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BPSC

64th BPSC Common Combined
(Preliminary) Competitive Exam

Revised Study Materials

BIHAR

General Knowledge



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Develop India Group

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Bihar State Specific General Knowledge

Bihar : At a Glance

The name Bihar is derived from the Sanskrit and Pali word, *Vihara*, which means '*abode*'. The region roughly encompassing the present state was dotted with Buddhist vihara, the abodes of Buddhist monks in the ancient and medieval periods. Medieval writer Minhaj al-Siraj Juzjani records in the *Tabakat-i-Nasiri* that in 1198 AD, Bakhtiyar Khalji committed a massacre in a town now known as Bihar Sharif, about 70 km away from Bodh Gaya. Later, Bakhtiyar learned that the town was a college, and the word for college is Bihar.

Bihar is located in the eastern part of the country.

It is an entirely land locked state, although the outlet to the Sea through the port of Kolkata is not far away. Bihar lies midway between the humid West Bengal, in the east and the sub humid Uttar Pradesh, in the west which provides it with a transitional position in respect of climate and economic activities. It is bounded by Nepal in the north, Jharkhand in the South. The Bihar plain is divided into two unequal halves by the river Ganga which flows through the middle from west to east. The physical divisions based on bio-physical and historical antecedence are depicted in Plate No. 1.

The state of Bihar has always been in the centrestage of the country's economic, cultural, historical and political activities. It has acquired a new identity on 15th November 2000 after the creation of the State of Jharkhand out of it. It occupies a total geographical area of 94,163 sq. km and is extended for 483 km from east to west and 345 km from north to south.

Bihar is the **9th largest state of India in terms of its area** and the **2nd largest in terms of population after U.P.** It is bounded by Nepal on the north, Jharkhand on the south, West Bengal on west and Uttar Pradesh on the east. Bihar is a land of varied religions. Buddhism and Jainism were born in the state of Bihar. It was here that Prince Gautama attained enlightenment, became the Buddha, at the present Bodh Gaya, a town in central Bihar. The great religion of Buddhism was born in Bihar. It is here also that Lord Mahavira, the founder of another great religion, Jainism, was born and attained nirvana (death). In Bihar only the tenth and last Guru of the Sikhs, Guru Gobind Singh was born and attained the sainthood of Sikhism.

Bihar was also ruled by Magadh and Licchavis rulers around 7-8th Century B.C. Kautilya, the author of *Arthashastra*, the first treatise of the modern science of Economics, lived here. Seleucus Nicator, lived in Pataliputra (ancient name of Patna) around 302 B.C.

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Mauryan king, Ashoka, ruled the state around 270 B.C., was the first to formulate firm tenets for the governance of a people. He had these tenets, the so called Edicts of Ashok, inscribed on stone pillars which were planted across his kingdom. The pillars were crowned with the statue of one or more lions sitting on top of a pedestal which was inscribed with symbols of wheels.

At Nalanda, the world's first seat of higher learning, and university, was established during the Gupta period. It continued as a seat of learning till the Middle Ages, when the muslim invaders burned it down. The ruins are a protected monument and a popular tourist spot. A museum and a learning center- The Nava Nalanda Mahavira - are located here.

In medieval times Bihar lost its prestige as the political and cultural center of India. The Mughal period was a period of unremarkable provincial administration from Delhi. The only remarkable person of these times in Bihar was Sher Shah, or Sher Khan Sur, who was from Sasaram and built the longest road of the Indian subcontinent, the Grand Trunk Road, which starts from Sonargaon in Bangladesh and ends at Peshawar in Pakistan.

During 1557-1576, Akbar, the Mughal emperor, annexed Bihar and Bengal to his empire. With the decline of Mughals, Bihar passed under the control of the Nawabs of Bengal. Thus, the medieval period was mostly one of anonymous provincial existence.

Bihar also played a significant role at the time of independence. Many important revolutions were started from this state, and many important personalities who fought for the independence of India were also from Bihar. In the year 2000, Bihar was divided into two states namely Bihar and Jharkhand

Major Facts

State Capital	PATNA. It was once Capital of the Mighty Magadh Empire. Patna was known in ancient times as Pataliputra, Pataligrama, Pushp Pur, Kusumpur and Azimabad etc.
State's Official Languages	First Hindi, second Urdu
Local Dialects Languages	Bhojpuri, Magahi, Maithili
Symbol of the City	Golghar
Important River	The Ganga, others are : Kosi, Bagmati, Gandak, Sone, Falgu, Punpun, Ghagara, Karamnasa.
Geographical Location	Between 24° 20' 10" and 27°3'15" North Latitude 83° 19' 50" and 88°17'40" Eastern Longitude
Area	94,163 sq. km.
Rural Area	92,257.51 sq. kms
Urban Area	1,095.49 sq. kms
Total population	10, 38, 04, 637; male-5, 41, 85,347;