

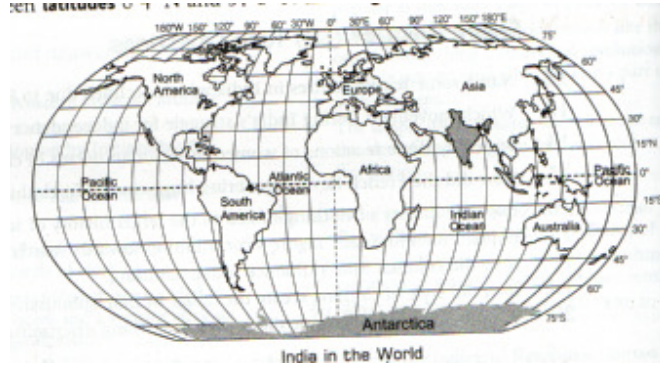


9th India: Size and Location

Indian civilisation is one of the oldest civilisations in the world. During the last 50 years, India has made remarkable progress in both social and economic spheres. These spheres include agriculture, industry, technology and overall economic development. India has also contributed significantly to the making of world history.

Location

India is a vast country located in the Northern hemisphere. Its mainland extends between latitude 8° 4' N and 37°6' N and longitudes 68°7' E and 97°25' E.



India is divided into almost two equal parts by the Tropic of Cancer (23° 30' N). It passes through the States of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Tripura and Mizoram. Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep islands are the two groups of islands belonging to India. Andaman and Nicobar islands is situated South – East of mainland in Bay of Bengal. Lakshadweep islands is situated South - West of mainland in Arabian Sea.

The southernmost point of the Indian Union, 'Indira Point', was submerged under the sea water in 2004 during the Tsunami.

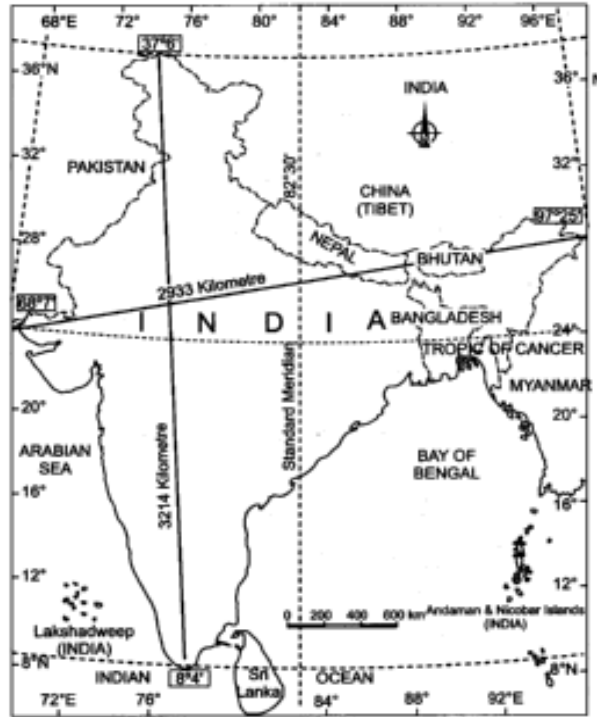
Latitudes: They are the angular distances of points on the Earth's surface North or South of the equator which is at 0° latitude.

Longitudes: They are the angular distances of points on the Earth's surface to the East or West of the plane going through Greenwich near London in England, which is at 0° longitude.

Tropic of Cancer: An imaginary parallel of latitude at 23°30'N. South of this is considered the tropical zone of India.

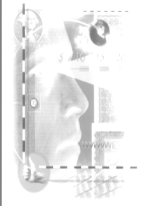
Size

India's landmass with an area of 3.28 million sq km occupies 2.4% of the total geographical area of the world. India (3.28 sq km) is the seventh largest country of the world, after Russia, (17.09 sq km) Canada (9.98 sq km), USA (9.62 sq km), China (9.59 sq km), Brazil (8.51 sq km) and Australia (7.69 sq km). India has a land boundary which extends over 15200 km and the length of its coastline including Andaman and Nicobar and Lakshadweep islands is about 7516.6 km.



Extent

India is bounded by young fold mountains in the North - West, North and North - East. India's landmass begin to form cone shape in South of 22° North latitude. This landmass



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extends towards the Indian oceans and divides it into Arabian sea in West and the Bay of Bengal in East.

The latitudinal as well as longitudinal extent of the mainland is about 30° both ways. The fact is that the East – West extend appears smaller than the North – South extend. The North – South distance is 3214 km and the East – West distance is 2933 km.

Indian Standard Time (IST)

There is a time lag (period of time) of almost two hours between Gujarat in the West and Arunachal Pradesh in the East. Hence, time along the Standard Meridian of India (82° 30' E) passing through Mirzapur (in Uttar Pradesh) is taken as the standard time for the whole country. For convenience, Indian Standard Time (IST) is followed as a standard time. The latitudinal extend influences the duration of day and night as one moves from South to North.

India and the World
India occupies the greater part of South Asia. India has a central location between the East and the West Asia. The Indian landmass is the southward extension of the continent of Asia. The trans-Indian ocean routes, which connect the countries of Europe in the West and the countries of East Asia provide a strategic central location to India.

The Deccan Peninsula extends towards the Indian ocean, helping India to establish close contact with West Asia, Africa and Europe from the Western coast and with South-East and East Asia from the Eastern coast.

India has the longest coastline on the Indian ocean as compared to other countries. This eminent position is the reason which justifies the naming of the Indian ocean after the name of the country.

Due to the opening of Suez Canal in 1869, India's distance from Europe has been reduced by 7000 km.

Fold mountains: Mountains which develop when two tectonic plates come together causing compression, resulting in buckling and folding of rocks.

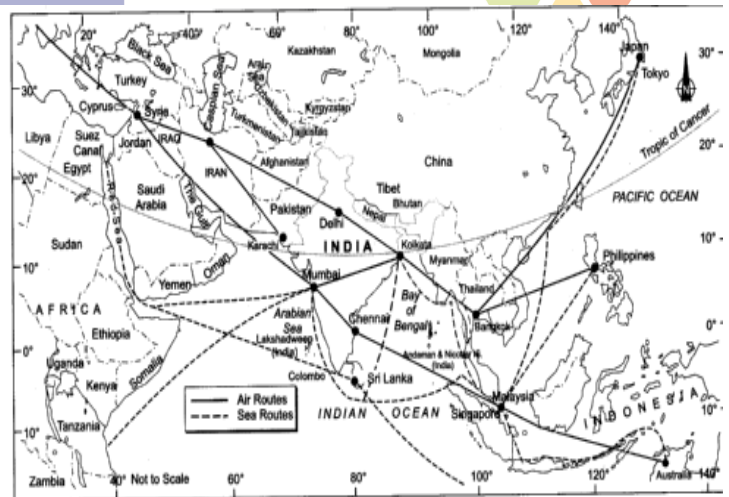
Standard meridian: The longitude which passes through a country/region which is used to fix the standard time for that country/region.

Indian Standard Time (IST): This is the local time of the longitude 82° 30' E, taken as the time for the whole of India. This is five and a half hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT).

India's Contacts with the World

India's contacts with the world have continued through the ages, but its relationships through the land routes are much older than its maritime contacts. The various passes across the mountains in the North have provided passages to the ancient travellers, while the oceans restricted such interaction.

The following instances states that these routes have contributed to the exchange of ideas and commodities between India and the rest of the world from ancient times.



India on the International Highway of Trade and Commerce





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The ideas of the Upanishads and the Ramayana, the stories of the Panchtantra, Indian numerals and decimal system have reached many parts of the world. Spices, muslin and other merchandise were taken from India to different countries. The influence of Greek sculpture and the architectural style of domes and minarets from West Asia can be seen in many parts of India. Before 1947, there were two types of States in India - the "Provinces and the Princely States"

Provinces were ruled directly by the British officials, who were appointed by the Viceroy. Princely States were ruled by local, hereditary rulers, who acknowledged sovereignty in return for local autonomy.

India's neighbours

India has an important strategic position in South Asia. It has 29 states and 7 Union Territories. India shares its land boundaries with Pakistan and Afghanistan in the North - West, China (Tibet), Nepal and Bhutan in the North, and Myanmar and Bangladesh in the East. Two island countries Sri Lanka and Maldives, lie to the South of India across the Indian ocean.

All these countries are part of the Indian subcontinent. India and Sri Lanka are separated by a narrow channel of sea formed by the Palk Strait and Gulf of Mannar while Maldives lie to the South of Lakshadweep. Thus, India has strong geographical and historical links with its neighbours.

Telangana became the 29th State of India on 2nd June, 2014 after reorganisation of Andhra Pradesh.

Worksheet

1. What is the longitudinal and latitudinal extent of India?
2. Name the southernmost point of the Indian Union.
3. When was Suez Canal opened?
4. Name the two countries separated by Palk Strait.
5. Which countries are included in the Indian subcontinent?
6. Fill in the blanks
 - (i) The State of Sikkim borders the countries named _____
 - (ii) The maritime trade route from the Suez Canal to Singapore passes through the Indian port of _____
 - (iii) The State of Madhya Pradesh is bounded by the states named _____
 - (iv) The 29th State of India _____ was founded on 2nd June, 2014.
7. Why 82° 30'E has been selected as the Standard Meridian of India?
8. Find out the number of Union Territories along the Western and Eastern coasts.
9. The Sun rises two hours earlier in Arunachal Pradesh as compared to Gujarat in the West, but the watches show the same time. How does this happen?