

FREE EXTRACT

Bihar Special Current Affairs

Three questions from inside the book, with the explanation written out as it appears throughout. Nothing here is abridged for the sample.

1

Consider the following statements with reference to the reservation of seats for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions:

1. Bihar was the first State in India to reserve fifty per cent of the seats for women in all three tiers of its Panchayati Raj Institutions.
2. The Constitution of India provides that not less than one-third of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every Panchayat shall be reserved for women.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (A) 1 only
- (B) 2 only
- (C) Both 1 and 2
- (D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (C) Both 1 and 2

Article 243D, inserted by the Constitution (Seventy-third Amendment) Act, 1992, lays down a floor and not a ceiling: not less than one-third of the directly elected seats, and of the offices of chairperson, must go to women, and within the seats reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes at least one-third must again go to women of those communities. Because it is only a floor, a State legislature is perfectly free to go higher, and Bihar was the first State to do so when it moved to fifty per cent reservation for women across gram panchayat, panchayat samiti and zila parishad in 2006, the panchayat elections of that year being fought on the new pattern. Several other States later adopted the same fifty per cent norm, which is why aspirants should remember Bihar as the originator rather than as one of the many. Bihar carried the same policy into other spheres as well, most visibly through the thirty-five per cent reservation for women in State government appointments. The trap that examiners set here is a statement claiming that the Constitution itself reserves fifty per cent, or that Bihar's step came from a central law; the fifty per cent figure comes from a State Act, the one-third from the Constitution. Read the words 'not less than' carefully, since a great many marks in this exam turn on that phrase alone.

2

The National Makhana Board, announced in the Union Budget 2025-26, has its headquarters in which one of the following districts of Bihar?

- (A) Darbhanga
- (B) Madhubani
- (C) Purnia
- (D) Katihar

Answer: (C) Purnia

The Board was announced by the Union Finance Minister in the Budget for 2025-26 and was formally launched at Purnia in September 2025, with the town also serving as its headquarters, which is why the answer is not the more obvious Mithila districts. Purnia sits at the meeting point of the Kosi and Seemanchal makhana belt and functions as the collection, trading and dispatch hub for the crop, so the choice of location follows the trade rather than the folklore. Bihar accounts for the overwhelming bulk of India's makhana output, the ponds and low-lying tracts of Darbhanga, Madhubani, Purnia, Katihar, Saharsa, Supaul, Araria and Kishanganj carrying most of the crop, and cultivation is traditionally the work of the Mallah community. Candidates must keep two related facts apart: the geographical indication tag granted in 2022 is for Mithila Makhana, a product tag attached to the Mithila region, whereas the Board is an institution headquartered at Purnia, and question setters routinely swap the two. The Board's mandate covers seed and cultivation improvement, processing and value addition, branding and export promotion, all of which address the old complaint that Bihar grows the crop while other States capture the profit from processing it. For Bihar current affairs, always fix an institution by the triad of what, where and when, because that is exactly the shape in which the Commission asks it.

3

The recurring floods of north Bihar are as much the result of the engineering choices made after Independence as of the behaviour of the monsoon. Critically examine this statement with special reference to the Kosi. (15 marks, answer in about 250 words)

Answer: Introduction: open by fixing the scale, namely that Bihar is India's most flood-prone State and that about three-quarters of the area of north Bihar is classified as flood-prone, drained by Nepal-fed rivers such as the Kosi, Gandak, Bagmati, Burhi Gandak, Kamla Balan and Mahananda. State your position in one line: the monsoon supplies the water, but policy decided where the damage would fall.

First strand, the natural drivers: a steep young Himalayan catchment lying largely outside India, an exceptionally high sediment load, an abrupt fall in gradient where the river debouches on the plain, and a well-documented history of westward shifting of the Kosi across its megafan over the past two centuries. Add the concentration of rainfall into a few weeks and the transboundary character of the catchment, which means peak discharge is generated beyond Indian jurisdiction.

Second strand, the engineering and institutional drivers: the Kosi Agreement with Nepal of 1954, later revised, led to the barrage at Bhimnagar with project headquarters at

The full book

Every question from the papers, each explained like this.

SAMPLE COPY | iasvalley.com | NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION