

Bihar

Bihar is a landlocked state. This means that it has land on all sides. It shares one border with a foreign country, that is, Nepal. Bihar has plenty of neighbours to keep it company. West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand are its neighbours.



Capital-Patna

This is Bihar's capital city. It was once called Pataliputra. Sitting on the banks of the Ganga, Patna is now one of India's most crowded cities.



Introduction

- Bihar is mostly flat plains. Most of Bihar is made up of the famous Indo-Gangetic plains. It's only in the north that Bihar has a tiny bit of mountains area, where it touches the foothills of the Himalayas. This is called the **Terai region**.
- The south of Bihar includes a part of the **Chota Nagpur Plateau**. Most of this plateau is now in the state of Jharkhand.
- Parts of Bihar are prone to earthquakes because they lie in what is called the Himalayan earthquake zone.
- Only a small part of Bihar has forests and this part is at the foothills of the Himalayas. Bihar celebrates Sparrow Day on 20th March every year because sparrows are dwindling in number.

History

- Bihar's history is intertwined with India's mythology. Lord Rama's wife Sita is a daughter of Bihar. Her father king Janaka had a kingdom at Mithila.
- Gautam Buddha is believed to have achieved enlightenment in Bihar, in the city of Bodh Gaya.
- Bhagwan Mahavir, founder of Jainism was also born in Bihar.
- The tenth and last Sikh Guru, Gobind Singh was born here and attained sainthood in this region.
- Several ancient kingdoms happily coexisted on the vast plains of Bihar. Magadha, Anga & Licchavi were some.
- It was during the Gupta rule that the decimal system in Mathematics was developed.

Geographical Settings

- **Rivers:** India's most famous river Ganga divides the state into two parts- the North Bihar plains and the South Bihar plains.
- Apart from the magnificent Ganga, there are many other rivers that generously water the plains. the Ghaghra, the Gandak, the Bagmati, the Kosi and the Mahananda are some rivers that rush down the Himalayas.
- The **river Kosi** is known as the '**Sorrow of Bihar**', because it floods so often and causes a lot of destruction to crops and homes in the plains.
- Bihar has some colorful soil. Most of the north has sandy soil, whereas the south has many small hills with dark clay like soil.
- **Season:** Bihar has three clear seasons. A hot summer, a rainy monsoon and a gentle winter.

State Tree & State Flower

Peepal Tree



Kanchar (Orchid)



State Animal & State Bird

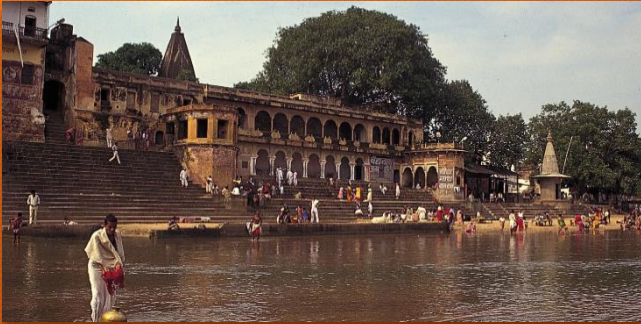
Gaur



Sparrow



Cities



Gaya

This is one of Bihar's most historic cities. According to Hindu mythology, Lord Rama & his wife Sita visited here to perform the last rites of Rama's father, king Dasharatha. It is also an important Buddhist pilgrimage center.



Darbhanga

This busy city is a major medical hub with lots of well-known hospitals. Once upon a time, it was Mithila's capital.



Bihar Sarif

This city has incredibly long history, over millions of years old. It has many Buddhist, Hindu, Jain & Islamic landmarks.

City Tales

Muzaffarpur is known as the ‘lychee kingdom’ for its famous lychees.



Hajipur is known to be one of Bihar’s fastest developing cities. It is best known for the bananas it produces.



Nalanda & Vikramshila Universities

This is one of the world's oldest universities & its ruins can still be seen at Nalanda. The kings of the Gupta & the Pala dynasties sent their learned citizens to study here, hundreds of years ago.



The ruins of this university tells us that people must have given a lot of importance to education. The king Dharmapala from Pala dynasty built this university that taught complex subjects, like Philosophy, Metaphysics, Logic & theology.



Place of Interests



Sher Shah Turi Tomb

This brave Afghani warrior ruled the region of Bihar for many years. He built an entire city inside a magnificent fort. But one of his most amazing structures was his own tomb at a place called Sasaram.



Ibrahim Baya Mukbara

This is a tomb that is really worth seeing. It was built for a general called Ibrahim Malick, who was in the army of Mohammed bin Tughlaq.



Mahabodhi Temple

This is an amazing place for the Buddhist devotees. Right in the heart of this temple stands the Bodhi tree, where the Buddha achieved enlightenment more than 2500 years ago.

Culture: Music, Dance, Paintings

- There are singers in this state called bhajaniyas & kirtaniyas who sing devotional music. These singers are hugely popular and whenever there is a religious event, people ask them to perform.
- Bihar is not only about folk and religious music. Classical music has been an important part of this region for centuries. Ancient kings and emperors were great music lovers. They encouraged singers perform in their courts.
- Bihar has meaningful folk music.

Sohar: Sung when a child is born.

Sumangali: Sung at weddings.

Ropni geet: Sung when paddy is sown.

Katnee geet: Sung when paddy is cut.

Beer Kunwar: War songs.

Chance to Dance

Kajari is a monsoon dance. People perform this dance for an entire month, celebrating the rain. All the songs are in praise of Mother Earth for being so generous & giving them so much.



Jhijhiya is a dance for when there is no rain. Through the dance, people persuade Lord Indra, the god of rain, to shower their fields. This dance is performed mainly by women.



Dance-Drama

Paika is a sort of war dance in which dancers wield weapons and use them as props. Performers wear dhotis and colourful turbans.



This is like a dance drama, during which performers enact issues in their daily lives, like the conflicts between rich & poor people or women being left alone when their husbands go to work in big cities.



Madhubani Paintings

The people of Bihar seem to be really good with their hands too. They make amazing things with bamboo, brass & wood. A style of painting called Patna Kalam is very famous. Madhubani is one of Bihar's most famous art forms. Originally village women used natural colours from vegetables to paint intricate patterns on the walls of their homes.



Festivals

- Most of the festivals in Bihar revolve round nature. People worship the Sun, the Moon, trees, water and even many animals.
- **Chhath Puja:** Chhath Puja is one of Bihar's biggest festivals. All over the world, Bihari people get together to celebrate the setting Sun.
- **Madhushravani:** It celebrates the rain. Devotees carry pots of water and empty them over the Shiv lings in Lord Shiva temples, thanking the lord for the rain that helps their crops and praying for a good monsoon the next year as well.
- **Bihula:** Bihula is a festival during which devotees worship the serpent goddess Manasa. During this festival, people read out the story of Manasa. Bihula teaches people to be kind to snakes, even though they can be dangerous.

Chhath Puja

- The puja is dedicated to the sun God or Surya dev, as a way of offering gratitude and thankfulness to the sun deity for bestowing a bountiful life on earth.
- It is celebrated 6 days after Diwali.
- According to the environmentalists, Chhath is one of the most eco-friendly religious festivals in the world.
- The rituals including bathing, abstaining from drinking water, fasting, standing in water offering prayer etc.



Bihari cuisines

Sattu Ka Sharbat: In summer people love to have this drink. It's made of Sattu, which is a kind of flour.



Dal Pitha: It can be called Bihar's version of momos. This delicious breakfast dish is made of rice flour, stuffed with lentil paste, steamed & then eaten with pickle.



Litti Chokha

This dish is similar to dal baati from Rajasthan. Litti is a baked wheat dumpling. It's filled with Sattu (that's fried gram flour) and had with chokha- a heavenly mix of spicy vegetables.





Pedakiya

Chhapra town is famous for this sweet dish. This dish is made of semolina & sugar.



Khaja

A lot of street sellers fry mounds of khaja on roadsides. This is a specialty of a village called Silao, which has an ancient tradition of making khaja.



Tilkut

Gaya is the city where this crisp sweet is believed to be originated. It's made of sesame seeds and sugar.

Dress up: Bihar is famous for handwoven textiles. *Tussar* is a type of silk that is popular. In some parts of Bihar, men wear a turban called a *paag*.

Men in Bihar traditionally wear dhoti & kurta. Muslim men prefer lungis.

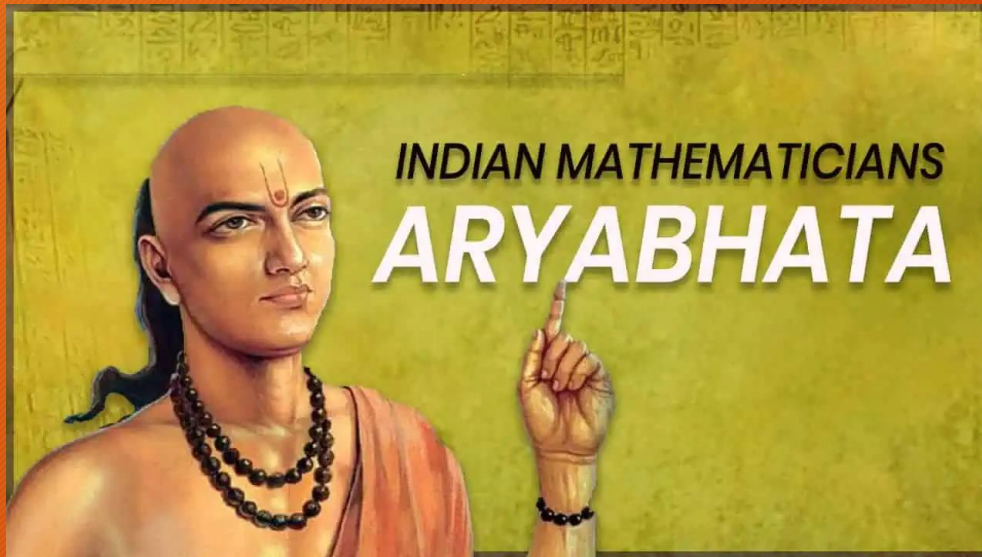


Many women wear saris that they drape elegantly around themselves.

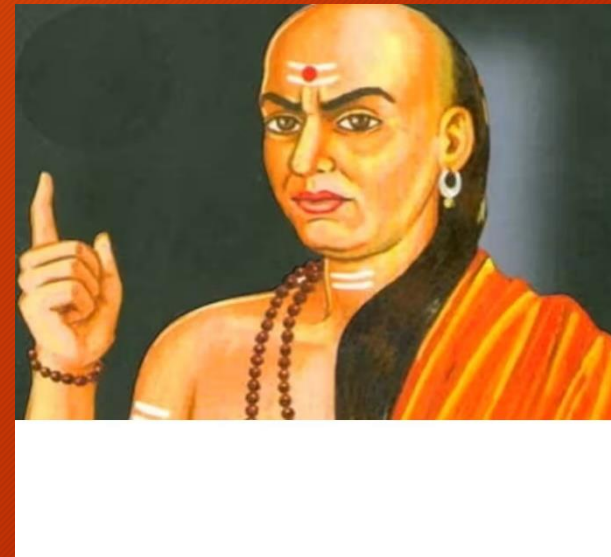


With so many religions being born here, Bihar must have some really great people.

He was an ancient astronomer & scientist, who developed many theories that we follow even today. It is believed that he was the first to come up with the concept of zero & place values.

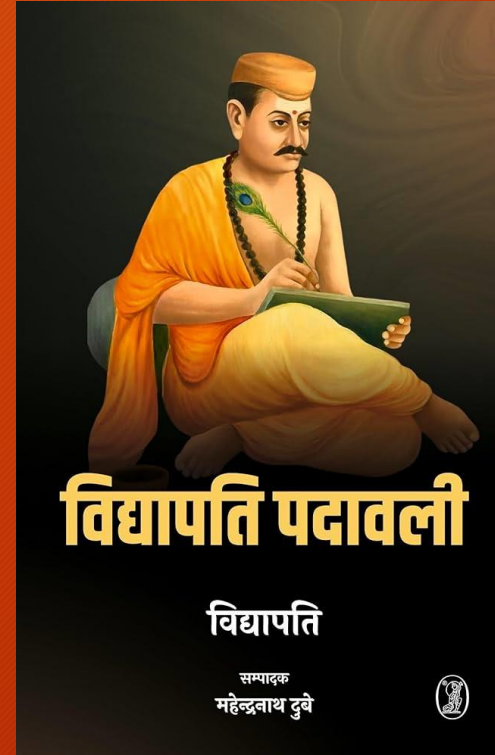


He was a minister in the courts of Chandragupta Marya. It was his thinking & strategy that helped the Mauryan kingdom to reach such heights.



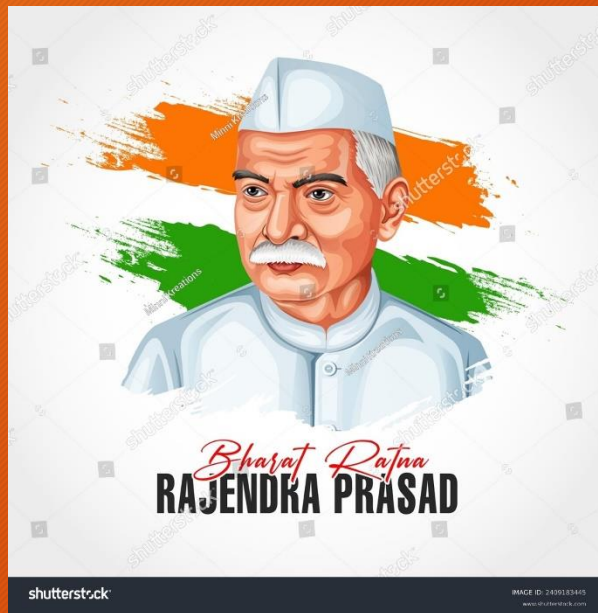
Vidyapati

Vidyapati was a great poet from Mithila, who wrote long & elaborate poetry about Lord Krishna & Radha. Many of these poems are still much loved and recited.



Great Leaders

He was a freedom fighter & went on to become India's first President.



Jayaprakash Narayan was an important political leader whose thinking inspired many. People called him Loknayak (hero of the people). He played an important role in India's freedom struggle.



Great Artists

Bismillah Khan was an amazing shehnai player, whose ancestors were musicians in the royal courts of Bihar. He made the shehnai popular.



Ganga Devi was believed to be a pioneer of the Madhubani style of painting. She was a folk painter but brought a contemporary touch to this classical style of painting.



Thank You