



NAGRIKA

NAGAR IN FOCUS COMPENDIUM

India's Lesser-Known
Cities & their Emerging
Developments



NAGAR
in focus 

2023

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01 INTRODUCTION

The urban landscape of India is constantly changing, and within it lie cities with untold stories waiting to be uncovered. The "Nagar in Focus" (NIF) series was created with this idea in mind, aiming to facilitate learning. The NIF series sets out to highlight small and lesser-known cities and towns in India that have been making headlines due to recent developments.

In the Indian context, "small and mid-sized cities" refer to the vast array of urban centers that don't belong to the

mega-metropolises but are crucial components of the country's urban landscape. They are characterized by their moderate to small population sizes compared to the bustling Tier-1 cities like Delhi and Mumbai. While they may not grab international headlines, these smaller cities in India represent the heart of regional economies and centers of culture. In this quest of sharing information about such cities with our readers, Nagrika also embarked on its own enlightening journey.



Figure 1: Total 34 cities were covered in Nagar in Focus series 2023

Information about each city featured in the NIF series provided readers with a comprehensive view of the featured city, while also inviting readers to contribute their insights.

The first page provides the geographical context of the city by displaying the location of the specific city on the Indian map along with its corresponding state.

The second page presents an iconic image of the city or a renowned landmark, giving a visual introduction to the city's unique character.

The subsequent pages delve into why the city has been in focus such as for its

involvement in government initiatives.

It further provides basic information about the city along with the context of the scheme or program of which the city is part.

The page titled "Nagar Profile," provides essential information such as population, literacy rate, municipal area, transportation options, municipal body type, commonly spoken languages, etc.

The final page encourages reader participation, inquiring about their experiences and inputs regarding recent developments in the city.

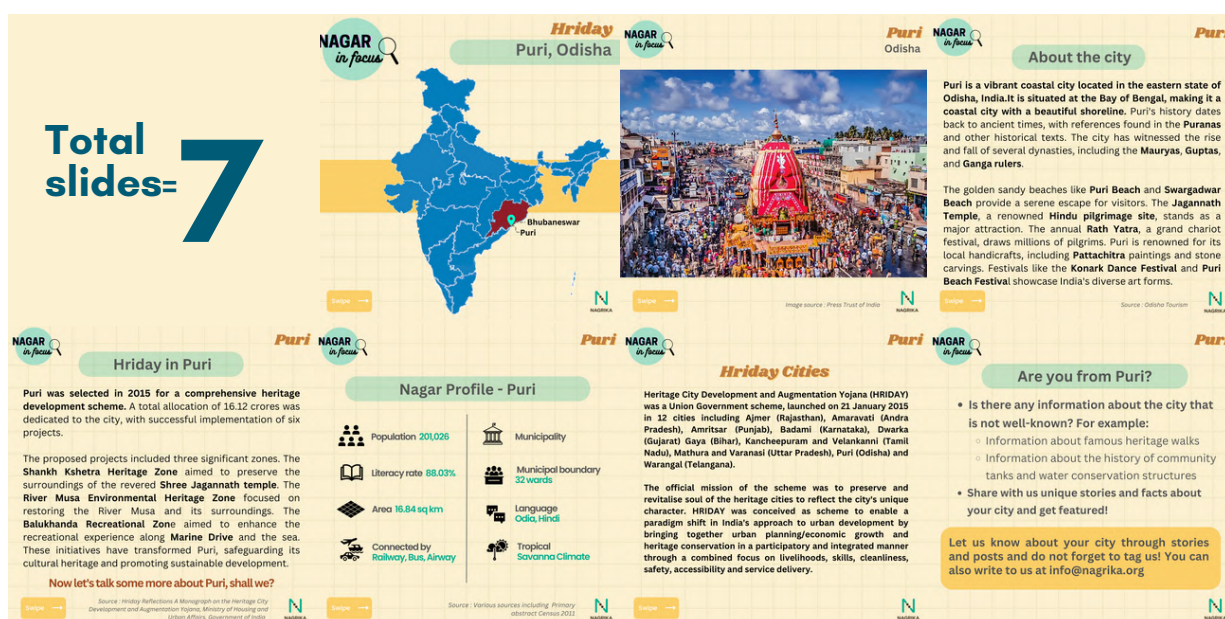


Figure 2: Number of slides for a NIF post

WHAT BROUGHT THESE CITIES INTO THE SPOTLIGHT?

Current Affairs-based



Swadesh Darshan 2.0



Swacch Survekshan



Waste-wise cities



HRIDAY Scheme



IQAir's Global Air Quality Report 2022



Figure 3: Selection Criteria for Featuring Cities

With the number of small cities that are present in India, figuring out which cities to bring our attention to was intentional. The cities we have brought to the spotlight in 2023 were cities that featured in the news, made headway on some government programs or were featured in the air quality report.

Current Affairs-based

This series featured lesser-known cities and towns in India that were in the news. For instance, Paralakhemundi was featured as the Odisha state chapter of INTACH had objected to the demolition of the historic railway station built in 1899. Likewise, Kanchipuram had received India Post's Permanent Pictorial Cancellation on World Heritage Day. Dumka organized a two-day State Library Literature Festival, while Alang emerged as a vehicle scrappage hub; each contributing a unique chapter to this series.

Swadesh Darshan 2.0

An initiative by the Ministry of Tourism, the Swadesh Darshan scheme aimed to create thematic tourist circuits highlighting India's cultural heritage, history, and natural beauty. Swadesh Darshan 2.0,

launched in January 2023, shifts its focus to destination tourism, departing from theme-based circuits.

Swacch Survekshan

Since 2016, MoHUA has conducted the world's largest urban sanitation survey, under the Swacch Bharat Mission (Urban). This annual survey promotes healthy competition among towns and cities, aiming to enhance service delivery to citizens and create cleaner urban environments. Additionally, the survey encourages sustainable practices among citizens and ULBs.

Waste-wise cities

NITI Aayog and the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) released a report, "Waste-Wise Cities," which studied 28 Indian cities and highlighted best practices in 10 thematic areas of waste management. The report aims to encourage effective waste management strategies and offers practical examples for other cities to adopt.

HRIDAY Scheme

Launched across 12 cities in January 2015, the Heritage City Development & Augmentation Yojana (HRIDAY) was a Union Government scheme with a mission to preserve and revitalize the unique heritage of these cities. HRIDAY aimed to

integrate urban development, economic growth, and heritage conservation, focusing on livelihoods, skills, cleanliness, safety, accessibility, and service delivery.

IQAir's Global Air Quality Report 2022

Published on March 14, 2022, this report offers PM2.5 data from 7323 cities across 131 countries, drawing from over 30,000 monitoring stations. It shows that just 5% of the countries meet WHO's air pollution guidelines. India ranks 8th among the most polluted countries worldwide, with 39 of the 50 most polluted cities within its borders.

The table below gives the information on the population, type of city government and the theme for which the 34 cities were covered under this year's Nagar in Focus series. Out of the 34 cities, 5 are covered under HRIDAY scheme, 4 are covered under Waste Wise cities, 6 are covered under Swadesh Darshan 2.0, 5 under Swacch Survekshan, 4 under IQAir's Global Air Quality report 2022 and 10 are Current Affairs based cities.

Nagar In Focus

City	State	Population	Type of City Government	Theme
Amaravati	Andhra Pradesh	13,400	Notified Area	HRIDAY
Bobbili	Andhra Pradesh	56,819	Municipality	Waste Wise city
Machilipatnam	Andhra Pradesh	1,69,892	Municipal Corporation	Heritage conservation
Jorhat	Assam	1,53,889	Notified Town	Swadesh Darshan 2.0
Chhapra	Bihar	2,02,352	Municipal Corporation	Air Quality
Darbhanga	Bihar	2,96,039	Municipal Corporation	Air Quality
Ambikapur	Chattisgarh	1,12,449	Municipal Corporation	Swachh Survekshan
Chirimiri	Chattisgarh	85,317	Municipal Corporation	Swachh Survekshan
Alang	Gujarat	8,309	Gram Panchayat	Vehicle scrapping proposal
Dwarka	Gujarat	38,873	Municipality	HRIDAY
Bicholim	Goa	16,988	Municipal Corporation	Waste Wise city
Dharuhera	Haryana	30,344	Municipal Committee	Air Quality
Jind	Haryana	1,67,592	Municipal Council	Hometown of cricketer Yuzevendra Chahal
Dumka	Jharkhand	47,584	City Council	Literature Fest
Badami	Karnataka	30,943	Municipal Council	HRIDAY
Shivamogga	Karnataka	3,22,650	Municipal Corporation	Airport inauguration
Leh	Ladakh	30,870	Municipal Committee	Swadesh Darshan 2.0
Karad	Maharashtra	53,879	Municipal Council	Swachh Survekshan
Panchgani	Maharashtra	14,894	Municipal Council	Waste Wise city
Vengurla	Maharashtra	12,392	Municipal Council	Waste Wise city
Sohra	Meghalaya	11,722	Notified Town	Swadesh Darshan 2.0
Champhai	Mizoram	32,734	Notified Town	Swadesh Darshan 2.0
Lunglei	Mizoram	57,011	Municipal Council	Swachh Survekshan
Chümoukedima	Nagaland	25,885	Notified Town	Swadesh Darshan 2.0
Paralakhemundi	Odisha	46,272	Municipality	Heritage conservation
Puri	Odisha	2,01,026	Municipality	HRIDAY
Gobindgarh	Punjab	82,266	Municipal Committee	Swachh Survekshan
Kapurthala	Punjab	98,916	Municipal Corporation	Swadesh Darshan 2.0
Bhiwadi	Rajasthan	1,04,921	Municipal Council	Air Quality
Degana	Rajasthan	34,315	Municipality	Lithium reserve discovery
Kanchipuram	Tamil Nadu	1,64,384	Municipal corporation	Permanent postal cancellation by India post
Vellankanni	Tamil Nadu	11,108	Town Panchayat	HRIDAY
Ramnagar	Uttarakhand	54,787	Municipality	G20 meeting
Bansberia	West Bengal	1,03,920	Municipality	Mentioned in PM's Mann ki Baat

Even though the 34 cities were selected under 6 different themes mentioned in the previous chapter, our analysis reveals that all of them seem to be bound by some of the common threads. There are 6 common threads which also includes citizen engagement in the realm of city's development.

Economic Potential

The emerging developments in smaller cities and towns symbolize the transformative power of local initiatives, illustrating their potential to shape not only their future but also India's broader ambitions in urban and economic growth.

For instance, the recent lithium discovery in Degana, Rajasthan holds far-reaching implications, both locally and nationally. Lithium is crucial for electric vehicle (EV) batteries, and its presence could position the town as a key player in the EV supply chain and a center for innovation. This discovery holds the promise of economic revitalization for Degana, paving the way for new industries, jobs, and investments. This also aligns with India's push for electric mobility, reducing reliance on imports, enhancing energy security, and reinforcing India's competitiveness in the global EV market.

Similarly, the recent inauguration of an airport in Shivamogga, Karnataka, underscores how infrastructure development can have far-reaching economic consequences. Improved connectivity via the airport not only benefits Shivamogga but also stimulates economic activities in the region. It attracts businesses, tourists, and investments, resulting in job creation and an overall economic upswing. Such developments also contribute to India's national growth by increasing accessibility and connectivity, ultimately creating a more robust national network.

Tourism & Heritage

The tourism potential of smaller towns in India is a hidden treasure trove! The HRIDAY initiative has been instrumental in shining the spotlight over such towns and revitalizing their heritage. Furthermore, in continuation of the original flagship scheme, Swadesh Darshan 2.0 launched this year could also be another key to unlock the potential of obscure towns through destination tourism, significantly impacting their local economies.

Puri, a city steeped in history and spirituality in Odisha, was selected in

2015 under the HRIDAY initiative. With its magnificent temples, scenic beaches, and vibrant festivals, Puri has long been a cultural jewel. With the successful implementation of 6 projects in 3 zones, the city has preserved its cultural heritage and promoted sustainable tourism development. Sohra, nestled in the lush green landscapes of Meghalaya, has now been chosen as a significant destination under the Swadesh Darshan 2.0 scheme. Often referred to as the "Abode of Clouds," Sohra's breathtaking natural beauty, waterfalls, and vibrant indigenous culture have made it an emerging unique tourist hotspot.

The quest to revive the historic port in Machilipatnam, Andhra Pradesh also exemplifies how heritage cities can recapture their past glory. This recent initiative may breathe new life into a place once at the heart of the earliest Portuguese colonies in India. The restoration of such historical sites not only attracts tourists but also promotes local art, cuisine, and crafts.

There is immense tourism potential hidden in lesser-known cities. As these places open their doors to the world, they simultaneously bolster their local economies, proving that India's charm extends far beyond its famous metropolises.

Sustainability & Governance

The importance of building mechanisms of sustainability and mitigating climate change are essential especially given the economic and tourist activity in the smaller towns. Sustainability and governance play pivotal roles in the development of smaller cities, albeit with their own set of challenges. Initiatives like Swacch Survekshan and Waste Wise Cities have been instrumental in promoting cleaner and more sustainable urban environments.

Chirmiri in Chhattisgarh, clinched the top spot in the Swacch Survekshan 2022 for the Eastern Zone. The city scored a perfect 100% in various categories, including waste management and cleanliness of residential areas, markets, drainage systems, and water bodies. Chirmiri's impressive performance not only enhances residents' quality of life but also contributes to a healthier urban environment, showcasing the city's dedication to environmental sustainability.

Bicholim's participation in the Waste Wise Cities initiative shows how smaller cities tackle waste management issues. Despite initial challenges, this city in Goa improved its waste collection and established a Material Recovery Facility (MRF). This MRF effectively sorts, recycles,

and co-processes plastic waste, resulting in 100% material recovery and reduced dumpsite pressure. Consequently, Bicholim's environmental conditions have notably improved.

Despite such progress, challenges still persist. For instance, Darbhanga in Bihar ranks as the 3rd most polluted city in India. The status of such small cities within the IQAir global report serves as a crucial barometer for air quality. Smaller cities often grapple with issues like pollution control and limited resources for environmental management. Their inclusion in such reports highlights the urgency of addressing these challenges.

Technological Advancements

The strategic application of technology has the potential to drive sustainable development and enhance civic amenities even in the smaller cities. The following examples illustrate the pivotal role of technology in creating a prosperous future.

Tamil Nadu's Velankanni embraced comprehensive development through the HRIDAY scheme, receiving 19.03 crores in 2015 to embark on a tech-driven transformation. Leveraging new-age technology, the town enhanced safety, energy efficiency, and tourism. Heritage street lighting and strategically placed

LED lights not only elevated the aesthetics but also ensured a safer environment. The Town Panchayat spearheaded this implementation along with incorporating informative signages with valuable heritage insights for visitors.

Bobbili's achievement in waste management showcases the effectiveness of the Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) Program which was seamlessly integrated with advanced technology. The implementation of a Real-Time Monitoring System, utilizing RFID tags and GPS-enabled trucks, delivered precise data on waste collection. The focus on technology-driven biodegradable waste management by this town in Andhra Pradesh, including composting units and a biogas plant, earned it the esteemed Paryavaran Mitra Award.

Citizen Engagement

In the realm of civic progress, citizens hold the transformative power of actively shaping their surroundings. Sustainability becomes an achievable goal to strive towards when individuals embrace their role as stewards of their towns.

Since 2015, Ambikapur in Chhattisgarh has topped the Swachh Survekshan charts for 8 consecutive years. Here, a café offers a free meal in exchange for

plastic waste, exemplifying the citizen's role in waste management. The waste management journey in Ambikapur begins at home, where residents diligently segregate waste into dry and wet categories. Further, secondary segregation centers meticulously sort waste into 38 categories, setting the stage for recycling, composting, and processing. Vengurla in Maharashtra, is another beacon of citizen-driven change. Locally generated revenue covers 25% of total waste management costs, with citizen's contributions such as user fees and recycled item sales forming nearly half the earnings. Vengurla's citizen-centric approach includes vermicomposting, bio methanation for kitchen waste, and two bin-two bag strategy for source segregation. The Clean City Ambassadors have also played a crucial role in Vengurla's Municipal Council receiving the Vasundhara Award in 2017.

Role of Policy

Policy continues to play an important role in the development of smaller Indian cities. For instance, the HRIDAY scheme allocated funds from the Union Government to 12 cities across India for the purpose of breathing new life into these old cities and maintaining their heritage. This allocation of resources set in motion the creation of Heritage

Management Plans that not only developed heritage sensitive infrastructure but also enhanced basic services such as public toilets, drinking water facilities, street lightings and signages of these towns. Similarly, the second leg of the Swadesh Darshan scheme is now diverting resources into places which had been previously neglected, by fostering them into tourist destinations. Policies that emerge from the findings of international publications such as IQAir's air quality report can potentially be useful in identifying and prioritizing cities that require more attention in addressing challenges. Such policies can serve as a stepping stone in the creation of infrastructure, and in this case, better air quality monitoring as well as comprehensive plans to tackle pollution. Reports like Waste-wise Cities & Swacch Survekshan are elements within the larger nation-wide campaign of the Swacch Bharat Mission (Urban) which aims to enhance solid-waste management of the country. The information base produced through such reports provide policymakers with a local perspective that is crucial to improve the guiding principles for the governance of cities across India.

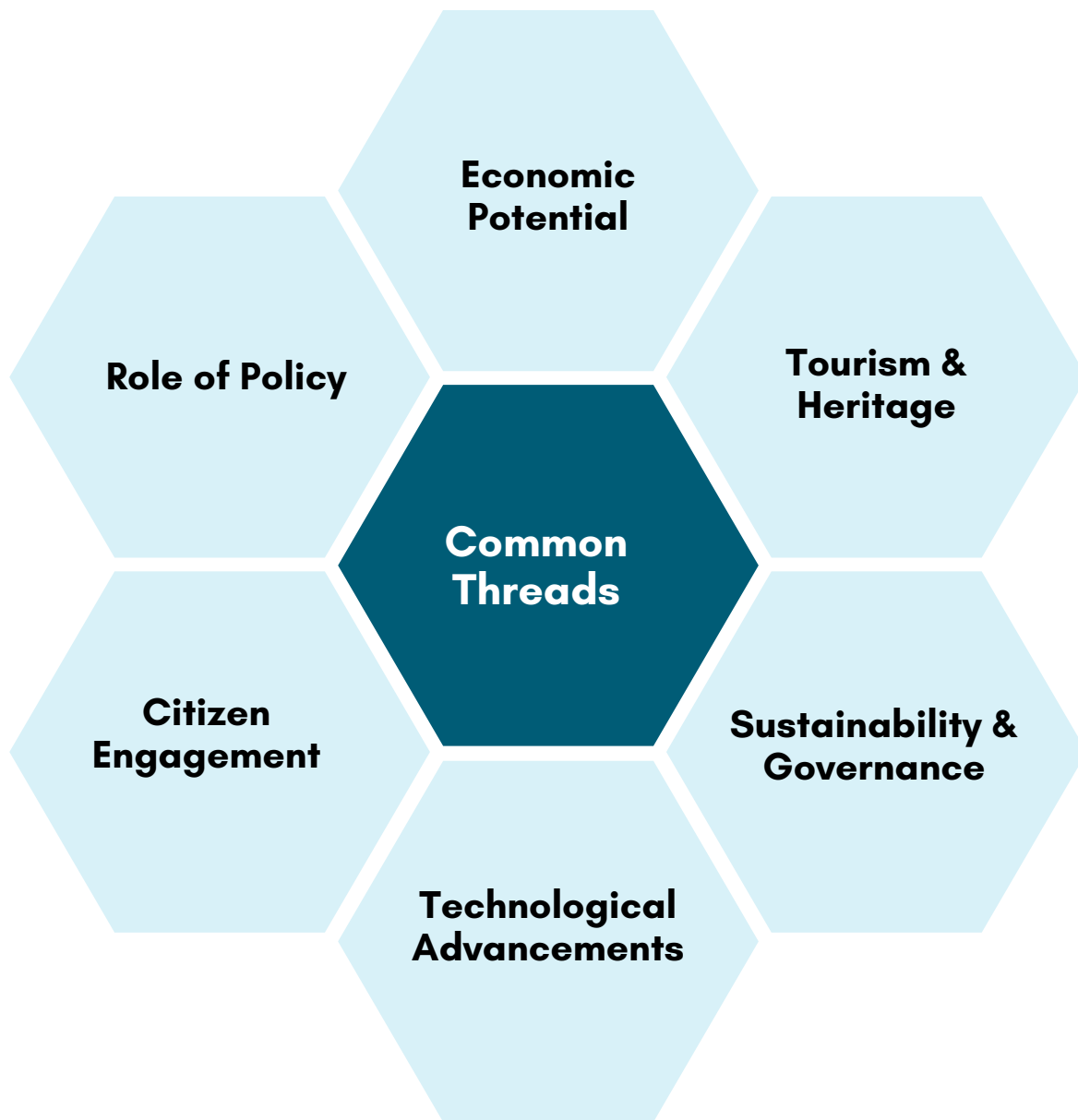


Figure 4: The common threads that tie the 34 cities together

By delving into the narratives of smaller towns and cities, this series has come across a mosaic of opportunities emerging from such places. While their trajectory towards development unfolds against the backdrop of untapped potential, these cities also grapple with certain challenges that shape their unique landscapes.

Lack of Infrastructure

The lack of adequate infrastructure poses threats to environmental sustainability, underscoring the pressing need for comprehensive urban planning.

- **Air pollution Management:** The lack of infrastructure, especially in tackling air pollution poses a significant challenge. There is an urgent need for advanced air quality monitoring systems and emission control measures to safeguard the health and well-being of residents.
- **Waste Management:** Smaller cities often struggle in implementing effective waste management systems. Insufficient facilities for recycling and processing contribute to pressure over the environment, emphasizing the need for comprehensive waste management infrastructure.

Digital & Technological Divide

While not all smaller towns & cities in India have equal access, technology presents a pivotal opportunity for efficient governance. Ensuring widespread access to these advancements therefore becomes essential. Bridging the gap through improving internet connectivity, digital infrastructure, and technological literacy can empower citizens in making informed decisions.

Innovation & Community-driven Initiatives

Exploring innovative solutions emerging from local communities can potentially contribute to the overall growth and wellbeing of these towns. Successful citizen-led initiatives in such places require more attention through media, as they hold the potential of becoming sustainable models for the rest of the country.

Investments & Planning

The untapped potential of these places beckons for strategic investments in critical areas such as infrastructure, education, and healthcare to unlock the full potential of such growing cities.

Furthermore, this requires comprehensive urban planning that considers economic, social, and environmental aspects for sustainable development. This would be possible through the effective

collaboration between government bodies, local communities, and private enterprises, which can ultimately shape the narrative of progress in urban India.

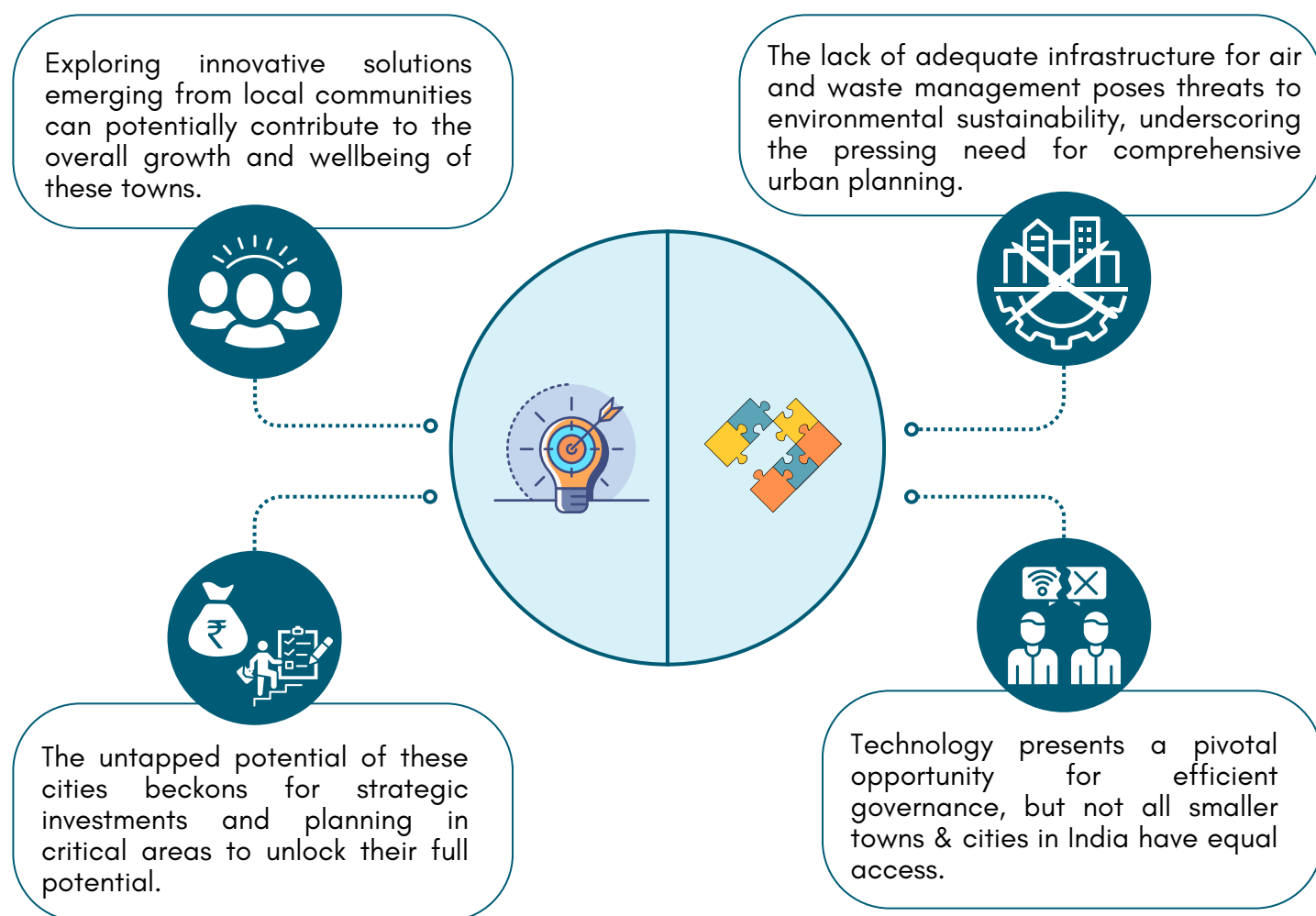


Figure 5: The emerging opportunity and challenges from smaller cities

06 LIMITATIONS

The NIF Series, while providing valuable insights into lesser-known cities in India, is not without limitations. There is a deficiency of data regarding these cities, which made the criteria for featuring them selective. The lack of such resources remained a prominent challenge in this process. Many of these smaller cities often share names with their corresponding Taluka, which results in mixed or unavailable data on platforms like Wikipedia. Hence, Nagrika had to invest effort in cross-verifying information by reaching out to city officials.

Additionally, the series has grappled with the challenge of insufficient information specifically regarding community engagement and citizen-led initiatives. While this does not imply a lack of citizen involvement in city development, the absence of proper news coverage has hindered the series from adequately showcasing these initiatives. This limitation underscores the need for more comprehensive data sources and increased national attention on the community-driven efforts that contribute significantly to the development of these lesser-known cities.

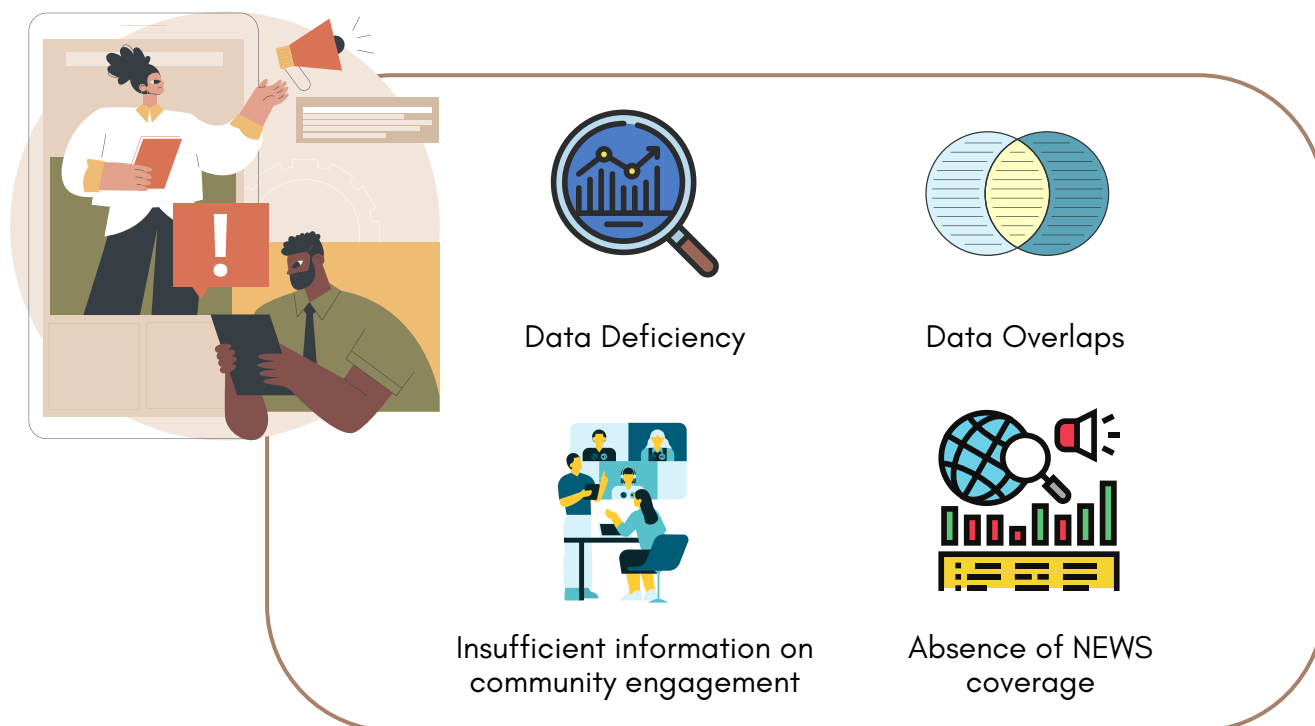


Figure 6: Limitations associated with the NIF research

07 WAY FORWARD

The Nagar in Focus (NIF) series unveils the often-overlooked stories of India's smaller cities. Acting as a crucial archive, the series not only sheds light on emerging economic, touristic, technological, and sustainability initiatives but also underscores the pivotal role of local efforts in shaping national progress. As we delve into the stories of these cities, the NIF Series prompts essential questions about their future trajectories. Will economic transformations lead to sustained growth?

Can tourism initiatives unlock the hidden potential of these locales? How will sustainability practices evolve to meet growing urban challenges? How are citizens engaging with and contributing to the transformative changes in their communities? The series, while showcasing the present, leaves us contemplating the exciting prospects and challenges that lie ahead for these cities, underscoring the need for continued exploration and attention.

Can tourism initiatives unlock the hidden potential of these locales?

Will economic transformations lead to sustained growth?



How will sustainability practices evolve to meet growing urban challenges?

How are citizens engaging with and contributing to the transformative changes in their communities?

Figure 7: The NIF Series prompts essential questions about the future growth of Small cities

ANNEXURE

HRIDAY City



Amaravati, a city in Andhra Pradesh, India, is a city with immense historical and cultural importance. Situated on the banks of the Krishna River, it boasts the magnificent Amaravati Stupa, a renowned Buddhist monument dating back to the 2nd century BCE.

The city was planned to be a world-class capital, replacing Hyderabad in 2014. However, Amaravati faced challenges, including land disputes and financial constraints, slowing its development. Despite changes in the capital city plan, Amaravati remains significant due to its cultural heritage and strategic location. With good connectivity and potential for industrial growth, it holds promise for the future. Despite uncertainties, Amaravati continues to attract tourists and may thrive as a center of historical and economic significance.

Amaravati was chosen in 2015 under the Hridaya scheme to develop its rich heritage. With an allocation of 16.60 crores, three projects were implemented, focusing on infrastructure, restoration, and maintenance. The scheme upgraded 18 road stretches connecting heritage sites like Dharanikota Fort and Amaravati Pond. It also improved stormwater drainage, footpaths, and street furniture, reflecting the town's heritage.

A significant highlight was the creation of a captivating heritage walkway, showcasing both tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Amaravati underwent a remarkable transformation, preserving its heritage while revitalizing infrastructure for residents and tourists.

HRIDAY City

Badami is a historic town in Karnataka, India, known for its rock-cut cave temples and ancient architectural wonders.

The town is situated between rocky hills, near Agastya Tirtha reservoir, and is surrounded by a ravine. Carved out of sandstone cliffs, the four main cave temples showcase intricate carvings and sculptures dedicated to different deities.

The town's ancient fort, perched atop a hill, provides breathtaking views of the surroundings. Badami was the capital of the Badami Chalukyas, who ruled the region from the 6th to the 8th centuries. Nearby attractions include Aihole and Pattadakal, renowned for their exquisite temple architecture. Aihole is hailed as the "Cradle of Indian Architecture," while Pattadakal boasts a complex of majestic temples.



Badami, was one of the 12 cities selected in 2015 under this scheme, for the comprehensive development of the heritage town. As per PIB, a total allocation of 19.03 crores had been dedicated to the city under this initiative, resulting in the implementation of 4 projects. The initiatives encompassed several significant endeavors. They included expanding the road leading to the Cave Temple and relocating residences near Agastya Tirtha and the fort. Agastya Tirtha was developed for water sports, while the Badami hills were transformed into a mountaineering center. The Banashankari Temple and garden were aesthetically enhanced.

HRIDAY City



Puri is a vibrant coastal city located in the eastern state of Odisha, India. It is situated at the Bay of Bengal, making it a coastal city with a beautiful shoreline. Puri's history dates back to ancient times, with references found in the Puranas and other historical texts. The city has witnessed the rise and fall of several dynasties, including the Mauryas, Guptas, and Ganga rulers.

The golden sandy beaches like Puri Beach and Swargadwar Beach provide a serene escape for visitors. The Jagannath Temple, a renowned Hindu pilgrimage site, stands as a major attraction. The annual Rath Yatra, a grand chariot festival, draws millions of pilgrims. Puri is renowned for its local handicrafts, including Pattachitra paintings and stone carvings. Festivals like the Konark Dance Festival and Puri Beach Festival showcase India's diverse art forms.

Puri was selected in 2015 for a comprehensive heritage development scheme. A total allocation of 16.12 crores was dedicated to the city, with successful implementation of six projects.

The proposed projects included three significant zones. The Shankh Kshetra Heritage Zone aimed to preserve the surroundings of the revered Shree Jagannath temple. The River Musa Environmental Heritage Zone focused on restoring the River Musa and its surroundings. The Balukhanda Recreational Zone aimed to enhance the recreational experience along Marine Drive and the sea. These initiatives have transformed Puri, safeguarding its cultural heritage and promoting sustainable development.

HRIDAY City

Dwarka is a city located in the Devbhoomi Dwarka district of India's western state of Gujarat. It is located on the western shore of the Okhamandal Peninsula on the right bank of the Gomti River at the mouth of the Gulf of Hutch. An underwater study on the coastal water of the Dwarka conducted by the Archaeological Survey of India reveals the existence of the city dating back to the 2nd millennium BC.

Dwarka is often identified with the Dwarka kingdom, the ancient kingdom of Lord Krishna, and is believed to have been first capital of Gujarat. The city is centered around the Dwarkadheesh temple (dedicated to Lord Krishna), which was built around 200 BC and was enlarged in the 17th century.



Image source : Inditales

Dwarka was one of the cities selected in 2015 under this scheme for the comprehensive development of the heritage town. As per PIB, a total allocation of 27.76 crores had been dedicated to the city under this initiative, resulting in the implementation of 8 projects. These projects included building new infrastructure, repairing existing facilities, managing operations and maintenance, and collaborating with city-level planning and policies. A noteworthy development initiative can be the establishment of a kilometre long Bet Dwarka Circuit, which accounted for a significant portion of the allocated funds. The Ahmadabad based 'Urban Management Centre' conducted citizen consultation and also developed the development plan and guideline toolkit for the scheme.

HRIDAY City



Velankanni is a city located in Nagapattinam district in India's eastern state of Tamil Nadu.

It houses the most visited Latin Catholic shrines called the Basilica of Our Lady of Good Health. Basilica of Our Lady of Good Health, one of the country's most prominent Catholic pilgrimages, is known as the "Lourdes of the East."

The town lies on the Coromandel Coast of the Bay of Bengal, where a small branch of the Cauvery River called 'Vellayar' on the southern side drains into the sea. In the past, this small commercial centre thrived as a bustling port, trading with ancient Rome and Greece.

In 2015, Velankanni was selected as one of the 12 cities for comprehensive development under the HRIDAY scheme. The city received a total allocation of 19.03 crores to implement three projects. One of these projects involved the installation of heritage street lighting near Saparapathaili Street and LED lights on existing poles around the church and beach area. The objective was to improve safety and energy efficiency and promote night tourism. Velankanni Town Panchayat undertook the implementation of the project. Additionally, informative signages were installed to guide visitors and showcase the town's rich heritage. These signages were designed to enhance navigation and provide tourists with valuable information in a visually appealing and professional manner.

Waste Wise City

Bobbili, a town in Andhra Pradesh, was founded in the 17th century by Pedda Rayudu, a descendant of the Rajah of Venkatagiri. Over time, its name evolved from "Pebbuli" to "Bebbuli" and finally "Bobbili." In 1757, the battle of Bobbili was fought where Vizianagaram kings emerged victorious with the support of French General Marquis de Bussy.

In recent years, Bobbili has witnessed industrial development, with the Andhra Pradesh Industrial Infrastructure Corporation establishing an Industrial Development area. Bobbili is also renowned for contributing to Carnatic music as the birthplace of the Bobbili veena, which received a Geographical Indication tag from the Government of India in 2011.



Bobbili's waste management transformed remarkably through a well-designed Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) program achieving 100% door-to-door waste collection and segregation. The town implemented bans on plastics, provided separate bins for shops, and imposed penalties for littering, ensuring proper waste disposal. The Real-Time Monitoring System enabled accurate waste collection data using RFID tags and GPS-enabled trucks. Bobbili prioritized biodegradable waste management, establishing composting units, vermicomposting, and a biogas plant. Home composting was encouraged, and the town's windrow composting unit produced 120 tonnes of compost every two months. The municipality was awarded Paryavaran Mitra Award from the state government.

Waste Wise City



Image source : Times of India

Bicholim, Goa, is the headquarters of the Concelho of Bicholim, one of the seven counties that were a later addition to Goa from the Portuguese territories. The dominant church of Our Lady of Grace adorns the town square. Nimuz Ghar stands on a hilltop, commemorating the triumph of the town's people over the Portuguese. The Tribunal, established by the Portuguese to deal with civil and criminal issues, is another noteworthy landmark.

Bicholim's vibrant cultural scene includes the unique celebration of Ganesh Chaturthi and the folk dance "Ghode Modni" with its cavalry theme. The economy thrives on mining. Nearby attractions like Mayem Lake, offering boating facilities, and the ancient Arvalem Caves with archaeological significance.

The Bicholim Municipal Corporation (BMC) initially struggled with its door-to-door collection but improved after 2005. NITI Aayog recognized the city for its plastic waste management system. In 2011, a committee guided waste segregation, and from 2015, plastic waste was processed at cement factories. BMC addressed segregation through awareness camps and in 2019, collaborated with Goa Waste Management Corporation to form a Material Recovery Facility (MRF).

Operated by Sampurn(e)arth and UNDP, the MRF sorts plastic waste into 13 categories, recycling and co-processing them. Fines are imposed on banned plastic use. These efforts achieved 100% material recovery, reduced dumpsite pressure, and better environmental conditions in Bicholim.

Waste Wise City

Panchgani in Maharashtra is a hill station developed by the British under the supervision of Lord John Chesson in the 1860s. The city is situated in the Sahyādri mountain ranges. The name 'Panchgani' signifies 'five hills,' and is a significant tourist spot.

The town is surrounded by five hills and topped by a volcanic plateau, known as "tableland," a part of the Deccan Plateau. However, Panchgani faces ecological challenges due to unregulated commercial activities, excessive traffic, and temperature inversions.



Panchgani - a hill station located southeast of Mumbai in India's Maharashtra state, became an eco-sensitive zone in 2001. The town currently generates about 7.2 tonnes of waste daily. The Panchgani Municipal Council (PMC) launched an Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) program, achieving 100% waste segregation at the source through a two-bins-one-bag system. The town established bye-laws and fines as per the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016 to ensure compliance through innovative models. They have established waste infrastructure with a central organic processing unit, decentralized composting, material recovery facility, and a bio-methanation plant powered by solar and wind energy. PMC now generates revenue of about INR 1 Lakh monthly after breaking even with expenditures.

Waste Wise City



Vengurla, a town in Maharashtra, is encompassed by a semicircular range of hills with foliage, predominantly consisting of cashew, mango, coconut, and berry trees. Dabholi, Tulas, and Mochemad hills encircle Vengurla to the north, east, and south, respectively, while the Arabian Sea graces its western periphery.

Initially established in 1665 by Dutch traders and subsequently governed by the British, Vengurla still bears the remnants of its influence, exemplified by notable landmarks such as the Dutch Wakhar, St. Luke's Hospital, and Crawford Market. With a history spanning 130 years, the Vengurla Municipal Council holds the distinction of being one of the oldest Municipal Councils in the state of Maharashtra.

Vengurla, Maharashtra, since 2015, has achieved over 95% waste segregation and processes 7 tonnes of waste daily. About 25% of the total cost of managing municipal solid waste is covered by the revenue it generates. This revenue majorly consists of user fees and the sale of recycled items such as compost and RDF (refuse-derived fuel). Interestingly, the sale of recycled products is almost half of the user fee earnings. Vengurla's Swachh Bharat Waste Park, created from a landfill, includes a biogas plant, a briquette-making plant, and a plastic crusher unit. They employ vermicomposting and bio methanation for kitchen waste. With a two bin-two bag approach for source segregation, Vengurla is a successful 100% waste management model. Clean City Ambassadors helped the Vengurla Municipal Council receive the Vasundhra Award 2017.

Swadesh Darshan 2.0

Jorhat, also known as the "Knowledge city of Assam" and "The Cultural Capital of Assam," is a captivating place celebrated for its natural beauty, rich heritage, and educational prominence. Its name originates from the bustling bazaars of Macharhat and Chowkihat on the banks of the Bhogdoi River. Annually, Jorhat attracts approximately 4.34 lakh tourists, including 5,000 international visitors. Jorhat is an integral part of a larger tourist circuit encompassing Jorhat, Kaziranga National Park, Majuli, and Sivasagar.

Within proximity lies the globally renowned UNESCO World Heritage Site of Kaziranga National Park, the enchanting Majuli islands, and the captivating Kakochang Waterfalls, each offering a unique experience.

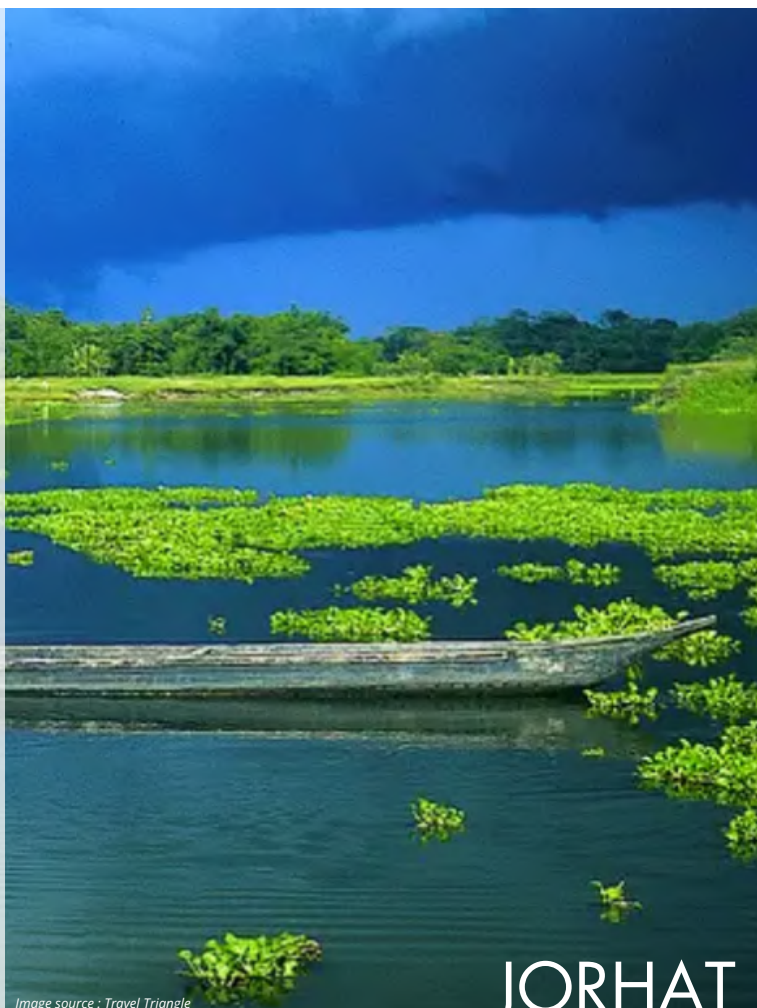


Image source : Travel Triangle

Jorhat, chosen as a significant destination under the scheme 'Swadesh Darshan 2.0', is one of the two approved destinations in Assam for phase 1 of the scheme. Located in the Jorhat district of Assam, Jorhat holds historical significance. The city's tourism revolves around its expansive tea gardens, esteemed heritage sites like Thengal Bhawan and Raja Maidam, and protected natural reserves like Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary and Dhekiakhowa Bornamghar. Majuli, the largest riverine island in the world, lies to the north. Jorhat served as the last capital of the Ahom Kingdom and gained fame as the "Tea capital of the world" due to its vast tea plantations and the renowned Tocklai Tea Research Institute.

Swadesh Darshan 2.0



Leh, the capital city of Ladakh, sits on the banks of the river Indus. It was a significant hub on the ancient "Silk Route," connecting Sinkiang to West Asia and India's plains. The old town of Leh is listed among the World Monuments Fund's 100 most endangered sites due to increased rainfall and climate change.

Annually, Leh attracts 2.12 lakh tourists, including 40,000 foreigners. Its diverse circuits, like Leh-Drass-Kargil, Leh-Nubra-Turtuk, Leh-Shey-Thiksey-Pangong Tso, and Eco-Culture Park, promote sustainability and preserve heritage. Leh's city governance follows the Goba/Nambardar system, with informally elected head persons handling local matters and dispute resolution.

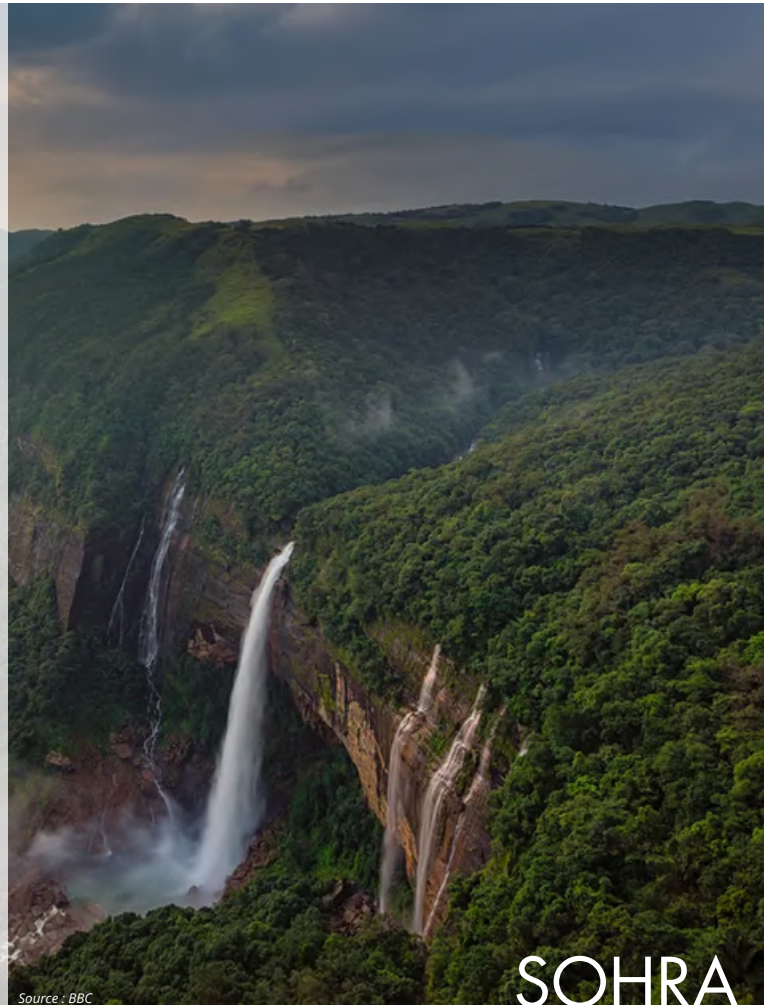
Leh a vital destination selected for 'Swadesh Darshan 2.0', is one of two approved locations in Ladakh for phase 1 of the scheme.

This scheme primarily focuses on developing Leh's cultural heritage and eco-tourism potential. Attractions like Leh Palace, Shanti Stupa, Leh main bazaar, Jama Masjid, Zorawar Fort Gompa Soma, and Central Asia Museum showcase Ladakh's architectural brilliance and socio-cultural history, reflecting ties to Central Asia, Tibet, and Kashmir. The Baramulla-Kupwara-Leh Tourist Facilitation Center was developed under Swadesh Darshan 1.0.

Swadesh Darshan 2.0

Sohra was ruled by the Syiems of Khyriemin in the Khasi Hills, between the 16th and 18th centuries. However, when the British occupied the Khasi Hills in 1883, they established their headquarters in present-day Sohra.

The area's high rainfall prompted the British to set up a meteorological office, with a record of 9,300mm of rainfall in a single month recorded in 1861. On average, Sohra attracts around 310,000 tourists annually. Sohra as advised by the Meghalaya Government, along was recommended travel itineraries with nearby attractions like Mawkdok Dympep Valley View, the Living Root Bridge, the Double Decker Bridge, and the locales of Nongriat and Khat-ar-song.



Sohra, chosen as a significant destination under the scheme 'Swadesh Darshan 2.0', is one of the two approved destinations in Meghalaya for phase 1 of the scheme.

Sohra, formerly known as Cherrapunji, is a historically significant destination situated in the East Khasi Hills of Meghalaya. The region surrounding Sohra is renowned for its waterfalls, such as the plunging Noh ka likai and the thunderous Dainthlen, both settings for immortal Khasi folktales. The major attractions include its unique living root bridges crafted from rubber trees, the Arwah Cave, the Dainthlen Falls, the Mawsmat Caves, the Noh Sngithiang Falls, and the Noh Ka Likai Falls.

Swadesh Darshan 2.0



Champhai is a vital border town and district headquarters, connecting India and Myanmar for business purposes. Its strategic location on the Indo-Myanmar border has made it a critical hub for commercial activities. Located 192 kilometers from the capital city of Aizawl, Champhai has expanded by incorporating 18 neighboring villages, including Hmunhmeltha, Zote, Tlangsam, Zotlang, Ruantlang, and Chhungte.

The town has a historical origin in the Chawnchhim area, inhabited by Mizo ancestors. Today, Champhai is a thriving town with an average of 4,900 tourists visiting annually to nearby attractions like the Lengteng Wildlife Sanctuary, Rih Dil Lake, and Myanmar.

Champhai, a vital destination selected for 'Swadesh Darshan 2.0', is one of two approved locations in Mizoram for phase 1 of the scheme.

The scheme aims to promote Champhai as a cultural and eco-tourism hub, providing a wide range of adventure and eco-friendly activities. It holds significant historical value as one of the oldest settlements of the Mizo people, deeply rooted in their heritage. Additionally, Champhai has earned the reputation of being the fruit bowl of Mizoram, showcasing its thriving agricultural landscape. Tourists flock to attractions such as Mura Puk caves, Vangchhias for its rich historical and archaeological significance and Farkawn for its picturesque landscapes, tranquil ambiance of Mizo culture.

Swadesh Darshan 2.0

Chümoukedima, nestled within the Chümoukedima district of Nagaland, held a significant position as the inaugural headquarters of the Naga Hills District in the Assam Province of British India from 1866 to 1875. It served as the administrative center, playing a pivotal role in managing governance and affairs during that period.

The headquarters status remained with Chümoukedima until 1875 when it was then relocated to Wokha. In 1879, the administrative center was moved again, this time to Kohima, further establishing its role as the heart of the Naga Hills District. The town welcomes an average of 12,500 tourists annually who are captivated by its rich history and cultural heritage.



Chümoukedima, a vital destination selected for 'Swadesh Darshan 2.0', is one of two approved locations in Nagaland for phase 1 of the scheme.

Chümoukedima is a charming city in the Dimapur district of Nagaland, India. The city boasts a variety of major attractions like Triple Falls, Seithekema, Patkai Range, and the cultural haven of Dezeiphe Craft Village. Additionally, Chümoukedima provides convenient access to nearby locations, further enhancing the tourism experience. Aqua Mellow Park, Rangapahar Reserve Forest, Dimapur Zoo, and the historically significant Kachari Ruins in Dimapur town offer diversity.

Swadesh Darshan 2.0



KAPURTHALA

Image source : Dr. Graham Beards, Wikipedia

Kapurthala, located in the Doaba region at the confluence of the Beas and Sutlej rivers, serves as the administrative headquarters of Kapurthala District. It was one of the earlier princely states in British India.

Kapurthala has an average annual tourist footfall of 32 lakhs including 3,620 international tourists. The city is known for the various heritage buildings, thereby known as the city of Palaces & Gardens.

Moreover, a Ramsar site - Kanjli wetland, that holds religious, agricultural, and ecological value in the area, is situated on the outskirts of the city. India's first Climate change theatre is also situated in Kapurthala.

Doaba: also known as Bist Doab, is the region of Punjab, India that lies between the Beas River and the Sutlej River. People of this region are given the demonym "Doabia". The dialect of Punjabi spoken in Doaba is called "Doabi".

Kapurthala, chosen as a significant destination under the scheme 'Swadesh Darshan 2.0', is one of the two approved destinations in Punjab for phase 1 of the scheme. The scheme aims to preserve and develop historical heritage places like Jagjit Mahal, Elsie Palace, Moorish Mosque, and Shalimar Garden. Maharaja Jagatjit Singh, the last ruler of Kapurthala before independence, was a great enthusiast of French architecture, which is reflected in the palaces and monuments of the city.

The State Tourism department had also initiated the 'conservation and adaptive reuse of colonial heritage' project in 2017, planning to restore heritage structures like Gulabi Kothi, Gol Kothi and Buggy Khana for adaptive reuse.

Source : Various sources including Swadesh Darshan 2.0 RFP proposal document

IQAir's Global Air Quality Report 2022

Chhapra, a town in Bihar, gained prominence during the 18th century when European powers like the Dutch, French, Portuguese, and English established saltpetre refineries, transforming it into a bustling river-based market. In 1864, it was officially recognized as a municipality.

Chhapra currently houses India's largest double-decker flyover, stretching 3.5 km from Bikhari Chowk to the Chhapra Bus Stand. Saltpetre and linseed oil processing are the primary industries. Additionally, Chhapra hosts the Saran International Film Festival annually, showcasing global films and promoting the region as a cinematic destination in northern India.



Image source : Indiarailinfo

Chhapra in Bihar experiences significant air pollution primarily due to industrial activities and vehicular emissions. It presently ranks 14th most polluted cities worldwide. In November of 2022, Chhapra recorded AQI of 314.

The city recorded PM_{2.5} values 10 times higher than the World Health Organization (WHO)'s prescribed annual safe limit of 5 g/m³. Combustion processes in industries and fossil fuel usage, contribute to hazardous pollutants like PM_{2.5}. Poorly maintained vehicles and low-quality fuels exacerbate the issue. The air quality in Chhapra ranges from "Moderate" to "Poor" throughout the year.

AQI stands for Air Quality Index, a numerical scale measuring air pollution level.

PM_{2.5} refers to particulate matter with a diameter of 2.5 micrometers or smaller. The WHO recommends an annual average PM_{2.5} concentration limit of 10 µg/m³ for best health outcomes, while in India, recommended annual average limit is 60 µg/m³.

Source : Various sources mainly including IQ Air 2022 reports

IQAir's Global Air Quality Report 2022



Darbhanga, the fifth-largest city in Bihar, India, holds significant historical and cultural importance. The name "Darbhanga" is believed to have originated from "Dwar Banga" or "Dari-Banga," meaning the 'door of Bengal.' The Khandwala Zamindar dynasty ruled Darbhanga from 1557 to 1947 during the Mughal and British periods.

The city has preserved ancient musical, folk art, and literary traditions in Sanskrit, Hindi, and Maithili, reflecting its strong artistic background. It is renowned as the "Cultural Capital of Bihar" and the "Heart of Mithilaanchal." Notably, Darbhanga is also an essential medical center, housing the Darbhanga Medical College and Hospital, with plans for a second AIIMS in the state to be established here.

Darbhanga in Bihar experiences significant air pollution primarily due to industrial activities and vehicular emissions. It presently ranks amongst 6th most polluted cities worldwide and 3rd most polluted city in India. While historical data before 2021 is limited, trends in neighbouring cities suggest peak pollution levels occur at year-end and early months.

In late January 2022, Darbhanga recorded a PM_{2.5} level that was 26 points higher than the safe exposure standards established by the World Health Organization. Emissions from poorly maintained vehicles and low-quality fuels exacerbate the issue.

Source : Various sources mainly including IQ Air 2022 reports

IQAir's Global Air Quality Report 2022

Dharuhera, located in Haryana's Rewari district, is a thriving industrial city connecting New Delhi and Gurgaon. Industries like Venus Engineers, DELPHI Automotive Systems, Amul and more, contribute to regional growth.

The region is poised for real estate development with infrastructure projects nearby, such as the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor and Delhi-Alwar RRTS. Dharuhera offers affordable housing options, including luxury gated societies. However, Dharuhera faces environmental challenges due to the discharge of toxic waste from industrial units in neighboring Bhiwandi. Efforts are underway to address this issue and prevent further pollution of water bodies and contamination of residential areas.



DHARUHERA

Dharuhera, an industrial city in Haryana, India, ranks 12th among the most polluted cities worldwide. In 2022, the PM_{2.5} value recorded in the city was 87.8, indicating a very unhealthy air quality level based on the AQI. Vehicular emissions, industrial emissions, waste burning, poorly paved roads, construction sites, and road repairs worsen air quality.

Air pollution peaks in Oct-Dec with high PM_{2.5} levels, while May-Aug has better air quality, especially in August. Dharuhera's air contains pollutants like nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, volatile organic compounds, carbon monoxide, black carbon, and harmful particles.

Source : Various sources mainly including IQ Air 2022 reports

IQAir's Global Air Quality Report 2022



Bhiwadi, a city in the Alwar district of Rajasthan, India, is widely recognized as an industrial hub. It enjoys strategic proximity to major urban centers like New Delhi and Jaipur. Half of the city's landscape is dedicated to residential areas, while various industries occupy the remaining portion. As of 2021, the air quality in Bhiwadi was classified as "Hazardous" by the World Health Organization (WHO).

A recent report on drinking water quality in Rajasthan identifies Bhiwadi as one of the 11 towns with unpotable water due to extremely high nitrogen concentration levels. Bhiwadi currently ranks as the second dirtiest city in India, trailing by 2 points behind Dharuhera, Haryana.

BHIWADI

Image source : Patrika

Bhiwadi, an industrial hub in Rajasthan, ranks 1st among the most polluted Indian cities worldwide. In November of 2022, Bhiwadi recorded AQI of 412.

The pollution is mainly caused by road dust (47%), industries (30%), vehicles (12%), construction activities, and garbage burning. Currently in Bhiwadi, there are 1700 small and large-scale industries and 400 furnaces. Wildfires in neighboring states also contribute significantly to the pollution levels. During extreme conditions, preventive measures such as water spraying on roads and the closure of specific industries are taken to reduce the harmful effects of pollution.

Source : Various sources mainly including IQ Air 2022 reports

Current Affairs-based

Machilipatnam, which is also referred to as Bandar or Masulipatnam, is a foremost port city as well as an administrative center of Krishna district, Andhra Pradesh. Nestled on the south-eastern Coromandel Coast of India, Machilipatnam holds great significance due to its rich cultural heritage and maritime history.

It was once a thriving trading port during the colonial era. It played a crucial role in international trade, attracting merchants from around the world and leaving behind a legacy of diverse influences.

Machilipatnam is known for its architectural wonders, including ancient temples and colonial-era buildings. The city also has a vibrant local culture, with colorful festivals, and traditional crafts like Kalamkari.



The state government has set the stage for reviving the historical port in Machilipatnam. Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy laid the foundation for the new port this Monday.

Machilipatnam Port, a Greenfield port, is being developed by AP Maritime Board (APMB) and is entirely funded by the state government. The port obtained Environmental Clearance from the Ministry of Environment and Forests and got a loan of INR 3,940 crore for port construction from the Power Finance Corporation Limited

Reportedly, a local legislator claimed that the port would provide direct and indirect employment to about 25,000 people.

Source : The Times of India, India Seatrade news

Current Affairs-based

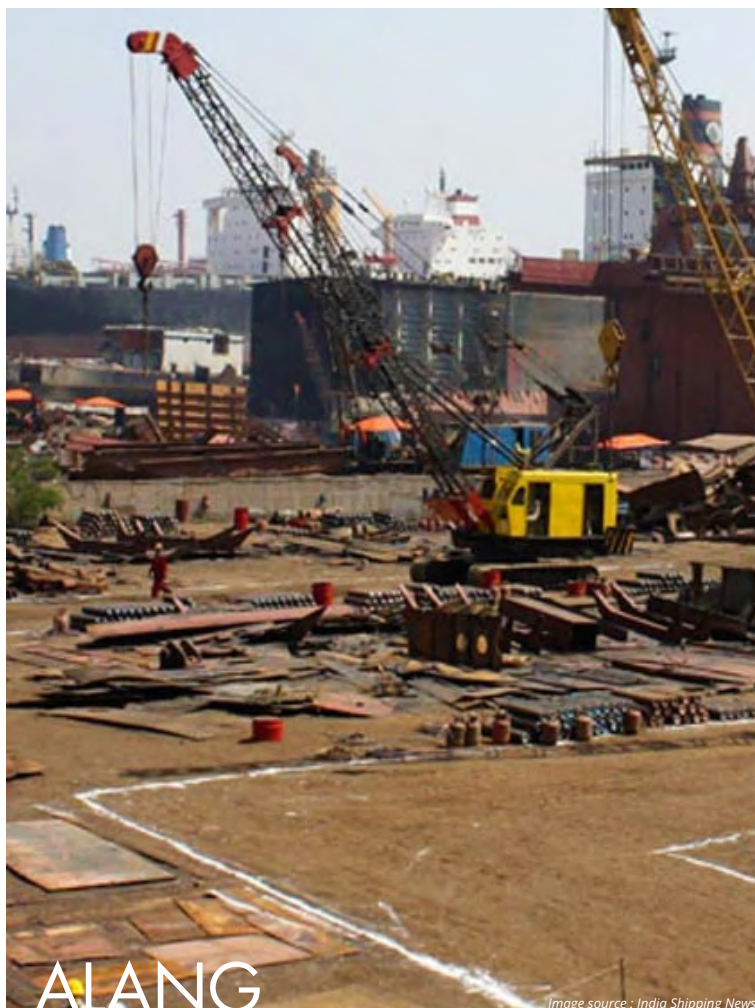


Image source : India Shipping News

Alang, a census town, located on the eastern coast of Saurashtra region in Gujarat, in the Gulf of Khambhat is home to the world's largest ship recycling yard. The shipyard started functioning in 1983 and as the enterprise picked up, the villages surrounding the beaches saw the emergence of several ancillary industrial and commercial activities.

Recently, three town planning (TP) schemes for Alang and surrounding villages to facilitate the planned development of the area were also approved by Gujarat's CM.

Centre has asked the Gujarat Maritime Board and the Department of Ports and Transport of the State government to come out with "necessary orders" and SOPs to explore the possibility of allowing the existing yards to double up as vehicle scrapping units.

Alang, in the Bhavnagar district of Gujarat, is considered to be the largest ship breaking yard in Asia; and there has been a push from the Centre to expand its usage for vehicle scrapping or recycling.

Source : The Hindu Businessline

Current Affairs-based

One of the Largest & Oldest Cities in Jind District, It is also called the Heart of Haryana.

Named after Jainti Devi (Goddess of Victory), Jind, which is an important district headquarter, is an erstwhile princely state. Jind is known for its 'akhadas' and sports academies.

Also, a pilot project is being started to set up a hydrogen plant on two thousand yards of land along the washing line at Jind Junction. This is being done to run and facilitate hydrogen trains. It has been reported that 110 crores will be spent on this project.



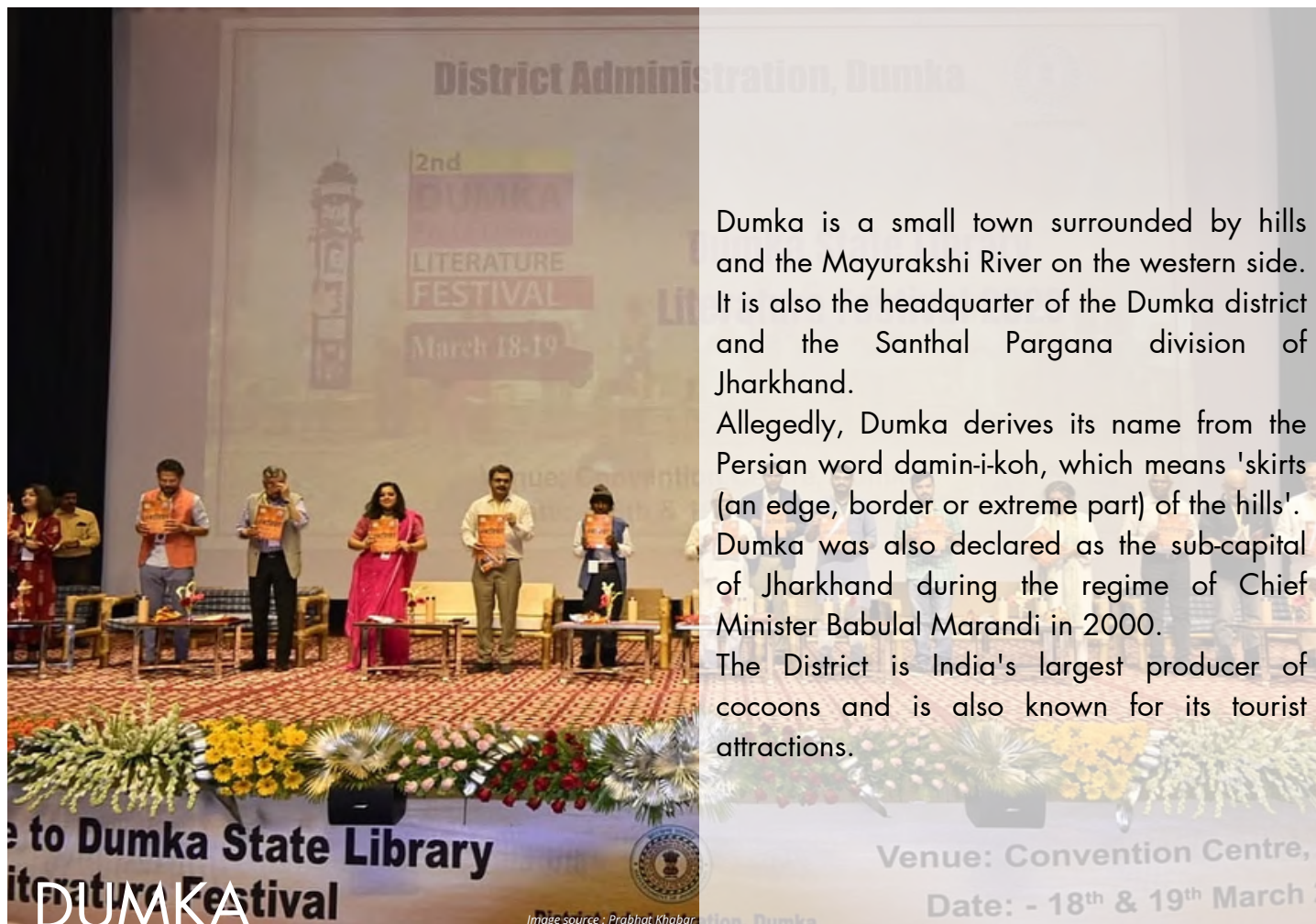
Image source : The Quint

The Rajasthan Royals' leg-spinner, Yuzvendra Chahal has climbed to the first position in the IPL 2023 Purple Cap race, with a total of 11 wickets.

Chahal had a great start to his season, picking up a four-wicket haul against Sunrisers Hyderabad, before taking one wicket in his second match against Punjab Kings. In his third match, Chahal took three wickets against Delhi Capitals.

Source : Livemint

Current Affairs-based



When the district administration in Dumka, Jharkhand decided to fix the dilapidated public library in 2021, the administration, led by Deputy Commissioner RS Shukla, began digitizing and cataloguing the dusty books in the public library and revamping the resources, they stumbled upon a forgotten van that served as a mobile library. This inspired them to organize their literary event in the form of the Dumka State Library Literature Festival in April 2022.

The district has since organized three literary events, including the recent second edition of the two-day Dumka literature festival, which ended on 19th March.

Source : Prabhat Khabar

Current Affairs-based

Shivamogga, also called Shimoga, is a mid-sized city in the western Karnataka state. It is situated on the banks of Tunga River and is a gateway to the western ghats.

One possible origin of the city name is believed to be from the term Shiva-Mukha, meaning Face of Shiva.

Shivamogga is about 270 kilometers northwest of Bangalore.



The Airport project is an attempt to improve connectivity and accessibility of Shivamogga and other neighbouring areas in the Malnad region.

The airport has been built on 663 acres of land with an investment of ₹449.22 crores. The Passenger Terminal Building of the airport can handle 300 passengers per hour.

Source : The New Indian Express

Current Affairs-based



Paralakhemundi is the district headquarters of Gajapati district and one of the oldest municipalities established in 1885, in the Indian state of Odisha. Paralakhemundi town is about 280km by road from the state capital, Bhubaneswar.

Crafts and industries have been a prominent feature in the economic life of the people of Paralakhemundi since ancient times. Some of the crafts practiced here include stone masonry, wood carving, horn, bamboo and Ivory works, jewelry making, etc.

The Maharaja's Palace in the city, influenced by Byzantine and European styles, is an architectural marvel. The sprawling white Brundaban Palace and the Jagannath temple complex are also well-known attractions.

PARALAKHEMUNDI

Image source : Indian Express

As the railway ministry has started redevelopment of the Paralakhemundi station, one of the oldest railway stations in Odisha, the state chapter of the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) has objected to the demolition of the heritage station built in 1899.

In a letter to railway minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, INTACH Odisha chapter convener, AB Tripathy, encouraged him to consider the station's heritage and historical relevance, urging him to establish a museum and a photo gallery. "Many other artifacts, including signaling equipment, electrical equipment, scales, uniforms, insignias, German silver cutlery, and Royal embellishments should be kept at the Paralakhemundi station by creating a museum."

Source : Hindustan Times

Current Affairs-based

Degana is a city and a municipality located in the Nagaur district of Rajasthan, India. It is around 90 kilometers away from Nagaur. The town was granted municipality status in 2013.

The discovery of lithium deposits in the Renwat hills of Degana and the surrounding area is particularly noteworthy as this is the same region from where tungsten ore was previously sourced for the country.

The British first stumbled upon tungsten mineral here in 1914, and before Indian independence, this tungsten was used to manufacture war materials and surgical instruments for the British Army during World War I. At its peak, this industry employed approximately 1,500 individuals.



Image source : Firstpost

Lithium reserves have been traced in Rajasthan's Degana, according to media reports citing state government officials.

Geological Survey of India (GSI) authorities claimed that this reserve is much bigger than the one found in Jammu and Kashmir in February this year. If mining for this area is approved, this much quantity of lithium can help India meet around 80% of its total demand.

India's plan to increase EV penetration by 30% by 2030 relies heavily on lithium. Lithium batteries provide a high power-to-weight ratio, energy efficiency, and better performance in different temperatures, making them a viable option for EVs. In the year 2020-21, India had imported Lithium worth more than Rs 6,000 crore.

Source : Firstpost

Current Affairs-based



Kanchipuram also known as Kanchi, is a city in Tamil Nadu in the Tondaimandalam region, 72 km from Chennai. Also known as the City of Thousand Temples, Kanchipuram is known for its temple architecture and silk sarees.

Situated on the banks of the Palar river, its name is derived from the combination of two Tamil words - "Kanchi" meaning "Brahma" and "-puram" meaning "residential place". Kanchipuram was also chosen as one of the heritage cities for HRIDAY (Heritage City Development and Augmentation Yojana).

Tondaimandalam : Tondaimandalam was an ancient division of Tamil country comprising roughly the present districts of Kancheepuram, Chennai, Tiruvallur, Vellore and Tiruvannamalai.

Kanchipuram, famed for its master silk weavers and home to several heritage structures, is all set to get its first Permanent Pictorial Cancellation. Issued by India Post, a cancellation is a postmark from a stamp available at the head post office, that bears a design that defines the city in some way.

P. Venkatesan, the founding treasurer of the Postcrossing Society of India, said that the cancellation will display 'Annaparavai', a recurring motif in Kanjivaram, and that this is part of their efforts to promote India's heritage and to get Kanchipuram listed in UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

Source : The Hindu

Current Affairs-based

Ramnagar is a town located at the foothills of the Himalayas on the bank of river Kosi. The town lies to the north of the Indo-Gangetic plains as part of the Terai Arc Landscape. It is a Gateway to the Jim Corbett National Park, a famous wildlife tourist destination in India.

Ramnagar is popular for its fruit orchards, tourism, and various significant temples. It is also the main administrative center for Jim Corbett National Park and Project Tiger.

Terai Arc Landscape : TAL stretches from Nepal's Bagmati River in the east to India's Yamuna River in the west covering an area of 51,000 sq.km



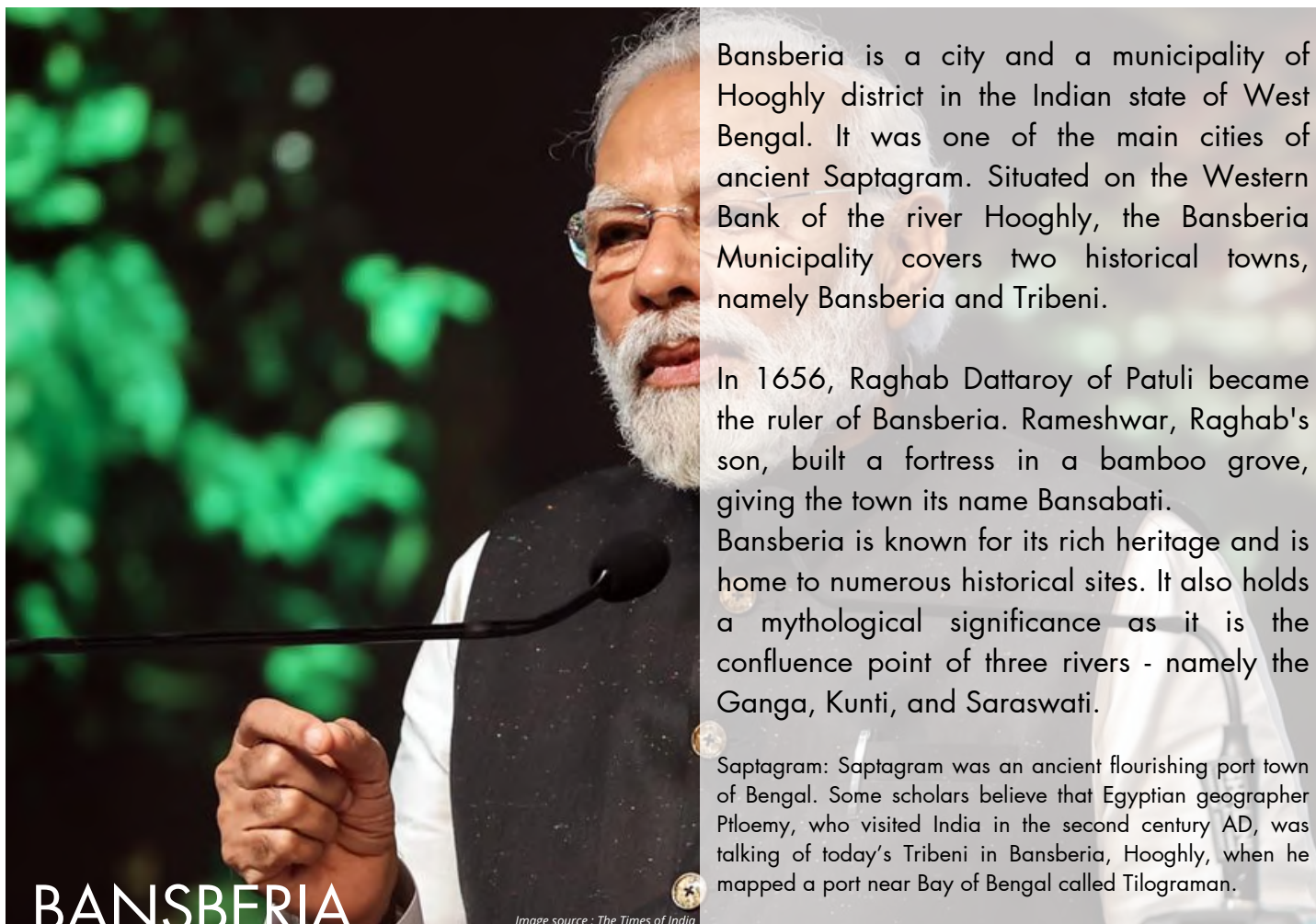
Image source : Pioneer Edge

The G20 summit is set to be organized in Ramnagar from March 28 to 30. For this, special preparations have been made in Ramnagar under which the civilization and culture of Uttarakhand are being shown through art, food, and cultural events for the guests. Reportedly, a total of 30 crores was spent on making these arrangements.

The G20 Summits are being organized all over India in various cities. These summits have initiated a barrage of beautification work in the host cities like Amritsar, Darjeeling, Nagpur, Rishikesh, etc.

Source : Pioneer Edge

Current Affairs-based



Bansberia is a city and a municipality of Hooghly district in the Indian state of West Bengal. It was one of the main cities of ancient Saptagram. Situated on the Western Bank of the river Hooghly, the Bansberia Municipality covers two historical towns, namely Bansberia and Tribeni.

In 1656, Raghav Dattaroy of Patuli became the ruler of Bansberia. Rameshwar, Raghav's son, built a fortress in a bamboo grove, giving the town its name Bansabati.

Bansberia is known for its rich heritage and is home to numerous historical sites. It also holds a mythological significance as it is the confluence point of three rivers - namely the Ganga, Kunti, and Saraswati.

Saptagram: Saptagram was an ancient flourishing port town of Bengal. Some scholars believe that Egyptian geographer Ptolemy, who visited India in the second century AD, was talking of today's Tribeni in Bansberia, Hooghly, when he mapped a port near Bay of Bengal called Tilograman.

When the PM took a retrospective look at the past episodes of 'Mann ki Baat' on Sunday morning, personalities and organizations across India were featured, and the Kumbh Mela at Bansberia, Hooghly, found a prominent place. In the 100th episode of Mann Ki Baat, Modi congratulated the organizers of the fair.

The fair, locals said, was organized around 700 years ago at the confluence of three rivers in the area near Bansberia. Two years ago, some locals and US-based Kanchan Banerjee revived it and organized a holy dip for the devotees.

Source : The Times of India

Swachh Survekshan

Ambikapur is a city and headquarters of Surguja district in Chhattisgarh. The district is spread over a forest-rich area of 22,237 km² and most of the district's terrain is forested and hilly. Natural resources found here include bauxite, forest products and paddy crops.

Ambikapur was the capital of the Princely state of Surguja before Indian Independence. The name of the city is derived from the Hindu goddess Ambika (Mahamaya) Devi, who is the central figure of worship in the area.



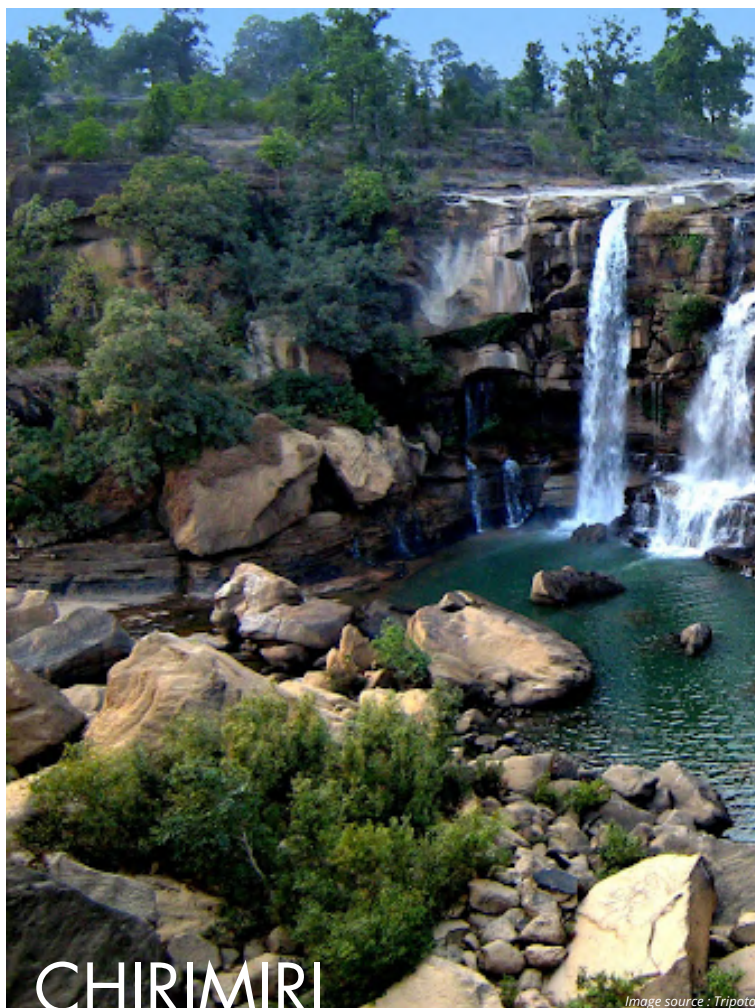
Image source : Hindustan

For eight consecutive years – from 2015 to 2022, Ambikapur bagged the top spot in the 1-3 lakh population category in the swachh survekshan surveys.

This town has a cafe, where you get a free meal for bringing in plastic waste, a 1.5km road made entirely of plastic granules, and a dump yard that has been converted into a garden. The city has a robust waste management system, starting with the residents segregating the waste into dry and wet waste. The waste is then sent to secondary segregation centers, where it is sorted into 38 different categories before being sent off for recycling, composting, or other kinds of processing depending on the type.

Source : Swachh Survekshan 2022 Urban

Swachh Survekshan



Chirmiri, located in the hilly area of the Chhattisgarh Plateau, is a colliery town developed in an interior location which has become an independent urban centre. As per the Census 2011, Chirmiri was a Class-II town which had been granted the status of Municipal Corporation by the Chhattisgarh Government in 2008.

The town is divided into 40 wards and nine zones and these nine zones are physically separated from each other by hilly mounts and forested areas.

Chirmiri was part of the Koriya district until 2022, when the Manendragarh-Chirmiri-Bharatpur district was established.

Colliery town - A settlement where development is initiated around a mining area for the workers. Chirmiri is principally a colliery town, and the evolutionary history of the town, closely associated with the account of coal mining.

Chirmiri, a city situated in Chhattisgarh, secured the top position in the Swachh Survekshan 2022 rankings for the '50,000-1 lakh' population category in the Eastern zone. The city was given the award for 'Fastest mover' city under the same category during Swachh Survekshan 2020.

For the 2022 Survekshan, Chirmiri scored 100% under categories like Waste generation vs processing, Remediation of Dumpsites, Cleanliness of Residential Areas, Cleanliness of Market Areas, Cleanliness Of Drains, and Cleanliness of Water Bodies. Chattisgarh Ranked second among the states in the 'more than 100 ULBs' category.

Source : Swachh Survekshan 2022 Urban

Swachh Survekshan

Karad, located in the southern part of Maharashtra's Satara district, is renowned for its distinctive geographical features and significant role in sugar production.

Positioned at the confluence of the Koyna River and the Krishna River, Karad forms the enchanting Preeti Sangam, meaning Confluence of Love. As the sugar bowl of Maharashtra, the city is home to numerous sugar factories, driving the thriving sugar production industry in the region. Moreover, Karad holds a prominent position as an educational hub in Western Maharashtra, boasting several esteemed educational institutions.

It was originally known as "Karhatak", meaning "elephant market". Located to the south west of Karad is Karad Caves.

Source : Krishna Vishwa Vidyapeeth (Deemed to be university)



Image source : TripNight

Karad also known as Karhad, a city located in Maharashtra, achieved the first position in the Western zone's Swachh Survekshan 2020 rankings for the '50,000-1 lakh' population category. It also secured the third position in overall national ranking in 2022.

During the 2022 Survekshan, Karad excelled with a perfect score of 100% in various categories such as Door to Door Collection of Waste, Source Segregation, Remediation of Dumpsites, Cleanliness of Residential Areas, Cleanliness of Drains, Cleanliness of Market Areas, and Cleanliness of Water Bodies. Additionally, it achieved scores ranging from 95% to 82% in categories including Cleanliness of Public Toilets, Waste Generation vs Processing, and Grievance Redressal.

Source : Swachh Survekshan 2022 Urban

Swachh Survekshan



Lunglei gets its name from a bridge-like rock formation in the Nghasih River, a tributary of the Tlawng River. The city recently received the prestigious 'Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar Awards 2023' at the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction event in New Delhi. Lunglei Fire Station was recognized for its exemplary response to a massive forest fire in April 2021.

Lunglei is known for its significant forest cover, accounting for 9.97% of its total area. Rice is the primary crop, and cottage industries contribute to the local economy, producing hand-loomed cloth, furniture, agricultural equipment, woven textiles, bamboo, and cane work. Lunglei is also the Church Headquarters of the Baptist Church of Mizoram.

Lunglei, a city located in Mizoram, achieved the top position in the Swachh Survekshan 2022 for the population category of '50,000-1 lakh' in the Northeastern zone. Additionally, it was recognized as the 'Cleanest City' in the same category.

Lunglei showcased exceptional performance by achieving a perfect score of 100% in categories like Remediation of Dumpsites, Cleanliness of Market Areas, Cleanliness of Drains, and Cleanliness of Water Bodies. However, it received varying scores ranging from 98% to 8% in categories such as Door to Door Collection of Waste, Grievance Redressal, Cleanliness of Public Toilets, and Source Segregation. Despite its remarkable performance, Lunglei encountered challenges in categories of Waste Generation vs Processing and Cleanliness of Residential Areas.

Source : Swachh Survekshan 2022 Urban

Swachh Survekshan

Mandi Gobindgarh, or "loha mandi," is a town in Punjab, India, renowned for its iron industry. Legend has it that a 17th-century battle led a Sikh saint to bless the town with inexhaustible iron. Today, it remains an important center for steel production, housing over 500 steel and iron scrap recycling industries.

The town got the 1st rank in the North Zone category of 'Best Self Sustainable City' in Swachh Survekshan-2021.

Discarded materials from around the world find their way to this small town, where around 150 induction furnaces operate tirelessly, producing iron ingots for re-rolling mills. Despite lacking a large railway station, Mandi Gobindgarh plays a crucial role in the iron and steel industry, supplying materials for the construction and transportation sectors.

Source : An Iron Town Called Mandi Gobindgarh | Mint, The Tribune



Image source : Mappls

GOBINDGARH

Gobindgarh, a city situated in Punjab, claimed the top spot in the Swachh Survekshan 2022 rankings for the population category of '50,000-1 lakh' in the Northern zone. It was honored with the title of the cleanest city in the northern region.

During the 2022 survey, Gobindgarh achieved a perfect score of 100% in various categories, including Door to Door Collection of waste, Cleanliness of Residential Areas, Cleanliness of Market Areas, Cleanliness of Drains, and Cleanliness of Water Bodies. However, it received scores ranging from 84% to 44% in categories such as Grievance Redressal, Waste Generation vs. Processing, Remediation of Dumpsites, and Cleanliness of Public Toilets.

Source : Swachh Survekshan 2022 Urban

NAGAR IN FOCUS COMPENDIUM