

India – Size and Location

Introduction

- India is one of the oldest civilizations in the world.
- It has a rich cultural heritage and long history of trade, art, and knowledge.
- It is a vast country with great physical diversity such as mountains, plateaus, plains, and islands.
- India occupies an important position in South Asia.

India's Location and Extent

- India is located in the Northern Hemisphere and the Eastern Hemisphere.
- The mainland of India extends between 8°4' N to 37°6' N latitudes and 68°7' E to 97°25' E longitudes.
- The Tropic of Cancer (23°30' N) passes almost halfway through the country.
- It divides the country into two equal halves – Northern and Southern India.
- The Andaman and Nicobar Islands lie to the southeast in the Bay of Bengal.
- The Lakshadweep Islands lie in the Arabian Sea to the southwest.
- India has a total length of about 3,214 km from north to south and about 2,933 km from east to west.
- The land frontier of India is about 15,200 km long.
- The total length of India's coastline (including islands) is about 7,516.6 km.

Size of India

- India is the seventh-largest country in the world in terms of land area.
- The total area of India is 3.28 million square kilometres.
- It occupies about 2.4% of the total land area of the world.
- India's size gives it a distinct geographical identity in South Asia.
- India is surrounded by three large water bodies:
 - The Arabian Sea in the west
 - The Bay of Bengal in the east
 - The Indian Ocean in the south

Due to its central location in Asia, India has had strong historical and cultural contacts with other parts of the world.

India and the World

- India is located in the center of the Indian Ocean.
- This central location gives India a strategic advantage for sea trade.
- India has had historical and cultural links with many countries like:
 - West Asia
 - Central Asia
 - Southeast Asia
 - Africa
- India's location helped in the exchange of ideas and goods like:
 - Spices, cotton, sugar
 - Ideas of religion, mathematics, and architecture
- India also received influences from other regions such as:
 - Greek sculpture
 - West Asian architecture
 - Central Asian styles

In modern times, India continues to maintain strong economic and political relations with the world.

India's Neighbours

- India shares its land boundaries with 7 countries:
 - Pakistan – to the northwest
 - Afghanistan – to the northwest (through the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir region)
 - China – to the north
 - Nepal – to the north
 - Bhutan – to the north
 - Bangladesh – to the east
 - Myanmar (Burma) – to the east
- Sri Lanka and Maldives are India's neighbours across the sea:
- Sri Lanka is separated from India by a narrow channel of sea called the Palk Strait and Gulf of Mannar.
- Maldives lies to the south-west of India in the Arabian Sea.
- India has strong social, cultural, historical, and economic ties with its neighbouring countries.
- India plays a major role in maintaining peace and cooperation in South Asia.