

# Welcome to the land of peace, knowledge and tranquility

The history of Bihar can be traced back to the dawn of civilization when the enlightened intellectuals of the soil carried and spread the light of wisdom far and wide. The constellation of monasteries and shrines of Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, and Sikhs and architectural grandeur of the past are Bihar's socio-cultural benevolences. The University of Nalanda was one of the world's oldest seat of learning. The reign of the Guptas was heralded as the Golden Age of India when science, mathematics, astronomy, philosophy and religion received regal impetus and was pursued with fervor. Etymologically, Bihar derives its name from the Sanskrit word 'VIHARA' meaning 'abode' or 'monastery'.

Patna is one of the oldest continuously inhabited places in the world. Whereas one school believes it to be derived from the Sanskrit word "Pattan" meaning 'port' as the city was a thriving river port near the confluence of four rivers. Another belief is that the city derived its name from "Patan Devi", the presiding deity of the city. One legend associates the origin to Putraka, a mythological king, who created the city by magic for his beloved queen Patali and in honour of queen's first born named it as 'Patliputra'. The city finds mention as 'Palibothra' or 'Palimbotra' in the writings of Greek historian Megasthenes and as 'Pa-lin-fou' in the records of Chinese traveller Fahien.

The history of the city, dates back to 684 B.C. when the Haryanka dynasty wielded power. Ever since Patna or Patliputra has figured as the capital of the Nanda, the Maurya, the Gupta and the Vardhana dynasties. Megasthenes, the Greek Ambassador to the Court of Chandragupta Maurya and many Chinese travellers, including Fahien and Huen Tsang, in their travelogues have spoken in glowing terms of the peace and prosperity that prevailed in the region.

Pataliputra is the birth place of: the great Maurayan Emperor, Ashoka, and Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Guru of the Sikhs. During the 17th century, Patna became a center of international trade with the British starting a factory in Patna in 1620 for trading in silk and calico.

In 1912, Patna became the capital of Province of Orissa and Bihar when the Bengal Presidency was partitioned. Patna played a major role in the Indian Independence struggle. Mahatma Gandhi launched his first non-violent 'Satyagraha' movement in India against the Indigo Plantation in the Champaran district of Bihar. The success of this movement was the beginning of his great & historic political journey. Bihar contributed in full measure to the successive movements launched by Mahatma Gandhi including the 1920 non-cooperation movement, 1930 Civil Disobedience movement & 1942 Quit India movement. Bihar threw up great national leaders like Deshratna Dr Rajendra Prasad, the first President of the Republic of India, Loknayak Jai Prakash Narayan among many others.

Patna, as most of Bihar, has a humid subtropical climate with hot summers from late March to early June, the monsoon season from late June to late September and a mild winter from November to February. Many languages are spoken in Patna. Hindi and Urdu are the official languages. The native dialects are Magahi, Bhojpuri, Maithili and Angika. Other languages widely spoken in Patna are Bengali and English.

