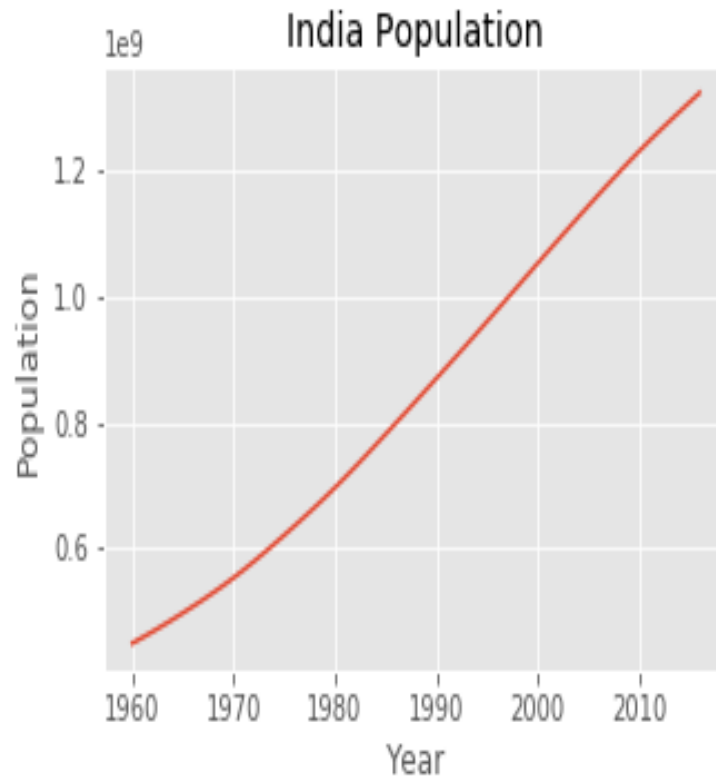


# India



India, officially the Republic of India (Bhārat Gaṇarājya),<sup>[e]</sup> is a country in South Asia. It is the seventh-largest country by area, the second-most populous country (with over 1.2 billion people), and the most populous democracy in the world. It is bounded by the Indian Ocean on the south, the Arabian Sea on the southwest, and the Bay of Bengal on the southeast. It shares land borders with Pakistan to the west;<sup>[f]</sup> China, Nepal, and Bhutan to the northeast; and Myanmar (Burma) and Bangladesh to the east. In the Indian Ocean, India is in the vicinity of Sri Lanka and the Maldives. India's Andaman and Nicobar Islands share a maritime border with Thailand and Indonesia. The Indian subcontinent was home to the urban Indus Valley Civilisation of the 3rd millennium BCE — one of the world's earliest civilizations.<sup>[g]</sup> In the following millennium, the oldest scriptures associated with Hinduism began to be composed. Large scale urbanization occurred on the Ganges in the first millennium BCE leading to the Mahajanapadas, and Buddhism and Jainism arose. Early political consolidations took place under the Maurya and Gupta empires; the later peninsular Middle Kingdoms influenced cultures as far as Southeast Asia. In the medieval era, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity, and Islam arrived, and Sikhism emerged, all adding to the region's diverse culture. Much of the north fell to the Delhi sultanate; the south was united under the Vijayanagara Empire. The country was unified in the 17th century by the Mughal Empire. In the 18th century, the subcontinent came under the Maratha Empire and in the 19th under the British East India Company, later shifting to British crown rule. A nationalist movement emerged in the late 19th century, which later, under Mahatma Gandhi, was noted for nonviolent resistance and led to India's independence in 1947.