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## Location and Extent of Bihar

Bihar, one of India's most historically and culturally significant states, is situated in the eastern part of the country. The state is defined by its geographic position, diverse landscapes, and its role as a corridor linking northern and eastern India. Below is a detailed examination of the location, extent, and related aspects of Bihar.

## 1. Geographical Location

### *Latitude and Longitude*

Bihar lies between:

- Latitude: **24°20'10"N to 27°31'15"N**
- Longitude: **83°19'50"E to 88°17'40"E**

This geographic position places Bihar in the northern hemisphere and in the subtropical zone, contributing to its distinctive climate and vegetation patterns.

### *Boundaries*

Bihar is a landlocked state bordered by:

- **North**: Nepal, with the Himalayan foothills serving as a natural boundary.
- **South**: Jharkhand.
- **West**: Uttar Pradesh.
- **East**: West Bengal.

The state's strategic location has historically made it a vital link between northern and eastern India, as well as a gateway to Nepal.

## 2. Total Area and Extent

Bihar spans a total area of **94,163 square kilometers**, making it the **13th largest state** in India by area. It accounts for approximately **2.86%** of the total geographical area of the country.

### *Shape and Physical Extent*

- The state has a roughly rectangular shape.
- Maximum length (north-south): **345 km**
- Maximum width (east-west): **483 km**

## 3. Administrative Divisions

Bihar is divided into **38 districts**, which are further grouped into 9 administrative divisions:

1. Patna
2. Tirhut
3. Saran
4. Darbhanga
5. Kosi
6. Purnia

7. Bhagalpur
8. Munger
9. Magadh

Each division plays a crucial role in the administrative and economic organization of the state.

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## 4. Physiographic Features

### *The Northern Plains*

Bihar's terrain is dominated by the fertile plains of the **Ganga River basin**, a part of the Indo-Gangetic Plain. The alluvial soils deposited by the Ganga and its tributaries make the region agriculturally prosperous.

- **Rivers**: Major rivers like the Ganga, Kosi, Gandak, and Son traverse the state.
- **Flood-Prone Areas**: The northern regions, especially those near the Kosi River, are prone to flooding.

### *Southern Plateau*

The southern part of Bihar includes the northern edges of the **Chota Nagpur Plateau**, characterized by:

- Undulating terrain
- Rocky outcrops
- Mineral-rich areas

### *Foothills of the Himalayas*

The northernmost areas of Bihar, bordering Nepal, include the Terai region, known for:

- Marshy lands
- Rich biodiversity

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## 5. Climatic Conditions

The geographical location of Bihar gives it a **subtropical monsoon climate**, characterized by:

- **Hot summers**: Temperatures range from 25°C to 45°C.
- **Cold winters**: Temperatures range from 4°C to 20°C.
- **Monsoon season**: Receives annual rainfall of about **1000-1200 mm**, mostly from the southwest monsoon.

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## 6. Geopolitical Significance

### *Proximity to Nepal*

Bihar shares a 726 km long international border with Nepal. This proximity enhances trade, cultural exchange, and geopolitical importance.

### *Economic Corridors*

Bihar's location makes it a pivotal region in India's eastern economic corridor, connecting:

- The north (Uttar Pradesh)
- The east (West Bengal)
- The southern mineral belt (Jharkhand)

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## 7. Natural Resources

Bihar's geographical extent contributes to its rich natural resources:

- **Agriculture**: Fertile plains for rice, wheat, maize, and sugarcane cultivation.
- **Minerals**: Though limited compared to Jharkhand, some southern districts like Gaya have mineral deposits.
- **Forests**: Small but significant forest areas in the southern regions.

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## 8. Transport and Connectivity

### *Roadways*

Bihar is connected by the **Golden Quadrilateral** highway network and other major national highways such as NH 19, NH 31, and NH 28.

### *Railways*

The state has an extensive railway network, connecting it to major cities in India. Key railway junctions include:

- Patna
- Muzaffarpur
- Gaya

### *Airways*

Bihar has two operational airports:

- **Jay Prakash Narayan International Airport**, Patna
- **Gaya International Airport**

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### 9. Impact of Location on Economy

The geographic location and extent of Bihar influence its economy in several ways:

- **Agriculture**: The fertile Gangetic plains support robust agricultural activity.
- **Trade**: Proximity to Nepal and connectivity to major Indian states bolster trade and commerce.
- **Tourism**: Its central location in eastern India makes it a hub for cultural and religious tourism.

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### 10. Challenges Due to Location

*Floods*

The low-lying plains, coupled with the rivers like Kosi (often termed the "Sorrow of Bihar"), result in frequent flooding.

*Seismic Vulnerability*

Bihar lies in a **seismic zone prone to earthquakes**, particularly in its northern regions near the Himalayan foothills.

## Physiographic Divisions of Bihar

Bihar, a state in eastern India, is characterized by diverse landforms that significantly influence its climate, agriculture, and overall economy. The state can be broadly divided into three distinct physiographic regions:

1. **The Shivalik Range and Terai Region**
2. **The Gangetic Plains**
3. **The Southern Plateau Region**

### 1. The Shivalik Range and Terai Region

- **Location:** This region lies in the northwestern part of West Champaran district, bordering Nepal.
- **Characteristics:**
    - Forms the foothills of the Himalayas.
    - Composed of unconsolidated sediments like sandstone, shale, and conglomerate.
    - Narrow and elongated in shape, extending for about 32 km in length and 6-8 km in width.
    - **Terai:** This is a narrow belt of marshy land south of the Shivaliks, formed by the deposition of sediments brought down by Himalayan rivers. It is characterized by fertile soil and dense forests.