

Bihar's Annual Flood Crisis

Why in News?

Bihar faces devastating <u>floods</u> every year due to its unique geography and decades-old <u>flood</u> control methods.

Key Points

Flood-Prone Nature of Bihar

- Bihar is India's most flood-prone state, with **76% of North Bihar's** population affected.
- The region is crisscrossed by both snow-fed and rain-fed rivers, increasing flood risk.
- Bihar is located below Nepal, with <u>Himalayan rivers</u> (<u>Kosi, Gandak, Bagmati</u>) flowing into the state.
- These rivers carry high sediment loads due to loose Himalayan soil, leading to overflow during heavy rains.

Impact of Embankments:

- Embankments along rivers like Kosi were built in the 1950s to control flooding.
- Embankments narrowed river channels, leading to sediment buildup and higher riverbeds, making the rivers more prone to overflow.
- Kosi, known as the "sorrow of Bihar," floods annually despite embankments.

Recent Flooding (2024):

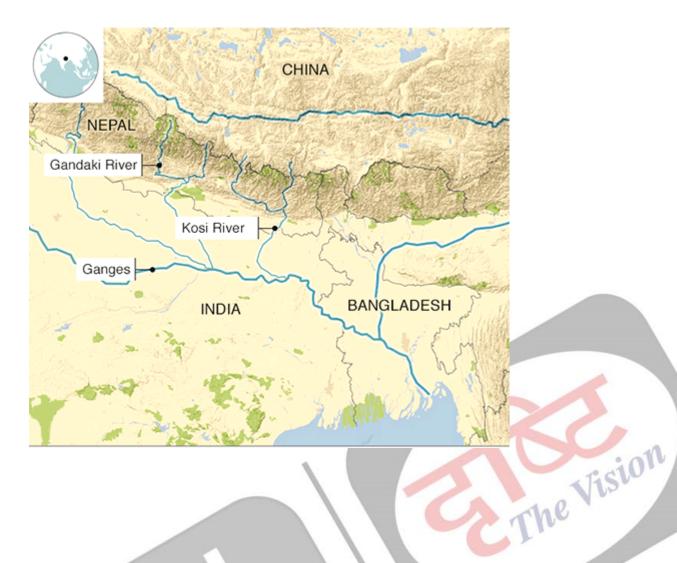
- Heavy rainfall and Nepal's release of water from the Kosi barrage led to severe floods in North Bihar.
- Embankments have breached in several districts, affecting 11.84 lakh people.
- The **Birpur barrage** released **6.6 lakh cusecs of water**, the highest in six decades.

Economic and Social Impact:

- Flooding results in crop loss, livestock destruction, damage to infrastructure, and forced migration.
- Bihar government spends Rs 1,000 crore annually on flood relief and management.

Proposed Solutions:

- Structural: Proposals for dams and additional barrages on Kosi and other rivers.
- Non-structural: Enhancing flood warnings, improving reaction times, public awareness, and training to mitigate flood effects.



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