

Kanwar Lake

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The condition of Bihar's Kanwar Lake was not an issue in ongoing Lok Sabha elections.



[Ref: DTE]

About Kanwar Lake:

- Also known as Kabartal Wetland, it is located in the Begusarai district of Bihar, India.
- It is recognized as **Asia's largest freshwater oxbow lake**.
- Formed by the meandering of the **Gandak River**, a tributary of the Ganga.
- Designated as Bihar's only **Ramsar site in 2020** ??.

Biodiversity:

- The lake is a crucial habitat for a diverse range of flora and fauna.
- It supports over **50 fish species** and provides a critical stopover for **58 migratory waterbirds** along the Central Asian Flyway.
- Notably, it houses critically endangered species such as the **red-headed vulture, white-rumped vulture, Indian vulture, sociable lapwing, and Baer's pochard**??.

Threats and Challenges

- Major threats include water management issues like **drainage, damming, and canalization**, which impact the wetland's ecological balance.
- The area faces challenges from excessive **chemical usage, encroachment, and illegal activities** such as bird hunting and land encroachment by locals.
- Despite its Ramsar designation, there has been significant neglect, leading to its **drying up and degradation**, which also affects the local communities relying on its resources? ?.

Conservation Efforts:

- The lake is protected under the **Wildlife Protection Act of 1972**, but enforcement has been lax, leading to continued ecological degradation.

