

Bihar to launch conservation plan to protect 'Marcha rice', 'Govind Bhog', 'Sona Chur'

Sections Bihar to launch conservation plan to protect 'Marcha rice', 'Govind Bhog', 'Sona Chur' Share Font Size Save Print Comment

Synopsis
The Bihar State Biodiversity Board (BSBB) has also decided to conduct a study to find out the reason behind the sharp decline in the cultivation of India's famous 'Magahi paan' (betel leaf), which received the Geographical Indication (GI) tag in 2016, in four districts - Aurangabad, Gaya, Nawada and Nalanda - in the state.

Concerned with a sharp decline in farming of traditional varieties of rice in certain districts, the Bihar government has decided to conduct a preliminary survey and also to launch a conservation plan to protect rare varieties such as 'Marcha rice', 'Govind Bhog' and 'Sona Chur' in the state, an



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reason behind the sharp decline in the cultivation of India's famous 'Magahi paan' (betel leaf), which received the Geographical Indication (GI) tag in 2016, in four districts - Aurangabad, Gaya, Nawada and Nalanda - in the state.

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"We are really concerned with the decline in cultivation of rare varieties of rice that includes 'Marcha rice', 'Govind Bhog' and 'Sona Chur' in the state. These are rare varieties of rice cultivated in certain districts in Bihar. A preliminary survey/study will soon be conducted to find out the reason behind decline in cultivation of these varieties of rice", Ashutosh, Chairman of the BSBB told PTI.

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Echoing a similar view, K Ganesh Kumar, Secretary of the BSBB, told PTI, "Based on the findings of our survey, the board will launch a conservation plan to protect these rare varieties of rice. While, Marcha rice (appears like black pepper) is cultivated in Gaunaha, Narkatiaganj, Ramnagar, Chanpatiya and Lauriya blocks of West Champaran district, Govind Bhog rice is grown mainly in Kaimur. Govind Bhog rice is known for its fine quality and rich fragrance, and is cultivated on a large scale in Kaimur district".

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The BSBB official said data available with the board suggest a decline in farming in traditional varieties of rice without specifying the figure.

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As far as aromatic Sonachur rice is concerned, it is mainly grown in Bhojpur, Rohtas, and certain parts of northern Bihar, he said, adding decline in cultivation of this variety of rice is also a matter of concern.

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The secretary said, "The conservation plan will also include creating awareness among the local farmers regarding newer improved crop production technologies, efficient water application tools, plant protection, nutrient management, cropping system based training to the farmers, etc. Focused attention for improving the seed quality will also be part of the conservation plan".

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Further, the BSBB has also decided to conduct a survey to find out the reason behind decline in the cultivation of 'Magahi paan', said K Ganesh Kumar.

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"Farmers had hoped for better days when the paan got the GI tag, but nothing substantially changed for them. The board will suggest options to the farmers for increasing the cultivation of Magahi paan in its conservation plan," he said.

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According to the state government's data, Magahi paan is currently cultivated in only 440 hectares in the state. And the number of paan farmers is on the decline because of lack of any state help to ease their high cost of production.

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ET Online | Last Updated: Feb 20, 2023, 10:01 AM IST

Synopsis
As many as 10 more large cracks were reported to have been found on the Badrinath highway near Joshimath. TOI reported on Monday. The highway connects to the shrine town of Badrinath which is one of the most-visited pilgrimage spots in the Garhwal Himalayas. The cracks, locals said, have appeared in a 10km stretch between Joshimath and Marwari.

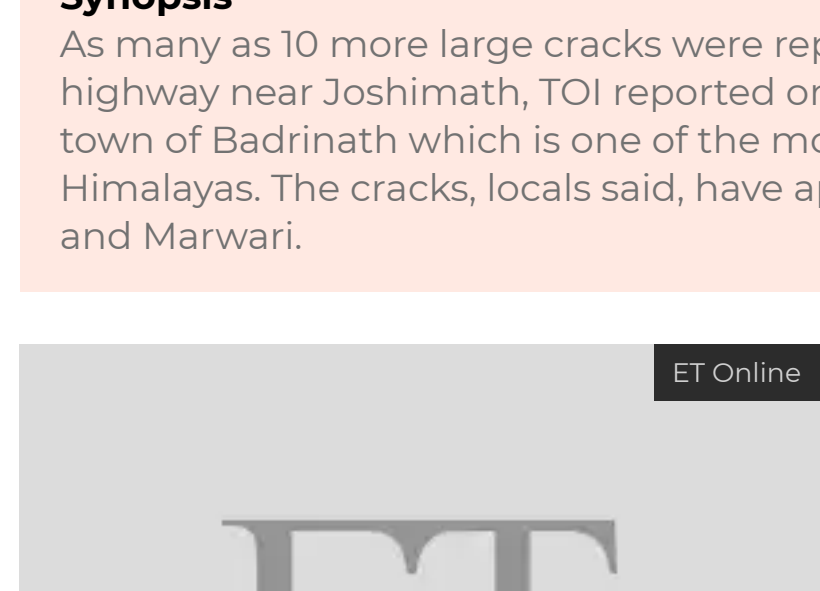


IMAGE SOURCE: TOI

As many as 10 more large cracks were reported to have been found on the **Badrinath** highway near Joshimath, TOI reported on Monday. The highway connects to the shrine town of Badrinath which is one of the most-visited pilgrimage spots in the Garhwal Himalayas. The **cracks, locals said, have appeared** in a 10km stretch between Joshimath and Marwari.

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A scientific study on the carrying capacity of towns on the **Char Dham Yatra** route needs to be carried out ahead of the pilgrimage to avoid any last-minute chaos and confusion, an activist said. The annual yatra takes place from April to June.

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Anoop Natuyl said the study will help avoid last-minute chaos on the route as witnessed last year during the initial days of the pilgrimage.

"The study of the carrying capacity becomes more important this year in view of the land subsidence crisis in Joshimath," he said.

Joshimath is known as the gateway to the Badrinath, one of the Char Dham temples located in the Garhwal Himalayas.

In view of the record footfall of pilgrims during the Char Dham Yatra last year, this time the government is going to make new arrangements to facilitate the yatra this year.

Officials said that arrangements will be made to control the crowd of devotees during Char Dham Yatra, one of the famous Hindu pilgrimages which take place in the Garhwal Himalayas every year.

"Arrangements are being made for better facilities and arrangements for the pilgrims coming for the Char Dham Yatra," Sachin Kurve, State Tourism Secretary said.

District Magistrate of **Chamoli** district Himanshu Khurana on Sunday carried out an inspection of the landslide-affected areas in Bahuguna Nagar, Subhash Nagar and Upper Bazar of Karnprayag and spoke to the affected people.

Khurana said that all possible help would be provided to the affected families.

The District Magistrate said that the buildings which have developed excessive cracks due to landslides should be evacuated and shifted to safer places.

Those who want to go on rent, those people will also be given rent for 6 months.

The District Magistrate directed the SDM to shift the affected families to safer places. Crackmeters should be installed for monitoring cracks in buildings.

A detailed survey of the buildings in the affected areas should be conducted through the survey team.

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