



Bihar's Annual Flood Crisis | Bihar | 04 Oct 2024

Why in News?

Bihar faces devastating [floods](#) every year due to its unique geography and decades-old [flood](#) 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 [Himalayan rivers](#) ([Kosi](#), [Gandak](#), [Bagmati](#)) 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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