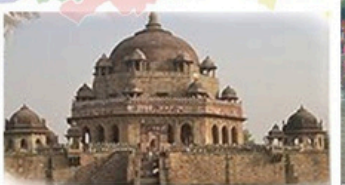


BPSC

Bihar Special History

One-Stop Guidebook for Quick Revision

BIHAR



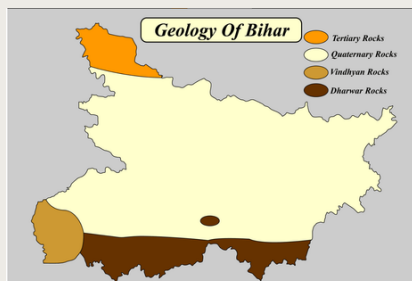
Origin and Geography of Bihar

Etymology (Origin of the Name)

- The word "Bihar" is derived from the Sanskrit and Pali word "**Vihara**" meaning "monastic complex" or resting places of Buddhist monks.
- These Viharas were Buddhist monasteries that served as shelters for monks, places for **meditation, religious learning, and spiritual practice**, often constructed as cave or stone complexes.
- Bihar earned its name due to the abundance of these Buddhist Viharas historically spread across the region, especially during and after the time of **Gautama Buddha (6th century BCE)**.
- It was Muslim rulers in the 12th century CE who popularized the term "Bihar" to describe this land of many Viharas and monasteries or "**the land dotted with monasteries.**"
- The existence of monastic complexes from the Mauryan period (3rd century BCE) to later dynasties like the **Pala Empire** reinforced Bihar's identity as a hub of Buddhist religious activity and education.
- Famous ancient Viharas in or near Bihar included **Nalanda, Vikramshila, Somapura, Odantapura, and Jagaddala**, which were centers of learning and pilgrimage.

Geography of Bihar

- Bihar is geographically located in the fertile Indo-Gangetic plains in eastern India, making it one of the agriculturally richest states.
- The state is characterized by a network of major rivers—the **Ganges, Gandak, Kosi, and Son**—which play a pivotal role in agriculture, cultural life, and settlement patterns.
- The state is broadly divided into **three historic and cultural regions**, each with its own distinct identity:



Magadh (Southwest Bihar)

- Known as the cradle of two major empires — the **Mauryan and Gupta Empires**.
- It encompasses the ancient capitals of **Rajgir, Pataliputra (modern-day Patna), Nalanda, and Bodh Gaya** (where Buddha attained enlightenment).
- The region witnessed major developments in political administration, religion, and education.

Mithila (Northeast Bihar and adjoining Terai of Nepal)

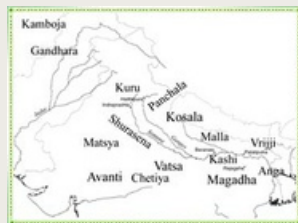
- A historic center of Vedic learning and culture; famous for the Janakpur tradition associated with **King Janaka and Goddess Sita from the Ramayana**.
- Fertile land nurtured agricultural prosperity and rich literary and philosophical traditions.

Bhojpur (West-central Bihar)

- Known for its rich folk culture, dialects, and resistance movements against colonial and feudal powers.
- It has a distinct identity reflected in the language Bhojpuri and its social history.

Role of Rivers and Physical Features

- The Ganga River flows through Bihar and acts both as a natural resource and a cultural backbone, supporting agriculture, industry, and pilgrimage sites such as **Varanasi and Bodh Gaya**.
- Tributaries like the **Gandak (originating from Nepal's Himalayas)** contribute to the rich alluvial soil and irrigation potential but also carry flood risks.
- The Kosi River, termed the "**Sorrow of Bihar**," is notorious for frequent floods changing course and causing damage to farmlands and settlements.
- The Son River flows through the southern part of the state and, combined with the Damodar, flows into the Ganges, enriching the region's mineral and agricultural landscape.





Prehistoric and Stone Age Sites in Bihar



Palaeolithic Period (Old Stone Age)



- **Characteristics:** Tool-making by hunter-gatherers using rough stone implements such as hand axes and choppers.
- **Notable Sites**
 - **Munger:** Important site with quartzite tools representing early human activity.
 - **Nalanda:** Stone tools discovered indicating human presence in the riverine environment.
 - **Banargarh (Kharagpur hills, Munger district):** A significant Palaeolithic site showing cultural transitions between Acheulian and Upper Palaeolithic phases.
 - **Paisra (Munger district):** Stone working site with finished and semi-finished tools; evidence of transient hunter-gatherer camps.
- **Significance:** These sites mark the earliest human occupation in Bihar, adapting to forested, riverine environments in the Indo-Gangetic plains.

Mesolithic Period (Middle Stone Age, 10,000–8,000 BCE)



- Characteristics:** Use of refined microlithic tools made of flint and chert; evidence of hunting, fishing, and gathering.
- **Notable Sites:**
 - **Santhal Pargana (Jharkhand):** Rich in microlithic tools, shows shift towards semi-settled living.
 - **Hazaribagh, Ranchi, Singhbhum (Jharkhand):** Concentrations of microlithic sites indicating technological improvements.
 - **Paisra (Munger):** Transition of Palaeolithic to Mesolithic culture; evidence of seasonal migration and fire use.
 - **Significance:** Marks transition to organized hunting, fishing, primitive food production, and early settlement patterns.

Neolithic Period (New Stone Age, 2500–1500 BCE)



- **Characteristics:** Beginning of settled agriculture, domestication of animals, pottery, and polished stone tools.
- **Major Sites:**
 - **Chirand (Saran District):** The most prominent Neolithic site; discovered rice cultivation, domesticated animals (cattle, buffalo), bone tools, handmade and painted pottery.
 - **Chechar (Vaishali District):** Semi-permanent village settlement with early evidence of cultivated crops and domestic animals.
 - **Senuwar (Rohtas), Maner (Patna), Barudih (Singhbhum):** Sites with Neolithic cultural layers showing early farming.
- **Significance:** These sites illustrate the agricultural revolution in eastern India and the rise of village life and complex societies

Chalcolithic Period (Copper Age, 1500–700 BCE)

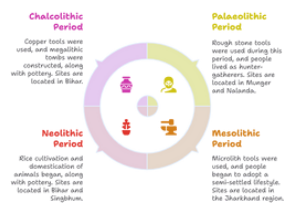


- **Characteristics:** Use of copper tools along with stone implements; advanced pottery; beginnings of metal use prior to Iron Age.

Key Sites:

- **Taradih (near Bodh Gaya):** Domestic structures with evidence of copper tools and black-and-red ware pottery.
- **Chirand:** Stratified deposits showing Chalcolithic cultural phases, copper tools, and advanced pottery techniques.
- **Chechar and Vaishali:** Continued Chalcolithic occupation dual-layered with pottery and copper artifacts.
- **Rohtas and Kaimur Hills:** Megalithic cultural sites with stone pillars and tombs linked to Iron Age transitions.
- **Significance:** Reflects cultural sophistication, community evolution, and technological progress toward metal use.

Archaeological Periods in Bihar



Period	Notable Sites	Key Features	Location
Palaeolithic	Munger, Nalanda, Banargarh, Paisra	Rough stone tools, hand axes, hunter-gatherers	Munger, Nalanda (Bihar)
Mesolithic	Santhal, Hazaribagh, Singhbhum	Pargana, Ranchi, Microolith tools, semi-settled lifestyle	Jharkhand region
Neolithic	Chirand, Senuwar, Barudih	Chechar, Maner, Rice cultivation, domestication, pottery	Bihar (Singhbhum, Jharkhand)
Chalcolithic	Taradih, Chirand, Chechar, Rohtas, Kaimur Hills	Chirand, Vaishali, Copper megalithic pottery, tools, tombs,	Bihar



BIHAR

Historical Overview of Bihar

Quick Facts

- First CM of Bihar
- First Dy. CM
- Capital Shifted
- Bihar Separated from Bengal
- JP Movement



Ancient Bihar

- Mahajanapadas
- Magadh Empire
- Key Dynasties
- Religions

Bihar



Modern Bihar

- 1857 Revolt
- Indigo Movement
- Champaran Satyagraha
- Bihar Provincial Congress Committee

Social & Political Movements

- Wahabi Movement
- Home Rule League
- Kisan Sabhas
- Bihar Socialist Party



Medieval Bihar

- Delhi Sultanate & Mughals
- Sher Shah Suri

Empowering Minds, Excelling in IAS

Aryan Migration & Early Vedic References

Aryan Movement Eastward (~1000–600 BCE)

- The Indo-Aryan migration is understood as a gradual movement of Indo-European-speaking tribes from the Eurasian steppes (Pontic-Caspian region) through Central Asia into northern India during circa 2000–1500 BCE, reaching the Ganges basin around 1000–600 BCE.
- This migration was peaceful and slow, involving multiple waves, with Indo-Aryans integrating with indigenous cultures rather than a sudden invasion.
- Genetic, linguistic, and archaeological studies support this migration theory, showing a diffusion of Indo-Aryan languages and cultural traits into the Indian subcontinent.
- Sites in the Upper Gangetic plain and Bihar show continuity of cultural developments alongside Aryan settlements (e.g., Cemetery H culture linked with Ochre Colored Pottery).
- The presence of Ochre Colored Pottery (OCP) culture is often associated with these early Indo-Aryan populations in eastern India.

Textual Mentions in Early Vedic Literature

- Satapatha Brahmana:** One of the Later Vedic Sanskrit prose texts mentions prominent places in Bihar such as Gaya and Purnpun, signifying their sacredness during the Vedic period.
- Varah Purana,** a later Puranic text, refers to Rajgir (ancient Girivraja) as a sacred city, associating it with religious significance and royal prominence.
- The Rigveda,** while composed in the northwest of India, hints at gradual eastward expansion toward the Gangetic plains, where more complex religious rituals and philosophical ideas developed in the later Vedic period.

Cultural and Religious Importance of Eastern India

- Eastern India, particularly Bihar and the Gangetic plains, became the heartland for the Later Vedic culture, with increased emphasis on sacrificial rituals (yajnas), philosophical ideas, and social stratification (varna system).
- This region fostered significant religious developments leading to the rise of Buddhism and Jainism, which challenged Vedic orthodoxy by promoting spiritual egalitarianism and non-violence.
- The Magadha kingdom (in Bihar) became a powerful polity instrumental in the spread of these religions and Vedic cultural practices.
- Archaeological evidence from this region shows evolving pottery styles, early iron use, and settlement patterns contemporary with later Vedic texts.

Examples and Archaeological Correlates

- Gaya and Rajgir (Magadh region, Bihar): Continuously referenced as sacred sites in Vedic and Puranic literature; archaeological sites reveal ancient urban settlements with temples and ritual structures.
- Punpun river region: Mentioned in Vedic texts, also linked to ritual practices.
- Sites exhibiting Ochre Colored Pottery (OCP) culture such as Chirand and Chechar in Bihar reflect material culture contemporaneous with Later Vedic period.
- The Gangetic plains witnessed gradual transition from tribal polities to more structured kingdoms like Kuru, Panchala, Magadha, matching textual evidence of Aryan political entities.

Keywords to Remember

Topic	Details
Aryan migration	Gradual eastward movement (~1000–600 BCE)
Satapatha Brahmana	Mentions Gaya and Punpun
Varah Purana	Refers to sacred city Rajgir
Later Vedic rituals	Yajnas, Varna system, philosophical growth
Magadha kingdom	Emerged as a political and religious hub
Ochre Colored Pottery (OCP)	Archaeological culture linked to Aryan settlements
Expansion of Indo-Aryan culture	Spread from northwest India to Gangetic plains & Bihar



KEY EXAM POINTS

- Indo-Aryan Migration:** Gradual movement of Indo-European-speaking Aryans into northern India between 2000–1500 BCE, settling in the Indus Valley and later into the Gangetic plains (including Bihar) by ~1000–600 BCE.
- Original Homeland Theories:** Proposed origins include the Pontic-Caspian steppes (Central Asia) and Russian steppes; contentious among scholars.
- Arya Meaning:** Sanskrit word "Arya" means "noble" or "cultured", used by Rigvedic people as self-identifier.
- Language:** Aryans spoke early forms of Sanskrit, part of the Indo-Iranian branch of Indo-European languages.
- Migration Routes:** Entered Indian subcontinent through Khyber Pass, spreading eastward into Punjab, Haryana, western Uttar Pradesh, and eventually eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

Textual Sources:

- Satapatha Brahmana:** Mentions eastern sacred sites—Gaya, Punpun.
- Varah Purana:** Highlights Rajgir (Girivraja) as a sacred place.
- Cultural Transition:** Eastern India became the center for Later Vedic culture, marked by ritual evolution and early social organization (e.g., varna system).

Archaeological Evidence in Bihar:

- Presence of Ochre Colored Pottery (OCP) culture** at sites like Chirand and Chechar, linked to Aryan settlements.
- Early Iron Age** settlements linked to Magadha kingdom emergence.
- Religious Significance:** Development of complex Vedic rituals (Yajnas) in Bihar, laying groundwork for Buddhism and Jainism.
- Political Expansion:** Aryans established kingdoms like Kosala, Videha (Mithila), and Magadha in Bihar and neighboring regions.
- Social Structure:** Introduction of varna-based society with increasing stratification; kingship systems evolved in these regions.

Mahajanapadas (6th Century BCE)



Magadha

- **Capital(s):** Initially Rajgir (Girivraja), later shifted to Pataliputra (modern Patna).
- **Powerful Rulers:** Bimbisara and Ajatshatru consolidated Magadha's territorial, military, and political might.
- **Empire Foundations:** Magadha laid the foundation for two major Indian empires — the Maurya Empire (Chandragupta Maurya) and later, the Gupta Empire, marking the rise of a centralized imperial state.
- **Religious Contributions:** Crucial role in the spread of Buddhism and Jainism; site for early Buddhist councils and patrons like King Bimbisara and Ajatshatru.
- **Economic Importance:** Access to fertile plains and mineral resources, control over trade routes enhanced Magadha's prosperity.

Anga

- **Capital:** Champa, a flourishing ancient port city and commercial hub along the Ganges.
- **Historical Mentions:** Referenced in the Atharvaveda, indicating its antiquity and cultural importance.
- **Relations:** Frequently at conflict with Magadha over regional dominance but also integral in trade between eastern India and Southeast Asia.
- **Cultural Significance:** Center for early religious and cultural developments in eastern India

Vajji Confederacy (Vajjika League)

- **Capital:** Vaishali, located in present-day Bihar, acclaimed as the world's first known republic.
- **Political Structure:** Comprised a confederation of eight clans or aristocratic families including the powerful Licchavis, Jnatikas, and Videhas.
- **Democratic Tradition:** Operated as an early ganasangha (aristocratic republic), where decisions were made collectively by an assembly rather than a single monarch.
- **Historical Importance:** Considered an inspiration for later republican and democratic forms of governance globally.
- **Decline:** Annexed by Magadha during Ajatshatru's reign following internal political fragmentation, but Vaishali remained significant in religious history as a Buddhist pilgrimage site.

Other Relevant Mahajanapadas

- **Kosala:** Capital at Shravasti; played key roles in Buddhist and Jain histories.
- **Kashi:** Centered at Varanasi; one of the oldest continuous inhabited cities globally, important in Hindu religious traditions.
- **Malla:** Comprised two confederacies; capitals at Kusinara and Pawa, prominent during the life of Buddha and Mahavira.

Mahajanapada	Capital(s)	Key Features	Significance
Magadha	Rajgir → Pataliputra	Powerful rulers; rise of Maurya & Gupta Empires	Political & religious hub; patron of Buddhism & Jainism
Anga	Champa	Ancient port, active trade hub; mentioned in Atharvaveda	Economic & cultural gateway to eastern India
Vajji Confederacy	Vaishali	Early republic with 8 clans; democratic assembly	Prototype of republican governance
Kosala	Shravasti	Wealthy kingdom with Buddhist & Jain heritage	Major religious & political influence
Kashi	Varanasi	One of the world's oldest cities; Hindu religious center	Considered spiritual capital of Hinduism
Malla	Kusinara, Pawa	Two republican confederacies	Deeply associated with Buddhism (Mahaparinirvana of Buddha) & Jainism



Do You Know?

- Mahajanapada means "Great Kingdom", referring to emerging large states by the 6th century BCE.
- This era marks the Second Urbanization in India, with growth of cities like Rajgir, Pataliputra, Vaishali, and Champa.
- Introduction of iron tools in agriculture and warfare led to surplus production and political centralization.
- Most Mahajanapadas were monarchies, but some like Vajji (Vaishali), Malla, and Kuru were early republics (Gana Sanghas) with assemblies.
- The Vajji Confederacy, based in Vaishali, is considered the world's earliest republic, inspiring democratic ideas.
- Magadha became the most powerful Mahajanapada, leading to the Maurya and Gupta empires.
- The period saw flourishing trade, use of coinage, fortifications, and major religious movements like Buddhism and Jainism.
- Champa (Anga) was a key trade port, connecting India with Southeast Asia.
- Mahajanapadas shaped India's political organization, urban culture, and religious evolution.
- Buddhist and Jain texts such as the Anguttara Nikaya and Bhagavati Sutra mention the sixteen Mahajanapadas, highlighting their historical importance.



Pre-Mauryan Dynasties of Magadha

Brihadratha Dynasty

- Earliest known dynasty of Magadha, reputed to have ruled from around 1700 BCE according to some traditions, though historical evidence mainly starts later.
- **Capital:** Rajgir (Girivraja)—well-fortified and surrounded by hills, making it naturally defensive.
- **Notable kings:** Brihadratha (founder), Jarasandha (prominent figure in Mahabharata, powerful contemporary of Yudhishtira and Krishna).
- **Legacy:** Often viewed as setting the foundation for Magadha's later dominance.

Shishunaga Dynasty (c. 413–345 BCE)

- **Founder:** Shishunaga—originally a viceroy at Varanasi, later became king of Magadha.
- **Ended the century**—old rivalry with Avanti (defeated Avanti once and for all).
- Shifted capital from Rajgir to Pataliputra, recognizing its geographical benefits for trade, governance, and defense.
- **Kalasoka (son):** presided over Second Buddhist Council (Vaishali, c. 383 BCE), showing Magadha's centrality in Buddhist affairs.
- **Shishunaga dynasty** strengthened by incorporating many small kingdoms into Magadha.



Haryanka Dynasty (c. 544–413 BCE)

Founder: Bimbisara (ruled c. 544–492 BCE)

- Expanded territory through conquests and strategic matrimonial alliances (married Kosala princess, Lichchhavi princess, and Chellana of Vaishali).
- Annexed Anga, gaining access to eastern trade routes and the port of Champa.
- Established the system of standing army and effective administration.
- Contemporary of Gautama Buddha and Mahavira; supported Buddhist Sangha.

Nanda Dynasty (c. 345–321 BCE)

- **Founder:** Mahapadma Nanda—first non-Kshatriya ("Shudra dynasty") ruler, called "Ekarat" ("sole sovereign") for eliminating all contemporary Kshatriya dynasties.
- Created a vast, unified empire by annexing many neighboring Mahajanapadas.
- Famous for its enormous standing army: according to Greek accounts, had 200,000 infantry, 20,000 cavalry, 2,000 chariots, and 3,000 elephants.
- **Administration:** Highly centralized and wealthy; built huge state treasuries.
- **Dhana Nanda** (last Nanda):
 - Contemporary of Alexander's invasion; his unpopularity and oppressive taxation led to widespread resentment.
 - Overthrown by Chandragupta Maurya and Chanakya, marking the end of Pre-Mauryan rule and the start of the Mauryan Empire.

Ajatshatru (ruled c. 492–460 BCE)

- Known for fratricide and imprisonment of his father, Bimbisara.
- Fought prolonged wars with Vajji Confederacy (Vaishali) and Kashi.
- Expanded Magadha westwards – used war engines like Mahashilakantaka (stone-throwing machines).
- Patronized the First Buddhist Council (483 BCE) at Rajgir after Buddha's Mahaparinirvana.

Udayin (son of Ajatshatru)

- Founded Pataliputra at the confluence of Ganga and Son for strategic reasons; later became capital of Maurya and Gupta empires.

Exam Pointers

- Magadha's rise aided by fertile plains, iron ore (Rajgir, Gaya), proximity to trade routes, and systematic administration.
- **Capitals shifted:** Rajgir (Brihadratha, Haryanka) → Pataliputra (Udayin, Shishunaga, Nanda, Maurya, Gupta).
- Magadha's dynasties played crucial roles in Buddhist and Jain histories, patronizing key Councils.
- Nandas expanded Magadha's territory and military strength, creating the political setting for the Mauryan age.



Bimbisara
544 BC - 492 BC





Buddhism & Jainism in Bihar Buddhism

BUDDHISM IN BIHAR

- **Bodh Gaya:** The site where Gautama Buddha attained enlightenment under the Bodhi tree after 49 days of meditation; recognized as the most sacred pilgrimage for Buddhists globally.
- **Rajgir:** Buddha spent several rainy seasons here; site of the First Buddhist Council held at Saptaparni Cave, presided by Mahakassapa, shortly after Buddha's death.
- **Vaishali:** Venue of the Second Buddhist Council, critical for settling monastic disputes and Buddhist canon formation; Buddha visited frequently and initiated the first order of Buddhist nuns here.
- **Nalanda University:** Founded in the 5th century CE; world's first fully residential university and a renowned Buddhist learning center. Attracted scholars like Hiuen Tsang from China and produced illustrious teachers (Nagarjuna, Dharmapala).
- **Vikramshila University:** Established by Dharmapala (Pala dynasty, 8th century CE) near Bhagalpur; second only to Nalanda in fame; specialized in Tantric Buddhism.
- **Other Sites:** Ancient Buddhist remains at Lauria Nandangarh, Vaishali, and Kesaria Stupa.
- **Ashoka's Role:** Emperor Ashoka of Magadha embraced Buddhism after the Kalinga war. He built the Mahabodhi temple at Bodh Gaya and sent missionaries (including his children, Mahendra and Sanghamitra) to Sri Lanka, Southeast Asia, and beyond—helping Buddhism become a world religion.
- **Cultural Impact:** Bihar was a continuous center for Buddhist art, architecture (stupas, viharas), and monastic tradition for over a millennium.

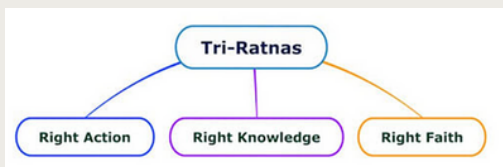
JAINISM IN BIHAR

- **Mahavira:** 24th Tirthankara of Jainism, born in Kundagrama near Vaishali (599 BCE); he attained Kevalajnana (omniscience) in Bihar and preached across the region.
- **Core Doctrines:** Advocated Ahimsa (non-violence), Satya (truth), Aparigraha (non-possessiveness), Asteya (non-stealing), and Brahmacharya (celibacy) as the fivefold path to liberation.
- **Sangha Formation:** Mahavira reorganized the Jain community and the ascetic order (Shvetambara and Digambara traditions later emerged).
- **Pawapuri:** Site where Mahavira attained Nirvana (death/liberation); his Samadhi is marked by the famous Jal Mandir in Bihar, a major Jain pilgrimage.
- **First Jain Council:** Held at Pataliputra (3rd century BCE, during the Nanda dynasty); Jain scriptures (Angas) were compiled here under Stulabhadra.
- **Jain Heritage:** Bihar contains numerous ancient Jain relics, caves (Barabar hills), temples (Pawapuri, Rajgir), and archaeological remains, reflecting the region's central role in the early Jain faith.
- **Social Impact:** Jain principles influenced Bihar's social fabric and fostered a rich tradition of debate, tolerance, and non-violence.

ADDITIONAL EXAM-ORIENTED FACTS

- Both Buddhism and Jainism arose as reformist movements against orthodox Vedic rituals in Bihar's fertile and prosperous Magadha region.
- Bihar remains a core part of both religions' pilgrimage circuits (Bodh Gaya, Rajgir, Vaishali, Pawapuri, etc.).
- Both religions advocated spiritual equality and renunciation, attracting support from different social classes.
- Major councils that defined scripture and monastic discipline for both faiths were convened in Bihar.
- Bihar's sites enjoy UNESCO World Heritage status (e.g., Mahabodhi Temple at Bodh Gaya, Nalanda ruins), underscoring global recognition.

Council	Where	When	What
The First	Near Rajgir (Kajagaha)	483 BCE (Immediately after the Buddha's death)	500 Ahimsa were in attendance, and an elder monk, Maha Kassapa was elected to run the council. This first council set the structure for proceedings of future councils, and involved reciting and collecting the sermons of the Buddha.
The Second	Vesali	383 BCE	Called by a monk named Vesali. Vesali had seen a group of monks performing 10 illicit practices and he wished to resolve the matters. 700 monks were in attendance, and they debated the illicit practices, condemning all of them and in doing so, reaffirming the correct practices of the Sangha.
The Third	Pataliputra	232 BCE	1000 monks, from 18 different schools were in attendance. They gathered to discuss and clarify the Buddhist orthodox doctrine, and the spread of the Buddha Dharma into India. As a result of the council, Dharma missions spread to other Asian islands including Sri Lanka.
The Fourth	Kashmir	1 st Century CE	499 Buddhist monks were in attendance, from the Theravada and Mahayana sects. Once again, the Buddha's teachings were recited and a new monastic rule was established, with the debates recorded.



Mauryan Empire (321–185 BCE)



- **Founder:** Established by Chandragupta Maurya under the guidance of Chanakya (Kautilya) around 322 BCE after overthrowing the Nanda dynasty.
- **Capital:** Pataliputra (modern-day Patna), which became the political and administrative center of the empire.
- **Expansion and Administration:** Chandragupta consolidated a vast territory spanning from Afghanistan in the northwest to Bengal in the east and the Deccan plateau in the south. The empire had a well-organized bureaucracy, a vast standing army, and a network of spies.
- **Infrastructure and Economy:** The Mauryan rulers built extensive road networks (notably connecting Pataliputra to other regions), established irrigation and mining projects, and standardized a currency system facilitating internal and external trade. The economy flourished with active trade including with the Hellenistic world via treaties like that with Seleucus I.
- **Ashoka the Great (Reign: c. 268–232 BCE)**
 - Early military campaigns expanded the empire, including the conquest of **Kalinga (~261 BCE)**, which caused massive destruction and loss of life.
 - Profoundly impacted by the bloodshed, Ashoka embraced Buddhism, abandoning further military conquests.
 - Promoted the Dhamma policy emphasizing non-violence, moral governance, religious tolerance, and social welfare.
 - Convened the Third Buddhist Council at Pataliputra to organize the Buddhist teachings.
 - Issued numerous Rock and Pillar Edicts across the empire, many found in Bihar, propagating ethical living and administrative policies.
 - Sponsored construction of hospitals, roads, rest houses, and animal welfare measures.
 - Sent Buddhist missionaries to Sri Lanka, Southeast Asia, and Central Asia, aiding Buddhism's global spread.
- **Cultural and Diplomatic Relations:** Maintained diplomatic ties with Greek states, initiated cultural exchanges enriching Indian civilization.
- **Decline:** After Ashoka's death (~232 BCE), the empire weakened under his successors, leading to fragmentation and the eventual end of Mauryan rule by circa 185 BCE.
- **Legacy:** The Mauryan Empire laid the foundation for centralized governance, imperial administration, and promoted ethical statecraft influencing subsequent Indian empires.

Sources for the Mauryan Period

Literary Sources

- **Kautilya's Arthashastra** – Detailed treatise on polity, economy, administration, espionage, and statecraft.
- **Megasthenes' Indica** – Account by the Greek ambassador at Chandragupta Maurya's court; provides information on administration, society, and economy.
- **Buddhist Texts** – Divyavadana and Ashokavadana highlight Ashoka's policies and Buddhist influence.
- **Sri Lankan Chronicles** – Mahavamsa and Dipavamsa narrate the spread of Buddhism under Ashoka.
- **Puranas** – Provide lists of Mauryan kings and genealogies.

Epigraphical Sources

- **Ashokan Inscriptions** – Rock Edicts and Pillar Edicts across the subcontinent, recording Ashoka's Dhamma, administration, and policies.

Archaeological Sources

- Remains at **Bulandi Bagh & Kumrahar (Pataliputra)** – Evidence of Mauryan capital's grandeur and administrative centres.
- **Stupas & Monuments** – Sanchi, Sarnath, Bharhut, and other Buddhist monuments constructed or enhanced under Ashoka.



MEDIEVAL BIHAR



BAKHTIYAR KHILJI (1200 CE)

- Turkish general under Qutb-ud-din Aibak (Slave Dynasty).
- Destroyed ancient universities of Nalanda, Vikramshila, and Odantapuri, leading to a massive intellectual decline in Bihar.
- Established his base at Bakhtiyarpur (near Patna).
- Conquered Bengal, making Bihar a strategic gateway to eastern India.

Significance

- Marked the end of Bihar's ancient scholastic centers.
- Beginning of Islamic rule in Bihar.

SHER SHAH SURI (1540–1545 CE)

- Born as Farid Khan Sur in Sasaram (Bihar).
- Defeated Humayun at the Battle of Chausa (1539 CE) and Battle of Kannauj (1540 CE).
- Founded the Sur Dynasty with Delhi as capital.



Major Contributions

- Constructed the Grand Trunk Road from Bengal to Peshawar, still in use today.
- Introduced a uniform and efficient land revenue system (measured land, fixed state share).
- Standardized currency system: issued silver "Rupiya" – the precursor of modern Rupee.
- Developed postal system with sarais (rest houses) along highways.
- Built Sher Shah's Mausoleum at Sasaram – a masterpiece of Indo-Islamic architecture.

Significance

- Considered a forerunner of Mughal administrative reforms.
- His policies influenced Akbar's land revenue system (Todar Mal's reforms).

MUGHAL PERIOD (16TH–18TH CENTURY CE)

- Bihar became a subah (province) of the Mughal Empire under Akbar.
- Patna emerged as a major center of trade, dealing in saltpeter, cotton, and indigo.
- European traders (Dutch, English, French) established factories in Patna during the 17th century.
- Under Aurangzeb, Patna was renamed Azimabad, after Prince Azim-us-Shan (Aurangzeb's grandson and governor of Bihar).



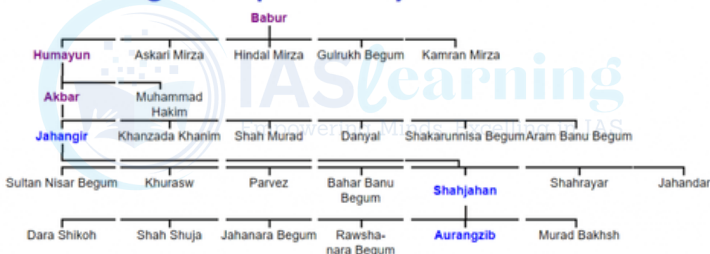
Notable Developments

- Patna became famous for Mughal miniature paintings and handicrafts.
- Bihar was an important military and economic zone due to its location between Bengal and Delhi.
- Decline of Mughal power led to rise of regional forces and increasing influence of European traders.

Quick Revision Summary

- **Bakhtiyar Khilji** → Beginning of medieval Bihar, destruction of ancient learning centers.
- **Sher Shah Suri** → Bihar's greatest medieval ruler, introduced administrative, economic, and architectural reforms.
- **Mughal Period** → Bihar became a trade hub, with Patna (Azimabad) flourishing under Mughal and later European influence.

Mughal Empire Family Tree





MODERN BIHAR UNDER BRITISH RULE



ADMINISTRATIVE DEVELOPMENTS

- Part of Bengal Presidency till 1912, later separated as a distinct province with Patna as its capital.
- In 1912, the provinces of Bihar and Orissa were carved out of Bengal; later in 1936, Bihar and Orissa were separated.
- Patna emerged as the administrative and educational hub of colonial Bihar.

ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION

- **Cash Crops for Export**
 - **Indigo Plantations:** European planters exploited peasants (ryots) under the tinkathia system, forcing them to grow indigo instead of food crops.
 - **Saltpetre Trade:** Bihar's saltpetre was a major export, especially controlled by the Dutch and later the British.
 - **Opium Trade:** Bihar became a major center for opium production, exported primarily to China.
- **Famine of 1770–71**
 - Caused by over-exploitation, heavy taxation, and failure of monsoons.
 - Around 10 million people died in Bengal and Bihar.
- Drain of wealth through revenue extraction, trade monopoly, and export of raw materials.

EUROPEAN TRADERS IN BIHAR

- **Portuguese:** First Europeans to establish trade in Bihar.
- **Dutch (VOC):** Controlled the saltpetre trade in Patna and Bihar Sharif.
- **French & Danes:** Limited presence in Patna, engaged in indigo and textile trade.
- Eventually, British East India Company gained monopoly after the **Battle of Buxar (1764)**.

POLITICAL & SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Battle of Buxar (1764)

- Fought near the town of Buxar (Bihar).
- British **East India Company** defeated Mir Qasim (Nawab of Bengal), Shuja-ud-Daula (Nawab of Awadh), and Shah Alam II (Mughal Emperor).
- **Consequence:** Strengthened British political control over Bengal, Bihar, and Odisha, paving the way for Diwani rights (1765) in these regions.

Santhal Rebellion (1855–56)

- Though centered in present-day Jharkhand, it directly affected colonial Bihar's administration.
- Led by Sidhu and Kanhu Murmu, the Santhals rose against exploitative zamindars, moneylenders, and British officials.
- Suppressed brutally, but highlighted tribal resistance against British policies.

Indigo Revolt (Neel Bidroha, 1860s)

- Farmers of Bihar resisted the forced cultivation of indigo by European planters.
- Sparked agrarian discontent; became one of the earliest peasant movements in colonial India.

Champaran Satyagraha (1917)

- Mahatma Gandhi's first satyagraha in India, held in Champaran (Bihar).
- Against the oppressive tinkathia system, where peasants were forced to cultivate indigo on a portion of their land.
- Gandhi's intervention mobilized peasants, leading to reforms and marking the beginning of mass nationalist movements in India.

Other Peasant and Tribal Movements

- **Kisan Sabha Movement (1920s–30s):** Spread in Bihar under Sahajanand Saraswati, focusing on peasant rights, abolition of zamindari, and fair rent.
- **Quit India Movement (1942):** Bihar was a major center; people actively resisted British rule. Leaders like Jayaprakash Narayan, Ram Manohar Lohia, and others played a key role.
- **Chauri-Chaura incident's after-effect:** Though in UP, it influenced Bihar's Congress units to rethink violent strategies.
- **Women's participation:** Women like Rajkumari Amrit Kaur and local activists in Bihar mobilized rural masses against British rule.



ROLE IN INDIAN FREEDOM MOVEMENT – BIHAR



1857 Revolt – The First War of Independence

- Bihar emerged as a crucial center of resistance during the revolt.
- Kunwar Singh of Jagdishpur, a zamindar, became one of the tallest leaders of the revolt at the age of 80.
- Despite limited resources, he waged a guerilla struggle against the British.
- Other notable leaders: Amar Singh (Kunwar Singh's brother), Babu Veer Kunwar Singh's associates, Sheikh Paltu.

Champaran Satyagraha (1917)

- Mahatma Gandhi's first mass movement in India was launched in Champaran, Bihar.
- Against the Tinkathia system, where peasants were forced to cultivate indigo on a part of their land under exploitative conditions.
- Gandhi's leadership here gave rise to non-violent mass mobilization in India.
- Rajendra Prasad and Mazhar-ul-Haq played key supporting roles.

Peasant Movements

- Led by Swami Sahajanand Saraswati, who founded the Bihar Provincial Kisan Sabha (1929).
- Movement expanded into the All India Kisan Sabha (1936).
- Focused on peasant rights, abolition of zamindari, and land reforms.
- Strong base for later socialist and agrarian movements.

Tribal and Regional Uprisings

- **Santhal Rebellion (1855–56):** Though centered in present-day Jharkhand, had a direct impact on Bihar's colonial administration.
- **Munda Ulgulan (1899–1900):** Birsa Munda led the tribal resistance that influenced the nationalist consciousness in Bihar's tribal belt.

Participation in Major National Movements

- **Non-Cooperation Movement (1920–22):** Students, peasants, and workers of Bihar actively participated.
- **Civil Disobedience Movement (1930–34):** Salt satyagraha saw widespread participation in Bihar.
- **Quit India Movement (1942):** Bihar became one of the most militant centers.
 - Patna Secretariat was attacked and set on fire by students.
 - JP Narayan escaped Hazaribagh jail to lead underground resistance.

Prominent Leaders from Bihar

- **Dr. Rajendra Prasad** – First President of India, key associate of Gandhi, prominent in Champaran Satyagraha and Constituent Assembly.
- **Jayaprakash Narayan (JP):** Socialist leader, led the Quit India Movement in Bihar, and later the Total Revolution Movement (1970s).
- **Maulana Mazhar-ul-Haq:** Nationalist leader, educationist, and prominent figure in the Khilafat and Non-Cooperation movements.
- **Anugrah Narayan Sinha:** Known as 'Bihar Vibhuti', a close associate of Rajendra Prasad and Gandhi.
- **Shri Krishna Sinha:** Prominent nationalist, later first Chief Minister of Bihar.

EXTRA FACTS FOR EXAMS

- **Sadaqat Ashram (Patna):** Established 1921, hub of nationalist activities.
- **Bihar Vidyapeeth (1921):** Founded by Rajendra Prasad for promoting national education.
- **Triveni Sangh Movement (1930s):** Social movement of backward castes in Bihar.
- **Patna College (1863):** One of the oldest institutions, produced nationalist leaders.
- **1942 Quit India in Bihar:** Azad Dasta, led by JP Narayan, launched guerrilla resistance.

OTHER IMPORTANT FACTS

- **Bihar Socialist Party (1934):** JP Narayan & Ram Manohar Lohia's socialist group.
- **Phulwari Sharif (Patna):** Important center for freedom fighters' secret meetings.
- **Bihar Legislative Council (1912):** One of the earliest provincial legislative councils.
- **Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose in Bihar:** Presided over 1928 Patna session of Bihar Congress Committee.
- **Bihar Earthquake (1934):** Gandhi called it "Nature's wrath against untouchability."

SOCIAL & POLITICAL MOVEMENTS IN BIHAR

Movement/Organisation	Time Period	Key Leaders/Supporters	Features/Significance
Wahabi Movement	1820s–1870s	Vilayati Ali, Inayat Ali; supported by locals in Patna & Arrah	Anti-British Islamic reform movement; aimed to restore Muslim rule; Patna became an
Santhal Rebellion	1855–56	Sidhu & Kanhu Murmu	Tribal uprising against British exploitation, moneylenders &
1857 Revolt in Bihar	1857	Kunwar Singh of Jagdishpur	One of the most prominent leaders of 1857; fought till death
Home Rule League	1916	Annie Besant, Tilak's league also influenced Bihar; Bihar unit under Mazhar-ul-Haq	Spread of constitutional demands, self-rule; created nationalist awakening in Bihar.
Champaran Satyagraha	1917	Mahatma Gandhi, Rajendra Prasad, J.B. Kripalani	Gandhi's first Satyagraha in India against indigo planters; marked beginning of
Anushilan Samiti & Revolutionary Activities	Early 20th century	Bengali revolutionaries; links with Patna & Muzaffarpur	Muzaffarpur (1908): Khudiram Bose & Prafulla Chaki's attack on British official (failed,
Congress Swarajists	1923 onwards	Rajendra Prasad, Sri Krishna Sinha	Opposed British rule from within legislatures; boycotts and political resistance.
Kisan Sabha Movement	1929 onwards	Swami Sahajanand Saraswati	Formation of Bihar Provincial Kisan Sabha (1929); mobilized peasants against
Triveni Sangh Movement	1930s	Leaders of Yadav, Kurmi, Koeri castes	Social-political mobilization of backward castes demanding social justice
Quit India Movement (Azad Dasta)	1942	Jayaprakash Narayan, Ram Manohar Lohia, Dr. Anugrah Narayan Sinha	Bihar became a centre of guerrilla resistance; JP escaped prison and led armed struggle
Bihar Socialist Party	1934 onwards	Jayaprakash Narayan, Ram Manohar Lohia, Acharya Narendra Dev	Advocated socialism, anti-imperialism; strong influence in post-independence Bihar
Total Revolution Movement (JP Movement)	1974–75	Jayaprakash Narayan	Movement against corruption, authoritarianism; mobilized students &