PM Modi opens the six-lane 'Nitish Setu' over the Ganga in Bihar

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News

On 21 November 2026, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the six-lane 'Nitish Setu' over the Ganga in Vaishali district, Bihar. Officially the Kachchi Dargah–Raghopur–Bidupur bridge, it links Kachchi Dargah in Patna district with Bidupur in Vaishali district. Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary announced on 13 November that it would be named after former Chief Minister Nitish Kumar. The main bridge is about 9.76 km long, and the project is about 19.76 km with approach roads; media describe it as an 'extradosed' cable-stayed bridge. Media (Swarajya) have billed it as the country's longest river bridge; there is no official confirmation. The first phase, Kachchi Dargah–Raghopur, opened in June 2025. At the same event the PM inaugurated and laid foundation stones for projects worth about ₹34,470 crore.

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Name	Nitish Setu (Kachchi Dargah–Raghopur–Bidupur bridge)
Opened	21 November 2026 – PM Modi
River	Ganga
Links	Kachchi Dargah (Patna) – Bidupur (Vaishali)
Length	Main bridge ≈ 9.76 km; ≈ 19.76 km with approaches

Point	Details
Type	Six-lane extradosed cable-stayed bridge
Naming	13 Nov 2026 – CM Samrat Choudhary
First phase	Kachchi Dargah–Raghopur, June 2025
Other projects	About ₹34,470 crore

Background

- Geography: The Ganga splits Bihar into north and south, so its bridges are lifelines. The Mahatma Gandhi Setu (1982) links Patna with Hajipur, HQ of Vaishali district, on the north bank. Rajendra Setu and the Aunta–Simaria bridge (Aug 2025) are near Begusarai. Raghopur is a riverine island area in the Ganga.
- Engineering: An extradosed bridge blends a girder (box) bridge with a cable-stayed one – shallow cables from short pylons carry long spans at low height. The earlier record-holder as India's longest river bridge, the 9.15 km Dhola–Sadiya (Bhupen Hazarika Setu) linking Assam and Arunachal Pradesh, opened in May 2017.
- History: Vaishali was the capital of the Licchavis and the centre of the Vajji confederacy, regarded as one of the world's early republics. The Second Buddhist Council was held here around 383 BCE under Kalasoka. Mahavira was born at Kundagrama near Vaishali.
- Ganga: In November 2008 the Ganga was declared the National River; the National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA) was notified on 20 February 2009 under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. The Ganga Action Plan began in 1986 and 'Namami Gange' in 2014.

Tamil Nadu link: The bridge has no direct Tamil Nadu link. Historical link: Rajendra Chola I's armies reached the Ganga; he took the title 'Gangaikonda Chola' and made Gangaikonda Cholapuram in Ariyalur district his capital. Its temple is part of the UNESCO World Heritage site 'Great Living Chola Temples'.

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

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What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Name: Nitish Setu (Kachchi Dargah–Raghopur–Bidupur bridge); Opened: 21 November 2026 – PM Modi; River: Ganga; Links: Kachchi Dargah (Patna) – Bidupur (Vaishali).

What is the background to this news?

Geography: The Ganga splits Bihar into north and south, so its bridges are lifelines. The Mahatma Gandhi Setu (1982) links Patna with Hajipur, HQ of Vaishali district, on the north bank.

Practice questions (with answers)

1. Bhupen Hazarika Setu (2017), earlier billed as India's longest river bridge, links Assam with which State?

A) Nagaland

B) Meghalaya

C) Manipur

D) Arunachal Pradesh

Answer: D – Explanation: Arunachal Pradesh – the 9.15 km Dhola–Sadiya bridge, opened by the PM on 26 May 2017 (PIB).

2. The Second Buddhist Council at Vaishali, capital of the Licchavis, was held under which king's patronage?

A) Ajatashatru

B) Kalasoka

C) Ashoka

D) Kanishka

Answer: B – Explanation: Kalasoka of the Shishunaga dynasty (c. 383 BCE). First – Ajatashatru (Rajagriha); Third – Ashoka (Pataliputra); Fourth – Kanishka (Kashmir).

3. The older Mahatma Gandhi Setu across the Ganga links Patna with which town?

A) Hajipur

B) Munger

C) Bhagalpur

D) Begusarai

Answer: A – Explanation: Hajipur, HQ of Vaishali district – opened in 1982. Rajendra Setu and the Aunta–Simaria bridge are near Begusarai.

4. The 'extradosed' design used for Nitish Setu blends which two types of bridge?

A) Arch and suspension

B) Truss and arch

C) Girder and cable-stayed

D) Cantilever and truss

Answer: C – Explanation: Girder + cable-stayed – shallow cables from short pylons carry long spans at low height.

5. In which year was the Ganga declared India's 'National River'?

A) 1986

B) 1995

C) 2014

D) 2008

Answer: D – Explanation: 2008 (November). The NGRBA followed in February 2009. 1986 – Ganga Action Plan; 2014 – Namami Gange.

Sources: PIB – PMO, 21 Nov 2026; ANI, 21 Nov 2026; ThePrint, 13 Nov 2026; Swarajya, 15 Nov 2026; PIB, 26 May 2017 (Bhupen Hazarika Setu); PMIndia (Aug 2025); National Mission for Clean Ganga – nmcg.nic.in (NGRBA). © Shanmugam IAS Academy.