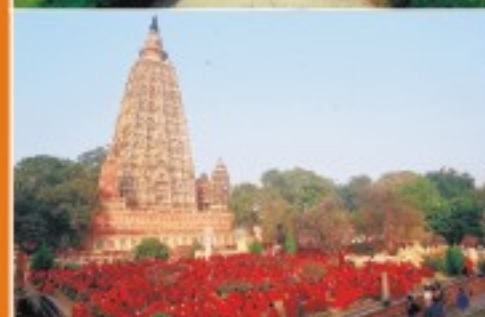
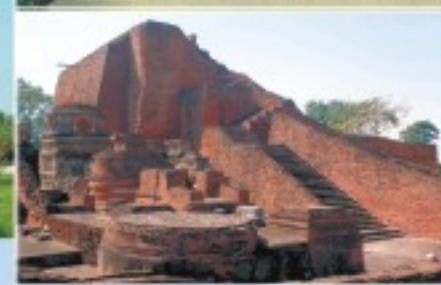
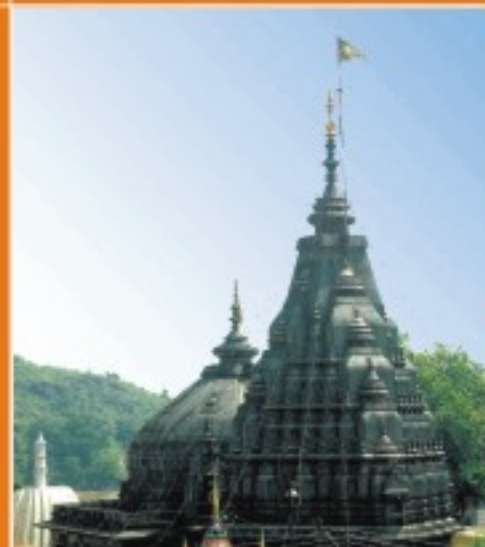




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बिहार सरकार

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Department of Tourism

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Website: www.discoverbihar.org.in


BIHAR
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Songs and musical instruments accompany folk dances for men and the footwork of the dancers is in tune with the swar and Tal of the music. Some of the dances, exclusively for women are Jhijhiya nach, Jata-Jatin nach, Sama- Chakwa nach, etc. The only mixed group dance is the Saturi dance of Mithila, apart from the mixed folk dances of the tribal people. In the family dance, called Bakho nach, the husband and wife

participate on the occasion of the birth of a child or on a similar joyous occasion.

Some communities have their own exclusive dances such as Chamar natua, Kanala Mai nach, Dampha-Basuli nach etc. In addition to these, there are also some other popular folk dance forms called Pamariya nach, Videshia nach, Kathputli nach, Launda nach and Dhobia nach.

Launda, Pamaria and Dhobia dances are popular in the Bhojpuri speaking areas of Bihar. Only males perform Launda and Pamaria nach. Boys dressed in woman costumes and guises are a must on the marriage and other auspicious occasions. Dhobia nach is a popular community dance form performed on marriages and other auspicious occasions in the washer men's society of Bhojpur.



Jharni dance is a Muslim community folk dance. Sad songs and depiction of grief and sorrow is the specialty of this dance form, which is performed on the eve of Muharram.

Bihar is situated in the eastern part of India. It is bound on the north by Nepal, on the east by West Bengal, on the west by Uttar Pradesh and on the south by the state of Jharkhand. The river Ganga, cutting straight across Bihar from west to east has rendered the region fertile and plentiful. The state has a population density of 880 per sq. km spread in 38 districts. The state covers an area of 94,164 sq km with a population of 82.87 million. Bihar is well connected by road, rail, air & inland waterways for cargo transport between Haldia & Patna.

Bihar: A Snapshot

Capital	Patna
Area	94,164 Sq. Km.
Population (2001)	82,878,796
Principal Languages	Hindi, Bhojpuri & Maithili
Urbanization Rate (2001)	10.47%

Climate

Bihar has a sub-tropical climate. Temperature varies from a maximum of 43°C in summer to a minimum of around 5°C in the winters. Relative humidity can go up to 100% during summer. It receives medium to heavy rainfall in the monsoon.

Physiography, Flora & Fauna

The entire state is part of the Ganga-Plain in North India. The plains are formed by the sediments deposited by the River Ganga, Gandak and Ghagra. The River Ganga divides Bihar into two physical divisions - the north Bihar Plain and the South Bihar Plain. The river system is the lifeline of the state.

History & Administration

The name 'Bihar' is derived from 'Vihara', meaning monastery. Bihar has been a great religious centre for Hindus, Jains and most importantly, the Buddhists. It was at Bodhgaya in Bihar, that the Buddha sat under the Bodhi tree, and attained enlightenment. A descendant of the same tree still flourishes in Bodhgaya today. Nalanda, which was a world renowned Buddhist University in the 5th century AD, is also located in Bihar. Rajgir, a pilgrimage place for Buddhists and Pawapuri where Lord Mahavira breathed his last is near Nalanda. Patna the capital of Bihar was known as Patliputra in ancient times and was home to one of the greatest monarchs in the history of the world, Ashoka, who ruled over much of the Indian Subcontinent. Ashoka's kingdom extended as far as Iran and Afghanistan in the West. Emperor Ashoka later preached "ahimsa" or non-violence and spread the message of Buddhism throughout the world. The tradition of "Ahimsa" has been carried into modern times and from Motihari in

Bihar sprung the "Satyagraha (or non-violence) Movement" of Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of our Nation. Bihar is the fascinating land of great religious leaders like Gautam Buddha, Lord Mahavir and Guru Gobind Singh.

Economy

Agriculture is the main stay of economy of Bihar. The principal food grains of Bihar are paddy, wheat, maize and pulses. Main cash crops include sugarcane, potato, tobacco, oilseeds, onion, chilies, jute and mesta.

Connectivity

Road: Bihar is well connected by roads. NH 30 and 31 connects, Gangtok, Varanasi, Lucknow, New Delhi and Calcutta. National Waterway No.1 used for cargo transport between Haldia and Patna.

Air: Air services connect Patna with Calcutta, Ranchi, Lucknow, Kanpur, Delhi, Guwahati, Ahmedabad, Allahabad and Katmandu. Vayudoot connects Patna with Jamshedpur, Gaya, Dhanbad and Calcutta.

Rail: The State is well connected through the railway network with the major cities of Calcutta, Delhi, Ranchi, Rajgir, Bombay, Varanasi, Jammu and Guwahati amongst other places.

Major tourist attractions

Bihar has a rich inventory of world class tourism resources, with a rich heritage of enormous history and natural resources which include:

- Buddhist Religious Places spread throughout the State with Bodhgaya being the place where Buddha attained supreme enlightenment. Other Places include Kesariya, Lauriya Areraj, Lauriya Nandangarh & Vaishali.
- Jain Religious Places of both sects with Jain Temples at Rajgir, Mandar Hill, Nawada, Pawapuri, Vaishali, Nalanda & other places with the potential to attract Jains from all over the world.
- Muslim Religious Places comprising of Tombs & Mosques at various places including Patna, Vaishali, Munger, Biharsharif Lakri Dargah & others.
- Legendary places associated with the Ramayan including Sitamarhi, Valmikinagar, Ahalya Asthan, Vaishali etc.
- Places associated with Mahatma Gandhi and the Independence struggle such as Motihari, Betia, Bhitharwa, Brindaban, Sadaquat Ashram & others.

Pirtapaksha Mela

Another unique ritual confined to Bihar is the Pind-daan performed by the Gayawals in Gaya. It is considered to be an obligation of all devout Hindus to visit this place after the death of their parents, a mandatory rite believed to bring salvation to the departed souls. Though the pind-daan can be performed almost any time of the year, people prefer to do it during Pitrapaksha, which is the period just before Navratri and generally falls in September.



Sonepur Mela

The cattle fair at Sonepur is very popular and is perhaps the largest of its kind anywhere in the world. Sonepur is located in Saran district in the northern part of Bihar. Three mighty rivers - the Ganga, Gandak, and Ghagra, demarcate this district, which is shaped like a triangle. Sonepur stands on the confluence of the Ganga and Gandak.



The Sonepur Fair is of great importance and during in the past attracted traders from as far as Central Asia.

Marriage Mart

In the summer month of June, the people of Mithila in the village of Saurath organize a unique marriage mart in a mango orchard. During this fair, parents whose children are of marriageable age come here and the Mithila Brahmins settle a record number of marriages during this time.

FOLK DANCES

The folk-dance tradition in Bihar has distinct streams.

The folk dances of Mithila are religious, social or sectarian. In the religious type, gods and goddesses are invoked through the dance, performed to the rhythm of folk songs and such musical instruments as the Dhol (drum), Pipahi (an instrument like the Shehnai), Pakhawaj and Danka. The Ram-Leela nach, Bhagat nach, Kirtaniya nach, Kunjawi nach, Naadi nach, Vidyapat nach and Puja Arti nach are all religious folk dances of Mithila.

WILD LIFE SANCTUARIES

- | | |
|--|--------------------|
| • Valmiki Sanctuary | West Champaran |
| • Bhimbandh Sanctuary | Monghyr district |
| • Rajgir Sanctuary | Rajgir district |
| • Kaimur Sanctuary | Sasaram district |
| • Udayapur Sanctuary | West Champaran |
| • Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary | Bhagalpur district |
| • Kabar Jheel Bird Sanctuary | Begusari district |
| • Gogabil Bird Sanctuary | Katihar district |
| • Sanjay Gandhi Biological Park, Patna | Patna district |
| • Nakti Dam Bird Sanctuary | Jamui district |
| • Nagi Dam Bird Sanctuary | Jamui district |

National Park

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| • Valmiki National Park | West Champaran |
|-------------------------|----------------|

FAIRS & FESTIVALS

True to the spirit of its multi religious heritage, Bihar celebrates many festivals of national and local appeal.

Chhath Puja Festival



Chhath Puja or the worship of the Sun God is unique to Bihar. The most popular site for the events of this festival is at the Sun Temple in Baragaon near Nalanda. Hundreds of thousands of people attend and offer paddy, sweets and fruits during worship.



Rajgir Dance Festival

Every year the Department of Tourism organizes the Rajgir Dance Festival, a colourful display of classical and folk dances at Rajgir.

The traditional Indian festivals of Ramnavmi, Dussehra, Diwali and Holi are also celebrated with great extravaganza in Bihar.

- Historical Places including 'Patna' earlier known as 'Pataliputra' which was the royal seat of governance of various kingdoms.
- Picturesque landscape along rivers of Ganges, Gandak, Ghaghara and Sone.
- Luxuriant greenery dotted with beautiful villages.
- Bird sanctuaries, Wildlife & National Parks including Kanwar Jheel Bird Sanctuary, Bhimbandh Sahnctuary, Nagi Dam Sanctuary, Goga Bill Bird Sanctuary, Gautam Buddha Sanctuary and Rajgir Sanctuary.
- Heritage monuments & Ruins such as Nalanda, Vikramsila and Kumrahar.
- Rich cultural heritage celebration of various fairs and festivals of tribes, and the local dances.
- A wide variety of flora and fauna.
- Rich in Arts and Crafts with exclusive Mithila Paintings of unmatched art and unique craftsmanship. The folk paintings are the works of women artists and are famous all over the world for their intricate designs & motifs.

Places of tourist attraction in the state can be broadly classified as:

- Places of Religious Importance and Archeological/Historical Sites
- Wildlife Sanctuaries and National Parks
- Adventure tourism
- Arts and Craft, Fairs & Festivals & Dances

Based on the above classifications the following tourist destination circuits have been established:

- Ramayan Circuit
- Islamic/Sufi Circuit
- Buddhist Circuit
- Jain/Tirthankar Circuit
- Gandhi Circuit
- Nature & Wildlife Circuit

Religious Tourist sites

The state has many places which are of historical importance. These places are of major religious significance for Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, Sikhs and Jains.

Ramayan Circuit



Bihar is an ancient land where the mythological King Janaka of Videha, Ramayan famed Maharishi Valmiki and Sita resided. Places in Bihar associated with legends of Shri Ram and Sita are:

PAINTINGS

The art of painting in Bihar might have developed during the Gupta period. Perhaps the Ajanta tradition of paintings might have been present in Bihar during the Gupta period. Artists of the Pala period evolved a new method of painting on manuscripts, which are commonly known as illustrated manuscripts.

MADHUBANI PAINTING

Unmatched art and unique craftsmanship find expression in each and every aspect of the life of the people of Bihar. The folk paintings of the women of Mithila are the exclusive monopoly of women artists. The Brahmins' and the Kshatriyas' pictorial style is known as MITHILA. Mithila paintings are famous the world over for their intricate designs and motifs. The origin of the Mithila painting seems very ancient, although it is impossible to exact its date of origin.



PATNA KALAM

The Patna School of Paintings or the Patna Kalam (the local style) as it is better known flourished for about two centuries in Bihar between 1760 A.D. and the early years of the 20th century. The style portrays mostly the scenes of everyday life of the people of Bihar, which retains the Indian traditions. These paintings are light coloured sketches and are admirably drawn and are life-like representations.

finds in the excavations of Kumhrar. Some of the old houses of Patna City still have carved pieces in their doors and windows.

POTTERY

Clay pottery has been used since ancient times as a medium of expression. The excavations of Kumhrar, Nalanda and Rajgir confirm this. The art of pottery was highly developed during the Mauryan and Gupta periods. The works of these master craftsmen are part of our rich heritage and have inspired the modern potters to improve their artistic



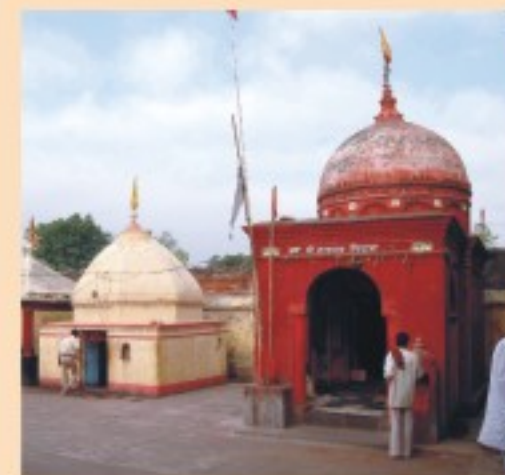
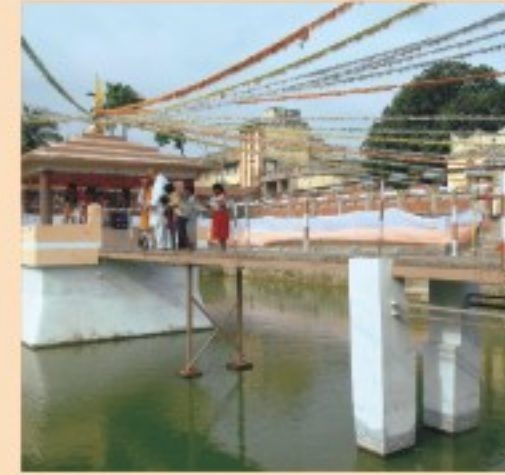
pattern. Potters all over the state manufacture earthen utensils and tiles. Some of them are capable of doing artistic painting on jugs. Potters of Patna are traditional artists for making statues of goddess Durga and Sarswati and other deities to meet the local demands on the occasions of Durga Puja, Basant Panchami and others.

BAMBOO WORK

Many members of a particular scheduled caste community earn their living through bamboo work. They manufacture baskets and other household wares. Basket making is carried on in many villages of the district as bamboos are generally available everywhere. Bamboo furniture pieces are also manufactured. Morhas is a common sight even in humble homes. Novel designs are constantly being evolved at the Institute of Industrial Designs, Patna where craftsmen keep themselves in touch with the changing tastes of customers.

SIKKI WORKS

Sikki is available in abundance in the diara areas of the Ganges and also in the beds of other rivers. Women manufacture artistic toys and wares out of it.



- Tar (Bhojpur District)
- Abirauli (Buxar District)
- Ram Rekha Ghat (Buxar District)
- Ahiari of Ahalya Asthan (Darbhanga District)
- Pretshila Hill (Gaya District)
- Gidheshwar (Jamui district)
- Kako (Jehanabad District)
- Singheshwar Asthan (Madhepura District)
- Phullahar (Madhubani District)
- Sita-Kund (Munger District)
- Sitamarhi (Nawada District)
- Rivilganj/Godna (Saran District)
- Janaki Temple (Sitamarhi District)
- Haleshwar Asthan (Sitamarhi District)
- Panth Pakar (Sitamarhi District)
- Ramchaura, Vaishali (Vaishali district)
- Balmikinagar (West Champaran District)
- Chankigarh (West Champaran District)
- Sitakund (East Champaran District).

Islamic/Sufi Circuit



Bihar was ruled by many Muslim governors during the Mughul period. Since then the state has been an active cultural center and an important seat of Muslim thought and learning. Bihar has many sacred shrines and tombs that give us a glimpse of the period. Some of the important places associated with Islamic and Sufi circuit are:

- Maner Sharif (Patna District)
- Khankah Muzibia, Fulwari Sharif (Patna District)
- Khankan Emadia, Mangal Talab, Patna (Patna District)
- Darga Sharif of Mittan Ghat, Patna (Patna District)

Bihar has a rich heritage of craftsmanship. Over the centuries, skills have been passed down from generation to generation. Though technology has caused slight variations in the crafts, they largely remain the same, as they were thousands of years ago. The handicrafts of Bihar present a synthesis of utilitarianisms, artistic beauty and emotional contents. The utilitarian aspect of the handicraft may be seen in the ancient stones, wooden structures, grass-clothes, lacquer and metal-wares.



for the manufacture of furniture. Highly artistic models were carved on simhasan (royal throne) and doors and panels of temples. In Patna district, wooden toys are still manufactured. Carpenters manufacture wheels of bullock-carts and also sugarcane crushers (kolhu). Danapur is a traditional seat for manufacture of furniture which still competes well with modern furniture due to their durability and low prices and forms an important item in the Somvari and Sonepur fair held every year in the months of Shraavan at Patna and Kartik at Sonepur. The artists have been quick to recognize the change in tastes of customers and the ornate style has now been simplified to conform to modern times. Many carpenters specialize in toy making of very high quality.

WOOD CARVING

The fine woodcarvings of Bihar are used as a decorative art. In Mauryan times, houses in this city were made mostly of wood and had carvings on them as has been confirmed from the

The craftsmen of Bihar specialized over the ages in creative activities and excelled in the manufacture of artistic goods, which were not only popular in local markets, but were also in great demand overseas. After the British domination of India from the late 18th century onward, the handicrafts died a slow death at the hands of the machine-made-foreign goods which flooded the local market under the shield of protections, and craftsmen gradually gave up their professions due to lack of patronage and ultimately sank to the lower levels of the society. However, the crafts that survived were those, which were strongly fastened to our religious and social rituals.

WOODEN WORK

In ancient times Magadh was famous

Arts & Crafts

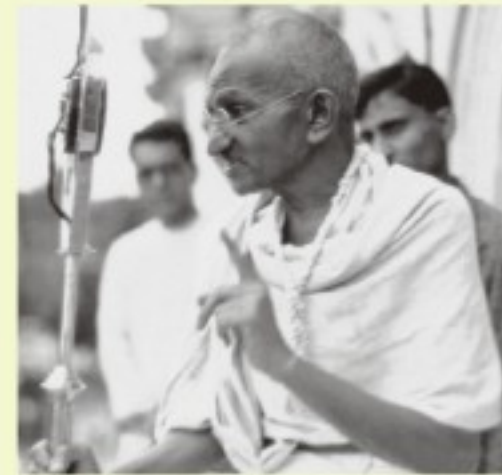
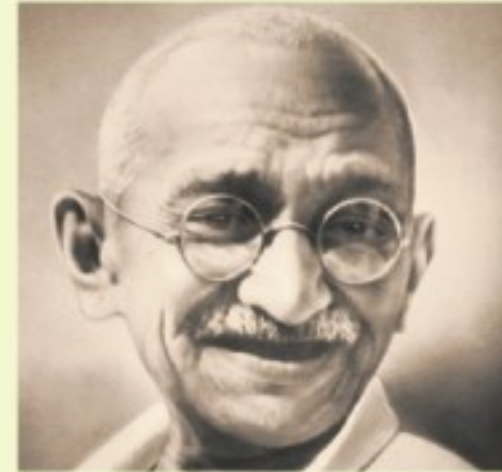


- Biharsharif (Nalanda District)
- Hajrat Jandaha (Vaishali District)
- Hajipur (Vaishali District)
- Karbala
- Serukahi (Vaishali District)
- Kanti (Muzaffarpur District)
- Saran Khas (Saran District)
- Hasanpura (Siwan District)
- Lakri Dargah (Gopalganj District)
- Goraul Sharif (Sitamarhi District)
- Masurhi (Bhojpur District)
- Kako (Jehanabad District)
- Pir Pahar (Munger District)
- Siris (Aurangabad District)
- Tombs:
 - Mamu Bhagana ki Kabar
 - Tomb of Bar Khurdar Aulia Shaheb
 - Tomb of Hafiz Barkhurdar
 - Tomb of Ruknuddin Shaheb
 - Tomb of Hazrat Maohiuddin alias Pir Damaria Shaheb
 - Tombs of Kamaluddin Shaheb
 - Tomb of Khaja Mahiuddin Chisti, disciple of Baba Fariduddin Gunj Shakar Multani
 - Tomb of Syed Haji
 - Tomb of Hazrat Jalaluddin Abdul
 - Tomb of Khaja Bhil
 - Tomb of Chandan Shahid (Rohtas District)
 - Tomb of Hasan Khan Suri (Rohtas District)
 - Tomb of Mulla Muhammad Said (Munger District)

Buddhist Circuit



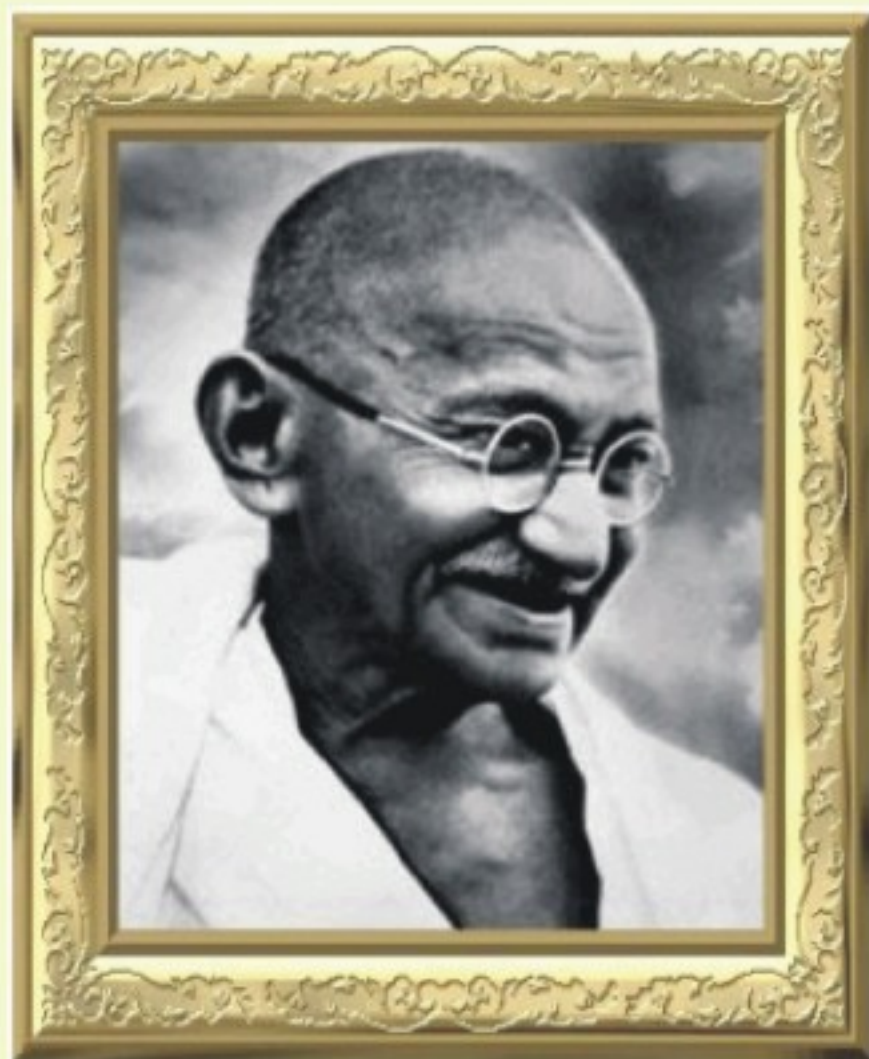
The State of Bihar is intimately associated with Buddhism. Buddha attained enlightenment at Bodhgaya. Bihar was also the home of Emperor Ashoka who preached "ahimsa" or non-violence and spread the message of Buddhism throughout the world. Historical importance of Bihar has been established again with the discovery of "biggest ever Buddhist Stupa" at Kesariya by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). A number of temples and monasteries have sprung up at many pilgrimage centers in the state. Some of the important places of pilgrimage for Buddhists are:



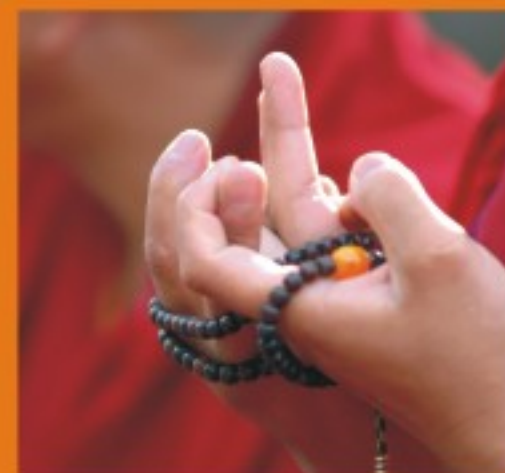
- Motihari (East Champaran)
- Hazarimal Dharamshala, Betia (West Champaran)
- Bhitharwa Ashram (West Champaran)
- Brindaba (West Champaran)
- Shri Rampur (West Champaran)
- Koeldih (West Champaran)
- Amolwa (West Champaran)
- Murli Bharhawa (West Champaran)
- Sariswa (West Champaran)
- Hardiya Kothi (West Champaran)
- Sadaquat Ashram (Patna)
- Gandhi Sangrahalay (Patna Museum)



Gandhi Circuit



There are many places in Bihar that are associated with Mahatma Gandhi and India's freedom movement. Motihari in East Champaran, was where Gandhi first experimented with Satyagraha and it will not be incorrect to say that it was a spring board for India's independence struggle. Some important places to visit are:



- Mahabodhi Temple, Bodhgaya (Gaya District)
- Stone Railing, Bodhgaya (Gaya District)
- Bodhi Tree, Bodhgaya (Gaya District)
- Vajrasana,, Bodhgaya (Gaya District)
- The Jewel Walk Shrine, Bodhgaya (Gaya District)
- Muchalinda Tank (Gaya District)
- Bakraur (Gaya District)
- Guneri (Gaya District)
- Ruins of the Nalanda University, Nalanda (Nalanda District)
- Archaeological Museum, Nalanda (Nalanda District)
- Nav Nalanda Mahavihara, Nalanda (Nalanda District)
- Hieun Tsang Memorial Hall, Nalanda (Nalanda District)
- Griddhakoot Hill (Nalanda District)
- Peace Pagoda, Rajgir (Nalanda District)
- Bimbisara Jail (Nalanda District)
- Maniyar Math (Nalanda District)
- Jarasandh Ki Baithak / Pippala Cave (Nalanda District)
- Sataparni Cave (Nalanda District)
- Ajastshatru Stupa, Rajgir (Nalanda District)
- The Fortification Walls (Nalanda District)
- The Venuvana Vihara, Rajgir (Nalanda District)
- Hot Water Springs, Rajgir (Nalanda District)
- Banganga (Nalanda District)
- Aerial Ropeway, Rajgir (Nalanda District)
- Lauriya Nandangarh (West Champaran District)
- Ashokan Pillar (Vaishali District)
- Buddha Stupa I & II (Vaishali District)
- Raja Vishal Ka Garh (Vaishali District)
- Abhishek Pushkarni (Vaishali District)
- Vishwa Shanti Stupa (Vaishali District)
- Kesariya (East Champaran District)
- Lauriya Areraj (East Champaran District)
- Aurangabad (East Champaran District)
- Vikramshila (Bhagalpur District)



Jain/Tirthankar Circuit



Mahavir, the exponent of Jainism was born in Bihar. His teachings spread throughout India during his life time and today continues to be a major school of thought around the world . He died at Pawapuri in Bihar, and left behind a rich legacy and some beautiful temples. There are some beautiful temples that are not only famous pilgrimage spots but are also works of great architecture. Some of the important places of pilgrimage for Jains are:



- Bishram (Bhojpur District)
- Masadh (Bhojpur District)
- Mandar Hill (Banka District)
- Champanagar (Bhagalpur District)
- Kundghat (Jamui)
- Gonavajee (Nawada District)
- Kundalpur (Nalanda District)
- Jalmandir, Pawapuri (Nalanda District)
- Samosaran, Pawapuri (Nalanda District)
- Maniyar math, Rajgir (Nalanda District)
- Sone Bhandar, Rajgir (Nalanda District)
- Veerayatan , Rajgir (Nalanda District)
- Kamaldah (Patna District)
- Vasokund (Muzaffarpur District)