

A MILESTONE IN WILDLIFE CRIME INVESTIGATION: CONVICTION OF A SHAHTOOSH TRADER

A historic verdict has been delivered in the enforcement of India's wildlife protection laws. A Delhi court has sentenced an art gallery owner from Jaipur for attempting to illegally export Shahtoosh shawls made from the hair of the endangered **Tibetan Antelope**.

1. CASE BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

- **The Crime:** An attempt to illegally smuggle Shahtoosh shawls abroad through Delhi Airport in 2008.
- **Agency Coordination:** The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB), CBI, Customs, and the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) worked in coordination for nearly 17 years to investigate this case.
- **CBI Involvement:** This marks the first time in India that a wildlife crime investigated by the CBI has led to the conviction of the accused.

2. TIBETAN ANTELOPE (CHIRU) - LEGAL PROTECTION

- **Scientific Name:** *Pantholops hodgsonii*.
- **Local Name:** Chiru.
- **WPA Act:** Listed under **Schedule-I** of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. This status grants the species the highest level of protection, making any trade strictly prohibited.
- **CITES:** International trade has been banned since 1975 under the CITES agreement.

3. WHAT IS SHAHTOOSH?

- Shahtoosh is an extremely expensive shawl woven from the underfur of the Tibetan Antelope.
- Approximately **3 to 5 Tibetan Antelopes must be killed** to produce a single Shahtoosh shawl. Although often called the "King of Wools," possessing these items is a serious legal offense.

4. ROLE OF KEY ORGANIZATIONS

- **WCCB:** Identified the shawls and filed the complaint with the CBI.
- **WII (Dehradun):** Scientifically proved through forensic examination that the shawls contained Tibetan Antelope hair.
- **Sentencing:** The accused was sentenced to **3 years of imprisonment** and a fine of **₹50,000**.

QUICK REVISION POINTS FOR EXAMS:

- **Chiru:** Found in the Ladakh and Tibet regions.
- **IUCN Status:** Previously listed as 'Endangered', it is currently categorized as '**Near Threatened**' (though it remains in Schedule-I under Indian law).

- **Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB):** A **statutory body** functioning under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

This verdict highlights the critical importance of scientific evidence (Forensics) and inter-agency coordination in curbing wildlife crimes.

EVOLUTION OF INDIAN RAILWAYS: FROM STEAM ENGINES TO HIGH-SPEED RAIL

Indian Railways serves as the backbone of the nation's economy. Beginning its journey in 1853, it has evolved through cutting-edge technology to become one of the largest railway networks in the world today.

1. THE GENESIS (HISTORICAL BACKGROUND)

- **The First Journey:** On April 16, 1853, the first passenger train ran from Mumbai (Bori Bunder) to Thane, covering a distance of 34 km.
- **Management:** It was operated by the Great Indian Peninsula Railway (GIPR).
- **First Engine:** A steam engine named 'Falkland' pulled 14 coaches.
- **Indigenous Manufacturing:** In 1895, the first Indian steam engine (F-734) was manufactured at the Ajmer Workshop.



2. CLASSIFICATION OF RAILWAY GAUGES

Gauges are classified based on the distance between the tracks:

- **Broad Gauge:** 1.676 meters (Currently constitutes 99% of the network).
- **Metre Gauge:** 1.000 meter.
- **Narrow Gauge:** 0.762 m and 0.610 m (e.g., Darjeeling Himalayan Railway).
- **Standard Gauge:** 1.435 meters (Used for Metro trains).

3. MODERNIZATION AND ELECTRIFICATION

- **First Electric Train:** Operated in 1925 between Bombay VT and Kurla.
- **Electrification Goal:** As of March 2026, 99.6% of the Broad Gauge network has been electrified (69,873 km).
- **Environmental Benefit:** The reduction in diesel consumption is saving approximately ₹6,000 crore annually.
- **Global Ranking:** India leads Russia, China, and the UK in terms of the scale of electrification.

4. KEY PROJECTS & SAFETY SYSTEMS

- **KAVACH:** An indigenously developed Automatic Train Protection (ATP) system designed to prevent train collisions. So far, it has been implemented across over 3,100 km.
- **Vande Bharat Express:** India's first semi-high-speed train (manufactured under 'Make in India'). Vande Bharat Sleeper services also commenced in January 2026.
- **Amrit Bharat Express:** Modern non-AC trains designed for the common man.
- **Bullet Train (MAHSR):** Designed to run at 320 km/h over a 508 km stretch between Mumbai and Ahmedabad.

5. DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

- **RailOne App:** A unified platform launched in July 2025 for ticket booking, inquiries, and complaints.
- **IP MPLS:** Technology used to strengthen the railway telecommunications system.
- **VSS (Video Surveillance System):** Installation of AI-based cameras across 1,874 stations.

6. 2025-26 STATISTICS (EXAM HIGHLIGHTS)

- **Budget Allocation (2026-27):** A record ₹2.78 lakh crore.
- **Passenger Count:** 741 crore.
- **Freight:** 1,670 million tonnes.
- **Amrit Bharat Station Scheme:** 119 stations have been redeveloped with world-class facilities under this scheme.

Beyond being just a transport system, Indian Railways plays a pivotal role in the nation's logistics sector through the 'Gati Shakti' cargo terminals.

NARI SHAKTI VANDAN RUN - 2026

The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India, is organizing the nationwide "Nari Shakti Vandan Run" to promote women-led development and increase citizen participation in the goal of achieving 'Viksit Bharat'.

1. BASIC INFORMATION

- **Organizer:** Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.
- **Dates:** April 17 and 18, 2026.
- **Number of Cities:** Being held across 7 major cities.
- **Theme:** #NariShaktiVandan.



2. SCHEDULE AND VENUES

The event will take place in two phases:

- **April 17, 2026:** Patna and Jaipur.
- **April 18, 2026:** Delhi, Cuttack, Mumbai, Indore, and Bengaluru.

3. OBJECTIVES

- **Women Empowerment:** To create awareness regarding women's participation in governance and democratic processes.
- **Viksit Bharat:** To recognize women as key partners in national development and to strengthen their roles.
- **Partnering Organizations:** **MY Bharat** (Mera Yuva Bharat), the National Service Scheme (**NSS**), and the Sports Authority of India (**SAI**) are collaborating to involve students, athletes, and professionals in this run.

4. SPECIAL CONTEXT

- The run is being organized in the backdrop of the **Special Session of Parliament** scheduled from April 16 to 18, 2026.
- During this special session, discussions are expected on key issues such as women's representation and the **Delimitation** process. The objective of this run is to raise public awareness about women's representation in this context.

QUICK REVISION POINTS FOR EXAMS:

- **Event:** Nari Shakti Vandan Run.
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.
- **Distance:** Approximately 2 to 3 kilometers.
- **Primary Goal:** To increase women's representation in political and social processes.

'PEYJAL SAMVAD' - KEY HIGHLIGHTS

The **Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS)**, under the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti, organized 'Peyjal Samvad' to accelerate the implementation of **Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) 2.0** and **Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin (SBM-G) Phase 2**.

1. KEY INITIATIVES & TECHNOLOGY

- **Jal Arpan:** A process where, upon completion of water supply schemes, a 15-day trial run is conducted before systematically handing over the assets to the Gram Panchayats.
- **Jal Seva Aankalan:** An innovative assessment method led by Gram Panchayats. It enables consumers and panchayats to self-evaluate the quality and supply levels of the water they receive.
- **Digital Tracking:** The '**Sujala Gaon ID**' and '**Sujalam Bharat App**' have been introduced to monitor water assets.
- **District Improvement Plan (DIP):** A plan to improve district-wise water supply based on data generated from the *Jal Seva Aankalan*.

2. DISTRICT-WISE BEST PRACTICES

Five districts showcased their innovative methods during the session:

- **Tehri Garhwal (Uttarakhand):** Rejuvenation of rivers and springs through **SARRA** (Spring and River Rejuvenation Authority). This serves as a model for water availability in hilly regions.
- **Koderma (Jharkhand):** Grievance redressal within 72 hours via the '**JHARJAL**' and '**MEETA**' apps. The district achieved 97% greywater management.
- **Anantnag (Jammu & Kashmir):** Providing functional household tap connections even in difficult terrains through a **Single-window mechanism** coordinating 8 departments.
- **Raebareli (Uttar Pradesh):** Utilization of the '**Jal Sarathi**' app for public participation. Establishment of 10 Fecal Sludge Treatment Plants (FSTPs) for solid and liquid waste management.
- **Vijayapura (Karnataka):** Implementation of Multi-Village Schemes (MVS) through Krishna and Bhima rivers, with active participation from **Self-Help Groups (SHGs)**.

3. SWACHH BHARAT MISSION-GRAMIN (SBM-G) PHASE 2 GOALS

- **ODF Plus Model:** Transforming villages that are not only Open Defecation Free but also effectively managing Solid and Liquid Waste Management (SLWM) into 'ODF Plus Models'.
- **Greywater Management:** Treating wastewater from kitchens and bathrooms through **soak pits** or community treatment systems.

4. IMPORTANT TERMINOLOGIES FOR EXAMS

- **JJM 2.0:** The second phase of the scheme aimed at providing safe tap water to every rural household.
- **DWSM:** District Water & Sanitation Mission.
- **Greywater:** Low-contamination wastewater originating from kitchens and bathrooms.

Analysis: Initiatives like "Jal Seva Aankalan" make the government machinery more accountable to citizens.

URBAN CHALLENGE FUND (UCF): OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

The **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)** has released the operational guidelines for the **Urban Challenge Fund (UCF)** and the **Credit Repayment Guarantee Sub-Scheme (CRGSS)**. This represents a revolutionary shift in the financing of India's urban infrastructure.

1. KEY OBJECTIVES

- **Mobilizing Investment:** To catalyze approximately **₹4 lakh crore** in urban investments with a central assistance of ₹1 lakh crore.
- **Focus on Tier-II & Tier-III Cities:** Prioritizing the development of smaller cities, hilly regions, and cities in the North-Eastern states.
- **Financial Self-Reliance:** Encouraging cities to move away from total dependence on grants and instead access market-based financial resources through municipal bonds and loans.

2. FUND ALLOCATION AND FINANCIAL MODEL

The total central outlay of **₹1 lakh crore** is distributed as follows:

- **Projects:** ₹90,000 crore.
- **Project Preparation & Capacity Building:** ₹5,000 crore.
- **CRGSS (Credit Repayment Guarantee):** ₹5,000 crore.

Funding Share:

- **Central Assistance:** A maximum of **25%** of the project cost.
- **Market Financing:** At least **50%** of the funds must be raised through municipal bonds, bank loans, or Public-Private Partnerships (PPP).

3. CREDIT REPAYMENT GUARANTEE SUB-SCHEME (CRGSS)

This is the most critical component of the scheme. The government provides a **guarantee** through this sub-scheme for Tier-II and Tier-III cities that have lower credit ratings or struggle to secure

direct market loans. This sovereign backing encourages banks to provide credit to these municipalities.

4. FOCUS SECTORS

The fund supports the following types of projects:

- **Brownfield Redevelopment:** Modernization of old city areas and traditional markets.
- **Urban Mobility:** Last-mile connectivity and non-motorized transport (cycle tracks, pedestrian pathways).
- **Infrastructure:** Water supply, sanitation, and **climate-resilient** urban development.

5. IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

- **Period:** Fiscal Year 2025–26 to 2030–31.
- **E-Directory:** An e-directory has been launched to connect cities with financial institutions, banks, and credit rating agencies.

Analysis: To achieve the goal of '**Viksit Bharat @ 2047**', cities must become engines of economic growth. While schemes like **AMRUT** and **Smart Cities** focus on building physical infrastructure, the **UCF** aims to make these urban centers financially sustainable.

IOS SAGAR - INDIAN SHIP REACHES PHUKET, THAILAND

As part of its long-term mission, the Indian Ministry of Defence vessel **IOS SAGAR** (INS Sunayna) departed from the Maldives and reached the port of **Phuket**, Thailand, on April 14, 2026.



1. OBJECTIVE OF THE IOS SAGAR MISSION

- **MAHASAGAR Vision:** The primary goal of this mission is to strengthen the vision of 'Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions' (MAHASAGAR).
- **IONS Leadership:** India currently holds the **Chair** of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS). This voyage was undertaken to foster cooperation among the countries in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).
- **Motto:** 'One Ocean, One Mission'.

2. MULTINATIONAL PARTNERSHIP (MULTINATIONAL CREW)

- The vessel carries a crew of 38 personnel from **16 Friendly Foreign Countries (FFCs)** alongside India.
- This initiative promotes **interoperability** and **capacity building** between the navies of various nations.

3. TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- **Route Map:** The mission commenced in Mumbai on April 2, 2026. It will visit the ports of Male (Maldives), Phuket (Thailand), Jakarta (Indonesia), Singapore, Yangon (Myanmar), Chittagong (Bangladesh), and Colombo (Sri Lanka).
- **Discussions with Royal Thai Navy:** During the Phuket visit, discussions regarding bilateral defense cooperation will be held with the Thai Navy.

- **Cultural Significance:** Notably, this visit coincides with '**Songkran**', the traditional Thai New Year festival.

4. DEFENSE SECTOR - KEY ASPECTS

- **Security:** This mission reflects India's role as a '**Net Security Provider**' in maintaining stability and security in the Indian Ocean Region.
- **Training:** During the sea voyage, international crew members were provided training in seamanship and operational drills.

QUICK REVISION POINTS FOR EXAMS:

- **Ship Name:** **INS Sunayna** (Under the IOS SAGAR mission).
- **Commencement:** Mumbai (April 2, 2026).
- **Key Term:** **MAHASAGAR** (India's outreach initiative for security and growth in the Indian Ocean Region).
- **IONS:** Indian Ocean Naval Symposium - Currently chaired by India.

CURBING TELECOM-BASED FINANCIAL FRAUD: MOU BETWEEN DOT AND SEBI

In a move to strengthen the security of India's financial ecosystem, the **Department of Telecommunications (DoT)** and the **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** have signed a strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The primary objective of this agreement is to curb the misuse of telecom resources in stock market and investment-related frauds.

1. KEY PROVISIONS OF THE AGREEMENT

- **Data Sharing Mechanism:** The DoT will share its **Financial Fraud Risk Indicator (FRI)** data with SEBI to identify suspicious mobile numbers.
- **Mobile Number Revocation List (MNRL):** A list of disconnected or inactive mobile numbers will be provided to SEBI. This ensures that brokers and mutual fund houses maintain investor accounts only with active numbers.
- **Digital Intelligence Platform (DIP):** This platform enables real-time information exchange among approximately 1,400 stakeholders.



2. KEY TECHNOLOGIES & PORTALS

- **Chakshu:** A facility introduced by the DoT under the 'Sanchar Saathi' portal to report fraudulent communications.
- **ASTR:** An Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based technology used to identify and disconnect approximately 88 lakh fake mobile connections to date.
- **FRI (Financial Fraud Risk Indicator):** An **Early Warning System** that has helped prevent financial losses of approximately **₹2,300 crore** in the last 10 months.

3. STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE

- **Investor Protection:** Protecting investors from being misled by cybercriminals in the wake of rising digital investments.
- **Money Mule Accounts:** Identifying and taking immediate action against benami accounts and SIM cards used for cyber fraud.
- **Proactive Approach:** Strengthening the system to prevent crimes before they occur (**Proactive**) rather than just responding after the event (**Reactive**).

4. KEY ORGANIZATIONS FOR EXAMS

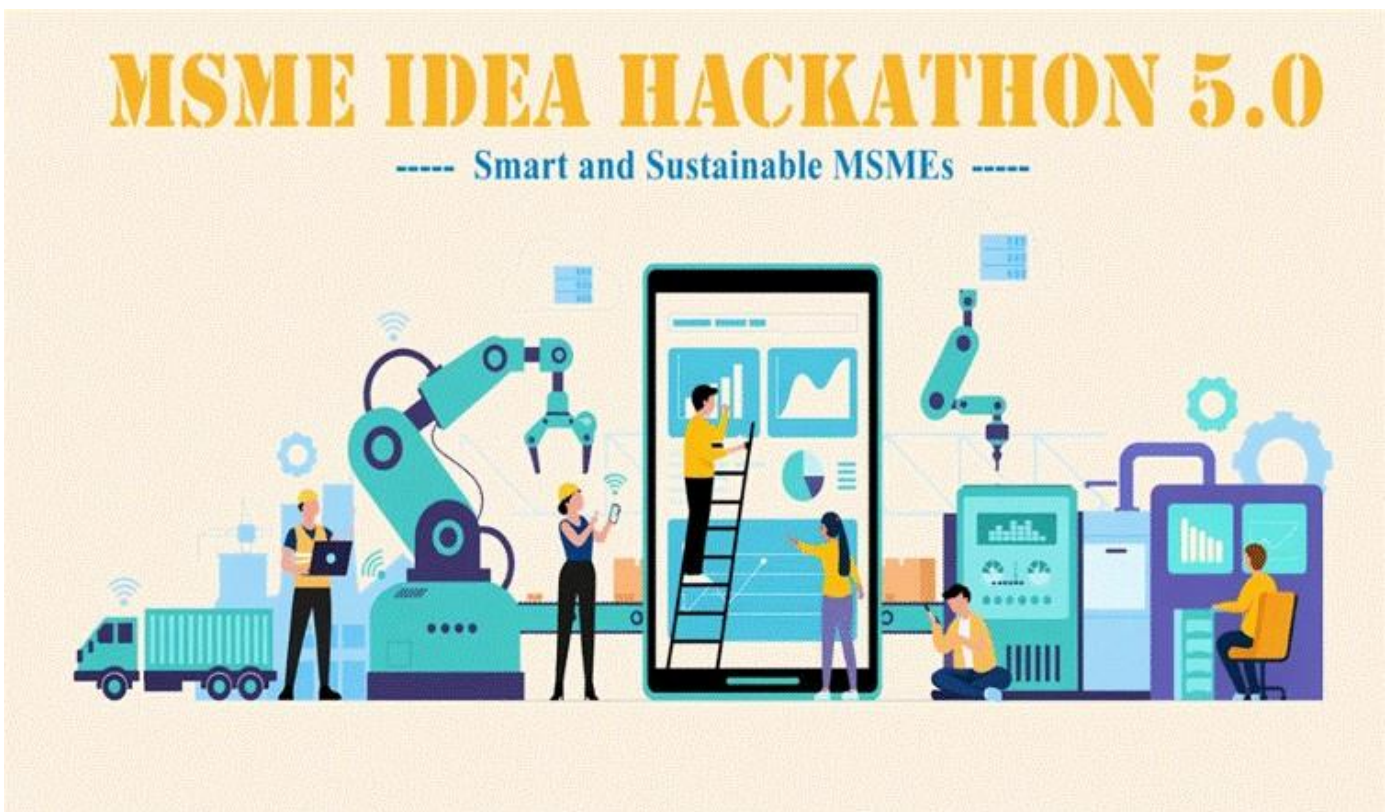
- **DoT (Department of Telecommunications):** Functions under the Ministry of Communications.
- **SEBI (Securities and Exchange Board of India):** Established as a **Statutory Body** in 1992. It regulates the securities market in India.

REVISION POINTS:

- **MoU Partners:** DoT and SEBI.
- **Goal:** To curb stock market frauds.
- **Important Apps/Portals:** Sanchar Saathi, Chakshu.
- **Key Term: Money Mule** – An account holder used by others to transfer illegally obtained money.

SUCCESS OF ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF AYURVEDA (AIIA) IN MSME HACKATHON 5.0

The **All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA)**, under the Union Ministry of Ayush, has achieved success in the **MSME Idea Hackathon 5.0** by facilitating the selection of an innovative invention through its incubation center, **iCAINE**. AIIA has once again solidified its position as the only prominent host institute promoting innovation in the field of Ayurveda.



1. WHAT IS MSME IDEA HACKATHON 5.0?

- **Organizer:** Union Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME).
- **Objective:** To encourage new ideas and innovation among students, innovators, and startups.
- **Financial Assistance:** Selected ideas receive up to **₹15 lakh** in financial aid, along with mentorship and incubation support.

2. SELECTED INNOVATION: "MITE OUT"

- **Project Name:** Mite Out.

- **Concept:** A **Dual-Action Non-Invasive Device** designed to safely extract 'Myiasis' maggots/worms from livestock.
- **Developer:** Anneasa Manna and team.
- **Significance:** Solving challenges in the veterinary field by integrating traditional Ayurvedic knowledge with modern technology.

3. ICAINE - THE INNOVATION HUB

- **iCAINE** at AIIA is an incubation center dedicated to promoting startups in the Ayurvedic sector.
- It provides technical mentorship, infrastructure, and strategic guidance for new ideas.

4. ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF AIIA

- **Host Institute:** AIIA has been acting as a recognized host institute since the inception of the MSME Hackathon.
- **Ayush Sector:** Beyond human health, AIIA is promoting Ayurvedic applications in **livestock** health and other related fields.

REVISION POINTS:

- **AIIA:** All India Institute of Ayurveda (New Delhi).
- **iCAINE:** Incubation center established for innovations in the Ayurvedic sector.
- **MSME Hackathon Funding:** Maximum of **₹15 lakh**.
- **Goal:** Integrating Ayurveda with the modern startup ecosystem.

This success is considered a key step in strengthening the Ayurveda-based startup ecosystem in India.

VISHU FESTIVAL - 2026

1. FESTIVAL BACKGROUND

- **State:** This is the New Year festival primarily celebrated in the state of **Kerala**.
- **Significance:** Falling in the month of 'Medam' according to the Malayalam calendar, this festival marks the astronomical beginning of the spring season.
- **Timing:** It usually occurs on April 14 or 15. It signifies the **Equinox**, a time when day and night are of approximately equal duration.

2. CULTURAL RITUALS

- **Vishukkani:** The practice of viewing auspicious items (such as rice, fruits, a mirror, Kanikkonna flowers, and gold) arranged before a deity first thing upon waking up is called 'Vishukkani'. It is believed to ensure prosperity throughout the year.

- **Vishu Kaineettam:** The tradition of elders giving small gifts or money to children and other family members is known as 'Vishu Kaineettam'.
- **Kanikkonna:** Yellow **Laburnum** (Golden Shower Tree) flowers are an essential part of the festivities. These are also the official state flowers of Kerala.

3. PARALLEL FESTIVALS IN INDIA

Various regions across India celebrate the New Year under different names around the same time as Vishu:

- **Bihu:** Assam.
- **Baisakhi:** Punjab.
- **Poila Baisakh:** West Bengal.
- **Puthandu:** Tamil Nadu.
- **Maha Bishuba Sankranti:** Odisha.

REVISION POINTS:

- **Vishu:** Kerala New Year.
- **Primary Deity:** Lord Krishna is widely worshipped on this day.
- **Cuisine:** A special feast called '**Vishu Sadya**' is prepared. Similar to the Ugadi Pachadi, it features a balance of sweet, salty, bitter, and sour flavors.

RONGALI BIHU - 2026

1. BASIC INFORMATION

- **State:** This is the most important festival celebrated in the state of **Assam**.
- **Significance:** Also known as '**Bohag Bihu**', it marks the Assamese New Year and the onset of the spring season.
- **Timing:** It occurs in mid-April (usually April 14 or 15), signaling the beginning of the month of 'Bohag' according to the Assamese calendar.

2. THE THREE TYPES OF BIHU

Bihu is celebrated three times a year in Assam, each tied to a specific stage of the crop cycle:

1. **Rongali or Bohag Bihu (April):** Marks the New Year and the seeding time. It is a symbol of joy (*Rong* means joy).
2. **Kongali or Kati Bihu (October):** Celebrated by lighting lamps when crops are growing; it is a more somber and reflective festival.
3. **Bhogali or Magh Bihu (January):** A harvest festival focused on feasting (similar to Sankranti) once the granaries are full.

3. CULTURAL HIGHLIGHTS

- **Bihu Dance:** A vibrant folk dance performed by both men and women wearing traditional attire (Muga silk *Mekhela Chador*).
- **Musical Instruments:** The '**Dhol**' (drum) and '**Pepa**' (an instrument made of buffalo horn) are the primary instruments used.
- **Husori:** A tradition where groups of young men visit households, performing songs and offering blessings.
- **Cuisine:** Special traditional delicacies are prepared, including '**Pitha**' (rice cakes), '**Laroo**' (sweet balls), and *Jolpan*.

REVISION POINTS:

- **State:** Assam.
- **Type:** An agro-based New Year festival.
- **Instruments:** Dhol, Pepa, Taal, Gogona.
- **Parallel Festivals:** Baisakhi (Punjab), Vishu (Kerala), Puthandu (Tamil Nadu).

POILA BOISHAKH - 2026

1. BASIC INFORMATION

- **State:** This is the New Year festival celebrated in the state of **West Bengal**.
- **Significance:** It is celebrated on the first day of 'Boishakh', the first month of the Bengali calendar. It is also popularly known as '**Shubho Noboborsho**' (Happy New Year).
- **Timing:** It generally falls on April 14 or 15 every year.

2. HISTORICAL AND ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE

- **Haal Khata:** On this day, Bengali businessmen close their old ledgers and open new account books, a tradition known as 'Haal Khata'. Special prayers dedicated to Lord Ganesha and Goddess Lakshmi are performed at business establishments.
- **Mughal Connection:** The roots of this festival are often traced back to the reign of the Mughal Emperor Akbar. The Bengali calendar was reportedly devised by combining solar and lunar calendars to streamline the tax collection process.

3. CULTURAL HIGHLIGHTS

- **Prabhat Pheri:** Early morning processions are held, often featuring the soul-stirring songs of Rabindranath Tagore.
- **Mangal Shobhajatra:** In both West Bengal and Bangladesh, people participate in massive colorful processions featuring masks and large effigies of birds and animals.

Note: The Mangal Shobhajatra in Bangladesh is recognized by **UNESCO** as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

- **Cuisine:** Traditional Bengali feasts include delicacies such as *Panta Bhat* (fermented rice), *Ilish Maach* (Hilsa fish), and the world-famous *Rasgulla*.

REVISION POINTS:

- **Region:** West Bengal (also celebrated in Tripura and the Barak Valley of Assam).
- **Festival Name:** Poila Boishakh (Bengali New Year).
- **Key Ritual:** **Haal Khata** (Opening of new financial ledgers).
- **Parallel Festivals:** Baisakhi (Punjab), Vishu (Kerala), Rongali Bihu (Assam).

HIMACHAL DIWAS - APRIL 15

1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- **April 15, 1948:** Himachal Pradesh was formed as a **Chief Commissioner's Province** by merging 30 small hill princely states. Consequently, April 15 is celebrated annually as 'Himachal Diwas'.
- **1951:** It became a 'Part-C' state.
- **November 1, 1956:** Under the States Reorganisation Act, it was converted into a **Union Territory**.

2. FULL STATEHOOD

- **December 18, 1970:** The 'State of Himachal Pradesh Act' was passed by Parliament.
- **January 25, 1971:** Himachal Pradesh emerged as the **18th state** of the Indian Union.

Note: January 25 is celebrated as '**Statehood Day**'.

3. GEOGRAPHICAL AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

- **Devbhumi:** Known as 'Devbhumi' (Land of the Gods) due to its numerous ancient temples and sacred sites.
- **State Symbols:**
 - **State Animal:** Snow Leopard.
 - **State Bird:** Western Tragopan.
 - **State Flower:** Pink Rhododendron.
- **Economy:** It is popularly known as the "**Apple State of India**".

4. QUICK REVISION POINTS FOR EXAMS

| Topic | Details |
|------------------|--|
| Himachal Diwas | April 15 (Commemorating the formation as a province in 1948) |
| Statehood Day | January 25 (Commemorating the 18th state status in 1971) |
| Capitals | Shimla (Summer), Dharamshala (Winter) |
| Important Passes | Rohtang Pass, Shipki La |

SAMRAT CHOUDHARY SWORN IN AS THE NEW CHIEF MINISTER OF BIHAR

1. APPOINTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

- **Chief Minister:** Shri Samrat Choudhary.
- **Deputy Chief Ministers:** Shri Vijay Kumar Choudhary and Shri Bijendra Prasad Yadav.

2. CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

The constitutional provisions regarding the appointment of the Chief Minister are as follows:

- **Article 164:** The Chief Minister is appointed by the **Governor**. Other ministers are also appointed by the Governor on the advice of the Chief Minister.
- **Accountability:** The Council of Ministers is collectively responsible to the State Legislative Assembly.
- **Oath of Office:** The Governor administers the oath of office and secrecy to the Chief Minister and the ministers.

3. POLITICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF BIHAR

- **Legislative Structure:** Bihar follows a **Bicameral** system. This means the state has both a Legislative Assembly (*Vidhan Sabha*) and a Legislative Council (*Vidhan Parishad*).
- **Lok Sabha Seats:** Bihar has **40 Lok Sabha seats**, playing a pivotal role in national politics.

REVISION POINTS:

- **State:** Bihar.
- **New Chief Minister:** Samrat Choudhary.
- **Constitutional Article:** Article 164.
- **Role of the Governor:** Appointing the Chief Minister and administering the oath.

Source: PIB

