

CAG report flags revenue arrears, financial 'lapses'

Jai Narain Pandey | TNN

Patna: The report of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) tabled in the Bihar legislative assembly on Thursday highlighted the govt's inability to collect revenue effectively. According to the report presented by finance minister Bijendra Prasad Yadav, revenue arrears stood at Rs 4,844 crore as of March 31, 2023, of which Rs 1,430 crore had been pending for more than five years.

The report further revealed that utilisation certificates (UCs) amounting to Rs 92,133 crore were either pending or unavailable in Bihar till March 31, 2025, raising serious concerns over financial accountability. It also flagged irregularities in the implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G), including instances of houses being sanctioned to children and geo-tagging of houses located in Delhi and Jharkhand.

"During test-check of records of the sampled districts, audit observed instances of sanction of houses to ineligible beneficiaries. There was no provision for registration/sanction of houses to minors in the PMAY-G. The central government had clarified in Sept 2017 that if the beneficiary husband and wife both had died then the minor child, whose name was displayed in the list, may be sanctioned a house jointly



CM Nitish Kumar on the assembly premises in Patna on Thursday

with the guardian or officer of the block/panchayat, after verification. However, the audit revealed four cases of minor beneficiaries," the report stated.

RJD MLA Kumar Sarvjeet alleged that a goods and services tax (GST) input tax scam had occurred in Bihar.

MATTER OF CONCERN

claiming that Rs 200 crore was returned to businesses without tax payment. He further alleged that Rs 4,844 crore remained outstanding as of March 31, 2023. "Of this, Rs 1,430 crore has been pending for the past five years. The transport department has also been accused of irregularities. The report states that fitness certificates for vehicles were issued without following SOPs. This

has resulted in a loss of crores of rupees to the govt exchequer," he said.

According to the CAG report, taxes and duties on electricity amounted to Rs 20 crore, goods and services to Rs 32 crore, state excise to Rs 543 crore, and mining and metallurgical industries to Rs 1,505 crore.

The report also stated that Rs 2,371 crore was outstanding under sales tax, of which Rs 1,289 crore had been pending for more than five years. Additionally, Rs 2,485 crore was outstanding under goods and passenger taxes. Outstanding dues included Rs 20 crore on electricity taxes and duties, Rs 32 crore on goods and services, Rs 543 crore on state excise and Rs 1,505 crore on mining and metallurgical industries.

The mines and geology department has not provided details of arrears pending for more than five years. A land revenue auction has been initiated to recover dues.

According to the report, agricultural input subsidies worth Rs 21 crore were provided to 10 districts in 2019 despite them not being declared flood-affected. Applicants in 14 other districts received Rs 4 crore in areas not included in the disaster-affected list.

During 2019 and 2020, subsidies worth Rs 151 crore were distributed across an area 1.34 lakh hectares larger than the identified crop damage area.

Audit finds gaps in Ayushman Bharat rollout

Sheezan.Nezami
@timesofindia.com

Patna: The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has flagged gaps in the implementation of Ayushman Bharat in Bihar, citing weak awareness measures and procedural hurdles that restricted the scheme's reach and resulted in eligible patients being denied treatment benefits.

The audit observed that expenditure on information, education and communication (IEC) activities was far below requirements, weakening beneficiary awareness and contributing to low verification of targeted beneficiaries. Bihar's revised target, set in January 2022, envisaged coverage of 6.18 crore beneficiaries, but only 2.56 crore — around 41% — had been verified as of March 2024.

The CAG also highlighted issues in the pre-authorisation process affecting both beneficiaries and hospitals. Of 14,015 pre-authorisations rejected, 8,371 cases — about 60% — amounting to Rs 12.20 crore were rejected by Pre-authorisation Panel Doctors (PPD). The report attributed these rejections to delays in initiating pre-authorisation, incorrect selection of treatment packages.



Lawmakers lock horns over liquor claims

Sheezan.Nezami
@timesofindia.com

Patna: RJD MLC Sunil Kumar Singh and JD(U) MLC Neeraj Kumar clashed during Question Hour in the Bihar legislative council on Thursday over allegations of liquor delivery despite prohibition.

The exchange followed Singh's claim a day earlier that liquor could be delivered even within the council campus. Responding in the House, Kumar said anyone claiming they could arrange liquor delivery could be sent to jail.

The confrontation began during a discussion on overcrowding in state jails. RJD MLC Saurabh Kumar said pressure on prisons had eased after amendments to the prohibition law, under which first-time offenders can avoid imprisonment by paying a penalty.

The debate escalated when Neeraj Kumar criticised Sunil Kumar Singh over the alleged claim regarding liquor delivery on the Vidhan Mandal premises.

Green corridor from Patna to Dobhi on cards, says minister

Jai Narain Pandey | TNN

Patna: The state govt has planned to develop a 130-km green corridor from Patna to Dobhi with a selfie point every 10km. Co-operative, Environment, Forest & Climate Change minister Pramod Chandravanshi said during Question Hour in the legislative assembly on Thursday.

He said fruit trees such as mango, jamun, lemon and amla would be planted along the highway to promote ecotourism. Responding to BJP MLA Nitish Mishra and others, the environment, forest and climate change minister said farmers would be encouraged to plant fruit trees along the four-lane highway to increase income due to lower transportation costs.

The minister said the department is taking necessary action and will replicate similar corridors in other districts. Mishra flagged delays due to pending clearance from the central govt and said tourists visit Bihar but



File photo

“Fruit trees such as mango, jamun, lemon and amla will be planted along the highway to promote eco-tourism

PRAMOD CHANDRAVANSHI
Environment, forest & climate change minister

do not stay owing to inadequate facilities. He also urged the govt to frame a maintenance policy for properties at tourist sites.

The minister assured him that work would commence soon. "Plantation will begin this year before the monsoon (in June-July). Trees such as jamun, mango, neem, banyan, paakad and

peepal will be planted on both sides of the highway. This will increase greenery, reduce pollution, and strengthen environmental balance," he said, adding that an eco-tourism committee would be formed for maintenance.

Raising the issue, JD(U) MLA Manjit Singh said seven cities in the state are among the most polluted in the country and cited lower green cover in Patna compared to Delhi.

Deputy CM Vijay Kumar Sinha, who also holds the urban development and housing portfolio, said the govt is adopting the Miyawaki technique to accelerate plantation.

Saharsa MLA's turban: A lighter moment arose over Saharsa MLA I P Gupta's turban. Gupta said he had come without it to draw attention to a drainage scheme in Saharsa municipal area. Deputy CM Vijay Sinha said the govt would "protect the honour of your turban (pagdi)".

House passes bills to boost investment

Abhay Singh | TNN

Patna: The state assembly on Thursday passed six bills, including two separate legislations aimed at creating a business-friendly atmosphere in the state by removing stringent provisions in the departments concerned to attract investors for setting up industrial units and undertaking other economic activities. Another Bill seeks to prevent harassment of borrowers by micro finance institutions (MFIs) in cases of delayed loan repayment.

The assembly passed the Bihar Jan Vishwas (Provision Amendment) Bill, 2026, which was moved by deputy chief minister Vijay Kumar Sinha on behalf of industries minister Dilip Kumar Jaiswal.

Sinha said controversial sections and sub-sections in the rules of the urban development and housing department, forest, environment and climate change department, commercial

taxes department and certain other departments would now be removed. Moving the Bihar Micro Finance Institutions (Rules Regarding Loaning and Eradication of Oppression) Bill, 2026, finance minister Bijendra Prasad Yadav said MFIs had been charging highly exorbitant rates of interest and that the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) guidelines concerning MFIs were not sufficiently clear. Under the Bihar Private Commercial Educational In-

A high school in every panchayat

Responding to a calling attention motion, education minister Sunil Kumar said in assembly that the govt plans to open a high school in every panchayat. Members raised concerns that Kendriya Vidyalaya-level education remains limited to urban and district headquarters areas, depriving rural and semi-urban students.

stitutions Bill, 2026, the govt will regulate fees charged by such institutions from admission to examination.

Moving the Bihar Adhivakta Kalyan Nidhi (Amendment) Bill, 2026, rural development minister Shrawan Kumar said stamp duty would be increased from Rs 25 to Rs 50 to augment the welfare fund for lawyers after retirement or death.

Regarding the Bihar Secretariat Services (Amendment) Bill, 2026, parliamentary affairs minister Vijay Kumar Chaudhary said direct recruitment has been undertaken to fill section officer posts in the state secretariat. The probation period for confirmation has been reduced from two years to one year. Moving the Bihar State Madarsa Board (Amendment) Bill, 2026, education minister Sunil Kumar said complaints relating to the dismissal of teaching and non-teaching staff in madarsas would now be heard and decided by the board.

Stricter law needed on plastic ban: MLCs

Sheezan.Nezami
@timesofindia.com

Patna: State cooperative department minister Pramod Kumar on Thursday admitted in the legislative council that the ban on single-use plastic was being violated across the state and said a stricter law was required to ensure compliance. Members raised concerns over violations of the comprehensive ban on the manufacture, storage, distribution and sale of single-use plastic and thermocol, demanding stronger enforcement and greater public awareness.

MLC Saurabh Kumar, raising the issue on behalf of Maheshwar Singh, referred to a massive accumulation of plastic spread over 118 sq km in Pakridiyal in East Champaran, warning that it posed a serious threat to farmers as harmful chemicals were being trapped in the soil. "If there is a ban, then how such plastic are found everywhere," he asked. He suggested that the state govt should ut-



Legislators on the assembly premises in Patna on Thursday

ilise such plastic in the construction of rural roads under the Lohia Swachh Bihar Abhiyan, noting that nearly one lakh km of roads have been built using plastic across the country, whereas Bihar has constructed only 10km. MLC Sunil Kumar Singh pointed to the continued use of single-use plastic in the Bihar Legislative Council canteen.

In a separate matter, MLC Neeraj Kumar, through a starred question, raised concerns over the shifting course and imbalanced flow of the Ganga in the Mokama area. Replying, minister Vijay Kumar Chaudhary said an MoU had been signed with the National Institute of Hydrology (NIH), Roorkee, which is conducting a study on the Ganga.

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