

# India at a Glance

Before proceeding with Physiographical Divisions, let us look into the Location, Area, Administrative Divisions and Geographical Aspects of India

This is an introductory chapter of Indian Geography. Please go through this very carefully as all the upcoming topics are nothing but extension of these topics.

<b>East-West Extent of Main Land India (Including Pak occupied Kashmir-POK):</b>	68° 7' east to 97° 25' east longitude
<b>South-North Extent of Main Land India:</b>	8° 4' north to 37° 6' north latitude
<b>Locational Extent:</b>	8° 4' N to 37° 6' N latitude and 68° 7' E to 97° 25' East longitude.

## India as a Geographical Unit

- The **southernmost point of the country is the Pygmalion Point or Indira Point** is located at **6° 45' N** latitude.
- India has roughly a **quadrangular shape**.
- **North-south extent from Indira Col in Kashmir to Kanyakumari is 3,214 km.**
- **East-west width from the Rann of Kachchh to Arunachal Pradesh is 2,933 km.**
- With an area of **32, 87,263 sq. km**, India is the seventh largest country of the world.
- India accounts for about **2.4 per cent of the total surface area** of the world.
- The Tropic of Cancer passes through the middle of the country dividing it into two latitudinal halves.
- The area to the north of Tropic of Cancer is nearly twice the area which lies to the south of it.
- South of 22° north latitude, the country tapers off over 800 km into the Indian Ocean as a peninsula.
- **East-West time difference is nearly 2 hrs.**
- The earth moves [rotation and revolution] around its axis through 360° in 24 hours. Thus, a difference of **1° longitude will make a difference of 4 minutes in time.**
- Therefore the difference of local time between western-most point and eastern-most point is  $30 \times 4 = 120$  minutes or 2 hours.
- This meridian is known as the **Standard Meridian of India**. It passes through **Mirzapur (UP)**.
- The tropic of cancer  $23\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  N latitudes passes through the middle part of India and crosses the states of **Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Tripura and Mizoram.**
- Its total length of land frontier of 15,200 kilometres passes through marshy lands, desert, level plains, rugged mountains, snow covered areas and thick forests.
- Besides land there is a **maritime boundary of 6,100 kilometres** along the main land mass which increases to 7,516 kilometres of the coastlines of Andaman-Nicobar and Lakshadweep Islands are added to it.
- India is the only country which has given its name to an ocean, i.e. Indian Ocean encircled by 46 countries (27 littoral including Australia, 7 island states and 12 land locked countries).
- Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu, together make the **great peninsular plateau**.
- Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and West Bengal are states on the coast of India. Among our Union Territories, Daman and Pondicherry have sea boundaries.
- **The states of Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand are the only land-locked states which are neither on the coast nor on an international border.**

## Top 10 largest country in the world by area

Rank	Country	Area	Area (mi <sup>2</sup> )	% of Earth's Area
1	Russia	17,098,242 km <sup>2</sup>	6,599,921 mi <sup>2</sup>	11.52%
2	Canada	9,984,670 km <sup>2</sup>	3,854,083 mi <sup>2</sup>	6.73%
3	China	9,706,961 km <sup>2</sup>	3,746,887 mi <sup>2</sup>	6.54%
4	United States	9,372,610 km <sup>2</sup>	3,617,827 mi <sup>2</sup>	6.31%
5	Brazil	8,515,767 km <sup>2</sup>	3,287,086 mi <sup>2</sup>	5.74%
6	Australia	7,692,024 km <sup>2</sup>	2,969,121 mi <sup>2</sup>	5.18%
7	India	3,287,590 km <sup>2</sup>	1,269,010 mi <sup>2</sup>	2.21%
8	Argentina	2,780,400 km <sup>2</sup>	1,073,234 mi <sup>2</sup>	1.87%
9	Kazakhstan	2,724,900 km <sup>2</sup>	1,051,811 mi <sup>2</sup>	1.84%
10	Algeria	2,381,741 km <sup>2</sup>	919,352 mi <sup>2</sup>	1.60%

### India, Tropical or Temperate Country?

- The temperate part (north of Tropic of Cancer) is twice the area of tropical part.
- But India has always been treated as a **tropical country** for two different reasons – physical and cultural.

#### Physical Geographical Reasons

- The country is **separated from the rest of Asia by Himalayas**.
- Its climate is dominated by the **tropical monsoons** and the temperate air masses are blocked by Himalayas.
- Entire area south of the Himalayas is essentially tropical from climatic point of view: Although the night temperatures in winter at several places in North India may come down to the level of those prevailing in temperate lands, yet clear skies and intense insolation raise the day temperatures to a tropical level.

#### Cultural Geographical Reasons

- Settlements, diseases, agricultural and primary economic activities are all tropical in nature.
- It is primarily because of Himalayas that India is a tropical country.

## India's Frontiers

### Data from Ministry Of Home Affairs (Department Of Border Management)

- India has **15106.7 Km** of land border running through 92 districts in 17 States and a coastline of **7516.6 Km [6100 km of mainland coastline + coastline of 1197 Indian islands]** touching 13 States and Union Territories (UTs).
- Barring **Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Delhi, Haryana and Telangana**, all other States in the country have one or more international borders or a coastline and can be regarded as **frontline States** from the point of view of border management.
- India's longest border is with **BANGLADESH** while the shortest border is with Afghanistan.
- The length of India's land borders with neighbouring countries is as under:

Neighbouring country	Length of the common border ( in km)	No. of Indian states having common borders	Names of Indian states having common borders
<b>Bangladesh</b>	4096.7	5	West Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram
<b>China</b>	3488	5	Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim,

			Arunachal Pradesh
<b>Pakistan</b>	3323	4	Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Rajasthan, Gujarat
<b>Nepal</b>	1751	5	Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Sikkim
<b>Myanmar</b>	1643	4	Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram
<b>Bhutan</b>	699	4	Sikkim, West Bengal, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh
<b>Afghanistan</b>	106	1	Jammu & Kashmir (POK)

### Border with China

- This is the **second longest** border of India, next only to its border with Bangladesh.
- Five Indian states, namely Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh touch the Indian boundary with China.
- The Sino-Indian border is generally divided into three sectors namely: (i) the Western sector, (ii) the Middle sector, and (iii) the Eastern sector.

### The Western Sector

- Separates Jammu and Kashmir State of India from the Sinkiang (Xinjiang) province of China.
- The western sector boundary is largely the outcome of the British policy towards the state of Jammu and Kashmir.
- China claims the **Aksai Chin district**, the **Changmo valley**, **Pangong Tso** and the **Sponggar Tso** area of north-east Ladakh as well as a strip of about 5,000 sq km down the entire length of eastern Ladakh.
- China also claims a part of **Huza-Gilgit area** in North Kashmir (*ceded to it in 1963 by Pakistan*).

### The Middle Sector

- Two Indian states of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand touch this border.

### The Eastern Sector

- The 1,140 km long boundary between India and China runs from the eastern limit of Bhutan to a point near Diphu pass (**Talu Pass**) at the trijunction of India, Tibet and Myanmar.

- This line is usually referred to as the **Mc Mahon Line** after Sir Henry Mc Mahon, then foreign secretary of British India, who negotiated the boundary agreement between Great Britain and Tibet at **Shimla accord in 1913-14**.

### The India-Nepal Boundary

- Five states of India, namely Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal and Sikkim touch the Nepalese border with India. The border is a **porous** one with unrestricted movement of goods and people between Indian and Nepal.
- Major portion of Indo-Nepalese border runs in the east-west direction almost along the foothill of the **Shiwalik Range**.

### The India-Bhutan Boundary

- Quite peaceful border and there is no boundary dispute between the two countries.

### The Indo-Pakistan Boundary

- The Indo-Pakistan boundary is the result of partition of the country in 1947 under the **Radcliffe award** of which **Sir Cyril Radcliffe** was the chairman.
- Jammu and Kashmir, **Sir Creek** are the major disputed regions.

### The India-Bangladesh Border

- India's 4,096 km long border with Bangladesh is the longest.
- This boundary has been determined under the **Radcliffe Award** which divided the erstwhile province of Bengal into two parts.
- The boundary line between India and Bangladesh crisscrosses the vast **Ganga-Brahmaputra delta**.

- This boundary runs is not even a small mount or hill which could be used for demarcating the boundary between the two countries.

### India-Myanmar Boundary

- This boundary runs roughly along the watershed between the Brahmaputra and **Ayeyarwady [Irrawaddy]**.
- It passes through thickly forested regions, with Mizo Hills, Manipur and Nagaland on

the Indian side and Chin Hills, Naga Hills and Kachin state on the Myanmar side.

### India-Sri Lanka Boundary

- India and Sri Lanka are separated from each other by a narrow and shallow sea called **Palk Strait**.
- **Dhanushkodi** on the Tamil Nadu coast in India is only 32 km away from **Talaimanar** in Jaffna peninsula in Sri Lanka. These two points are joined by a group of islets forming **Adam's Bridge**.

## International Boundary Lines

S No	In Between Countries	Boundary Line
1.	The boundary line between India and Pakistan drawn by Sir Cyril Radcliffe in 1947	<b>Radcliffe Line</b>
2.	Boundary line between India and Afghanistan demarcated by Sir Mortimer Durand in 1896. (Presently it is between Pakistan and Afghanistan)	<b>Durand Line</b>
3.	The boundary line between India and China. (It was demarcated by Sir Henry McMahon)	<b>McMahon Line</b>
4.	The line which Pakistan claims should be the Demarcation line between India and Pakistan, not accepted by India.	<b>20th Parallel</b>
5.	The boundary line between India and Myanmar.	<b>24th Parallel</b>
6.	Boundary line between Germany and Poland to which German retreated in 1917 during the First World War	<b>Hindenburg Line</b>
7.	The boundary line between East Germany and Poland	<b>Oder-Neisse Line</b>
8.	The line which defines the boundary between North Vietnam and South Vietnam before the two were united	<b>17th Parallel</b>
9.	The boundary line between North Korea and South Korea	<b>38th Parallel</b>
10.	The boundary line between United States of America and Canada	<b>49th Parallel</b>
11.	Boundary Line between France and Germany	<b>Maginot Line</b>
12.	Boundary Line between Egypt and Sudan	<b>22<sup>nd</sup> Parallel North</b>
13.	Boundary Line between Libya and Sudan	<b>20<sup>th</sup> Parallel North</b>
14.	Line of fortification drawn by Germany on its border with France	<b>Siegfried Line</b>

**Interesting Fact:** The **Tin Bigha Corridor** is a strip of land belonging to India is a part of West Bengal and lies adjacent to the Bangladesh border. In 1947, the border between India and Bangladesh was also demarcated by Sir Radcliffe.

## Indian Geography at a Glance

### Mountain Ranges:

The mountains extend for more than 2400 km. They are seven.

- the **Himalayas**
- the **Patkai** and other ranges bordering India in the North and North East
- the **Vindhyas**, which separates the Indo-Gangetic plain from the Deccan Plateau
- the **Satpura**
- the **Aravali**
- the **Sahyadri**, which covers the eastern fringe of the West Coast plains
- the **Eastern Ghats**, irregularly scattered on the East Coast and forming the boundary of the East Coast plains
- Kangchenjunga is the tallest mountain peak of India and also ranked as the third highest mountain in the World (after Mount Everest and K2).
- The height of Kangchenjunga is 8586 metres. There are total 5 peaks out of which three lie on border of India and Nepal, while the other two are completely in Nepal.

### Rivers and the Plains:

- The main rivers of the **Himalayan group** and the **Indus**, the **Ganga** and the **Brahmaputra**.
- These rivers are both **snow-fed** and **rain-fed** and have therefore **continuous** flow throughout the year.
- Himalayan rivers discharge about **70%** of their inflow into the sea. This includes about 5% from central Indian rivers. They join the Ganga and drain into the Bay of Bengal.
- The plains of **Ganga and Indus** run for about **2400 km** with a width ranging from 240 to 320 km.
- They are formed in the river basins of Ganga-Yamuna, Brahmaputra, Indus, Godavari, Kaveri, etc.
- Longest River in India" is Ganga with 2510 km in length is the longest river of India which flows east through the Gangetic Plain of northern India and Bangladesh.

### Desert:

- The desert region is located in the western and north western part of the country. It can be divided into two parts: the great desert and the little desert.
- The great desert extends from the edge of the Rann of Kachch beyond the Luni river northward. The whole of Rajasthan-Sind Frontier runs through this.
- The little desert extends from the Luni between Jaisalmer and Jodhpur up to northern wastes (dry and rocky land).
- Coldest Place in India" is Drass in western Ladakh is located at an altitude of 3230 m in the Kargil district of Jammu and Kashmir.
- The winter temperature falls to as low as -22 degrees to -45 degrees with strong snow storms while summer temperature is near 15 degrees.

### Peninsula:

- The Peninsula is marked by elevated landmass with height ranging from 460 to 1220m.
- The Deccan and the Southern part surrounded by water on three sides make the peninsula.
- It is flanked by Eastern Ghats on the east and Western Ghat on the west. Between the Ghats and the Sea lies the narrow coastal belt.

### Climate:

- Traditionally, seasons in India are divided into six – Vasanta (Mar-Apr), Grishma (May-Jun), Varsha (Jul-Aug), Sharada (Sept-Oct), Hemanta (Nov-Dec) and Shishira (Jan-Feb).

- In broad terms, India experiences 3 main seasons, (a) Winter – Dec to March, (b) Summer – Apr to May and (c) Monsoon – South West Jun to Sept, and NE (retreating SW monsoon) – Oct to Nov. Between the two main seasons are Spring and Autumn.
- India receives 86% of the rain during SW monsoon. NE monsoon is a very restricted one – experienced in Tamil Nadu, Kerala and sometimes AP and Karnataka.

### Distribution of Soils:

Types of Soils	States where found	Rich in:	Lacks in:	Crops grown
<b>Alluvial</b>	Mainly found in the plains of Gujarat, Punjab, Haryana, UP, Bihar, Jharkhand etc.	Potash and Lime	Nitrogen and Phosphorous	Large variety of rabi and kharif crops such as wheat, rice, sugarcane, cotton, jute etc.
<b>Black (Regur soil)</b>	Deccan plateau- Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Valleys of Krishna and Godavari.	Lime, Iron, Magnesia and Alumina, Potash	Phosphorous, Nitrogen and organic matter	Cotton, sugarcane, jowar, tobacco, wheat, rice etc.
<b>Red</b>	Eastern and southern part of the deccan plateau, Orissa, Chattisgarh and southern parts of the middle Ganga plain.	Iron and Potash	Nitrogen, Phosphorous and humus.	Wheat, rice, cotton, sugarcane and pulses
<b>Laterite</b>	Karnataka, Kerala, Tamilnadu, Madhya Pradesh, Assam and Orissa hills.	Iron oxide and potash	Organic matter, Nitrogen, Phosphate and Calcium	Cashewnuts, tea, coffee, rubber
<b>Arid and Desert</b>	Western Rajastan, north Gujarat and southern Punjab	Soluble salts, phosphate	Humus, Nitrogen	Only drought resistant and salt tolerant crops such as barley, rape, cotton, millets maize and pulses
<b>Saline and Alkaline</b>	Western Gujarat, deltas of eastern coast, Sunderban areas of West Bengal, Punjab and Haryana	Sodium, Potassium, Magnesium	Nitrogen and Calcium	Unfit for agriculture

## India Census 2011

Some crucial facts about the census 2011 are as follows:

<b>1. No of states/UTs</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>2. No of districts</b>	640 (47 increased from 2001)
<b>3. No of towns</b>	7,933 (2772 increased from 2001)
<b>4. No of villages</b>	6,40,930 (2342 increased from 2001)
<b>5. Total population</b>	1,21,05,69,573 (68.8% urban & 31.2% rural )
<b>6. Child Sex Ratio (0- 6 year)</b>	919 (Rural- 923 & Urban-905)
<b>7. Sex Ratio</b>	940 females/1000 males
<b>8. Density of population</b>	382 Person/ KM <sup>2</sup>
<b>9. Decadal population growth from 2001 to 2011</b>	17.64%
<b>10. Literacy rate</b>	74.04% of total population
<b>11. India have total population of the world</b>	17.5%
<b>12. India's population is now bigger than the combined population of</b>	USA, Indonesia, Brazil, Pakistan and Bangladesh.
<b>13. The Union Territory of Lakshadweep is the least populated</b>	64,429 persons
<b>14. Top five literate states are...</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Kerala</b> - 94.00 %</li> <li>2. Lakshadweep - 91.85 %</li> <li>3. Mizoram - 91.33 %</li> <li>4. Goa - 88.70 %</li> <li>5. Tripura - 87.22 %</li> </ol>
<b>15. Highest sex ratio _ Top five states</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Kerala</b> - 1084</li> <li>2. Puducherry - 1037</li> <li>3. Tamil Nadu - 996</li> <li>4. Andhra Pradesh - 993</li> <li>5. Chhattisgarh - 991</li> </ol>
<b>16. Lowest sex ratio _ Top five states</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Daman and Diu</b> - 618</li> <li>2. Dadra &amp; Nagar Haveli - 774</li> <li>3. Chandigarh - 818</li> <li>4. Delhi - 868</li> <li>5. Andaman &amp; Nicobar Islands - 876</li> </ol>
<b>17. Top five highly dense union territories</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Delhi</b> - 11,320</li> <li>2. Chandigarh - 9,258</li> <li>3. Puducherry - 2,547</li> <li>4. Daman and Diu - 2,191</li> <li>5. Lakshadweep - 2,149</li> </ol>
<b>18. Top four highly dense states</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Bihar</b>- 1,106</li> <li>2. West Bengal - 1,028</li> <li>3. Kerala - 860</li> <li>4. Uttar Pradesh - 829</li> </ol>
<b>19. Top four highly populated states in India</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Uttar Pradesh</b> - 199,281,477 (16.49%)</li> <li>2. <b>Maharashtra</b>- 112,372,972 (9.28%)</li> <li>3. Bihar - 103,804,637 (8.58%)</li> <li>4. West Bengal - 91,347,736 (7.55%)</li> </ol>
<b>20. Top five least populated union territories in India</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Chandigarh</b> - 1,054,686 (0.09%)</li> <li>2. Andaman and Nicobar Islands - 379,944(0.03%)</li> <li>3. Dadra and Nagar Haveli - 342,853(0.03%)</li> <li>4. <b>Daman and Diu</b>- 242,911(0.02%)</li> <li>5. <b>Lakshadweep</b> 64,429 (0.01%)</li> </ol>



## India Facts

- Highest Award-Bharat Ratna
- Highest Gallantry Award-Param Vir Chakra
- Longest Tributary river of India-Yamuna
- Largest Lake-Wular Lake, Kashmir (Fresh Water)
- Largest Lake (Saline Water)-Chilka Lake, Orrisa
- Largest Man-Made Lake-Govind Vallabh Pant Sagar (Rihand Dam)
- Highest Lake-Devtal Lake, Gadhwal (Uttarakhand)
- Highest Peak-Karkoram-2 of K-2(8,611 meters) (India)
- Largest Populated City-Mumbai
- Largest State(Area)-Rajasthan
- Largest State(Population)-Uttar Pradesh
- Highest rainfall-Cherrapunji (426 inches per annum) Mawsynrane
- State wise largest area under forest-Madhya Pradesh
- Largest Delta-Sunderbans Delta
- Longest River Bridge-Mahatma Gandhi Setu, Patna
- Biggest Cave temple-Ellora
- Longest Road-Grand Trunk Road
- Longest Canal-Indira Gandhi Canal or Rajasthan Canal (Rajasthan)
- Largest Museum-India Museum at Kolkata
- Longest Dam-Hirakud Dam (Orrisa)
- Highest Dam-Tehri Dam ( 260 meters , 850 ft )
- Largest District-Kutch district (Area wise)
- Longest Highway NH-44 (NH-7) which turns from Varanasi to Kanyakumari
- Smallest State (Population)-Sikkim
- Smallest State (Area)-Goa
- Largest State (Area)-Rajasthan
- Largest State (Population)-Uttar Pradesh
- Largest Cave Temple-Kailash Temple, Ellora (Maharashtra)
- Largest Port-Mumbai
- Largest Church-Saint Cathedral (Goa)
- Longest Beach-Marina Beach, Chennai
- Highest Airport-Leh (Laddakh)
- Largest River Island-Majuli (Brahmaputra River, Asom)

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