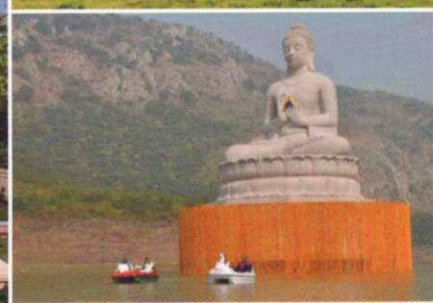
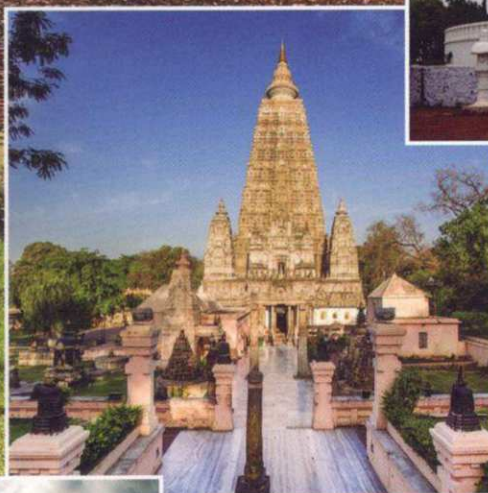
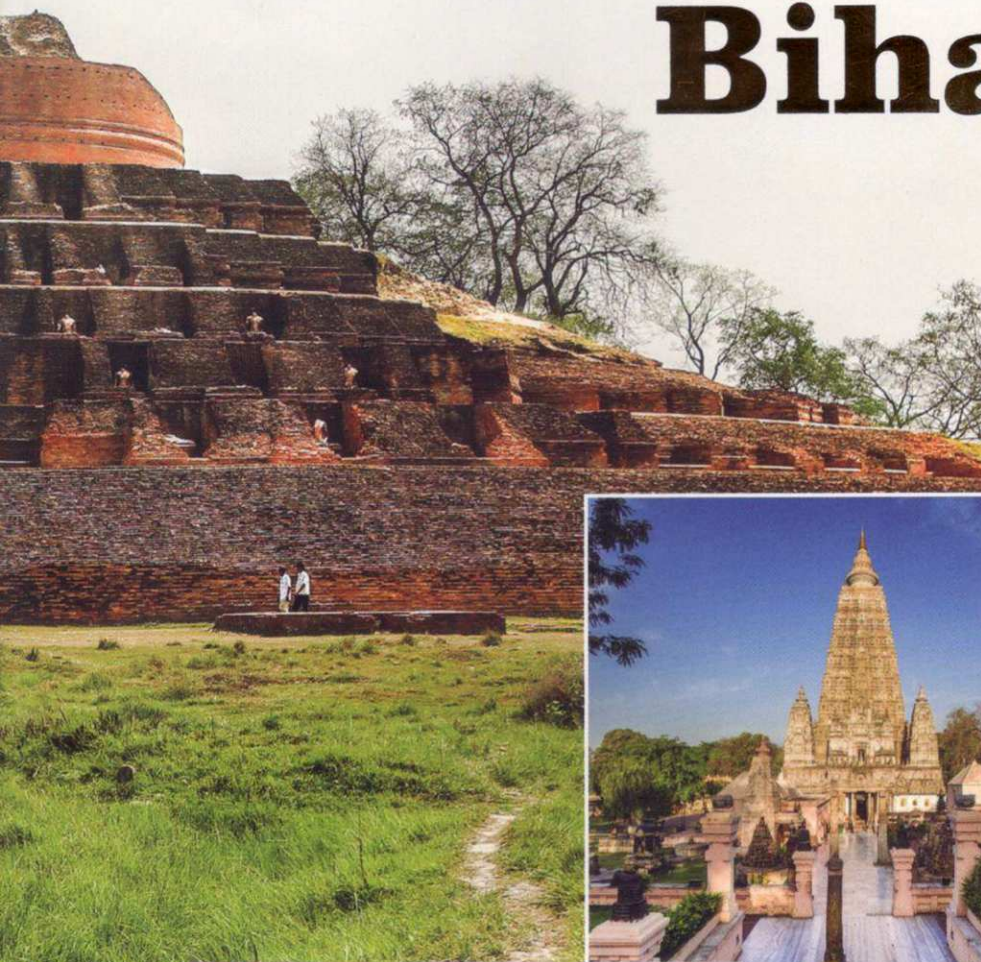
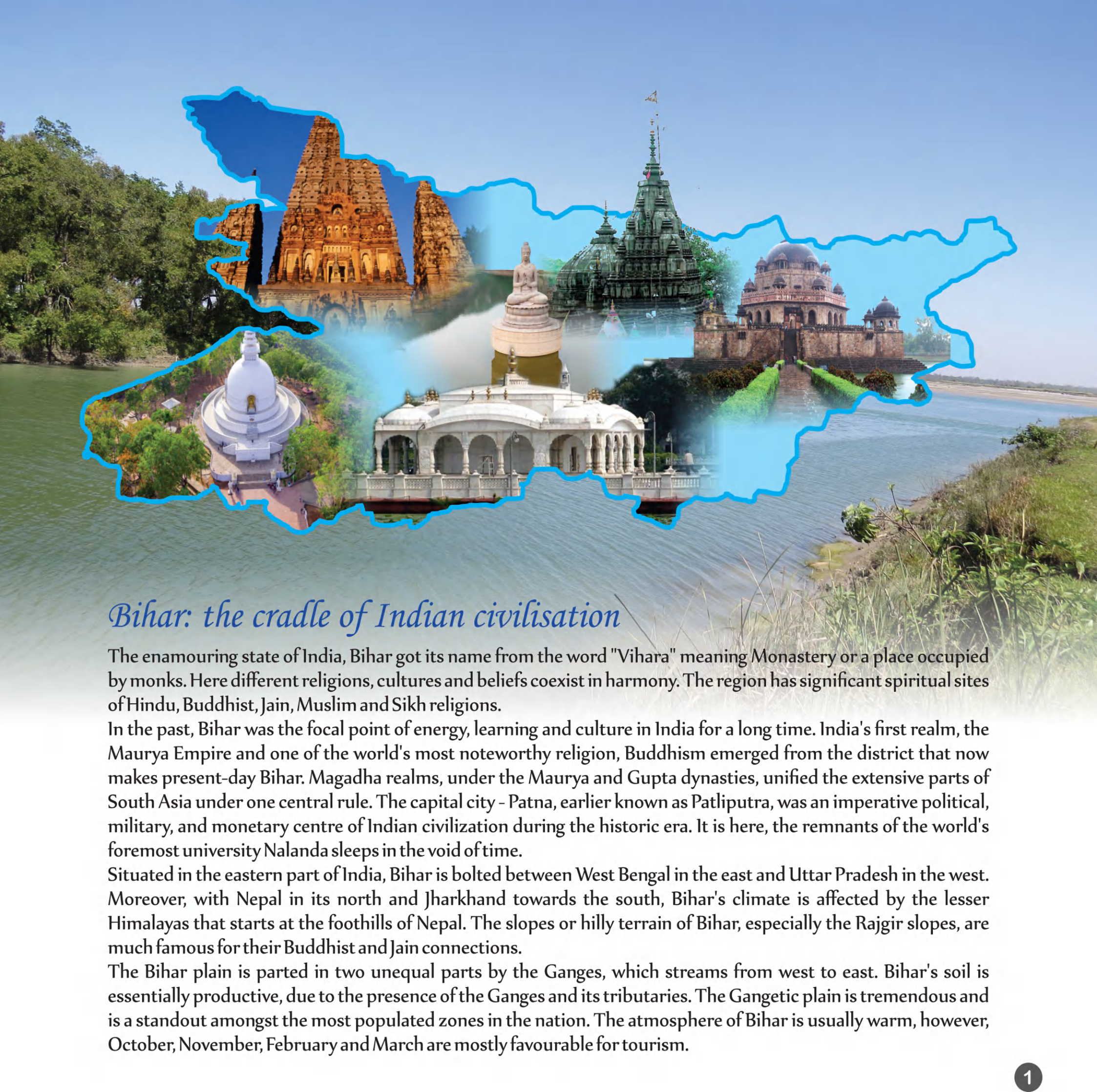


Magnificent Bihar





Bihar: the cradle of Indian civilisation

The enamouring state of India, Bihar got its name from the word "Vihara" meaning Monastery or a place occupied by monks. Here different religions, cultures and beliefs coexist in harmony. The region has significant spiritual sites of Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Muslim and Sikh religions.

In the past, Bihar was the focal point of energy, learning and culture in India for a long time. India's first realm, the Maurya Empire and one of the world's most noteworthy religion, Buddhism emerged from the district that now makes present-day Bihar. Magadha realms, under the Maurya and Gupta dynasties, unified the extensive parts of South Asia under one central rule. The capital city - Patna, earlier known as Patliputra, was an imperative political, military, and monetary centre of Indian civilization during the historic era. It is here, the remnants of the world's foremost university Nalanda sleeps in the void of time.

Situated in the eastern part of India, Bihar is bolted between West Bengal in the east and Uttar Pradesh in the west. Moreover, with Nepal in its north and Jharkhand towards the south, Bihar's climate is affected by the lesser Himalayas that starts at the foothills of Nepal. The slopes or hilly terrain of Bihar, especially the Rajgir slopes, are much famous for their Buddhist and Jain connections.

The Bihar plain is parted in two unequal parts by the Ganges, which streams from west to east. Bihar's soil is essentially productive, due to the presence of the Ganges and its tributaries. The Gangetic plain is tremendous and is a standout amongst the most populated zones in the nation. The atmosphere of Bihar is usually warm, however, October, November, February and March are mostly favourable for tourism.

Mahabodhi Temple

Bodhgaya

This is a UNESCO world heritage site. built by Emperor Ashoka to commemorate the enlightenment of Lord Buddha Under the Mahabodhi tree located in this temple.





80 ft. Buddha Stupa **Bodhgaya**

The Giant Buddha statue is one of the many stops in the Buddhist pilgrimage and tourist routes in Bodhgaya. The statue is 19.507 m (64.00 ft) high in meditation pose or dhyana mudra seated on a lotus in open air. The total height of the architecture is 80 ft.

Vishwa Shanti Stupa, also called the Peace Pagoda. It is located at the highest point of Ratnagiri hill, at an altitude of 400 m, qualifying its serene charm as divine. The stupa is made up of white marble stones, symbolic of world peace and enshrines four golden statues of Buddha. It can be reached by means of a ropeway.

Vishwa Shanti Stupa Rajgir





Also known as the horse bowl, this lake is a renowned tourist destination of Nalanda district. What sets this destination apart from other tourist spots is the approx 7km phaeton drive from Ropeway to Ghora Katora amidst lush green forests.

Ghoda Katora Rajgir

Ashoka Pillar Vaishali

Ashoka Pillar is the most popular sightseeing destination of Vaishali situated near a Buddhist monastery and a coronation tank, named Abhishek Pushkarni. It has also a Lion Pillar like the other Ashoka Pillars but the difference between this Ashoka Pillar and other Ashoka pillars is that, it one has only one lion capital.





Ancient emperor Kumargupta established Nalanda University. Offering courses in almost every area of learning. The University attracted students from all over the world. The terracotta seal from the University has been put on display in the ASI Museum at Nalanda.

Nalanda *University Ruins* Nalanda



Jal Mandir Pawapuri

Lord Mahavir, the last Tirthankar attained 'Nirvana' at Pawapuri, 90km away Patna. This is a holy site for Jains as Lord Mahavir was also buried here, where presently the Jalmandir stands.



This is a large and old rest house (Dharmshala) of 65 rooms constructed for the Jain Pilgrims. There is a Temple of Lord Mahavira inside the Dharmshala. The idol in this temple is more than 2,600 years old. This black stone idol is of weighs around 250 kg. This is situated on the way of Kshatriya Kund Gram. This place is located in Sikandra Block which is approx 20 km. west from Jamui District Headquarter.



Lachhuar Jain Mandir, Jamui

Kundalpur Jain Mandir, Nalanda



A beautiful Jaisalmer stone temple is situated close to the ruins of ancient Nalanda University at Kundalpur. This houses statues of Lord Mahavira, Adinath Swami and Gautam Gandharva. This place is believed to be the birthplace of Gautam Gandharva, the first disciple of Lord Mahavira. An ancient Jain temple is also here.



Mandar Hill, Banka

Situated around 48 km south of the Bhagalpur town, the Mandar hill is about 700 ft high that consists of a huge mass of granite overgrown near the summit with low jungle. The Skand Purana associates Mandar or Sumeru with the old story of Amrita-Manthana or churning of the ocean. The story goes that the Gods and the Demons (Devas and Asuras) with a view to secure AMRIT, consuming of which is believed to confer immortality, used this Mandara or Sumeru Mountain as the churning stick or rod. The great mythical serpent, Vasuki, was used as the rope. Due to this mythical association, the hill has assumed considerable religious significance and is a place of pilgrimage. Two Jain temples are situated on the summit of the hill where the Jain pilgrims worship Lord Vasupujyanatha.



Maner Sharif, Maner, Patna _____

In the early ages, Maner was a centre of learning. Maner contains two well-known Mohammedan tombs, that of Shah Daulat or Makhdum Daulat, known as Chhoti Dargah, and the other that of Sheikh Yahia Maneri or Makhdum Yahia, called the Bari Dargah. Maner Sharif walls contain carvings and high finish. A great dome crowns it, and the ceiling is covered with carved inscriptions from the Quran. The architectural nuances bears the testimony to Jehangir's times.

Sher Shah Suri Tomb, **Sasaram**

The Sasaram town was built in memory of Emperor Sher Shah Suri, a Pathan from this place in Bihar, who defeated the Mughal Emperor Humayun and ruled for 5 years till his death. His tomb is an example of Indo-Islamic architecture.





Takhat Sri Harimandir Ji Patna Sahib Patna

Maharaja Ranjit Singh Ji, the first king of the Sikh Empire, took up the reconstructions of this sacred birthplace of the great 10th Guru, Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj in 1839. The present gorgeous edifice of Takhat was reconstructed in 1954.

About three kilometers east of Takhat Sri Harimandir Sahib is where Guru Tegh Bahadur first alighted in a garden (bagh) belonging to Nawabs Rahim Bakhsh and Karim Bakhsh, nobles of Patna, and where the sangat of Patna along with the young Guru Gobind Singh came out to receive him back from his four-year-long odyssey. A shrine commemorative of the first meeting of Tegh Bahadur and Gobind Singh was established here. Its present building was constructed during the 1970s and 1980s. An old well which is still in use and a dried stump of the Imli tree under which the sangat met Guru Tegh Bahadur still exists.

Guru ka Bagh, Patna





Valmiki Nagar Tiger Reserve, Valmiki Nagar

Tiger Reserve and Wildlife Sanctuary is located at the India-Nepal border in the West Champaran district of Bihar, India on the bank of river Gandak. It is the only National park in Bihar. The extensive forest area of Valmikinagar was previously owned by the Bettiah Raj and Ramanagar Raj until the early 1950s. The pristine forest and wilderness of VTR is an excellent example of Himalayan Terai landscape. VTR comprises the Valmiki National Park and Valmiki Wildlife Sanctuary. This sanctuary covers an area of 880 sq. km. (approx) and houses leopards and tigers along with the fishing cats, chitals, sambar, black bucks, langur, sloth bears, gaurs.



Kakolat Waterfall, Nawada

It is a waterfall in Gobindpur, about 21 miles away from Nawada. Just below the fall, there is a deep natural reservoir. The fall is about 150 to 160 feet, from the ground level. The scene is panoramic due to all around green forest area, which is very pleasant to the eyes. A big fair is held on the occasion of bishua or Chait Sankranti.



Bhimbandh, Munger

It is situated at a distance of 56 km from Munger, 20 km from Jamui Railway Station and 200 km from Patna Airport. Bhimbandh Wild Life Sanctuary is located in the south west of Munger District. The forests cover an area of 681.99 sq km on the hills and undulating tract of Kharagpur Hills. The vegetation of these forests is very rich where Sal, Semal and other trees grow side by side the hilly terrains, protecting from the sun rays the forms and humble creepers which grow below. A host of wild animals such as Tiger, Leopards, Sloth Bear, Nilgai, Sambhar, Barking deer, Wild bear, Four Horned Antelope are found in these forests. In the valley portions and at the foothills are several hot springs of which the finest are at Bhimbandh, Sita Kund and Rishi Kund.



Dhuan Kund Falls, **Rohtas**

The Dhuan Kund are a pair of waterfalls situated in the city of Sasaram. The scenic beauty of the fall will mesmerize your eyes due to all around green forest and warmth of the nature.



Buddha Smriti Park also known as Buddha Memorial Park (as translated in English) is an urban park located on Frazer Road near Patna Junction in Patna, India. This park has been developed by the Bihar Government to commemorate the 2554th birth anniversary of the Buddha. This park was inaugurated by the 14th Dalai Lama.

Buddha Smriti Park, Patna

Golghar, Patna

Golghar is an outstanding architectural piece. Built in the year 1786, a flight of steps winds around this 29m high building to the top, from where one gets an amazing view of the river Ganga and Patna city.





Situated 252 kms. from Patna in the district of Bhagalpur, Vikramshila is the site of the ancient Vikramshila University. The university was founded by king Dharmapala, in late 8th century AD. After prospering for years, it was plundered by invaders around 1200 AD.

Vikramshila University Ruins **Bhagalpur**

Punaura Dham

Sitamarhi

This temple is about 5 km south west of Sitamarhi. This temple is claimed to be the birth place of Sita and is considered to be sacred place where people go for a pilgrimage.



Haleswar Sthan

Sitamarhi

This is an ancient temple of Lord Shiva about 3 km north west of Sitamarhi. According to myths the King of Videha on the occasion of Putrayesthi Yagna, founded this temple.

Bhitiharwa Ashram

West Champaran

Gandhi Sangrahalaya houses a large number of items and artifacts related with Mahatma Gandhi and his satyagraha movement in Bihar. It also has a vast collection of Gandhian literature and photographs depicting his life and works. A "Charkha" (Country made spinning wheel) used by Mahatma Gandhi is also well preserved in this museum.





Kesaria has a loft brick mound capped by a large solid brick tower. This is considered to be the highest of the Buddhist Stupas. The mound is a ruin with a diameter of 68 feet at its base and a total height of 104 feet. It is believed to have been built some time between 200-700 AD.

Kesariya Stupa East Champaran



The Vulture Peak, also known as the Holy Eagle Peak or Gadhrakuta, was the Buddha's favorite retreat in Rajgir and the scene for many of his discourses. It is so named because it resembles a sitting vulture with its wings folded.

Vulture Peak Mountain is, by tradition, one of several sites frequented by the Buddha and his community of disciples for both training and retreat.

Gridhakuta Hill, Rajgir

Barabar Caves, Jehanabad

The architectural beauty of Barabar Caves situated in the Barabar Hills is magnificent. These caves are located at a distance of around 25 km from Gaya. These caves were carved during the first phase of development of Buddhism in the second century BC. These rock caves are deep and finely cut and have fine glassy and shining polish inside. Buddhist literature reveals that these caves were meant for Ajivika Buddhists.





Lauriya Nandangarh, West Champaran

Lauria Nandangarh, also Lauriya Navandgarh, is a city or town about 14 km from Narkatiaganj (or Shikarpur) and 28 km from Bettiah in West Champaran district of Bihar. It is situated near the banks of the Burhi Gandak River. The village draws its name from a pillar (laur) of Ashoka standing there and the stupa mound Nandangarh (variant Nanadgarh) about 2 km south-west of the pillar. Lauriya Nandangarh is a historical site located in West Champaran district of Bihar. Remains of Mauryan period have been found here.



Vishnupad Mandir, Gaya

This mandir is located along the Falgu River, marked by a footprint of Lord Vishnu. Several legendary saints as Ramanujacharya, Madhvacharya, Sankaradeva and Chaitanya Mahaprabhu have visited this shrine. It is one of the vedis for Pinddan.

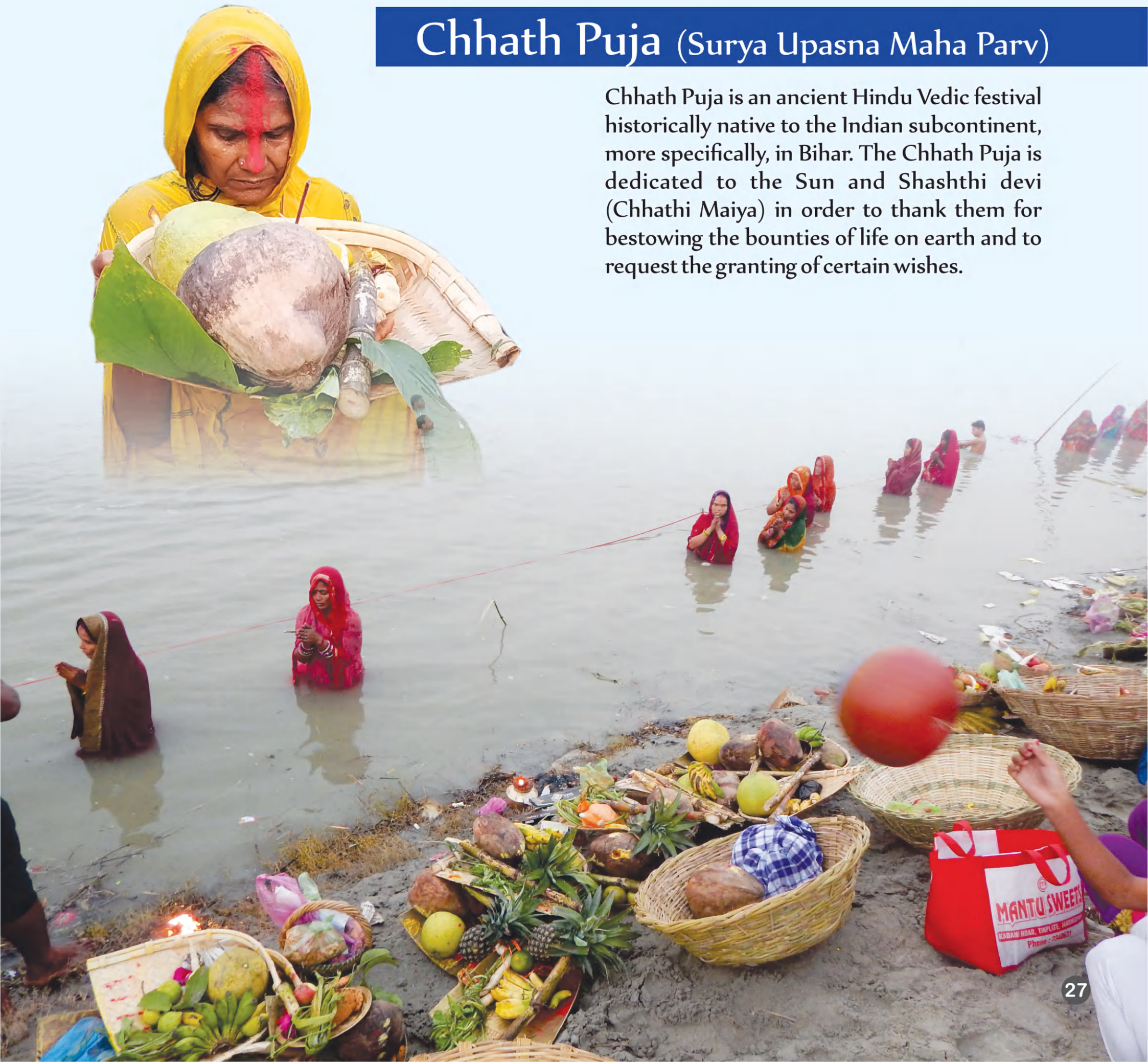
Pitrapaksha, the fortnight long festival of souls is organized in Gaya every year during September-October where Hindus from across the world congregate to worship their ancestors. Now a days 45 vedis are in existence which spread over different areas of the town and important sites such as Vishnupad Mandir, Ramshila, Pretshila, Akshayawat and Baitarni etc. Pilgrims perform 'Pindadaan' ritual at these places to the departed souls. Tarpan consisting of water mixed with sesame seeds with Kushaa (kind of sharp bladed grass) is offered to the gods, rishis and ancestors.

Pitrapaksha, Gaya



Chhath Puja (Surya Upasna Maha Parv)

Chhath Puja is an ancient Hindu Vedic festival historically native to the Indian subcontinent, more specifically, in Bihar. The Chhath Puja is dedicated to the Sun and Shashthi devi (Chhathi Maiya) in order to thank them for bestowing the bounties of life on earth and to request the granting of certain wishes.



Sonepur Cattle Fair





Sonepur Cattle Fair is held on Kartik Poornima (the full moon day) in the month of November - December in Sonepur on the confluence of river Ganges (Gandak). It is also known as Harihar Kshetra Mela and it attracts visitors from all over Asia. Till date, it is the biggest cattle fair of Asia and stretches to one month. It has its origins during ancient times. This is when Chandragupta Maurya (340 - 297 BCE) used to by elephants and horses across the river Ganges. The Sonepur Cattle Fair once used to attract traders from places as distant as Central Asia.



Madhubani art (or Mithila painting) is a style of Indian painting, practiced in the Mithila region of the Indian subcontinent. This painting is done with a variety of tools, including fingers, twigs, brushes, nib-pens, and matchsticks and using natural dyes and pigments. It is characterised by its eye-catching geometrical patterns. There is ritual content for particular occasions, such as birth or marriage, and festivals, such as Holi, Surya Shasti, Kali Puja, Upanayana, and Durga Puja.

Madhubani Painting





Khaja, Silao

Silao village, situated about 15 km from Bihar Sarif and 8 km from Rajgir, is known for its ancient tradition of Khaja making. A sweetmeat prepared with maida (wheat-flour), sugar and ghee, it is available in many varieties - Chandshahi, Round, Palvidar and Gandhi Topa. Amongst these, the one with rectangular shape is the most popular.

Tilkut & Anarsa, Gaya

Gaya is not only famous for its association with Lord Buddha, but it is also famous for Tilkut and Anarsa. While Tilkut is made with white sesame seeds (til) and sugar, Anarsa is made with a combination of rice flour, white sesame seeds and sugar. The Ramna Road, of Gaya is the place where one should head to for tasting these sweets.



Lai, Barh

Barh, a small town in Patna district that lies between Bakhtiarpur and Mokama is famous for Lai, a ball or cake-shaped sweet that is prepared with 'lthobi' or 'Ramdana' seeds, 'Khoa' and sugar.

Lychee, Muzaffarpur_____

Muzaffarpur is a city located in Muzaffarpur district in the Tirhut region of the Indian state of Bihar. It serves as the headquarters of Tirhut division, Muzaffarpur district and the Muzaffarpur Railway District. It is the fourth most populous city in Bihar.

Muzaffarpur is famous for Shahi lychees and is known as the Lychee Kingdom. Shahi litchi is set to become the fourth product from Bihar, after jardalu mango, katarni rice and Magahi paan (betel leaf) to get the Geographical Indication (GI) tag. It is situated on the banks of the perennial Burhi Gandak River, which flows from the Someshwar Hills of Himalayas.



*Litti Chokha*_____

Litti is another main-course dish that forms a part of Bihari cuisine. It is nothing, but wheat flour cake that has been salted and baked. Litti is filled with sattu (fried gram flour) and some special spices and served with ghee. Litti is similar to Bati in appearance but there is a little difference. Litti is best eaten with brinjal bharta or mashed potato. Litti-Chokha is now making its presence internationally.