

Sunday, December 17, 2017
Did You Know?

About Bihar, India

Last week, Pastor Peter shared that CoaH will be adopting the state of Bihar. This means that we will endeavor our missions work in Bihar until this state becomes reached with the Gospel. In order to do this better, it's important that we learn more about this state so that our work and prayers become more effective.

Bihar is one of the *poorest and most underdeveloped* states in India. Although it's 11 times smaller than Ontario in size, it is home to more than 113 million people; in comparison, Canada has a total population of 36 million. Here, countless orphans can't afford to go to school, let alone have anything to eat; numerous beggars are on the street; many men are found drunk at home; a great number of young people are either addicted to alcohol and drugs or moving out of Bihar to find opportunities elsewhere. Here are some facts about Bihar:

- Bihar is India's 13th largest state in terms of geographical size (94,163 km²) and 3rd largest by population (113,773,000).
- The name *Bihar* is derived from the Sanskrit and Pali word, *Vihara*, meaning "abode" or "monastery", but to many people, Bihar is a byword for deprivation and misery.
- Bihar has a diverse climate. Its temperature is subtropical in general, with hot summers and cool winters. Bihar is a vast stretch of fertile plain. It is drained by the Ganges River, originating in the Himalayas of Nepal.
- The official languages of the state are Hindi and Urdu.
- Only 11.3% of the population of Bihar lives in urban areas, which is the lowest in India.
- Almost 58% of people in Bihar are below the age of 25 – the highest proportion of young people of any Indian state.
- Bihar has a total literacy rate of 63.82% (75.7% for males and 55.1% for females).

Bihar is also one of the *most unreached* states in India. Due to the high level of difficulty for the Gospel to penetrate the northern state, for many years Bihar has been known as **the graveyard of missions** by missionaries. Here are some facts about religions in Bihar:

- There are 451 people groups (425 that are Unreached).
- It is the birthplace of Jainism and Buddhism.

<i>Religion</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Religion</i>	<i>Population</i>
Hindu	94,118,000 (82.7%)	Muslim	19,400,000 (17.1%)
Christian	137,000 (0.12%)	Sikh	22,000 (0.019%)
Buddhist	26,000 (0.023%)	Other	80,000 (0.07%)

This current situation may be discouraging for many believers, but we must not lose hope for we know that our God is in complete control. Let us continually and faithfully pray, send, go, and share this beautiful Gospel message that brings life.

Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. (Matthew 9:35-38)

Pastor Woohyun Jung