumeration**; reference date **1 March 2027**. Census is in the **Union List (Entry 69)**.

SECTION D • PRELIMS RAPID-FIRE

1	**Bihar Police** is building a **GIS portal** to map police-station boundaries; **968+** stations/outposts already on **CCTNS**.	4	**CISF** reorganised into specialised sectors (**Steel-Bhilai, Coal-Ranchi, Power-Kolkata**); **Buxar TPP** now under Power sector.
2	India's **Ramsar sites** reach **103** with **Sukhna (Chandigarh)** and **Sauj Jheel (UP)**; Bihar has **5** incl. **Kanwar Jheel** (Begusarai).	5	**Asian Para Games 2026**: **Aichi-Nagoya, Japan**, **18–24 Oct**; India fields **168** para-athletes.
3	**Saharsa Airport** to get a new **runway & terminal** under a **Rs 42.52 crore** AAI plan.	6	Centre caps **trade margins** at **30%** on **137 anti-cancer medicines**; new prices from **9 Nov 2026**.

SECTION E • PRACTICE CORNER BPSC-pattern MCQs + Mains

Q1. Consider the following districts of Bihar: 1. Sheohar 2. Supaul 3. Kishanganj 4. Nalanda. Through how many of the above will the Gorakhpur–Siliguri Expressway pass?

(a) Only one (b) Only two (c) Only three (d) All four

Answer: (c) — The expressway's ~417 km Bihar stretch passes through West Champaran, East Champaran, Sitamarhi, Sheohar, Madhubani, Supaul, Araria and Kishanganj; Nalanda is in south Bihar and is not on the route.

Q2. With reference to the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA), consider: 1. It was signed in Rome in 2006. 2. It manages highly migratory species such as tuna. 3. Its secretariat is on Réunion Island. Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b) — SIOFA was signed in Rome on 7 July 2006 and its secretariat is at Le Port, Réunion. Highly migratory species like tuna are excluded and are managed by the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC).

Mains Practice: Bihar is witnessing an unprecedented push in expressways and national highway corridors. Examine how improved road connectivity can transform Bihar's agrarian economy and industrial prospects, and identify the bottlenecks in timely execution. (BPSC Mains GS-II)

Hint: Intro with 32 projects / 2,424 km / Rs 1.64 lakh cr data → benefits: market access for makhana, maize, litchi; logistics parks; tourism circuits (Ram Janaki Path, Buddhist circuit); flood-time connectivity → bottlenecks: land acquisition, flood-prone terrain, forest clearances, contractor capacity → way forward: Gati Shakti planning, industrial nodes along corridors.

ONE-LINE REVISION: Bihar NH plan = 32 projects | 2,424 km | Rs 1,64,518 cr • VTR = 9th vulture centre • First triple talaq conviction • ESY 2026-27: zero sugar, maize Rs 68.86/L • India joins SIOFA • INS Samarthak = 1st indigenous MPV.

Compiled & simplified by the StudyForGS.com Research Team

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