

INDIA

Comprehensive Encyclopedia

Complete Information about India, States, Cities and Culture

Compiled from Wikipedia

India

India, officially the Republic of India, is a country in South Asia. It is the seventh-largest country by area; the most populous country since 2023; and, since its independence in 1947, the world's most populous democracy. 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; China, Nepal, and Bhutan to the north; and Bangladesh and Myanmar to the east. In the Indian Ocean, India shares maritime borders with Sri Lanka, Maldives, Thailand, and Indonesia. Modern humans arrived on the Indian subcontinent from Africa no later than 55,000 years ago. Their long occupation, predominantly in isolation as hunter-gatherers, has made the region highly diverse. Settled life emerged on the subcontinent in the western margins of the Indus river basin 9,000 years ago, evolving gradually into the Indus Valley Civilisation of the third millennium BCE. By 1200 BC, an archaic form of Sanskrit, an Indo-European language, had diffused into India from the northwest. Its hymns recorded the early dawnings of Hinduism in India. India's pre-existing Dravidian languages were supplanted in the northern regions. By 400 BC, caste had emerged within Hinduism, and Buddhism and Jainism had arisen, proclaiming social orders unlinked to heredity. Early political consolidations gave rise to the loose-knit Maurya and Gupta Empires. Widespread creativity suffused this era, but the status of women declined, and untouchability became an organised belief. In South India, the Middle kingdoms exported Dravidian language scripts and religious cultures to the kingdoms of Southeast Asia. In the 1st millennium, Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and Zoroastrianism became established on India's southern and western coasts. In the early centuries of the 2nd millennium Muslim armies from Central Asia intermittently overran India's northern plains. The resulting Delhi Sultanate drew northern India into the cosmopolitan networks of medieval Islam. In south India, the Vijayanagara Empire created a long-lasting composite Hindu culture. In the Punjab, Sikhism emerged, rejecting institutionalised religion. The Mughal Empire ushered in two centuries of economic expansion and relative peace, and left a rich architectural legacy. Gradually expanding rule of the British East India Company turned India into a colonial economy but consolidated its sovereignty. British Crown rule began in 1858. The rights promised to Indians were granted slowly, but technological changes were introduced, and modern ideas of education and the public life took root. A nationalist movement emerged in India, the first in the non-European British Empire and an influence on other nationalist movements. Noted for nonviolent resistance after 1920, it became the primary factor in ending British rule. In 1947, the British Indian Empire was partitioned into two independent dominions, a Hindu-majority dominion of India and a Muslim-majority dominion of Pakistan. A large-scale loss of life and an unprecedented migration accompanied the partition. India has been a federal republic since 1950, governed through a democratic parliamentary system. It is a pluralistic, multilingual and multi-ethnic society. India's population grew from 361 million in 1951 to over 1.4 billion in 2023. During this time, its nominal per capita income increased from US\$64 annually to US\$2,601, and its literacy rate from 16.6% to 74%. A comparatively destitute country in 1951, India has become a fast-growing major economy and a hub for information technology services, with an expanding middle class. India has reduced its poverty rate, though at the cost of increasing economic inequality. It is a nuclear-weapon state that ranks high in military expenditure. It has disputes over Kashmir with its neighbours, Pakistan and China, unresolved since the mid-20th century. Among the socio-economic challenges India faces are gender inequality, child malnutrition, and rising levels of air pollution. India's land is megadiverse with four biodiversity hotspots. India's wildlife, which has traditionally been viewed with tolerance in its culture, is supported in protected habitats.

Etymology According to the Oxford English Dictionary (2009), the name "India" is derived from the Classical Latin *India*, a reference to South Asia and an uncertain region to its east. In turn, "India" derived successively from Hellenistic Greek *India* (■vδ■α), Ancient Greek *Indos* (■vδ■ς), Old Persian *Hindush* (an eastern province

of the Achaemenid Empire), and ultimately its cognate, the Sanskrit Sindhu, or 'river'-specifically the Indus River, and by extension its well-settled southern basin. The Ancient Greeks referred to the Indians as Indoi, 'the people of the Indus'.

The term Bharat (Bh^hrat; pronounced [b^ha^hrat]), mentioned in both Indian epic poetry and the Constitution of India, is used in its variations by many Indian languages. A modern rendering of the historical name Bharatavarsha, which applied originally to North India, Bharat gained increased currency from the mid-19th century as a native name for India. Hindustan ([^hind^hstaⁿ]) is a Middle Persian name for India that became popular by the 13th century, and was used widely since the era of the Mughal Empire. The meaning of Hindustan has varied, referring to a region encompassing the northern Indian subcontinent (present-day northern India and Pakistan) or to India in its near entirety.

History Ancient India 55,000 years ago, the first modern humans, or Homo sapiens, arrived on the Indian subcontinent from Africa. The earliest known modern human remains in South Asia date to about 30,000 years ago. After 6500 BC, evidence for domestication of food crops and animals, construction of permanent structures, and storage of agricultural surplus appeared in Mehrgarh and other sites in Balochistan, Pakistan. These gradually developed into the Indus Valley Civilisation, the first urban culture in South Asia, which flourished during 2500-1900 BC in Pakistan and western India. Centred around cities such as Mohenjo-daro, Harappa, Dholavira, and Kalibangan, and relying on varied forms of subsistence, the civilisation engaged robustly in crafts production and wide-ranging trade. During the period 2000-500 BC, many regions of the subcontinent transitioned from the Chalcolithic cultures to the Iron Age ones. The Vedas, the oldest scriptures associated with Hinduism, were composed during this period, and historians have analysed these to posit a Vedic culture in the Punjab region and the upper Gangetic Plain. Most historians also consider this period to have encompassed several waves of Indo-Aryan migration into the subcontinent from the north-west. The caste system, which created a hierarchy of priests, warriors, and free peasants, but which excluded indigenous peoples by labelling their occupations impure, arose during this period. On the Deccan Plateau, archaeological evidence from this period suggests the existence of a chiefdom stage of political organisation. In South India, a progression to sedentary life is indicated by the large number of megalithic monuments dating from this period, as well as by nearby traces of agriculture, irrigation tanks, and craft traditions.

In the late Vedic period, around the 6th century BCE, the small states and chiefdoms of the Ganges Plain and the north-western regions had consolidated into 16 major oligarchies and monarchies that were known as the mahajanapadas. The emerging urbanisation gave rise to non-Vedic religious movements, two of which became independent religions. Jainism came into prominence during the life of its exemplar, Mahavira. Buddhism, based on the teachings of Gautama Buddha, attracted followers from all social classes excepting the middle class; chronicling the life of the Buddha was central to the beginnings of recorded history in India. In an age of increasing urban wealth, both religions held up renunciation as an ideal, and both established long-lasting monastic traditions. Politically, by the 3rd century BCE, the kingdom of Magadha had annexed or reduced other states to emerge as the Maurya Empire. The empire was once thought to have controlled most of the subcontinent except the far south, but its core regions are now thought to have been separated by large autonomous areas. The Mauryan kings are known as much for their empire-building and determined management of public life as for Ashoka's renunciation of militarism and far-flung advocacy of the Buddhist dhamma. The Sangam literature of the Tamil language reveals that, between 200 BC and 200 CE, the southern peninsula was ruled by the Cheras, the Cholas, and the Pandyas, dynasties that traded extensively with the Roman Empire and with West and Southeast Asia. In North India, Hinduism asserted patriarchal control within the family, leading to increased subordination of women. By the 4th and 5th centuries, the Gupta Empire had

created a complex system of administration and taxation in the greater Ganges Plain; this system became a model for later Indian kingdoms. Under the Guptas, a renewed Hinduism based on devotion, rather than the management of ritual, began to assert itself. This renewal was reflected in a flowering of sculpture and architecture, which found patrons among an urban elite. Classical Sanskrit literature flowered as well, and Indian science, astronomy, medicine, and mathematics made significant advances.

Medieval India The Indian early medieval age, from 600 to 1200 CE, is defined by regional kingdoms and cultural diversity. When Harsha of Kannauj, who ruled much of the Indo-Gangetic Plain from 606 to 647 CE, attempted to expand southwards, he was defeated by the Chalukya ruler of the Deccan. When his successor attempted to expand eastwards, he was defeated by the Pala king of Bengal. When the Chalukyas attempted to expand southwards, they were defeated by the Pallavas from farther south, who in turn were opposed by the Pandyas and the Cholas from still farther south. No ruler of this period was able to create an empire and consistently control lands much beyond their core region. During this time, pastoral peoples, whose land had been cleared to make way for the growing agricultural economy, were accommodated within caste society, as were new non-traditional ruling classes. The caste system consequently began to show regional differences. In the 6th and 7th centuries, the first devotional hymns were created in the Tamil language. They were imitated all over India and led to both the resurgence of Hinduism and the development of all modern languages of the subcontinent. Indian royalty, big and small, and the temples they patronised drew citizens in great numbers to the capital cities, which became economic hubs as well. Temple towns of various sizes began to appear everywhere as India underwent another urbanisation. By the 8th and 9th centuries, the effects were felt in Southeast Asia, as South Indian culture and political systems were exported to lands that became part of modern-day Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Brunei, Cambodia, Vietnam, Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Indian merchants, scholars, and sometimes armies were involved in this transmission; Southeast Asians took the initiative as well, with many sojourning in Indian seminaries and translating Buddhist and Hindu texts into their languages. After the 10th century, Muslim Central Asian nomadic clans, using swift-horse cavalry and raising vast armies united by ethnicity and religion, repeatedly overran South Asia's north-western plains, leading eventually to the establishment of the Islamic Delhi Sultanate in 1206. The sultanate was to control much of North India and to make many forays into South India. Although at first disruptive for the Indian elites, the sultanate largely left its vast non-Muslim subject population to its own laws and customs. By repeatedly repulsing Mongol raiders in the 13th century, the sultanate saved India from the devastation visited on West and Central Asia, setting the scene for centuries of migration of fleeing soldiers, learned men, mystics, traders, artists, and artisans from that region into the subcontinent, thereby creating a syncretic Indo-Islamic culture in the north. The sultanate's raiding and weakening of the regional kingdoms of South India paved the way for the indigenous Vijayanagara Empire. Embracing a strong Shaivite tradition and building upon the military technology of the sultanate, the empire came to control much of peninsular India, and was to influence South Indian society for long afterwards.

Early modern India In the early 16th century, northern India, then under mainly Muslim rulers, fell again to the superior mobility and firepower of a new generation of Central Asian warriors. The resulting Mughal Empire did not stamp out the local societies it came to rule. Instead, it balanced and pacified them through new administrative practices and diverse and inclusive ruling elites, leading to more systematic, centralised, and uniform rule. Eschewing tribal bonds and Islamic identity, especially under Akbar, the Mughals united their far-flung realms through loyalty, expressed through a Persianised culture, to an emperor who had near-divine status. The Mughal state's economic policies, deriving most revenues from agriculture and mandating that taxes be paid in the well-regulated silver currency, caused peasants and artisans to enter larger markets. The relative peace maintained by the empire during much of the 17th century was a factor in India's economic expansion, resulting in greater patronage of painting, literary forms, textiles, and architecture. Newly coherent

social groups in northern and western India, such as the Marathas, the Rajputs, and the Sikhs, gained military and governing ambitions during Mughal rule, which, through collaboration or adversity, gave them both recognition and military experience. Expanding commerce during Mughal rule gave rise to new Indian commercial and political elites along the coasts of southern and eastern India. As the empire disintegrated, many among these elites were able to seek and control their own affairs. By the early 18th century, with the lines between commercial and political dominance being increasingly blurred, a number of European trading companies, including the English East India Company, had established coastal outposts. The East India Company's control of the seas, greater resources, and more advanced military training and technology led it to increasingly assert its military strength and caused it to become attractive to a portion of the Indian elite; these factors were crucial in allowing the company to gain control over the Bengal region by 1765 and sideline the other European companies. Its further access to the riches of Bengal and the subsequent increased strength and size of its army enabled it to annexe or subdue most of India by the 1820s. India was then no longer exporting manufactured goods as it long had, but was instead supplying the British Empire with raw materials. Many historians consider this to be the onset of India's colonial period. By this time, with its economic power severely curtailed by the British parliament and having effectively been made an arm of British administration, the East India Company began more consciously to enter non-economic arenas, including education, social reform, and culture.

Modern India Historians consider India's modern age to have begun sometime between 1848 and 1885. The appointment in 1848 of Lord Dalhousie as Governor General of the East India Company set the stage for changes essential to a modern state. These included the consolidation and demarcation of sovereignty, the surveillance of the population, and the education of citizens. Technological changes-among them, railways, canals, and the telegraph-were introduced not long after their introduction in Europe. Disaffection with the company also grew during this time and set off the Indian Rebellion of 1857. Fed by diverse resentments and perceptions, including invasive British-style social reforms, harsh land taxes, and summary treatment of some rich landowners and princes, the rebellion rocked many regions of northern and central India and shook the foundations of Company rule. Although the rebellion was suppressed by 1858, it led to the dissolution of the East India Company and the direct administration of India by the British government. Proclaiming a unitary state and a gradual but limited British-style parliamentary system, the new rulers also protected princes and landed gentry as a feudal safeguard against future unrest. In the decades following, public life gradually emerged all over India, leading eventually to the founding of the Indian National Congress (generally referred to as the Congress) in 1885.

The rush of technology and the commercialisation of agriculture in the second half of the 19th century was marked by economic setbacks, and many small farmers became dependent on the whims of far-away markets. There was an increase in the number of large-scale famines, and, despite the risks of infrastructure development borne by Indian taxpayers, little industrial employment was generated for Indians. There were also salutary effects: commercial cropping, especially in the newly canalised Punjab, led to increased food production for internal consumption. The railway network provided critical famine relief, notably reduced the cost of moving goods, and helped nascent Indian-owned industry. After World War I, in which approximately one million Indians served, a new period began. It was marked by British reforms but also repressive legislation, by more strident Indian calls for self-rule, and by the beginnings of a nonviolent movement of non-co-operation, of which Mahatma Gandhi would become the leader and enduring symbol. During the 1930s, slow legislative reform was enacted by the British; the Indian National Congress won victories in the resulting elections. The next decade was beset with crises: Indian participation in World War II, the Congress's final push for non-co-operation, and an upsurge of Muslim nationalism. All were capped by the advent of independence in 1947, but tempered by the partition of India into two states: India and Pakistan. Vital to India's self-image as an independent nation was

its constitution, completed in 1950, which put in place a secular and democratic republic. Economic liberalisation, which began in the 1980s and with the collaboration with Soviet Union for technical knowledge, has created a large urban middle class, transformed India into one of the world's fastest-growing economies, and increased its geopolitical influence. Yet, India is also shaped by persistent poverty, both rural and urban; by religious and caste-related violence; by Maoist-inspired Naxalite insurgencies; and by separatism in Jammu and Kashmir and in Northeast India. It has unresolved territorial disputes with China and with Pakistan. India's sustained democratic freedoms are unique among the world's newer nations; however, in spite of its recent economic successes, freedom from want for its disadvantaged population remains a goal yet to be achieved. As of 2025, poverty in India declined sharply, mainly due to government welfare programs.

Geography India accounts for the bulk of the Indian subcontinent, lying atop the Indian tectonic plate, a part of the Indo-Australian Plate. India's defining geological processes began 75 million years ago when the Indian Plate, then part of the southern supercontinent Gondwana, began a north-eastward drift caused by seafloor spreading to its south-west, and later, south and south-east. Simultaneously, the vast Tethyan oceanic crust, to its northeast, began to subduct under the Eurasian Plate. These dual processes, driven by convection in the Earth's mantle, both created the Indian Ocean and caused the Indian continental crust eventually to under-thrust Eurasia and to uplift the Himalayas. Immediately south of the emerging Himalayas, plate movement created a vast crescent-shaped trough that rapidly filled with river-borne sediment and now constitutes the Indo-Gangetic Plain. The original Indian plate makes its first appearance above the sediment in the ancient Aravalli range, which extends from the Delhi Ridge in a southwesterly direction. To the west lies the Thar Desert, the eastern spread of which is checked by the Aravallis. The remaining Indian Plate survives as peninsular India, the oldest and geologically most stable part of India. It extends as far north as the Satpura and Vindhya ranges in central India. These parallel chains run from the Arabian Sea coast in Gujarat in the west to the coal-rich Chota Nagpur Plateau in Jharkhand in the east. To the south, the remaining peninsular landmass, the Deccan Plateau, is flanked on the west and east by coastal ranges known as the Western and Eastern Ghats; the plateau contains the country's oldest rock formations, some over one billion years old. Constituted in such fashion, India lies to the north of the equator between 6° 44' and 35° 30' north latitude and 68° 7' and 97° 25' east longitude. India's coastline measures 7,517 kilometres (4,700 mi) in length; of this distance, 5,423 kilometres (3,400 mi) belong to peninsular India and 2,094 kilometres (1,300 mi) to the Andaman, Nicobar, and Lakshadweep island chains. According to the Indian naval hydrographic charts, the mainland coastline consists of the following: 43% sandy beaches; 11% rocky shores, including cliffs; and 46% mudflats or marshy shores. Major Himalayan-origin rivers that substantially flow through India include the Ganges and the Brahmaputra, both of which drain into the Bay of Bengal. Important tributaries of the Ganges include the Yamuna and the Kosi. The Kosi's extremely low gradient, caused by long-term silt deposition, leads to severe floods and course changes. Major peninsular rivers, whose steeper gradients prevent their waters from flooding, include the Godavari, the Mahanadi, the Kaveri, and the Krishna, which also drain into the Bay of Bengal; and the Narmada and the Tapi, which drain into the Arabian Sea. Coastal features include the marshy Rann of Kutch of western India and the alluvial Sundarbans delta of eastern India; the latter is shared with Bangladesh. India has two archipelagos: the Lakshadweep, coral atolls off India's south-western coast; and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, a volcanic chain in the Andaman Sea.

Climate The Indian climate is strongly influenced by the Himalayas and the Thar Desert, both of which drive the economically and culturally pivotal summer and winter monsoons. The Himalayas prevent cold Central Asian katabatic winds from blowing in, keeping the bulk of the Indian subcontinent warmer than most locations at similar latitudes. The Thar Desert plays a crucial role in attracting the moisture-laden south-west summer monsoon winds that, between June and October, provide the majority of India's rainfall. Four major climatic groupings predominate in India: tropical wet, tropical dry, subtropical humid, and montane. Temperatures in

India have risen by 0.7 C (1.3 F) between 1901 and 2018. Climate change in India is often thought to be the cause. The retreat of Himalayan glaciers has adversely affected the flow rate of the major Himalayan rivers, including the Ganges and the Brahmaputra. According to some current projections, the number and severity of droughts in India will have markedly increased by the end of the present century.

Biodiversity India is a megadiverse country, a term employed for 17 countries that display high biological diversity and contain many species exclusively indigenous, or endemic, to them. India is the habitat for 8.6% of all mammals, 13.7% of bird species, 7.9% of reptile species, 6% of amphibian species, 12.2% of fish species, and 6.0% of all flowering plant species. Fully a third of Indian plant species are endemic. India also contains four of the world's 34 biodiversity hotspots, or regions that display significant habitat loss in the presence of high endemism. India's most dense forests, such as the tropical moist forest of the Andaman Islands, the Western Ghats, and Northeast India, occupy approximately 3% of its land area. Moderately dense forest, whose canopy density is between 40% and 70%, occupies 9.39% of India's land area. It predominates in the temperate coniferous forest of the Himalayas, the moist deciduous sal forest of eastern India, and the dry deciduous teak forest of central and southern India. India has two natural zones of thorn forest, one in the Deccan Plateau, immediately east of the Western Ghats, and the other in the western part of the Indo-Gangetic plain, now turned into rich agricultural land by irrigation, its features no longer visible. Among the Indian subcontinent's notable indigenous trees are the astringent *Azadirachta indica*, or neem, which is widely used in rural Indian herbal medicine, and the luxuriant *Ficus religiosa*, or peepul, which is displayed on the ancient seals of Mohenjo-daro, and under which the Buddha is recorded in the Pali canon to have sought enlightenment. Many Indian species have descended from those of Gondwana, the southern supercontinent from which India separated more than 100 million years ago. India's subsequent collision with Eurasia set off a mass exchange of species. However, volcanism and climatic changes later caused the extinction of many endemic Indian forms. Still later, mammals entered India from Asia through two zoogeographic passes flanking the Himalayas. This lowered endemism among India's mammals, which stands at 12.6%, contrasting with 45.8% among reptiles and 55.8% among amphibians. Among endemics are the vulnerable hooded leaf monkey and the threatened Beddome's toad of the Western Ghats. India contains 172 IUCN-designated threatened animal species, or 2.9% of endangered forms. These include the endangered Bengal tiger and the Ganges river dolphin. Critically endangered species include the gharial, a crocodilian; the great Indian bustard; and the Indian white-rumped vulture, which has become nearly extinct by having ingested the carrion of diclofenac-treated cattle. Before they were extensively used for agriculture and cleared for human settlement, the thorn forests of Punjab were mingled at intervals with open grasslands that were grazed by large herds of blackbuck preyed on by the Asiatic cheetah; the blackbuck, no longer extant in Punjab, is now severely endangered in India, and the cheetah is extinct. The pervasive and ecologically devastating human encroachment of recent decades has critically endangered Indian wildlife. In response, the system of national parks and protected areas, first established in 1935, was expanded substantially. In 1972, India enacted the Wildlife Protection Act and Project Tiger to safeguard crucial wilderness; the Forest Conservation Act was enacted in 1980 and amendments added in 1988. India hosts more than five hundred wildlife sanctuaries and eighteen biosphere reserves, four of which are part of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves; its eighty-nine wetlands are registered under the Ramsar Convention.

Government and politics Politics India is a parliamentary republic with a multi-party system. It has six recognised national parties, including the Indian National Congress (generally referred to as the Congress) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), and over 50 regional parties. The Congress is considered the ideological centre in Indian political culture, whereas the BJP is right-wing to far-right. From 1950 to the late 1980s, Congress held a majority in India's parliament. Afterwards, it increasingly shared power with the BJP, as well as with powerful regional parties, which forced multi-party coalition governments at the centre. In the general elections in 1951, 1957, and 1962, the Congress, led by Jawaharlal Nehru, won easy victories. On Nehru's

death in 1964, Lal Bahadur Shastri briefly became prime minister; he was succeeded in 1966, by Nehru's daughter Indira Gandhi, who led the Congress to election victories in 1967 and 1971. Following public discontent with the state of emergency Indira Gandhi had declared in 1975, the Congress was voted out of power in 1977; Janata Party, which had opposed the emergency, was voted in. Its government lasted two years; Morarji Desai and Charan Singh served as prime ministers. After the Congress was returned to power in 1980, Indira Gandhi was assassinated and succeeded by Rajiv Gandhi, who won comfortably in the elections later that year. A National Front coalition led by the Janata Dal in alliance with the Left Front won the 1989 elections, with the subsequent government lasting just under two years, and V.P. Singh and Chandra Shekhar serving as prime ministers. In the 1991 Indian general election, the Congress, as the largest single party, formed a minority government led by P. V. Narasimha Rao. After the 1996 Indian general election, the BJP formed a government briefly; it was followed by United Front coalitions, which depended on external political support. Two prime ministers served during this period: H.D. Deve Gowda and I.K. Gujral. In 1998, the BJP formed a coalition-the National Democratic Alliance (NDA). Led by Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the NDA became the first non-Congress, coalition government to complete a five-year term. In the 2004 Indian general elections, no party won an absolute majority. Still, the Congress emerged as the largest single party, forming another successful coalition: the United Progressive Alliance (UPA). It had the support of left-leaning parties and MPs who opposed the BJP. The UPA returned to power in the 2009 general election with increased numbers, and it no longer required external support from India's communist parties. Manmohan Singh became the first prime minister since Jawaharlal Nehru in 1957 and 1962 to be re-elected to a consecutive five-year term. In the 2014 general election, the BJP became the first political party since 1984 to win an absolute majority. In the 2019 general election, the BJP regained an absolute majority. In the 2024 general election, a BJP-led NDA coalition formed the government. Narendra Modi, a former chief minister of Gujarat, is in his third term as the prime minister of India and has served in the position since 26 May 2014.

Government India is a federation with a parliamentary system governed under the Constitution of India. Federalism in India defines the power distribution between the union and the states. India's form of government, traditionally described as "quasi-federal" with a strong centre and weak states, has grown increasingly federal since the late 1990s as a result of political, economic, and social changes. The Government of India comprises three branches: the Executive, Legislature, and Judiciary. The President of India is the ceremonial head of state, who is elected indirectly for a five-year term by an electoral college comprising members of national and state legislatures. The Prime Minister of India is the head of government and exercises most executive power. Appointed by the president, the prime minister is supported by the party or political alliance with a majority of seats in the lower house of parliament. The executive of the Indian government consists of the president, the vice-president, and the Union Council of Ministers-with the cabinet being its executive committee-headed by the prime minister. Any minister holding a portfolio must be a member of one of the houses of parliament. In the Indian parliamentary system, the executive is subordinate to the legislature; the prime minister and their council are directly responsible to the lower house of the parliament. Civil servants act as permanent executives and all decisions of the executive are implemented by them. The legislature of India is the bicameral parliament. Operating under a Westminster-style parliamentary system, it comprises an upper house called the Rajya Sabha (Council of States) and a lower house called the Lok Sabha (House of the People). The Rajya Sabha is a permanent body of 245 members who serve staggered six-year terms with elections every 2 years. Most are elected indirectly by the state and union territorial legislatures in numbers proportional to their state's share of the national population. The Lok Sabha's 543 members are elected directly by popular vote among citizens aged at least 18; they represent single-member constituencies for five-year terms. Several seats from each state are reserved for candidates from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in proportion to their population within that state. India has a three-tier unitary independent judiciary comprising the supreme court, headed by the Chief Justice of India, 25 high courts, and a large number of trial courts. The supreme court has original

jurisdiction over cases involving fundamental rights and over disputes between states and the centre and has appellate jurisdiction over the high courts. It has the power to both strike down union or state laws which contravene the constitution and invalidate any government action it deems unconstitutional.

Administrative divisions India is a federal union comprising 28 states and 8 union territories. All states, as well as the union territories of Jammu and Kashmir, Puducherry and the National Capital Territory of Delhi, have elected legislatures and governments following the Westminster system. The remaining five union territories are directly ruled by the central government through appointed administrators. In 1956, under the States Reorganisation Act, states were reorganised on a linguistic basis. There are over a quarter of a million local government bodies at city, town, block, district and village levels.

States Union territories Foreign relations India became a republic in 1950, remaining a member of the Commonwealth of Nations. India strongly supported decolonisation in Africa and Asia in the 1950s; it played a leading role in the Non-Aligned Movement. After initially cordial relations, India suffered a humiliating military defeat to China in a 1962 war. Another military conflict followed in 1967 in which India successfully repelled a Chinese attack. India has had uneasy relations with its western neighbour, Pakistan. The two countries went to war in 1947, 1965, 1971, and 1999. Three of these wars were fought over the disputed territory of Kashmir. In contrast, the 1971 war followed India's support for the independence of Bangladesh. After the 1965 war with Pakistan, India began to pursue close military and economic ties with the Soviet Union. By the late 1960s, the Soviet Union was its largest arms supplier. India has played a key role in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation and the World Trade Organization. The nation has supplied 100,000 military and police personnel in 35 UN peacekeeping operations. China's nuclear test of 1964 and threats to intervene in support of Pakistan in the 1965 war caused India to produce nuclear weapons. India conducted its first nuclear weapons test in 1974 and carried out additional underground testing in 1998. India has signed neither the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty nor the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, considering both to be flawed and discriminatory. India maintains a "no first use" nuclear policy and is developing a nuclear triad capability as a part of its "Minimum Credible Deterrence" doctrine. Since the end of the Cold War, India has increased its economic, strategic, and military cooperation with the United States and the European Union. In 2008, a civilian nuclear agreement was signed between India and the United States. Although India possessed nuclear weapons at the time and was not a party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, it received waivers from the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Nuclear Suppliers Group, ending earlier restrictions on India's nuclear technology and commerce; India subsequently signed co-operation agreements involving civilian nuclear energy with Russia, France, the United Kingdom, and Canada.

Military The President of India is the supreme commander of the nation's armed forces. With 1.45 million active troops, they are the world's second-largest military. It comprises the Indian Army, the Indian Navy, the Indian Air Force, and the Indian Coast Guard. The official Indian defence budget for 2011 was US\$36.03 billion, or 1.83% of GDP. Defence expenditure was pegged at US\$70.12 billion for fiscal year 2022-23 and, increased 9.8% on the previous fiscal year. India is the world's second-largest arms importer; between 2016 and 2020, it accounted for 9.5% of the total global arms imports. Much of the military expenditure was focused on defence against Pakistan and countering growing Chinese influence in the Indian Ocean.

Economy According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Indian economy in 2024 was nominally worth \$3.94 trillion; it is the fifth-largest economy by market exchange rates and is, at around \$15.0 trillion, the third-largest by purchasing power parity (PPP). With its average annual GDP growth rate of 5.8% over the past two decades, and reaching 6.1% during 2011-2012, India is one of the world's fastest-growing economies.

However, due to its low GDP per capita-which ranks 136th in the world in nominal per capita income and 125th in per capita income adjusted for purchasing power parity (PPP)-the vast majority of Indians fall into the low-income group. Until 1991, all Indian governments followed protectionist policies that were influenced by socialist economics. Widespread state intervention and regulation largely walled the economy off from the outside world. An acute balance of payments crisis in 1991 forced the nation to liberalise its economy; since then, it has moved increasingly towards a free-market system by emphasising both foreign trade and direct investment inflows. India has been a member of World Trade Organization since 1 January 1995. The 522-million-worker Indian labour force is the world's second largest, as of 2017. The service sector makes up 55.6% of GDP, the industrial sector 26.3% and the agricultural sector 18.1%. India's foreign exchange remittances of US\$100 billion in 2022, highest in the world, were contributed to its economy by 32 million Indians working in foreign countries. In 2006, the share of external trade in India's GDP stood at 24%, up from 6% in 1985. In 2008, India's share of world trade was 1.7%; In 2021, India was the world's ninth-largest importer and the sixteenth-largest exporter. Between 2001 and 2011, the contribution of petrochemical and engineering goods to total exports grew from 14% to 42%. India was the world's second-largest textile exporter after China in the 2013 calendar year. Averaging an economic growth rate of 7.5% for several years before 2007, India has more than doubled its hourly wage rates during the first decade of the 21st century. Some 431 million Indians have left poverty since 1985; India's middle classes are projected to number around 580 million by 2030. In 2024, India's consumer market was the world's third largest. India's nominal GDP per capita increased steadily from US\$308 in 1991, when economic liberalisation began, to US\$1,380 in 2010, to an estimated US\$2,731 in 2024. It is expected to grow to US\$3,264 by 2026.

Industries The Indian automotive industry, the world's second-fastest growing, increased domestic sales by 26% during 2009-2010, and exports by 36% during 2008-2009. In 2022, India became the world's third-largest vehicle market after China and the United States, surpassing Japan. At the end of 2011, the Indian IT industry employed 2.8 million professionals, generated revenues close to US\$100 billion equalling 7.5% of Indian GDP, and contributed 26% of India's merchandise exports. The pharmaceutical industry in India includes 3,000 pharmaceutical companies and 10,500 manufacturing units; India is the world's third-largest pharmaceutical producer, largest producer of generic medicines and supply up to 50-60% of global vaccines demand, these all contribute up to US\$24.44 billions in exports and India's local pharmaceutical market is estimated up to US\$42 billion. India is among the top 12 biotech destinations in the world. The Indian biotech industry grew by 15.1% in 2012-2013, increasing its revenues from ■204.4 billion (Indian rupees) to ■235.24 billion (US\$3.94 billion at June 2013 exchange rates).

Energy India's capacity to generate electrical power is 300 gigawatts, of which 42 gigawatts is renewable. The country's usage of coal is a major cause of India's greenhouse gas emissions, but its renewable energy is competing strongly. India emits about 7% of global greenhouse gas emissions. This equates to about 2.5 tons of carbon dioxide per person per year, which is half the world average. Increasing access to electricity and clean cooking with liquefied petroleum gas have been priorities for energy in India.

Socio-economic challenges Despite economic growth during recent decades, India continues to face socio-economic challenges. In 2006, India contained the largest number of people living below the World Bank's international poverty line of US\$1.25 per day. The proportion decreased from 60% in 1981 to 42% in 2005. Under the World Bank's later revised poverty line, it was 21%-22.5 in 2011. In 2019, the estimates had gone down to 10.2%. In 2014, 30.7% of India's children under the age of five were underweight. According to a Food and Agriculture Organization report in 2015, 15% of the population was undernourished. The Midday Meal Scheme attempts to lower these rates. A 2018 Walk Free Foundation report estimated that nearly 8

million people in India were living in different forms of modern slavery, such as bonded labour, child labour, human trafficking, and forced begging. According to the 2011 census, there were 10.1 million child labourers in the country, a decline of 2.6 million from 12.6 million in 2001. Since 1991, economic inequality between India's states has consistently grown: the per-capita net state domestic product of the richest states in 2007 was 3.2 times that of the poorest. Corruption in India is perceived to have decreased. According to the Corruption Perceptions Index, India ranked 78th out of 180 countries in 2018, an improvement from 85th in 2014. As of 2025, poverty in India declined sharply. According to the World Bank report, extreme poverty fell from 16.2% in 2011-12 to 2.3% in 2022-23. In rural areas it fell from 18.4% to 2.8%, and in urban areas, from 10.7% to 1.1%. 378 million people were lifted from poverty and 171 million from extreme poverty. The main reason, according to the World Bank, is not economic growth but different government welfare programs, like transferring food and money to the people with low income, improving their access to services.

Demographics With an estimated 1,428,627,663 residents in 2023, India is the world's most populous country. 1,210,193,422 residents were reported in the 2011 provisional census report. Its population grew by 17.64% from 2001 to 2011, compared to 21.54% growth in the previous decade (1991-2001). The human sex ratio, according to the 2011 census, is 940 females per 1,000 males. The median age was 28.7 in 2020. The first post-colonial census, conducted in 1951, counted 361 million people. Medical advances made in the last 50 years as well as increased agricultural productivity brought about by the "Green Revolution" have caused India's population to grow rapidly. The life expectancy in India is 70 years to 71.5 years for women, and 68.7 years for men. There are around 93 physicians per 100,000 people.

Urbanisation Migration from rural to urban areas has been an important dynamic in India's recent history. The number of people living in urban areas grew by 31.2% between 1991 and 2001. In 2001, over 70% lived in rural areas. The level of urbanisation increased further from 27.81% in the 2001 census to 31.16% in the 2011 census. The slowing down of the overall population growth rate was due to the sharp decline in the growth rate in rural areas since 1991. In the 2011 census, there were 53 million-plus urban agglomerations in India. Among them Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Ahmedabad, in decreasing order by population.

Languages Among speakers of the Indian languages, 74% speak Indo-Aryan languages (the easternmost branch of the Indo-European languages), 24% speak Dravidian languages (indigenous to South Asia and spoken widely before the spread of Indo-Aryan languages), and 2% speak Austroasiatic languages or the Sino-Tibetan languages. India has no national language. Hindi, with the largest number of speakers, is the official language of the government. English is used extensively in business and administration and has the status of a "subsidiary official language"; it is important in education, especially as a medium of higher education. Each state and union territory has one or more official languages, and the constitution recognises in particular 22 "scheduled languages".

Religion The 2011 census reported the religion in India with the largest number of followers was Hinduism (79.80% of the population), followed by Islam (14.23%); the remaining were Christianity (2.30%), Sikhism (1.72%), Buddhism (0.70%), Jainism (0.36%) and others (0.9%). India has the third-largest Muslim population-the largest for a non-Muslim majority country.

Education The literacy rate in 2011 was 74.04%: 65.46% among females and 82.14% among males. The rural-urban literacy gap, which was 21.2 percentage points in 2001, dropped to 16.1 percentage points in 2011.

The improvement in the rural literacy rate is twice that of urban areas. Kerala is the most literate state with 93.91% literacy; while Bihar the least with 63.82%. In the 2011 census, about 73% of the population was literate, with 81% for men and 65% for women. This compares to 1981 when the respective rates were 41%, 53% and 29%. In 1951, the rates were 18%, 27% and 9%. In 1921, the rates 7%, 12% and 2%. In 1891, they were 5%, 9% and 1%. According to Latika Chaudhary, in 1911 there were under three primary schools for every ten villages. Statistically, more caste and religious diversity reduced private spending. Primary schools taught literacy, so local diversity limited its growth. The education system of India is the world's second-largest. India has over 900 universities, 40,000 colleges and 1.5 million schools. In India's higher education system, a significant number of seats are reserved under affirmative action policies for the historically disadvantaged. In recent decades India's improved education system is often cited as one of the main contributors to its economic development.

Health The life expectancy at birth has increased from 49.7 years in 1970-1975 to 72.0 years in 2023. The under-five mortality rate for the country was 113 per 1,000 live births in 1994 whereas in 2018 it reduced to 41.1 per 1,000 live births. India bears a disproportionately large burden of the world's tuberculosis rates, with World Health Organization (WHO) statistics for 2022 estimating 2.8 million new infections annually, accounting for 26% of the global total. It is estimated that approximately 40% of the population of India carry tuberculosis infection. In 2018 chronic obstructive pulmonary disease was the leading cause of death after heart disease. The 10 most polluted cities in the world are all in northern India with more than 140 million people breathing air 10 times or more over the WHO safe limit. In 2017, air pollution killed 1.24 million Indians.

Culture Society The Indian caste system embodies much of the social stratification and many of the social restrictions found on the Indian subcontinent. Social classes are defined by thousands of endogamous hereditary groups, often termed as **jātis**, or "castes". India abolished untouchability in 1950 with the adoption of the constitution and has since enacted other anti-discriminatory laws and social welfare initiatives. However, the system continues to be dominant in India, and caste-based inequality, discrimination, segregation, and violence persist. Multi-generational patrilineal joint families have been the norm in India, though nuclear families are becoming common in urban areas. An overwhelming majority of Indians have their marriages arranged by their parents or other family elders. Marriage is thought to be for life, and the divorce rate is extremely low, with less than one in a thousand marriages ending in divorce. Child marriages are common, especially in rural areas; many women wed before reaching 18, which is their legal marriageable age. Female infanticide in India, and lately female foeticide, have created skewed gender ratios; the number of missing women in the country quadrupled from 15 million to 63 million in the 50 years ending in 2014, faster than the population growth during the same period. According to an Indian government study, an additional 21 million girls are unwanted and do not receive adequate care. Despite a government ban on sex-selective foeticide, the practice remains commonplace in India, the result of a preference for boys in a patriarchal society. The payment of dowry, although illegal, remains widespread across class lines. Deaths resulting from dowry, mostly from bride burning, are on the rise, despite stringent anti-dowry laws.

Visual art India has a very ancient tradition of art, which has exchanged many influences with the rest of Eurasia, especially in the first millennium, when Buddhist art spread with Indian religions to Central, East and Southeast Asia, the last also greatly influenced by Hindu art. Thousands of seals from the Indus Valley civilisation of the third millennium BCE have been found, usually carved with animals, but also some with human figures. The Pashupati seal, excavated in Mohenjo-daro, Pakistan, in 1928-29, is the best known. After this there is a long period with virtually nothing surviving. Almost all surviving ancient Indian art thereafter is in various forms of religious sculpture in durable materials, or coins. There was probably originally far more in

wood, which is lost. In north India Mauryan art is the first imperial movement. In the first millennium CE, Buddhist art spread with Indian religions to Central, East and Southeast Asia, the last also greatly influenced by Hindu art. Over the following centuries a distinctly Indian style of sculpting the human figure developed, with less interest in articulating precise anatomy than ancient Greek sculpture but showing smoothly flowing forms expressing prana ("breath" or life-force). This is often complicated by the need to give figures multiple arms or heads, or represent different genders on the left and right of figures, as with the Ardhanarishvara form of Shiva and Parvati. Most of the earliest large sculpture is Buddhist, either excavated from Buddhist stupas such as Sanchi, Sarnath and Amaravati, or is rock cut reliefs at sites such as Ajanta, Karla and Ellora. Hindu and Jain sites appear rather later. In spite of this complex mixture of religious traditions, generally, the prevailing artistic style at any time and place has been shared by the major religious groups, and sculptors probably usually served all communities. Gupta art, at its peak c. 300 CE - c. 500 CE, is often regarded as a classical period whose influence lingered for many centuries after; it saw a new dominance of Hindu sculpture, as at the Elephanta Caves. Across the north, this became rather stiff and formulaic after c. 800 CE, though rich with finely carved detail in the surrounds of statues. But in the South, under the Pallava and Chola dynasties, sculpture in both stone and bronze had a sustained period of great achievement; the large bronzes with Shiva as Nataraja have become an iconic symbol of India. Ancient paintings have only survived at a few sites, of which the crowded scenes of court life in the Ajanta Caves are some of the most important. Painted manuscripts of religious texts survive from Eastern India from 10th century onwards, most of the earliest being Buddhist and later Jain. These significantly influenced later artistic styles. The Persian-derived Deccan painting, starting just before the Mughal miniature, between them give the first large body of secular painting, with an emphasis on portraits, and the recording of princely pleasures and wars. The style spread to Hindu courts, especially among the Rajputs, and developed a variety of styles, with the smaller courts often the most innovative, with figures such as Nihal Chand and Nainsukh. As a market developed among European residents, it was supplied by Company painting by Indian artists with considerable Western influence. In the 19th century, cheap Kalighat paintings of gods and everyday life, done on paper, were urban folk art from Calcutta, which later saw the Bengal School of Art, reflecting the art colleges founded by the British, the first movement in modern Indian painting.

Clothing From ancient times until the advent of the modern, the most widely worn traditional dress in India was draped. For women it took the form of a sari, a single piece of cloth many yards long. The sari was traditionally wrapped around the lower body and the shoulder. In its modern form, it is combined with an underskirt, or Indian petticoat, and tucked in the waist band for more secure fastening. It is also commonly worn with an Indian blouse, or choli, which serves as the primary upper-body garment, the sari's end-passing over the shoulder-covering the midriff and obscuring the upper body's contours. For men, a similar but shorter length of cloth, the dhoti, has served as a lower-body garment. The use of stitched clothes became widespread after Muslim rule was established at first by the Delhi sultanate (c. 1300 CE) and then continued by the Mughal Empire (c. 1525 CE). Among the garments introduced during this time and still commonly worn are: the shalwars and pyjamas, both styles of trousers, and the tunics kurta and kameez. In southern India, the traditional draped garments were to see much longer continuous use. Salwars are atypically wide at the waist but narrow to a cuffed bottom. They are held up by a drawstring, which causes them to become pleated around the waist. The pants can be wide and baggy, or they can be cut quite narrow, on the bias, in which case they are called churidars. When they are ordinarily wide at the waist and their bottoms are hemmed but not cuffed, they are called pyjamas. The kameez is a long shirt or tunic, its side seams left open below the waistline. The kurta is traditionally collarless and made of cotton or silk; it is worn plain or with embroidered decoration, such as chikankari; and typically falls to either just above or just below the wearer's knees. In the last 50 years, fashions have changed a great deal in India. Increasingly, in urban northern India, the sari is no longer the apparel of everyday wear, though they remain popular on formal occasions. The traditional shalwar kameez is

rarely worn by younger urban women, who favour churidars or jeans. In office settings, ubiquitous air conditioning allows men to wear sports jackets year-round. For weddings and formal occasions, men in the middle and upper classes often wear Jodhpuri bandhgala, or short Nehru jackets, with pants, with the groom and his groomsmen sporting sherwanis and churidars. The dhoti, once the universal garment of Hindu males, the wearing of which in the homespun and handwoven khadi allowed Gandhi to bring Indian nationalism to the millions, is seldom seen in the cities.

Cuisine The foundation of a typical Indian meal is a cereal cooked plainly and complemented with flavourful savoury dishes. The cooked cereal could be steamed rice; chapati, a thin unleavened bread; the idli, a steamed breakfast cake; or dosa, a griddled pancake. The savoury dishes might include lentils, pulses and vegetables commonly spiced with ginger and garlic, but also with a combination of spices that may include coriander, cumin, turmeric, cinnamon, cardamon and others. They might also include poultry, fish, or meat dishes. In some instances, the ingredients may be mixed during the cooking process. A platter, or thali, used for eating usually has a central place reserved for the cooked cereal, and peripheral ones for the flavourful accompaniments. The cereal and its accompaniments are eaten simultaneously rather than a piecemeal manner. This is accomplished by mixing-for example of rice and lentils-or folding, wrapping, scooping or dipping-such as chapati and cooked vegetables.

India has distinctive vegetarian cuisines, each a feature of the geographical and cultural histories of its adherents. About 20% to 39% of India's population consists of vegetarians. Much of this stems from caste hierarchy, as upper castes, such as the Brahmins, consider vegetarian food to be "pure". Although meat is eaten widely in India, the proportional consumption of meat in the overall diet is low. Unlike China, which has increased its per capita meat consumption substantially in its years of increased economic growth, in India the strong dietary traditions have contributed to dairy, rather than meat, becoming the preferred form of animal protein consumption. The most significant import of cooking techniques into India during the last millennium occurred during the Mughal Empire. Dishes such as the pilaf, developed in the Abbasid caliphate, and cooking techniques such as the marinating of meat in yogurt, spread into northern India from regions to its northwest. To the simple yogurt marinade of Persia, onions, garlic, almonds, and spices began to be added in India. Rice was partially cooked and layered alternately with the sauteed meat, the pot sealed tightly, and slow cooked according to another Persian cooking technique, to produce what has today become biryani, a feature of festive dining in many parts of India. In the food served in Indian restaurants worldwide, the diversity of Indian food has been partially concealed by the dominance of Punjabi cuisine. The popularity of tandoori chicken-cooked in the tandoor oven, which had traditionally been used for baking bread in the rural Punjab and the Delhi region, especially among Muslims, but which is originally from Central Asia-dates to the 1950s, and was caused in large part by an entrepreneurial response among people from the Punjab who had been displaced by the 1947 partition.

Sports Several traditional sports, such as kabaddi, kho kho, pehlwani, gilli-danda, hopscotch and martial arts such as Kalarippayattu and marma adi, remain popular in India. Chess is commonly held to have originated in India as chaturaṅga; in recent years, there has been a rise in the number of Indian grandmasters and world champions. Parcheesi is derived from Pachisi, another traditional Indian pastime, which in early modern times was played on a giant marble court by Mughal emperor Akbar. Cricket is the most popular sport in India. India is one of the most successful cricket teams in the world, having won two Cricket World Cups, two T20 World Cups, three Champions Trophies, and finished as runners-up twice in the World Test Championship. India has won a record eight field hockey gold medals in the summer Olympics.

See also Administrative divisions of India Outline of India

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History of India

Anatomically modern humans first arrived on the Indian subcontinent between 73,000 and 55,000 years ago. The earliest known human remains in South Asia date to 30,000 years ago. Sedentariness began in South Asia around 7000 BCE; by 4500 BCE, settled life had spread, and gradually evolved into the Indus Valley Civilisation, one of three early cradles of civilisation in the Old World, which flourished between 2500 BCE and 1900 BCE in present-day Pakistan and north-western India. Early in the second millennium BCE, persistent drought caused the population of the Indus Valley to scatter from large urban centres to villages. Indo-Aryan tribes moved into the Punjab from Central Asia in several waves of migration. The Vedic Period of the Vedic people in northern India (1500-500 BCE) was marked by the composition of their extensive collections of hymns (Vedas). The social structure was loosely stratified via the varna system, incorporated into the highly evolved present-day Jati system. The pastoral and nomadic Indo-Aryans spread from the Punjab into the Gangetic plain. Around 600 BCE, a new, interregional culture arose; then, small chieftaincies (janapadas) were consolidated into larger states (mahajanapadas). Second urbanization took place, which came with the rise of new ascetic movements and religious concepts, including the rise of Jainism and Buddhism. The latter was synthesized with the preexisting religious cultures of the subcontinent, giving rise to Hinduism.

Chandragupta Maurya overthrew the Nanda Empire and established the first great empire in ancient India, the Maurya Empire. India's Mauryan king Ashoka is widely recognised for the violent Kalinga war and his historical acceptance of Buddhism and his attempts to spread nonviolence and peace across his empire. The Maurya Empire would collapse in 185 BCE, on the assassination of the then-emperor Brihadratha by his general Pushyamitra Shunga. Shunga would form the Shunga Empire in the north and north-east of the subcontinent, while the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom would claim the north-west and found the Indo-Greek Kingdom. Various parts of India were ruled by numerous dynasties, including the Gupta Empire, in the 4th to 6th centuries CE. This period, witnessing a Hindu religious and intellectual resurgence is known as the Classical or Golden Age of India. Aspects of Indian civilisation, administration, culture, and religion spread to much of Asia, which led to the establishment of Indianised kingdoms in the region, forming Greater India. The most significant event between the 7th and 11th centuries was the Tripartite struggle centred on Kannauj. Southern India saw the rise of multiple imperial powers from the middle of the fifth century. The Chola dynasty conquered southern India in the 11th century. In the early medieval period, Indian mathematics, including Hindu numerals, influenced the development of mathematics and astronomy in the Arab world, including the creation of the Hindu-Arabic numeral system. Islamic conquests made limited inroads into modern Afghanistan and Sindh as early as the 8th century, followed by the invasions of Mahmud Ghazni. The Delhi Sultanate, established in 1206 by Central Asian Turks, ruled much of northern India in the 14th century. It was governed by various Turkic and Afghan dynasties, including the Indo-Turkic Tughlaqs. The empire declined in the late 14th century following the invasions of Timur and saw the advent of the Malwa, Gujarat, and Bahmani sultanates, the last of which split in 1518 into the five Deccan sultanates. The wealthy Bengal Sultanate also emerged as a major power, lasting over three centuries. During this period, multiple strong Hindu kingdoms, notably the Vijayanagara Empire and Rajput states under the Kingdom of Mewar emerged and played significant roles in shaping the cultural and political landscape of India. The early modern period began in the 16th century, when the Mughal Empire conquered most of the Indian subcontinent, signaling the proto-industrialisation, becoming the biggest global economy and manufacturing power. The Mughals suffered a gradual decline in the early 18th century, largely due to the rising power of the Marathas, who took control of extensive regions of the Indian subcontinent, and numerous Afghan invasions. The East India Company, acting as a sovereign force on behalf of the British government, gradually acquired control of huge areas of India between the middle of the 18th and the middle of

the 19th centuries. Policies of company rule in India led to the Indian Rebellion of 1857. India was afterwards ruled directly by the British Crown, in the British Raj. After World War I, a nationwide struggle for independence was launched by the Indian National Congress, led by Mahatma Gandhi. Later, the All-India Muslim League would advocate for a separate Muslim-majority nation state. The British Indian Empire was partitioned in August 1947 into the Dominion of India and Dominion of Pakistan, each gaining its independence.

Prehistoric era (before c. 3300 BCE) Paleolithic Hominin expansion from Africa is estimated to have reached the Indian subcontinent approximately two million years ago, and possibly as early as 2.2 million years ago. This dating is based on the known presence of *Homo erectus* in Indonesia by 1.8 million years ago and in East Asia by 1.36 million years ago, as well as the discovery of stone tools at Riwat in Pakistan. Although some older discoveries have been claimed, the suggested dates, based on the dating of fluvial sediments, have not been independently verified. The oldest hominin fossil remains in the Indian subcontinent are those of *Homo erectus* or *Homo heidelbergensis*, from the Narmada Valley in central India, and are dated to approximately half a million years ago. Older fossil finds have been claimed, but are considered unreliable. Reviews of archaeological evidence have suggested that occupation of the Indian subcontinent by hominins was sporadic until approximately 700,000 years ago, and was geographically widespread by approximately 250,000 years ago.

According to a historical demographer of South Asia, Tim Dyson: Modern human beings-*Homo sapiens*-originated in Africa. Then, intermittently, sometime between 60,000 and 80,000 years ago, tiny groups of them began to enter the north-west of the Indian subcontinent. It seems likely that initially they came by way of the coast. It is virtually certain that there were *Homo sapiens* in the subcontinent 55,000 years ago, even though the earliest fossils that have been found of them date to only about 30,000 years before the present. According to Michael D. Petraglia and Bridget Allchin: Y-Chromosome and Mt-DNA data support the colonisation of South Asia by modern humans originating in Africa. ... Coalescence dates for most non-European populations average to between 73-55 ka. Historian of South Asia, Michael H. Fisher, states: Scholars estimate that the first successful expansion of the *Homo sapiens* range beyond Africa and across the Arabian Peninsula occurred from as early as 80,000 years ago to as late as 40,000 years ago, although there may have been prior unsuccessful emigrations. Some of their descendants extended the human range ever further in each generation, spreading into each habitable land they encountered. One human channel was along the warm and productive coastal lands of the Persian Gulf and northern Indian Ocean. Eventually, various bands entered India between 75,000 years ago and 35,000 years ago. Archaeological evidence has been interpreted to suggest the presence of anatomically modern humans in the Indian subcontinent 78,000-74,000 years ago, although this interpretation is disputed. The occupation of South Asia by modern humans, initially in varying forms of isolation as hunter-gatherers, has turned it into a highly diverse one, second only to Africa in human genetic diversity.

According to Tim Dyson: Genetic research has contributed to knowledge of the prehistory of the subcontinent's people in other respects. In particular, the level of genetic diversity in the region is extremely high. Indeed, only Africa's population is genetically more diverse. Related to this, there is strong evidence of 'founder' events in the subcontinent. By this is meant circumstances where a subgroup-such as a tribe-derives from a tiny number of 'original' individuals. Further, compared to most world regions, the subcontinent's people are relatively distinct in having practised comparatively high levels of endogamy.

Neolithic Settled life emerged on the subcontinent in the western margins of the Indus River alluvium approximately 9,000 years ago, evolving gradually into the Indus Valley Civilisation of the third millennium BCE.

According to Tim Dyson: "By 7,000 years ago agriculture was firmly established in Baluchistan... [and] slowly spread eastwards into the Indus valley." Michael Fisher adds: The earliest discovered instance ... of well-established, settled agricultural society is at Mehrgarh in the hills between the Bolan Pass and the Indus plain (today in Pakistan) (see Map 3.1). From as early as 7000 BCE, communities there started investing increased labor in preparing the land and selecting, planting, tending, and harvesting particular grain-producing plants. They also domesticated animals, including sheep, goats, pigs, and oxen (both humped zebu [*Bos indicus*] and unhumped [*Bos taurus*]). Castrating oxen, for instance, turned them from mainly meat sources into domesticated draft-animals as well.

Bronze Age (c. 3300 - 1800 BCE) Indus Valley Civilisation The Bronze Age in the Indian subcontinent began around 3300 BCE. The Indus Valley region was one of three early cradles of civilisation in the Old World; the Indus Valley civilisation was the most expansive, and at its peak, may have had a population of over five million. The civilisation was primarily centred in modern-day Pakistan, in the Indus river basin, and secondarily in the Ghaggar-Hakra River basin. The mature Indus civilisation flourished from about 2600 to 1900 BCE, marking the beginning of urban civilisation on the Indian subcontinent. It included cities such as Harappa, Ganweriwal, and Mohenjo-daro in modern-day Pakistan, and Dholavira, Kalibangan, Rakhigarhi, and Lothal in modern-day India.

Inhabitants of the ancient Indus River valley, the Harappans, developed new techniques in metallurgy and handicraft, and produced copper, bronze, lead, and tin. The civilisation is noted for its cities built of brick, and its roadside drainage systems, and is thought to have had some kind of municipal organisation. The civilisation also developed an Indus script, the earliest of the ancient Indian scripts, which is presently undeciphered. This is the reason why Harappan language is not directly attested, and its affiliation is uncertain.

After the collapse of Indus Valley civilisation, the inhabitants migrated from the river valleys of Indus and Ghaggar-Hakra, towards the Himalayan foothills of Ganga-Yamuna basin.

Ochre Coloured Pottery culture During the 2nd millennium BCE, Ochre Coloured Pottery culture was in Ganga Yamuna Doab region. These were rural settlements with agriculture and hunting. They were using copper tools such as axes, spears, arrows, and swords, and had domesticated animals.

Iron Age (c. 1800 - 200 BCE) Vedic period (c. 1500 - 600 BCE) Starting c. 1900 BCE, Indo-Aryan tribes moved into the Punjab from Central Asia in several waves of migration. The Vedic period is when the Vedas were composed of liturgical hymns from the Indo-Aryan people. The Vedic culture was located in part of north-west India, while other parts of India had a distinct cultural identity. Many regions of the Indian subcontinent transitioned from the Chalcolithic to the Iron Age in this period. The Vedic culture is described in the texts of Vedas, still sacred to Hindus, which were orally composed and transmitted in Vedic Sanskrit. The Vedas are some of the oldest extant texts in India. The Vedic period, lasting from about 1500 to 500 BCE, contributed to the foundations of several cultural aspects of the Indian subcontinent.

Vedic society Historians have analysed the Vedas to posit a Vedic culture in the Punjab, and the upper Gangetic Plain. The Peepal tree and cow were sanctified by the time of the Atharva Veda. Many of the concepts of Indian philosophy espoused later, like dharma, trace their roots to Vedic antecedents. Early Vedic society is described in the Rigveda, the oldest Vedic text, believed to have been compiled during the 2nd millennium BCE, in the north-western region of the Indian subcontinent. At this time, Aryan society consisted of predominantly tribal and pastoral groups, distinct from the Harappan urbanisation which had been abandoned.

The early Indo-Aryan presence probably corresponds, in part, to the Ochre Coloured Pottery culture in archaeological contexts. At the end of the Rigvedic period, the Aryan society expanded from the north-western region of the Indian subcontinent into the western Ganges plain. It became increasingly agricultural and was socially organised around the hierarchy of the four varnas, or social classes. This social structure was characterised by the exclusion of some indigenous peoples by labelling their occupations impure. During this period, many of the previous small tribal units and chiefdoms began to coalesce into Janapadas (monarchical, state-level polities).

Sanskrit epics The Sanskrit epics Ramayana and Mahabharata were composed during this period. The Mahabharata remains the longest single poem in the world. Historians formerly postulated an "epic age" as the milieu of these two epic poems, but now recognise that the texts went through multiple stages of development over centuries. The existing texts of these epics are believed to belong to the post-Vedic age, between c. 400 BCE and 400 CE.

Janapadas The Iron Age in the Indian subcontinent from about 1200 BCE to the 6th century BCE is defined by the rise of Janapadas, which are realms, republics and kingdoms—notably the Iron Age Kingdoms of Kuru, Panchala, Kosala and Videha. The Kuru Kingdom (c. 1200-450 BCE) was the first state-level society of the Vedic period, corresponding to the beginning of the Iron Age in north-western India, around 1200-800 BCE, as well as with the composition of the Atharvaveda. The Kuru state organised the Vedic hymns into collections and developed the *śrauta* ritual to uphold the social order. Two key figures of the Kuru state were king Parikshit and his successor Janamejaya, who transformed this realm into the dominant political, social, and cultural power of northern India. When the Kuru kingdom declined, the centre of Vedic culture shifted to their eastern neighbours, the Panchala kingdom. The archaeological PGW (Painted Grey Ware) culture, which flourished in north-eastern India's Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh regions from about 1100 to 600 BCE, is believed to correspond to the Kuru and Panchala kingdoms. During the Late Vedic Period, the kingdom of Videha emerged as a new centre of Vedic culture, situated even farther to the East (in what is today Nepal and Bihar state); reaching its prominence under the king Janaka, whose court provided patronage for Brahmin sages and philosophers such as Yajñavalkya, Aruni, and Gṛhyaśāstra Vāchaknavi. The later part of this period corresponds with a consolidation of increasingly large states and kingdoms, called Mahajanapadas, across Northern India.

Second urbanisation (c. 600 - 200 BCE) The period between 800 and 200 BCE saw the formation of the Śramaṇa movement, from which Jainism and Buddhism originated. The first Upanishads were written during this period. After 500 BCE, the so-called "second urbanisation" started, with new urban settlements arising at the Ganges plain. The foundations for the "second urbanisation" were laid prior to 600 BCE, in the Painted Grey Ware culture of the Ghaggar-Hakra and Upper Ganges Plain; although most PGW sites were small farming villages, "several dozen" PGW sites eventually emerged as relatively large settlements that can be characterised as towns, the largest of which were fortified by ditches or moats and embankments made of piled earth with wooden palisades. The Central Ganges Plain, where Magadha gained prominence, forming the base of the Maurya Empire, was a distinct cultural area, with new states arising after 500 BCE. It was influenced by the Vedic culture, but differed markedly from the Kuru-Panchala region. It "was the area of the earliest known cultivation of rice in South Asia and by 1800 BCE was the location of an advanced Neolithic population associated with the sites of Chirand and Chechar". In this region, the Śramaṇic movements flourished, and Jainism and Buddhism originated.

Buddhism and Jainism The time between 800 BCE and 400 BCE witnessed the composition of the earliest Upanishads, which form the theoretical basis of classical Hinduism, and are also known as the Vedānta

(conclusion of the Vedas). The increasing urbanisation of India in the 7th and 6th centuries BCE led to the rise of new ascetic or "śramaṇa movements" which challenged the orthodoxy of rituals. Mahavira (c. 599-527 BCE), proponent of Jainism, and Gautama Buddha (c. 563-483 BCE), founder of Buddhism, were the most prominent icons of this movement. Śramaṇa gave rise to the concept of the cycle of birth and death, the concept of samsara, and the concept of liberation. Buddha found a Middle Way that ameliorated the extreme asceticism found in the śramaṇa religions. Around the same time, Mahavira (the 24th Tirthankara in Jainism) propagated a theology that was to later become Jainism. However, Jain orthodoxy believes the teachings of the Tirthankaras predates all known time and scholars believe Parshvanatha (c. 872 - c. 772 BCE), accorded status as the 23rd Tirthankara, was a historical figure. The Vedas are believed to have documented a few Tirthankaras and an ascetic order similar to the śramaṇa movement.

Mahajanapadas The period from c. 600 BCE to c. 300 BCE featured the rise of the Mahajanapadas, sixteen powerful kingdoms and oligarchic republics in a belt stretching from Gandhara in the north-west to Bengal in the eastern part of the Indian subcontinent-including parts of the trans-Vindhyan region. Ancient Buddhist texts, like the *Anguttara Nikāya*, make frequent reference to these sixteen great kingdoms and republics-Anga, Assaka, Avanti, Chedi, Gandhara, Kashi, Kamboja, Kosala, Kuru, Magadha, Malla, Matsya (or Machcha), Panchala, Surasena, Vṛjji, and Vatsa. This period saw the second major rise of urbanism in India after the Indus Valley Civilisation.

Early "republics" or gaṇasaṃgha, such as Shakyas, Koliyas, Mallakas, and Licchavis had republican governments. Gaṇasaṃghas, such as the Mallakas, centered in the city of Kusinagara, and the Vajjika League, centred in the city of Vaishali, existed as early as the 6th century BCE and persisted in some areas until the 4th century CE. The most famous clan amongst the ruling confederate clans of the Vajji Mahajanapada were the Licchavis. This period corresponds in an archaeological context to the Northern Black Polished Ware culture. Especially focused in the Central Ganges plain but also spreading across vast areas of the northern and central Indian subcontinent, this culture is characterised by the emergence of large cities with massive fortifications, significant population growth, increased social stratification, wide-ranging trade networks, construction of public architecture and water channels, specialised craft industries, a system of weights, punch-marked coins, and the introduction of writing in the form of Brahmi and Kharosthi scripts. The language of the gentry at that time was Sanskrit, while the languages of the general population of northern India are referred to as Prakrits. Many of the sixteen kingdoms had merged into four major ones by the time of Gautama Buddha. These four were Vatsa, Avanti, Kosala, and Magadha.

Early Magadha dynasties Magadha formed one of the sixteen Mahajanapadas (Sanskrit: "Great Realms") or kingdoms in ancient India. The core of the kingdom was the area of Bihar south of the Ganges; its first capital was Rajagriha (modern Rajgir) then Pataliputra (modern Patna). Magadha expanded to include most of Bihar and Bengal with the conquest of Licchavi and Anga respectively, followed by much of eastern Uttar Pradesh and Orissa. The ancient kingdom of Magadha is heavily mentioned in Jain and Buddhist texts. It is also mentioned in the Ramayana, Mahabharata and Puranas. The earliest reference to the Magadha people occurs in the Atharva-Veda where they are found listed along with the Angas, Gandharis, and Mujavats. Magadha played an important role in the development of Jainism and Buddhism. Republican communities (such as the community of Rajakumara) are merged into Magadha kingdom. Villages had their own assemblies under their local chiefs called Gramakas. Their administrations were divided into executive, judicial, and military functions. Early sources, from the Buddhist Pāli Canon, the Jain Agamas and the Hindu Puranas, mention Magadha being ruled by the Pradyota dynasty and Haryanka dynasty (c. 544-413 BCE) for some 200 years, c. 600-413 BCE. King Bimbisara of the Haryanka dynasty led an active and expansive policy, conquering Anga in what is

now eastern Bihar and West Bengal. King Bimbisara was overthrown and killed by his son, Prince Ajatashatru, who continued the expansionist policy of Magadha. During this period, Gautama Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, lived much of his life in the Magadha kingdom. He attained enlightenment in Bodh Gaya, gave his first sermon in Sarnath and the first Buddhist council was held in Rajgriha. The Haryanka dynasty was overthrown by the Shaishunaga dynasty (c. 413-345 BCE). The last Shishunaga ruler, Kalasoka, was assassinated by Mahapadma Nanda in 345 BCE, the first of the so-called Nine Nandas (Mahapadma Nanda and his eight sons).

Nanda Empire and Alexander's campaign The Nanda Empire (c. 345-322 BCE), at its peak, extended from Bengal in the east, to the Punjab in the west and as far south as the Vindhya Range. The Nanda dynasty built on the foundations laid by their Haryanka and Shishunaga predecessors. Nanda empire have built a vast army, consisting of 200,000 infantry, 20,000 cavalry, 2,000 war chariots and 3,000 war elephants (at the lowest estimates).

Maurya Empire The Maurya Empire (322-185 BCE) unified most of the Indian subcontinent into one state, and was the largest empire ever to exist on the Indian subcontinent. At its greatest extent, the Mauryan Empire stretched to the north up to the natural boundaries of the Himalayas and to the east into what is now Assam. To the west, it reached beyond modern Pakistan, to the Hindu Kush mountains in what is now Afghanistan. The empire was established by Chandragupta Maurya assisted by Chanakya (Kautilya) in Magadha (in modern Bihar) when he overthrew the Nanda Empire. Chandragupta rapidly expanded his power westwards across central and western India, and by 317 BCE the empire had fully occupied north-western India. The Mauryan Empire defeated Seleucus I, founder of the Seleucid Empire, during the Seleucid-Mauryan war, thus gained additional territory west of the Indus River. Chandragupta's son Bindusara succeeded to the throne around 297 BCE. By the time he died in c. 272 BCE, a large part of the Indian subcontinent was under Mauryan suzerainty. However, the region of Kalinga (around modern day Odisha) remained outside Mauryan control, perhaps interfering with trade with the south.

Bindusara was succeeded by Ashoka, whose reign lasted until his death in about 232 BCE. His campaign against the Kalingans in about 260 BCE, though successful, led to immense loss of life and misery. This led Ashoka to shun violence, and subsequently to embrace Buddhism. The empire began to decline after his death and the last Mauryan ruler, Brihadratha, was assassinated by Pushyamitra Shunga to establish the Shunga Empire. Under Chandragupta Maurya and his successors, internal and external trade, agriculture, and economic activities all thrived and expanded across India thanks to the creation of a single efficient system of finance, administration, and security. The Mauryans built the Grand Trunk Road, one of Asia's oldest and longest major roads connecting the Indian subcontinent with Central Asia. After the Kalinga War, the Empire experienced nearly half a century of peace and security under Ashoka. Mauryan India also enjoyed an era of social harmony, religious transformation, and expansion of scientific knowledge. Chandragupta Maurya's embrace of Jainism increased social and religious renewal and reform across his society, while Ashoka's embrace of Buddhism has been said to have been the foundation of the reign of social and political peace and non-violence across India. Ashoka sponsored Buddhist missions across the Indo-Mediterranean, into Sri Lanka, Southeast Asia, West Asia, North Africa, and Mediterranean Europe. The Arthashastra written by Chanakya and the Edicts of Ashoka are the primary written records of the Mauryan times. Archaeologically, this period falls in the era of Northern Black Polished Ware. The Mauryan Empire was based on a modern and efficient economy and society in which the sale of merchandise was closely regulated by the government. Although there was no banking in the Mauryan society, usury was customary. A significant amount of written records on slavery are found, suggesting a prevalence thereof. During this period, a high-quality steel called Wootz steel

was developed in south India and was later exported to China and Arabia.

Sangam period During the Sangam period Tamil literature flourished from the 3rd century BCE to the 4th century CE. Three Tamil dynasties, collectively known as the Three Crowned Kings of Tamilakam: Chera dynasty, Chola dynasty, and the Pandya dynasty ruled parts of southern India. The Sangam literature deals with the history, politics, wars, and culture of the Tamil people of this period. Unlike Sanskrit writers who were mostly Brahmins, Sangam writers came from diverse classes and social backgrounds and were mostly non-Brahmins. Around c. 300 BCE - c. 200 CE, Pathupattu, an anthology of ten mid-length book collections, which is considered part of Sangam Literature, were composed; the composition of eight anthologies of poetic works Ettuthogai as well as the composition of eighteen minor poetic works Pati^{er}k^{ka}akku; while Tol^{ppiyam}, the earliest grammarian work in the Tamil language was developed. Also, during Sangam period, two of the Five Great Epics of Tamil Literature were composed. Ilango Adigal composed Silappatikaram, which is a non-religious work, that revolves around Kannagi, and Manimekalai, composed by Chithalai Chathanar, is a sequel to Silappatikaram, and tells the story of the daughter of Kovalan and Madhavi, who became a Buddhist Bhikkhuni.

Classical period (c. 200 BCE - 650 CE) The time between the Maurya Empire in the 3rd century BCE and the end of the Gupta Empire in the 6th century CE is referred to as the "Classical" period of India. The Gupta Empire (4th-6th century) is regarded as the Golden Age of India, although a host of kingdoms ruled over India in these centuries. Also, the Sangam literature flourished from the 3rd century BCE to the 3rd century CE in southern India. During this period, India's economy is estimated to have been the largest in the world, having between one-third and one-quarter of the world's wealth, from 1 CE to 1000 CE.

Early classical period (c. 200 BCE - 320 CE) **Shunga Empire** The Shungas originated from Magadha, and controlled large areas of the central and eastern Indian subcontinent from around 187 to 78 BCE. The dynasty was established by Pushyamitra Shunga, who overthrew the last Maurya emperor. Its capital was Pataliputra, but later emperors, such as Bhagabhadra, also held court at Vidisha, modern Besnagar. Pushyamitra Shunga ruled for 36 years and was succeeded by his son Agnimitra. There were ten Shunga rulers. However, after the death of Agnimitra, the empire rapidly disintegrated; inscriptions and coins indicate that much of northern and central India consisted of small kingdoms and city-states that were independent of any Shunga hegemony. The empire is noted for its numerous wars with both foreign and indigenous powers. They fought with the Mahameghavahana dynasty of Kalinga, Satavahana dynasty of Deccan, the Indo-Greeks, and possibly the Panchalas and Mitras of Mathura. Art, education, philosophy, and other forms of learning flowered during this period including architectural monuments such as the Stupa at Bharhut and the renowned Great Stupa at Sanchi. The Shunga rulers helped to establish the tradition of royal sponsorship of learning and art. The script used by the empire was a variant of Brahmi and was used to write the Sanskrit language. The Shunga Empire played an imperative role in patronising Indian culture at a time when some of the most important developments in Hindu thought were taking place.

Satavahana Empire The ^Satav^{hanas} were based from Amaravati in Andhra Pradesh as well as Junnar (Pune) and Prathisthan (Paithan) in Maharashtra. The territory of the empire covered large parts of India from the 1st century BCE onward. The ^Satav^{hanas} started out as feudatories to the Mauryan dynasty, but declared independence with its decline. The ^Satav^{hanas} are known for their patronage of Hinduism and Buddhism, which resulted in Buddhist monuments from Ellora (a UNESCO World Heritage Site) to Amaravati. They were one of the first Indian states to issue coins with their rulers embossed. They formed a cultural bridge and played a vital role in trade as well as the transfer of ideas and culture to and from the Indo-Gangetic Plain

to the southern tip of India. They had to compete with the Shunga Empire and then the Kanva dynasty of Magadha to establish their rule. Later, they played a crucial role to protect large part of India against foreign invaders like the Sakas, Yavanas and Pahlavas. In particular, their struggles with the Western Kshatrapas went on for a long time. The notable rulers of the Satavahana Dynasty Gautamiputra Satakarni and Sri Yajna Satakarni were able to defeat the foreign invaders like the Western Kshatrapas and to stop their expansion. In the 3rd century CE, the empire was split into smaller states.

Trade and travels to India The spice trade in Kerala attracted traders from all over the Old World to India. India's Southwest coastal port Muziris had established itself as a major spice trade centre from as early as 3,000 BCE, according to Sumerian records. Jewish traders arrived in Kochi, Kerala, India as early as 562 BCE. The Greco-Roman world followed by trading along the incense route and the Roman-India routes. During the 2nd century BCE Greek and Indian ships met to trade at Arabian ports such as Aden. During the first millennium, the sea routes to India were controlled by the Indians and Ethiopians that became the maritime trading power of the Red Sea. Indian merchants involved in spice trade took Indian cuisine to Southeast Asia, where spice mixtures and curries became popular with the native inhabitants. Buddhism entered China through the Silk Road in the 1st or 2nd century CE. Hindu and Buddhist religious establishments of South and Southeast Asia came to be centres of production and commerce as they accumulated capital donated by patrons. They engaged in estate management, craftsmanship, and trade. Buddhism in particular travelled alongside the maritime trade, promoting literacy, art, and the use of coinage.

Kushan Empire The Kushan Empire expanded out of what is now Afghanistan into the northwest of the Indian subcontinent under the leadership of their first emperor, Kujula Kadphises, about the middle of the 1st century CE. The Kushans were possibly a Tocharian speaking tribe, one of five branches of the Yuezhi confederation. By the time of his grandson, Kanishka the Great, the empire spread to encompass much of Afghanistan, and then the northern parts of the Indian subcontinent. Emperor Kanishka was a great patron of Buddhism; however, as Kushans expanded southward, the deities of their later coinage came to reflect its new Hindu majority. Historian Vincent Smith said about Kanishka:

He played the part of a second Ashoka in the history of Buddhism. The empire linked the Indian Ocean maritime trade with the commerce of the Silk Road through the Indus valley, encouraging long-distance trade, particularly between China and Rome. The Kushans brought new trends to the budding and blossoming Gandhara art and Mathura art, which reached its peak during Kushan rule. The period of peace under Kushan rule is known as Pax Kushana. By the 3rd century, their empire in India was disintegrating and their last known great emperor was Vasudeva I.

Classical period (c. 320 - 650 CE) **Gupta Empire** The Gupta period was noted for cultural creativity, especially in literature, architecture, sculpture, and painting. The Gupta period produced scholars such as Kalidasa, Aryabhata, Varahamihira, Vishnu Sharma, and Vatsyayana. The Gupta period marked a watershed of Indian culture: the Guptas performed Vedic sacrifices to legitimise their rule, but they also patronised Buddhism, an alternative to Brahmanical orthodoxy. The military exploits of the first three rulers - Chandragupta I, Samudragupta, and Chandragupta II - brought much of India under their leadership. Science and political administration reached new heights during the Gupta era. Strong trade ties also made the region an important cultural centre and established it as a base that would influence nearby kingdoms and regions. The period of peace under Gupta rule is known as Pax Gupta. The latter Guptas successfully resisted the northwestern kingdoms until the arrival of the Alchon Huns, who established themselves in Afghanistan by the first half of the 5th century CE, with their capital at Bamiyan. However, much of the southern India including Deccan were

largely unaffected by these events.

Vakataka Empire The Vakataka Empire originated from the Deccan in the mid-third century CE. Their state is believed to have extended from the southern edges of Malwa and Gujarat in the north to the Tungabhadra River in the south as well as from the Arabian Sea in the western to the edges of Chhattisgarh in the east. They were the most important successors of the Satavahanas in the Deccan, contemporaneous with the Guptas in northern India and succeeded by the Vishnukundina dynasty. The Vakatakas are noted for having been patrons of the arts, architecture and literature. The rock-cut Buddhist viharas and chaityas of Ajanta Caves (a UNESCO World Heritage Site) were built under the patronage of Vakataka emperor, Harishena.

Kamarupa Kingdom Samudragupta's 4th-century Allahabad pillar inscription mentions Kamarupa (Western Assam) and Davaka (Central Assam) as frontier kingdoms of the Gupta Empire. Davaka was later absorbed by Kamarupa, which grew into a large kingdom that spanned from Karatoya river to near present Sadiya and covered the entire Brahmaputra valley, North Bengal, parts of Bangladesh and, at times Purnea and parts of West Bengal. Ruled by three dynasties Varmanas (c. 350-650 CE), Mlechchha dynasty (c. 655-900 CE) and Kamarupa-Palas (c. 900-1100 CE), from their capitals in present-day Guwahati (Pragjyotishpura), Tezpur (Haruppeswara) and North Gauhati (Durjaya) respectively. All three dynasties claimed their descent from Narakasura. In the reign of the Varman king, Bhaskar Varman (c. 600-650 CE), the Chinese traveller Xuanzang visited the region and recorded his travels. Later, after weakening and disintegration (after the Kamarupa-Palas), the Kamarupa tradition was somewhat extended until c. 1255 CE by the Lunar I (c. 1120-1185 CE) and Lunar II (c. 1155-1255 CE) dynasties. The Kamarupa kingdom came to an end in the middle of the 13th century when the Khen dynasty under Sandhya of Kamarupanagara (North Guwahati), moved his capital to Kamatapur (North Bengal) after the invasion of Muslim Turks, and established the Kamata kingdom.

Pallava Empire The Pallavas, during the 4th to 9th centuries were, alongside the Guptas of the North, great patronisers of Sanskrit development in the South of the Indian subcontinent. The Pallava reign saw the first Sanskrit inscriptions in a script called Grantha. Early Pallavas had different connexions to Southeast Asian countries. The Pallavas used Dravidian architecture to build some very important Hindu temples and academies in Mamallapuram, Kanchipuram and other places; their rule saw the rise of great poets. The practice of dedicating temples to different deities came into vogue followed by fine artistic temple architecture and sculpture style of Vastu Shastra. Pallavas reached the height of power during the reign of Mahendravarman I (571-630 CE) and Narasimhavarman I (630-668 CE) and dominated the Telugu and northern parts of the Tamil region until the end of the 9th century.

Kadamba Empire Kadambas originated from Karnataka, was founded by Mayurasharma in 345 CE which at later times showed the potential of developing into imperial proportions. King Mayurasharma defeated the armies of Pallavas of Kanchi possibly with help of some native tribes. The Kadamba fame reached its peak during the rule of Kakusthavarma, a notable ruler with whom the kings of Gupta Dynasty of northern India cultivated marital alliances. The Kadambas were contemporaries of the Western Ganga Dynasty and together they formed the earliest native kingdoms to rule the land with absolute autonomy. The dynasty later continued to rule as a feudatory of larger Kannada empires, the Chalukya and the Rashtrakuta empires, for over five hundred years during which time they branched into minor dynasties (Kadambas of Goa, Kadambas of Halasi and Kadambas of Hangal).

Empire of Harsha Harsha ruled northern India from 606 to 647 CE. He was the son of Prabhakarvardhana and the younger brother of Rajyavardhana, who were members of the Vardhana dynasty and ruled Thanesar, in present-day Haryana.

After the downfall of the prior Gupta Empire in the middle of the 6th century, North India reverted to smaller republics and monarchical states. The power vacuum resulted in the rise of the Vardhanas of Thanesar, who began uniting the republics and monarchies from the Punjab to central India. After the death of Harsha's father and brother, representatives of the empire crowned Harsha emperor in April 606 CE, giving him the title of Maharaja. At the peak, his Empire covered much of North and Northwestern India, extended East until Kamarupa, and South until Narmada River; and eventually made Kannauj (in present Uttar Pradesh) his capital, and ruled until 647 CE. The peace and prosperity that prevailed made his court a centre of cosmopolitanism, attracting scholars, artists and religious visitors. During this time, Harsha converted to Buddhism from Surya worship. The Chinese traveller Xuanzang visited the court of Harsha and wrote a very favourable account of him, praising his justice and generosity. His biography Harshacharita ("Deeds of Harsha") written by Sanskrit poet Banabhatta, describes his association with Thanesar and the palace with a two-storied Dhavalagriha (White Mansion).

Early medieval period (c. 650 - 1200) Early medieval India began after the end of the Gupta Empire in the 6th century CE. This period also covers the "Late Classical Age" of Hinduism, which began after the collapse of the Empire of Harsha in the 7th century, and ended in the 13th century with the rise of the Delhi Sultanate in Northern India; the beginning of Imperial Kannauj, leading to the Tripartite struggle; and the end of the Later Cholas with the death of Rajendra Chola III in 1279 in Southern India; however some aspects of the Classical period continued until the fall of the Vijayanagara Empire in the south around the 17th century. From the fifth century to the thirteenth, ■rauta sacrifices declined, and support for Shaivism, Vaishnavism and Shaktism expanded in royal courts, while the support for Buddhism declined. Lack of appeal among the rural masses, who instead embraced Brahmanical Hinduism formed in the Hindu synthesis, and dwindling financial support from trading communities and royal elites, were major factors in the decline of Buddhism. In the 7th century, Kum■rila Bha■a formulated his school of Mimamsa philosophy and defended the position on Vedic rituals. From the 8th to the 10th century, three dynasties contested for control of northern India: the Gurjara Pratiharas of Malwa, the Palas of Bengal, and the Rashtrakutas of the Deccan. The Sena dynasty would later assume control of the Pala Empire; the Gurjara Pratiharas fragmented into various states, notably the Kingdom of Malwa, the Kingdom of Bundelkhand, the Kingdom of Dahala, the Tomaras of Haryana, and the Kingdom of Sambhar, these states were some of the earliest Rajput kingdoms; while the Rashtrakutas were annexed by the Western Chalukyas. During this period, the Chaulukya dynasty emerged; the Chaulukyas constructed the Dilwara Temples, Modhera Sun Temple, Rani ki vav in the style of M■ru-Gurjara architecture, and their capital Anhilwara (modern Patan, Gujarat) was one of the largest cities in the Indian subcontinent, with the population estimated at 100,000 in c. 1000. Patan's rise also marked the revival of Jainism in Gujarat during the times of Hemchandracharya. It became renowned for its collection of ancient Jain manuscripts and an important centre of Jain learning, which drew the admiration of many scholars. British Indologist and Sanskritist Peter Peterson described the collection as follows:

I know of no town in India and only a few in the world which can boast of so great a store documents of venerable antiquity. They would be the pride and jealously guarded treasure of any University Library in Europe. The Chola Empire emerged as a major power during the reign of Raja Raja Chola I and Rajendra Chola I who successfully invaded parts of Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka in the 11th century. Lalitaditya Muktapida (r. 724-760) was an emperor of the Kashmiri Karko■a dynasty, which exercised influence in

northwestern India from 625 until 1003, and was followed by Lohara dynasty. Kalhana in his *Rajatarangini* credits king Lalitaditya with leading an aggressive military campaign in Northern India and Central Asia. The Hindu Shahi dynasty ruled portions of eastern Afghanistan, northern Pakistan, and Kashmir from the mid-7th century to the early 11th century. While in Odisha, the Eastern Ganga Empire rose to power; noted for the advancement of Hindu architecture, most notable being Jagannath Temple and Konark Sun Temple, as well as being patrons of art and literature.

Later Gupta dynasty The Later Gupta dynasty ruled the Magadha region in eastern India between the 6th and 7th centuries AD. The Later Guptas succeeded the imperial Guptas as the rulers of Magadha, but there is no evidence connecting the two dynasties; these appear to be two distinct families. The Later Guptas are so-called because the names of their rulers ended with the suffix "-gupta", which they might have adopted to portray themselves as the legitimate successors of the imperial Guptas.

Chalukya Empire The Chalukya Empire ruled large parts of southern and central India between the 6th and the 12th centuries, as three related yet individual dynasties. The earliest dynasty, known as the "Badami Chalukyas", ruled from Vatapi (modern Badami) from the middle of the 6th century. The Badami Chalukyas began to assert their independence at the decline of the Kadamba kingdom of Banavasi and rapidly rose to prominence during the reign of Pulakeshin II. The rule of the Chalukyas marks an important milestone in the history of South India and a golden age in the history of Karnataka. The political atmosphere in South India shifted from smaller kingdoms to large empires with the ascendancy of Badami Chalukyas. A Southern India-based kingdom took control and consolidated the entire region between the Kaveri and the Narmada Rivers. The rise of this empire saw the birth of efficient administration, overseas trade and commerce and the development of new style of architecture called "Chalukyan architecture". The Chalukya dynasty ruled parts of southern and central India from Badami in Karnataka between 550 and 750, and then again from Kalyani between 970 and 1190.

Rashtrakuta Empire Founded by Dantidurga around 753, the Rashtrakuta Empire ruled from its capital at Manyakheta for almost two centuries. At its peak, the Rashtrakutas ruled from the Ganges-Yamuna Doab in the north to Cape Comorin in the south, a fruitful time of architectural and literary achievements. The early rulers of this dynasty were Hindu, but the later rulers were strongly influenced by Jainism. Govinda III and Amoghavarsha were the most famous of the long line of able administrators produced by the dynasty. Amoghavarsha was also an author and wrote *Kavirajamarga*, the earliest known Kannada work on poetics. Architecture reached a milestone in the Dravidian style, the finest example of which is seen in the Kailasanath Temple at Ellora. Other important contributions are the Kashivishvanatha temple and the Jain Narayana temple at Pattadakal in Karnataka. The Arab traveller Suleiman described the Rashtrakuta Empire as one of the four great Empires of the world. The Rashtrakuta period marked the beginning of the golden age of southern Indian mathematics. The great south Indian mathematician Mahāvīra had a huge impact on medieval south Indian mathematicians. The Rashtrakuta rulers also patronised men of letters in a variety of languages.

Gurjara-Pratihara Empire The Gurjara-Pratiharas were instrumental in containing Arab armies moving east of the Indus River. Nagabhata I defeated the Arab army under Junaid and Tamin during the Umayyad campaigns in India. Under Nagabhata II, the Gurjara-Pratiharas became the most powerful dynasty in northern India. He was succeeded by his son Ramabhadra, who ruled briefly before being succeeded by his son, Mihira Bhoja. Under Bhoja and his successor Mahendrapala I, the Pratihara Empire reached its peak of prosperity and power. By the time of Mahendrapala, its territory stretched from the border of Sindh in the west to Bihar in the east and from the Himalayas in the north to around the Narmada River in the south. The expansion triggered a tripartite

power struggle with the Rashtrakuta and Pala empires for control of the Indian subcontinent. By the end of the 10th century, several feudatories of the empire took advantage of the temporary weakness of the Gurjara-Pratiharas to declare their independence, notably the Kingdom of Malwa, the Kingdom of Bundelkhand, the Tomaras of Haryana, and the Kingdom of Sambhar and the Kingdom of Dahala.

Gahadavala dynasty Gahadavala dynasty ruled parts of the present-day Indian states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, during 11th and 12th centuries. Their capital was located at Varanasi.

Karnat dynasty In 1097 AD, the Karnat dynasty of Mithila emerged on the Bihar/Nepal border area and maintained capitals in Darbhanga and Simraongadh. The dynasty was established by Nanyadeva, a military commander of Karnataka origin. Under this dynasty, the Maithili language started to develop with the first piece of Maithili literature, the Varna Ratnakara being produced in the 14th century by Jyotirishwar Thakur. The Karnats also carried out raids into Nepal. They fell in 1324 following the invasion of Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq.

Pala Empire The Pala Empire was founded by Gopala I. It was ruled by a Buddhist dynasty from Bengal. The Palas reunified Bengal after the fall of Shashanka's Gauda Kingdom. The Palas were followers of the Mahayana and Tantric schools of Buddhism, they also patronised Shaivism and Vaishnavism. The empire reached its peak under Dharmapala and Devapala. Dharmapala is believed to have conquered Kanauj and extended his sway up to the farthest limits of India in the north-west. The Pala Empire can be considered as the golden era of Bengal. Dharmapala founded the Vikramashila and revived Nalanda, considered one of the first great universities in recorded history. Nalanda reached its height under the patronage of the Pala Empire. The Palas also built many viharas. They maintained close cultural and commercial ties with countries of Southeast Asia and Tibet. Sea trade added greatly to the prosperity of the Pala Empire.

Cholas Medieval Cholas rose to prominence during the middle of the 9th century and established the greatest empire South India had seen. They successfully united the South India under their rule and through their naval strength extended their influence in the Southeast Asian countries such as Srivijaya. Under Rajaraja Chola I and his successors Rajendra Chola I, Rajadhiraja Chola, Virarajendra Chola and Kulothunga Chola I the dynasty became a military, economic and cultural power in South Asia and South-East Asia. Rajendra Chola I's navies occupied the sea coasts from Burma to Vietnam, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, the Lakshadweep (Laccadive) islands, Sumatra, and the Malay Peninsula. The power of the new empire was proclaimed to the eastern world by the expedition to the Ganges which Rajendra Chola I undertook and by the occupation of cities of the maritime empire of Srivijaya in Southeast Asia, as well as by the repeated embassies to China. They dominated the political affairs of Sri Lanka for over two centuries through repeated invasions and occupation. They also had continuing trade contacts with the Arabs and the Chinese empire. Rajaraja Chola I and his son Rajendra Chola I gave political unity to the whole of Southern India and established the Chola Empire as a respected sea power. Under the Cholas, the South India reached new heights of excellence in art, religion and literature. In all of these spheres, the Chola period marked the culmination of movements that had begun in an earlier age under the Pallavas. Monumental architecture in the form of majestic temples and sculpture in stone and bronze reached a finesse never before achieved in India.

Western Chalukya Empire The Western Chalukya Empire ruled most of the western Deccan, South India, between the 10th and 12th centuries. Vast areas between the Narmada River in the north and Kaveri River in the south came under Chalukya control. During this period the other major ruling families of the Deccan, the Hoysalas, the Seuna Yadavas of Devagiri, the Kakatiya dynasty and the Southern Kalachuris, were

subordinates of the Western Chalukyas and gained their independence only when the power of the Chalukya waned during the latter half of the 12th century. The Western Chalukyas developed an architectural style known today as a transitional style, an architectural link between the style of the early Chalukya dynasty and that of the later Hoysala empire. Most of its monuments are in the districts bordering the Tungabhadra River in central Karnataka. Well known examples are the Kasivisvesvara Temple at Lakkundi, the Mallikarjuna Temple at Kuruvatti, the Kallesvara Temple at Bagali, Siddhesvara Temple at Haveri, and the Mahadeva Temple at Itagi. This was an important period in the development of fine arts in Southern India, especially in literature as the Western Chalukya kings encouraged writers in the native language of Kannada, and Sanskrit like the philosopher and statesman Basava and the great mathematician Bhaskara II.

Late medieval period (c. 1200 - 1526) The late medieval period is marked by repeated invasions by Muslim Central Asian nomadic clans, the rule of the Delhi Sultanate, and by the growth of other states, built upon military technology of the sultanate.

Delhi Sultanate The Delhi Sultanate was a series of successive Islamic states based in Delhi, ruled by several dynasties of varying origins. The polity ruled over large parts of the Indian subcontinent from the 13th to early 16th centuries. The sultanate was founded in the 12th and 13th centuries by Central Asian Turks, who invaded parts of northern India and established the state atop former Hindu holdings. The subsequent Mamluk dynasty of Delhi managed to conquer large areas of northern India. The Khalji dynasty conquered much of central India while forcing the principal Hindu kingdoms of South India to become vassal states. The sultanate ushered in a period of Indian cultural renaissance. The resulting "Indo-Muslim" fusion of cultures left lasting syncretic monuments in architecture, music, literature, religion, and clothing. It is surmised that the language of Urdu was born during the period of the Delhi Sultanate. The sultanate was the only Indo-Islamic state to enthrone one of the few female rulers in India, Razia Sultana (r. 1236-1240). While initially disruptive due to the passing of power from native Indian elites to Turkic Muslim elites, the Delhi Sultanate was responsible for integrating the Indian subcontinent into a growing world system, drawing India into a wider international network, which had a significant impact on Indian culture and society. However, the Delhi Sultanate also caused large-scale destruction and desecration of temples in the Indian subcontinent. The Mongol invasions of India were successfully repelled by the Delhi Sultanate during the rule of Alauddin Khalji. A major factor in their success was their Turkic Mamluk slave army, who were highly skilled in the same style of nomadic cavalry warfare as the Mongols. It is possible that the Mongol Empire may have expanded into India were it not for the Delhi Sultanate's role in repelling them. By repeatedly repulsing the Mongol raiders, the sultanate saved India from the devastation waged on West and Central Asia. Soldiers from that region and learned men and administrators fleeing Mongol invasions of Iran migrated into the subcontinent, thereby creating a syncretic Indo-Islamic culture in the north. A Turco-Mongol conqueror from Central Asia, Timur (Tamerlane), attacked the reigning sultan Nasir-u Din Mehmud of the Tughlaq dynasty in Delhi. The sultan's army was defeated on 17 December 1398. Timur entered Delhi and the city was sacked, destroyed, and left in ruins after Timur's army had killed and plundered for three days and nights. He ordered the whole city to be sacked except for the sayyids, scholars, and the "other Muslims" (artists); 100,000 war prisoners were said to have been put to death in one day. The sultanate suffered significantly from the sacking of Delhi. Though revived briefly under the Sayyid and Lodi dynasties, it was but a shadow of the former. Lodi rule lasted in Delhi until the defeat of the last sultan, Ibrahim Khan Lodi, in 1526 to the forces of Babur.

Vijayanagara Empire The Vijayanagara Empire was established in 1336 by Harihara I and his brother Bukka Raya I of Sangama Dynasty, which originated as a political heir of the Hoysala Empire, Kakatiya Empire, and the Pandyan Empire. The empire rose to prominence as a culmination of attempts by the south Indian powers

to ward off Islamic invasions by the end of the 13th century. It lasted until 1646, although its power declined after a major military defeat in 1565 by the combined armies of the Deccan sultanates. The empire is named after its capital city of Vijayanagara, whose ruins surround present day Hampi, now a World Heritage Site in Karnataka, India. In the first two decades after the founding of the empire, Harihara I gained control over most of the area south of the Tungabhadra river and earned the title of Purvapaschima Samudradhishavara ("master of the eastern and western seas"). By 1374 Bukka Raya I, successor to Harihara I, had defeated the chiefdom of Arcot, the Reddys of Kondavidu, and the Sultan of Madurai and had gained control over Goa in the west and the Tungabhadra-Krishna doab in the north. Harihara II, the second son of Bukka Raya I, further consolidated the kingdom beyond the Krishna River and brought the whole of South India under the Vijayanagara umbrella. The next ruler, Deva Raya I, emerged successful against the Gajapatis of Odisha and undertook important works of fortification and irrigation. Italian traveller Niccolo de Conti wrote of him as the most powerful ruler of India. Deva Raya II succeeded to the throne in 1424 and was possibly the most capable of the Sangama Dynasty rulers. He quelled rebelling feudal lords as well as the Zamorin of Calicut and Quilon in the south. He invaded the island of Sri Lanka and became overlord of the kings of Burma at Pegu and Tanasserim. The Vijayanagara Emperors were tolerant of all religions and sects, as writings by foreign visitors show. The kings used titles such as Gobrahamana Pratipalanacharya (literally, "protector of cows and Brahmins") and Hindurayasuratrana (lit, "upholder of Hindu faith") that testified to their intention of protecting Hinduism and yet were at the same time staunchly Islamicate in their court ceremonials and dress. The empire's founders, Harihara I and Bukka Raya I, were devout Shaivas (worshippers of Shiva), but made grants to the Vaishnava order of Sringeri with Vidyaranya as their patron saint, and designated Varaha (an avatar of Vishnu) as their emblem. Nobles from Central Asia's Timurid kingdoms also came to Vijayanagara. The later Saluva and Tuluva kings were Vaishnava by faith, but worshipped at the feet of Lord Virupaksha (Shiva) at Hampi as well as Lord Venkateshwara (Vishnu) at Tirupati. A Sanskrit work, Jambavati Kalyanam by King Krishnadevaraya, called Lord Virupaksha Karnata Rajya Raksha Mani ("protective jewel of Karnata Empire"). The kings patronised the saints of the dvaita order (philosophy of dualism) of Madhvacharya at Udupi.

The empire's legacy includes many monuments spread over South India, the best known of which is the group at Hampi. The previous temple building traditions in South India came together in the Vijayanagara Architecture style. The mingling of all faiths and vernaculars inspired architectural innovation of Hindu temple construction. South Indian mathematics flourished under the protection of the Vijayanagara Empire in Kerala. The south Indian mathematician Madhava of Sangamagrama founded the famous Kerala School of Astronomy and Mathematics in the 14th century which produced a lot of great south Indian mathematicians like Parameshvara, Nilakantha Somayaji and Jyeṣṭhadeva. Efficient administration and vigorous overseas trade brought new technologies such as water management systems for irrigation. The empire's patronage enabled fine arts and literature to reach new heights in Kannada, Telugu, Tamil, and Sanskrit, while Carnatic music evolved into its current form. Vijayanagara went into decline after the defeat in the Battle of Talikota (1565). After the death of Aliya Rama Raya in the Battle of Talikota, Tirumala Deva Raya started the Aravidu dynasty, moved and founded a new capital of Penukonda to replace the destroyed Hampi, and attempted to reconstitute the remains of Vijayanagara Empire. Tirumala abdicated in 1572, dividing the remains of his kingdom to his three sons, and pursued a religious life until his death in 1578. The Aravidu dynasty successors ruled the region but the empire collapsed in 1614, and the final remains ended in 1646, from continued wars with the Bijapur sultanate and others. During this period, more kingdoms in South India became independent and separate from Vijayanagara. These include the Mysore Kingdom, Keladi Nayaka, Nayaks of Madurai, Nayaks of Tanjore, Nayakas of Chitradurga and Nayak Kingdom of Gingee - all of which declared independence and went on to have a significant impact on the history of South India in the coming centuries.

Other kingdoms For two and a half centuries from the mid-13th century, politics in Northern India was dominated by the Delhi Sultanate, and in Southern India by the Vijayanagar Empire. However, there were other regional powers present as well. After fall of Pala Empire, the Chero dynasty ruled much of Eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Jharkhand from the 12th to the 18th centuries. The Reddy dynasty successfully defeated the Delhi Sultanate and extended their rule from Cuttack in the north to Kanchi in the south, eventually being absorbed into the expanding Vijayanagara Empire. In the north, the Rajput kingdoms remained the dominant force in Western and Central India. The Mewar dynasty under Maharana Hammir defeated and captured Muhammad Tughlaq with the Bargujars as his main allies. Tughlaq had to pay a huge ransom and relinquish all of Mewar's lands. After this event, the Delhi Sultanate did not attack Chittor for a few hundred years. The Rajputs re-established their independence, and Rajput states were established as far east as Bengal and north into the Punjab. The Tomaras established themselves at Gwalior, and Man Singh Tomar reconstructed the Gwalior Fort. During this period, Mewar emerged as the leading Rajput state; and Rana Kumbha expanded his kingdom at the expense of the Sultanates of Malwa and Gujarat. The next great Rajput ruler, Rana Sanga of Mewar, became the principal player in Northern India. His objectives grew in scope - he planned to conquer Delhi. But, his defeat in the Battle of Khanwa consolidated the new Mughal dynasty in India. The Mewar dynasty under Maharana Udai Singh II faced further defeat by Mughal emperor Akbar, with their capital Chittor being captured. Due to this event, Udai Singh II founded Udaipur, which became the new capital of the Mewar kingdom. His son, Maharana Pratap of Mewar, firmly resisted the Mughals. Akbar sent many missions against him. He survived to ultimately gain control of all of Mewar, excluding the Chittor Fort. In the south, the Bahmani Sultanate in the Deccan, born from a rebellion in 1347 against the Tughlaq dynasty, was the chief rival of Vijayanagara, and frequently created difficulties for them. Starting in 1490, the Bahmani Sultanate's governors revolted, their independent states composing the five Deccan sultanates; Ahmadnagar declared independence, followed by Bijapur and Berar in the same year; Golkonda became independent in 1518 and Bidar in 1528. Although generally rivals, they allied against the Vijayanagara Empire in 1565, permanently weakening Vijayanagar in the Battle of Talikota. In the East, the Gajapati Kingdom remained a strong regional power to reckon with, associated with a high point in the growth of regional culture and architecture. Under Kapilendradeva, Gajapatis became an empire stretching from the lower Ganga in the north to the Kaveri in the south. In Northeast India, the Ahom Kingdom was a major power for six centuries; led by Lachit Borphukan, the Ahoms decisively defeated the Mughal army at the Battle of Saraighat during the Ahom-Mughal conflicts. Further east in Northeastern India was the Kingdom of Manipur, which ruled from their seat of power at Kangla Fort and developed a sophisticated Hindu Gaudiya Vaishnavite culture. The Sultanate of Bengal was the dominant power of the Ganges-Brahmaputra Delta, with a network of mint towns spread across the region. It was a Sunni Muslim monarchy with Indo-Turkic, Arab, Abyssinian and Bengali Muslim elites. The sultanate was known for its religious pluralism where non-Muslim communities co-existed peacefully. The Bengal Sultanate had a circle of vassal states, including Odisha in the southwest, Arakan in the southeast, and Tripura in the east. In the early 16th century, the Bengal Sultanate reached the peak of its territorial growth with control over Kamrup and Kamata in the northeast and Jaunpur and Bihar in the west. It was reputed as a thriving trading nation and one of Asia's strongest states. The Bengal Sultanate was described by contemporary European and Chinese visitors as a relatively prosperous kingdom and the "richest country to trade with". The Bengal Sultanate left a strong architectural legacy. Buildings from the period show foreign influences merged into a distinct Bengali style. The Bengal Sultanate was also the largest and most prestigious authority among the independent medieval Muslim-ruled states in the history of Bengal. Its decline began with an interregnum by the Suri Empire, followed by Mughal conquest and disintegration into petty kingdoms.

Bhakti movement and Sikhism The Bhakti movement refers to the theistic devotional trend that emerged in medieval Hinduism and later revolutionised in Sikhism. It originated in the seventh-century south India (now parts of Tamil Nadu and Kerala), and spread northwards. It swept over east and north India from the 15th

century onwards, reaching its zenith between the 15th and 17th century.

The Bhakti movement regionally developed around different gods and goddesses, such as Vaishnavism (Vishnu), Shaivism (Shiva), Shaktism (Shakti goddesses), and Smartism. The movement was inspired by many poet-saints, who championed a wide range of philosophical positions ranging from theistic dualism of Dvaita to absolute monism of Advaita Vedanta. Sikhism is a monotheistic and panentheistic religion based on the spiritual teachings of Guru Nanak, the first Guru, and the ten successive Sikh gurus. After the death of the tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh, the Sikh scripture, Guru Granth Sahib, became the literal embodiment of the eternal, impersonal Guru, where the scripture's word serves as the spiritual guide for Sikhs. Buddhism in India flourished in the Himalayan kingdoms of Namgyal Kingdom in Ladakh, Sikkim Kingdom in Sikkim, and Chutia Kingdom in Arunachal Pradesh of the Late medieval period.

Early modern period (1526-1858) The early modern period of Indian history is dated from 1526 to 1858, corresponding to the rise and fall of the Mughal Empire, which inherited from the Timurid Renaissance. During this age India's economy expanded, relative peace was maintained and arts were patronised. This period witnessed the further development of Indo-Islamic architecture; the growth of Marathas and Sikhs enabled them to rule significant regions of India in the waning days of the Mughal empire. With the discovery of the Cape route in the 1500s, the first Europeans to arrive by sea and establish themselves, were the Portuguese in Goa and Bombay.

Mughal Empire In 1526, Babur swept across the Khyber Pass and established the Mughal Empire, which at its zenith covered much of South Asia. However, his son Humayun was defeated by the Afghan warrior Sher Shah Suri in 1540, and Humayun was forced to retreat to Kabul. After Sher Shah's death, his son Islam Shah Suri and his Hindu general Hemu Vikramaditya established secular rule in North India from Delhi until 1556, when Akbar (r. 1556-1605), grandson of Babur, defeated Hemu in the Second Battle of Panipat on 6 November 1556 after winning Battle of Delhi. Akbar tried to establish a good relationship with the Hindus. Akbar declared "Amari" or non-killing of animals in the holy days of Jainism. He rolled back the jizya tax for non-Muslims. The Mughal emperors married local royalty, allied themselves with local maharajas, and attempted to fuse their Turko-Persian culture with ancient Indian styles, creating a unique Indo-Persian culture and Indo-Saracenic architecture. Akbar married a Rajput princess, Mariam-uz-Zamani, and they had a son, Jahangir (r. 1605-1627). Jahangir followed his father's policy. The Mughal dynasty ruled most of the Indian subcontinent by 1600. The reign of Shah Jahan (r. 1628-1658) was the golden age of Mughal architecture. He erected several large monuments, the most famous of which is the Taj Mahal at Agra. It was one of the largest empires to have existed in the Indian subcontinent, and surpassed China to become the world's largest economic power, controlling 24.4% of the world economy, and the world leader in manufacturing, producing 25% of global industrial output. The economic and demographic upsurge was stimulated by Mughal agrarian reforms that intensified agricultural production, and a relatively high degree of urbanisation.

The Mughal Empire reached the zenith of its territorial expanse during the reign of Aurangzeb (r. 1658-1707), under whose reign India surpassed Qing China as the world's largest economy. Aurangzeb was less tolerant than his predecessors, reintroducing the jizya tax and destroying several historical temples, while at the same time building more Hindu temples than he destroyed, employing significantly more Hindus in his imperial bureaucracy than his predecessors, and advancing administrators based on ability rather than religion. However, he is often blamed for the erosion of the tolerant syncretic tradition of his predecessors, as well as increasing religious controversy and centralisation. The English East India Company suffered a defeat in the Anglo-Mughal War.

The Mughals suffered several blows due to invasions from Marathas, Rajputs, Jats and Afghans. In 1737, the Maratha general Bajirao of the Maratha Empire invaded and plundered Delhi. Under the general Amir Khan Umrao Al Udat, the Mughal Emperor sent 8,000 troops to drive away the 5,000 Maratha cavalry soldiers. Baji Rao easily routed the novice Mughal general. In 1737, in the final defeat of Mughal Empire, the commander-in-chief of the Mughal Army, Nizam-ul-mulk, was routed at Bhopal by the Maratha army. This essentially brought an end to the Mughal Empire. While Bharatpur State under Jat ruler Suraj Mal, overran the Mughal garrison at Agra and plundered the city. In 1739, Nader Shah, emperor of Iran, defeated the Mughal army at the Battle of Karnal. After this victory, Nader captured and sacked Delhi, carrying away treasures including the Peacock Throne. Ahmad Shah Durrani commenced his own invasions as ruler of the Durrani Empire, eventually sacking Delhi in 1757. Mughal rule was further weakened by constant native Indian resistance; Banda Singh Bahadur led the Sikh Khalsa against Mughal religious oppression; Hindu Rajas of Bengal, Pratapaditya and Raja Sitaram Ray revolted; and Maharaja Chhatrasal, of Bundela Rajputs, fought the Mughals and established the Panna State. The Mughal dynasty was reduced to puppet rulers by 1757. Vadda Ghalughara took place under the Muslim provincial government based at Lahore to wipe out the Sikhs, with 30,000 Sikhs being killed, an offensive that had begun with the Mughals, with the Chhota Ghalughara, and lasted several decades under its Muslim successor states.

Maratha Empire The Maratha kingdom was founded and consolidated by Chatrapati Shivaji. However, the credit for making the Marathas formidable power nationally goes to Peshwa (chief minister) Bajirao I. Historian K.K. Datta wrote that Bajirao I "may very well be regarded as the second founder of the Maratha Empire". In the early 18th century, under the Peshwas, the Marathas consolidated and ruled over much of South Asia. The Marathas are credited to a large extent for ending Mughal rule in India. In 1737, the Marathas defeated a Mughal army in their capital, in the Battle of Delhi. The Marathas continued their military campaigns against the Mughals, Nizam, Nawab of Bengal and the Durrani Empire to further extend their boundaries. At its peak, the domain of the Marathas encompassed most of the Indian subcontinent. The Marathas even attempted to capture Delhi and discussed putting Vishwasrao Peshwa on the throne there in place of the Mughal emperor. The Maratha empire at its peak stretched from Tamil Nadu in the south, to Peshawar (modern-day Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan) in the north, and Bengal in the east. The Northwestern expansion of the Marathas was stopped after the Third Battle of Panipat (1761). However, the Maratha authority in the north was re-established within a decade under Peshwa Madhavrao I. Under Madhavrao I, the strongest knights were granted semi-autonomy, creating a confederacy of United Maratha states under the Gaekwads of Baroda, the Holkars of Indore and Malwa, the Scindias of Gwalior and Ujjain, the Bhonsales of Nagpur and the Puars of Dhar and Dewas. In 1775, the East India Company intervened in a Peshwa family succession struggle in Pune, which led to the First Anglo-Maratha War, resulting in a Maratha victory. The Marathas remained a major power in India until their defeat in the Second and Third Anglo-Maratha Wars (1805-1818).

Sikh Empire The Sikh Empire was a political entity that governed the Northwestern regions of the Indian subcontinent, based around the Punjab, from 1799 to 1849. It was forged, on the foundations of the Khalsa, under the leadership of Maharaja Ranjit Singh (1780-1839). Maharaja Ranjit Singh consolidated much of northern India into an empire using his Sikh Khalsa Army, trained in European military techniques and equipped with modern military technologies. Ranjit Singh proved himself to be a master strategist and selected well-qualified generals for his army. He successfully ended the Afghan-Sikh Wars. In stages, he added central Punjab, the provinces of Multan and Kashmir, and the Peshawar Valley to his empire. At its peak in the 19th century, the empire extended from the Khyber Pass in the west, to Kashmir in the north, to Sindh in the south, running along Sutlej river to Himachal in the east. After the death of Ranjit Singh, the empire weakened, leading to conflict with the British East India Company. The First Anglo-Sikh War and Second Anglo-Sikh War marked

the downfall of the Sikh Empire, making it among the last areas of the Indian subcontinent to be conquered by the British.

Other kingdoms The Kingdom of Mysore in southern India expanded to its greatest extent under Hyder Ali and his son Tipu Sultan in the later half of the 18th century. Under their rule, Mysore fought series of wars against the Marathas and British or their combined forces. The Maratha-Mysore War ended in April 1787, following the finalising of treaty of Gajendragad, in which Tipu Sultan was obligated to pay tribute to the Marathas. Concurrently, the Anglo-Mysore Wars took place, where the Mysoreans used the Mysorean rockets. The Fourth Anglo-Mysore War (1798-1799) saw the death of Tipu. Mysore's alliance with the French was seen as a threat to the British East India Company, and Mysore was attacked from all four sides. The Nizam of Hyderabad and the Marathas launched an invasion from the north. The British won a decisive victory at the Siege of Seringapatam (1799). Hyderabad was founded by the Qutb Shahi dynasty of Golconda in 1591. Following a brief Mughal rule, Asif Jah, a Mughal official, seized control of Hyderabad and declared himself Nizam-al-Mulk of Hyderabad in 1724. The Nizams lost considerable territory and paid tribute to the Maratha Empire after being routed in multiple battles, such as the Battle of Palkhed. However, the Nizams maintained their sovereignty from 1724 until 1948 through paying tributes to the Marathas, and later, being vassals of the British. Hyderabad State became a princely state in British India in 1798. The Nawabs of Bengal had become the de facto rulers of Bengal following the decline of Mughal Empire. However, their rule was interrupted by Marathas who carried out six expeditions in Bengal from 1741 to 1748, as a result of which Bengal became a tributary state of Marathas. On 23 June 1757, Siraj ud-Daulah, the last independent Nawab of Bengal was betrayed in the Battle of Plassey by Mir Jafar. He lost to the British, who took over the charge of Bengal in 1757, installed Mir Jafar on the Masnad (throne) and established itself to a political power in Bengal. In 1765 the system of Dual Government was established, in which the Nawabs ruled on behalf of the British and were mere puppets to the British. In 1772 the system was abolished and Bengal was brought under the direct control of the British. In 1793, when the Nizamat (governorship) of the Nawab was also taken away, they remained as mere pensioners of the British East India Company. In the 18th century, the whole of Rajputana was virtually subdued by the Marathas. The Second Anglo-Maratha War distracted the Marathas from 1807 to 1809, but afterward Maratha domination of Rajputana resumed. In 1817, the British went to war with the Pindaris, raiders who were fled in Maratha territory, which quickly became the Third Anglo-Maratha War, and the British government offered its protection to the Rajput rulers from the Pindaris and the Marathas. By the end of 1818 similar treaties had been executed between the other Rajput states and Britain. The Maratha Sindhia ruler of Gwalior gave up the district of Ajmer-Merwara to the British, and Maratha influence in Rajasthan came to an end. Most of the Rajput princes remained loyal to Britain in the Revolt of 1857, and few political changes were made in Rajputana until Indian independence in 1947. The Rajputana Agency contained more than 20 princely states, most notable being Udaipur State, Jaipur State, Bikaner State and Jodhpur State. After the fall of the Maratha Empire, many Maratha dynasties and states became vassals in a subsidiary alliance with the British. With the decline of the Sikh Empire, after the First Anglo-Sikh War in 1846, under the terms of the Treaty of Amritsar, the British government sold Kashmir to Maharaja Gulab Singh and the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, the second-largest princely state in British India, was created by the Dogra dynasty. While in eastern and north-eastern India, the Hindu and Buddhist states of Cooch Behar Kingdom, Twipra Kingdom and Kingdom of Sikkim were annexed by the British and made vassal princely state. After the fall of the Vijayanagara Empire, Polygar states emerged in Southern India; and managed to weather invasions and flourished until the Polygar Wars, where they were defeated by the British East India Company forces. Around the 18th century, the Kingdom of Nepal was formed by Rajput rulers.

European exploration In 1498, a Portuguese fleet under Vasco da Gama discovered a new sea route from Europe to India, which paved the way for direct Indo-European commerce. The Portuguese soon set up trading

posts in Velha Goa, Damaon, Dio island, and Bombay. The Portuguese instituted the Goa Inquisition, where new Indian converts were punished for suspected heresy against Christianity and non-Christians were condemned. Goa remained the main Portuguese territory until it was annexed by India in 1961. The next to arrive were the Dutch, with their main base in Ceylon. They established ports in Malabar. However, their expansion into India was halted after their defeat in the Battle of Colachel by the Kingdom of Travancore during the Travancore-Dutch War. The Dutch never recovered from the defeat and no longer posed a large colonial threat to India. The internal conflicts among Indian kingdoms gave opportunities to the European traders to gradually establish political influence and appropriate lands. Following the Dutch, the British - who set up in the west coast port of Surat in 1619 - and the French both established trading outposts in India. Although continental European powers controlled various coastal regions of southern and eastern India during the ensuing century, they eventually lost all their territories in India to the British, with the exception of the French outposts of Pondichry and Chandernagore, and the Portuguese colonies of Goa, Daman and Diu.

East India Company rule in India The English East India Company was founded in 1600. It gained a foothold in India with the establishment of a factory in Masulipatnam on the Eastern coast of India in 1611 and a grant of rights by the Mughal emperor Jahangir to establish a factory in Surat in 1612. In 1640, after receiving similar permission from the Vijayanagara ruler farther south, a second factory was established in Madras on the southeastern coast. The islet of Bom Bahia in present-day Mumbai (Bombay) was a Portuguese outpost not far from Surat. It was presented to Charles II of England as dowry in his marriage to Catherine of Braganza. Charles in turn leased Bombay to the Company in 1668. Two decades later, the company established a trade post in the River Ganges delta. During this time other companies established by the Portuguese, Dutch, French, and Danish were similarly expanding in the subcontinent. The company's victory under Robert Clive in the 1757 Battle of Plassey and another victory in the 1764 Battle of Buxar (in Bihar), consolidated the company's power, and forced emperor Shah Alam II to appoint it the diwan, or revenue collector, of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa. The company thus became the de facto ruler of large areas of the lower Gangetic plain by 1773. It also proceeded by degrees to expand its dominions around Bombay and Madras. The Anglo-Mysore Wars (1766-99) and the Anglo-Maratha Wars (1772-1818) left it in control of large areas of India south of the Sutlej River. With the defeat of the Marathas, no native power represented a threat for the company any longer. The expansion of the company's power chiefly took two forms. The first of these was the outright annexation of Indian states and subsequent direct governance of the underlying regions that collectively came to comprise British India. The annexed regions included the North-Western Provinces (comprising Rohilkhand, Gorakhpur, and the Doab) (1801), Delhi (1803), Assam (Ahom Kingdom 1828) and Sindh (1843). Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, and Kashmir were annexed after the Anglo-Sikh Wars in 1849-56 (Period of tenure of Marquess of Dalhousie Governor General). However, Kashmir was immediately sold under the Treaty of Amritsar (1850) to the Dogra Dynasty of Jammu and thereby became a princely state. In 1854, Berar was annexed along with the state of Oudh two years later.

The second form of asserting power involved treaties in which Indian rulers acknowledged the company's hegemony in return for limited internal autonomy. Since the company operated under financial constraints, it had to set up political underpinnings for its rule. The most important such support came from the subsidiary alliances with Indian princes. In the early 19th century, the territories of these princes accounted for two-thirds of India. When an Indian ruler who was able to secure his territory wanted to enter such an alliance, the company welcomed it as an economical method of indirect rule that did not involve the economic costs of direct administration or the political costs of gaining the support of alien subjects. In return, the company undertook the "defense of these subordinate allies and treated them with traditional respect and marks of honor." Subsidiary alliances created the Princely States of the Hindu maharajas and the Muslim nawabs. Prominent among the princely states were Cochin (1791), Jaipur (1794), Travancore (1795), Hyderabad (1798), Mysore

(1799), Cis-Sutlej Hill States (1815), Central India Agency (1819), Cutch and Gujarat Gaikwad territories (1819), Rajputana (1818), and Bahawalpur (1833).

Indian indenture system The Indian indenture system was an ongoing system of indenture, a form of debt bondage, by which 3.5 million Indians were transported to colonies of European powers to provide labour for the (mainly sugar) plantations. It started from the end of slavery in 1833 and continued until 1920. This resulted in the development of a large Indian diaspora that spread from the Caribbean to the Pacific Ocean and the growth of large Indo-Caribbean and Indo-African populations.

Late modern period and contemporary history (1857-1947) **Rebellion of 1857 and its consequences** The Indian rebellion of 1857 was a large-scale rebellion by soldiers employed by the British East India Company in northern and central India against the company's rule. The spark that led to the mutiny was the issue of new gunpowder cartridges for the Enfield rifle, which was insensitive to local religious prohibition. The key mutineer was Mangal Pandey. In addition, the underlying grievances over British taxation, the ethnic gulf between the British officers and their Indian troops and land annexations played a significant role in the rebellion. Within weeks after Pandey's mutiny, dozens of units of the Indian army joined peasant armies in widespread rebellion. The rebel soldiers were later joined by Indian nobility, many of whom had lost titles and domains under the Doctrine of Lapse and felt that the company had interfered with a traditional system of inheritance. Rebel leaders such as Nana Sahib and the Rani of Jhansi belonged to this group. After the outbreak of the mutiny in Meerut, the rebels very quickly reached Delhi. The rebels had also captured large tracts of the North-Western Provinces and Awadh (Oudh). Most notably, in Awadh, the rebellion took on the attributes of a patriotic revolt against British presence. However, the British East India Company mobilised rapidly with the assistance of friendly Princely states, but it took the British the better part of 1858 to suppress the rebellion. Due to the rebels being poorly equipped and having no outside support or funding, they were brutally subdued. In the aftermath, all power was transferred from the British East India Company to the British Crown, which began to administer most of India as provinces. The Crown controlled the company's lands directly and had considerable indirect influence over the rest of India, which consisted of the Princely states ruled by local royal families. There were officially 565 princely states in 1947, but only 21 had actual state governments, and only three were large (Mysore, Hyderabad, and Kashmir). They were absorbed into the independent nation in 1947-48.

British Raj (1858-1947) After 1857, the colonial government strengthened and expanded its infrastructure via the court system, legal procedures, and statutes. The Indian Penal Code came into being. In education, Thomas Babington Macaulay had made schooling a priority for the Raj in 1835 and succeeded in implementing the use of English for instruction. By 1890 some 60,000 Indians had matriculated. The Indian economy grew at about 1% per year from 1880 to 1920, and the population also grew at 1%. However, from 1910s Indian private industry began to grow significantly. India built a modern railway system in the late 19th century which was the fourth largest in the world. Historians have been divided on issues of economic history, with the Nationalist school arguing that India was poorer due to British rule. In 1905, Lord Curzon split the large province of Bengal into a largely Hindu western half and "Eastern Bengal and Assam", a largely Muslim eastern half. The British goal was said to be efficient administration but the people of Bengal were outraged at the apparent "divide and rule" strategy. It also marked the beginning of the organised anti-colonial movement. When the Liberal party in Britain came to power in 1906, he was removed. Bengal was reunified in 1911. The new Viceroy Gilbert Minto and the new Secretary of State for India John Morley consulted with Congress leaders on political reforms. The Morley-Minto reforms of 1909 provided for Indian membership of the provincial executive councils as well as the Viceroy's executive council. The Imperial Legislative Council was enlarged from 25 to 60 members and separate communal representation for Muslims was established in a dramatic step towards representative and

responsible government. Several socio-religious organisations came into being at that time. Muslims set up the All India Muslim League in 1906 to protect the interests of the aristocratic Muslims. The Hindu Mahasabha sought to represent Hindu interests. The Hindu nationalist Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) was formed in 1925-1926. Sikhs founded the Shiromani Akali Dal in 1920. However, the largest and oldest political party Indian National Congress, founded in 1885, attempted to keep a distance from the socio-religious movements and identity politics.

Indian Renaissance The Bengali Renaissance refers to a social reform movement, dominated by Bengali Hindus, in the Bengal region of the Indian subcontinent during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a period of British rule. Historian Nitish Sengupta describes the renaissance as having started with reformer and humanitarian Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1775-1833), and ended with Asia's first Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941). This flowering of religious and social reformers, scholars, and writers is described by historian David Kopf as "one of the most creative periods in Indian history." During this period, Bengal witnessed an intellectual awakening that is in some way similar to the Renaissance. This movement questioned existing orthodoxies, particularly with respect to women, marriage, the dowry system, the caste system, and religion. One of the earliest social movements that emerged during this time was the Young Bengal movement, which espoused rationalism and atheism as the common denominators of civil conduct among upper caste educated Hindus. It played an important role in reawakening Indian minds and intellect across the Indian subcontinent.

Famines During British East India Company and British Crown rule, India experienced some of deadliest ever recorded famines. These famines, usually resulting from crop failures and often exacerbated by policies of the colonial government, included the Great Famine of 1876-1878 in which 6.1 million to 10.3 million people died, the Great Bengal famine of 1770 where between 1 and 10 million people died, the Indian famine of 1899-1900 in which 1.25 to 10 million people died, and the Bengal famine of 1943 where between 2.1 and 3.8 million people died. The Third plague pandemic in the mid-19th century killed 10 million people in India. Despite persistent diseases and famines, the population of the Indian subcontinent, which stood at up to 200 million in 1750, had reached 389 million by 1941.

World War I During World War I, over 800,000 volunteered for the army, and more than 400,000 volunteered for non-combat roles, compared with the pre-war annual recruitment of about 15,000 men. The Army saw early action on the Western Front at the First Battle of Ypres. After a year of front-line duty, sickness and casualties had reduced the Indian Corps to the point where it had to be withdrawn. Nearly 700,000 Indians fought the Turks in the Mesopotamian campaign. Indian formations were also sent to East Africa, Egypt, and Gallipoli. Indian Army and Imperial Service Troops fought during the Sinai and Palestine Campaign's defence of the Suez Canal in 1915, at Romani in 1916 and to Jerusalem in 1917. India units occupied the Jordan Valley and after the German spring offensive they became the major force in the Egyptian Expeditionary Force during the Battle of Megiddo and in the Desert Mounted Corps' advance to Damascus and on to Aleppo. Other divisions remained in India guarding the North-West Frontier and fulfilling internal security obligations. One million Indian troops served abroad during the war. In total, 74,187 died, and another 67,000 were wounded. The roughly 90,000 soldiers who died fighting in World War I and the Afghan Wars are commemorated by the India Gate.

World War II British India officially declared war on Nazi Germany in September 1939. The British Raj, as part of the Allied Nations, sent over two and a half million volunteer soldiers to fight under British command against the Axis powers. Additionally, several Princely States provided large donations to support the Allied campaign. India also provided the base for American operations in support of China in the China Burma India Theatre.

Indians fought throughout the world, including in the European theatre against Germany, in North Africa against Germany and Italy, against the Italians in East Africa, in the Middle East against the Vichy French, in the South Asian region defending India against the Japanese and fighting the Japanese in Burma. Indians also aided in liberating British colonies such as Singapore and Hong Kong after the Japanese surrender in August 1945. Over 87,000 soldiers from the subcontinent died in World War II. The Indian National Congress denounced Nazi Germany but would not fight it or anyone else until India was independent. Congress launched the Quit India Movement in August 1942, refusing to co-operate in any way with the government until independence was granted. The government immediately arrested over 60,000 national and local Congress leaders. The Muslim League rejected the Quit India movement and worked closely with the Raj authorities. Subhas Chandra Bose (also called Netaji) broke with Congress and tried to form a military alliance with Germany or Japan to gain independence. The Germans assisted Bose in the formation of the Indian Legion; however, it was Japan that helped him revamp the Indian National Army (INA), after the First Indian National Army under Mohan Singh was dissolved. The INA fought under Japanese direction, mostly in Burma. Bose also headed the Provisional Government of Free India (or Azad Hind), a government-in-exile based in Singapore. By 1942, neighbouring Burma was invaded by Japan, which by then had already captured the Indian territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Japan gave nominal control of the islands to the Provisional Government of Free India on 21 October 1943, and in the following March, the Indian National Army with the help of Japan crossed into India and advanced as far as Kohima in Nagaland. This advance on the mainland of the Indian subcontinent reached its farthest point on Indian territory, retreating from the Battle of Kohima in June and from that of Imphal on 3 July 1944. The region of Bengal in British India suffered a devastating famine during 1940-1943. An estimated 2.1-3 million died from the famine, frequently characterised as "man-made", with most sources asserting that wartime colonial policies exacerbated the crisis.

Indian independence movement (1885-1947) The numbers of British in India were small, yet they were able to rule 52% of the Indian subcontinent directly and exercise considerable leverage over the princely states that accounted for 48% of the area. One of the most important events of the 19th century was the rise of Indian nationalism, leading Indians to seek first "self-rule" and later "complete independence". However, historians are divided over the causes of its rise. Probable reasons include a "clash of interests of the Indian people with British interests", "racial discriminations", and "the revelation of India's past". The first step toward Indian self-rule was the appointment of councillors to advise the British viceroy in 1861 and the first Indian was appointed in 1909. Provincial Councils with Indian members were also set up. The councillors' participation was subsequently widened into legislative councils. The British built a large British Indian Army, with the senior officers all British and many of the troops from small minority groups such as Gurkhas from Nepal and Sikhs. The civil service was increasingly filled with natives at the lower levels, with the British holding the more senior positions. Bal Gangadhar Tilak, an Indian nationalist leader, declared Swaraj (home rule) as the destiny of the nation. His popular sentence "Swaraj is my birthright, and I shall have it" became the source of inspiration. Tilak was backed by rising public leaders like Bipin Chandra Pal and Lala Lajpat Rai, who held the same point of view, notably they advocated the Swadeshi movement involving the boycott of imported items and the use of Indian-made goods; the triumvirate were popularly known as Lal Bal Pal. In 1907, the Congress was split into two factions: The radicals, led by Tilak, advocated civil agitation and direct revolution to overthrow the British Empire and the abandonment of all things British. The moderates, led by leaders like Dadabhai Naoroji and Gopal Krishna Gokhale, on the other hand, wanted reform within the framework of British rule. The partition of Bengal in 1905 further increased the revolutionary movement for Indian independence. The disenfranchisement led some to take violent action. The British themselves adopted a "carrot and stick" approach in response to renewed nationalist demands. The means of achieving the proposed measure were later enshrined in the Government of India Act 1919, which introduced the principle of a dual mode of administration, or diarchy, in which elected Indian legislators and appointed British officials shared power. In 1919, Colonel Reginald Dyer

ordered his troops to fire their weapons on peaceful protestors, including unarmed women and children, resulting in the Jallianwala Bagh massacre; which led to the Non-cooperation Movement of 1920-1922. The massacre was a decisive episode towards the end of British rule in India. From 1920 leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi began highly popular mass movements to campaign against the British Raj using largely peaceful methods. The Gandhi-led independence movement opposed the British rule using non-violent methods like non-co-operation, civil disobedience and economic resistance. However, revolutionary activities against the British rule took place throughout the Indian subcontinent and some others adopted a militant approach like the Hindustan Republican Association, that sought to overthrow British rule by armed struggle. The All India Azad Muslim Conference gathered in Delhi in April 1940 to voice its support for an independent and united India. Its members included several Islamic organisations in India, as well as 1,400 nationalist Muslim delegates. The pro-separatist All-India Muslim League worked to try to silence those nationalist Muslims who stood against the partition of India, often using "intimidation and coercion". The murder of the All India Azad Muslim Conference leader Allah Bakhsh Soomro also made it easier for the pro-separatist All-India Muslim League to demand the creation of a Pakistan.

After World War II (c. 1946-1947) In January 1946, several mutinies broke out in the armed services, starting with that of RAF servicemen frustrated with their slow repatriation. The mutinies came to a head with mutiny of the Royal Indian Navy in Bombay in February 1946, followed by others in Calcutta, Madras, and Karachi. The mutinies were rapidly suppressed. In early 1946, new elections were called and Congress candidates won in eight of the eleven provinces. Late in 1946, the Labour government decided to end British rule of India, and in early 1947 it announced its intention of transferring power no later than June 1948 and participating in the formation of an interim government. Along with the desire for independence, tensions between Hindus and Muslims had also been developing over the years. Muslim League leader Muhammad Ali Jinnah proclaimed 16 August 1946 as Direct Action Day, with the stated goal of highlighting, peacefully, the demand for a Muslim homeland in British India, which resulted in the outbreak of the cycle of violence that would be later called the "Great Calcutta Killing of August 1946". The communal violence spread to Bihar, Noakhali in Bengal, Garhmukteshwar in the United Provinces, and on to Rawalpindi in March 1947 in which Sikhs and Hindus were attacked or driven out by Muslims.

Independence and partition (1947-present) In August 1947, the British Indian Empire was partitioned into the Union of India and Dominion of Pakistan. In particular, the partition of the Punjab and Bengal led to rioting between Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs in these provinces and spread to other nearby regions, leaving some 500,000 dead. The police and army units were largely ineffective. The British officers were gone, and the units were beginning to tolerate if not actually indulge in violence against their religious enemies. Also, this period saw one of the largest mass migrations anywhere in modern history, with a total of 12 million Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims moving between the newly created nations of India and Pakistan (which gained independence on 15 and 14 August 1947 respectively). In 1971, Bangladesh, formerly East Pakistan and East Bengal, seceded from Pakistan.

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Geography of India

India is situated north of the equator between 84° north (the mainland) to 376° north latitude and 687° east to 9725° east longitude. It is the seventh-largest country in the world, with a total area of 3,287,263 square kilometres (1,269,219 sq mi). India measures 3,214 km (1,997 mi) from north to south and 2,933 km (1,822 mi) from east to west. It has a land frontier of 15,200 km (9,445 mi) and a coastline of 7,516.6 km (4,671 mi). On the south, India projects into and is bounded by the Indian Ocean—in particular, by the Arabian Sea on the west, the Lakshadweep Sea to the southwest, the Bay of Bengal on the east, and the Indian Ocean proper to the south. The Palk Strait and Gulf of Mannar separate India from Sri Lanka to its immediate southeast, and the Maldives are some 125 kilometres (78 mi) to the south of India's Lakshadweep Islands across the Eight Degree Channel. India's Andaman and Nicobar Islands, some 1,200 kilometres (750 mi) southeast of the mainland, share maritime borders with Myanmar, Thailand and Indonesia. The southernmost tip of the Indian mainland (84°38'N, 7731'56"E) is just south of Kanyakumari, while the southernmost point in India is Indira Point on Great Nicobar Island. The northernmost point which is under Indian administration is Indira Col, Siachen Glacier. India's territorial waters extend into the sea to a distance of 12 nautical miles (13.8 mi; 22.2 km) from the coast baseline. India has the 18th largest Exclusive Economic Zone of 2,305,143 km² (890,021 sq mi). The northern frontiers of India are defined largely by the Himalayan mountain range, where the country borders China, Bhutan, and Nepal. Its western border with Pakistan lies in the Karakoram and Western Himalayan ranges, Punjab Plains, the Thar Desert and the Rann of Kutch salt marshes. In the far northeast, the Chin Hills and Kachin Hills, deeply forested mountainous regions, separate India from Burma. On the east, its border with Bangladesh is largely defined by the Khasi Hills and Mizo Hills, and the watershed region of the Indo-Gangetic Plain. The Ganges is the longest river originating in India. The Ganges-Brahmaputra system occupies most of northern, central, and eastern India, while the Deccan Plateau occupies most of southern India. Kangchenjunga, in the Indian state of Sikkim, is the highest point in India at 8,586 m (28,169 ft) and the world's third highest peak. The climate across India ranges from equatorial in the far south, to alpine and tundra in the upper regions of the Himalayas. Geologically, India lies on the Indian Plate, the northern part of the Indo-Australian Plate.

Geological development India is situated entirely on the Indian Plate, a major tectonic plate that was formed when it split off from the ancient continent Gondwanaland (ancient landmass, consisting of the southern part of the supercontinent of Pangea). The Indo-Australian plate is subdivided into the Indian and Australian plates. About 90 million years ago, during the late Cretaceous Period, the Indian Plate began moving north at about 15 cm/year (6 in/yr). About 50 to 55 million years ago, in the Eocene Epoch of the Cenozoic Era, the plate collided with Asia after covering a distance of 2,000 to 3,000 km (1,243 to 1,864 mi), having moved faster than any other known plate. In 2007, German geologists determined that the Indian Plate was able to move so quickly because it is only half as thick as the other plates which formerly constituted Gondwanaland. The collision with the Eurasian Plate along the modern border between India and Nepal formed the orogenic belt that created the Tibetan Plateau and the Himalayas. As of 2009, the Indian Plate is moving northeast at 5 cm/yr (2 in/yr), while the Eurasian Plate is moving north at only 2 cm/yr (0.8 in/yr). India is thus referred to as the "fastest continent". This is causing the Eurasian Plate to deform, and the Indian Plate to compress at a rate of 4 cm/yr (1.6 in/yr).

Political geography India is divided into 28 States (further subdivided into districts) and 8 union territories including the National capital territory (i.e., Delhi). India's borders run a total length of 15,200 km (9,400 mi). Its borders with Pakistan and Bangladesh were delineated according to the Radcliffe Line, which was created in

1947 during Partition of India. Its western border with Pakistan extends up to 3,323 km (2,065 mi), dividing the Punjab region and running along the boundaries of the Thar Desert and the Rann of Kutch. This border runs along the Indian states and union territories of Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Rajasthan, and Gujarat. Both nations delineated a Line of Control (LoC) to serve as the informal boundary between the Indian and Pakistan-administered areas of the Kashmir region. India claims the whole of the former princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, which includes areas now administered by Pakistan and China, which according to India are illegally occupied areas. India's border with Bangladesh runs 4,096.70 km (2,545.57 mi). West Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram are the states which share the border with Bangladesh. Before 2015, there were 92 enclaves of Bangladesh on Indian soil and 106 enclaves of India were on Bangladeshi soil. These enclaves were eventually exchanged in order to simplify the border. After the exchange, India lost roughly 40 km² (9,900 acres) to Bangladesh. The Line of Actual Control (LAC) is the effective border between India and the People's Republic of China. It traverses 4,057 km along the Indian states and union territories of Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh. The border with Burma (Myanmar) extends up to 1,643 km (1,021 mi) along the eastern borders of India's northeastern states viz. Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram. Located amidst the Himalayan range, India's border with Bhutan runs 699 km (434 mi). Sikkim, West Bengal, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh are the states which share the border with Bhutan. The border with Nepal runs 1,751 km (1,088 mi) along the foothills of the Himalayas in northern India. Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal and Sikkim are the states which share the border with Nepal. The Siliguri Corridor, narrowed sharply by the borders of Bhutan, Nepal and Bangladesh, connects peninsular India with the northeastern states.

Physiographic regions Regions India can be divided into six physiographic regions. They are:

Northern Mountains: Himalayas Peninsular Plateau: contains mountain ranges (Aravalli, Vindhayachal and Satpura ranges), ghats (Eastern Ghats and Western Ghats) and plateaus (Malwa Plateau, Chhota Nagpur Plateau, Southern Garanalite terrain, Deccan Plateau and Kutch Kathiawar plateau). Indo-Gangetic Plain or The Northern Plains Thar Desert Coastal Plains: Eastern Ghat folds and Western Ghats folds Islands- The Andaman and Nicobar islands and the Lakshadweep islands.

The Himalayas An arc of mountains consisting of the Himalayas, Hindu Kush, and Patkai ranges define the northern frontiers of the Indian subcontinent. These were formed by the ongoing tectonic plates collision of the Indian and Eurasian plates. The mountains in these ranges include some of the world's tallest mountains which act as a barrier to cold polar winds. They also facilitate the monsoon winds which in turn influence the climate in India. Rivers originating in these mountains flow through the fertile Indo-Gangetic plains. These mountains form the boundary between two biogeographic realms: the temperate Palearctic realm that covers most of Eurasia, and the tropical and subtropical Indomalayan realm which includes South Asia, Southeast Asia and Indonesia. The Himalayas in India extend from Ladakh in the north to the state of Arunachal Pradesh in the east. Several Himalayan peaks in India rise above 7,000 m (23,000 ft), including Kanchenjunga (8,598 m (28,209 ft)) on the Sikkim-Nepal border, and Nanda Devi (7,816 m (25,643 ft)) in the Garhwal Himalayas of Uttarakhand. The snow line ranges between 6,000 m (20,000 ft) in Sikkim to around 3,000 m (9,800 ft) in Ladakh. The Himalayas act as a barrier to the frigid katabatic winds flowing down from Central Asia. Thus, northern India is kept warm or only mildly cooled during winter; in summer, the same phenomenon makes India relatively hot.

The Karakoram range runs through Ladakh. The range is about 500 km (310 mi) in length and the most heavily glaciated part of the world outside of the polar regions. The Siachen Glacier at 76 km (47 mi) ranks as the world's second longest glacier outside the polar regions. The southern boundary of the Karakoram is formed by

the Indus and Shyok rivers, which separate the range from the northwestern end of the Himalayas. The Patkai, or Purvanchal, are situated near India's eastern border with Burma. They were created by the same tectonic processes which led to the formation of the Himalayas. The physical features of the Patkai mountains are conical peaks, steep slopes and deep valleys. The Patkai ranges are not as rugged or tall as the Himalayas. There are three hill ranges that come under the Patkai: the Patkai-Bum, the Garo-Khasi-Jaintia and the Lushai hills. The Garo-Khasi range lies in Meghalaya. Mawsynram, a village near Cherrapunji lying on the windward side of these hills, has the distinction of being the wettest place in the world, receiving the highest annual rainfall.

The Peninsular Plateau This is a large region of the Indian subcontinent located between the Western Ghats and the Eastern Ghats, and is loosely defined as the peninsular region between these ranges that is south of the Narmada River. Having once constituted a segment of the ancient continent of Gondwanaland, this land is the oldest and most stable in India.

Mountain ranges (clockwise from top-left) Aravali Range is the oldest mountain range in India, running across Rajasthan from northeast to southwest direction, extending approximately 800 km (500 mi). The northern end of the range continues as isolated hills and rocky ridges into Haryana, ending near Delhi. The highest peak in this range is Guru Shikhar at Mount Abu, rising to 1,722 m (5,650 ft), lying near the border with Gujarat. The Aravali Range is the eroded stub of an ancient fold mountain system. The range rose in a Precambrian event called the Aravali-Delhi orogen. The range joins two of the ancient segments that make up the Indian craton, the Marwar segment to the northwest of the range, and the Bundelkhand segment to the southeast. Vindhya range, lies north of Satpura range and east of Aravali range, runs across most of central India, extending 1,050 km (650 mi). The average elevation of these hills is from 300 to 600 m (980 to 1,970 ft) and rarely goes above 700 metres (2,300 ft). They are believed to have been formed by the wastes created by the weathering of the ancient Aravali mountains. Geographically, it separates Northern India from Southern India. The western end of the range lies in eastern Gujarat, near its border with Madhya Pradesh, and runs east and north, almost meeting the Ganges at Mirzapur. Satpura Range, lies south of Vindhya range and east of Aravali range, begins in eastern Gujarat near the Arabian Sea coast and runs east across Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. It extends 900 km (560 mi) with many peaks rising above 1,000 m (3,300 ft). It is triangular in shape, with its apex at Ratnapuri and the two sides being parallel to the Tapti and Narmada rivers. It runs parallel to the Vindhya Range, which lies to the north, and these two east-west ranges divide the Indo-Gangetic plain from the Deccan Plateau located north of River Narmada. **Plateaus (clockwise from top-left)** Malwa Plateau is spread across Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat. The average elevation of the Malwa plateau is 500 metres, and the landscape generally slopes towards the north. Most of the region is drained by the Chambal River and its tributaries; the western part is drained by the upper reaches of the Mahi River. Chhota Nagpur Plateau is situated in eastern India, covering much of Jharkhand and adjacent parts of Odisha, Bihar and Chhattisgarh. Its total area is approximately 65,000 km² (25,000 sq mi) and is made up of three smaller plateaus-the Ranchi, Hazaribagh, and Kodarma plateaus. The Ranchi plateau is the largest, with an average elevation of 700 m (2,300 ft). Much of the plateau is forested, covered by the Chhota Nagpur dry deciduous forests. Vast reserves of metal ores and coal have been found in the Chhota Nagpur plateau. **Southern Garamulite terrain:** Covers South India especially Tamil Nadu excluding western and eastern ghats. Deccan Plateau, also called Deccan Traps, is a large triangular plateau, bounded by the Vindhyas to the north and flanked by the Eastern and Western Ghats. The Deccan covers a total area of 1.9 million km² (730,000 sq mi). It is mostly flat, with elevations ranging from 300 to 600 m (980 to 1,970 ft). The average elevation of the plateau is 2,000 feet (610 m) above sea level. The surface slopes from 3,000 feet (910 m) in the west to 1,500 feet (460 m) in the east. It slopes gently from west to east and gives rise to several peninsular rivers such as the Godavari, the Krishna, the Kaveri and the Mahanadi which drain into the Bay of Bengal. This region is mostly

semi-arid as it lies on the leeward side of both Ghats. Much of the Deccan is covered by thorn scrub forest scattered with small regions of deciduous broadleaf forest. Climate in the Deccan ranges from hot summers to mild winters. Kutch Kathiawar plateau is located in Gujarat state. The Kathiawar peninsula in western Gujarat is bounded by the Gulf of Kutch and the Gulf of Khambat. The natural vegetation in most of the peninsula is xeric scrub, part of the Northwestern thorn scrub forests ecoregion.

Ghats The word ghati (Hindi: गढ़ा) means valley. In Marathi, Hindi, Gujarati and Kannada, ghat is a term used to identify a difficult passage over a mountain. One such passage is the Bhore Ghat that connects the towns Khopoli and Khandala, on NH 4 about 80 kilometres (50 mi) north of Mumbai. Channarayana Ghat of Karnataka is also notable. In many cases, the term is used to refer to a mountain range itself, as in the Western Ghats and Eastern Ghats. 'Ghattam' in Malayalam also refers to mountain ranges when used with the name of the ranges being addressed (e.g., paschima ghattam for Western Ghats), while the passage road would be called a 'churam'. Eastern Ghats on the east coast of India and Western Ghats on the west coast of India are the largest ghats in peninsular India. Western Ghats also known as Sahyadri (Benevolent Mountains) run along the western edge of India's Deccan Plateau and separate it from a narrow coastal plain along the Arabian Sea. The range covers an area of 140,000 km² in a stretch of 1,600 km (990 mi) parallel to the western coast of the Indian peninsula, from south of the Tapi River near the Gujarat-Maharashtra border and across Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Goa, Maharashtra and Gujarat. to the southern tip of the Deccan peninsula. The average elevation is around 1,000 m (3,300 ft). Anai Mudi in the Anaimalai Hills 2,695 m (8,842 ft) in Kerala is the highest peak in the Western Ghats. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is one of the eight "hottest hot-spots" of biological diversity in the world. It is sometimes called the Great Escarpment of India. It is a biodiversity hotspot that contains a large proportion of the country's flora and fauna; many of which are only found here and nowhere else in the world. According to UNESCO, Western Ghats are older than Himalayan mountains. It also influences Indian monsoon weather patterns by intercepting the rain-laden monsoon winds that sweep in from the south-west during late summer. A total of thirty-nine properties including national parks, wildlife sanctuaries and reserve forests were designated as world heritage sites - twenty in Kerala, ten in Karnataka, five in Tamil Nadu and four in Maharashtra. Ghati people, literally means the people of hills or ghats (valleys), is an exonym used for the Marathi people specially those from the villages in Western Ghats, often in pejorative terms. Eastern Ghats are a discontinuous range of mountains along India's eastern coast, which have been eroded and quadrisectioned by the four major rivers of southern India, the Mahanadi, Godavari, Krishna, and Kaveri. These mountains extend from West Bengal to Odisha through Andhra Pradesh to Tamil Nadu in the south passing some parts of Karnataka and in the Wayanad region of Kerala. Parts of the coastal plains, including the Coromandel Coast region, lie between the Eastern Ghats and the Bay of Bengal. Though not as tall as the Western Ghats, some of its peaks are over 1,000 m (3,300 ft) in height. The Nilgiri hills in Tamil Nadu lies at the junction of the Eastern and Western Ghats. Arma Konda (1,690 m (5,540 ft)) in Andhra Pradesh is the tallest peak in Eastern Ghats. The Eastern Ghats are older than the Western Ghats, and have a complex geologic history related to the assembly and breakup of the ancient supercontinent of Rodinia and the assembly of the Gondwana supercontinent. The Eastern Ghats are made up of charnockites, granite gneiss, khondalites, metamorphic gneisses and quartzite rock formations. The structure of the Eastern Ghats includes thrusts and strike-slip faults all along its range. Limestone, bauxite and iron ore are found in the Eastern Ghats hill ranges.

Indo-Gangetic plain The Indo-Gangetic plains, also known as the Great Plains are large alluvial plains dominated by three main rivers, the Indus, Ganges, and Brahmaputra. They run parallel to the Himalayas, from Jammu and Kashmir in the west to Assam in the east, drain most of northern and eastern India and extend into Pakistan. The plains encompass an area of 700,000 km² (270,000 sq mi). The major rivers in this region are the Ganges, Indus, and Brahmaputra along with their main tributaries-Yamuna, Chambal, Gomti, Ghaghara,

Kosi, Sutlej, Ravi, Beas, Chenab, and Tista-as well as the rivers of the Ganges Delta, such as the Meghna. The great plains are sometimes classified into four divisions:

The Bhabar belt is adjacent to the foothills of the Himalayas and consists of boulders and pebbles which have been carried down by streams. As the porosity of this belt is very high, the streams flow underground. The Bhabar is generally narrow with its width varying between 6 and 15 km (3.7 and 9.3 mi). The Tarai belt lies south of the adjacent Bhabar region and is composed of newer alluvium. The underground streams reappear in this region. The region is excessively moist and thickly forested. It also receives heavy rainfall throughout the year and is populated with a variety of wildlife. The Bangar belt consists of older alluvium and forms the alluvial terrace of the flood plains. In the Gangetic plains, it has a low upland covered by laterite deposits. The Khadar belt lies in lowland areas after the Bangar belt. It is made up of fresh newer alluvium which is deposited by the rivers flowing down the plain. The Indo-Gangetic belt is the world's most extensive expanse of uninterrupted alluvium formed by the deposition of silt by the numerous rivers. The plains are flat making it conducive for irrigation through canals. The area is also rich in ground water sources. The plains are one of the world's most intensely farmed areas. The main crops grown are rice and wheat, which are grown in rotation. Other important crops grown in the region include maize, sugarcane and cotton. The Indo-Gangetic plains rank among the world's most densely populated areas.

Thar Desert The Thar Desert (also known as the deserts) is by some calculations the world's seventh largest desert, by some others the tenth. It forms a significant portion of western India and covers an area of 200,000 to 238,700 km² (77,200 to 92,200 sq mi). The desert continues into Pakistan as the Cholistan Desert. Most of the Thar Desert is situated in Rajasthan, covering 61% of its geographic area. About 10 percent of this region consists of sand dunes, and the remaining 90 percent consist of craggy rock forms, compacted salt-lake bottoms, and interdunal and fixed dune areas. Annual temperatures can range from 0 C (32 F) in the winter to over 50 C (122 F) during the summer. Most of the rainfall received in this region is associated with the short July-September southwest monsoon that brings 100 to 500 mm (3.9 to 19.7 in) of precipitation. Water is scarce and occurs at great depths, ranging from 30 to 120 metres (98 to 394 ft) below the ground level. Rainfall is precarious and erratic, ranging from below 120 mm (4.7 in) in the extreme west to 375 mm (14.8 in) eastward. The only river in this region is Luni. The soils of the arid region are generally sandy to sandy-loam in texture. The consistency and depth vary as per the topographical features. The low-lying loams are heavier may have a hard pan of clay, calcium carbonate or gypsum. In western India, the Kutch region in Gujarat and Koyna in Maharashtra are classified as a Zone IV region (high risk) for earthquakes. The Kutch city of Bhuj was the epicentre of the 2001 Gujarat earthquake, which claimed the lives of more than 1,337 people and injured 166,836 while destroying or damaging near a million homes. The 1993 Latur earthquake in Maharashtra killed 7,928 people and injured 30,000. Other areas have a moderate to low risk of an earthquake occurring.

Coastal plains The Eastern Coastal Plain is a wide stretch of land lying between the Eastern Ghats and the oceanic boundary of India. It stretches from Tamil Nadu in the south to West Bengal in the east. The Mahanadi, Godavari, Kaveri, and Krishna rivers drain these plains. The temperature in the coastal regions often exceeds 30 C (86 F), and is coupled with high levels of humidity. The region receives both the northeast monsoon and southwest monsoon rains. The southwest monsoon splits into two branches, the Bay of Bengal branch and the Arabian Sea branch. The Bay of Bengal branch moves northwards crossing northeast India in early June. The Arabian Sea branch moves northwards and discharges much of its rain on the windward side of Western Ghats. Annual rainfall in this region averages between 1,000 and 3,000 mm (39 and 118 in). The width of the plains varies between 100 and 130 km (62 and 81 mi). The plains are divided into six regions-the Mahanadi delta, the southern Andhra Pradesh plain, the Krishna-Godavari deltas, the Kanyakumari coast, the Coromandel Coast,

and sandy coastal. The Western Coastal Plain is a narrow strip of land sandwiched between the Western Ghats and the Arabian Sea, ranging from 50 to 100 km (31 to 62 mi) in width. It extends from Gujarat in the north and extends through Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, and Kerala. Numerous rivers and backwaters inundate the region. Mostly originating in the Western Ghats, the rivers are fast-flowing, usually perennial, and empty into estuaries. Major rivers flowing into the sea are the Tapti, Narmada, Mandovi and Zuari. Vegetation is mostly deciduous, but the Malabar Coast moist forests constitute a unique ecoregion. The Western Coastal Plain can be divided into two parts, the Konkan and the Malabar Coast.

Islands The Lakshadweep and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands are India's two major island formations and are classified as union territories. The Lakshadweep Islands lie 200 to 440 km (120 to 270 mi) off the coast of Kerala in the Arabian sea with an area of 32 km² (12 sq mi). They consist of twelve atolls, three reefs, and five submerged banks, with a total of about 35 islands and islets. The Andaman and Nicobar Islands are located between 6 and 14 north latitude and 92 and 94 east longitude. They consist of 572 islands, lying in the Bay of Bengal near the Myanmar coast running in a north-south axis for approximately 910 km. They are located 1,255 km (780 mi) from Kolkata (Calcutta) and 193 km (120 mi) from Cape Negrais in Burma. The territory consists of two island groups, the Andaman Islands and the Nicobar Islands. The Andaman and Nicobar Islands consist of 572 islands which run in a north-south axis for around 910 km. The Andaman group has 325 islands which cover an area of 6,170 km² (2,380 sq mi) while the Nicobar group has only 247 islands with an area of 1,765 km² (681 sq mi). India's only active volcano, Barren Island is situated here. It last erupted in 2017. The Narcondum is a dormant volcano and there is a mud volcano at Baratang. Indira Point, India's southernmost land point, is situated in the Nicobar islands at 6°45'10"N and 93°49'36"E, and lies just 189 km (117 mi) from the Indonesian island of Sumatra, to the southeast. The highest point is Mount Thullier at 642 m (2,106 ft). Other significant islands in India include Diu, a former Portuguese colony; Majuli, a river island of the Brahmaputra; Elephanta in Bombay Harbour; and Sriharikota, a barrier island in Andhra Pradesh. Salsette Island is India's most populous island on which the city of Mumbai (Bombay) is located. Forty-two islands in the Gulf of Kutch constitute the Marine National Park.

Natural resources Major resource-based industries of India are fisheries, agriculture, mining, and petroleum products. India has the 18th-largest exclusive economic zone (EEZ) in the world with a total size of 2,305,143 km² (890,021 sq mi). It includes the Lakshadweep island group in the Laccadive Sea off the southwestern coast of India and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea.

Ecological resources India was ranked seventh among the list of countries most affected by climate change in 2019. Temperature rises on the Tibetan Plateau are causing Himalayan glaciers to retreat, threatening the flow rate of the Ganges, Brahmaputra, Indus, Yamuna and other major rivers. A 2007 World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) report states that the Indus River may run dry for the same reason. Severe landslides and floods are projected to become increasingly common in such states as Assam. Temperatures in India have risen by 0.7 °C (1.3 °F) between 1901 and 2018. According to some current projections, the number and severity of droughts in India will have markedly increased by the end of the present century. Ecological disasters, such as a 1998 coral bleaching event that killed off more than 70% of corals in the reef ecosystems off Lakshadweep and the Andamans and was brought on by elevated ocean temperatures tied to global warming, are also projected to become increasingly common.

Water bodies India has around 14,500 km of inland navigable waterways. There are twelve rivers which are classified as major rivers, with the total catchment area exceeding 2,528,000 km² (976,000 sq mi). All major rivers of India originate from one of the three main watersheds:

The Himalaya and the Karakoram ranges Vindhya and Satpura range in central India Sahyadri or Western Ghats in western India The Himalayan river networks are snow-fed and have a perennial supply throughout the year. The other two river systems are dependent on the monsoons and shrink into rivulets during the dry season. The Himalayan rivers that flow westward into Punjab are the Indus, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas, and Sutlej. The Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna system has the largest catchment area of about 1,600,000 km² (620,000 sq mi). The Ganges Basin alone has a catchment of about 1,100,000 km² (420,000 sq mi). The Ganges originates from the Gangotri Glacier in Uttarakhand. It flows southeast, draining into the Bay of Bengal. (The Yamuna and Gomti rivers also arise in the western Himalayas and join the Ganges in the plains. The Brahmaputra originates in Tibet, China, where it is known as the Yarlung Tsangpo River) (or "Tsangpo"). It enters India in the far-eastern state of Arunachal Pradesh, then flows west through Assam. The Brahmaputra merges with the Ganges in Bangladesh, where it is known as the Jamuna River. The Chambal, another tributary of the Ganges, via the Yamuna, originates from the Vindhya-Satpura watershed. The river flows eastward. Westward-flowing rivers from this watershed are the Narmada and Tapi, which drain into the Arabian Sea in Gujarat. The river network that flows from east to west constitutes 10% of the total outflow.

(The Western Ghats are the source of all Deccan rivers, which include the through Godavari River, Krishna River and Kaveri River, all draining into the Bay of Bengal. These rivers constitute 20% of India's total outflow). The heavy southwest monsoon rains cause the Brahmaputra and other rivers to distend their banks, often flooding surrounding areas. Though they provide rice paddy farmers with a largely dependable source of natural irrigation and fertilisation, such floods have killed thousands of people and tend to cause displacements of people in such areas. Major gulfs include the Gulf of Cambay, Gulf of Kutch, and the Gulf of Mannar. Straits include the Palk Strait, which separates India from Sri Lanka; the Ten Degree Channel, which separates the Andamans from the Nicobar Islands; and the Eight Degree Channel, which separates the Laccadive and Amindivi Islands from the Minicoy Island to the south. Important capes include the Kanyakumari (formerly called Cape Comorin), the southern tip of mainland India; Indira Point, the southernmost point in India (on Great Nicobar Island); Rama's Bridge, and Point Calimere. The Arabian Sea lies to the west of India, the Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean lie to the east and south, respectively. Smaller seas include the Laccadive Sea and the Andaman Sea. There are four coral reefs in India, located in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, the Gulf of Mannar, Lakshadweep, and the Gulf of Kutch. Important lakes include Sambhar Lake, the country's largest saltwater lake in Rajasthan, Vembanad Lake in Kerala, Kolleru Lake in Andhra Pradesh, Loktak Lake in Manipur, Dal Lake in Kashmir, Chilka Lake (lagoon lake) in Odisha, and Sasthamkotta Lake in Kerala.

Wetlands India's wetland ecosystem is widely distributed from the cold and arid located in the Ladakh region of Jammu and Kashmir, and those with the wet and humid climate of peninsular India. Most of the wetlands are directly or indirectly linked to river networks. The Indian government has identified a total of 71 wetlands for conservation and are part of sanctuaries and national parks. Mangrove forests are present all along the Indian coastline in sheltered estuaries, creeks, backwaters, salt marshes and mudflats. The mangrove area covers a total of 4,461 km² (1,722 sq mi), which comprises 7% of the world's total mangrove cover. Prominent mangrove covers are located in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, the Sundarbans delta, the Gulf of Kutch and the deltas of the Mahanadi, Godavari and Krishna rivers. Parts of Maharashtra, Karnataka and Kerala also have large mangrove covers. The Sundarbans delta is home to the largest mangrove forest in the world. It lies at the mouth of the Ganges and spreads across areas of Bangladesh and West Bengal. The Sundarbans is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, but is identified separately as the Sundarbans (Bangladesh) and the Sundarbans National Park (India). The Sundarbans are intersected by a complex network of tidal waterways, mudflats and small islands of salt-tolerant mangrove forests. The area is known for its diverse fauna, being home to a large variety of species of birds, spotted deer, crocodiles and snakes. Its most famous inhabitant is

the Bengal tiger. It is estimated that there are now 400 Bengal tigers and about 30,000 spotted deer in the area. The Rann of Kutch is a marshy region located in northwestern Gujarat and the bordering Sindh province of Pakistan. It occupies a total area of 27,900 km² (10,800 sq mi). The region was originally a part of the Arabian Sea. Geologic forces such as earthquakes resulted in the damming up of the region, turning it into a large saltwater lagoon. This area gradually filled with silt thus turning it into a seasonal salt marsh. During the monsoons, the area turns into a shallow marsh, often flooding to knee-depth. After the monsoons, the region turns dry and becomes parched.

Arable land India's arable land area of 1,597,000 km² (394.6 million acres) is the second largest in the world, after the United States. Its gross irrigated crop area of 826,000 km² (215.6 million acres) is the largest in the world, followed by US and China. Of the 160 million hectares of cultivated land in India, about 39 million hectares can be irrigated by groundwater wells and an additional 22 million hectares by irrigation canals. In 2010, only about 35% of agricultural land in India was reliably irrigated. About 2/3rd cultivated land in India is dependent on monsoons.

Economic resources Minerals and ores India is the world's biggest producer of mica blocks and mica splittings. India ranks second amongst the world's largest producers of barite and chromite. The Pleistocene system is rich in minerals. India is the third-largest coal producer in the world and ranks fourth in the production of iron ore. It is the fifth-largest producer of bauxite, second largest of crude steel as of February 2018 replacing Japan, the seventh-largest of manganese ore and the eighth-largest of aluminium. India has significant sources of titanium ore, diamonds and limestone. India possesses 24% of the world's known and economically viable thorium, which is mined along shores of Kerala. Gold had been mined in the now-defunct Kolar Gold Fields in Karnataka.

Renewable water India's total renewable water resources are estimated at 1,907.8 km³ a year. Its annual supply of usable and replenishable groundwater amounts to 350 billion cubic metres. Only 35% of groundwater resources are being utilised. About 44 million tonnes of cargo is moved annually through the country's major rivers and waterways. Groundwater supplies 40% of water in India's irrigation canals. 56% of the land is arable and used for agriculture. Black soils are moisture-retentive and are preferred for dry farming and growing cotton, linseed, etc. Forest soils are used for tea and coffee plantations. Red soils have a wide diffusion of iron content.

Energy Most of India's estimated 5.4 billion barrels (860,000,000 m³) in oil reserves are located in the Mumbai High, upper Assam, Cambay, the Krishna-Godavari and Cauvery basins. India possesses about seventeen trillion cubic feet of natural gas in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Odisha. Uranium is mined in Andhra Pradesh. India has 400 medium-to-high enthalpy thermal springs for producing geothermal energy in seven areas-the Himalayas, Sohana, Cambay, the Narmada-Tapti delta, the Godavari delta and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands (specifically the volcanic Barren Island.)

Climate Based on the Kppen system, India hosts six major climatic subtypes, ranging from arid desert in the west, alpine tundra and glaciers in the north, and humid tropical regions supporting rainforests in the southwest and the island territories. The nation has four seasons: winter (January-February), summer (March-May), a monsoon (rainy) season (June-September) and a post-monsoon period (October-December). The Himalayas act as a barrier to the frigid katabatic winds flowing down from Central Asia. Thus, northern India is kept warm or only mildly cooled during winter; in summer, the same phenomenon makes India relatively hot. Although the

Tropic of Cancer-the boundary between the tropics and subtropics-passes through the middle of India, the whole country is considered to be tropical. Summer lasts between March and June in most parts of India. Temperatures can exceed 40 C (104 F) during the day. The coastal regions exceed 30 C (86 F) coupled with high levels of humidity. In the Thar desert area temperatures can exceed 45 C (113 F). The rain-bearing monsoon clouds are attracted to the low-pressure system created by the Thar Desert. The southwest monsoon splits into two arms, the Bay of Bengal arm and the Arabian Sea arm. The Bay of Bengal arm moves northwards crossing northeast India in early June. The Arabian Sea arm moves northwards and deposits much of its rain on the windward side of Western Ghats. Winters in peninsula India see mild to warm days and cool nights. Further north the temperature is cooler. Temperatures in some parts of the Indian plains sometimes fall below freezing. Most of northern India is plagued by fog during this season. The highest temperature recorded in India was 51 C (124 F) in Phalodi, Rajasthan. And the lowest was -60 C (-76 F) in Dras, Jammu and Kashmir.

Geology India's geological features are classified based on their era of formation. The Precambrian formations of Cudappah and Vindhyan systems are spread out over the eastern and southern states. A small part of this period is spread over western and central India. The Paleozoic formations from the Cambrian, Ordovician, Silurian and Devonian system are found in the Western Himalaya region in Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh. The Mesozoic Deccan Traps formation is seen over most of the northern Deccan; they are believed to be the result of sub-aerial volcanic activity. The Trap soil is black in colour and conducive to agriculture. The Carboniferous system, Permian System and Triassic systems are seen in the western Himalayas. The Jurassic system is seen in the western Himalayas and Rajasthan.

Tertiary imprints are seen in parts of Manipur, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh and along the Himalayan belt. The Cretaceous system is seen in central India in the Vindhyas and part of the Indo-Gangetic plains. The Gondwana system is seen in the Narmada River area in the Vindhyas and Satpuras. The Eocene system is seen in the western Himalayas and Assam. Oligocene formations are seen in Kutch and Assam. The Pleistocene system is found over central India. The Andaman and Nicobar Island are thought to have been formed in this era by volcanoes. The Himalayas were formed by the convergence and deformation of the Indo-Australian and Eurasian Plates. Their continued convergence raises the height of the Himalayas by one centimetre each year. Soils in India can be classified into eight categories: alluvial, black, red, laterite, forest, arid and desert, saline and alkaline and peaty and organic soils. Alluvial soil constitute the largest soil group in India, constituting 80% of the total land surface. It is derived from the deposition of silt carried by rivers and are found in the Great Northern plains from Punjab to the Assam valley. Alluvial soil are generally fertile but they lack nitrogen and tend to be phosphoric. National Disaster Management Authority says that 60% of Indian landmass is prone to earthquakes and 8% susceptible to cyclone risks. Black soil are well developed in the Deccan lava region of Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Madhya Pradesh. These contain high percentage of clay and are moisture retentive. Red soils are found in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka plateau, Andhra plateau, Chota Nagpur plateau and the Aravallis. These are deficient in nitrogen, phosphorus and humus. Laterite soils are formed in tropical regions with heavy rainfall. Heavy rainfall results in leaching out all soluble material of top layer of soil. These are generally found in Western ghats, Eastern ghats and hilly areas of northeastern states that receive heavy rainfall. Forest soils occur on the slopes of mountains and hills in Himalayas, Western Ghats and Eastern Ghats. These generally consist of large amounts of dead leaves and other organic matter called humus.

Cratons Cratons are a specific kind of continental crust made up of a top layer called platform and an older layer called basement. A shield is the part of a craton where basement rock crops out of the ground, and it is relatively the older and more stable section, unaffected by plate tectonics. The Indian Craton can be divided into

five major cratons as such:

Aravalli Craton (Marwar-Mewar Craton or Western Indian Craton): Covers Rajasthan as well as western and southern Haryana. It comprises Mewar Craton in the east and Marwar Craton in the west. It is limited by the Great Boundary Fault in the east, sandy Thar Desert in the west, Indo-ganetic alluvium in the north, Son-Narmada-Tapti in the south. It mainly has quartzite, marble, pelite, greywacke and extinct volcanos exposed in Aravalli-Delhi Orogen. Malani Igneous Suite is the largest in India and third largest igneous suite in the world. Bundelkand Craton, covers 26,00 km² in the Bundelkhand region of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh and forms the basis of the Malwa Plateau. It is limited by the Aravalli in the west, Narmada river and Satpura range in the south, and Indo-Gangetic alluvium in the north. It is similar to the Aravalli Craton, which used to be a single craton before being divided into two with the evolution of Hindoli and Mahakoshal belts at the margins of two cratons. Dharwar Craton (Karnataka Craton), 3.4 - 2.6 Ga, granite-greenstone terrain covers the state of Karnataka and parts of eastern and southern Maharashtra state, and forms the basis of the southern end of the Deccan Plateau. In 1886 it was divided into two tectonic blocks, namely Eastern Dharwar Craton (EDC) and Western Dharwar Craton (WDC). Singhbhum Craton, 4,000 km² area which primarily covers Jharkhand as well as parts of Odisha, northern Andhra Pradesh, northern Telangana and eastern Maharashtra. It is limited by the Chhota Nagpur Plateau to the north, Eastern Ghats to the southeast, Bastar Craton to southwest and alluvium plain to the east. Bastar Craton (Bastar-Bhandara Craton), primarily covers Chhattisgarh and forms the basis of the Chhota Nagpur Plateau. It is a remnant of 3.4-3.0 Ga old TTG gneisses of five types. It is subdivided into Kotri-Dongargarh Orogen and the Rest of Bastar Craton. It is limited by three rifts, Godavari rift in southwest, Narmada rift in northwest and Mahanadi rift in northeast.

See also Geology of India Borders of India Climate change in India Disputed territories of India List of extreme points of India Exclusive economic zone of India List of disputed territories of India Outline of India Category:Lists of villages in India

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== Further reading ==

Culture of India

Indian culture is the heritage of social norms and technologies that originated in or are associated with the ethno-linguistically diverse nation of India, pertaining to the Indian subcontinent until 1947 and the Republic of India post-1947. The term also applies beyond India to countries and cultures whose histories are strongly connected to India by immigration, colonisation, or influence, particularly in South Asia and Southeast Asia. India's languages, religions, dance, music, architecture, food, and customs differ from place to place within the country. Indian culture, often labelled as a combination of several cultures, has been influenced by a history that is several millennia old, beginning with the Indus Valley Civilisation and other early cultural areas. India has one of the oldest continuous cultural traditions in the world. Many elements of Indian culture, such as Indian religions, mathematics, philosophy, cuisine, languages, dance, music, and movies have had a profound impact across the Indosphere, Greater India, and the world. The British Raj further influenced Indian culture, such as through the widespread introduction of the English language, which resulted in a local English dialect and influences on the Indian languages.

Religious culture Indian-origin religions Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, and Sikhism, are all based on the concepts of dharma and karma. Ahimsa, the philosophy of nonviolence, is an important aspect of native Indian faiths whose most well-known proponent was Shri Mahatma Gandhi, who used civil disobedience to unite India during the Indian independence movement - this philosophy further inspired Martin Luther King Jr. and James Bevel during the American civil rights movement. Foreign-origin religion, including Abrahamic religions, such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam, are also present in India, as well as Zoroastrianism and Bahá'í Faith both escaping persecution by Islam have also found shelter in India over the centuries. India has 28 states and 8 union territories with different cultures and is the most populated country in the world. The Indian culture, often labeled as an amalgamation of several various cultures, spans across the Indian subcontinent and has been influenced and shaped by a history that is several thousand years old. Throughout the history of India, Indian culture has been heavily influenced by Dharmic religions. Influence from East/Southeast Asian cultures onto ancient India and early Hinduism, specifically via Austroasiatic groups, such as early Munda and Mon Khmer, but also Tibetic and other Tibeto-Burmese groups, had noteworthy impact on local Indian peoples and cultures. Several scholars, such as Professor Przyluski, Jules Bloch, and Lvi, among others, concluded that there is a significant cultural, linguistic, and political Mon-Khmer (Austroasiatic) influence on early India, which can also be observed by Austroasiatic loanwords within Indo-Aryan languages and rice cultivation, which was introduced by East/Southeast Asian rice-agriculturalists using a route from Southeast Asia through Northeast India into the Indian subcontinent. They have been credited with shaping much of Indian philosophy, literature, architecture, art and music. Greater India was the historical extent of Indian culture beyond the Indian subcontinent. This particularly concerns the spread of Hinduism, Buddhism, architecture, administration and writing system from India to other parts of Asia through the Silk Road by the travelers and maritime traders during the early centuries of the Common Era. To the west, Greater India overlaps with Greater Persia in the Hindu Kush and Pamir Mountains. Over the centuries, there has been a significant fusion of cultures between Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims, Jains, Sikhs and various tribal populations in India. India is the birthplace of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, and other religions. They are collectively known as Indian religions. Indian religions are a major form of world religions along with Abrahamic ones. Today, Hinduism and Buddhism are the world's third and fourth-largest religions respectively, with over 2 billion followers altogether, and possibly as many as 2.5 or 2.6 billion followers. Followers of Indian religions - Hindus, Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists make up around 80-82% population of India. India is one of the most religiously and ethnically diverse nations in the world, with some of the most deeply religious societies and cultures. Religion plays a central and definitive role

in the lives of many of its people. Although India is a secular Hindu-majority country, it has a large Muslim population. Except for Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram and Lakshadweep, Hindus form the predominant population in all 28 states and 8 union territories. Muslims are present throughout India, with large populations in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Maharashtra, Kerala, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Assam; while only Jammu and Kashmir and Lakshadweep have majority Muslim populations. Christians are other significant minorities of India. Because of the diversity of religious groups in India, there has been a history of turmoil and violence between them. India has been a theatre for violent religious clashes between members of different religions such as Hindus, Christians, Muslims, and Sikhs. Several groups have founded various national-religious political parties, and in spite of government policies minority religious groups are being subjected to prejudice from more dominant groups in order to maintain and control resources in particular regions of India. According to the 2011 census, 79.8% of the population of India practice Hinduism. Islam (14.2%), Christianity (2.3%), Sikhism (1.7%), Buddhism (0.7%) and Jainism (0.4%) are the other major religions followed by the people of India. Many tribal religions, such as Sarnaism, are found in India, though these have been affected by major religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Christianity. Jainism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, and the Bahá'í Faith are also influential but their numbers are smaller. Atheism and agnostics also have visible influence in India, along with a self-ascribed tolerance to other faiths. Atheism and agnosticism have a long history in India and flourished within the Sramana movement. The Cārvāka school originated in India around the 6th century BCE. It is one of the earliest form of materialistic and atheistic movement in ancient India. Sramana, Buddhism, Jainism, Ajīvika and some schools of Hinduism consider atheism to be valid and reject the concept of creator deity, ritualism and superstitions. India has produced some notable atheist politicians and social reformers. According to the 2012 WIN-Gallup Global Index of Religion and Atheism report, 81% of Indians were religious, 13% were not religious, 3% were convinced atheists, and 3% were unsure or did not respond.

Philosophy Indian philosophy comprises the philosophical traditions of the Indian subcontinent. There are six schools of orthodox Hindu philosophy-Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Samkhya, Yoga, Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta-and four heterodox schools-Jain, Buddhist, Ajīvika and Cārvāka - last two are also schools of Hinduism. However, there are other methods of classification; Vidyananda for instance identifies sixteen schools of Indian philosophy by including those that belong to the Śaiva and Raseśvara traditions. Since medieval India (ca.1000-1500), schools of Indian philosophical thought have been classified by the Brahmanical tradition as either orthodox or non-orthodox - śāstika or nāśāstika - depending on whether they regard the Vedas as an infallible source of knowledge. The main schools of Indian philosophy were formalised chiefly between 1000 BCE to the early centuries of the Common Era. According to philosopher Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, the earliest of these, which date back to the composition of the Upanishads in the later Vedic period (1000-500 BCE), constitute "the earliest philosophical compositions of the world." Competition and integration between the various schools were intense during their formative years, especially between 800 BCE and 200 CE. Some schools like Jainism, Buddhism, Śaiva, and Advaita Vedānta survived, but others, like Samkhya and Ajīvika, did not; they were either assimilated or became extinct. Subsequent centuries produced commentaries and reformulations continuing up to as late as the 20th century. Authors who gave contemporary meaning to traditional philosophies include Shrimad Rajchandra, Swami Vivekananda, Ram Mohan Roy, and Swami Dayananda Saraswati.

Family structure and wedding For generations, India has had a prevailing tradition of the joint family system. It is when extended members of a family - parents, children, the children's spouses, and their offspring, etc. - live together. Usually, the oldest male member is the head of the joint Indian family system. He mostly makes all important decisions and rules, and other family members are likely to abide by them. With the current economy, lifestyle, and cost of living in most of the metro cities are high, the population is leaving behind the joint family

model and adapting to the nuclear family model. Earlier living in a joint family was with the purpose of creating love and concern for the family members. However, now it's a challenge to give time to each other as most of them are out for survival needs. Rise in the trends of nuclear family settings has led to a change in the traditional family headship structure and older males are no longer the mandated heads of the family as they mostly live alone during old age and are far more vulnerable than before. In a 1966 study, Orenstein and Micklin analysed India's population data and family structure. Their studies suggest that Indian household sizes had remained similar over the 1911 to 1951 period. Thereafter, with urbanisation and economic development, India has witnessed a break up of traditional joint family into more nuclear-like families. Sinha, in his book, after summarizing the numerous sociological studies done on the Indian family, notes that over the last 60 years, the cultural trend in most parts of India has been an accelerated change from joint family to nuclear families, much like population trends in other parts of the world. The traditionally large joint family in India, in the 1990s, accounted for a small percent of Indian households, and on average had lower per capita household income. He finds that joint family still persists in some areas and in certain conditions, in part due to cultural traditions and in part due to practical factors. Youth in lower socio-economic classes are more inclined to spend time with their families than their peers due to differing ideologies in rural and urban parenting. With the spread of education and growth of economics, the traditional joint-family system is breaking down rapidly across India and attitudes towards working women have changed.

Arranged marriage Arranged marriages have long been the norm in Indian society. Even today, the majority of Indians have their marriages planned by their parents and other respected family members. In the past, the age of marriage was young. The average age of marriage for women in India has increased to 21 years, according to the 2011 Census of India. In 2009, about 7% of women got married before the age of 18. In most marriages, the bride's family provides a dowry to the bridegroom. Traditionally, the dowry was considered a woman's share of the family wealth, since a daughter had no legal claim on her natal family's real estate. It also typically included portable valuables such as jewelry and household goods that a bride could control throughout her life. Historically, in most families the inheritance of family estates passed down the male line. Since 1956, Indian laws treat males and females as equal in matters of inheritance without a legal will. Indians are increasingly using a legal will for inheritance and property succession, with about 20 percent using a legal will by 2004. In India, the divorce rate is low - 1% compared with about 40% in the United States. These statistics do not reflect a complete picture, though. There is a dearth of scientific surveys or studies on Indian marriages where the perspectives of both husbands and wives were solicited in-depth. Sample surveys suggest the issues with marriages in India are similar to trends observed elsewhere in the world. The divorce rates are rising in India. Urban divorce rates are much higher. Women initiate about 80 percent of divorces in India.

Opinion is divided over what the phenomenon means: for traditionalists, the rising numbers portend the breakdown of society while, for some modernists, they speak of healthy new empowerment for women. Recent studies suggest that Indian culture is trending away from traditional arranged marriages. Banerjee et al. surveyed 41,554 households across 33 states and union territories in India in 2005. They find that the marriage trends in India are similar to trends observed over the last 40 years in China, Japan, and other nations. The study found that fewer marriages are purely arranged without consent and that the majority of surveyed Indian marriages are arranged with consent. The percentage of self-arranged marriages (called love marriages in India) was also increasing, particularly in the urban parts of India.

Wedding rituals Weddings are festive occasions in India with extensive decorations, colors, music, dance, costumes and rituals that depend on the religion of the bride and the groom, as well as their preferences. The nation celebrates about 10 million weddings per year, of which over 80% are Hindu weddings. While there are

many festival-related rituals in Hinduism, vivaha (wedding) is the most extensive personal ritual an adult Hindu undertakes in his or her life. Typical Hindu families spend significant effort and financial resources to prepare and celebrate weddings. The rituals and processes of a Hindu wedding vary depending on the region of India, local adaptations, family resources and preferences of the bride and the groom. Nevertheless, there are a few key rituals common in Hindu weddings - Kanyadaan, Panigrahana, and Saptapadi; these are respectively, gifting away of daughter by the father, voluntarily holding hand near the fire to signify impending union, and taking seven circles before firing with each circle including a set of mutual vows. Mangalsutra necklace of bond a Hindu groom ties with three knots around the bride's neck in a marriage ceremony. The practice is integral to a marriage ceremony as prescribed in Manusmriti, the traditional law governing Hindu marriage. After the seventh circle and vows of Saptapadi, the couple is legally husband and wife. Sikhs get married through a ceremony called Anand Karaj. The couple walks around the holy book, the Guru Granth Sahib four times. Indian Muslims celebrate a traditional Islamic wedding following customs similar to those practiced in the Middle East. The rituals include Nikah, payment of financial dower called Mahr by the groom to the bride, signing of a marriage contract, and a reception. Indian Christian weddings follow customs similar to those practiced in the Christian countries in the West in states like Goa but have more Indian customs in other states.

Festivals India, being a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious society, celebrates holidays and festivals of various religions. The three national holidays in India, the Independence Day, the Republic Day and the Gandhi Jayanti, are celebrated with zeal and enthusiasm across India. In addition, many Indian states and regions have local festivals depending on prevalent religious and linguistic demographics. Popular religious festivals include the Hindu festivals of Chhath, Navratri, Janmashtami, Diwali, Maha Shivratri, Ganesh Chaturthi, Durga Puja, Holi, Rath Yatra, Ugadi, Vasant Panchami, Rakshabandhan, and Dussehra. Several harvest festivals such as Makar Sankranti, Sohrai, Pusn, Hornbill, Chapchar Kut, Pongal, Onam and Raja sankranti swinging festival are also fairly popular. India celebrates a variety of festivals due to the large diversity of India. Many religious festivals like Diwali (Hindu) Eid (Muslim) Christmas (Christian), etc. are celebrated by all. The government also provides facilities for the celebration of all religious festivals with equality and grants road bookings, security, etc. providing equality to the diverse religions and their festivals.

The Indian New Year festival is celebrated in different parts of India with a unique style at different times. Ugadi, Bihu, Gudhi Padwa, Puthandu, Vaisakhi, Pohela Boishakh, Vishu and Vishuva Sankranti are the New Year festival of different part of India. Certain festivals in India are celebrated by multiple religions. Notable examples include Diwali, which is celebrated by Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, and Jains across the country and Buddha Purnima, Krishna Janmashtami, Ambedkar Jayanti celebrated by Buddhists and Hindus. Sikh festivals, such as Guru Nanak Jayanti, Baisakhi are celebrated with full fanfare by Sikhs and Hindus of Punjab and Delhi where the two communities together form an overwhelming majority of the population. Adding colours to the culture of India, the Dree Festival is one of the tribal festivals of India celebrated by the Apatanis of the Ziro valley of Arunachal Pradesh, which is the easternmost state of India. Nowruz is the most important festival among the Parsi community of India. Islam in India is the second largest religion with over 172 million Muslims, according to India's 2011 census. The Islamic festivals which are observed and are declared public holiday in India are; Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha, Mawlid, Muharram and Shab-e-Barat. Some of the Indian states have declared regional holidays for the particular regional popular festivals; such as Arba'een, Jumu'ah-tul-Wida and Shab-e-Qadar. Christianity in India is the third-largest religion with over 27.8 million Christians, according to India's 2011 census. With over 27.8 million Christians, of which 17 million are Roman Catholics, India is home to many Christian festivals. The country celebrates Christmas and Good Friday as public holidays. Regional and community fairs are also a common festivals in India. For example, Pushkar Fair of Rajasthan is one of the world's largest markets of cattle and livestock.

Greetings Indian greetings are based on Ajali Mudra, including Pranama and Puja. Greetings include Namaste (Hindi, Sanskrit and Kannada), Nmskar in Odia, Khulumkha (Tripuri), Namaskar (Marathi), Namaskara (Kannada and Sanskrit), Paranaam (Bhojpuri), Namaskaram (Telugu, Malayalam), Vanakkam (Tamil), Nmshkar (Bengali), Nomoskar (Assamese), Aadab (Urdu), and Sat Shri Akal (Punjabi). All these are commonly spoken greetings or salutations when people meet and are forms of farewell when they depart. Namaskar is considered slightly more formal than Namaste but both express deep respect. Namaskar is commonly used in India and Nepal by Hindus, Jains and Buddhists, and many continue to use this outside the Indian subcontinent. In Indian and Nepali culture, the word is spoken at the beginning of written or verbal communication. However, the same hands folded gesture may be made wordlessly or said without the folded hand gesture. The word is derived from Sanskrit (Namah): to bow, reverential salutation, and respect, and (te): "to you". Taken literally, it means "I bow to you". In Hinduism it means "I bow to the divine in you." In most Indian families, younger men and women are taught to seek the blessing of their elders by reverentially bowing to their elders. This custom is known as Pranama.

Other greetings include Jai Jagannath (used in Odia) Ami Aschi (used in Bengali), Jai Shri Krishna (in Gujarati and the Braj Bhasha and Rajasthani dialects of Hindi), Ram Ram/(Jai) Sita Ram ji (Awadhi and Bhojpuri dialects of Hindi and other Bihari dialects), and Sat Sri Akal (Punjabi; used by followers of Sikhism), As-salamu alaykum (Urdu; used by follower of Islam), Jai Jinendra (a common greeting used by followers of Jainism), Jai Bhim (used by followers of Ambedkarism), Namu Buddhay (used by followers of Buddhism), Allah Abho (used by followers of the Bahai Faith), Shalom aleichem (used by followers of Judaism), Hamazor Hama Ashobed (used by followers of Zoroastrianism), Sahebji (Persian and Gujarati; used by the Parsi people), Dorood (Persian and Gujarati; used by the Irani people), Om Namah Shivaya/Jai Bholenath Jaidev (used in Dogri and Kashmiri, also used in the city of Varanasi), Jai Ambe Maa/Jai Mata di (used in Eastern India), Jai Ganapati Bapa (used in Marathi and Konkani), etc. These traditional forms of greeting may be absent in the world of business and in India's urban environment, where a handshake is a common form of greeting.

Animals The varied and rich wildlife of India has a profound impact on the region's popular culture. Common name for wilderness in India is jungle which was adopted by Britons living in India to the English language. The word has been also made famous in The Jungle Book by Rudyard Kipling. India's wildlife has been the subject of numerous other tales and fables such as the Panchatantra and the Jataka tales. In Hinduism, the cow is regarded as a symbol of ahimsa (non-violence), mother goddess and bringer of good fortune and wealth. For this reason, cows are revered in Hindu culture and feeding a cow is seen as an act of worship. This is why beef remains a taboo food in mainstream Hindu and Jain society. The Article 48 of the Constitution of India is one of the Directive Principles which directs that the state shall endeavor to prohibit slaughtering and smuggling of cattle, calves and other milch and draught cattle. As of January 2012, cow remains a divisive and controversial topic in India. Several states of India have passed laws to protect cows, while many states have no restrictions on the production and consumption of beef. Some groups oppose the butchering of cows, while other secular groups argue that what kind of meat one eats ought to be a matter of personal choice in a democracy. Madhya Pradesh enacted a law in January 2012, namely the Gau-Vansh Vadh Pratishedh (Sanshodhan) Act, which makes cow slaughter a serious offence. Gujarat, a western state of India, has the Animal Preservation Act, enacted in October 2011, that prohibits the killing of cows along with buying, selling and transport of beef. In contrast, Assam and Andhra Pradesh allow butchering of cattle with a fit-for-slaughter certificate. In the states of West Bengal and Kerala, consumption of beef is not deemed an offence. Contrary to stereotypes, a sizeable number of Hindus eat beef, and many argue that their scriptures, such as Vedic and Upanishadic texts do not prohibit its consumption. In southern Indian state Kerala, for instance, beef accounts for nearly half of all meat consumed by all communities, including Hindus. Sociologists theorise that the widespread consumption of cow meat in India is because it is a far cheaper source of animal protein for the poor than mutton or chicken, which

retail at double the price. For these reasons, India's beef consumption post-independence in 1947 has witnessed a much faster growth than any other kind of meat; currently, India is one of the five largest producers and consumers of cattle livestock meat in the world. A beef ban has been made in Maharashtra and other states as of 2015. While states such as Madhya Pradesh are passing local laws to prevent cruelty to cows, other Indians are arguing "If the real objective is to prevent cruelty to animals, then why single out the cows when hundreds of other animals are maltreated?"

Cuisine Indian food is as diverse as India. Indian cuisines use numerous ingredients, deploy a wide range of food preparation styles, cooking techniques, and culinary presentations. From salads to sauces, from vegetarian to meat, from spices to sensuous, from bread to desserts, Indian cuisine is invariably complex. Harold McGee, a favorite of many Michelin-starred chefs, writes "for sheer inventiveness with the milk itself as the primary ingredient, no country on earth can match India."

I travel to India at least three to four times a year. It's always inspirational. There is so much to learn from India because each and every state is a country by itself and each has its own cuisine. There are lots of things to learn about the different cuisines - it just amazes me. I keep my mind open and like to explore different places and pick up different influences as I go along. I don't actually think that there is a single state in India that I haven't visited. Indian food is a cosmopolitan cuisine that has so many ingredients. I don't think any cuisine in the world has got so many influences on the way that Indian food has. It is a very rich cuisine and is very varied. Every region in the world has its own sense of how Indian food should be perceived. ... it takes me back to the first Christmas I can remember, when the grandmother I hadn't yet met, who was Indian and lived in England, sent me a box. For me it still carries the taste of strangeness and confusion and wonder.

According to Sanjeev Kapoor, a member of Singapore Airlines' International Culinary Panel, Indian food has long been an expression of world cuisine. Kapoor claims, "if you looked back in India's history and study the food that our ancestors ate, you will notice how much attention was paid to the planning and cooking of a meal. Great thought was given to the texture and taste of each dish." One such historical record is *Mānasollāsa*, (Sanskrit: *मानसोल्लासः*, The Delight of Mind), written in the 12th century. The book describes the need to change cuisine and food with seasons, various methods of cooking, the best blend of flavors, the feel of various foods, planning and style of dining amongst other things. India is known for its love of food and spices. Indian cuisine varies from region to region, reflecting the local produce, cultural diversity, and varied demographics of the country. Generally, Indian cuisine can be split into five categories - northern, southern, eastern, western, and northeastern. The diversity of Indian cuisine is characterised by the differing use of many spices and herbs, a wide assortment of recipes and cooking techniques. Though a significant portion of Indian food is vegetarian, many Indian dishes also include meats like chicken, mutton, beef (both cow and buffalo), pork and fish, egg and other seafood. Fish-based cuisines are common in eastern states of India, particularly West Bengal and the southern states of Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

Despite this diversity, some unifying threads emerge. Varied uses of spices are an integral part of certain food preparations and are used to enhance the flavors of a dish and create unique flavors and aromas. Cuisine across India has also been influenced by various cultural groups that entered India throughout history, such as the Central Asians, Arabs, Mughals, and European colonists. Sweets are also very popular among Indians, particularly in West Bengal where both Bengali Hindus and Bengali Muslims distribute sweets to mark joyous occasions. There is specifically evidence for early influences from East and Southeast Asian-derived cultural areas, primarily via Austroasiatic (Mon Khmer) groups during the Neolithic period, on certain cultural and political elements of Ancient India, and which may have arrived together with the spread of rice cultivation from

Mainland Southeast Asia. A significant number of ethnic minorities in central, eastern and northeastern India are Austroasiatic language speakers, most notably the Munda and Khasic.

Indian cuisine is one of the most popular cuisines across the globe. In most Indian restaurants outside India, the menu does not do justice to the enormous variety of Indian cuisine available - the most common cuisine served on the menu would be Punjabi cuisine (chicken tikka masala is a very popular dish in the United Kingdom). There do exist some restaurants serving cuisines from other regions of India, although these are few and far between. Historically, Indian spices and herbs were one of the most sought after trade commodities. The spice trade between India and Europe led to the rise and dominance of Arab traders to such an extent that European explorers, such as Vasco da Gama and Christopher Columbus, set out to find new trade routes with India leading to the Age of Discovery. The popularity of curry, which originated in India, across Asia has often led to the dish being labeled as the "pan-Asian" dish. Regional Indian cuisine continues to evolve. A fusion of East Asian and Western cooking methods with traditional cuisines, along with regional adaptations of fast food are prominent in major Indian cities.

The cuisine of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana consists of the Telugu cuisine, of the Telugu people as well as Hyderabadi cuisine (also known as Nizami cuisine), of the Hyderabadi Muslim community. Hyderabadi food is based heavily on non-vegetarian ingredients while, Telugu food is a mix of both vegetarian and non-vegetarian ingredients. Telugu food is rich in spices and chillies are abundantly used. The food also generally tends to be more on the tangy side with tamarind and lime juice both used liberally as souring agents. Rice is the staple food of Telugu people. Starch is consumed with a variety of curries and lentil soups or broths. Vegetarian and non-vegetarian foods are both popular. Hyderabadi cuisine includes popular delicacies such as Biryani, Haleem, Baghara baingan and Kheema, while Hyderabadi day to day dishes see some commonalities with Telanganite Telugu food, with its use of tamarind, rice, and lentils, along with meat. Yogurt is a common addition to meals, as a way of tempering spiciness.

Clothing Traditional clothing in India greatly varies across different parts of the country and is influenced by local culture, geography, climate, and rural/urban settings. Popular styles of dress include draped garments such as sari and Mekhela Sador for women and the Kurta, Dhoti or Lungi or Panche (in Kannada) for men. Stitched clothes are also popular such as Churidar or Salwar-Kameez for women, with Dupatta (long scarf) thrown over shoulder completing the outfit. The salwar is often loose fitting, while churidar is a tighter cut. The dastar, a headgear worn by Sikhs is common in Punjab. Indian women perfect their sense of charm and fashion with makeup and ornaments. Bindi, Mehendi, earrings, bangles and other jewelry are common. On special occasions, such as marriage ceremonies and festivals, women may wear cheerful colors with various ornaments made with gold, silver or other regional stones and gems. Bindi is often an essential part of a Hindu woman's make up. Worn on their forehead, some consider the bindi as an auspicious mark. Traditionally, the red bindi was worn only by married Hindu women, and colored bindi was worn by single women, but now all colors and glitter have become a part of women's fashion. Some women wear Sindoor - a traditional red or orange-red powder (vermilion) in the parting of their hair (locally called mang). Sindoor is the traditional mark of a married woman for Hindus. Single Hindu women do not wear Sindoor; neither do over 1 million Indian women from religions other than Hindu and agnostics/atheists who may be married. The make up and clothing styles differ regionally between the Hindu groups, and also by climate or religion, with Christians preferring Western and Muslim preferring the Arabic styles. For men, stitched versions include kurta-pyjama and European-style trousers and shirts. In urban and semi-urban centres, men and women of all religious backgrounds, can often be seen in jeans, trousers, shirts, suits, kurtas and variety of other fashions.

Languages and literature History The Sanskrit language, whatever be its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure; more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either, yet bearing to both of them a stronger affinity, both in the roots of verbs and the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident; so strong indeed, that no philologist could examine them all three, without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which, perhaps, no longer exists; there is a similar reason, though not quite so forcible, for supposing that both the Gothic and the Celtic, though blended with a very different idiom, had the same origin with the Sanskrit ... The Rigvedic Sanskrit is one of the oldest attestations of any Indo-Aryan languages, and one of the earliest attested members of the Indo-European languages. The discovery of Sanskrit by early European explorers of India led to the development of comparative Philology. The scholars of the 18th century were struck by the far-reaching similarity of Sanskrit, both in grammar and vocabulary, to the classical languages of Europe. Intensive scientific studies that followed have established that Sanskrit and many Indian derivative languages belong to the family which includes English, German, French, Italian, Spanish, Celtic, Greek, Baltic, Armenian, Persian, Tocharian, and other Indo-European languages. Tamil, one of India's major classical languages, descends from Proto-Dravidian languages spoken around the third millennium BCE in peninsular India. The earliest inscriptions of Tamil have been found on pottery dating back to 500 BC. Tamil literature has existed for over two thousand years and the earliest epigraphic records found date from around the 3rd century BCE.

The evolution of language within India may be distinguished over three periods: old, middle and modern Indo-Aryan. The classical form of old Indo-Aryan was Sanskrit meaning polished, cultivated and correct, in distinction to Prakrit - the practical language of the migrating masses evolving without concern to proper pronunciation or grammar, the structure of language changing as those masses mingled, settled new lands and adopted words from people of other native languages. Prakrit became middle Indo-Aryan leading to Pali (the language of early Buddhists and Ashoka era in 200-300 BCE), Prakrit (the language of Jain philosophers) and Apabhramsa (the language blend at the final stage of middle Indo-Aryan). It is Apabhramsa, scholars claim, that flowered into Hindi, Gujarati, Bengali, Marathi, Punjabi, and many other languages now in use in India's north, east and west. All of these Indian languages have roots and structures similar to Sanskrit, to each other and to other Indo-European languages. Thus we have in India three thousand years of continuous linguistic history recorded and preserved in literary documents. This enables scholars to follow language evolution and observe how, by changes hardly noticeable from generation to generation, an original language alters into descendant languages that are now barely recognisable as the same.

Sanskrit has had a profound impact on the languages and literature of India. Hindi, India's most spoken language, is a "Sanskritisation register" of the Delhi dialect. In addition, all modern Indo-Aryan languages, Munda languages and Dravidian languages, have borrowed many words either directly from Sanskrit (tatsama words), or indirectly via middle Indo-Aryan languages (tadbhava words). Words originating in Sanskrit are estimated to constitute roughly fifty percent of the vocabulary of modern Indo-Aryan languages, and the literary forms of (Dravidian) Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada. Tamil, although to a slightly smaller extent, has also been significantly influenced by Sanskrit. Part of the Eastern Indo-Aryan languages, the Bengali language arose from the eastern Middle Indic languages and its roots are traced to the 5th-century BCE Ardhamagadhi language. Another major Classical Dravidian language, Kannada is attested epigraphically from the mid-1st millennium AD, and literary Old Kannada flourished in the 9th- to 10th-century Rashtrakuta Dynasty. Pre-old Kannada (or Purava Hazhe-Gannada) was the language of Banavasi in the early Common Era, the Satavahana and Kadamba periods and hence has a history of over 2000 years. The Ashoka rock edict found at Brahmagiri (dated 230 BCE) has been suggested to contain a word in identifiable Kannada. Odia is India's 6th classical language in addition to Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam. It is also one of the 22 official languages in the 8th schedule of Indian constitution. Odia's importance to Indian culture, from ancient

times, is evidenced by its presence in Ashoka's Rock Edict X, dated to the 2nd century BC. The language with the largest number of speakers in India is Hindi and its various dialects. Early forms of present-day Hindustani developed from the Middle Indo-Aryan apabhraṃśa vernaculars of present-day North India in the 7th-13th centuries. During the time of Islamic rule in parts of India, it became influenced by Persian. The Persian influence led to the development of Urdu, which is more Persianised and written in the Perso-Arabic script. Modern standard Hindi has a lesser Persian influence and is written in the Devanagari script. During the 19th and 20th centuries, Indian English literature developed during the British Raj, pioneered by Rabindranath Tagore, Mulk Raj Anand and Munshi Premchand. In addition to Indo-European and Dravidian languages, Austro-Asiatic and Tibeto-Burman languages are in use in India. The 2011 Linguistic Survey of India states that India has over 780 languages and 66 different scripts, with its state of Arunachal Pradesh with 90 languages.

Epics The Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyaṇa are the oldest preserved and well-known epics of India. Versions have been adopted as the epics of Southeast Asian countries like Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia. The Ramayana consists of 24,000 verses in seven books (kāṇḍas) and 500 cantos (sargas), and tells the story of Rama (an incarnation or Avatar of the Hindu preserver-god Vishnu), whose wife Sita is abducted by the demon king of Lanka, Ravana. This epic played a pivotal role in establishing the role of dharma as a principal ideal guiding force for Hindu way of life. The earliest parts of the Mahabharata text date to 400 BC and is estimated to have reached its final form by the early Gupta period (c. 4th century AD). Other regional variations of these, as well as unrelated epics include the Tamil Ramavataram, Assamese Saptakanda Ramayana, Kannada Pampa Bharata, Hindi Ramacharitamansa, and Malayalam Adhyathmaramayanam. In addition to these two great Indian epics, there are The Five Great Epics of Tamil Literature composed in classical Tamil language - Manimegalai, Cīvaka Cintāmaṇi, Silappadikaram, Valayapathi and Kundalakesi.

Performing arts Dance Let drama and dance (Nāṭya, ṬṬṬṬṬ) be the fifth vedic scripture. Combined with an epic story, tending to virtue, wealth, joy and spiritual freedom, it must contain the significance of every scripture, and forward every art. India has had a long romance with the art of dance. The Hindu Sanskrit texts Natya Shastra (Science of Dance) and Abhinaya Darpana (Mirror of Gesture) are estimated to be from 200 BCE to early centuries of the 1st millennium CE.

The Indian art of dance as taught in these ancient books, according to Ragini Devi, is the expression of inner beauty and the divine in man. It is a deliberate art, nothing is left to chance, each gesture seeks to communicate the ideas, each facial expression the emotions.

Indian dance includes eight classical dance forms, many in narrative forms with mythological elements. The eight classical forms accorded classical dance status by India's National Academy of Music, Dance, and Drama are: bharatanatyam of the state of Tamil Nadu, kathak of Uttar Pradesh, kathakali and mohiniattam of Kerala, kuchipudi of Andhra Pradesh, yakshagana of Karnataka, manipuri of Manipur, odissi (orissi) of the state of Odisha and the sattriya of Assam.

In addition to the formal arts of dance, Indian regions have a strong free form, folksy dance tradition. Some of the folk dances include the bhangra of Punjab; the Bihu of Assam; the zeliang of Nagaland; the Jhumair, Domkach, chhau of Jharkhand; the Ghumura Dance, Gotipua, Mahari dance and Dalkhai of Odisha; the qauwwalis, birhas and charkulas of Uttar Pradesh; the jat-jatin, nat-natin and saturi of Bihar; the ghoomar of Rajasthan and Haryana; the dandiya and garba of Gujarat; the kolattam of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana; the yakshagana of Karnataka; lavani of Maharashtra; Dekhnni of Goa. Recent developments include adoption of

international dance forms particularly in the urban centres of India, and the extension of Indian classical dance arts by the Kerala Christian community, to tell stories from the Bible.

Drama Indian drama and theatre have a long history alongside its music and dance. Kalidasa's plays like Shakuntala and Meghadoota are some of the older dramas, following those of Bhasa. Kutiyattam of Kerala, is the only surviving specimen of the ancient Sanskrit theatre, thought to have originated around the beginning of the Common Era, and is officially recognised by UNESCO as a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity. It strictly follows the Natya Shastra. Nāṭyaśāstra Māni Mādhava Chākyār is credited for reviving the age-old drama tradition from extinction. He was known for mastery of Rasa Abhinaya. He started to perform the Kalidasa plays like Abhijñānaśākuntala, Vikramorvaśya and Mālavikāgnimitra; Bhasa's Swapnavasavadatta and Pancharātra; Harsha's Nagananda.

Puppetry India has a long tradition of puppetry. In the ancient Indian epic Mahabharata there are references to puppets. Kathputli, a form of string puppet performance native to Rajasthan, is notable and there are many Indian ventriloquists and puppeteers. The first Indian ventriloquist, Professor Y. K. Padhye, introduced this form of puppetry to India in the 1920s and his son, Ramdas Padhye, subsequently popularised ventriloquism and puppetry. Ramdas Padhye's son, Satyajit Padhye is also a ventriloquist and puppeteer. Almost all types of puppets are found in India.

India has a rich and ancient tradition of string puppets or marionettes. Marionettes with jointed limbs controlled by strings allow far greater flexibility and are therefore the most articulate of the puppets. Rajasthan, Orissa, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu are some of the regions where this form of puppetry has flourished. The traditional marionettes of Rajasthan are known as Kathputli. Carved from a single piece of wood, these puppets are like large dolls that are colorfully dressed. The string puppets of Orissa are known as Kundhei. The string puppets of Karnataka are called Gombeyatta. Puppets from Tamil Nadu, known as Bommalattam, combine the techniques of rod and string puppets.

Rod puppets Rod puppets are an extension of glove-puppets but are often much larger and supported and manipulated by rods from below. This form of puppetry now is found mostly in West Bengal and Orissa. The traditional rod puppet form of West Bengal is known as Putul Nautch. They are carved from wood and follow the various artistic styles of a particular region. The traditional rod puppet of Bihar is known as Yampuri.

Glove puppets Glove puppets are also known as sleeve, hand or palm puppets. The head is made of either papier mch, cloth or wood, with two hands emerging from just below the neck. The rest of the figure consists of a long, flowing skirt. These puppets are like limp dolls, but in the hands of an able puppeteer, are capable of producing a wide range of movements. The manipulation technique is simple the movements are controlled by the human hand, the first finger inserted in the head and the middle finger and the thumb in the two arms of the puppet. With the help of these three fingers, the glove puppet comes alive. The tradition of glove puppets in India is popular in Uttar Pradesh, Orissa, West Bengal and Kerala. In Uttar Pradesh, glove puppet plays usually present social themes, whereas in Orissa such plays are based on stories of Radha and Krishna. In Orissa, the puppeteer plays a dholak (hand drum) with one hand and manipulates the puppet with the other. The delivery of the dialogue, the movement of the puppet and the beat of the dholak are well synchronised and create a dramatic atmosphere. In Kerala, the traditional glove puppet play is called Pavakoothu.

Shadow play Shadow puppets are an ancient part of India's culture and art, particularly regionally as the keelu bomme and Tholu bommalata of Andhra Pradesh, the Togalu gombeyaata in Karnataka, the charma bahuli natya in Maharashtra, the Ravana chhaya in Odisha, the Tholpavakoothu in Kerala and the thol bommalatta in Tamil Nadu. Shadow puppet play is also found in pictorial traditions in India, such as temple mural painting, loose-leaf folio paintings, and the narrative paintings. Dance forms such as the Chhau of Odisha literally mean "shadow". The shadow theatre dance drama theatre are usually performed on platform stages attached to Hindu temples, and in some regions these are called Koothu Madams or Koothambalams. In many regions, the puppet drama play is performed by itinerant artist families on temporary stages during major temple festivals. Legends from the Hindu epics Ramayana and the Mahabharata dominate their repertoire. However, the details and the stories vary regionally. During the 19th century and early parts of the 20th century of the colonial era, Indologists believed that shadow puppet plays had become extinct in India, though mentioned in its ancient Sanskrit texts. In the 1930s and thereafter, states Stuart Blackburn, these fears of its extinction were found to be false as evidence emerged that shadow puppetry had remained a vigorous rural tradition in central Kerala mountains, most of Karnataka, northern Andhra Pradesh, parts of Tamil Nadu, Odisha and southern Maharashtra. The Marathi people, particularly of low caste, had preserved and vigorously performed the legends of Hindu epics as a folk tradition. The importance of Marathi artists is evidenced, states Blackburn, from the puppeteers speaking Marathi as their mother tongue in many non-Marathi speaking states of India.

According to Beth Osnes, the tholu bommalata shadow puppet theatre dates back to the 3rd century BCE, and has attracted patronage ever since. The puppets used in a tholu bommalata performance, states Phyllis Dircks, are "translucent, lusciously multicolored leather figures four to five feet tall, and feature one or two articulated arms". The process of making the puppets is an elaborate ritual, where the artist families in India pray, go into seclusion, produce the required art work, then celebrate the "metaphorical birth of a puppet" with flowers and incense. The tholu pava koothu of Kerala uses leather puppets whose images are projected on a backlit screen. The shadows are used to creatively express characters and stories in the Ramayana. A complete performance of the epic can take forty-one nights, while an abridged performance lasts as few as seven days. One feature of the tholu pava koothu show is that it is a team performance of puppeteers, while other shadow plays such as the wayang of Indonesia are performed by a single puppeteer for the same Ramayana story. There are regional differences within India in the puppet arts. For example, women play a major role in shadow play theatre in most parts of India, except in Kerala and Maharashtra. Almost everywhere, except Odisha, the puppets are made from tanned deer skin, painted and articulated. Translucent leather puppets are typical in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, while opaque puppets are typical in Kerala and Odisha. The artist troupes typically carry over a hundred puppets for their performance in rural India.

Music Music is an integral part of India's culture. Natyasastra, a 2000-year-old Sanskrit text, describes five systems of taxonomy to classify musical instruments. One of these ancient Indian systems classifies musical instruments into four groups according to four primary sources of vibration: strings, membranes, cymbals, and air. According to Reis Flora, this is similar to the Western theory of organology. Archeologists have also reported the discovery of a 3000-year-old, 20-key, carefully shaped polished basalt lithophone in the highlands of Odisha. The oldest preserved examples of Indian music are the melodies of the Samaveda (1000 BC) that are still sung in certain Vedic ■rauta sacrifices; this is the earliest account of Indian musical hymns. It proposed a tonal structure consisting of seven notes, which were named, in descending order, as Krusht, Pratham, Dwitiya, Tritiya, Chaturth, Mandra and Atisw■r. These refer to the notes of a flute, which was the only fixed frequency instrument. The Samaveda, and other Hindu texts, heavily influenced India's classical music tradition, which is known today in two distinct styles: Carnatic and Hindustani music. Both the Carnatic music and Hindustani music systems are based on the melodic base (known as R■ga), sung to a rhythmic cycle (known as T■la); these principles were refined in the n■tya■■stra (200 BC) and the dattilam (300 AD). The

current music of India includes multiple varieties of religious, classical, folk, filmi, rock and pop music and dance. The appeal of traditional classical music and dance is on the rapid decline, especially among the younger generation. Prominent contemporary Indian musical forms included filmi and Indipop. Filmi refers to the wide range of music written and performed for mainstream Indian cinema, primarily Bollywood, and accounts for more than 70 percent of all music sales in the country. Indipop is one of the most popular contemporary styles of Indian music which is either a fusion of Indian folk, classical or Sufi music with Western musical traditions.

Visual arts Painting Cave paintings from Ajanta, Bagh, Ellora and Sittanavasal and temple paintings testify to a love of naturalism. Most early and medieval art in India is Hindu, Buddhist or Jain. A freshly made coloured floor design (Rangoli) is still a common sight outside the doorstep of many (mostly South Indian) Indian homes. Raja Ravi Varma is one of the classical painters from medieval India. Pattachitra, Madhubani painting, Mysore painting, Rajput painting, Tanjore painting and Mughal painting are some notable Genres of Indian Art; while Nandalal Bose, M. F. Husain, S. H. Raza, Geeta Vadhera, Jamini Roy and B. Venkatappa are some modern painters. Among the present-day artists, Atul Dodiya, Bose Krishnamachari, Devajyoti Ray and Shibu Natesan represent a new era of Indian art where global art shows direct amalgamation with Indian classical styles. These recent artists have acquired international recognition. Jehangir Art Gallery in Mumbai, Mysore Palace has on display a few good Indian paintings.

Sculpture The first sculptures in India date back to the Indus Valley civilisation, where stone and bronze figures have been discovered. Later, as Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism developed further, India produced some extremely intricate bronzes as well as temple carvings. Some huge shrines, such as the one at Ellora were not constructed by using blocks but carved out of solid rock. Sculptures produced in the northwest, in stucco, schist, or clay, display a very strong blend of Indian and Classical Hellenistic or possibly even Greco-Roman influence. The pink sandstone sculptures of Mathura evolved almost simultaneously. During the Gupta period (4th to 6th centuries) sculpture reached a very high standard in execution and delicacy in modeling. These styles and others elsewhere in India evolved leading to classical Indian art that contributed to Buddhist and Hindu sculptures throughout Southeast Central and East Asia.

Architecture Indian architecture encompasses a multitude of expressions over space and time, constantly absorbing new ideas. The result is an evolving range of architectural production that nonetheless retains a certain amount of continuity across history. Some of its earliest productions are found in the Indus Valley civilisation (2600-1900 BC) which is characterised by well-planned cities and houses. Religion and kingship do not seem to have played an important role in the planning and layout of these towns.

During the period of the Mauryan and Gupta empires and their successors, several Buddhist architectural complexes, such as the caves of Ajanta and Ellora and the monumental Sanchi Stupa were built. Later on, South India produced several Hindu temples like Chennakesava Temple at Belur, the Hoysaleswara Temple at Halebidu, and the Kesava Temple at Somanathapura, Brihadeeswara Temple, Thanjavur built by Raja Raja Chola, the Sun Temple, Konark, Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple at Srirangam, and the Buddha stupa (Chinna Lanja dibba and Vikramarka kota dibba) at Bhattiprolu. Rajput kingdoms oversaw the construction of Khajuraho Temple Complex, Chittor Fort and Chaturbhuj Temple, etc. during their reign. Angkor Wat, Borobudur and other Buddhist and Hindu temples indicate strong Indian influence on South East Asian architecture, as they are built in styles almost identical to traditional Indian religious buildings. The traditional system of Vaastu Shastra serves as India's version of Feng Shui, influencing town planning, architecture, and ergonomics. It is unclear which system is older, but they contain certain similarities. Feng Shui is more commonly used throughout the

world. Though Vastu is conceptually similar to Feng Shui in that it also tries to harmonise the flow of energy, (also called life-force or Prana in Sanskrit and Chi/Ki in Chinese/Japanese), through the house, it differs in the details, such as the exact directions in which various objects, rooms, materials, etc. are to be placed. With the advent of Islamic influence from the west, Indian architecture was adapted to allow the traditions of the new religion, creating the Indo-Islamic style of architecture. The Qutb complex, a group of monuments constructed by successive sultanas of the Delhi Sultanate is one of the earliest examples. Fatehpur Sikri, Taj Mahal, Gol Gumbaz, Red Fort of Delhi and Charminar are creations of this era, and are often used as the stereotypical symbols of India. British colonial rule in India saw the development of Indo-Saracenic style and mixing of several other styles, such as European Gothic. The Victoria Memorial and the Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus are notable examples. Indian architecture has influenced eastern and southeastern Asia, due to the spread of Buddhism. A number of Indian architectural features such as the temple mound or stupa, temple spire or shikhara, temple tower or pagoda and temple gate or torana, have become famous symbols of Asian culture, used extensively in East Asia and South East Asia. The central spire is also sometimes called a vimanam. The southern temple gate, or gopuram is noted for its intricacy and majesty. Contemporary Indian architecture is more cosmopolitan. Cities are extremely compact and densely populated. Mumbai's Nariman Point is famous for its Art Deco buildings. Recent creations such as the Lotus Temple, Golden Pagoda and Akshardham, and the various modern urban developments of India like Bhubaneswar and Chandigarh, are notable.

Sports and martial arts Sports Field hockey was considered to be the national game of India, but this has been recently denied by the Government of India, clarifying on a Right to Information Act (RTI) filed that India has not declared any sport as the national game. At a time when it was especially popular, the India men's national field hockey team won the 1975 Men's Hockey World Cup, and 8 gold, 1 silver, and 2 bronze medals at the Olympic Games. However, field hockey in India no longer has the following that it once did. Cricket is by far the most popular sport in India. The India national cricket team won the 1983 Cricket World Cup, the 2011 Cricket World Cup, the 2007 T20 World Cup, the 2024 T20 World Cup, the 2002 ICC Champions Trophy, the 2013 ICC Champions Trophy and the 2025 ICC Champions Trophy. Domestic competitions include the Ranji Trophy, the Duleep Trophy, the Deodhar Trophy, the Irani Trophy and the Challenger Series. In addition, BCCI conducts the Indian Premier League, a Twenty20 competition. Football is popular in the Indian states of Kerala, Goa, West Bengal and the Northeastern states. The city of Kolkata is the home to the largest stadium in India, and the second largest stadium in the world by capacity, Salt Lake Stadium, as well as clubs such as Mohun Bagan A.C., Kingfisher East Bengal F.C., Prayag United S.C., and the Mohammedan Sporting Club. Chess is commonly believed to have originated in northwestern India during the Gupta empire, where its early form in the 6th century was known as chaturanga. Other games which originated in India and continue to remain popular in wide parts of northern India include Kabaddi, Gilli-danda, and Kho kho. Traditional southern Indian games include Snake boat race and Kuttium kolum. The modern game of polo is derived from Manipur, India, where the game was known as 'Sagol Kangjei', 'Kanjai-bazee', or 'Pulu'. It was the anglicised form of the last, referring to the wooden ball that was used, which was adopted by the sport in its slow spread to the west. The first polo club was established in the town of Silchar in Assam, India, in 1833. In 2011, India inaugurated a privately built Buddh International Circuit, its first motor racing circuit. The 5.14-kilometre circuit is in Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh, near Delhi. The first Formula One Indian Grand Prix event was hosted here in October 2011.

Indian martial arts One of the best known forms of ancient Indian martial arts is the Kalaripayattu from Kerala. This ancient fighting style is mentioned in Sangam literature 400 BCE and 600 CE and is regarded as one of the oldest surviving martial arts. In this form of martial arts, various stages of physical training include ayurvedic massage with sesame oil to impart suppleness to the body (uzichil); a series of sharp body movements so as to gain control over various parts of the body (miapayattu); and, complex sword fighting techniques (paliyankam). Silambam, which was developed around 200 AD, traces its roots to the Sangam period in

southern India. Silambam is unique among Indian martial arts because it uses complex footwork techniques (kaaladi), including a variety of spinning styles. A bamboo staff is used as the main weapon. The ancient Tamil Sangam literature mentions that between 400 BCE and 600 CE, soldiers from southern India received special martial arts training which revolved primarily around the use of spear (vel), sword (val) and shield (kedaham). Among eastern states, Paika akhada is a martial art found in Odisha. Paika akhada, or paika akhara, roughly translates as "warrior gymnasium" or "warrior school". In ancient times, these were training schools of the peasant militia. Today's Paika akhada teach physical exercises and martial arts in addition to the Paika dance, performance art with rhythmic movements and weapons being hit in time to the drum. It incorporates acrobatic manoeuvres and use of the khanda (straight sword), patta (guntlet-sword), sticks, and other weapons. In northern India, the musti yuddha evolved in 1100 AD and focussed on mental, physical and spiritual training. In addition, the Dhanur Veda tradition was an influential fighting arts style which considered the bow and the arrow to be the supreme weapons. The Dhanur Veda was first described in the 5th-century BCE *Vishnu Purana* and is also mentioned in both of the major ancient Indian epics, the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*. A distinctive factor of Indian martial arts is the heavy emphasis laid on meditation (dhyana) as a tool to remove fear, doubt and anxiety. Indian martial arts techniques have had a profound impact on other martial arts styles across Asia. The 3rd-century BCE Yoga Sutras of Patanjali taught how to meditate single-mindedly on points located inside one's body, which was later used in martial arts, while various mudra finger movements were taught in Yogacara Buddhism. These elements of yoga, as well as finger movements in the nata dances, were later incorporated into various martial arts. According to some historical accounts, the South Indian Buddhist monk Bodhidharma was one of the main founders of the Shaolin Kungfu.

Popular media Television Indian television started off in 1959 in New Delhi with tests for educational telecasts. Indian small screen programming started off in the mid-1970s. Only one national channel, the government-owned Doordarshan existed around that time. The year 1982 marked a revolution in TV programming in India, as the New Delhi Asian games became the first to be broadcast on the colour version of TV. The Ramayana and Mahabharat were among the popular television series produced. By the late 1980s television set ownership rapidly increased. Because a single channel was catering to an ever-growing audience, television programming quickly reached saturation. Hence the government started another channel that had part of national programming and part regional. This channel was known as DD 2 (later DD Metro). Both channels were broadcast terrestrially. In 1991, the government liberated its markets, opening them up to cable television. Since then, there has been a spurt in the number of channels available. Today, the Indian small screen is a huge industry by itself and offers hundreds of programmes in almost all the regional languages of India. The small screen has produced numerous celebrities of their own kind, some even attaining national fame for themselves. TV soaps enjoy popularity among women of all classes. Indian TV also consists of Western channels such as Cartoon Network, Nickelodeon, HBO, and FX. In 2016 the list of TV channels in India stood at 892.

Cinema Bollywood is the informal name given to the popular Mumbai-based film industry in India. Bollywood and the other major cinematic hubs (in Bengali cinema, the Oriya film industry, Bhojpuri, Assamese, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Tamil, Punjabi and Telugu) constitute the broader Indian film industry, whose output is considered to be the largest in the world in terms of number of films produced and number of tickets sold. India has produced many cinema-makers like S.Shankar, S.S.Rajamouli, Satyajit Ray, Mrinal Sen, J. C. Daniel, K. Viswanath, Ram Gopal Varma, Bapu, Ritwik Ghatak, Guru Dutt, Adoor Gopalakrishnan, Shaji N. Karun, Girish Kasaravalli, Shekhar Kapoor, Hrishikesh Mukherjee, Nagraj Manjule, Shyam Benegal, Shankar Nag, Girish Karnad, G. V. Iyer, Mani Ratnam, and K. Balachander (see also: Indian film directors). With the opening up of the economy in recent years and consequent exposure to world cinema, audience tastes have been changing. In addition, multiplexes have mushroomed in most cities, changing the revenue patterns.

Perceptions of Indian culture India's diversity has inspired many writers to describe their perceptions of the country's culture. These writings paint a complex and often conflicting picture of the culture of India. India is one of the most ethnically and religiously diverse countries in the world. The concept of "Indian culture" is a very complex and complicated matter. Indian citizens are divided into various ethnic, religious, caste, linguistic and regional groups, making the realities of "Indianness" extremely complicated. This is why the conception of Indian identity poses certain difficulties and presupposes a series of assumptions about what concisely the expression "Indian" means. However, despite this vast and heterogeneous composition, the creation of some sort of typical or shared Indian culture results from some inherent internal forces (such as a robust Constitution, universal adult franchise, flexible federal structure, secular educational policy, etc.) and from certain historical events (such as Indian Independence Movement, Partition, wars against Pakistan, etc.) Hindu Sanskriti Ankh is an ancient series of books originally from northern part of India highlighting the Bharatiya Sanskriti, that is, the culture of India. According to industry consultant Eugene M. Makar, for example, traditional Indian culture is defined by a relatively strict social hierarchy. He also mentions that from an early age, children are reminded of their roles and places in society. This is reinforced, Makar notes, by the way, many believe gods and spirits have an integral and functional role in determining their life. Several differences such as religion divide the culture. However, a far more powerful division is the traditional Hindu bifurcation into non-polluting and polluting occupations. Strict social taboos have governed these groups for thousands of years, claims Makar. In recent years, particularly in cities, some of these lines have blurred and sometimes even disappeared. He writes important family relations extend as far as 1 gotra, the mainly patrilineal lineage or clan assigned to a Hindu at birth. In rural areas & sometimes in urban areas as well, it is common that three or four generations of the family live under the same roof. The patriarch often resolves family issues. Others have a different perception of Indian culture. According to an interview with C.K. Prahalad by Des Dearlove, author of many best selling business books, modern India is a country of very diverse cultures with many languages, religions, and traditions. Children begin by coping and learning to accept and assimilate in this diversity. Prahalad - who was born in India and grew up there - claimed, in the interview, that Indians, like everyone else in the world, want to be treated as unique, as individuals, want to express themselves and seek innovation. In another report, Nancy Lockwood of Society for Human Resource Management, the world's largest human resources association with members in 140 countries, writes that in the past two decades or so, social change in India is in dramatic contrast to the expectations from traditional Indian culture. These changes have led to Indian families giving education opportunities to girls, accepting women working outside the home, pursuing a career, and opening the possibility for women to attain managerial roles in corporate India. Lockwood claims that change is slow, yet the scale of cultural change can be sensed from the fact that of India's 397 million workers, 124 million are now women. The issues in India with women empowerment are similar to those elsewhere in the world. According to Amartya Sen, the India born Nobel Laureate in Economics, the culture of modern India is a complex blend of its historical traditions, influences from the effects of colonial rule over centuries and current Western culture - both collaterally and dialectically. Sen observes that external images of India in the West often tend to emphasise the difference - real or imagined - between India and the West. There is a considerable inclination in the Western countries to distance and highlight the differences in Indian culture from the mainstream of Western traditions, rather than discover and show similarities. Western writers and media usually misses, in important ways, crucial aspects of Indian culture and traditions. The deep-seated heterogeneity of Indian traditions, in different parts of India, is neglected in these homogenised descriptions of India. The perceptions of Indian culture, by those who weren't born and raised in India, tend to be one of at least three categories, writes Sen:

Exoticist approach: it concentrates on the wondrous aspects of the culture of India. The focus of this approach of understanding Indian culture is to present the different, the strange and as Hegel put it, "a country that has existed for millennia in the imaginations of the Europeans." Magisterial approach: it assumes a sense of

superiority and guardianship necessary to deal with India, a country that James Mill's historiography thought of as grotesquely primitive culture. While a great many British observers did not agree with such views of India, and some non-British ones did, it is an approach that contributes to some confusion about the culture of India. Curatorial approach: it attempts to observe, classify and record the diversity of Indian culture in different parts of India. The curators do not look only for the strange, are not weighed by political priorities, and tend to be freer from stereotypes. The curatorial approach, nevertheless, has an inclination to see Indian culture as more special and extraordinarily interesting than it actually may be. The curatorial approach, one inspired by a systematic curiosity for the cultural diversity of India within India, is mostly absent. Susan Bayly, in her book, observes that there is a considerable dispute in India and Orientalist scholars on perceived Indian culture. She acknowledges that many dispute claims of the pervasiveness of caste and strict social hierarchy in modern India. Bayly notes that much of the Indian subcontinent was populated by people for whom the formal distinctions of caste and strict social hierarchies were of only limited importance in their lifestyles. According to Rosser, an American sociologist, Americans of South Asian origins feel the Western perception of the culture of India has numerous stereotypes. Rosser notes that the discourse in much of the United States about the culture of India is rarely devoted to independent India. People quickly make sweeping and flawed metaphysical assumptions about its religion and culture but are far more circumspect when evaluating civil society and political culture in modern India. It is as if the value of South Asia resides only in its ancient contributions to human knowledge whereas its pathetic attempts to modernise or develop are to be winked at and patronised. Rosser conducted numerous interviews and summarised the comments. The study reports a stark contrast between Western perceptions of the culture of India, versus the direct experience of the interviewed people. For example:

The presentation of South Asians is a standard pedagogic approach which runs quickly from the "Cradle of Civilisation"-contrasting the Indus Valley with Egypt and Mesopotamia-on past the Aryans, who were somehow our ancestors- to the poverty-stricken, superstitious, polytheistic, caste-ridden Hindu way of life ... and then somehow magically culminates with a eulogy of Mahatma Gandhi. A typical textbook trope presents standard Ancient India Meets the Age of Expansion Approach with a colour photo of the Taj Mahal. There may be a sidebar on ahimsa or a chart of connecting circles graphically explaining samsara and reincarnation or illustrations of the four stages of life or the Four Noble Truths. Amid the dearth of real information, there may be found an entire page dedicated to a deity such as Indra or Varuna, who admittedly are rather an obscure vis--vis the beliefs of most modern Hindus. There is new debate arising as to whether or not Indian culture is decaying.

See also References Citations Works cited Bibliography Further reading Chattopadhyaya, D. P. (ed.). History of Science, Philosophy and Culture in Indian Civilization. Vol. 15-volum + parts Set. Delhi: Centre for Studies in Civilizations.

Union Ministry of Culture (archive): Links to some cultural sites and available grants for understanding the cultural diversity and society of India Union Ministry of Culture: Official Website India and World Cultural Heritage A UNESCO site describing cultural heritage sites of India India's intangible cultural heritage Another UNESCO site dedicated to Indian dance and other cultural heritage Indian Culture: Repository of culturally-relevant data hosted by/at the behest of the Union Ministry of Culture

Economy of India

The economy of India is a developing mixed economy with a notable public sector in strategic sectors. It is the world's fourth-largest economy by nominal GDP and the third-largest by purchasing power parity (PPP); on a per capita income basis, India ranked 136th by GDP (nominal) and 119th by GDP (PPP). From independence in 1947 until 1991, successive governments followed the Soviet model and promoted protectionist economic policies, with extensive Sovietization, state intervention, demand-side economics, natural resources, bureaucrat-driven enterprises and economic regulation. This was a form of the Licence Raj. The end of the Cold War and an acute balance of payments crisis in 1991 led to the adoption of a broad economic liberalisation in India and indicative planning. India has about 1,900 public sector companies, with the Indian state having complete control and ownership of railways and highways. The Indian government has major control over banking, insurance, farming, fertilizers and chemicals, airports, essential utilities. The state also exerts substantial control over digitalization, telecommunication, supercomputing, space, port and shipping industries, which were effectively nationalised in the mid-1950s but has seen the emergence of key corporate players. Nearly 70% of India's GDP is driven by domestic consumption; the country remains the world's third-largest consumer market. Aside private consumption, India's GDP is also fueled by government spending, investments, and exports. In 2022, India was the world's 10th-largest importer and the 8th-largest exporter. India has been a member of the World Trade Organization since 1 January 1995. It ranks 63rd on the ease of doing business index and 40th on the Global Competitiveness Index. India has one of the world's highest number of billionaires along with extreme income inequality. Economists and social scientists often consider India a welfare state. India's overall social welfare spending stood at 8.6% of GDP in 2021-22, which is much lower than the average for OECD nations. With 586 million workers, the Indian labour force is the world's second-largest. Despite having some of the longest working hours, India has one of the lowest workforce productivity levels in the world. Economists say that due to structural economic problems, India is experiencing jobless economic growth. During the Great Recession, the economy faced a mild slowdown. India endorsed Keynesian policy and initiated stimulus measures (both fiscal and monetary) to boost growth and generate demand. In subsequent years, economic growth revived. In 2021-22, the foreign direct investment (FDI) in India was \$82 billion. The leading sectors for FDI inflows were the Finance, Banking, Insurance and R&D. India has free trade agreements with several nations and blocs, including ASEAN, SAFTA, Mercosur, South Korea, Japan, Australia, the United Arab Emirates, and several others which are in effect or under negotiating stage. The service sector makes up more than 50% of GDP and remains the fastest growing sector, while the industrial sector and the agricultural sector employs a majority of the labor force. The Bombay Stock Exchange and National Stock Exchange are some of the world's largest stock exchanges by market capitalisation. India is the world's sixth-largest manufacturer, representing 2.6% of global manufacturing output. Nearly 65% of India's population is rural, and contributes about 50% of India's GDP. India faces high unemployment, rising income inequality, and a drop in aggregate demand. India's gross domestic savings rate stood at 29.3% of GDP in 2022.

History For a continuous duration of nearly 1700 years from the year 1 CE, India was the world's largest economy, constituting 35 to 40% of the world GDP. The combination of protectionist, import-substitution, Fabian socialism, and social democratic-inspired policies governed India for sometime after the end of British rule. The economy was then characterised as Dirigism, It had extensive regulation, protectionism, public ownership of large monopolies, pervasive corruption and slow growth. Since 1991, continuing economic liberalisation has moved the country towards a market-based economy. By 2008, India had established itself as one of the world's faster-growing economies.

Ancient and medieval eras **Indus Valley Civilisation** The citizens of the Indus Valley civilisation, a permanent settlement that flourished between 2800 BCE and 1800 BCE, practised agriculture, domesticated animals, used uniform weights and measures, made tools and weapons, and traded with other cities. Evidence of well-planned streets, a drainage system, and water supply reveals their knowledge of urban planning, which included the first-known urban sanitation systems and the existence of a form of municipal government.

West Coast Maritime trade was carried out extensively between southern regions of India and Southeast Asia and West Asia from early times until around the fourteenth century CE. Both the Malabar and Coromandel Coasts were the sites of important trading centres from as early as the first century BCE, used for import and export as well as transit points between the Mediterranean region and southeast Asia. Over time, traders organised themselves into associations which received state patronage. This state patronage for overseas trade came to an end by the thirteenth century CE, when it was largely taken over by the local Parsi, Jewish, Syrian Christian, and Muslim communities, initially on the Malabar and subsequently on the Coromandel coast.

Silk Route Other scholars suggest trading from India to West Asia and Eastern Europe was active between the 14th and 18th centuries. During this period, Indian traders settled in Surakhani, a suburb of greater Baku, Azerbaijan. These traders built a Hindu temple, which suggests commerce was active and prosperous for Indians by the 17th century. Further north, the Saurashtra and Bengal coasts played an important role in maritime trade, and the Gangetic plains and the Indus valley housed several centres of river-borne commerce. Most overland trade was carried out via the Khyber Pass connecting the Punjab region with Afghanistan and onward to the Middle East and Central Asia. Although many kingdoms and rulers issued coins, barter was prevalent. Villages paid a portion of their agricultural produce as revenue to the rulers, while their craftsmen received a part of the crops at harvest time for their services.

Mughal, Rajput, and Maratha eras (1526-1820) The Indian economy was the largest and most prosperous throughout world history and would continue to be under the Mughal Empire, up until the 18th century. Sean Harkin estimates that China and India may have accounted for 60 to 70 percent of world GDP in the 17th century. The Mughal economy functioned on an elaborate system of coined currency, land revenue and trade. Gold, silver and copper coins were issued by the royal mints which functioned on the basis of free coinage. The political stability and uniform revenue policy resulting from a centralized administration under the Mughals, coupled with a well-developed internal trade network, ensured that India-before the arrival of the British-was to a large extent economically unified, despite having a traditional agrarian economy characterised by a predominance of subsistence agriculture. Agricultural production increased under Mughal agrarian reforms, with Indian agriculture being advanced compared to Europe at the time, such as the widespread use of the seed drill among Indian peasants before its adoption in European agriculture, and possibly higher per-capita agricultural output and standards of consumption than 17th century Europe. The Mughal Empire had a thriving industrial manufacturing economy, with India producing about 25% of the world's industrial output up until 1750, making it the most important manufacturing centre in international trade. Manufactured goods and cash crops from the Mughal Empire were sold throughout the world. Key industries included textiles, shipbuilding, and steel, and processed exports included cotton textiles, yarns, thread, silk, jute products, metalware, and foods such as sugar, oils and butter. Cities and towns boomed under the Mughal Empire, which had a relatively high degree of urbanization for its time, with 15% of its population living in urban centres, higher than the percentage of the urban population in contemporary Europe at the time and higher than that of British India in the 19th century. In early modern Europe, there was significant demand for products from Mughal India, particularly cotton textiles, as well as goods such as spices, peppers, indigo, silks, and saltpeter (for use in munitions).

European fashion, for example, became increasingly dependent on Mughal Indian textiles and silks. From the late 17th century to the early 18th century, Mughal India accounted for 95% of British imports from Asia, and the Bengal Subah province alone accounted for 40% of Dutch imports from Asia. In contrast, there was very little demand for European goods in Mughal India, which was largely self-sufficient. Indian goods, especially those from Bengal, were also exported in large quantities to other Asian markets, such as Indonesia and Japan. At the time, Mughal Bengal was the most important centre of cotton textile production. In the early 18th century the Mughal Empire declined, as it lost western, central and parts of south and north India to the Maratha Empire, which integrated and continued to administer those regions. The decline of the Mughal Empire led to decreased agricultural productivity, which in turn negatively affected the textile industry. The subcontinent's dominant economic power in the post-Mughal era was the Bengal Subah in the east., which continued to maintain thriving textile industries and relatively high real wages. However, the former was devastated by the Maratha invasions of Bengal and then British colonization in the mid-18th century. After the loss at the Third Battle of Panipat, the Maratha Empire disintegrated into several confederate states, and the resulting political instability and armed conflict severely affected economic life in several parts of the country - although this was mitigated by localised prosperity in the new provincial kingdoms. By the late eighteenth century, the British East India Company had entered the Indian political theatre and established its dominance over other European powers. This marked a determinative shift in India's trade, and a less-powerful effect on the rest of the economy.

British era (1793-1947) There is no doubt that our grievances against the British Empire had a sound basis. As the painstaking statistical work of the Cambridge historian Angus Maddison has shown, India's share of world income collapsed from 22.6% in 1700, almost equal to Europe's share of 23.3% at that time, to as low as 3.8% in 1952. Indeed, at the beginning of the 20th century, "the brightest jewel in the British Crown" was the poorest country in the world in terms of per capita income.

From the beginning of the 19th century, the British East India Company's gradual expansion and consolidation of power brought a major change in taxation and agricultural policies, which tended to promote commercialisation of agriculture with a focus on trade, resulting in decreased production of food crops, mass impoverishment and destitution of farmers, and in the short term, led to numerous famines. The economic policies of the British Raj caused a severe decline in the handicrafts and handloom sectors, due to reduced demand and dipping employment. After the removal of international restrictions by the Charter of 1813, Indian trade expanded substantially with steady growth. The result was a significant transfer of capital from India to Britain, which, due to the colonial policies of the British, led to a massive drain of revenue rather than any systematic effort at modernisation of the domestic economy. The economy of the Indian subcontinent was the largest in the world for most of recorded history up until the onset of colonialism in early 19th century.

Under British rule, India's share of the world economy declined from 24.4% in 1700 down to 4.2% in 1950. India's GDP (PPP) per capita was stagnant during the Mughal Empire and began to decline prior to the onset of British rule. India's share of global industrial output declined from 25% in 1750 down to 2% in 1900. At the same time, Britain's share of the world economy rose from 2.9% in 1700 up to 9% in 1870. The British East India Company, following their conquest of Bengal in 1757, had forced open the large Indian market to British goods, which could be sold in India without tariffs or duties, compared to local Indian producers who were heavily taxed, while in Britain protectionist policies such as bans and high tariffs were implemented to restrict Indian textiles from being sold there, whereas raw cotton was imported from India without tariffs to British factories which manufactured textiles from Indian cotton and sold them back to the Indian market. British economic policies gave them a monopoly over India's large market and cotton resources. India served as both a significant supplier of raw goods to British manufacturers and a large captive market for British manufactured

goods. British territorial expansion in India throughout the 19th century created an institutional environment that, on paper, guaranteed property rights among the colonisers, encouraged free trade, and created a single currency with fixed exchange rates, standardised weights and measures and capital markets within the company-held territories. It also established a system of railways and telegraphs, a civil service that aimed to be free from political interference, a common-law, and an adversarial legal system. This coincided with major changes in the world economy - industrialisation, and significant growth in production and trade. However, at the end of colonial rule, India inherited an economy that was one of the poorest in the developing world, with industrial development stalled, agriculture unable to feed a rapidly growing population, a largely illiterate and unskilled labour force, and extremely inadequate infrastructure. The 1872 census revealed that 91.3% of the population of the region constituting present-day India resided in villages. This was a decline from the earlier Mughal era, when 85% of the population resided in villages and 15% in urban centres under Akbar's reign in 1600. Urbanisation generally remained sluggish in British India until the 1920s, due to the lack of industrialisation and absence of adequate transportation. Subsequently, the policy of discriminating protection (where certain important industries were given financial protection by the state), coupled with the Second World War, saw the development and dispersal of industries, encouraging rural-urban migration, and in particular, the large port cities of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras grew rapidly. Despite this, only one-sixth of India's population lived in cities by 1951. The effect of British rule on India's economy is a controversial topic. Leaders of the Indian independence movement and economic historians have blamed colonial rule for India's poor economic performance following independence and argued that the capital required for the Industrial Revolution in Britain came from India. At the same time, other historians have countered that India's poor economic performance was due to various sectors being in a state of growth and decline due to changes brought in by colonialism and a world that was moving towards industrialisation and economic integration. Several economic historians have argued that Indian real wages declined in the early 19th century, or possibly beginning in the very late 18th century, largely as a result of British colonial rule. According to Prasannan Parthasarathi and Sashi Sivramkrishna, the grain wages of Indian weavers were likely comparable to that of their British counterparts and their average income was around five times the subsistence level, which was comparable to advanced parts of Europe. However they concluded that due to the scarcity of data, it was hard to draw definitive conclusions and that more research was required. It has also been argued that India went through a period of deindustrialization in the latter half of the 18th century as an indirect outcome of the collapse of the Mughal Empire.

Pre-liberalisation period (1947-1980) Indian economic policy after independence was influenced by the colonial experience, which was seen as exploitative by Indian leaders exposed to the planned economy of the Soviet Union. Domestic policy tended towards protectionism, with a strong emphasis on import substitution industrialisation, economic interventionism, a large government-run public sector, business regulation, and central planning, while trade and foreign investment policies were relatively liberal. Five-Year Plans of India resembled central planning in the Soviet Union. Steel, mining, machine tools, telecommunications, insurance, and power plants, among other industries, were effectively nationalised in the mid-1950s. The Indian economy of this period is characterised as Dirigism.

Never talk to me about profit, Jeh, it is a dirty word.

Jawaharlal Nehru, the first prime minister of India, along with the statistician Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis, formulated and oversaw economic policy during the initial years of the country's independence. They expected favourable outcomes from their strategy, involving the rapid development of heavy industry by both public and

private sectors, and based on direct and indirect state intervention, rather than the more extreme Soviet-style central command system. The policy of concentrating simultaneously on capital- and technology-intensive heavy industry and subsidising manual, low-skill cottage industries was criticised by economist Milton Friedman, who thought it would waste capital and labour, and retard the development of small manufacturers.

I cannot decide how much to borrow, what shares to issue, at what price, what wages and bonus to pay, and what dividend to give. I even need the government's permission for the salary I pay to a senior executive.

Since 1965, the use of high-yielding varieties of seeds, increased fertilisers and improved irrigation facilities collectively contributed to the Green Revolution in India, which improved the condition of agriculture by increasing crop productivity, improving crop patterns and strengthening forward and backward linkages between agriculture and industry. However, it has also been criticised as an unsustainable effort, resulting in the growth of capitalistic farming, ignoring institutional reforms and widening income disparities.

Economic reforms during the 1980s Indira Gandhi and Sanjay Gandhi took several liberalization steps after the coming back to power in 1980 learning from the mistakes of the defeat in 1977. There were several steps taken such as opening of automobile sectors to private sector i.e. Maruti Suzuki, creation of auto component industries through new industrial zones known as Industrial Model Townships (IMT) and Gurgaon, expansion of steel, fertilizer, oil and cement sector led to wider participation of private sector. They also subsequently tried to do urban reforms such as creation of Navi Mumbai and Noida. In 1984, The New Computer Policy of 1984 was introduced by Rajiv Gandhi, as it eased import restrictions on technology, encouraged private investments, and provided incentives for software exports. This included computers, airlines, defense, and telecommunications. Gandhi's government also established Software Technology Parks (STPs) to provide infrastructure, tax benefits, and faster data communications, enabling companies to export software services globally. Rajiv Gandhi's administration also saw setup of new logistics, telecom and transport infrastructure like Nhava Sheva port, Centre for Development of Advanced Computing, Centre for Development of Telematics, CONCOR and creation of highway body NHAI. These reforms led to the growth rate of 5.6% throughout 1980's instead of 2.9% in 1970's but Soviet Union was the largest export partner to India, which would lead to 1991 crisis. In 1990 Rajiv Gandhi introduced measures to significantly reduce the Licence Raj such as allowing private businesses and individuals to purchase capital, consumer goods and import without bureaucratic restrictions. Rajiv Gandhi subsequently promised full economic liberalization, he made V. P. Singh the finance minister, who tried to reduce tax evasion and tax receipts rose due to this crackdown although taxes were lowered. This process lost its momentum during the later tenure of Mr. Gandhi as his government was marred by scandals.

Post-liberalisation period (since 1991-2021) The collapse of the Soviet Union, which was India's major trading partner, and the Gulf War, which caused a spike in oil prices, resulted in a major balance-of-payments crisis for India, which found itself facing the prospect of defaulting on its loans. India asked for a \$1.8 billion bailout loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which in return demanded de-regulation. In response, the Narasimha Rao government, including Finance Minister Manmohan Singh, initiated economic reforms in 1991. The reforms did away with the Licence Raj, reduced tariffs and interest rates and ended many public monopolies, allowing automatic approval of foreign direct investment in many sectors. Since then, the overall thrust of liberalisation has remained the same, although no government has tried to take on powerful lobbies such as trade unions and farmers, on contentious issues such as reforming labour laws and reducing agricultural subsidies. This has been accompanied by increases in life expectancy, literacy rates, and food security, although urban residents have benefited more than rural residents.

From 2010, India has risen from ninth-largest to the fifth-largest economies in the world by nominal GDP in 2019 by surpassing UK, France, Italy and Brazil. India started recovery in 2013-14 when the GDP growth rate accelerated to 6.4% from the previous year's 5.5%. The acceleration continued through 2014-15 and 2015-16 with growth rates of 7.5% and 8.0% respectively. For the first time since 1990, India grew faster than China which registered 6.9% growth in 2015. However the growth rate subsequently decelerated, to 7.1% and 6.6% in 2016-17 and 2017-18 respectively, partly because of the disruptive effects of 2016 Indian banknote demonetisation and the Goods and Services Tax (India). India is ranked 63rd out of 190 countries in the World Bank's 2020 ease of doing business index, up 14 points from the last year's 100 and up 37 points in just two years. In terms of dealing with construction permits and enforcing contracts, it is ranked among the 10 worst in the world, while it has a relatively favourable ranking when it comes to protecting minority investors or getting credit. The strong efforts taken by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) to boost ease of doing business rankings at the state level is said to affect the overall rankings of India.

COVID-19 pandemic and new reforms (2021-present) During the COVID-19 pandemic, numerous rating agencies downgraded India's GDP predictions for FY21 to negative figures, signalling a recession in India, the most severe since 1979. The Indian Economy contracted by 6.6 percent which was lower than the estimated 7.3 percent decline. In 2022, the ratings agency Fitch Ratings upgraded India's outlook to stable similar to S&P Global Ratings and Moody's Investors Service's outlooks. In the first quarter of financial year 2022-2023, the Indian economy grew by 13.5%. India's defence sector was significantly "opened up" in the 2020s through policies that increased foreign direct investment (FDI) limits to 74% under the automatic route and 100% through government approval, especially for technology access. Railway reforms aim to modernize the system for greater efficiency, safety, and passenger experience through strategies like the PM Gati Shakti Plan for infrastructure, organizational restructuring into the Indian Railway Management Service (IRMS), and the National Rail Plan 2030 for increased freight and passenger services. In mid-2025 India surpassed Japan to become the Fourth Largest Economy in the world in terms of GDP(nominal).

Data The following table shows the main economic indicators in 1980-2024 (with IMF staff estimates in 2025-2029). Inflation below 5% is in green. The annual unemployment rate is extracted from the World Bank, although the International Monetary Fund finds them unreliable.

GDP (nominal) past and forecasts Economic sectors Agriculture, forest, and fishing Agriculture and allied sectors like forestry, logging and fishing accounted for 18.4% of the GDP, the sector employed 51.2 crore persons or 45.5% of the workforce in India are employed in agriculture. India is major agriculture producing country and has the most arable land in the world followed by the United States. However, agricultural output lags far behind its potential. Agriculture's contribution to GDP has steadily declined from 1951 to 2023, shifting from 52% to 15% of India's GDP yet it is still the country's largest employment provider sector . Crop-yield-per-unit-area of all crops has grown since 1950, due to the special emphasis placed on agriculture in the five-year plans and steady improvements in irrigation, technology, application of modern agricultural practices and provision of agricultural credit and subsidies since the Green Revolution in India. However, international comparisons reveal the average yield in India is generally 30% to 50% of the highest average yield in the world. The states of Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Bihar, West Bengal, Gujarat and Maharashtra are key contributors to Indian agriculture. India receives an average annual rainfall of 1,208 millimetres (47.6 in) and a total annual precipitation of 4,000 billion cubic metres, with the total utilisable water resources, including surface and groundwater, amounting to 1,123 billion cubic metres. 546,820 square kilometres (211,130 sq mi) of the land area, or about 39% of the total cultivated area, is irrigated. India's inland water resources and marine resources provide employment to nearly 6 million

people in the fisheries sector. In 2023, according to the Ministry of Fisheries, India is the 3rd largest fish producing and 2nd largest aquaculture producing nation in the world.

India is the largest producer of milk, jute and pulses, and has the world's largest cattle population with 303 million animals in 2023. It is the second-largest producer of rice, wheat, sugarcane, cotton and groundnuts, as well as the second-largest fruit and vegetable producer, accounting for 10.9% and 8.6% of the world fruit and vegetable production, respectively, but only for 1% of global fruits and vegetables trade. India is also the second-largest producer and the largest consumer of silk, producing 77,000 tonnes (76,000 long tons; 85,000 short tons) in 2005. India is the second-largest exporter of cashew kernels and cashew nut shell liquid (CNSL). Foreign exchange earned by the country through the export of cashew kernels during FY 2023 reached 356M\$. 76,624 tonnes (75,414 long tons; 84,464 short tons) of kernels were exported during 2023. There are about 600 cashew processing units in Kollam, Kerala. India's foodgrain production stagnant at approximately 316 megatonnes (311 million long tons; 348 million short tons) during 2020-21. India exports several agriculture products, such as Basmati rice, wheat, cereals, spices, fresh fruits, dry fruits, cotton, tea, coffee, milk products and other cash crops to the Asian, African and other countries.

The low productivity in India is a result of several factors. Over-regulation of agriculture has increased costs, price risks and uncertainty, and governmental intervention in labour, land, and credit are hurting the market. Infrastructure such as rural roads, electricity, ports, food storage, retail markets and services remain inadequate. The average size of land holdings is very small, with 70% of holdings being less than one hectare (2.5 acres) in size. Irrigation facilities are inadequate, as revealed by the fact that only 46% of the total cultivable land was irrigated as of 2016, resulting in farmers still being dependent on rainfall, specifically the monsoon season, which is often inconsistent and unevenly distributed across the country. In an effort to bring an additional 20,000,000 hectares (49,000,000 acres) of land under irrigation, various schemes have been attempted, including the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP) which was provided ₹800 billion (equivalent to ₹1.2 trillion or US\$14 billion in 2023) in the Union Budget. Farming incomes are also hampered by lack of food storage and distribution infrastructure; a third of India's agricultural production is lost from spoilage.

Automobile industry The automotive industry in India is one of the largest and fastest-growing globally, contributing significantly to the country's economy, employment, and export performance. As of 2023, India ranked as the fourth-largest automobile producer in the world, following China, United States and Japan. The sector accounts for approximately 7.1% of India's GDP and employs over 37 million people directly and indirectly. As of April 2022, India's auto industry is worth more than US\$100 billion and accounts for 8% of the country's total exports and 7.1% of India's GDP. India's automotive market comprises both domestic and international manufacturers. Key passenger vehicle producers include Maruti Suzuki, Hyundai Motor India, Tata Motors, Mahindra & Mahindra, Kia India, and Toyota Kirloskar Motor. In the two-wheeler segment, leading companies are Hero MotoCorp, Honda Motorcycle and Scooter India, TVS Motor, and Bajaj Auto. The commercial vehicle space is dominated by Tata Motors, Ashok Leyland, and Mahindra & Mahindra.

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) India began its first few steps during the years 1978-80 when early conditions for SMEs or entrepreneurship were hostile too. 63 million MSMEs in India which contribute 35% to the country's GDP provides employment to 111.4 million persons and accounts for more than 40% of India's exports and are hailed as the 'growth engines' of the economy. China has been creating 16,000-18,000 new enterprises per day for the last 5 years. When one compares that with India, it is about 1000-1100 per day. Micro and small enterprises have the potential to resolve India's unemployment crisis provided the constraints

impeding the growth of the sector are resolved. According to Annual MSME Report 2021-22, over 90 per cent of India's 6.3 crore MSMEs are in the micro-segment. Within the micro sector, 62 per cent firms are self-employments which no workers, another 32 per cent have two or three workers and just 6-7 per cent have four workers or above (up to 19). In 2023, SME IPOs set a record-breaking year with 179 listings. In Budget 2023, The government has implemented a number of reforms aimed at boosting MSMEs' growth in India while also improving their international competitiveness.

Machinery, Tools and equipment Machinery and equipment market is expected to grow 8% from 2024 to 2029. India's Industrial Machinery Equipment and Tools market size is expected to be \$210 billion in 2023. The rise in R&D and large number of startups has led to increase in investment in tools, industrial equipment, robotics, industrial automation, pharmaceutical machinery, mining & construction equipment. Indian Government has launched an initiative in promoting electrification of fossil-fuel based equipment hence reducing carbon footprint and leading to new innovations.

Mining, resources, and chemicals Mining India has, in 2022, a reported 1,319 mines of which reporting mines for metallic minerals were estimated at 545 and non-metallic minerals at 775. Mining contributed to 1.75% of GDP and employed directly or indirectly 11 million people in 2021. India's mining industry was the fourth-largest producer of minerals in the world by volume, and eighth-largest producer by value in 2009. In 2013, it mined and processed 89 minerals, of which four were fuel, three were atomic energy minerals, and 80 non-fuel. The public sector accounted for 68% of mineral production by volume in 2011-12. India has the world's fourth-largest natural resources, with the mining sector contributing 11% of the country's industrial GDP and 2.5% of total GDP. Nearly 50% of India's mining industry, by output value, is concentrated in eight states: Odisha, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka. Another 25% of the output by value comes from offshore oil and gas resources. India operated about 3,000 mines in 2010, half of which were coal, limestone and iron ore. On output-value basis, India was one of the five largest producers of mica, chromite, coal, lignite, iron ore, bauxite, barite, zinc and manganese; while being one of the ten largest global producers of many other minerals. India was the fourth-largest producer of steel in 2013, and the seventh-largest producer of aluminium. India's mineral resources are vast. However, its mining industry has declined - contributing 2.3% of its GDP in 2010 compared to 3% in 2000, and employed 2.9 million people - a decreasing percentage of its total labour. India is a net importer of many minerals including coal. India's mining sector decline is because of complex permit, regulatory and administrative procedures, inadequate infrastructure, shortage of capital resources, and slow adoption of environmentally sustainable technologies.

Cement Indian cement industry is the 2nd largest cement producing country in the world, next only to China. At present, the Installed Capacity of Cement in India is 500 MTPA with production of 298 million tonnes per annum. Majority of the cement plants installed capacity (about 35%) is located in the states of south India. In PAT scheme, Total Installed Capacity of Cement in India is 325 MTPA which contributes to 65% coverage of total installed capacity in India.

Iron and steel India surpassed Japan as the second largest steel producer in January 2019. As per worldsteel, India's crude steel production in 2018 was at 106.5 tonnes (104.8 long tons; 117.4 short tons), 4.9% increase from 101.5 tonnes (99.9 long tons; 111.9 short tons) in 2017, which means that India overtook Japan as the world's second largest steel production country. According to data presented by PIB(FY2021-22), there are more than 900 steel plants in India that produce crude steel. These are owned by PSUs, large-scale companies as well as small and medium enterprises (SMEs). In the year 2021-22, the total capacity of these plants stood

at 154.06 million tonnes. The total market value of the Indian steel sector stood at US\$57.8 billion in 2011 and is predicted to touch US\$95.3 billion by 2016. Growth of crude steel production in India has not kept pace with the growth in capacity of production, according to the report. As per this report, steel sector contributes 2 per cent to India's GDP and employs half a million people directly and 2 million people indirectly. The Indian steel sector has been vibrant, growing at a compounded rate of 6% year-on-year. Multiple integrated steel plants both state-owned and private are using automated AI-based systems for production.

Petroleum Petroleum products and chemicals are a major contributor to India's industrial GDP, and together they contribute over 34% of its export earnings. India hosts many oil refinery and petrochemical operations developed with help of Soviet technology such as Barauni Refinery and Gujarat Refinery, it also includes the world's largest refinery complex in Jamnagar that processes 1.24 million barrels of crude per day. By volume, the Indian chemical industry was the third-largest producer in Asia, and contributed 5% of the country's GDP. India is one of the five-largest producers of agrochemicals, polymers and plastics, dyes and various organic and inorganic chemicals. Despite being a large producer and exporter, India is a net importer of chemicals due to domestic demands. India's chemical industry is extremely diversified and estimated at \$178 billion.

Chemicals and fertilizer The chemical industry contributed \$163 billion to the economy in FY18 and is expected to reach \$300-400 billion by 2025. The industry employed 17.33 million people (4% of the workforce) in 2016. At present, 57 large fertilizer units are manufacturing a wide number of nitrogen fertilizers. These include 29 urea-producing units and 9 ammonia sulfate-producing units as a by-product. Besides, there are 64 small-scale producing units of single super phosphate. According to the latest data released by the WTO, India has emerged as the second largest exporter of agrochemicals in the world. The rank was sixth, 10 years ago. The Indian agrochemical industry fetches valuable trade surplus every year. The trade surplus sharply increased from Rs. 8,030 crores in 2017-18 to Rs. 28,908 crores in the last fiscal. India's agrochemicals export has doubled in the last 6 years from \$2.6 bn in 2017-18 to \$5.4 bn in the last financial year according to the data recently released by Ministry of Commerce. It has grown at an impressive CAGR of 13% which is among the highest in the manufacturing sector. Millions of farmers in over 130 countries trust Indian agrochemicals for their high quality and affordable prices, said an industry observer. With the global agrochemicals market estimated at \$78 billion, predominantly comprising post-patent products, India is rapidly becoming a preferred global hub for sourcing such agrochemicals. To bolster domestic production and reduce imports, the Crop Care Federation of India (CCFI) has recommended specific measures to the Government of India.

Transportation Railways and Logistics The Indian Railways contributes to ~3% of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) and has social obligations pegged at \$5.3 billion annually. Indian Railways revenue has grown at 5% CAGR in the past 5 years but profitability has reduced drastically in the past 4 years, due to growing infrastructure and modernization expenses. With a workforce of 1.31 million people, the IR is also one of the country's largest employers. The railways is a major contributor to jobs, GDP, and mobility. Indian Railways has decided to revise its 2022-23 rolling stock production plan upwards. The Ministry's new plan targets the production of 8,429 units for the coming financial year. Production for 2022-23 has been raised by 878 units from the earlier planned 7,551, according to the revised targets. Indian Railways has targeted to manufacture 475 new Vande Bharat trainsets for the next four years as a part of its modernization plan. It is about Rs 40,000 crore (\$5 billion) business opportunity that would also create 15,000 jobs and several spin-off benefits. Indian Railway's CORE aims to electrify all of its broad gauge network by 31 March 2024. The entire electrified mainline rail network in India uses 25 kV AC; DC is used only for metros. As of July 2023, India currently has 90% of total train tracks fully electrified. Under the eleventh Five Year Plan of India (2007-12), the Ministry of Railways started constructing a new Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC) in two long routes, namely the Eastern

and Western freight corridors. The two routes cover a total length of 3,260 kilometres (2,030 mi), with the Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor stretching from Ludhiana in Punjab to Dankuni in West Bengal and the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor from Jawaharlal Nehru Port in Mumbai (Maharashtra) to Dadri in Uttar Pradesh. The DFC will generate around 42,000 jobs and provide long term employment to many people in public sector and private sector.

Rapid Transit India is developing modern mass rapid transit systems to meet present and future urban requirements. A modern metro rail system is already in place in the cities of Navi Mumbai, Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Kochi, Gurgaon, Jaipur, Noida, Pune, Nagpur, Kanpur, Ahmedabad and Lucknow. Similar mass transit systems are intended for Agra, Bhopal, Indore, Surat, Patna, Bhubaneswar Tri-city, Chandigarh Tri-city, Gwalior, Mysore, Nashik, Prayagraj, Varanasi, Ranchi, Thane and Trivandrum. Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee has been credited with success of the metro systems in India and every metro has followed Delhi Metro model generating lot of real estate wealth in India specially in smaller cities like Gurgaon and Noida. For Elevated corridor, there is no need for land acquisition as pillars are built above Median strip of a road. Land prices in tier-II cities such as Lucknow, Patna, Jaipur, Ahmedabad, Pune, Kochi, and Coimbatore have gone up by almost 8-10 percent following the introduction of a metro corridor in these cities, an assessment by JLL has said. India is also developing modern RRTS system to replace the old MRTS system which will provide connectivity in Delhi Metropolitan Area and Mumbai Metropolitan Region which will serve the suburbs of these big cities at 80-100 km of distance from city centre.

Aviation India is the fourth-largest civil aviation market in the world recording an air traffic of 158 million passengers in 2017. The market is estimated to have 800 aircraft by 2020, which would account for 4.3% of global volumes, and is expected to record annual passenger traffic of 520 million by 2037. IATA estimated that aviation contributed \$30 billion to India's GDP in 2017, and supported 7.5 million jobs - 390,000 directly, 570,000 in the value chain, and 6.2 million through tourism. As of 2024, There are 75 new airports have been built in the last ten years, taking the total count to 149 airports (include helipads and aerodromes). Government vision is to take this milestone 149 to 220 airports in the next 5 to 7 years and Government of India has a Rs 1 lakh crore capex plan to spend on Airport infrastructure.

Shipbuilding The Shipbuilding Financial Assistance Policy (SBFAP) was introduced in 2016, provides financial assistance to Indian shipyards for shipbuilding contracts. According to the ministry of ports, shipping and waterways, under SBFAP, a total of 313 domestic and export vessel orders were procured by 39 shipyards since the inception of the scheme, with the total value standing at about ■10,500 crore(\$1.26 billion). India has multiple ship building companies such as Cochin Shipyard, Hindustan Shipyard and Swan Defence and Heavy Industries, mainly produces ships for European, South American and African shipping companies. Cochin shipyard is the pioneer in autonomous electric propulsion ships.

IT and telecommunications Datacentre and cloud India has emerged as the leading data centre hub in the Asia-Pacific region (excluding China), surpassing established players like Singapore, Australia, South Korea, Japan, and Hong Kong in installed capacity. This reflects the escalating demand for data services in one of the world's fastest-growing major economies. With a current installed capacity of 950 MW and projections indicating an additional 850 MW by 2026, India is poised to solidify its position as a key player in the Asia-Pacific data centre landscape. In Hyderabad, The largest datacentre is spread over 1. 31 lakh square feet, the proposed rated-4 (tier-4) data centre will be equipped with 1,600 racks and powered by 18MW of electricity. India's overall public cloud services market is projected to hit US \$13 billion by 2026, expanding at a CAGR of 23.1% in 2021-26. The market's revenue totaled US \$2.8 billion for the first half of 2022.

Telecommunications The telecommunication sector generated ■2.20 trillion (US\$26 billion) in revenue in 2014-15, accounting for 1.94% of total GDP. Telecom equipment manufacturing and exports are becoming a new success story following the success of smartphone exports. In the financial year 2024, the telecom equipment production exceeded the milestone of Rs 45,000 crore with exports totaling approximately Rs 10,500 crore. India is the second-largest market in the world by number of telephone users (both fixed and mobile phones) with 1.053 billion subscribers as of 31 August 2016. It has one of the lowest call-tariffs in the world, due to fierce competition among telecom operators. India has the world's third-largest Internet user-base. As of 31 March 2016, there were 342.65 million Internet subscribers in the country. India's telecommunication industry is the world's second largest by the number of mobile phone, smartphone, and internet users. Industry estimates indicate that there are over 554 million TV consumers in India as of 2012. India is the largest direct-to-home (DTH) television market in the world by number of subscribers. As of May 2016, there were 84.80 million DTH subscribers in the country.

Defence and energy **Defence** With over 1.3 million active personnel, the Indian Army is the third-largest military force and the largest volunteer army. Defence expenditure was pegged at US\$70.12 billion for fiscal year 2022-23 and, increased 9.8% than previous fiscal year. India is the world's second largest arms importer; between 2016 and 2020, it accounted for 9.5% of the total global arms imports. India exported military hardware worth ■159.2 billion (US\$1.9 billion) in the financial year 2022-23, the highest ever and a notable tenfold increase since 2016-17.

Diversified Energy sector Primary energy consumption of India is the third-largest after China and US with 5.3% global share in the year 2015. Coal and crude oil together account for 85% of the primary energy consumption of India. India's oil reserves meet 25% of the country's domestic oil demand. As of April 2015, India's total proven crude oil reserves are 763.476 megatonnes (751.418 million long tons; 841.588 million short tons), while gas reserves stood at 1,490 billion cubic metres (53 trillion cubic feet). Oil and natural gas fields are located offshore at Ashoknagar Oil Field, Bombay High, Krishna Godavari Basin, Mangala Area and the Cauvery Delta, and onshore mainly in the states of West Bengal, Assam, Gujarat and Rajasthan. India is the fourth-largest consumer of oil and net oil imports were nearly ■8.2 trillion (US\$97 billion) in 2014-15, which had an adverse effect on the country's current account deficit. The petroleum industry in India mostly consists of public sector companies such as Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) and Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL). There are some major private Indian companies in the oil sector such as Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) which operates the world's largest oil refining complex. India became the world's third-largest producer of electricity in 2013 with a 4.8% global share in electricity generation, surpassing Japan and Russia. By the end of calendar year 2015, India had an electricity surplus with many power stations idling for want of demand. The utility electricity sector had an installed capacity of 303 GW as of May 2016 of which thermal power contributed 69.8%, hydroelectricity 15.2%, other sources of renewable energy 13.0%, and nuclear power 2.1%. India meets most of its domestic electricity demand through its 106 gigatonnes (104 billion long tons; 117 billion short tons) of proven coal reserves. India is also rich in certain alternative sources of energy with significant future potential such as solar, wind and biofuels (jatropha, sugarcane). India's dwindling uranium reserves stagnated the growth of nuclear energy in the country for many years. Recent discoveries in the Tummalapalle belt may be among the top 20 natural uranium reserves worldwide, and an estimated reserve of 846,477 tonnes (833,108 long tons; 933,081 short tons) of thorium - about 25% of world's reserves - are expected to fuel the country's ambitious nuclear energy programme in the long run. The Indo-US nuclear deal has also paved the way for India to import uranium from other countries.

Infrastructure sector India's infrastructure and transport sector contributes around 5% to the country's gross domestic product (GDP).

Roads India's total road network is over 6.6 million km, making it the second largest in the world as of early 2025. This expansive network comprises national highways, state highways, and other roads and is crucial for transportation, with roads carrying over 85% of passenger traffic and more than 70% of freight. India has rapidly expanded its network of expressways and national highways. As of 2024, more than 45,000 kilometres (28,000 mi) of 4-lane and above highways have been built, including flagship projects such as the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway, Surat-Chennai Expressway, Ganga Expressway, Dwarka Expressway, and Delhi-Meerut Expressway.

Ports India has a coastline of 11,098.81 kilometres (6,896.48 mi), with 13 major ports and more than 200 non-major and private ports. These handle around 95% of India's external trade by volume and about 70% by value. Kandla (Deendayal) Port in Gujarat is the largest public port, while Mundra Port (operated by Adani Ports) is the largest private port in India. Under the Sagarmala project, port-led development and modernization of coastal infrastructure are being accelerated.

Aviation India currently has around 153 operational airports managed by the Airport Authority of India (AAI), including 29 international airports, 10 customs airports, and 114 domestic airports, along with 23 civil enclaves at defence airfields. This number reflects significant growth, as it was 74 in 2014 and has more than doubled, a result of government initiatives UDAN.

Companies India hosts multiple global-scale infrastructure and transport companies such as Afcons Infrastructure, Adani Ports & SEZ, JSW Infrastructure, and Larsen & Toubro, which operate across roads, ports, metro systems, and international projects.

Construction & Real Estate The construction sector-including infrastructure and real estate services-now accounts for approximately 18 % of India's total economic output, reflecting a decade-long compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of about 11 %. It remains the second-largest employment generator in the economy, currently employing roughly 71 million people and forecasted to exceed 100 million jobs by 2030. In Q4 2024-25, real gross value added (GVA) from construction reached **₹4.64** lakh crore, a year-on-year growth of 10.8 %, contributing strongly to GDP growth. For the full fiscal year 2024-25, construction GVA at constant (real) prices stood at **₹15.72** lakh crore, showing a 9.4 % increase over the previous year; nominal GVA rose to **₹26.27** lakh crore, also up 9.4 % year-on-year. In 2016, the construction industry contributed US\$288 billion (13 % of GDP) and employed 60.4 million people (14 % of the workforce). Today, the sector's share has grown significantly, underscoring its expanding economic and employment contributions. The real estate segment is set to generate substantial opportunities in business, employment, and the startup ecosystem. The 2023 Union budget of India allocated nearly **₹10** trillion toward infrastructure, further bolstering this growth trajectory. The MGNREGA scheme continues to play a dual role in rural employment and infrastructure development: - In FY24, approximately 83.2 million people were provided work, generating over 312 crore person-days-a post-pandemic high. - In FY25, despite slight declines, the scheme still delivered over 288 crore person-days-well above pre-pandemic levels.

India is massively privatizing airports, ports, bus stands, railway stations, dams, dam wind park, solar parks, floating solar plants, power transmission, highways, thermal power and other utilizes.

Finance and trade Banking and financial services The financial services industry contributed \$809 billion (37% of GDP) and employed 14.17 million people (3% of the workforce) in 2016, and the banking sector contributed \$407 billion (19% of GDP) and employed 5.5 million people (1% of the workforce) in 2016. The Indian money market is classified into the organised sector, comprising private, public and foreign-owned commercial banks and cooperative banks, together known as 'scheduled banks'; and the unorganised sector, which includes individual or family-owned indigenous bankers or money lenders and non-banking financial companies. The unorganised sector and microcredit are preferred over traditional banks in rural and sub-urban areas, especially for non-productive purposes such as short-term loans for ceremonies. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi nationalised 14 banks in 1969, followed by six others in 1980, and made it mandatory for banks to provide 40% of their net credit to priority sectors including agriculture, small-scale industry, retail trade and small business, to ensure that the banks fulfilled their social and developmental goals. Since then, the number of bank branches has increased from 8,260 in 1969 to 72,170 in 2007 and the population covered by a branch decreased from 63,800 to 15,000 during the same period. The total bank deposits increased from ₹59.1 billion (equivalent to ₹2.8 trillion or US\$33 billion in 2023) in 1970-71 to ₹38.31 trillion (equivalent to ₹96 trillion or US\$1.1 trillion in 2023) in 2008-09. Despite an increase of rural branches - from 1,860 or 22% of the total in 1969 to 30,590 or 42% in 2007 - only 32,270 of 500,000 villages are served by a scheduled bank. India's gross domestic savings in 2006-07 as a percentage of GDP stood at a high 32.8%. More than half of personal savings are invested in physical assets such as land, houses, cattle, and gold. The government-owned public-sector banks hold over 75% of total assets of the banking industry, with the private and foreign banks holding 18.2% and 6.5% respectively. Since liberalisation, the government has approved significant banking reforms. While some of these relate to nationalised banks - such as reforms encouraging mergers, reducing government interference and increasing profitability and competitiveness - other reforms have opened the banking and insurance sectors to private and foreign companies.

Retail The retail industry, excluding wholesale, contributed \$793 billion (10% of GDP) and employed 35 million people (8% of the workforce) in 2020. The industry is the second largest employer in India, after agriculture. The Indian retail market is estimated to be US\$600 billion and one of the top-five retail markets in the world by economic value. India has one of the fastest-growing retail markets in the world, and is projected to reach \$1.3 trillion by 2020. India has retail market worth \$1.17 trillion, which contributes over 10% of India's GDP. It also has one of the world's fastest growing e-commerce markets. The e-commerce retail market in India was valued at \$32.7 billion in 2018, and is expected to reach \$71.9 billion by 2022. India's retail industry mostly consists of local mom-and-pop stores, owner-staffed shops and street vendors. Retail supermarkets are expanding, with a market share of 4% in 2008. In 2012, the government permitted 51% FDI in multi-brand retail and 100% FDI in single-brand retail. However, a lack of back-end warehouse infrastructure and state-level permits and red tape continue to limit growth of organised retail. Compliance with over thirty regulations such as "signboard licences" and "anti-hoarding measures" must be made before a store can open for business. There are taxes for moving goods from state to state, and even within states.

Industries Tourism The World Travel & Tourism Council calculated that tourism generated ₹15.24 trillion (US\$180 billion) or 9.4% of the nation's GDP in 2017 and supported 41.622 million jobs, 8% of its total employment. The sector is predicted to grow at an annual rate of 6.9% to ₹32.05 trillion (US\$380 billion) by 2028 (9.9% of GDP). Over 10 million foreign tourists arrived in India in 2017 compared to 8.89 million in 2016, recording a growth of 15.6%. The tourism industry contributes about 9.2% of India's GDP and employs over 42 million people. India earned \$21.07 billion in foreign exchange from tourism receipts in 2015. International tourism to India has seen a steady growth from 2.37 million arrivals in 1997 to 8.03 million arrivals in 2015. Bangladesh is the largest source of international tourists to India, while European Union nations and Japan are

other major sources of international tourists. In 2024, Ayodhya, particularly with the Ram Temple became Uttar Pradesh's top tourist destination, attracting more domestic and international visitors. Coorg became the top fastest growing destination and hill station in 2024. Less than 10% of international tourists visit the Taj Mahal, with the majority visiting other cultural, thematic and holiday circuits. Over 12 million Indian citizens take international trips each year for tourism, while domestic tourism within India adds about 740 million Indian travellers. India has a fast-growing medical tourism sector of its health care economy, offering low-cost health services and long-term care. In October 2015, the medical tourism sector was estimated to be worth US\$3 billion. It is projected to grow to \$7-8 billion by 2020. In 2014, 184,298 foreign patients traveled to India to seek medical treatment.

Wedding Industry India's wedding industry has a size of \$75 billion, second largest after China. It is the fourth largest industry in India. The wedding industry saw significant growth in 2023 as weddings became larger and more extravagant post the pandemic blues. Average guest size grew by nearly 15%, from 270 guests in 2022 to 310 in 2023. Celebrations also expanded, with couples now hosting an average of 4.2 functions, up from 3.2. A significant 27 lakh weddings fall in the ₹10-25 lakh range, reflecting the popularity of mid-range wedding budgets. Smaller budgets like ₹3 lakh and ₹6 lakh account for 10 lakh weddings each, while high-end weddings costing ₹1 crore or more make up 50,000 weddings. India hosts the highest number of weddings in the world each year, as per investment banking and capital market firm Jefferies. However, in terms of market size, the Indian wedding industry is still smaller than China's but almost twice as big as the US's.

Films, entertainment and music industry The Indian cinema industry is expected to garner a revenue of around Rs 16,198 crore by 2026, of which Rs 15,849 would be Box office revenue and the rest Rs 349 crore from advertising, the report added. India's Recorded Music industry (which is a key sub-segment) is making steady progress at a CAGR of 13.6 percent, thanks to streaming models.

Regional economies India's regional economies vary significantly in terms of output, industrial composition, and development levels. Maharashtra has the largest state economy, contributing over 13% to the national GDP, followed by Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Gujarat, and Uttar Pradesh. These five states collectively account for nearly half of India's economic output. Southern states such as Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Telangana are known for strong performance in services and manufacturing, while western states like Gujarat and Maharashtra are industrial powerhouses. In contrast, eastern and central states such as Bihar, Jharkhand, and Chhattisgarh exhibit lower GDPs, reflecting ongoing challenges in industrialisation and infrastructure. Union Territories like Delhi and Chandigarh, though smaller in size, have high per capita incomes due to urban-centric service-driven economies. This economic landscape highlights both growth opportunities and regional disparities, underscoring the need for tailored economic strategies across states.

Employment Agricultural and allied sectors accounted for about 52% of the total workforce in 2009-10. While agriculture employment has fallen over time in percentage of labour employed, services which include construction and infrastructure have seen a steady growth accounting for 20.3% of employment in 2012-13. Of the total workforce, 7% is in the organised sector, two-thirds of which are in the government-controlled public sector. About 51.2% of the workforce in India is self-employed. Despite having one of the longest working hours, India has one of the lowest workforce productivity levels in the world. According to a 2005-06 survey, there is a gender gap in employment and salaries. In rural areas, both men and women are primarily self-employed, mostly in agriculture. In urban areas, salaried work was the largest source of employment for both men and women in 2006.

Unemployment Unemployment in India is characterised by chronic (disguised) unemployment. Government schemes that target eradication of both poverty and unemployment - which in recent decades has sent millions of poor and unskilled people into urban areas in search of livelihoods - attempt to solve the problem by providing financial assistance for starting businesses, honing skills, setting up public sector enterprises, reservations in governments, etc. The decline in organised employment, due to the decreased role of the public sector after liberalisation, has further underlined the need for focusing on better education and created political pressure for further reforms. India's labour regulations are heavy, even by developing country standards, and analysts have urged the government to abolish or modify them to make the environment more conducive for employment generation. The 11th five-year plan has also identified the need for a congenial environment to be created for employment generation, by reducing the number of permissions and other bureaucratic clearances required. Inequalities and inadequacies in the education system have been identified as an obstacle, which prevents the benefits of increased employment opportunities from reaching all sectors of society.

Child labour Child labour is a complex problem that is rooted in poverty. Since the 1990s, the government has implemented a variety of programs to eliminate child labour. These have included setting up schools, launching free school lunch programs, creating special investigation cells, etc. Author Sonalde Desai stated that recent studies on child labour in India have found some pockets of industries in which children are employed, but overall, relatively few Indian children are employed. Child labour below the age of 10 is now rare. In the 10-14 age group, the latest surveys find only 2% of children working for wage, while another 9% work within their home or rural farms assisting their parents in times of high work demand such as sowing and harvesting of crops.

Diaspora remittance India has the largest diaspora around the world, an estimated 32 million people according to the Ministry of External Affairs (India), many of whom work overseas and remit funds back to their families. The Middle East region is the largest source of employment for expat Indians. The crude oil production and infrastructure industry of Saudi Arabia employs over 2 million expat Indians. Cities such as Dubai and Abu Dhabi in United Arab Emirates have employed another 2 million Indians during the construction boom in recent decades. In 2009-10, remittances from Indian migrants overseas stood at **■**2.5 trillion (equivalent to **■**5.6 trillion or US\$66 billion in 2023), the highest in the world, but their share in FDI remained low at around 1%.

Trade unions In India, the Trade Union movement is generally divided on political lines. According to provisional statistics from the Ministry of Labour, trade unions had a combined membership of 24,601,589 in 2002. As of 2008, there are 12 Central Trade Union Organisations (CTUO) recognized by the Ministry of Labour. The forming of these unions was a big deal in India. It led to a big push for more regulatory laws which gave workers a lot more power. AITUC is the oldest trade union in India. It is a left supported organization. A trade union with nearly 2,000,000 members is the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) which protects the rights of Indian women working in the informal economy. In addition to the protection of rights, SEWA educates, mobilizes, finances, and exalts their members' trades. Multiple other organizations represent workers. These organizations are formed upon different political groups. These different groups allow different groups of people with different political views to join a Union.

Income and consumption India's gross national income per capita had experienced high growth rates since 2002. It has increased from **■**19,040 in 2002-03 to **■**1,88,892 in 2024, This translates to approximately \$2,268. India's GNI per capita has seen considerable growth in the last 10 years. While specific average growth rates are not consistently reported, the available data indicates a positive trend. For example, India's GNI per capita increased by 6.72% in 2023, reaching \$2,540. In comparison, the per capita income at constant (2011-12)

prices increased by 35.12% between 2014-15 and 2022-23. This indicates a positive trend in both nominal and real terms. The estimated GNI per capita for India in 2025 is \$2,878 (nominal) at current prices, according to the IMF World Economic Outlook. According to 2011 census data, India has about 330 million houses and 247 million households. The household size in India has dropped in recent years, the 2011 census reporting 50% of households have four or fewer members, with an average of 4.8 members per household including surviving grandparents. These households produced a GDP of about \$1.7 trillion. Consumption patterns note: approximately 67% of households use firewood, crop residue, or cow-dung cakes for cooking purposes; 53% do not have sanitation or drainage facilities on premises; 83% have water supply within their premises or 100 metres (330 ft) from their house in urban areas and 500 metres (1,600 ft) from the house in rural areas; 67% of the households have access to electricity; 63% of households have landline or mobile telephone service; 43% have a television; 26% have either a two- or four-wheel motor vehicle. Compared to 2001, these income and consumption trends represent moderate to significant improvements. One report in 2010 claimed that high-income households outnumber low-income households.

New World Wealth publishes reports tracking the total wealth of countries, which is measured as the private wealth held by all residents of a country. According to New World Wealth, India's total wealth increased from \$3,165 billion in 2007 to \$8,230 billion in 2017, a growth rate of 160%. India's total wealth decreased by 1% from \$8.23 trillion in 2017 to \$8.148 trillion in 2018, making it the sixth wealthiest nation in the world. There are 20,730 multimillionaires (7th largest in the world) and 118 billionaires in India (3rd largest in the world). With 327,100 high net-worth individuals (HNWI), India is home to the 9th highest number of HNWI's in the world. Mumbai is the wealthiest Indian city and the 12th wealthiest in the world, with a total net worth of \$941 billion in 2018. Twenty-eight billionaires reside in the city, ranked ninth worldwide. As of December 2016, the next wealthiest cities in India were Delhi (\$450 billion), Bengaluru (\$320 billion), Hyderabad (\$310 billion), Kolkata (\$290 billion), Chennai (\$200 billion), and Gurugram (\$110 billion). The Global Wealth Migration Review 2019 report, published by New World Wealth, found that 5,000 HNWI's emigrated from India in 2018, or about 2% of all HNWI's in the country. Australia, Canada, and United States were among the top destination countries. The report also projected that private wealth in India would grow by around 180% to reach \$22,814 billion by 2028.

Poverty In May 2014, the World Bank reviewed and proposed revisions to its poverty calculation methodology of 2005 and purchasing-power-parity basis for measuring poverty. According to the revised methodology, the world had 872.3 million people below the new poverty line, of which 179.6 million lived in India. With 17.5% of the total world's population, India had a 20.6% share of the world's poorest in 2013. According to a 2005-2006 survey, India had about 61 million children under the age of 5 who were chronically malnourished. A 2011 UNICEF report stated that between 1990 and 2010, India achieved a 45 percent reduction in mortality rates under the age of 5, and now ranks 46th of 188 countries on this metric. Since the early 1960s, successive governments have implemented various schemes to alleviate poverty, under central planning, that have met with partial success. In 2005, the government enacted the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), guaranteeing 100 days of minimum wage employment to every rural household in all the districts of India. In 2011, it was widely criticised and beset with controversy for corrupt officials, deficit financing as the source of funds, poor quality of infrastructure built under the programme, and unintended destructive effects. Other studies suggest that the programme has helped reduce rural poverty in some cases. Yet other studies report that India's economic growth has been the driver of sustainable employment and poverty reduction, though a sizeable population remains in poverty. India lifted 271 million people out of poverty between 2006 and 2016, recording the fastest reductions in the multidimensional poverty index values during the period with strong improvements in areas such as assets, cooking fuel, sanitation, and nutrition. On the 2019 Global Hunger Index India ranked 102nd (out of 117 countries) with a score of 30.3, being categorized as 'serious' in severity. In 2024, India ranked 105 (out of 127 countries) with a score of 27.3, indicating an

improvement in its hunger situation. According to the World Bank's Spring 2025 Poverty and Equity Brief, approximately 171 million people in India moved out of extreme poverty between 2011 and 2023. During this period, the country's poverty rate declined significantly from 16.2% to 2.3%, based on the international poverty line of \$2.15 per day.

Taxation **Currency** **Exchange rates** **Overview** The Indian rupee (₹) is the only legal tender in India, and is also accepted as legal tender in neighbouring Nepal and Bhutan, both of which peg their currency to that of the Indian rupee. The rupee previously was divided into 100 paise, which no longer exist. The highest-denomination banknote was the ₹2,000 note until 30 September 2023 after which it was scrapped and ₹500 note became the highest denomination; the lowest-denomination coin in circulation is the ₹1 coin. In 2017, demonetisation was announced in which ₹500 and ₹1000 notes were withdrawn and new ₹500 notes were issued. India's monetary system is managed by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the country's central bank. Established on 1 April 1935 and nationalised in 1949, the RBI serves as the nation's monetary authority, regulator and supervisor of the monetary system, banker to the government, custodian of foreign exchange reserves, and as an issuer of currency. It is governed by a central board of directors, headed by a governor who is appointed by the Government of India. The benchmark interest rates are set by the Monetary Policy Committee. The rupee was linked to the British pound from 1927 to 1946, and then to US dollar until 1975 through a fixed exchange rate. It was devalued in September 1975 and the system of fixed par rate was replaced with a basket of four major international currencies: the British pound, US dollar, the Japanese yen and the Deutsche Mark. In 1991, after the collapse of its largest trading partner, the Soviet Union, India faced the major foreign exchange crisis and the rupee was devalued by around 19% in two stages on 1 and 2 July. In 1992, a Liberalized Exchange Rate Mechanism (LERMS) was introduced. Under LERMS, exporters had to surrender 40 percent of their foreign exchange earnings to the RBI at the RBI-determined exchange rate; the remaining 60% could be converted at the market-determined exchange rate. In 1994, the rupee was convertible on the current account, with some capital controls. After the sharp devaluation in 1991 and transition to current account convertibility in 1994, the value of the rupee has been largely determined by market forces. The rupee has been fairly stable during the decade 2000-2010. In October 2022, rupee touched an all-time low 83.29 to US dollar.

Security markets The development of Indian security markets began with the launch of the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) in July 1875 and the Ahmedabad Stock Exchange in 1894. Since then, 22 other exchanges have traded in Indian cities. In 2014, India's stock exchange market became the 10th largest in the world by market capitalisation, just above those of South Korea and Australia. India's two major stock exchanges, BSE and the National Stock Exchange of India, had a market capitalisation of US\$1.71 trillion and US\$1.68 trillion as of February 2015, according to the World Federation of Exchanges, which grew to \$3.36 trillion and \$3.31 trillion respectively by September 2021. The initial public offering (IPO) market in India has been small compared to NYSE and NASDAQ, raising US\$300 million in 2013 and US\$1.4 billion in 2012. Ernst & Young stated that the low IPO activity reflects market conditions, slow government approval processes, and complex regulations. Before 2013, Indian companies were not allowed to list their securities internationally without first completing an IPO in India. In 2013, these security laws were reformed and Indian companies can now choose where they want to list first: overseas, domestically, or both concurrently. Further, security laws have been revised to ease overseas listings of already-listed companies, to increase liquidity for private equity and international investors in Indian companies.

Foreign trade and investment **Major Trade Partners** The following table shows the largest trading partners for India in 2024-25 by total trade value in billions of USD.

Foreign trade India's foreign trade by year Until the liberalisation of 1991, India was largely and intentionally isolated from world markets, to protect its economy and to achieve self-reliance. Foreign trade was subject to import tariffs, export taxes and quantitative restrictions, while foreign direct investment (FDI) was restricted by upper-limit equity participation, restrictions on technology transfer, export obligations and government approvals; these approvals were needed for nearly 60% of new FDI in the industrial sector. The restrictions ensured that FDI averaged only around \$200 million annually between 1985 and 1991; a large percentage of the capital flows consisted of foreign aid, commercial borrowing and deposits of non-resident Indians. India's exports were stagnant for the first 15 years after independence, due to general neglect of trade policy by the government of that period; imports in the same period, with early industrialisation, consisted predominantly of machinery, raw materials and consumer goods. Since liberalisation, the value of India's international trade has increased sharply, with the contribution of total trade in goods and services to the GDP rising from 16% in 1990-91 to 47% in 2009-10. Foreign trade accounted for 48.8% of India's GDP in 2015. Globally, India accounts for 1.44% of exports and 2.12% of imports for merchandise trade and 3.34% of exports and 3.31% of imports for commercial services trade. India's major trading partners are the European Union, China, United States and United Arab Emirates. In 2006-07, major export commodities included engineering goods, petroleum products, chemicals and pharmaceuticals, gems and jewellery, textiles and garments, agricultural products, iron ore and other minerals. Major import commodities included crude oil and related products, machinery, electronic goods, gold and silver. In November 2010, exports increased 22.3% year-on-year to **■851 billion** (equivalent to **■1.9 trillion** or US\$23 billion in 2023), while imports were up 7.5% at **■1.25 trillion** (equivalent to **■2.8 trillion** or US\$33 billion in 2023). The trade deficit for the same month dropped from **■469 billion** (equivalent to **■1.2 trillion** or US\$14 billion in 2023) in 2009 to **■401 billion** (equivalent to **■900 billion** or US\$11 billion in 2023) in 2010. India is a founding-member of General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and its successor, the WTO. While participating actively in its general council meetings, India has been crucial in voicing the concerns of the developing world. For instance, India has continued its opposition to the inclusion of labour, environmental issues and other non-tariff barriers to trade in WTO policies. India secured 43rd place in competitiveness index.

Balance of payments Since independence, India's balance of payments on its current account has been negative. Since economic liberalisation in the 1990s, precipitated by a balance-of-payment crisis, India's exports rose consistently, covering 80.3% of its imports in 2002-03, up from 66.2% in 1990-91. However, the global economic slump followed by a general deceleration in world trade saw the exports as a percentage of imports drop to 61.4% in 2008-09. India's growing oil import bill is seen as the main driver behind the large current account deficit, which rose to \$118.7 billion, or 11.11% of GDP, in 2008-09. Between January and October 2010, India imported \$82.1 billion worth of crude oil. The Indian economy has run a trade deficit every year from 2002 to 2012, with a merchandise trade deficit of US\$189 billion in 2011-12. Its trade with China has the largest deficit, about \$31 billion in 2013. India's reliance on external assistance and concessional debt has decreased since liberalisation of the economy, and the debt service ratio decreased from 35.3% in 1990-91 to 4.4% in 2008-09. In India, external commercial borrowings (ECBs), or commercial loans from non-resident lenders, are being permitted by the government for providing an additional source of funds to Indian corporates. The Ministry of Finance monitors and regulates them through ECB policy guidelines issued by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) under the Foreign Exchange Management Act of 1999. India's foreign exchange reserves have steadily risen from \$5.8 billion in March 1991 to **■38,832.21 billion** (US\$540 billion) in July 2020. In 2012, United Kingdom announced an end to all financial aid to India, citing the growth and robustness of Indian economy. India's current account deficit reached an all-time high in 2013. India has historically funded its current account deficit through borrowings by companies in the overseas markets or remittances by non-resident Indians and portfolio inflows. From April 2016 to January 2017, RBI data showed that, for the first

time since 1991, India was funding its deficit through foreign direct investment inflows. The Economic Times noted that the development was "a sign of rising confidence among long-term investors in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ability to strengthen the country's economic foundation for sustained growth".

Foreign direct investment As the third-largest economy in the world in PPP terms, India has attracted foreign direct investment (FDI). During the year 2011, FDI inflow into India stood at \$36.5 billion, 51.1% higher than the 2010 figure of \$24.15 billion. India has strengths in telecommunication, information technology and other significant areas such as auto components, chemicals, apparels, pharmaceuticals, and jewellery. Despite a surge in foreign investments, rigid FDI policies were a significant hindrance. Over time, India has adopted a number of FDI reforms. India has a large pool of skilled managerial and technical expertise. The size of the middle-class population stands at 300 million and represents a growing consumer market. India liberalised its FDI policy in 2005, allowing up to a 100% FDI stake in ventures. Industrial policy reforms have substantially reduced industrial licensing requirements, removed restrictions on expansion and facilitated easy access to foreign technology and investment. The upward growth curve of the real-estate sector owes some credit to a booming economy and liberalised FDI regime. In March 2005, the government amended the rules to allow 100% FDI in the construction sector, including built-up infrastructure and construction development projects comprising housing, commercial premises, hospitals, educational institutions, recreational facilities, and city- and regional-level infrastructure. Between 2012 and 2014, India extended these reforms to defence, telecom, oil, retail, aviation, and other sectors. From 2000 to 2010, the country attracted \$178 billion as FDI. The inordinately high investment from Mauritius is due to routing of international funds through the country given significant tax advantages - double taxation is avoided due to a tax treaty between India and Mauritius, and Mauritius is a capital gains tax haven, effectively creating a zero-taxation FDI channel. FDI accounted for 2.1% of India's GDP in 2015. As the government has eased 87 foreign investment direct rules across 21 sectors in the last three years, FDI inflows hit \$60.1 billion between 2016 and 2017 in India.

Outflows Since 2000, Indian companies have expanded overseas, investing FDI and creating jobs outside India. From 2006 to 2010, FDI by Indian companies outside India amounted to 1.34 per cent of its GDP. Indian companies have deployed FDI and started operations in United States, Europe and Africa. The Indian conglomerate Tata Group is United Kingdom's largest manufacturer and private-sector employer.

Remittances In 2015, a total of US\$68.91 billion was made in remittances to India from other countries, and a total of US\$8.476 billion was made in remittances by foreign workers in India to their home countries. UAE, US, and Saudi Arabia were the top sources of remittances to India, while Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Nepal were the top recipients of remittances from India. Remittances to India accounted for 3.32% of the country's GDP in 2015.

Mergers and acquisitions Between 1985 and 2018 20,846 deals have been announced in, into (inbound) and out of (outbound) India. This cumulates to a value of US\$618 billion. In terms of value, 2010 has been the most active year with deals worth almost 60 bil. USD. Most deals have been conducted in 2007 (1,510). Here is a list of the top 10 deals with Indian companies participating:

Economic issues **Corruption** Corruption has been a pervasive problem in India. A 2005 study by Transparency International (TI) found that more than half of those surveyed had first-hand experience of paying a bribe or peddling influence to get a job done in a public office in the previous year. A follow-up study in 2008 found this rate to be 40 percent. In 2011, TI ranked India at 95th place amongst 183 countries in perceived levels of public

sector corruption. By 2016, India saw a reduction in corruption, and its ranking improved to 79th place. In 1996, red tape, bureaucracy, and the Licence Raj were suggested as a cause for institutionalised corruption and inefficiency. More recent reports suggest the causes of corruption include excessive regulations and approval requirements, mandated spending programs, monopoly of certain goods and service providers by government-controlled institutions, bureaucracy with discretionary powers, and lack of transparent laws and processes. Computerisation of services, various central and state vigilance commissions, and the 2005 Right to Information Act - which requires government officials to furnish information requested by citizens or face punitive action - have considerably reduced corruption and opened avenues to redress grievances. In 2011, the Indian government concluded that most spending fails to reach its intended recipients, as the large and inefficient bureaucracy consumes budgets. India's absence rates are among the worst in the world; one study found that 25% of public sector teachers and 40% of government-owned public-sector medical workers could not be found at the workplace. Similarly, many issues are facing Indian scientists, with demands for transparency, a meritocratic system, and an overhaul of the bureaucratic agencies that oversee science and technology. India has an underground economy, with a 2006 report alleging that India topped the worldwide list for black money with almost \$1,456 billion stashed in Swiss banks. This would amount to 13 times the country's total external debt. These allegations have been denied by the Swiss Banking Association. James Nason, the Head of International Communications for the Swiss Banking Association, suggested "The (black money) figures were rapidly picked up in the Indian media and in Indian opposition circles, and circulated as gospel truth. However, this story was a complete fabrication. The Swiss Bankers Association never published such a report. Anyone claiming to have such figures (for India) should be forced to identify their source and explain the methodology used to produce them." A Step was taken by Prime Minister Modi, on 8 November 2016, involved the demonetization of all 500 and 1000 rupee bank notes (replaced by new 500 and 2000 rupee notes) to return black money into the economy followed by criticism that the measure was deemed ineffective by economists and negatively affected the poorest people of India. This demonetisation together with the introduction of the goods and services tax(GST) is believed to be responsible for the slowdown in growth.

Education India has made progress in increasing the primary education attendance rate and expanding literacy to approximately three-fourths of the population. India's literacy rate had grown from 52.2% in 1991 to 74.04% in 2011. The right to education at the elementary level has been made one of the fundamental rights under the Eighty-Sixth Amendment of 2002, and legislation has been enacted to further the objective of providing free education to all children. However, the literacy rate of 74% is lower than the worldwide average, and the country suffers from a high drop-out rate. Literacy rates and educational opportunities vary by region, gender, urban and rural areas, and among different social groups.

Economic disparities Poverty rates in India's poorest states are three to four times higher than those in the more advanced states. While India's average annual per capita income was \$1,410 in 2011 - placing it among the poorest of the world's middle-income countries - it was just \$436 in Uttar Pradesh (which has more people than Brazil) and only \$294 in Bihar, one of India's poorest states.

A critical problem facing India's economy is the sharp and growing regional variations among India's different states and territories in terms of poverty, availability of infrastructure, and socio-economic development. Six low-income states - Assam, Chhattisgarh, Nagaland, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Uttar Pradesh - are home to more than one-third of India's population. Severe disparities exist among states in terms of income, literacy rates, life expectancy, and living conditions. The four states of Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Karnataka alone are projected to account for almost 50% of India's GDP by 2030; the five South Indian states are projected to contribute 35% of India's GDP by 2030 despite currently having 20% of India's population. The

five-year plans, especially in the pre-liberalisation era, attempted to reduce regional disparities by encouraging industrial development in the interior regions and distributing industries across states. The results have been discouraging as these measures increased inefficiency and hampered effective industrial growth. The more advanced states have been better placed to benefit from liberalisation, with well-developed infrastructure and an educated and skilled workforce, which attract the manufacturing and service sectors. Governments of less-advanced states have tried to reduce disparities by offering tax holidays and cheap land and focused on sectors like tourism, which can develop faster than other sectors. India's income Gini coefficient is 33.9, according to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), indicating overall income distribution to be more uniform than East Asia, Latin America, and Africa. The Global Wealth Migration Review 2019 report, published by New World Wealth, estimated that 48% of India's total wealth was held by high-net-worth individuals. According to a 2021 report by the Pew Research Center, India has roughly 1.2 billion lower-income individuals, 66 million middle-income individuals, 16 million upper-middle-income individuals, and 2 million in the high-income group. As per The Economist, 78 million of India's population are considered middle class as of 2017, if defined using the cutoff of those making more than \$10 per day, a standard used by the India's National Council of Applied Economic Research. There is a continuing debate on whether India's economic expansion has been pro-poor or anti-poor. Studies suggest that urban economic growth has become less pro-poor since the 1991 economic reforms.

Climate change Several banks including State Bank of India, Axis Bank, ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank have taken the lead in funding green projects even as the Reserve Bank of India comes up with norms for lenders to disclose their actions on climate risk. RBI in an earlier report in 2022, had said that climate change would require "intensive capital mobilisation" for that India needs \$17.77 trillion. The RBI recommends that regulated entities rely upon the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) framework, the most prominent climate disclosure framework globally, at least at the initial stage. India is home to 75 per cent of the world's wild tiger population. The big cats like lion, tiger, leopard, cheetah, snow leopard, jaguar and puma were on the brink of extinction. With hunting and encroachment, their numbers dropped to a mere 20. Efforts to save the lion started before Independence but it was in 1965 that the Indian Forest Service stepped in to set up a conservation programme. Researchers believe a combination of factors is driving the unprecedented migration in tigers. Rising temperatures due to climate change are making the lower foothills less hospitable.

See also Economic Advisory Council Economic development in India List of Indian states and union territories by GDP List of Indian states and union territories by GDP per capita Make in India, a government programme to encourage manufacturing in India List of industrial cities in India List of megaprojects in India NITI Aayog is a state-led public think tank economic policy agency of the Government of India Public Sector Undertakings are state-owned entities of India The Industrial Policy Resolution of 1956 were industrial policies adopted by the Government of India Medieval India Taxation Political funding in India Economically Weaker Section Events:

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Politics of India

The politics and government of India work within the framework of the country's Constitution, which was adopted in 1950. India is a parliamentary secular democratic republic, described as a "sovereign, socialist, secular democratic republic" in its constitution, in which the president of India is the head of state and first citizen of India and the Prime Minister of India is the head of government. It is based on the federal structure of government, although the word is not used in the Constitution itself. India follows the dual polity system, i.e. federal in nature, that consists of the central authority at the centre and states at the periphery. The Constitution defines the organizational powers and limitations of both central and state governments; it is well recognised, fluid (with the Preamble of the Constitution, fundamental rights, and principles of liberty, equality, justice, and fraternity, being rigid and to dictate further amendments to the Constitution) and considered supreme, i.e. the laws of the nation must conform to it. India is officially declared a secular and socialist state as per the Constitution. There is a provision for a bicameral legislature consisting of an upper house, the Rajya Sabha (Council of States), which represents the states of the Indian federation, and a lower house, the Lok Sabha (House of the People), which represents the people of India as a whole. The Constitution provides for an independent judiciary, which is headed by the Supreme Court. The court's mandate is to protect the Constitution, to settle disputes between the central government and the states, to settle inter-state disputes, to nullify any central or state laws that go against the Constitution and to protect the fundamental rights of citizens, issuing writs for their enforcement in cases of violation. There are 543 members in the Lok Sabha, who are elected using plurality voting (first past the post) system from 543 Single-member district. There are 245 members in the Rajya Sabha, out of which 233 are elected through indirect elections by single transferable vote by the members of the state legislative assemblies; 12 other members are elected/nominated by the President of India. Governments are formed through elections held every five years (unless otherwise specified), by parties that secure a majority of members in their respective lower houses (Lok Sabha in the central government and Vidhan Sabha in states). India had its first general election in 1951, which was won by the Indian National Congress, a political party that went on to dominate subsequent elections until 1977, when a non-Congress government was formed for the first time in independent India. The 1990s saw the end of single-party domination and the rise of coalition governments. The latest 18th Lok Sabha elections was conducted in seven phases from 19 April 2024 to 1 June 2024 by the Election commission of India. The results bought in the NDA (National Democratic Alliance) to form in the next government In recent decades, Indian politics has become a dynastic affair. Possible reasons for this could be the party stability, absence of party organisations, independent civil society associations that mobilise support for the parties and centralised financing of elections. According to the V-Dem Democracy indices India in 2023 was the 19th most electoral democratic country in Asia.

Union government The Government of India is modelled after the Westminster system. The Union government (also called as the Central government) is mainly composed of the executive, the legislature, and the judiciary, and powers are vested by the constitution in the prime minister, parliament, and the supreme court, respectively. The president of India is the head of state and the commander-in-chief of the Indian Armed Forces, while the elected prime minister acts as the head of the executive and is responsible for running the Union government. The parliament is bicameral in nature, with the Lok Sabha being the lower house, and the Rajya Sabha the upper house. The judiciary systematically contains an apex supreme court, 25 high courts, and 688 district courts, all inferior to the supreme court. The basic civil and criminal laws governing the citizens of India are set down in major parliamentary legislation, such as the civil procedure code, the penal code, and the criminal procedure code. Similar to the Union government, individual state governments each consist of

executive, legislative and judiciary branches. The legal system as applicable to the Union and individual state governments is based on the English common and Statutory law. The term New Delhi is commonly used as a metonym for the Union government, as the seat of the central government is in New Delhi.

Lok Sabha The Lok Sabha, constitutionally the House of the People, is the lower house of India's bicameral Parliament. Members of the Lok Sabha are elected by an adult universal suffrage and a first-past-the-post system to represent their respective constituencies, and they hold their seats for five years or until the body is dissolved by the President on the advice of the council of ministers. The house meets in the Lok Sabha Chambers of the Parliament House, New Delhi. The maximum membership of the House allotted by the Constitution of India is 552 (Initially, in 1950, it was 500.) Currently, the house has 543 seats which are filled by the election of up to 543 elected members. The new parliament has a seating capacity of 888 for Lok Sabha. A total of 131 seats (24.03%) are reserved for representatives of Scheduled Castes (84) and Scheduled Tribes (47). The quorum for the House is 10% of the total membership. The Lok Sabha, unless sooner dissolved, continues to operate for five years from the date appointed for its first meeting. However, while a proclamation of emergency is in operation, this period may be extended by Parliament by law or decree. Members of Lok Sabha (House of the People) or the lower house of India's Parliament are elected by being voted upon by all adult citizens of India, who crossed 18 years from a set of candidates who stand in their respective constituencies. Every adult citizen of India can vote only in their constituency.

Office of the Prime Minister The Prime Minister of India is the head of government of the Republic of India. Executive authority is vested in the prime minister and his chosen Council of Ministers, despite the president of India being the nominal head of the executive. The prime minister has to be a member of one of the houses of bicameral Parliament of India, alongside heading the respective house. The prime minister and their cabinet are at all times responsible to the Lok Sabha. The prime minister is appointed by the president of India; however, the prime minister has to enjoy the confidence of the majority of Lok Sabha members, who are directly elected every five years, lest the prime minister shall resign. The prime minister can be a member of the Lok Sabha or of the Rajya Sabha, the upper house of the parliament. The prime minister controls the selection and dismissal of members of the Union Council of Ministers; and allocation of posts to members within the government.

Office of the Council of Ministers The Union Council of Ministers is the principal executive organ of the Government of India, which functions as the senior decision-making body of the executive branch. It is chaired by the prime minister and consists of the heads of each of the executive government ministries. A smaller executive body called the Union Cabinet is the supreme decision-making body in India; it is a subset of the Union Council of Ministers who hold important portfolios and ministries of the government. Pursuant to Article 75, a minister who works at the pleasure of the President, is appointed by the President on the advice of the Prime Minister. There are five categories of the council of ministers as given below, in descending order of rank:

Prime Minister: Leader of the Union Council of Ministers. **Deputy Prime Minister (if any):** Presides as prime minister in his absence or as the senior most cabinet minister. **Cabinet Minister:** A member of the Union cabinet; leads a ministry. **Minister of State (Independent charge):** Junior minister not reporting to a Cabinet Minister. **Minister of State (MoS):** Deputy Minister reporting to a Cabinet Minister, usually tasked with a specific responsibility in that ministry.

Rajya Sabha The Rajya Sabha, constitutionally the Council of States, is the upper house of the bicameral Parliament of India. It has a maximum membership of 250, of which 238 are elected by the legislatures of the

states and union territories using single transferable votes through open ballots, while the president can appoint 12 members for their contributions to art, literature, science, and social service. The total allowed capacity is 250 (238 elected, 12 appointed) according to article 80 of the Indian Constitution. The current potential seating capacity of the Rajya Sabha is 245 (233 elected, 12 appointed). Members sit for staggered terms lasting six years, with about a third of the 238 designates up for election every two years, in even-numbered years. Unlike the Lok Sabha, the Rajya Sabha is a continuing chamber and hence not subject to dissolution. However, the Rajya Sabha, like the Lok Sabha, can be prorogued by the president. The Rajya Sabha has equal footing in legislation with the Lok Sabha, except in the area of supply, where the latter has overriding powers. In the case of conflicting legislation, a joint sitting of the two houses can be held, where the Lok Sabha would hold a greater influence because of its larger membership. The vice president of India is the ex-officio chairman of the Rajya Sabha, who presides over its sessions. The deputy chairman, who is elected from amongst the house's members, takes care of the day-to-day matters of the house in the absence of the chairman.

President & Vice-President of India
Office of the President of India
The President of India is the head of state of the Republic of India. The president is the nominal head of the executive, the first citizen of the country, as well as the supreme commander of the Indian Armed Forces. The new president is chosen by an electoral college consisting of the elected members of both houses of parliament (MPs), the elected members of the State Legislative Assemblies (Vidhan Sabha) of all States and the elected members of the legislative assemblies (MLAs) of union territories with legislatures, i.e., National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir and Puducherry. The election process of the president is a more extensive process than of the prime minister who is also elected indirectly (elected by the members of the majority party (or union) in the Lok Sabha). Whereas President being the constitutional head with duties to protect, defend and preserve the constitution and rule of law in a constitutional democracy with constitutional supremacy, is elected in an extensive manner by the members of Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha and state legislative assemblies in a secret ballot procedure.

Office of the Vice-President of India
The Vice President of India is the deputy to the head of state of the Republic of India, i.e. the president of India. The office of vice president is the second-highest constitutional office after the president and ranks second in the order of precedence and first in the line of succession to the presidency. The vice president is also the ex officio chairman of the Rajya Sabha. Article 66 of the Constitution of India states the manner of election of the vice president. The vice president is elected indirectly by members of an electoral college consisting of the members of both Houses of Parliament and not the members of state legislative assembly by the system of proportional representation using single transferable votes and the voting is conducted by Election Commission of India via secret ballot. The vice president also acts as the chancellor of the Panjab University and Delhi University.

State governments
State governments in India are the governments ruling over 28 states and 8 union territories of India and the head of the Council of Ministers in a state is the Chief Minister. Each state has a legislative assembly. A state legislature that has one house - the state legislative assembly (Vidhan Sabha) - is a unicameral legislature. A state legislature that has two houses - the state legislative assembly and state legislative council (Vidhan Parishad) - is a bicameral legislature. The Vidhan Sabha is the lower house and corresponds to the Lok Sabha while the Vidhan Parishad is the upper house and corresponds to the Rajya Sabha of the Parliament of India. The judicial branch of the state consists of the High Court at the top, followed by District and Subordinate Courts, along with various special courts and tribunals established for specific purposes.

Executive branch of the State Government The executive branch of a state government comprises the Governor and the Council of Ministers, headed by the Chief Minister. The Governor, appointed by the President of India, serves as the constitutional head, while the Chief Minister is the executive head of the government. Like the Union Government, the state government follows a similar structure - the Governor corresponds to the President, the Chief Minister to the Prime Minister, and the State Council of Ministers to the Union Council of Ministers.

The Council of Ministers, headed by the Chief Minister, exercises the executive powers of the state and includes Cabinet Ministers and Ministers of State, appointed by the Governor on the Chief Minister's advice. The state government functions through various ministries and departments, each headed politically by a Minister. The bureaucracy in the state is a permanent executive responsible for implementing government policies and decisions. The Chief Secretary, a senior IAS officer, is the administrative head of the government, and each department is headed administratively by a Secretary to the Government.

State legislative assembly Vidhan Sabha, also known as state legislative assembly, is a legislative body in each of the states and certain union territories of India. In 22 states and 3 union territories, there is a unicameral legislature which is the sole legislative body. Vidhan Sabha is present in all the states and 3 union territories. Each Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) is directly elected to serve 5-year terms by single-member constituencies. The Constitution of India states that a state legislative assembly must have no less than 60 and no more than 500 members however an exception may be granted via an Act of Parliament as is the case in the states of Goa, Sikkim, Mizoram and the union territory of Puducherry which have fewer than 60 members. A state legislative assembly may be dissolved in a state of emergency, by the Governor on request of the Chief Minister, or if a motion of no confidence is passed against the ruling majority party or coalition.

State legislative council Vidhan Parishad, also called as the state legislative council, is the upper house in those states of India that have a bicameral state legislature; the lower house being the State Legislative Assembly. Its establishment is defined in Article 169 of the Constitution of India. Only 6 out of 28 states have a legislative council. These are Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Telangana, Maharashtra, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh. No union territory has a legislative council. The size of the state legislative councils cannot be more than one third of the membership of the state legislative assembly. However, its size cannot be less than 40 members. These members elect the chairman and deputy chairman of the state legislative council.

Local governments Local government in India is governmental jurisdiction below the level of the state. Local self-government means that residents in towns, villages and rural settlements are the people who elect local councils and their heads authorising them to solve the important issues. The 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments give recognition and protection to local governments and in addition each state has its own local government legislation. Since 1992, local government in India takes place in two very distinct forms. Urban localities, covered in the 74th amendment to the Constitution, have Municipality but derive their powers from the individual state governments, while the powers of rural localities have been formalized under the panchayati raj system, under the 73rd amendment to the Constitution.

Urban local governing bodies The following 3 types of democratically elected urban local governance bodies in India are called municipalities and abbreviated as the "MC". These are classified based on the size of the population, density, revenue, non-agricultural employment, economic importance of the urban settlement.

Municipal Corporation, also called the "Nagar Nigam" or "City Corporation", of cities with more than 1 million population. Municipal Councils, also called the "Nagar Palika" or "Nagar Palika Parishad", of cities with more than 25,000 and less than 1 million population. Municipal Committee, also called the "Town Council" or "Nagar Panchayat" or "Town Panchayat" or "Notified Area Council" or "Notified Area Committee" depending on the state within which they lie, these are in the town with more than 10,000 and less than 25,000 population.

Rural local governing bodies The Constitutional (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 aims to provide a three-tier system of Panchayati Raj for all States having a population of over 2 million, to hold Panchayat elections regularly every five years, to provide reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Women, to appoint State Finance Commission to make recommendations as regards the financial powers of the Panchayats and to constitute District Planning Committee to prepare a draft development plan for the district. The following 3 hierarchies of PRI panchayats exist in states or Union Territories with more than two million inhabitants:

Gram Panchayats at village level Panchayat Samiti or Mandal Parishad or Block Panchayat or Taluk Panchayat at Community Development Block or Mandal or Taluk level and Zila Parishad/District Panchayat at district level.

Elections in India Elections in the Republic of India include elections for

President of India, Vice President of India, Members of the Parliament in Rajya Sabha (Upper house) and Lok Sabha (Lower house), Members of State Legislative Councils, Members of State Legislative Assemblies (includes legislative assemblies of three union territories - Jammu and Kashmir, National Capital Territory of Delhi and Puducherry) Members of local governance bodies (Municipal bodies and Panchayats), By-election is held when a seat-holder of a particular constituent dies, resigns, or is disqualified.

Election Commission of India The Election Commission of India (ECI) is a constitutional body established by the Constitution of India empowered to conduct free and fair elections in India. The Election commission is headed by a Chief Election Commissioner and consists of two other Election Commissioners. At the states and union territories, the Election Commission is assisted by the Chief Electoral Officer of the state or union territory (CEO), who leads the election machinery in the states and union territories. At the district and constituency levels, the District Magistrates/District Collectors (in their capacity as District Election Officers), Electoral Registration Officers and Returning Officers perform election work. The Election Commission operates under the powers granted by Article 324 of the Constitution and subsequently enacted Representation of the People Act. The election commission decides the dates for the filing of nominations, voting, counting and announcement of results. A law for the registration process for political parties was enacted in 1989. The registration ensures that the political parties are recognized as national, state and regional parties. The election commission has the right to allot symbols to the political parties depending on the status. The same symbol cannot be allocated to two political parties even if they do not contest in the region. The commission prepares electoral rolls and updates the voter list. To prevent electoral fraud, Electors Photo Identity Cards (EPIC) were introduced in 1993. However certain legal documents such as ration cards have been allowed for voting in certain situations.

State Election Commissions (SECs) The state election commissions are responsible for conducting local body elections in the respective states. The State Election Commission (SEC) is an independent constitutional

authority responsible for conducting free and fair elections to Local self-government institutions, such as panchayats and municipalities, within each state. Established under Article 243K and Article 243ZA of the Constitution, it oversees the preparation of electoral rolls, ensures adherence to the Model Code of Conduct, and supervises the entire election process at the state level. The Commission is headed by a State Election Commissioner, who is appointed by the Governor.

One Nation, One Election "One Nation, One Election" is an initiative proposed in India to synchronize the schedules of the Lok Sabha (House of the People) and state legislative assembly elections. The concept aims to conduct simultaneous elections for both central and state governments, a practice that was prevalent until 1967. Advocates argue that this approach would significantly reduce the burden on the public exchequer, minimize the disruption caused by frequent elections, and ensure more consistent policy implementation. However, it faces challenges, such as the logistical complexities of conducting elections on such a large scale and concerns over the potential impact on the federal structure of governance. The proposal continues to spark significant debate among political parties, constitutional experts, and the general public in India. Simultaneous elections were common in India until 1967, but the practice ended due to the premature dissolution of some state assemblies and the Lok Sabha in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The idea has been periodically revisited, with significant push in recent years from Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Bharatiya Janata Party.

Political parties, political families and alliances Political parties in India When compared to other democracies, India has had a large number of political parties during its history under democratic governance. It has been estimated that over 200 parties were formed after India became independent in 1947. As per latest publications dated 23 March 2024 from Election Commission of India, and subsequent notifications, there are 6 national parties, 57 state parties, and 2,764 registered unrecognized parties. All registered parties contesting elections need to choose a symbol from a list of available symbols offered by the EC.

Types of political parties Every political party in India, whether a national or regional/state party, must have a symbol and must be registered with the Election Commission of India. Symbols are used in the Indian political system to identify political parties in part so that illiterate people can vote by recognizing the party symbols. In the current amendment to the Symbols Order, the commission has asserted the following five principles:

A party, national or state, must have a legislative presence. A national party's legislative presence must be in the Lok Sabha. A state party's legislative presence must be in the State Assembly. A party can set up a candidate only from amongst its own members. A party that loses its recognition shall not lose its symbol immediately but shall be allowed to use that symbol for some time to try and retrieve its status. However, the grant of such facility to the party will not mean the extension of other facilities to it, as are available to recognized parties, such as free time on Doordarshan or AIR, free supply of copies of electoral rolls, etc. Recognition should be given to a party only on the basis of its own performance in elections and not because it is a splinter group of some other recognized party.

National political party A political party shall be eligible to be recognized as a national party if:

it secures at least six percent (6%) of the valid votes polled in any four or more states, at a general election to the Lok Sabha or, to the State Legislative Assembly; and . in addition, it wins at least four seats in the House of the People from any State or States. or it wins at least two percent (2%) seats in the House of the People (i.e.

11 seats in the existing House having 543 members), and these members are elected from at least three different states. Six national political parties are - Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Indian National Congress (INC), Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI-M), Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and National People's Party (NPP).

State political party A political party shall be entitled to be recognized as a state party, if:

it secures at least six percent (6%) of the valid votes polled in the state at a general election, either to the Lok Sabha or to the Legislative Assembly of the State concerned; and in addition, it wins at least two seats in the Legislative Assembly of the state concerned. or it wins at least three percent (3%) of the total number of seats in the Legislative Assembly of the state, or at least three seats in the Assembly, whichever is more.

Registered unrecognized political party (RUPP) Registered unrecognized political parties are those parties which are either newly registered or which have not secured enough percentage of votes in the assembly or general elections to become a state party or those which have never contested elections since being registered. Registered but unrecognized political parties don't enjoy all the benefits extended to the recognized parties.

Party proliferation Although a strict anti-defection law had been passed in 1984, there has been a continued tendency amongst politicians to float their own parties rather than join a broad based party such as the Congress or the BJP. Between the 1984 and 1989 elections, the number of parties contesting elections increased from 33 to 113. In the decades since, this fragmentation has continued.

Political families Since the 1980s, Indian politics has become dynastic, possibly due to the absence of a party organization, independent civil society associations that mobilize support for the party, and centralized financing of elections. One example of dynastic politics has been the Nehru-Gandhi family which produced three Indian prime ministers. Family members have also led the Congress party for most of the period since 1978 when Indira Gandhi floated the then Congress(I) faction of the party. The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party also features several senior leaders who are dynasts. Dynastic politics is prevalent also in a number of political parties with regional presence such as All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM), Trinamool Congress (TMC), Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS), Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) (SHS (UBT)), Nationalist Congress Party - Sharadchandra Pawar (NCP (SP)), Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), Indian National Lok Dal (INLD), Jammu & Kashmir National Conference (JKNC), Jammu and Kashmir People's Democratic Party (JKPDP), Janata Dal (Secular) (JD(S)), Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), National People's Party (NPP), Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK), Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD), Samajwadi Party (SP), Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), Shiv Sena (SS), Telugu Desam Party (TDP) and YSR Congress Party (YSRCP).

Political alliances A coalition government is a form of government in which political parties cooperate to form a government. The usual reason for such an arrangement is that no single party has achieved an absolute majority after an election. Political parties of such a coalition government forms an alliance for contesting election together usually for better prospects. Alliance usually revolves around the BJP and INC, being the two largest political parties in India without whose support, it would be difficult to form a majority government.

National Democratic Alliance (NDA) National Democratic Alliance (NDA), a centre-right to right-wing coalition led by BJP was formed in 1998 after the elections. NDA formed a government, although the government did not last long as AIADMK withdrew support from it resulting in 1999 general elections, in which NDA won and resumed power. The coalition government went on to complete the full five-years term, becoming the first non-Congress government to do so. After securing a defeating in 2004 General Election and 2009 General Elections against the United Progressive Alliance (UPA), the NDA once again returned to power in the 2014 General Elections, for the second time, with a historic mandate of 336 out of 543 Lok Sabha seats. BJP itself won 282 seats, thereby electing Narendra Modi as the head of the government. In a historic win, the NDA stormed to power for the third term in 2019 with a combined strength of 353 seats, with the BJP itself winning an absolute majority with 303 seats. In the 2024 Indian general election the NDA, though lost a couple of seats succeeded to form the government by winning 293 seats with a major support from allies like Telugu Desam Party (16 seats) and Janata Dal (United) (12 seats).

United Progressive Alliance (UPA) The United Progressive Alliance was a political alliance in India led by the Indian National Congress. It was formed after the 2004 general election with support from left-leaning political parties when no single party got the majority. The UPA subsequently governed India from 2004 until 2014 for 2 terms before losing power to their main rivals, the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance. With strong corruption history within the alliance and becoming increasingly unpopular among the masses, the UPA was dissolved to form the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance on 18 July 2023 ahead of the 2024 general election. The UPA used to rule 7 States and union territories of India before it was dissolved.

Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (I.N.D.I.A) Unable to defeat the NDA in 2014 General Election and 2019 General Election, and with Congress performing its poorest in same, many political leaders understood the need for a grand alliance of almost all major political parties to stand against the BJP led NDA in the 2024 General Elections which resulted in the formation of the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (I.N.D.I.A). It was formed by merger of United Progressive Alliance (UPA), Left Front and other smaller alliances, centre-left to left-wing coalition led by Indian National Congress (INC). The alliance, comprising 26 opposition parties, include many political parties that are at loggerhead with the INC in their respective states and territories but are in alliance for the 2024 General Elections.

Political issues Law and order Terrorism, Naxalism, religious violence and caste-related violence are important issues that affect the political environment of the Indian nation. Stringent anti-terror legislation such as TADA, POTA and MCOCA have received much political attention, both in favour and against, and some of these laws were disbanded eventually due to human rights violations. However, UAPA was amended in 2019 to negative effect vis--vis human rights. Terrorism has affected politics in India since its conception, be it the terrorism supported from Pakistan or the internal guerrilla groups such as Naxalites. In 1991 the former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated during an election campaign. The suicide bomber was later linked to the Sri Lankan terrorist group Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, as it was later revealed the killing was an act of vengeance for Rajiv Gandhi sending troops in Sri Lanka against them in 1987. Babri Masjid demolition on 6 December 1992 resulted in nationwide communal riots in two months, with the worst occurring in Mumbai with at least 900 dead. The riots were followed by 1993 Bombay bombings, which resulted in more deaths. Law and order issues, such as action against organised crime are issues which do not affect the outcomes of elections. On the other hand, there is a criminal-politician nexus. Many elected legislators have criminal cases against them. In July 2008, The Washington Post reported that nearly a fourth of the 540 Indian Parliament members faced criminal charges, "including human trafficking, child prostitution, immigration rackets, embezzlement, rape and even murder".

State of democracy From 2006 to 2023 the situation of Indian democracy worsened. There was little state presence in tribal areas and tensions between Hindus and minorities. The rebellions are a sign of the governments loss of power. Interreligious riots where observed. Political freedoms are limited since funding of NGOs, such as Amnesty International, got more difficult due to the "Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act", though the constitution guarantees freedom of association. Hindu-nationalist groups created a climate of intimidation over the country. Freedom of press is impacted through the intimidation of journalists by police, criminals and politicians. In 2023, according to the Freedom in the World report by Freedom House, India was classified as a "partly free" country for the third consecutive year. The V-Dem Democracy Indices by V-Dem Institute classify India as an 'electoral autocracy'. In 2023, it referred to India as "one of the worst autocratisers in the last 10 years". According to the Democracy Index of the Economist Intelligence Unit, India is a Defective democracy.

See also References Bibliography Further reading External links

Outline of the Indian Government

Demographics of India

India is the most populous country in the world, with one-sixth of the world's population. Between 1975 and 2010, the population doubled to 1.2 billion, reaching the billion mark in 2000. According to the UN's World Population dashboard, in 2023 India's population stood at slightly over 1.428 billion, edging past China's population of 1.425 billion people, as reported by the news agency Bloomberg. In 2015, India's population was predicted to reach 1.7 billion by 2050. In 2017 its population growth rate was 0.98%, ranking 112th in the world; in contrast, from 1972 to 1983, India's population grew by an annual rate of 2.3%. In 2023, the median age of an Indian was 29.5 years, compared to 39.8 for China and 49.5 for Japan; and, by 2030; India's dependency ratio will be just over 0.4. However, the number of children in India peaked more than a decade ago and is now falling. The number of children under the age of five peaked in 2007, and since then the number has been falling. The number of Indians under 15 years old peaked slightly later (in 2011) and is now also declining. India has many ethnic groups, and every major region is represented, as are four major families of languages (Indo-European, Dravidian, Austroasiatic and Sino-Tibetan languages) as well as two language isolates: the Nihali language, spoken in parts of Maharashtra, and the Burushaski language, spoken in parts of Jammu and Kashmir. Around 150,000 people in India are Anglo-Indians, and between 25,000-70,000 people are Siddhis, who are descendants of Bantu slaves brought by Arabs, Persians and Portuguese to the western coast of India during the Middle Ages and the colonial period. They represent over 0.1% of the total population of India. Overall, only the continent of Africa exceeds the linguistic, genetic and cultural diversity of the nation of India. The sex ratio was 944 females for 1000 males in 2016, and 940 per 1000 in 2011. This ratio has been showing an upwards trend for the last two decades after a continuous decline in the 20th century.

History Prehistory to early 19th century The following table lists estimates for the population of India (including what are now Pakistan and Bangladesh) from prehistory up until 1820. It includes estimates and growth rates according to five economic historians, along with interpolated estimates and overall aggregate averages derived from their estimates.

Population of India Over Time India's population has changed significantly due to migrations, technological advancements, and societal developments. Below is a table of historical population estimates: Estimated Population of India (10,000 BC - 2011)

The population grew from the South Asian Stone Age in 10,000 BC to the Maurya Empire in 200 BC at a steadily increasing growth rate, before population growth slowed down in the classical era up to 500 AD, and then became largely stagnant during the early medieval era up to 1000 AD. The population growth rate then increased in the late medieval era (during the Delhi Sultanate) from 1000 to 1500. Under the Mughal Empire, India experienced a high economic and demographic upsurge, due to Mughal agrarian reforms that intensified agricultural production. 15% of the population lived in urban centres, higher than the percentage of the population in 19th-century British India and contemporary Europe up until the 19th century. These estimates by Abraham Eraly and Paolo Malanima have been criticised by Tim Dyson, who considers them exaggerations and estimates urbanisation of the Mughal Empire to be less than 9% of the population. Under the reign of Akbar (reigned 1556-1605) in 1600, the Mughal Empire's urban population was up to 17 million people, larger than the urban population in Europe. By 1700, Mughal India had an urban population of 23 million people, larger than British India's urban population of 22.3 million in 1871. Nizamuddin Ahmad (1551-1621) reported that, under Akbar's reign, Mughal India had 120 large cities and 3,200 townships. A number of cities in India had a

population between a quarter-million and half-million people, with larger cities including Agra (in Agra Subah) with up to 800,000 people and Dhaka (in Bengal Subah) with over 1 million people. Mughal India also had a large number of villages, with 455,698 villages by the time of Aurangzeb (reigned 1658-1707).

Late 19th century to early 20th century The total fertility rate is the number of children born per woman. It is based on fairly good data for the entire years. Sources: Our World in Data and Gapminder Foundation.

Life expectancy from 1881 to 1950

The population of India under the British Raj (including what are now Pakistan and Bangladesh) according to censuses:

Studies of India's population since 1881 have focused on such topics as total population, birth and death rates, geographic distribution, literacy, the rural and urban divide, cities of a million, and the three cities with populations over eight million: Delhi, Greater Mumbai (Bombay), and Kolkata (Calcutta). Mortality rates fell in the period 1920-45, primarily due to biological immunisation. Suggestions that it was the benefits of colonialism are refuted by academic thinking: "There can be no serious, informed belief... that... late colonial era mortality diminished and population grew rapidly because of improvements in income, living standards, nutrition, environmental standards, sanitation or health policies, nor was there a cultural transformation...".

Languages According to the 2001 census, 41.03% of the Indians spoke Hindi natively, while the rest spoke Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Maithili, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu and a variety of other languages. There are a total of 122 languages and 234 mother tongues spoken in India. Of these, 22 languages are specified in the Eighth Schedule of Indian Constitution, while 100 are non-specified. The table below excludes Mao-Maram, Paomata and Purul subdivisions of Senapati District of Manipur state due to cancellation of census results.

Vital statistics UN estimates Census of India: Sample Registration System Life expectancy Demographic and Health Surveys From the Demographic Health Survey:

Regional vital statistics

Neonatal and infant demographics

The table below represents the infant mortality rate trends in India, based on sex, over the last 15 years. In the urban areas of India, average male infant mortality rates are slightly higher than average female infant mortality rates.

India's 2011 census shows a serious decline in the number of girls under the age of seven - activists posit that eight million female fetuses may have been aborted between 2001 and 2011.

Ethnic groups The national Census of India does not recognise racial or ethnic groups within India, but recognises many of the tribal groups as Scheduled Castes and Tribes (see list of Scheduled Tribes in India). For a list of ethnic groups in the Republic of India (as well as neighbouring countries), see South Asian ethnic groups. According to a 2009 study published by Reich et al., the modern Indian population is composed of two genetically divergent and heterogeneous populations which mixed in ancient times (about 1,200-3,500 BP), known as Ancestral North Indians (ANI) and Ancestral South Indians (ASI). ASI corresponds to the Dravidian-speaking population of southern India, whereas ANI corresponds to the Indo-Aryan-speaking population of northern India. 700,000 people from the United States of any race live in India. Around 150,000 Anglo-Indian people still live in India. India is a country with a vast diversity of ethnic groups, each with its own distinct culture, language, and traditions. The major ethnic groups in India include the Indo-Aryans, Dravidians, Sino-Tibetans, Austroasiatic peoples, and various indigenous tribes. These groups are spread across different regions of India, each contributing to the country's rich cultural mosaic.

Population size and structure India occupies 2.41% of the world's land area but supports over 18% of the world's population. At the 2001 census 72.2% of the population lived in about 638,000 villages and the remaining 27.8% lived in more than 5,100 towns and over 380 urban agglomerations. By 2011, the share of the population living in rural areas decreased to 68.84%, while that of those living in urban areas increased to 31.16%. India's population exceeded that of the entire continent of Africa by 200 million people in 2010. However, because Africa's population growth is extremely high compared to the rest of the world, it is expected to surpass both China and India by the early 2030s. Comparative demographics

List of states and union territories by demographics

Religion Based on the latest Census Data

Population pyramid by religion

The table below summarises India's demographics (excluding the Mao-Maram, Paomata and Purul subdivisions of Senapati district of Manipur state due to cancellation of census results) according to religion at the 2011 census in per cent. The data are "unadjusted" (without excluding Assam and Jammu and Kashmir); the 1981 census was not conducted in Assam and the 1991 census was not conducted in Jammu and Kashmir.

Caste/tribe Caste and community statistics as recorded from "Socially and Educationally Backward Classes Commission" (SEBC) or Mandal Commission of 1979, which was completed in 1983. India has chosen not to officially count caste population since then. The following data are from the Mandal report:

Genetics Y-chromosome DNA Y-Chromosome DNA Y-DNA represents the male lineage, The Indian Y-chromosome pool may be summarised as follows where haplogroups R-M420, H, R2, L and NOP comprise generally more than 80% of the total chromosomes.

Mitochondrial DNA Mitochondrial DNA mtDNA represents the female lineage. The Indian mitochondrial DNA is primarily made up of Haplogroup M

Autosomal DNA Numerous genomic studies have been conducted in the last 15 years to seek insights into India's demographic and cultural diversity. These studies paint a complex and conflicting picture.

In a 2003 study, Basu, Majumder et al.. have concluded on the basis of results obtained from mtDNA, Y-chromosome and autosomal markers that "(1) there is an underlying unity of female lineages in India, indicating that the initial number of female settlers may have been small; (2) the tribal and the caste populations are highly differentiated; (3) the Austroasiatic tribals are the earliest settlers in India, providing support to one anthropological hypothesis while refuting some others; (4) a major wave of humans entered India through the northeast; (5) the Tibeto-Burman tribals share considerable genetic commonalities with the Austroasiatic tribals, supporting the hypothesis that they may have shared a common habitat in southern China, but the two groups of tribals can be differentiated on the basis of Y-chromosomal haplotypes; (6) the Dravidian speaking populations were possibly widespread throughout India but are regulated to South India now; (7) formation of populations by fission that resulted in founder and drift effects have left their imprints on the genetic structures of contemporary populations; (8) the upper castes show closer genetic affinities with Central Asian populations, although those of southern India are more distant than those of northern India; (9) historical gene flow into India has contributed to a considerable obliteration of genetic histories of contemporary populations so that there is at present no clear congruence of genetic and geographical or sociocultural affinities." In a later 2010 review article, Majumder affirms some of these conclusions, introduces and revises some other. The ongoing studies, concludes Majumder, suggest India has served as the major early corridor for geographical dispersal of modern humans from out-of-Africa. The archaeological and genetic traces of the earliest settlers in India has not provided any conclusive evidence. The tribal populations of India are older than the non-tribal populations. The autosomal differentiation and genetic diversity within India's caste populations at 0.04 is significantly lower than 0.14 for continental populations and 0.09 for 31 world population sets studied by Watkins et al., suggesting that while tribal populations were differentiated, the differentiation effects within India's caste population was less than previously thought. Majumder also concludes that recent studies suggest India has been a major contributor to the gene pool of southeast Asia. Another study covering a large sample of Indian populations allowed Watkins et al.. to examine eight Indian caste groups and four endogamous south Indian tribal populations. The Indian castes data show low between-group differences, while the tribal Indian groups show relatively high between-group differentiation. This suggests that people between Indian castes were not reproductively isolated, while Indian tribal populations experienced reproductive isolation and drift. Furthermore, the genetic fixation index data show historical genetic differentiation and segregation between Indian castes population is much smaller than those found in east Asia, Africa and other continental populations; while being similar to the genetic differentiation and segregation observed in European populations. In 2006, Sahoo et al.. reported their analysis of genomic data on 936 Y-chromosomes representing 32 tribal and 45 caste groups from different regions of India. These scientists find that the haplogroup frequency distribution across the country, between different caste groups, was found to be predominantly driven by geographical, rather than cultural determinants. They conclude there is clear evidence for both large-scale immigration into ancient India of Sino-Tibetan speakers and language change of former Austroasiatic speakers, in the northeast Indian region. The genome studies conducted up until 2010 have been on relatively small population sets. Many are from just one southeastern state of Andhra Pradesh (including Telangana, which was part of the state until June 2014). Thus, any conclusions on demographic history of India must be interpreted with caution. A larger national genome study with demographic growth and sex ratio balances may offer further insights on the extent of genetic differentiation and segregation in India over the millennia.

Largest cities of India .

See also Government 2011 Census of India National Commission on Population Caste Census

Lists List of states and union territories of India by population List of states and union territories of India by fertility rate List of Indian states by life expectancy at birth List of cities in India by population List of metropolitan areas in India List of million-plus urban agglomerations in India

Charts Notes References Bibliography External links

Census of India; government site with detailed data from 2001 census Anthropological Survey of India Population of India as per Census India 2011 Census of India map generator; generates maps based on 2001 census figures Demographic data for India; provides sources of demographic data for India 2001 maps; provides maps of social, economic and demographic data of India in 2001 Population of India 2011 map; distribution of population amongst states and union territories India's Demographic Outlook: Implications and Trends "World Population Prospects Archived 1 January 2023 at the Wayback Machine": Country Profile - India Aggregated demographic statistics from Indian and global data sources Demographic statistics for India - online on Bluenomics India comparing with China population projection graph Based on data from database of UN Population Division.

Education in India

Education in India is primarily managed by the state-run public education system, which falls under the command of the government at three levels: central, state and local. Under various articles of the Indian Constitution and the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, free and compulsory education is provided as a fundamental right to children aged 6 to 14. The approximate ratio of the total number of public schools to private schools in India is 10:3.

Education in India covers different levels and types of learning, such as early childhood education, primary education, secondary education, higher education, and vocational education. It varies significantly according to different factors, such as location (urban or rural), gender, caste, religion, language, and disability. Education in India faces several challenges, including improving access, quality, and learning outcomes, reducing dropout rates, and enhancing employability. It is shaped by national and state-level policies and programmes such as the National Education Policy 2020, Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan, Midday Meal Scheme, and Beti Bachao Beti Padhao. Various national and international stakeholders, including UNICEF, UNESCO, the World Bank, civil society organisations, academic institutions, and the private sector, contribute to the development of the education system. Education in India is plagued by issues such as grade inflation, corruption, unaccredited institutions offering fraudulent credentials and lack of employment prospects for graduates. Half of all graduates in India are considered unemployable. This raises concerns about prioritizing Western viewpoints over indigenous knowledge. It has also been argued that this system has been associated with an emphasis on rote learning and external perspectives. In contrast, countries such as Germany, known for its engineering expertise, France, recognized for its advancements in aviation, Japan, a global leader in technology, and China, an emerging hub of high-tech innovation, conduct education primarily in their respective native languages. However, India continues to use English as the principal medium of instruction in higher education and professional domains.

Education system Until 1976, under the Indian constitution, each state was responsible for the schools that fell under its governance; states possessed full (Unless and otherwise a Conflict between Union govt. And the state govt.) jurisdiction over creating and implementing education policies. After the 42nd Amendment of the Constitution of India was passed in 1976, education fell under the concurrent list, which allowed the federal government (also known as the central government) to recommend education policies and programmes, even if state governments continued to wield extensive autonomy in implementing these programmes. In a country as large as India, with 28 states and eight union territories, this has created vast differences between states' policies, plans, programmes, and initiatives relating to school education. Periodically, national policy frameworks are created to guide states in creating state-level programmes and policies. State governments and local government bodies manage the majority of primary and upper primary schools and the number of government-managed elementary schools is growing. Simultaneously, the number and proportion managed by private bodies is growing. In 2005-2006, 83.13% of schools offering elementary education (Grades 1-8) were managed by government, and 16.86% of schools were under private management (excluding children in unrecognised schools, schools established under the Education Guarantee Scheme and in alternative learning centres). Of those schools managed privately, one third are 'aided' and two thirds are 'unaided'. Enrolment in Grades 1-8 is shared between government and privately managed schools in the ratio 73:27. However, in rural areas this ratio is higher (80:20), and in urban areas much lower (36:66). In the 2011 Census, about 73% of the population was reported to be literate, with 81% for males and 65% for females. National Statistical

Commission surveyed literacy to be 77.7% in 2017-18, 84.7% for males and 70.3% for females. This compares to 1981 when the respective rates were 41%, 53%, and 29%. In 1951 the rates were 18%, 27% and 9%. India's improved education system is often cited as one of the main contributors to its economic development. Much of the progress, especially in higher education and scientific research, has been credited to various public institutions. While enrolment in higher education has increased steadily over the past decade, reaching a Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of 26.3% in 2019, there still remains a significant distance to catch up with tertiary education enrolment levels of developed nations, a challenge that will be necessary to overcome in order to continue to reap a demographic dividend from India's comparatively young population. Demand for private schools has been growing over the years. While a consensus over what is the most significant driver of this growth in private schooling has not yet emerged, some authors have attributed this to a higher demand for English-medium education, a dissatisfaction with the quality of public schools, greater affordability of private schools, and non-availability of the preferred field of study in government schools. After the adoption of the Right to Education (RTE) Act 2009, private schools were required to be 'government-recognized'. A private school would be eligible for government recognition when it met certain conditions. At the primary and secondary level, India has a large private school system complementing the government-run schools, with 29% of students receiving private education in the 6 to 14 age group. Certain post-secondary technical schools are also private. The private education market in India had a revenue of US\$450 million in 2008, but is projected to be a US\$40 billion market. As per the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2012, 96.5% of all rural children between the ages of 6-14 were enrolled in school. This trend of high enrollment has continued consistently since the mid-2000s. Between 2007 and 2014, India maintained an average school enrolment rate of 95% for children aged 6-14, according to ASER reports. As an outcome, the number of students in the age group 6-14 who are not enrolled in school has come down to 2.8% in the academic year 2018 (ASER 2018). Another report from 2013 stated that there were 229 million students enrolled in different accredited urban and rural schools of India, from Class I to XII, indicating a steady growth, including a 19% increase in enrolment of girls since 2002. While India is moving toward universal enrollment, concerns remain about the quality of education, especially in government-run schools. While more than 95 percent of children attend primary school, just 40 percent of Indian adolescents attend secondary school (Grades 9-12). Since 2000, the World Bank has committed over \$2 billion to support India's efforts in improving educational infrastructure and learning outcomes. Teacher absenteeism remains a significant challenge, with studies indicating that nearly 25% of teachers may be absent on any given day. States of India have introduced tests and education assessment system to identify and improve such schools. The Human Rights Measurement Initiative finds that India is achieving only 79.0% of what should be possible at its level of income for the right to education. Although there are private schools in India, they are highly regulated in terms of what they can teach, in what form they can operate (they must be a non-profit to run any accredited educational institution), and all the other aspects of the operation. Hence, the differentiation between government schools and private schools can be misleading. However, in a report by Geeta Gandhi Kingdon entitled: The Emptying of Public Schools and Growth of Private Schools in India, it is said that for sensible education-policy making, it is vital to take account of the various changing trends in the size of the private and public schooling sectors in India. Ignoring these trends involves the risk of poor policies/legislation, with adverse effects on children's education. In January 2019, India had over 900 universities and 40,000 colleges. In India's higher education system, a significant number of seats are reserved under affirmative action policies for the historically disadvantaged Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes. In universities, colleges, and similar institutions affiliated with the central government, there is a maximum of 50% of reservations applicable to these disadvantaged groups, at the state level it can vary. Maharashtra had 73% reservations in 2014, which is the highest percentage of reservations in India.

History Early education in India commenced under the supervision of a guru or preceptor after initiation. The education was delivered through Gurukula. The relationship between the Guru and his Shishya (students /disciples) was a very important part of education. Taxila is an example of an ancient higher learning institute in ancient India, possibly dating as far back as the 8th century BCE. However, it is debatable whether or not this can be regarded as a university in modern-day terms, since the teachers living there may not have had official membership of particular colleges, and there did not seem to have existed purpose-built lecture halls and residential quarters in Taxila, in contrast to the later Nalanda university in eastern India. Nalanda was the oldest university-system of education in the world in the modern sense of university, and all subjects there were taught in the Pali language. Secular institutions cropped up along Buddhist monasteries. These institutions imparted practical education such as medical studies. A number of urban learning centres became increasingly visible from the period between 500 BCE to 400 CE. The important urban centres of learning were Nalanda (in modern-day Bihar), Vikramashila, and Odantapuri among others. These institutions systematically imparted knowledge and attracted a number of foreign students to study topics such as Buddhist Pli literature, logic, and pli grammar. Chanakya, a Brahmin teacher, was among the most famous teachers, associated with the founding of the Mauryan Empire. Shramanas and Brahmanas historically offered education by means of donations, rather than charging fees or the procurement of funds from students or their guardians. Later, stupas and temples also became centres of education; religious education was compulsory, but secular subjects were also taught. Students were required to be brahmacharis or celibate. The knowledge in these orders was often related to the tasks a section of the society had to perform. Arts, crafts, Ayurveda, architecture, etc., were taught. With the advent of Islam in India the traditional methods of education increasingly came under Islamic influence. Pre-Mughal rulers such as Qutb-ud-din Aybak and other Muslim rulers initiated institutions which imparted religious knowledge. Scholars such as Nizamuddin Auliya and Moinuddin Chishti became prominent educators and established Islamic monasteries. Students from Bukhara and Afghanistan visited India to study humanities and science. Islamic institution of education in India included traditional madrassas and maktabas which taught grammar, philosophy, mathematics, and law influenced by the Greek traditions inherited by Persia and the Middle East before Islam spread from these regions into India. A feature of traditional Islamic education was its emphasis on the connection between science and humanities. British rule and the subsequent establishment of educational institutions saw the introduction of English as a medium of instruction. Some schools taught the curriculum through vernacular languages with English as a second language. The term "pre-modern" was used for three kinds of schools - the Arabic and Sanskrit schools which taught Muslim or Hindu sacred literature and the Persian schools which taught Persian literature. The vernacular schools across India taught reading and writing the vernacular language and arithmetic. British education became solidified into India as missionary schools were established during the 1820s.

18th century Dharampal was instrumental in changing the understanding of pre-colonial education in India. Dharampal's primary works are based on documentation by the colonial government on Indian education, agriculture, technology, and arts during the period of colonial rule in India. His pioneering historical research, conducted intensively over a decade, provides evidence from extensive early British administrators' reports of the widespread prevalence of indigenous educational institutions in Bombay, Bengal and Madras Presidencies as well as in the Punjab, teaching a sophisticated curriculum, with daily school attendance by about 30% of children aged 6-15. In 1818, the fall of Maratha Empire lead to large parts of India coming under British rule. During the decade of 1820-30, detailed surveys of the indigenous education system that were prevalent in their provinces were conducted by the British. G.L. Prendergast, a member of the Governor's Council in Bombay Presidency, recorded the following about indigenous schools on 27 June 1821:

"I need hardly mention what every member of the Board knows as well as I do, that there is hardly a village, great or small, throughout our territories, in which there is not at least one school, and in larger villages more;

many in every town, and in large cities in every division; where young natives are taught reading, writing and arithmetic, upon a system so economical, from a handful or two of grain, to perhaps a rupee per month to the school master, according to the ability of the parents, and at the same time so simple and effectual, that there is hardly a cultivator or petty dealer who is not competent to keep his own accounts with a degree of accuracy, in my opinion, beyond what we meet with amongst the lower orders in our own country."

Colonial period and English education In 1835, the English Education Act was passed by the British in India. This act made English the formal medium of education in all schools and colleges. This act neglected both indigenous schools and mass education, as only a small section of upper-class Indians were educated to become the connecting link between the government and the masses. This act is today popularly known as Macaulayism.

"We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from the Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population." According to sociologist Hetukar Jha, this act led to the decline of indigenous schools which flourished in villages and towns, and simultaneously, the British policy in 1835 skewed in favor of the filtration theory of education, which worked to block to a significant extent the entry of the middle classes and below. The colonial period also saw an increasing establishment of Christian missionary schools, which had a considerable influence in shaping English education in India. The Charter Act 1813 lifted several prohibitions on Christian missionary schools in the expanding British territories. Historian Gauri Viswanathan identifies two major changes to the relation between Britain and India that came about as the result of the Charter Act 1813: first, the assumption by the British of a new responsibility for Indian people's education; and, second, the relaxation of controls on missionary activity.

Post-independence Since the country's independence in 1947, the Indian government sponsored a variety of programmes to address the low literacy rate in both rural and urban India. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, India's first Minister of Education, envisaged strong central government control over education throughout the country, with a uniform educational system. The Union government established the University Education Commission (1948-1949), the Secondary Education Commission (1952-1953), University Grants Commission and the Kothari Commission (1964-66) to develop proposals to modernise India's education system. The Resolution on Scientific Policy was adopted by the government of Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister. The Nehru government sponsored the development of high-quality scientific education institutions such as the Indian Institutes of Technology. In 1961, the Union government formed the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) as an autonomous organisation that would advise both the Union and state governments on formulating and implementing education policies.

2020 In 2019, the Indian Ministry of Education released a draft of a new education policy, which was followed by a number of public consultations. It discusses reducing curriculum content to enhance essential learning, critical thinking, and promoting more holistic, experiential, discussion-based and analysis-based learning. It also talks about a revision of the curriculum and pedagogical structure from a 10+2 system to a 5+3+3+4 system design in an effort to optimise learning for students based on cognitive development of children. On 29 July 2020, the cabinet approved a new National Education Policy with an aim to introduce several changes to the existing Indian education system. The Policy aims to make pre-primary education universal and places special emphasis on achieving foundational literacy/numeracy in primary school and beyond for all by 2025.

Educational stages The National Education Policy 2020 introduced the 5+3+3+4 education structure in India, where students will spend 5 years in the foundational stage, 3 years in the preparatory stage, 3 years in the middle stage, and 4 years in the secondary stage, with a focus on holistic development and critical thinking. However, it is important to note that educational practices can vary across different states and education boards in India.

Pre-Primary / Elementary Education This stage is optional and includes pre-school and kindergarten education for children aged 3 to 6 years. It focuses on early childhood development and prepares children for formal schooling.

Nursery / Anganwadi Nursery education in India refers to pre-primary schooling designed for children typically between the ages of 2.5 and 5 years. It serves as the foundational stage before kindergarten or formal primary education begins.

Kindergarten Kindergarten is mainly attended by children between 3-5 years of age, and is an important basic building block that prepares kids for primary education. Children study in lower kindergarten (LKG) for one year and then in upper kindergarten (UKG) for one year.

Primary Education Primary education typically starts at the age of 6 and continues for 5 years, from Classes I to V. The main subjects taught during this stage include: mathematics, science, social science, languages (usually English and a regional language or a foreign language), physical education and training, value education.

High School Education Secondary / Lower Secondary / Matriculation Education Secondary education covers Classes IX and X (Grades 9-10), usually from ages 14 to 16. Students are exposed to a wider range of subjects, including additional languages, arts, and vocational subjects in addition to the usual English, math, science, social science, computer science physical ed., value education. At the end of class X, students often appear for a standardised board examination like the Secondary School Leaving Certificate Examination / Secondary School Certificate (SSLC / SSC) conducted by the respective state education boards or All India Secondary School Examination (AISSE) conducted by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) or the Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE) examination conducted by the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE). Secondary school education in India is commonly known as "high school" or "secondary school". These terms are widely used across the country to refer to the stage of education that follows primary education and precedes higher secondary education.

Senior Secondary / Higher Secondary / Intermediate Education After completing secondary education, students move on to higher secondary education, which includes classes XI and XII (Grades 11-12). They typically specialise in one of three streams: Science, Commerce, or Humanities/Arts. The curriculum becomes more focused on specific subjects related to the chosen stream with a few subjects in common and compulsory such as physical education, work experience, value education and art or related. At the end of class XII, students generally appear for board examinations such as the Higher Secondary Certificate Examination conducted by the respective state boards or All India Senior School Certificate Examination (AISSCE) conducted by CBSE or the Indian School Certificate (ISC) examination conducted by CISCE. The terminology used to describe higher secondary education varies between states in India. Some commonly used terms include intermediate education in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Bihar, Uttarakhand, and Uttar Pradesh; higher secondary education

(HSE) in Assam, Maharashtra, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu; senior secondary education (SSE) in Haryana, Punjab, and Rajasthan; and pre-university education (PUC) in Karnataka. These terms represent the educational stage following secondary education and indicate the diverse terminology used in different states across the country. The curriculum for these streams may vary based on the board of education or state education board. After completing the 12th grade, students can also pursue higher education in universities or specialised institutions depending on their chosen stream and career aspirations.

Pre-university course or intermediate education In certain states in India, such as Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, the education system includes a two-year pre-university course (PUC) after the completion of secondary education (10th grade). The PUC is commonly referred to as junior college. Students typically enroll in pre-university colleges to pursue their intermediate education, which acts as a bridge between high school and university. The pre-university system allows students to choose from three major streams of study:

Science: This stream focuses on subjects such as Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Mathematics, and Computer Science. **Commerce:** This stream includes subjects like Accountancy, Economics, Business Studies, and Mathematics. **Arts/Humanities:** Students in this stream study subjects like History, Political Science, Sociology, Economics, and Languages. Upon completing their pre-university education, students can choose to pursue higher education at universities, professional colleges, or other specialised institutions. In the rest of the states in India, including the central education boards like CBSE (Central Board of Secondary Education) and CISCE (Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations), the education system follows a 10+2 format. It consists of ten years of primary and secondary education (up to the 10th grade) followed by two years of higher secondary education (11th and 12th grade).

Vocational Education In addition to the regular academic curriculum, vocational education is offered at various stages to provide specific skills and training in fields such as engineering, information technology, hospitality, healthcare, and more. Vocational courses are available at both the secondary and higher secondary levels. It is important to note that educational practices, syllabus, and examinations may vary depending on the education board, such as CBSE, CISCE, state boards, or international boards. Additionally, there are alternative education systems in India, such as the International Baccalaureate (IB) and Cambridge International Examinations (CIE), which follow different curricula and assessment methods.

Higher Education After completing higher secondary or intermediate education, students can pursue higher education in colleges and universities. Higher education options include undergraduate programmes (bachelor's degrees), postgraduate programmes (master's degrees), and doctoral programmes (Ph.D. degrees).

Pre-primary education in India The pre-primary stage is the foundation of children's knowledge, skills and behaviour. On completion of pre-primary education, the children are sent to the primary stage, but pre-primary education in India is not a fundamental right. In rural India, pre-primary schools are rarely available in small villages. But in cities and big towns, there are many established players in the pre-primary education sector. The demand for the preschools is growing considerably in the smaller towns and cities but still, only 1% of the population under age 6 is enrolled in preschool education.

Play group (pre-nursery): At playschools, children are exposed to a lot of basic learning activities that help them to get independent faster and develop their self-help qualities like eating food themselves, dressing up, and

maintaining cleanliness. The age limit for admission into pre-nursery is 2 to 3 years. Anganwadi is government-funded free rural childcare & Mothercare nutrition and learning programme also incorporating the free Midday Meal Scheme. Nursery: Nursery level activities help children reach crucial developmental milestones, thus enabling them to sharpen their mental and physical abilities. The age range for admission in nursery is 3 to 4 years. Lower Kindergarten (LKG): Also known as the junior kindergarten (jr. kg) stage. The age range for admission in LKG is 4 to 5 years. Upper Kindergarten (UKG): It is also called the senior kindergarten (Sr. kg) stage. The age range for admission in UKG is 5 to 6 years. LKG and UKG stages prepare and help children emotionally, mentally, socially and physically to grasp knowledge easily in the later stages of school and college life. A systematic process of preschool education is followed in India to impart knowledge in the best possible way for a better understanding of the young children. By following an easy and interesting curriculum, teachers strive hard to make the entire learning process enjoyable for the children.

Primary education in India Primary education in India is divided into two parts: Lower Primary (Class I-V) and Upper Primary (Class VI-VIII). The Indian government places emphasis on primary education, intended for children between 6 and 14 years of age. Since education laws are governed by individual states, the duration of primary school can vary between Indian states. The Indian government has also banned child labour in order to ensure that the children do not enter unsafe working conditions. However, both free education and the ban on child labour are difficult to enforce due to economic disparity and social conditions. 80% of all recognised schools at the elementary stage are government run or supported, making it the largest provider of education in the country. Figures released by the Indian government in 2011 show that there were 5,816,673 elementary school teachers in India. As of March 2012 there were 2,127,000 secondary school teachers in India. Education has also been made free for children for 6 to 14 years of age or up to class VIII under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009. While school enrollment rates have increased, many children leave school with poor literacy and numeracy skills. ASER reported in 2019 that only 50% of fifth standard students in rural India could read a Standard II-level text, and only 29% of them could do basic division. However, due to a shortage of resources and lack of political will, this system suffers from massive gaps including high pupil to teacher ratios, shortage of infrastructure and poor levels of teacher training. Some scholars have used the concept of "visibility" to explain why successive governments have underprioritised investments directed at raising the quality of teaching and education in India relative to investments in building more schools. Building schools is more "visible" to the voting public and easily attributable to the government; training teachers to teach better and raising the quality of education is a more uncertain venture, the success of which is determined by factors outside the control of any one government. This incentivises governments to focus their resources on "visible" areas of intervention. There have been several efforts to enhance quality made by the government. The District Education Revitalisation Programme (DERP) was launched in 1994 with an aim to universalise primary education in India by reforming and vitalising the existing primary education system. 85% of the DERP was funded by the central government and the remaining 15% was funded by the states. The DERP, which had opened 160,000 new schools including 84,000 alternative education schools delivering alternative education to approximately 3.5 million children, was also supported by UNICEF and other international programmes. "Corruption hurts the poor disproportionately - by diverting funds intended for development, undermining a government's ability to provide basic services, feeding inequality and injustice, and discouraging foreign investment and aid" (Kofi Annan, in his statement on the adoption of the United Nations Convention against Corruption by the General Assembly, NY, November 2003). In January 2016, Kerala became the 1st Indian state to achieve 100% primary education through its literacy programme Athulyam. This primary education scheme has also shown a high gross enrolment ratio of 93-95% for the last three years in some states. Significant improvement in staffing and enrolment of girls has also been made as a part of this scheme. The scheme for universalisation of Education for All is the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan which is one of the largest education initiatives in the world. While school enrolment rates have increased, the quality of education

received by students remains low. The literature suggests that one of the biggest reasons for quality deficiencies in primary and secondary education is teacher absence and negligence. In one popular study, the researchers made unannounced visits to 3700 schools in 20 major Indian states, where they found that, on average, 25% of government primary school teachers absent every day. In another study, although it was found that three-quarters of the teachers were in attendance in the government primary schools that were inspected, only half of them were found teaching.

Secondary education in India Secondary education covers children aged 14 to 18, a group comprising 88.5 million children according to the 2001 Census of India. The final two years of secondary is often called Higher Secondary (HS), Senior Secondary, Intermediate or simply the "+2" stage. The two-halves of secondary education are each an important stage for which a pass certificate is needed, and thus are affiliated by boards of education under education ministry, before one can pursue higher education, including college or professional courses. UGC, NCERT, CBSE and ICSE directives state qualifying ages for candidates who wish to take the standardised exams. Those at least 15 years old by 30 May for a given academic year are eligible to appear for Secondary School certificate exams, and those 17 by the same date are eligible to appear for Higher Secondary certificate exams. It is further stated that upon successful completion of Higher Secondary, one can apply to higher education under UGC control. Secondary education in India is examination-oriented and not course-based: students register for and take classes primarily to prepare for one of the centrally-administered examinations. Secondary school is split into 2 parts (grades 9-10 and grades 11-12) with a standardised nationwide examination at the end of grade 10 and grade 12 (colloquially referred to as "board exams"). Grade 10 examination results can be used for admission into grades 11-12 at a secondary school, pre-university programme, or a vocational or technical school. Passing the grade 12 board examination leads to the granting of a secondary school completion diploma, which may be used for admission into vocational schools or universities in the country or the world. Most schools in India do not offer subject and scheduling flexibility due to budgeting constraints (for example, students in India are often not allowed to take Chemistry and History together in grades 11-12 as they are part of different "streams"). Private candidates (that is, not studying in a school) are generally not allowed to register for, and take board examinations, but there are some exceptions such as NIOS. Students taking the grade 10 examination usually take five or six subjects: Two languages (at least one of them being English/Hindi), Mathematics, Science (often taught as three separate disciplines: physics, chemistry and biology; but assessed as a single subject), Social Sciences (consisting of four components assessed as a single subject: history, geography, economics and political science), and one optional subject depending on the availability of teachers. Elective or optional subjects often include computer applications, information technology, commerce, painting, music and home science. Students taking the grade 12 examination usually take five or six subjects with English or the local language being compulsory. Students re-enrolling in most secondary schools after grade 10 have to make the choice of choosing subjects from a "core stream" in addition to the language: Science (Mathematics, Biology, Physics, Chemistry, Computer Science, Biotechnology, Physical Education), Commerce (Accountancy, Business Studies, Economics, Entrepreneurship, Informatics Practices, Marketing, Retail, Financial Market Management), or Humanities (History, Political Science, Sociology, Psychology, Geography, Legal Studies, Fine Arts, Music, Dance) depending on the school. Students with the Science stream study mathematics up to single-variable calculus in grade 12. Most reputable universities in India require students to pass college-administered admissions tests in addition to passing a final secondary school examination for entry into a college or university. School grades are usually not sufficient for college admissions in India. Popular entrance tests include JEE, NEET and the recent CUET.

Higher education in India Students may opt for vocational education or university education.

Vocational education India's All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) reported, in 2013, that there are more than 4,599 vocational institutions that offer degrees, diploma and post-diploma in architecture, engineering, hotel management, infrastructure, pharmacy, technology, town services and others. There were 1,740,000 students enrolled in these schools. Total annual intake capacity for technical diplomas and degrees exceeded 3.4 million in 2012. According to the University Grants Commission (UGC) total enrolment in Science, Medicine, Agriculture and Engineering crossed 65 lakh in 2010. The number of women choosing engineering has more than doubled since 2001.

Tertiary education After passing the Higher Secondary Examination (the Standard 12 examination), students may enroll in general degree programmes such as bachelor's degree (graduation) in arts, commerce or science, or professional degree programme such as engineering, medicine, nursing, pharmacy, and law graduates. India's higher education system is the third largest in the world, after China and the United States. The main governing body at the tertiary level is the University Grants Commission (India) (UGC), which enforces its standards, advises the government, and helps co-ordinate between the centre and the state up to Post graduation and Doctorate (PhD). Accreditation for higher learning is overseen by 12 autonomous institutions established by the University Grants Commission. The Accreditation is seen by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council. The Management & Accreditation of Technical Education like Engineering, Management and Similar Education course are overseen by the All India Council for Technical Education.

As of 2012, India has 152 central universities, 316 state universities, and 191 private universities. Other institutions include 33,623 colleges, including 1,800 exclusive women's colleges, functioning under these universities and institutions, and 12,748 Institutions offering Diploma Courses. The emphasis in the tertiary level of education lies on science and technology. Indian educational institutions by 2004 consisted of a large number of technology institutes. Distance learning is also a feature of the Indian higher education system. The Government has launched Rashtriya Uchchattar Shiksha Abhiyan to provide strategic funding to State higher and technical institutions. A total of 316 state public universities and 13,024 colleges will be covered under it. Some institutions of India, such as the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and National Institutes of Technology (NITs) have been globally acclaimed for their standard of under-graduate education in engineering. Several other institutes of fundamental research such as the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science (IACS), Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Harish-Chandra Research Institute (HRI), Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) are also acclaimed for their standard of research in basic sciences and mathematics. However, India has failed to produce world class universities both in the private sector or the public sector. Besides top rated universities which provide highly competitive world class education to their pupils, India is also home to many universities which have been founded with the sole objective of making easy money. Regulatory authorities like UGC and AICTE have been trying very hard to extirpate the menace of private universities which are running courses without any affiliation or recognition. Indian Government has failed to check on these education shops, which are run by big businessmen & politicians. Many private colleges and universities do not fulfil the required criterion by the Government and central bodies (UGC, AICTE, MCI, BCI etc.) and take students for a ride. For example, many institutions in India continue to run unaccredited courses as there is no legislation strong enough to ensure legal action against them. Quality assurance mechanisms have failed to stop misrepresentations and malpractices in higher education. At the same time regulatory bodies have been accused of corruption, specifically in the case of deemed-universities. In this context of a lack of a solid quality assurance mechanism, institutions need to step-up and set higher standards of self-regulation.

Our university system is, in many parts, in a state of disrepair...In almost half the districts in the country, higher education enrollments are abysmally low, almost two-third of our universities and 90% of our colleges are rated as below average on quality parameters... I am concerned that in many states university appointments, including that of vice-chancellors, have been politicised and have become subject to caste and communal considerations, there are complaints of favouritism and corruption.

The Government of India is aware of the plight of higher education sector and has been trying to bring reforms, however, 15 bills are still awaiting discussion and approval in the Parliament. One of the most talked about bill is Foreign Universities Bill, which is supposed to facilitate entry of foreign universities to establish campuses in India. The bill is still under discussion and even if it gets passed, its feasibility and effectiveness is questionable as it misses the context, diversity and segment of international foreign institutions interested in India. One of the approaches to make internationalisation of Indian higher education effective is to develop a coherent and comprehensive policy which aims at infusing excellence, bringing institutional diversity and aids in capacity building. Three Indian universities were listed in the Times Higher Education list of the world's top 200 universities - Indian Institutes of Technology, Indian Institutes of Management, and Jawaharlal Nehru University in 2005 and 2006. Six Indian Institutes of Technology and the Birla Institute of Technology and Science-Pilani were listed among the top 20 science and technology schools in Asia by Asiaweek. The Indian School of Business situated in Hyderabad was ranked number 12 in global MBA rankings by the Financial Times of London in 2010 while the All India Institute of Medical Sciences has been recognised as a global leader in medical research and treatment. The University of Mumbai was ranked 41 among the Top 50 Engineering Schools of the world by America's news broadcasting firm Business Insider in 2012 and was the only university in the list from the five emerging BRICS nations viz Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. It was ranked at 62 in the QS BRICS University rankings for 2013 and was India's 3rd best Multi-Disciplinary University in the QS University ranking of Indian Universities after University of Calcutta and Delhi University. In April 2015, IIT Bombay launched the first U.S.-India joint EMBA programme alongside Washington University in St. Louis.

Technical education From the first Five-year Plan onwards, India's emphasis was to develop a pool of scientifically inclined manpower. India's National Policy on Education (NPE) provisioned for an apex body for regulation and development of higher technical education, which came into being as the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) in 1987 through an act of the Indian parliament. At the central level, the Indian Institutes of Technology, the Indian Institute of Space Science and Technology, the National Institutes of Technology and the Indian Institutes of Information Technology are deemed of national importance.

The Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and National Institutes of Technology (NITs) are among the nation's premier education facilities. <The UGC has inter-university centers at a number of locations throughout India to promote common research, e.g. the Nuclear Science Centre at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Besides there are some British established colleges such as Harcourt Butler Technological Institute situated in Kanpur and King George Medical University situated in Lucknow which are important centre of higher education. In addition to above institutes, efforts towards the enhancement of technical education are supplemented by a number of recognised Professional Engineering Societies such as:

Institution of Engineers (India) Institution of Civil Engineers (India) Institution of Mechanical Engineers (India) Institution of Chemical Engineering (India) Institution of Electronics and Tele-Communication Engineers (India) Indian Institute of Metals Institution of Industrial Engineers (India) Institute of Town Planners (India) Indian Institute of Architects that conduct Engineering/Technical Examinations at different levels (Degree and diploma) for working professionals desirous of improving their technical qualifications. The number of graduates from

technical colleges increased to over 700,000 in 2011, compared to 550,000 in FY 2010. However, according to one study, 75% of technical graduates and more than 85% of general graduates lack the skills needed in India's most demanding and high-growth global industries such as Information Technology (IT). In 2009, less than 1% of India's labour pool was employed in the Indian IT industry (about 2.3 million people). That number has almost doubled as of 2023, with around 5.4 million people estimated to be employed in IT, however, given the rapid population growth in India, this still accounts for only 0.4% of the Indian labour pool. Given the sheer numbers of students seeking education in engineering, science and mathematics, India faces challenges balancing the huge demand for employment with the need to ensure quality graduates.

Schooling system Education in India is a Concurrent List subject, that is, both the Central Government of India and the state governments are responsible for enacting and implementing education policy. The central board and most of the state boards uniformly follow the "10+2" pattern of education. In this pattern, the first 10 years of a student's education is spent in schools, and the latter two years are in junior colleges (as they are known in the state of Maharashtra) or higher secondary schools (in most other states). Students wishing to pursue further education undergo 3 years of study for a bachelor's degree. The first 10 years is further subdivided into 8 years of elementary education (5 years Primary School and 3 years Middle School), 2 years of Secondary education followed by 2 years of Higher Secondary Schools or Junior colleges. This pattern originated from the recommendation of the Education Commission of 1964-66. There are two types of educational institutions in India, 1) Recognised institutions - primary school, secondary school, special schools, intermediate schools, colleges and universities who follow courses as prescribed by universities or boards and are also open for inspection by these authorities, 2) Unrecognised Institutions, which do not fulfil conditions as stated for the recognised ones.

Administration Policy Education policy is prepared by the Central Government and State Governments at national and state levels respectively. The National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986, provided for environment awareness, science and technology education, and introduction of traditional elements such as Yoga into the Indian secondary school system. A significant feature of India's secondary school system is the emphasis on inclusion of the disadvantaged sections of the society. Professionals from established institutes are often called to support in vocational training. Another feature of India's secondary school system is its emphasis on profession based vocational training to help students attain skills for finding a vocation of his/her choosing. A significant new feature has been the extension of SSA to secondary education in the form of the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan. Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) which is the most recent initiative of Government of India to achieve the goal of universalisation of secondary education (USE). It is aimed at expanding and improving the standards of secondary education up to class X.

Curriculum and school education boards National Skill Development Agency (NSDA)'s National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF), is a quality assurance framework which grades and recognises levels of skill based on the learning outcomes acquired through both formal or informal means. School boards set the curriculum, conduct standardised exams mostly at 10th and 12th level to award the school diplomas. Exams at the remaining levels (also called standard, grade or class, denoting the years of schooling) are conducted by the schools.

National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT): The NCERT is the apex body located in New Delhi, India's capital city. The council oversees the curriculums for school education across India. The NCERT provides support, guidance and technical assistance to a number of schools in India and oversees many aspects of enforcement of education policies. Curriculum bodies that govern state specific curriculum are

known as SCERTs. State Government Boards of Education: Most state governments have at least one state board that oversees secondary school education. However, some states, like Andhra Pradesh have more than one, while the union territories, such as Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu, Lakshadweep, and Puducherry, do not have a board, and instead share services with a larger state. The boards set curriculum from Grades 1 to 12 for affiliated schools. The curriculum varies from state to state and has more local appeal with examinations conducted in regional languages in addition to English - often considered less rigorous than national curricula such as CBSE or ICSE/ISC. Most of these conduct exams at 10th and 12th level, but some even at the 5th and 8th level. Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE): The CBSE sets curriculum from Grades 9 to 12 for affiliated schools and conducts examinations at the 10th and 12th levels. Students studying the CBSE Curriculum take the All India Secondary School Examination (AISSE) at the end of grade 10 and All India Senior School Certificate Examination (AISSCE) at the end of grade 12. Examinations are offered in Hindi and English. Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE): CISCE sets curriculum from Grades 1 to 12 for affiliated schools and conducts three examinations, namely, the Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE - Class/Grade 10); The Indian School Certificate (ISC - Class/Grade 12) and the Certificate in Vocational Education (CVE - Class/Grade 12). CISCE English level has been compared to UK's A-Levels; this board offers more choices of subjects. CBSE exams at grade 10 and 12 have often been compared with ICSE and ISC examinations respectively. ICSE is generally considered to be more rigorous than the CBSE AISSE (grade 10) but the CBSE AISSCE and ISC examinations are almost on par with each other in most subjects with ISC including a slightly more rigorous English examination than the CBSE 12th grade examination. The CBSE and ISC are recognised internationally and most universities abroad accept the final results of CBSE and ISC exams for admissions purposes and as proof of completion of secondary school. National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS): The NIOS conducts two examinations; the secondary examination and senior secondary examination (All India), and also some courses in Vocational Education. The National Board of Education is run by Government of India's Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) to provide education in rural areas and challenged groups in open and distance education mode. A pilot project started by the CBSE, designed to provide quality, affordable education, educates students up until the 12th grade. The choice of subjects is highly customisable and the subjects are equivalent to CBSE subjects. Home-schooled students usually take NIOS or international curriculum examinations as they are ineligible to write CBSE or ISC exams. Hindu, vedic & Sanskrit education: The Maharshi Sandipani Rashtriya Veda Sanskrit Shiksha Board (MSRVSSB) is a national-level school education board which grants the Veda Bhushan (10th) and Veda Vibhushan (12th) certificates to students of affiliated schools. MSRVSSB certificates are accredited by the Association of Indian Universities (AIU) and AICTE as the recognised qualifications for admission into other tertiary institutions for a higher degree. Along with the modern subjects, the students are also taught Hindu scriptures, vedas, upnishads, ayurveda and sanskrit. Govt of India has granted legal authority to MSRVSSB to affiliate and recognise vedic and Sanskrit schools run by other organisations. MSRVSSB is run by the Maharishi Sandipani Rashtriya Ved Vidya Pratishthan (MSRVVP), which already runs several vedic school and MSRVSSB also accredit schools run by other organisations. Islamic madrasah: Their boards are controlled by local state governments, or autonomous, or affiliated with Darul Uloom Deoband or Darul Uloom Nadwtul Ulama. Autonomous schools: Such as Woodstock School, Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education Puducherry, Patha Bhavan and Ananda Marga Gurukula. International Baccalaureate (IB) and Cambridge International Examinations (CAIE): These are generally private schools that have dual affiliation with one of the school education board of India as well as affiliated to the International Baccalaureate (IB) Programme or the Cambridge International Examinations (CAIE). International schools, which offer 10th and 12th standard examinations under the International Baccalaureate, Cambridge Senior Secondary Examination systems or under their home nations school boards (such as run by foreign embassies or the expat communities).

Midday Meal Scheme The Midday Meal Scheme is a school meal programme of the Government of India designed to improve the nutritional status of school-age children nationwide, by supplying free lunches on working days for children in primary and upper primary classes in government, government aided, local body, Education Guarantee Scheme, and alternative innovative education centres, Madarsa and Maqtabas supported under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, and National Child Labour Project schools run by the ministry of labour. Serving 120,000,000 children in over 1,265,000 schools and Education Guarantee Scheme centres, it is one of the largest in the world. With the twin objectives of improving health and education of the poor children, India has embarked upon an ambitious scheme of providing mid day meals (MDM) in the government and government-assisted primary schools. The administrative and logistical responsibilities of this scheme are enormous, and, therefore, offering food stamps or income transfer to targeted recipients is considered as an alternative. In a welcome move, Government of India made special allocations for Midday Meal Scheme during nationwide lockdown and school closure period of COVID-19 to continue nutrition delivery to children. However, many experts have differing opinions on ground level implementation of MDM amid pandemic and its actual benefit delivered to school children.

Teacher Training In addition, NUEPA (National University of Educational Planning and Administration) and NCTE (National Council for Teacher Education) are responsible for the management of the education system and teacher accreditation.

Types of schools **Government schools** The majority of Indian children attend government run schools. Education is free socially and economically for children until the age of 14. An Education Ministry data from 2017 showed that 65.2% (113 million) of all school students in 20 states attend government schools (c. 2017). These include schools runs by the state and local government as well as the central government. Example of large central government run school systems are Kendriya Vidyalaya in urban areas, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya for the gifted students, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya for girls belonging to vulnerable SC/ST/OBC classes, and Indian Army Public Schools run by the Indian Army for the children of military personnel. Kendriya Vidyalaya project, was started for the employees of the central government of India, who are deployed throughout the country. The government started the Kendriya Vidyalaya project in 1965 to provide uniform education in institutions following the same syllabus at the same pace regardless of the location to which the employee's family has been transferred.

Government aided private schools These are usually charitable trust run schools that receive partial funding from the government. The largest system of aided schools is run by D.A.V. College Managing Committee.

Private schools (unaided) According to a survey an estimate, 29% of Indian children were privately educated in 2014. With more than 50% children enrolling in private schools in urban areas, the balance has already tilted towards private schooling in cities; and, even in rural areas, nearly 20% of the children in 2004-5 were enrolled in private schools.

Most middle-class families send their children to private schools, mostly in their own city, but also at boarding schools. Private schools have been established since the British Rule in India and St George's School, Chennai is the oldest private school in India. At such schools, the medium of education is often English, but Hindi or the state's official language is also taught as a compulsory subject. Pre-school education is mostly limited to organised neighbourhood nursery schools with some organised chains. Montessori education is also popular, due to Maria Montessori's stay in India during World War II. In 2014, four of the top ten pre-schools in Chennai

were Montessori. Many privately owned and managed schools carry the appellation "Public", such as the Delhi Public Schools, or Frank Anthony Public Schools. These are modelled after British public schools, which are a group of older, expensive and exclusive fee-paying private independent schools in England. Some studies claim private schools produce better academic results at lower costs per student compared to government schools, often due to different management practices and accountability structures. This is often attributed to factors such as better infrastructure, teacher accountability, and parental involvement. However, critics argue that private schools often exclude the poorest families, represent only a small portion of total schools, and have sometimes failed to comply with regulatory requirements. Research with children from the same family, in which one child attends private school and the other receives a government education, has found barely any difference in their attainment. Analysts suggest that the higher test scores in private schools largely reflect socioeconomic advantages, as these students often come from wealthier families. Such advantages often include access to educational resources, supportive home environments, and additional tutoring opportunities. In their favour, it has been pointed out that private schools cover the entire curriculum and offer extra-curricular activities such as science fairs, general knowledge, sports, music and drama. The pupil teacher ratios are much better in private schools (1:31 to 1:37 for government schools) and more teachers in private schools are female. There is some disagreement over which system has better educated teachers. According to the latest DISE survey, the percentage of untrained teachers (para-teachers) is 54.91% in private, compared to 44.88% in government schools and only 2.32% teachers in unaided schools receive in-service training compared to 43.44% for government schools. The competition in the school market is intense, yet most schools make profit. However, the number of private schools in India is still low - the share of private institutions is 7% (with upper primary being 21% secondary 32% - source: fortress team research). Even the poorest often go to private schools despite the fact that government schools are free. A study found that 65% school-children in Hyderabad's slums attend private schools.

National schools Atomic Energy Central School (established in 1969) Bal Bharati Public School (established in 1944) Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (established in 1938) Chinmaya Vidyalaya (established in 1965) DAV Public School (established in 1886) Delhi Public School (established in 1949) Indian Army Public Schools (established in 1983) Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (established in 1986) Kendriya Vidyalaya (established in 1963) Padma Seshadri Bala Bhavan (established in 1958) Railway Schools in India (established in 1873) Ramakrishna Mission Schools (established in 1922) Ryan International Schools (established in 1976) Sainik School (established in 1960) Saraswati Shishu Mandir (established in 1952) Seth M.R. Jaipuria Schools (established in 1992) Vivekananda Vidyalaya (established in 1972) Vivekananda Kendra Vidyalaya (established in 1977) Waldorf Schools (India) (established in 2002)

International schools As of January 2015, the International Schools Consultancy (ISC) listed India as having 410 international schools. ISC defines an 'international school' in the following terms "ISC includes an international school if the school delivers a curriculum to any combination of pre-school, primary or secondary students, wholly or partly in English outside an English-speaking country, or if a school in a country where English is one of the official languages, offers an English-medium curriculum other than the country's national curriculum and is international in its orientation." This definition is used by publications including The Economist.

Home-schooling Home-schooling in India is legal, though it is the less explored option, and often debated by educators. The Indian Government's stance on the issue is that parents are free to teach their children at home, if they wish to and have the means. The then MHRD Minister Kapil Sibal has stated that despite the RTE Act of 2009, if someone decides not to send his/her children to school, the government would not interfere.

Non-governmental work in education NGO work in Indian education broadly spans four areas - piloting approaches to multigrade teaching, making improvements to learning environments, teacher training and support, and creating stronger school-community links. NGO involvement in education has been crucial in delivering targeted action to under resourced communities, such as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, the urban poor, children engaged in child labor, children with disabilities, etc. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) recognised the role played by NGOs in ensuring access to education, particularly for students with disabilities. NGOs contributed to SSA by either leading advocacy movements for persons with disabilities or providing various types of assistance in rural settings for children with disabilities. Under the SSA, NGOs also engaged in collaboration with the state to reach children excluded from mainstream education, including migrant children, child laborers, dropouts, children living in areas with civil instability and girls. There are 79,960 registered NGOs working in the areas of education and literacy. Partnerships under the SSA can occur through funding by Central and State governments, funding activities by identified National and State Resource Institutions or through participation in community activities of various Village Education Committees. Grassroots education NGOs often deliver services via local governing institutions such as the Panchayati Raj and emphasise community participation in ensuring quality. The Mamidipudi Venkatarangaiya Foundation (MVF), established in 1991 to address literacy among child laborers utilised Parent Teacher Associations to disburse seed money for the programme under the supervision of the village Panchayat, which then took issues of staffing shortage and insufficient infrastructure to the State Government. The Pratham Educational Initiative in Delhi and Mumbai works with the Integrated Child Development Scheme to set up and provide support to community-run pre-school centres or balwadis. Under the Namma Shaale project in Karnataka, the Azim Premji Foundation identified seven key stakeholders (children, teachers, parents, School Development and Monitoring Committees, Community Based Organizations, Gram Panchayats, and education managers) in their work to establish a framework of school-community leadership. NGOs also work with the State to enable teacher training. There have been a number of NGO partnerships with local District Institute of Educational Training. The Rishi Valley Institute for Educational Resources (RIVER) has worked with school districts in many Indian states to provide multi-grade, multi-level training approaches catering to the needs of remote one-room schools. The Eklavya Foundation in Madhya Pradesh has been working with the State Council for Education Research and Training since 1987 to train teachers in making learning a joyful experience by emphasising skill development and practical learning in the sciences. NGOs have historically been associated with non-formal education (NFE) programmes, both in providing alternative pedagogical approaches as well as substitutes to mainstream education. The Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti, for instance, emphasises "science and literacy for national integration and self-reliance" and uses approaches such as the Gyan Vigyan Vidyalayas to encourage long-term engagement in literacy. Studies in NGO involvement in education have criticised the adoption of NGO models into formal schooling as low-cost options that require institutional mechanisms to avoid undermining the State's financial responsibility in providing elementary education. The cost-effectiveness of NGO programmes has yet to be determined. In studies that demonstrate that NGOs are more cost-effective in the Global South, there have been concerns raised that this is accomplished by cutting ethical corners, such as underpayment of NGO workers.

Open and distance learning in India Open schooling refers to a system of education that allows individuals to pursue their education through flexible and extensible learning methods. It is primarily targeted towards students who are unable to attend regular schools due to various reasons, such as work commitments, financial constraints, or other personal circumstances. The National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) is the largest open schooling system in India, operating under the aegis of the Indian Ministry of Education. NIOS offers various academic and vocational courses at the secondary (10th grade) and senior secondary (12th grade) levels. It follows a learner-centric approach and provides education through open and distance learning

methods. Apart from NIOS, some states like Kerala have their own open schooling boards that provide similar opportunities for flexible learning and certification. The certificates and qualifications offered by NIOS or state open education boards are recognised by various educational institutions, colleges, and universities in India and abroad, and hold the same value as certificates obtained through regular schooling. 1.4 million students are enrolled at the secondary and higher secondary level through open and distance learning. At the school level, the Board of Open Schooling and Skill Education, Sikkim (BOSSE), NIOS provides opportunities for continuing education to those who missed completing school education. In 2012, various state governments also introduced the State Open School program to provide distance education. Massive open online courses are made available for free by the MHRD and various educational institutes.

Online education Online education in India started during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, only a small proportion of the Indian population has access to online education. The MHRD recently launched the 'Bharat Padhe Online' program. The Indian government has imposed one of the longest school closures globally as it suffered through multiple waves of the COVID-19 pandemic. These school closures have revealed the inequities between urban and rural populations, as well as between girls and boys, in adapting to online learning tools. On 4 July 2018, in a landmark reform in the field of Higher Education, University Grants Commission has notified UGC (Online Courses or Programmes) Regulations, 2018. Distance Education Bureau started giving approvals to Higher Educational Institutions to offer Certificate, Diploma and Degree Programmes in full-fledged online mode.

Evolution When COVID-19 shut down schools and colleges all over the India, online education became really popular , helping lots of people keep up with their studies.

Deaf education in India History of education in India for the DHH population India is very diverse with eight main religions, hundreds of ethnic groups, and 21 languages with hundreds of dialects. This diversity has made it difficult to educate deaf or hard of hearing (DHH) people in India for generations. There is a history of educating the deaf in India, however, there is no single clear approach to their education. This stems from conditions, some similar to those faced around the world, and others unique to India. For example, prior to independence of India, there were not clear laws and protections for the disabled. Since independence, advancements have been made for rights of the disabled, but this has not fully tackled the issue. Pre-independence there were only 24 schools for the deaf in India, and all of these used an oral approach. The belief was that using sign language would hinder advancements of hearing and speaking in deaf children. Additionally, there was no single Indian sign language, so signs would differ depending on where the school was located. Post-independence, there are more services and resources available for DHH people, however, challenges with education remain. There are organisations around the country that work to advance the spread and quality of education for the deaf.

Education for DHH children Oralism and the use of sign language are two competing approaches to education for DHH people. While oralism dominates in India, which is an approach that encourages speaking and hearing, it is usually not realistic for DHH children. There is an Indian Sign Language, however, it is not formally recognised by the government and it is not complete or comprehensive. It varies around the country and is not encouraged by professionals and educators. Beliefs of the past that the use of sign language will hinder the potential advancements of hearing and speaking in DHH children remain. In recent years, there has been a notion to encourage the use of sign language in India and teach it in schools. In 2017, the first ISL dictionary was released. Due to these challenges and beliefs associated with sign language, education for DHH people in India often focuses on teaching children to hear, speak, and read lips, this is known as an oral approach. In India there are regular schools and special schools. Special schools provide education for children with different

disabilities. Special schools can be beneficial to DHH children, and provide a better education than they would receive in a regular school. However, these schools are not available for every deaf child. Sometimes they are located too far from a child's home. Another reason a child may have to attend a regular school is if they receive hearing technology. Since India focuses on hearing and speaking for the deaf, hearing technology is encouraged. Once a child receives hearing technology it is believed that they can attend regular schools. Even with hearing technology, DHH children still need special education in order to succeed. This puts them at a significant disadvantage in regular school and can cause them to fall behind academically, linguistically, and developmentally. For these reasons, many deaf children receive poor education or no education at all, causing the illiteracy rate of deaf children to rise. Education in India in regular schools and deaf schools has problems. Even in deaf schools, sign language is not usually taught and used. Some use a small amount of sign language but all of the deaf schools in India use or claim to use an oral approach. Some deaf schools secretly teach sign language due to the stigma and beliefs surrounding the use of sign language, and disability in general, in India. Children in deaf schools have to try to learn by hearing or reading lips and writing. In hearing schools, the children have to do the same. There are no special accommodations. Additionally, there are not any teachers that use sign language in regular schools (maybe a few in deaf schools), and there aren't any interpreters. There are a couple of hundred deaf schools in India and vocational training is becoming more common for DHH people.

Higher education There are no deaf colleges or universities in India. A person's education ends with grade school- where they likely were not able to learn. With lack of education, DHH people then have a very difficult time finding a job. There is one interpreter in one college in India, Delhi University.

Quality Literacy According to the Census of 2011, "every person above the age of 7 years who can read and write with understanding in any language is said to be literate". According to this criterion, the 2011 survey holds the national literacy rate to be 74.04%. The youth literacy rate, measured within the age group of 15 to 24, is 81.1% (84.4% among males and 74.4% among females), while 86% of boys and 72% of girls are literate in the 10-19 age group. Within the Indian states, Kerala has the highest literacy rate of 93.91% whereas Bihar averaged 61.8% literacy. The 2001 statistics indicated that the total number of 'absolute non-literates' in the country was 304 million. Gender gap in literacy rate is high, for example in Rajasthan, the state with the lowest female literacy rate in India, average female literacy rate is 52.66% and average male literacy rate is 80.51%, making a gender gap of 27.85%.

Attainment As of 2011, enrolment rates are 58% for pre-primary, 93% for primary, 69% for secondary, and 25% for tertiary education. Despite the high overall enrolment rate for primary education among rural children of age 10, half could not read at a basic level, over 60% were unable to do division, and half dropped out by the age of 14. In 2009, two states in India, Tamil Nadu and Himachal Pradesh, participated in the international PISA exams which is administered once every three years to 15-year-olds. Both states ranked at the bottom of the table, beating out only Kyrgyzstan in score, and falling 200 points (two standard deviations) below the average for OECD countries. While in the immediate aftermath there was a short-lived controversy over the quality of primary education in India, ultimately India decided to not participate in PISA for 2012, and again not to for 2015 and 2018. While the quality of free, public education is in crisis, a majority of the urban poor have turned to private schools. In some urban cities, it is estimated as high as two-thirds of all students attend private institutions, many of which charge a modest US\$2 per month.

Public school workforce Officially, the pupil to teacher ratio within the public school system for primary education is 35:1. However, teacher absenteeism in India is exorbitant, with 25% never showing up for work.

The World Bank estimates the cost in salaries alone paid to no-show teachers who have never attended work is US\$2 billion per year. A study on teachers by Kremer etc. found out that 25% of private sector teachers and 40% of public sector medical workers were absent during the survey. Among teachers who were paid to teach, absence rates ranged from 14.6% in Maharashtra to 41.9% in Jharkhand. Only 1 in nearly 3,000 public school head teachers had ever dismissed a teacher for repeated absence. The same study found "only about half were teaching, during unannounced visits to a nationally representative sample of government primary schools in India."

Higher education As per "Report of the Higher education in India, Issues Related to Expansion, Inclusiveness, Quality and Finance", the access to higher education measured in term of gross enrolment ratio increased from 0.7% in 1950/51 to 1.4% in 1960-61. By 2006/7 the GER increased to about 11%. Notably, by 2012, it had crossed 20% (as mentioned in an earlier section). According to a survey by All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) released by the ministry of human resource development, Tamil Nadu which has the highest gross enrolment ratio (GER) in higher education in the country has registered an increase of 2.6% to take GER to 46.9 per cent in 2016-17.

Vocational education An optimistic estimate from 2008 was that only one in five job-seekers in India ever had any sort of vocational training. However, it is expected to grow as the CBSE has brought changes in its education system which emphasises inclusion of certain number and types of vocational subjects in classes 9th and 11th. Although it is not mandatory for schools to go for it but a good number of schools have voluntarily accepted the suggestion and incorporated the change in their curriculum.

Problems and Issues Facilities As per 2016 Annual Survey of Education Report (ASER), 3.5% schools in India had no toilet facility while only 68.7% schools had usable toilet facility. 75.5% of the schools surveyed had library in 2016, a decrease from 78.1% in 2014. Percentage of schools with separate girls toilet have increased from 32.9% in 2010 to 61.9% in 2016. 74.1% schools had drinking water facility and 64.5% of the schools had playground.

Curriculum issues Modern education in India is often criticised for being based on rote learning rather than problem solving. Anil K. Rajvanshi writes that Indian education system seems to be producing zombies since in most of the schools students seemed to be spending majority of their time in preparing for competitive exams rather than learning or playing. Preschool for Child Rights states that almost 99% of pre-schools do not have any curriculum at all. Also creativity is not encouraged or is considered a form of entertainment in most institutions. The 2009 Hindi movie 3 Idiots specifically highlighted these issues, which led to major debates, especially in higher education. The British "essentialist" view of knowledge of the nineteenth century emphasised the individual, scientific, universal, and moral aims of education ahead of the social and cultural. This, combined with the colonial construction of Indian society, designed to preserve the ideological lead of the Empire post-1857, it helped shape the official nineteenth-century school curriculum. The rejection of nationalist Gopal Krishna Gokhale's Bill (1911) to make primary education free and compulsory by the colonial administration and English-educated and often upper-caste elite further helped sustain a curriculum that focused on colonial objectives. Holmes and McLean (1989, 151) argues that despite tensions between the colonial view of education and the nationalist postcolonial aims of education, British essentialism grew unassailable roots in India partly because "colonial values coincided with those of indigenous traditions."

Rural education Following independence, India viewed education as an effective tool for bringing social change through community development. The administrative control was effectively initiated in the 1950s, when, in 1952, the government grouped villages under a Community Development Block-an authority under a national programme which could control education in up to 100 villages. A Block Development Officer oversaw a geographical area of 150 square miles (390 km²) which could contain a population of as many as 70,000 people. Setty and Ross elaborate on the role of such programmes, themselves divided further into individual-based, community based, or the Individual-cum-community-based, in which microscopic levels of development are overseen at village level by an appointed worker:

The community development programmes comprise agriculture, animal husbandry, cooperation, rural industries, rural engineering (consisting of minor irrigation, roads, buildings), health and sanitation including family welfare, family planning, women welfare, child care and nutrition, education including adult education, social education and literacy, youth welfare and community organisation. In each of these areas of development there are several programmes, schemes and activities which are additive, expanding and tapering off covering the total community, some segments, or specific target populations such as small and marginal farmers, artisans, women and in general people below the poverty line. Despite some setbacks the rural education programmes continued throughout the 1950s, with support from private institutions. A sizeable network of rural education had been established by the time the Gandhigram Rural Institute was established and 5,200 Community Development Blocks were established in India. Nursery schools, elementary schools, secondary school, and schools for adult education for women were set up. The government continued to view rural education as an agenda that could be relatively free from bureaucratic backlog and general stagnation. However, in some cases lack of financing balanced the gains made by rural education institutes of India. Some ideas failed to find acceptability among India's poor and investments made by the government sometimes yielded little results. Today, government rural schools remain poorly funded and understaffed. Several foundations, such as the Rural Development Foundation (Hyderabad), actively build high-quality rural schools, but the number of students served is small. Education in rural India is valued differently from in an urban setting, with lower rates of completion. An imbalanced sex ratio exists within schools with 18% of males earning a high school diploma compared with only 10% of females. The estimated number of children who have never attended school in India is near 100 million which reflects the low completion levels. This is the largest concentration in the world of youth who have not enrolled in school.

Women's education Women have a much lower literacy rate than men. Far fewer girls are enrolled in the schools, and many of them drop out. In the patriarchal setting of the Indian family, girls have lower status and fewer privileges than boys. Conservative cultural attitudes prevent some girls from attending school. Furthermore, educated women belonging to the upper middle class are less likely to enter the workforce compared to uneducated women of lower castes. They opt to stay at home due to traditional, cultural and religious norms. The number of literate women among the female population of India was between 2-6% from the British Raj onward to the formation of the Republic of India in 1947. Concerted efforts led to improvement from 15.3% in 1961 to 28.5% in 1981. By 2001 literacy for women had exceeded 50% of the overall female population, though these statistics were still very low compared to world standards and even male literacy within India. Recently the Indian government has launched Saakshar Bharat Mission for Female Literacy. This mission aims to bring down female illiteracy by half of its present level. Sita Anantha Raman outlines the progress of women's education in India:

Since 1947 the Indian government has tried to provide incentives for girls' school attendance through programmes for midday meals, free books, and uniforms. This welfare thrust raised primary enrollment

between 1951 and 1981. In 1986 the National Policy on Education decided to restructure education in tune with the social framework of each state, and with larger national goals. It emphasised that education was necessary for democracy, and central to the improvement of women's condition. The new policy aimed at social change through revised texts, curricula, increased funding for schools, expansion in the numbers of schools, and policy improvements. Emphasis was placed on expanding girls' occupational centres and primary education; secondary and higher education; and rural and urban institutions. The report tried to connect problems like low school attendance with poverty, and the dependence on girls for housework and sibling day care. The National Literacy Mission also worked through female tutors in villages. Although the minimum marriage age is now eighteen for girls, many continue to be married much earlier. Therefore, at the secondary level, female drop-out rates are high. Sita Anantha Raman also mentions that while the educated Indian women workforce maintains professionalism, the men outnumber them in most fields and, in some cases, receive higher income for the same positions. The education of women in India plays a significant role in improving living standards in the country. A higher female literacy rate improves the quality of life both at home and outside the home, by encouraging and promoting education of children, especially female children, and in reducing the infant mortality rate. Several studies have shown that a lower level of women literacy rates results in higher levels of fertility and infant mortality, poorer nutrition, lower earning potential and the lack of an ability to make decisions within a household. Women's lower educational levels is also shown to adversely affect the health and living conditions of children. A survey that was conducted in India showed results which support the fact that infant mortality rate was inversely related to female literacy rate and educational level. The survey also suggests a correlation between education and economic growth. In India, there is a large disparity between female literacy rates in different states. State of Kerala has the highest female literacy rate of 91.98% while Rajasthan has the lowest female literacy rate of 52.66. This correlates to the health levels of states, Kerala has average life expectancy at birth of 74.9 while Rajasthan's average life expectancy at birth is 67.7 years. In India, higher education is defined as the education of an age group between 18 and 24, and is largely funded by the government. Despite women making up 24-50% of higher education enrolment, there is still a gender imbalance within higher education. Only one third of science students and 7% of engineering students, are women. In comparison, however, over half the students studying Education are women.

Accreditation In 2018, 277 fake engineering colleges were identified. In January 2010, the Government of India decided to withdraw Deemed university status from as many as 44 institutions. The Government claimed in its affidavit that academic considerations were not being kept in mind by the management of these institutions and that "they were being run as family fiefdoms". In February 2009, the University Grant Commission found 39 fake institutions operating in India.

Employer training Only 16% of manufacturers in India offer in-service training to their employees, compared with over 90% in China.

Teacher careers In the Indian education system, a teacher's success is loosely defined. It is either based on a student's success or based on the years of teaching experience, both of which do not necessarily correlate to a teacher's skill set or competencies. The management of an institution could thereby be forced to promote teachers based on the grade level they teach or their seniority, both of which are often not an indicator of a good teacher. This means that either a primary school teacher is promoted to a higher grade, or a teacher is promoted to take up other roles within the institution such as Head of Department, coordinator, Vice Principal or Principal. However, the skills and competencies that are required for each of them vary and a great teacher may not be a great manager. Since teachers do not see their own growth and success in their own hands, they often do not take up any professional development. Thus, there is a need to identify a framework to help a

teacher chart a career path based on his/her own competency and help them understand their own development.

Coaching Institutes Increased competition to get admission in reputed colleges has given rise to private coaching institutes in India. They prepare students for engineering, medical, MBA, banking jobs' entrance tests as well as American SAT and GRE. There are also coaching institutes that teach subjects like English for employment in India and abroad. Private coaching institutes are of two types: offline coaching and online coaching. There are many online coaching centres and apps available in the market and their usage is growing, especially in tier 2 metro cities. A 2013 survey by ASSOCHAM predicted the size of private coaching industry to grow to \$40 billion, or Rs 2.39 trillion (short scale) by 2015. Kota in Rajasthan is called the "Coaching Capital Of India" as it prepares students for engineering and medical entrance exams like IIT-JEE and NEET-UG. In Punjab, English language is taught by coaching institutes for foreign visa aspirants to get the right IELTS score for their applications. Mukherjee Nagar and Old Rajinder Nagar in Delhi are considered a hub for UPSC Civil Services Examination coaching. To compete in these exams, Center and some state governments also provide free coaching to students, especially to students from minority communities. Coaching classes have been blamed for the neglect of school education by students. Educationists such as Anandakrishnan have criticised the increasing importance being given to coaching classes as they put students under mental stress and the coaching fees add to the financial burden on parents. These educationists opine that if a good schooling system is put in place, children should not need additional coaching to take any competitive examination. The Indian education system has faced criticism for its emphasis on rote learning and intense examination pressure. This pressure has been linked to cases of mental health issues and student suicides especially in the city of Kota, Rajasthan, amongst those preparing for competitive exams such as JEE and NEET-UG. In 2023, India witnessed a rise in the number of student suicides with Kota, Rajasthan witnessing a record breaking 26 suicide cases in a single year. Initiatives like the National Level Common Entrance Examination (NLCEE) provide students with exposure to various career paths and institutions, guiding them to make informed decisions about their future. By reducing uncertainty and regret in their choices, such initiatives aim to alleviate stress and help students avoid extreme responses to academic challenges. The Ministry of Education has implemented a new law regulating private coaching institutes to control growing student suicides.

Corruption in education Corruption in Indian education system has been eroding the quality of education and has been creating long-term negative consequences for the society. Educational corruption in India is considered one of the major contributors to domestic black money. In 2021, Manav Bharti University, a private university, was accused of selling tens of thousands of degrees for money over a decade.

Grade inflation Grade inflation has become an issue in Indian secondary education. In CBSE, a 95 per cent aggregate is 21 times as prevalent today as it was in 2004, and a 90 per cent close to nine times as prevalent. In the ISC Board, a 95 per cent is almost twice as prevalent today as it was in 2012. CBSE called a meeting of all 40 school boards early in 2017 to urge them to discontinue "artificial spiking of marks". CBSE decided to lead by example and promised not to inflate its results. But although the 2017 results have seen a small correction, the board has clearly not discarded the practice completely. Almost 6.5 per cent of mathematics examinees in 2017 scored 95 or more - 10 times higher than in 2004 - and almost 6 per cent of physics examinees scored 95 or more, 35 times more than in 2004.

Overflow of Certain Fields Across the nation, it has often been observed that majority of Indian parents want their children to pursue only engineering or medical fields. This is due to guaranteed employment, financial

security, survival mentality, societal status, and cultural conditioning. As a result of this, along with an obsession for getting into prestigious IITs, many students in their high school are forced to sit and study for entrance exams other than their field of preference, like the JEE-Advanced for engineering and NEET for medical. This has led to development of coaching centers that tutor students for such exams, and with packed schedules issued, it has caused extreme pressure for the students, gradually affecting their mental health and no time for extra-curricular activities like arts or sports. The IITs, despite being premier institutions, do not accept SAT scores for entrance and admission, which have been noted to be comparatively easier than the JEE. In 2012, it was noted that India had an overflow of engineering colleges/institutions, and that NASSCOM, non-governmental trade association and advocacy group, revealed in a report that only 15% of engineering graduates are employable. In 2024, that figure had dropped close to 10%, which triggered a debate of the skill gaps.

Initiatives Central government involvement Following India's independence, a number of rules were formulated for the backward Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes of India. In 1960, a list identifying 405 Scheduled Castes and 225 Scheduled Tribes was published by the central government. An amendment was made to the list in 1975, which identified 841 Scheduled Castes and 510 Scheduled Tribes. The total percentage of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes combined was found to be 22.5% with the Scheduled Castes accounting for 17% and the Scheduled Tribes accounting for the remaining 7.5%. Following the report many Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes increasingly referred to themselves as Dalit, a Marathi language terminology used by B R Ambedkar which literally means "oppressed". The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are provided for in many of India's educational programmes. Special reservations are also provided for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in India, e.g. a reservation of 15% in Kendriya Vidyalaya for Scheduled Castes and another reservation of 7.5% in Kendriya Vidyalaya for Scheduled Tribes. Similar reservations are held by the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in many schemes and educational facilities in India. The remote and far-flung regions of North-East India are provided for under the Non-Lapsible Central pool of Resources (NLCPR) since 1998-1999. The NLCPR aims to provide funds for infrastructure development in these remote areas. Women from remote, underdeveloped areas or from weaker social groups in Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, and Uttarakhand, fall under the Mahila Samakhya Scheme, initiated in 1989. Apart from provisions for education this programme also aims to raise awareness by holding meetings and seminars at rural levels. The government allowed ₹340 million (US\$4.0 million) during 2007-08 to carry out this scheme over 83 districts including more than 21,000 villages. There are 68 Bal Bhavans and 10 Bal Kendra affiliated to the National Bal Bhavan. The scheme involves educational and social activities and recognising children with a marked talent for a particular educational stream. A number of programmes and activities are held under this scheme, which also involves cultural exchanges and participation in several international forums. India's minorities, especially the ones considered 'educationally backward' by the government, are provided for in the 1992 amendment of the Indian National Policy on Education (NPE). The government initiated the Scheme of Area Intensive Programme for Educationally Backward Minorities and Scheme of Financial Assistance or Modernisation of Madarsa Education as part of its revised Programme of Action (1992). Both these schemes were started nationwide by 1994. In 2004 the Indian parliament passed an act which enabled minority education establishments to seek university affiliations if they passed the required norms. Ministry of Human Resource and Development, Government of India in collaboration with Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology has also launched a National Scholarship Portal to provide students of India access to National and State Level Scholarships provided by various government authorities. As a Mission Mode Project under the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP), the online service enlists more than 50 scholarship programmes every year including the renowned Ministry of Minority Affairs (MOMA) Scholarships for Post-Matric and Pre-Matric studies. In the academic year 2017-18 the MOMA Scholarships facilitated the studies of 116,452 students with scholarships worth ₹3165.7 million. The

National Scholarship continues to enlist scholarship programmes managed by AICTE (All India Council for Technical Education), UGC (University Grants Commission) and respective state governments.

Legislative framework Article 45, of the Constitution of India originally stated:

The State shall endeavour to provide, within a period of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years. This article was a directive principle of state policy within India, effectively meaning that it was within a set of rules that were meant to be followed in spirit and the government could not be held to court if the actual letter was not followed. However, the enforcement of this directive principle became a matter of debate since this principle held obvious emotive and practical value, and was legally the only directive principle within the Indian constitution to have a time limit. Following initiatives by the Supreme Court of India during the 1990s the 93rd amendment bill suggested three separate amendments to the Indian constitution: The constitution of India was amended to include a new article, 21A, which read:

The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years in a such manner as the State may, by law, determine. Article 45 was proposed to be substituted by the article which read:

Provision for early childhood care and education to children below the age of six years: The State shall endeavour to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of sixteen years. Another article, 51A, was to additionally have the clause:

...a parent or guardian [shall] provide opportunities for education to his child or, as the case may be, [a] ward between the age of six to fourteen years. The bill was passed unanimously in the Lok Sabha, the lower house of the Indian parliament, on 28 November 2001. It was later passed by the upper house-the Rajya Sabha-on 14 May 2002. After being signed by the President of India the Indian constitution was amended formally for the eighty sixth time and the bill came into effect. Since then those between the age of 6-14 have a fundamental right to education. Article 46 of the Constitution of India holds that:

The State shall promote, with special care, the education and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of social exploitation'. Other provisions for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes can be found in Articles 330, 332, 335, 338-342. Both the 5th and the 6th Schedules of the Constitution also make special provisions for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Central government expenditure on education As a part of the tenth Five-year Plan (2002-2007), the central government of India outlined an expenditure of 65.6% of its total education budget of ■438 billion (US\$5.2 billion) i.e. ■288 billion (US\$3.4 billion) on elementary education; 9.9% i.e. ■43.25 billion (US\$510 million) on secondary education; 2.9% i.e. ■12.5 billion (US\$150 million) on adult education; 9.5% i.e. ■41.77 billion (US\$490 million) on higher education; 10.7% i.e. ■47 billion (US\$560 million) on technical education; and the remaining 1.4% i.e. ■6.24 billion (US\$74 million) on miscellaneous education schemes. During the Financial Year 2011-12, the Central Government of India has allocated ■ 38,957 crore for the Department of School Education and Literacy which is the main department dealing with primary education in India. Within this

allocation, a major share of ₹ 21,000 crore, is for the flagship programme 'Sarva Siksha Abhiyan'. However, budgetary allocation of ₹ 210,000 million is considered very low in view of the officially appointed Anil Bordia Committee recommendation of ₹ 356.59 billion for the year 2011-12. This higher allocation was required to implement the recent legislation, the 'Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009'. In recent times, several major announcements have been made for developing the poor state of affairs in the education sector in India, the most notable ones being those of the National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP) of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government. These announcements were: (a) To progressively increase expenditure on education to around 6% of GDP. (b) To support this increase in expenditure on education, and to increase the quality of education, there would be an imposition of an education cess over all central government taxes. (c) To ensure that no one is denied of education due to economic backwardness and poverty. (d) To make right to education a fundamental right for all children in the age group 6-14 years. (e) To universalise education through its flagship programmes such as Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and Midday Meal Scheme. However, even after five years of the implementation of NCMP, not much progress has been seen on this front. Although the country has targeted devoting a 6% share of its GDP towards the educational sector, India's performance has definitely fallen short of expectations. Expenditure on education has steadily risen from 0.64% of GDP in 1951-52 to 2.31% in 1970-71 and thereafter reached the peak of 4.26% in 2000-01. However, it declined to 3.49% in 2004-05. There is a definite need to step up again. As a proportion of total government expenditure, it has declined from around 11.1% in 2000-2001 to around 9.98% during the UPA's rule, even though ideally it should be around 20% of the total budget. A policy brief issued by [Network for Social Accountability (NSA)] titled "[NSA Response to Education Sector Interventions in Union Budget: UPA Rule and the Education Sector]" provides a significant revelation of this fact. Due to a declining priority of education in the public policy paradigm in India, there has been an exponential growth in the private expenditure on education also. [As per the available information, the private out-of-pocket expenditure by the working class population for the education of their children in India has increased by around 1150 percent or around 12.5 times over the last decade].

National Education Policy 2020 The central government of India introduced the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) which is expected to bring profound changes to education in India. The policy, approved by the Cabinet of India on 27 July 2020, outlines the vision of India's new education system. The new policy replaces the 1986 National Policy on Education. The policy is a comprehensive framework for elementary education to higher education as well as vocational training in both rural and urban India. It aims to transform India's education system by 2021. The National Education Policy 2020 has 'emphasised' on the use of mother tongue or local language as the medium of instruction till Class 5 while, recommending its continuance till Class 8 and beyond. It also states that no language will be imposed on the students. The language policy in NEP is a broad guideline and advisory in nature; and it is up to the states, institutions, and schools to decide on the implementation. Education in India is a Concurrent List subject. NEP 2020 outlines the vision of India's School education system. The new policy replaces the previous National Policy on Education, 1986. The policy is a comprehensive framework for elementary education to higher education as well as vocational training in both rural and urban India. The policy aims to transform India's education system by 2021. As per NEP2020, the "10 + 2" structure is replaced with "5+3+3+4" model. 5+3+3+4 refers to 5 foundational years, whether in an anganwadi, pre-school or balvatika. This is followed by 3 years of preparatory learning from classes 3 to 5. This is followed by a middle stage that is of 3 years in length and finally a 4-year secondary stage till class 12 or 18 years of age. This model will be implemented as follows: Instead of exams being held every academic year, school students attend three exams, in classes 2, 5 and 8. Board exams are held for classes 10 and 12. Standards for Board exams is established by an assessment body, PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development). To make them easier, these exams would be conducted twice a year, with students being offered up to two attempts. The exam itself would have two parts,

namely the objective and the descriptive. NEP's higher education policy proposes a 4-year multi-disciplinary bachelor's degree in an undergraduate programme with multiple exit options. These will include professional and vocational areas and will be implemented

A certificate after completing 1 year of study (vocational) A diploma after completing 2 years of study (vocational) A Bachelor's degree after completion of a 3-year programme (professional) A 4-year multidisciplinary bachelor's degree (the preferred option) (professional)

Conceptual understanding of inclusive education The new National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) introduced by the Central Government is expected to bring profound changes to education in India. The policy approved by the Union Cabinet of India on 29 July 2020, outlines the vision of India's new education system. The new policy replaces the 1986 National Policy on Education. The policy is a comprehensive framework for elementary education to higher education as well as vocational training in both rural and urban India. The policy aims to transform India's education system by 2021. Shortly after the release of the policy, the government clarified that no one will be forced to study any particular language and that the medium of instruction will not be shifted from English to any regional language. The language policy in NEP is a broad guideline and advisory in nature; and it is up to the states, institutions, and schools to decide on the implementation. Education in India is a Concurrent List subject. Although it may not be appropriate to judge the adoption of a northern concept in the south from a northern perspective, hasty use of such globalised terminology without engaging with the thinking behind it may present no more than empty rhetoric, whatever the context. clearly perceives inclusive education as "...a concept that has been adopted from the international discourse, but has not been engaged with in the Indian scenario." She supports this view of lack of conceptual engagement through data collected in semi-structured interviews for her PhD research, where she found that: Many interviewees concurred with the opinions reflected in government documents that inclusion is about children with special needs, as reflected by a disabling condition. A handful of others argue that inclusive education should not be limited to children with disabilities, as it holds relevance for all marginalised groups. Though they were quick to accept that this thinking has not yet prevailed. Indian understandings of disability and educational needs are demonstrated through the interchangeable use of several English terms which hold different meanings in the north. For example, children with special needs or special educational needs tend to be perceived as children with disabilities in India, as demonstrated by Mukhopadhyay and Mani's (2002) chapter on 'Education of Children with Special Needs' in a NIEPA government-funded research report, which solely pertains to children with disabilities. In contrast, the intention of Mary Warnock's term 'special educational needs', coined in the UK in 1978, was to imply that any child, with an impairment or not, may have an individual educational need at some point in their school career (e.g. dyslexia, or language of instruction as a second language) which the teacher should adapt to. This further implies that a child with a disability may not have a special educational need while their able-bodied peers could (Giffard-Lindsay, 2006). In addition, despite the 1987 Mental Health Act finally separating the meaning of learning disability from that of mental illness in India, there is still some confusion in understanding, with the 1995 Persons with Disabilities Act listing both mental retardation and mental illness as categories of disability. Ignorance and fear of genetic inheritance adds to the societal stigma of both. 'Inclusive' and 'integrated' education are also concepts that are used interchangeably, understood as the placement of children with disabilities in mainstream classrooms, with the provision of aids and appliances, and specialist training for the teacher on how to 'deal with' students with disabilities. There is little engagement with the connotations of school, curriculum, and teacher flexibility for all children. These rigid, categorical interpretations of subtly different northern concepts are perhaps a reflection of not only the government tendency to categories and label (Julka, 2005; Singal, 2005a) but also a cultural one, most explicitly enforced through the rigidly categorised caste system.

Adult and youth literacy rates See also Minister of Education (India) Ministry of Education (India) Gender inequality in India Gurukula List of design colleges and institutes of India List of schools in India Macaulayism, historical background to the implementation of English education in India. National Translation Mission New Education Policy NCERT textbook controversies Open access in India Two Million Minutes, documentary film Dreams Choked, documentary film Happiness Curriculum

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External links Ministry of Human Resource Development Education statistics from the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation

Transport in India

Transport in India consists of transport by land, water and air. Road transport is the primary mode of transport for most Indian citizens, and India's road transport systems are among the most heavily used in the world. The growth of highway construction in India, fueled by fast GDP growth (world's 3rd largest in PPP and 4th largest nominally), has reduced India's logistics costs to 9% (2025) compared to 8% in China, 12% in USA and EU. India's road network is the largest, and the busiest in the world, transporting 8.225 billion passengers and over 980 million tonnes of cargo annually, as of 2015. India's rail network is the fourth largest and second busiest in the world, transporting 8.09 billion passengers and 1.20 billion tonnes of freight annually, as of 2020. Aviation in India is broadly divided into military and civil aviation which is the fastest-growing aviation market in the world (IATA data). India's waterways network, in the form of rivers, canals, backwaters and creeks, is the ninth largest waterway network in the world. Freight transport by waterways is highly under utilised in India with the total cargo moved (in tonne kilometres) by inland waterways being 0.1 percent of the total inland traffic in India. In total, about 21 percent of households have two wheelers whereas 4.70 percent of households in India have cars or vans as per the 2011 census of India. The automobile industry in India is currently growing rapidly with an annual production of over 28.4 million vehicles (2025), with an annual growth rate of 10.5% (2015) and vehicle volume is expected to rise greatly in the future. For the construction of green highways and to reduce the piles of municipal waste, India aims to reuse all of the existing piles of garbage for the road construction by 2027, of which 80 trillion ton of solid waste has been already segregated and reused for the highway construction as of 2025.

Intermediate public transport As per a report by CPPR, "Intermediate Public Transport (IPT), also known as para-transit or feeder service, refers to vehicles that work as a supplement to the public transport system by providing first and last mile connectivity to commuters. In urban and suburban areas, they commonly take the form of autorickshaws, cycle rickshaws, taxis, mini buses and more recently e-rickshaws. Jeeps, chakdas and kadukas (usually tractor or jeep chassis fitted with a trailer) provide feeder services in rural areas, connecting villages to the nearest towns. If the public transport system forms the skeleton of the framework, feeder services are its veins and capillaries." IPT fills gaps in public transport and addresses deficiencies, catering to excess demand and serving areas lacking public transport. Despite its crucial role, IPT has been overlooked in policy for decades, remaining largely unorganized and neglected by the central government while facing heavy state regulation to avoid competition with state-owned transport systems. Public transport typically excludes informal services like autorickshaws, taxis, and minibuses, yet these play a vital role in cities where formal systems are lacking. "In larger cities with more than one crore population, the major share of transport is served by formal systems like the bus, metro and suburban rail (refer table below). In medium sized cities with population less than one crore, IPT modes like autorickshaws are almost equal to the formal bus system. In smaller cities, with less than 10 lakh population, the share of IPTs is almost three times that of the formal bus system." The high prevalence of two-wheelers in small cities highlights the inadequacy of both formal and informal transport. Comparing the number of informal transport options to city buses per one lakh population in Indian cities reveals that informal transport is often equal to or surpasses city buses, indicating heavy reliance on informal transport due to its demand-responsive nature compared to fixed-route city buses.

Research The Indian transport research and education ecosystem is a highly structured, multi-modal network designed to address the nation's immense logistical, safety, and strategic needs. This landscape is characterized by a core duality: critical sectors that require centralized, high-integrity governance, and

decentralized urban sectors that demand agile, policy-driven innovation. The foundational pillars of the centralized system are the high-technology, mission-critical domains of Rail and Space. This multi-modal ecosystem is therefore geared towards generating standardized, scalable, and sustainable solutions for India's future mobility challenges across all critical transport verticals.

Transport policy Research: Organizations like Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP) India translate the technical findings into tangible policy action, assisting municipal corporations in implementing successful Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) systems and creating Complete Streets networks that prioritize walking and cycling, which is vital given India's large population. **Space transport Research** in space transport is managed entirely by the ISRO under the Department of Space, with specialized centers like the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) for launch vehicle design and the Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC) for propulsion systems. **Education:** Indian Institute of Space Science and Technology (IIST), Asia's first space university, for aerospace and avionics engineering. **Roads and urban mobility Research:** Research in Road, Urban Mobility, and Maritime logistics is highly collaborative, integrating government mandates with academic and non-governmental expertise. The CSIR-Central Road Research Institute (CSIR-CRRI) is the national apex body for road infrastructure, dedicated to advancing pavement technology, geotechnical stability, and the implementation of Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) to enhance cost-efficiency and safety. **Education:** Specialized academic centers ensure policy is informed by cutting-edge science: the Transportation Research and Injury Prevention Programme (TRIPP) at IIT Delhi is globally recognized for its pioneering work on Vulnerable Road Users (VRUs), directly influencing indigenous vehicle and safety standards. The focus on sustainable urban mobility is further advanced by the Centre of Excellence in Urban Transport (CoE-UT) at IIT Madras, which models advanced solutions for connected intelligent transportation (CIUT) and advises on concepts like Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) and Low Emission Zones (LEZ). **Railways Research** in Rail development is anchored by the Research Designs and Standards Organisation (RDSO) under the Ministry of Railways, which is responsible for standardization, design, and developing safety systems like Kavach and sustainable solutions such as the Hydrogen Train model. **Education:** The specialized talent needed for these high-technology fields is systematically cultivated by dedicated universities, such as GATI SHAKTI VISHWAVIDYALAYA (GSV) for rail and transport analytics. **Maritime logistics Research:** The Centre for Maritime Logistics (CML) at GMU focuses research on digitalization and automation to maximize logistical efficiency across shipping, ports, and freight forwarding, directly supporting the strategic goals outlined in the national Maritime India Vision 2030. The list of research and educational institutes and think tanks.

Traditional means of transport Walking Walking was a major transport form in ancient times. People used to cover long distances on foot or bull carts. For instance, Adi Sankaracharya travelled all over India from Kalady near Kochi. Walking still constitutes an important mode of transport in rural areas. In the city of Mumbai, to further improve the transit conditions for pedestrians, the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority, has commenced the construction of more than 50 skywalks, as part of the Mumbai Skywalk project, which is very helpful as walk enthusiasts take part in reducing traffic. The Dakshineswar Skywalk has also come up in West Bengal.

Palanquins Palanquins, also known as palkis, were one of the luxurious methods used by the rich and noblemen for travelling and also to carry a deity (idol) of a god. Many temples have sculptures of a god being carried in palkis. Modern use of the palanquin is limited to Indian weddings, pilgrimage and carrying idols of gods.

Bullock carts Bullock carts used to be a way of transportation in India, but it is seldom seen today due to the slow speed and advent of motorised vehicles. It is still prevalent in deep within the rural areas for the transport of goods.

Bicycles Bicycles or cycles, have ownership rates ranging from around 30% to 75% at the state level. Along with walking, cycling accounts for 50% to 80% of the commuter trips for those in the informal sector in urban areas. However, recent developments suggest that bicycle riding is quickly becoming popular in Indian cities. In smaller Indian cities, non-motorized transport, which includes cycling, accounts for close to 50% of the total trips by the working-class population. In larger cities like Mumbai, Bengaluru, and Delhi, non-motorized transport accounts for 35%-37% of the total trips. In recent years, government development authorities all over India have encouraged the setup and use of separate bicycle lanes alongside the roads to combat pollution and ease traffic congestion.

Human-rickshaws Human-pulled rickshaws are nowadays rarely available in various cities and villages in the country. Many local governments have proposed a ban on these rickshaws describing them as "inhuman". The Government of West Bengal proposed a ban on these rickshaws in 2005. Though a bill aiming to address this issue, termed as Calcutta Hackney Carriage Bill, was passed by the West Bengal Assembly in 2006, it has not yet been implemented. The Government of West Bengal is working on an amendment to this bill to avoid the loopholes that were exposed when the Hand-pulled Rickshaw Owners' Association filed a petition against the bill.

Cycle rickshaw Cycle rickshaws were introduced in India in the 1940s. They are bigger than a tricycle where two people sit on an elevated seat at the back and a person pedals from the front. In the late 2000s, they were banned in several cities for causing traffic congestion. The Delhi Police recently submitted an affidavit against plying of cycle rickshaws to ease traffic congestion in the city but it was dismissed by the Delhi High Court. In addition, environmentalists have supported the retention of cycle rickshaws as a non-polluting mode of transport.

Road As per 2024 estimates, the total road length in India is 6,700,000 km (4,200,000 mi); making the Indian road network the largest road network in the world. At 0.66 km of highway per square kilometre of land the density of India's highway network is higher than that of the United States (0.65) and far higher than that of China's (0.16) or Brazil's (0.20). India has a network of National Highways connecting all the major cities and state capitals, forming the economic backbone of the country. As of 2013, India has a total of 161,350 km (100,258 mi) of National Highways, of which 6,059 km (3,765 mi) are classified as expressways. Although India has large network of four or more lane highways of international quality standards, but without access control (entry/exit control), they are not called as expressways but simply highways. As per the National Highways Authority of India, about 66% of freight and 82% passenger traffic is carried by the roads. The National Highways carry about 40% of total road traffic, though only about 2% of the road network is covered by these roads. Average growth of the number of vehicles has been around 10.16% per annum over recent years. India also has many bridges and flyovers in major cities to reduce traffic congestion. Some notable projects include Bandra - Worli Sea link in Mumbai and Kathipara Cloverleaf Interchange in Chennai. India's metropolitan intra-city average traffic vehicle speed in Delhi was 25 km/h (16 mph), in Mumbai 20.7 km/h (12.9 mph), in Chennai 18.9 km/h (11.7 mph) and in Kolkata 19.2 km/h (11.9 mph), as per a study by Ola Cabs in 2017. Under National Highways Development Project (NHDP), work is under progress to equip national highways with at least four lanes; there is also a plan to convert some stretches of these roads to six lanes. In recent years construction has commenced on a nationwide system of multi-lane highways, including the Golden

Quadrilateral connecting four important metropolitan cities of India (Delhi-Kolkata-Chennai-Mumbai) and North-South and East-West Corridors which link the largest cities in India. In 2000, around 40% of villages in India lacked access to all-weather roads and remained isolated during the monsoon season. To improve rural connectivity, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (Prime Minister's Rural Road Program), a project funded by the Central Government with the help of the World Bank, was launched in 2000 to build all-weather roads to connect all habitations with a population of 500 or above (250 or above for hilly areas).

The Mumbai Trans Harbour Link is the longest sea bridge in India. It was inaugurated on 12 January 2024, by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. It connects Mumbai with Navi Mumbai.

Bus Buses are an important means of public transport in India. Due to this social significance, urban bus transport is often owned and operated by public agencies, and most state governments operate bus services through a state road transport corporation. These corporations have proven extremely useful in connecting villages and towns across the country. However, a majority of smaller cities still lack a public bus system. Only 63 out of 458 Indian cities with populations exceeding 1 lakh have established formal city bus networks. Alongside the public companies there are many private bus fleets: As of 2020, there were about 150,000 publicly owned buses in India, and around 2,190,000 buses owned by private companies. However, the share of buses is negligible in most Indian cities as compared to personalised vehicles, and two-wheelers and cars account for more than 80 percent of the vehicle population in most large cities.

Bus rapid transit systems Bus rapid transit systems (BRTS), exist in several cities. Buses take up over 90% of public transport in Indian cities, and serve as an important mode of transport. Services are mostly run by state government owned transport corporations. In 1990s, all government state transport corporations have introduced various facilities like low-floor buses for the disabled and air-conditioned buses to attract private car owners to help decongest roads. In 2010, the Ahmedabad Bus Rapid Transit System won the prestigious Sustainable Transport Award from the Transportation Research Board in Washington. Rainbow BRTS in Pune is the first BRTS system in the country. Mumbai introduced air conditioned buses in 1998. Bangalore was the first city in India to introduce Volvo B7RLE intra-city buses in India in January 2005. Bangalore was the first Indian city to have an air-conditioned bus stop, located near Cubbon Park. It was built by Airtel. The city of Chennai houses one of Asia's largest bus terminus, the Chennai Mofussil Bus Terminus.

Motor vehicles Two-wheelers Motorised two-wheeler vehicles like scooters, motorcycles and mopeds are very popular due to their fuel efficiency and ease of use in congested roads or streets. The number of two-wheelers sold is several times to that of cars. There were 47.5 million powered two-wheelers in India in 2003 compared with just 8.6 million cars. Manufacture of motorcycles in India started when Royal Enfield began assembly in its plant in Chennai in 1948. Royal Enfield, an iconic brand name in the country, manufactures different variants of the British Bullet motorcycle which is a classic motorcycle that is still in production. Hero MotoCorp (formerly Hero Honda), Honda, Bajaj Auto, Yamaha, TVS Motors and Mahindra 2 Wheelers are the largest two-wheeler companies in terms of market-share. Manufacture of scooters in India started when Automobile Products of India (API) set up at Mumbai and incorporated in 1949. They began assembling Innocenti-built Lambretta scooters in India. They eventually acquired a licence for the Li150 series model, of which they began full-fledged production from the early 1960s onwards. In 1972, Scooters India Limited (SIL), a state-run enterprise based in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, bought the entire manufacturing rights of the last Innocenti Lambretta model. API has infrastructural facilities at Mumbai, Aurangabad, and Chennai, but has been non-operational since 2002. SIL stopped producing scooters in 1998. Motorcycles and scooters can be rented in many cities, Wicked Ride, Metro Bikes and many other companies are working with state governments to

solve last-mile connectivity problems with mass-transit. Wearing protective headgear is mandatory for both the rider and the pillion-rider in most cities.

Automobiles Private automobiles account for 30% of the total transport demand in urban areas of India. An average of 1,800 new vehicles are registered every day in Delhi alone. The number of automobiles produced in India rose from 6.3 million in 2002-2003 to 11 million (11.2 million) in 2008-2009 and 28.4 million in 2023-2024. There is substantial variation among cities and states in terms of dependence on private cars: Bangalore, Chennai, Delhi and Kolkata have 185, 127, 157 and 140 cars per 1,000 people respectively, which is much lower compared to developed countries. This reflects different levels of urban density and varied qualities of public transport infrastructure. Nationwide, India still has a very low rate of car ownership. When comparing car ownership between BRICS developing countries, it is on a par with China, and exceeded by Brazil and Russia.

Compact cars, especially hatchbacks and compact SUVs predominate due to affordability, fuel efficiency, congestion, and lack of parking space in most cities. Chennai is known as the "Detroit of India" for its automobile industry. Maruti, Hyundai, Mahindra and Tata Motors are the most popular brands in the order of their market share. The Ambassador once had a monopoly, but is now an icon of pre-liberalisation India. The Maruti 800 launched in 1984, created the first revolution in the Indian auto sector because of its low price and high quality. It had the highest market share until 2004, when it was overtaken by other low-cost models from Maruti such as the Alto and the Wagon R, the Indica from Tata Motors and the Santro from Hyundai. Over the 20 years since its introduction, about 2.4 million Maruti 800s were sold. However, with the launch of the Tata Nano, the least expensive production car in the world, the Maruti 800 lost its popularity. India is also known for a variety of indigenous vehicles made in villages out of simple motors and vehicle spare parts. A few of these innovations are the jugaad, maruta, chhakda, and the peter rehra. In the city of Bangalore, Radio One and the Bangalore Traffic Police, launched a carpooling drive which has involved celebrities such as Robin Uthappa, and Rahul Dravid encouraging the public to carpool. The initiative got a good response, and by the end of May 2009, 10,000 people are said to have carpooled in the city. There have been efforts to improve the energy efficiency of transport systems in Indian cities, including by introducing performance standards for private automobiles or by banning particularly polluting older cars. The city of Kolkata, for example, passed a law in 2009/10 phasing out vehicles over 15 years old with the purpose of reducing air pollution. However, the effects were mixed. On the one hand, poorer urban residents are more likely to see public health improvements from better air quality, since they are more likely to live in polluted areas and work outdoors than richer urban residents. On the other hand, drivers of such vehicles suffered from losing their livelihoods as a result of this environmental regulation.

Utility vehicles The first utility vehicle in India was manufactured by Mahindra. It was a copy of the original Willys Jeep and was manufactured under licence. The vehicle was an instant hit and made Mahindra one of the top companies in India. The Indian Army and police extensively use Mahindra vehicles along with Maruti Gypsies for transporting personnel and equipment. Tata Motors, the automobile manufacturing arm of the Tata Group, launched its first utility vehicle, the Tata Sumo, in 1994. The Sumo, owing to its then-modern design, captured a 31% share of the market within two years. The Tempo Trax from Force Motors until recently was ruling the rural areas. Sports utility vehicles now form a sizeable part of the passenger vehicle market. Models from Tata, Honda, Hyundai, Toyota and other brands are available.

Taxis Taxicabs in Mumbai and Kolkata were traditionally either Premier Padmini or Hindustan Ambassador cars. Currently, taxi fleets consist of more modern cars such as the Suzuki Dzire and Suzuki Ertiga. In recent years, taxi fleets in India have become more diverse, and taxicabs now include sedans, SUVs and even

motorcycle taxis. Depending on the city/state, taxis can either be hailed or hired from taxi-stands. In cities such as Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad and Ahmedabad, taxis need to be hired over phone, whereas in cities like Kolkata and Mumbai, taxis can also be hailed on the street. According to Government of India regulations, all taxis are required to have a fare-meter installed. There are additional surcharges for luggage, late-night rides and toll taxes are to be paid by the passenger. In recent years, online app-based cabs have become increasingly popular with the public due to reasons of safety and convenience. In cities and localities where taxis are expensive or do not charge as per the government or municipal regulated fares, people use share taxis. These are normal taxis which carry one or more passengers travelling to destinations either on one route to the final destination, or near the final destination. The passengers are charged according to the number of people with different destinations. The city of Mumbai became the first city in India to have an "in-taxi" magazine, titled MumBaee, which was issued to taxis which are part of the Mumbai Taximen's Union. The magazine debuted on 13 July 2009. In Kolkata, there are many no refusal taxis available with white and blue in colour.

Auto An auto is a three-wheeler vehicle for hire that does not have doors and is generally characterised by a small cabin for the driver in the front and a seat for passengers in the rear. Generally it is painted in yellow, green or black and has a black, yellow or green canopy on the top, but designs vary considerably from place to place. The colour of the auto rickshaw is also determined by the fuel that it is powered by, for example Agartala, Ahmedabad, Mumbai, Pune and Delhi have green or black autos indicating the use of compressed natural gas, whereas the autos of Kolkata, Bengaluru, Hyderabad have green autos indicating the use of LPG. In Mumbai and other metropolitan cities, 'autos' or 'rickshaws', as they are popularly known, usually have regulated metered fares. A recent law prohibits auto rickshaw drivers from charging more than the specified fare, or charging night-fare before midnight, and also prohibits the driver from refusing to go to a particular location. Mumbai and Kolkata are also the only two cities, which prohibit auto rickshaws from entering certain parts of the city, these cases being South Mumbai and certain parts of Downtown Kolkata. However, in cities like Chennai and other areas, some autorickshaw drivers demand more than the specified fare and refuse to use the fare meter. Airports and railway stations at many cities such as Howrah, Chennai and Bengaluru provide a facility of prepaid auto booths, which requires a fixed payment, with a base fare of Rs. 30 and a rate of Rs.14.20 per kilometre after 1.5 kilometres of travel, set by the authorities as of May 2022. The fare to be paid by the passenger is calculated on this basis. Electric rickshaw is a new popular means of transport, rapidly growing in number and popularity in India, due to low running and initial cost, and other economic and environmental benefits. E-Rickshaws are made in fiberglass or metal body, powered by a BLDC Electric Motor with max power 2000W and speed 25 km/h. They are usually painted white and blue though some E-autos use the conventional color scheme as well.

Rail Country-wide rail services in India are provided by the state-run Indian Railways (IR) under the supervision of the Ministry of Railways. IR is divided into eighteen zones including the Kolkata Metro Railway. The IR are further sub-divided into sixty seven divisions, each having a divisional headquarters. The railway network travels across the country, covering more than 7,325 stations over a total route length of more than 68,080 km (42,300 mi) and track length of about 132,310 km (82,210 mi) as of March 2021. About 45,000 km (28,000 mi) or 97% of the route-kilometre was electrified as of 2025. IR provides an important mode of transport in India, transporting 23.1 million passengers and 3.3 million tons of freight daily as of March 2019. IR is the world's ninth-largest employer, it had 1.227 million employees as of March 2019. As to rolling stock, IR owns over 289,185 (freight) wagons, 74,003 coaches and 12,147 locomotives as of March 2019. It also owns locomotive and coach production facilities. It operates both long distance and suburban rail systems.

The IR runs a number of special types of services which are given higher priority. The fastest train at present is the Vande Bharat Express with design speeds of up to 180 km/h, though the fastest service is Gatiman Express with an operational speed of 160 km/h (99 mph) and average speed of 100 km/h (62 mph), since the Vande Bharat Express is capped at 130 km/h for safety reasons. The Rajdhani trains introduced in 1969 provides connectivity between the national capital, Delhi and capitals of the states. On the other hand, Shatabdi Express provides connectivity between centres of tourism, pilgrimage or business. The Shatabdi Express trains run over short to medium distances and do not have sleepers while the Rajdhani Expresses run over longer distances and have only sleeping accommodation. Both series of trains have a maximum permissible speed of 110 to 140 km/h (68 to 87 mph) but average speed of less than 100 km/h. The Duronto Express trains provide connectivity between large cities. Besides, the IR also operates a number of luxury trains which cater to various tourist circuits. For instance, the Palace on Wheels serves the Rajasthan circuit and The Golden Chariot serves the Karnataka and Goa circuits. There are two UNESCO World Heritage Sites on IR, the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus and the Mountain railways of India. The latter consists of three separate railway lines located in different parts of India, the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, a 610 mm (2 ft) narrow-gauge railway in Lesser Himalayas in West Bengal, the Nilgiri Mountain Railway, a 1,000 mm (3 ft 3+38 in) metre gauge rack railway in the Nilgiri Hills in Tamil Nadu and the Kalka-Shimla Railway, a 762 mm (2 ft 6 in) narrow-gauge railway in the Siwalik Hills in Himachal Pradesh. In the freight segment, IR ferries various commodities and fuels in industrial, consumer, and agricultural segments across the length and breadth of India. IR has historically subsidised the passenger segment with income from the freight business. As a result, freight services are unable to compete with other modes of transport on both cost and speed of delivery, leading to continuous erosion of market share. To counter this downward trend, IR has started new initiatives in freight segments including upgrading of existing goods sheds, attracting private capital to build multi-commodity multi-modal logistics terminals, changing container sizes, operating time-tabled freight trains, and tweaking with the freight pricing/product mix. In 1999, the Konkan Railway Corporation introduced the Roll on Roll off (RORO) service, a unique road-rail synergy system, on the section between Kolad in Maharashtra and Verna in Goa, which was extended up to Surathkal in Karnataka in 2004. The RORO service, the first of its kind in India, allowed trucks to be transported on flatbed trailers. It was highly popular, carrying about 110,000 trucks and bringing in about ₹ 740 million worth of earnings to the corporation until 2007. Perhaps the game-changer for IR in the freight segment are the new dedicated freight corridors that are expected to be completed by 2020. When fully implemented, the new corridors, spanning around 3300 km, could support hauling of trains up to 1.5 km in length with 32.5-ton axle-load at speeds of 100 kilometres per hour (62 mph). Also, they will free-up capacity on dense passenger routes and will allow IR to run more trains at higher speeds. Additional corridors are being planned to augment the freight infrastructure in the country.

Commuter rail transport In many Indian metropolitan regions, rail is the more efficient and affordable mode of public transport for daily commute. Examples of types of services include long-established local or suburban rail services in cities such as Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai, the century-old tram service in Kolkata, the more recent metro service in Kolkata, Delhi and Chennai and Monorail feeder service in Mumbai.

Suburban rail The Mumbai Suburban Railway was the first rail system in India, which began its services in Mumbai in 1853, transporting 6.3 million passengers daily and has the highest passenger density in the world. The Kolkata Suburban Railway was established in 1854, and the Chennai Suburban Railway in 1931. The operational suburban rail systems in India are in Mumbai Suburban Railway, Kolkata Suburban Railway, Chennai Suburban Railway, Lucknow-Kanpur Suburban Railway, Delhi Suburban Railway, Pune Suburban Railway, Hyderabad Multi-Modal Transport System, Barabanki-Lucknow Suburban Railway and Karwar railway division. Other planned systems are Bengaluru Suburban Railway, Ahmedabad Suburban Railway and Coimbatore Suburban Railway.

Mass rapid transit system The Chennai MRTS, which began services in 1995, remains the country's first and only mass rapid transit rail. Although distinct from the Chennai Suburban Railway, the MRTS remains integrated in a wider urban rail network.

Metro The first modern rapid transit in India is the Kolkata Metro which started its operations in 1984 as the 17th Zone of the Indian Railways. The Delhi Metro in New Delhi is India's second conventional metro and began operations in 2002. The Namma Metro in Bengaluru began operations in 2011 as India's third operational rapid transit system. The operational systems are Kolkata Metro, Delhi Metro, Bengaluru Metro, Gurgaon Metro, Mumbai Metro, Jaipur Metro, Chennai Metro, Kochi Metro, Lucknow Metro, Nagpur Metro, Noida Metro, Hyderabad Metro, Kanpur Metro, Ahmedabad Metro, Pune Metro, Navi Mumbai Metro, Agra Metro and Ahmedabad Metro, and Patna Metro. The under implementation systems are Varanasi Metro, Madurai Metro, Vijayawada Metro, Meerut Metro, Guwahati Metro, Chandigarh Metro, Bhopal Metro, Kozhikode Light Metro, Indore Metro, Thiruvananthapuram Metro, Coimbatore Metro, Visakhapatnam Metro, Surat Metro, Jammu Metro, Srinagar Metro, Greater Gwalior Metro, Jabalpur Metro and Greater Nashik Metro. India now operates over 900 km of metro rail across more than 15 cities, making it the third-largest urban rapid transit network in the world, after China and the United States. With over 900 km more under active construction or approved, India is witnessing one of the fastest metro rail expansions globally, reflecting the country's commitment to modern, sustainable urban transport.

Monorail Monorail is generally considered as a feeder system for metro trains in India. In 2004, monorail was first proposed for Kolkata. But, later the idea was put on hold due to lack of funds and infeasibility. The Mumbai Monorail, which started in 2014, is the first operational monorail network in India (excluding the Skybus Metro) since the Patiala State Monorail Trainways closed in 1927. Monorail systems were also planned in Chennai, Kolkata, Allahabad, Bengaluru, Delhi, Indore, Kanpur, Navi Mumbai, Patna, Pune, Ahmedabad, Aizawl, Bhubaneswar, Jodhpur, Kota, Nagpur and Nashik.

Tram In addition to trains, trams were introduced in many cities in the late 19th century, though almost all of these have been phased out. The trams in Kolkata is currently the only tram system in the country.

International links Rail links between India and neighbouring countries are not well-developed. Bangladesh is connected by a biweekly train, the Maitree Express that runs from Kolkata to Dhaka and a weekly train, the Bandhan Express that runs from Kolkata to Khulna. Two rail links to Nepal exist-passenger services between Jaynagar and Bijalpura, and freight services between Raxaul and Birganj. No rail link exists with Myanmar but a railway line is to be built through from Jiribam (in Manipur) to Tamu through Imphal and Moreh. The construction of this missing link, as per the feasibility study conducted by the Ministry of External Affairs through RITES Ltd, is estimated to cost ₹29.41 billion (US\$350 million). An 18 km railway link with Bhutan is being constructed from Hashimara in West Bengal to Toribari in Bhutan. No rail link exists with either China or Sri Lanka.

High-speed rail India does not have any railways classified as high-speed rail (HSR), which have operational speeds in excess of 200 km/h (120 mph). Prior to the 2014 general election, the major national parties (Indian National Congress and Bharatiya Janata Party) pledged to introduce high-speed rail. The INC pledged to connect "all of India's million-plus cities by high-speed rail." Later, the BJP, which won the election, promised to build the Diamond Quadrilateral project, which would connect the cities of Chennai, Delhi, Kolkata, and Mumbai via high-speed rail. This project was approved as a priority for the new government in the incoming prime

minister's speech. Construction of one kilometer of high speed railway track will cost ₹1 billion (US\$12 million) - ₹1.4 billion (US\$17 million), which is 10-14 times higher than the construction of standard railway. Indian government approved the choice of Japan to build India's first high-speed railway. The planned rail would run some 500 km (310 mi) between Mumbai and the western city of Ahmedabad, at a top speed of 320 km/h (200 mph). Under the proposal, construction was expected to begin in 2017 and be completed in 2023. It would cost about ₹980 billion (US\$12 billion) and be financed by a low-interest loan from Japan. India will use the wheel-based 300 km/h HSR technology, instead of new maglev 600 km/h technology of Japan used in Chūō Shinkansen. India is expected to have its first HSR line operational from 2026 onwards.

Light rail Like monorail, light rail is also considered as a feeder system for the metro systems. The planned systems are Kolkata Light Rail Transit and Delhi Light Rail Transit.

Aerial ropeways Parvatmala (literally "mountain garland scheme") ropeway network in India is a public transportation system where cabins, gondolas or open chairs are hauled above the ground with the help of cables. It is world's largest ropeway project, envisages spending ₹1,250 billion (US\$15 billion) in public-private partnership (PPP) mode over five years till 2030 to build 200 new ropeway projects of more than 1200 km length, which will decongest the traffic in narrow roads of big cities and provide cheaper connectivity in mountainous and touristy areas. Since 30% of India is covered by mountains, the ropeways are specially useful in mountainous areas, where it is difficult to build roads or railway, as lower cost and higher Return on investment (ROI) projects.

Airways Directorate General of Civil Aviation is the national regulatory body for the aviation industry. It is controlled by the Ministry of Civil Aviation. The ministry also controls aviation related autonomous organisations like the Airports Authority of India (AAI), Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS), Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Uran Akademi and Public Sector Undertakings including Pawan Hans Helicopters Limited and Hindustan Aeronautics Limited. Air India is India's national flag carrier, having merged with Indian Airlines in 2011 and plays a major role in connecting India with the rest of the world. IndiGo, Air India, Air India Express, Akasa and Spicejet are the major carriers in order of their market share. These airlines connect more than 80 cities across India and also operate overseas routes after the liberalisation of Indian aviation. Several other foreign airlines connect Indian cities with other major cities across the globe. However, a large section of country's air transport potential remains untapped, even though the Mumbai-Delhi air corridor was ranked the world's tenth busiest route by Amadeus in 2012.

Airports While there are 346 civilian airfields in India - 253 with paved runways and 93 with unpaved runways, only 132 were classified as "airports" as of November 2014. Of these, Indira Gandhi International Airport in Delhi is the busiest in the country. The operations of the major airports in India have been privatised over the past five years and this has resulted in better equipped and cleaner airports. The terminals have either been refurbished or expanded. India also has 33 "ghost airports," which were built in an effort to make air travel more accessible for those in remote regions but are now non-operational due to a lack of demand. The Jaisalmer Airport in Rajasthan, for example, was completed in 2013 and was expected to host 300,000 passengers a year but has yet to see any commercial flights take off. Despite the number of non-operational airports, India is currently planning on constructing another 200 "low-cost" airports over the next 20 years.

Heliports As of 2021, there are 45 heliports in India. India also has the world's highest helipad at the Siachen Glacier at a height of 6,400 m (21,000 ft) above mean sea level. Pawan Hans Limited is a public sector

company that provides helicopter services to ONGC to its off-shore locations, and also to various State Governments in India, particularly in North-east India.

Water India has a coastline of 7,517 km (4,671 mi), and thus ports are the main centres of trade. India also has an extensive network of inland waterways.

Ports and shipping In India, about 96% of the foreign trade by quantity and 70% by value takes place through the ports. Mumbai Port & JNPT(Navi Mumbai) handles 70% of maritime trade in India. There are twelve major ports:Navi Mumbai, Mumbai, Chennai, Ennore, Thoothukudi, Kochi, Kolkata (including Haldia), Paradip, Visakhapatnam, New Mangaluru, Mormugao and Kandla. Other than these, there are 187 minor and intermediate ports, 43 of which handle cargo. Maritime transportation in India is managed by the Shipping Corporation of India, a government-owned company that also manages offshore and other marine transport infrastructure in the country. It owns and operates about 35% of Indian tonnage and operates in practically all areas of shipping business servicing both national and international trades. The only Indian state with three ports is Tamil Nadu, they are Ennore, Chennai and Tuticorin. It has a fleet of 79 ships of 2,750,000 GT (4.8 million DWT) and also manages 53 research, survey and support vessels of 120,000 GT (060,000 DWT) on behalf of various government departments and other organisations. Personnel are trained at the Maritime Training Institute in Mumbai, a branch of the World Maritime University, which was set up in 1987. The corporation also operates in Malta and Iran through joint ventures. The distinction between major and minor ports is not based on the amount of cargo handled. The major ports are managed by port trusts which are regulated by the central government. They come under the purview of the Major Port Trusts Act, 1963. The minor ports are regulated by the respective state governments and many of these ports are private ports or captive ports. The total amount of traffic handled at the major ports in 2005-2006 was 382.33 Mt.

Inland Waterways India has an extensive network of inland waterways in the form of rivers, canals, backwaters and creeks. The total navigable length is 14,500 kilometres (9,000 mi), out of which about 5,200 km (3,231 mi) of river and 485 km (301 mi) of canals can be used by mechanised crafts. Freight transport by waterways is highly underutilised in India compared to other large countries. The total cargo moved by inland waterways is just 0.15% of the total inland traffic in India, compared to the corresponding figures of 20% for Germany and 32% for Bangladesh. Cargo that is transported in an organised manner is confined to a few waterways in Goa, West Bengal, Assam and Kerala. The Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) is the statutory authority in charge of the waterways in India. It does the function of building the necessary infrastructure in these waterways, surveying the economic feasibility of new projects and also administration and regulation. The following waterways have been declared as National Waterways:

National Waterway 1: Prayagraj-Haldia stretch of the Ganga - Bhagirathi - Hooghly River system with a total length of 1,620 kilometres (1,010 mi) on 27 October 1986. National Waterway 2: Saidiya-Dhubri stretch of the Brahmaputra River system with a total length of 891 kilometres (554 mi) in 26 Oct 1988. National Waterway 3: Kollam-Kottappuram stretch of the West Coast Canal along with Champakara and Udyogmandal canals, with a total length of 205 kilometres (127 mi) in 1 Feb 1991. National Waterway 4: Bhadrachalam-Rajahmundry and Wazirabad-Vijaywada stretch of the Krishna-Godavari river system along with the Kakinada-Puducherry canal network, with a total length of 1,095 km (680 mi) in 24 Nov 2008. National Waterway 5: Mangalgadi-Paradeep and Talcher-Dhamara stretch of the Mahanadi-Brahmani river system along with the East Coast Canal, with a total length of 623 km (387 mi) in 24 Nov 2008.

Seaplane India will soon have around ten Seaplane in operation, which are expected to be deployed by private as well as public operators, global aerospace major De Havilland Canada. At present, no seaplanes are operating in the country.

Pipelines Oil and gas industry in India imports 82% of its oil needs and aims to bring that down to 67% by 2022 by replacing it with local exploration, renewable energy and indigenous ethanol fuel (c. Jan 2018).

Length of pipelines for crude oil is 20,000 km (12,427 mi). Length of Petroleum products pipeline is 15,000 kilometres (9,300 mi).

Cable Cable transport, commonly known as Ropeways in India, are mostly located in mountainous areas such as in Kashmir. Some of them are also located in amusement parks such Nicco Park and Science City in Kolkata.

Logistics Logistics in India ranking moved up to 35th place in 2016 from 54th in 2014 on World Bank's Global Logistics Performance Index. Government strategy aims to raise the share of global trade in India's GDP (US\$2.7 trillion in FY 2017-18) to 40%, including half of it (20% of GDP) from exports (c. Jan 2019). Cost of logistics in India is 14% of GDP, which is higher than the developed nations, and government reforms aim to bring it down to 10% of GDP by 2022 (c. Jan 2018). Ministry of Commerce and Industry has created a new dedicated centralised Logistics division in collaboration with Singapore and Japan to handle the logistics which was earlier handled by several different ministries, such as railways, roads, shipping and aviation. To boost exports, each state will have exports and logistic policy and Nodal officers will be appointed at district level (c. Jan 2018). There are 64 transactions and 37 government agencies in the end-to-end production-to-export process. To further improve the ranking, improve speed of logistics, ease of doing business and reduce the cost of logistics, India is creating a "common online integrated logistics e-marketplace portal" that will cover all transactions in production and export, connect buyers with logistics service providers and government agencies such as the customs department Icegate system, Port Community Systems, Sea and Air Port terminals, Shipping lines, Railways, etc. (c. Jan 2018). As part of the US\$125 billion port-led development project Sagarmala, the government will define the regulatory framework for the Indian logistics operational standards by India's 300 dry ports logistics parks (inland container depots or ICDs) to the top 10 logistics international best practices nations to boost exports, remove supply chain bottlenecks, reduce transaction costs, optimise logistics mix, set up new hub-and-spoke dry ports (c. January 2018). To reduce the logistics costs by 10% and CO2 emissions by 12%, the government is also developing 35 new "Multimodal Logistics Parks" (MMLPs) on 36 ring roads, which will facilitate 50% of the freight moved in India. Land has been earmarked and pre-feasibility studies are underway for six of these MMLPs (c. May 2017). Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and government will organise an annual national logistics convention. Major shippers include Container Corporation of India and Transport Corporation of India, and Logistics Management magazine is one of the industry publications.

Modernisation In 1998, the Supreme Court of India published a directive that specified the date of April 2001 as deadline to replace or convert all buses, three-wheelers and taxis in Delhi to compressed natural gas. The Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation was the first state transport undertaking in India to utilise bio-fuels and ethanol-blended fuels. KSRTC took an initiative to do research in alternative fuel forms by experimenting with various alternatives - blending diesel with biofuels such as honge, palm, sunflower, groundnut, coconut and sesame. In 2009, the corporation decided to promote the use of biofuel buses. In 2017, the government

announced that by 2030, only electric vehicles would be sold in the country. It also announced that by 2022 all trains would be electric. In March 2020, the Government of India temporarily suspended all passenger rail, metro and bus services due to COVID-19

See also Multimodal and international North-South Transport Corridor Ashgabat Agreement, a multimodal transport agreement signed by India, Oman, Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, for creating an international transport and transit corridor facilitating transportation of goods between Central Asia and the Persian Gulf. Similar rail development Dedicated freight corridors in India Future of rail transport in India, rail development Similar roads development Bharatmala Diamond Quadrilateral, subsumed in Bharatmala Golden Quadrilateral, completed national road development connectivity older scheme India-China Border Roads, subsumed in Bharatmala Expressways of India Setu Bharatam, river road bridge development in India Similar ports and river transport development List of national waterways in India Sagar Mala project, national water port development connectivity scheme Similar air transport development Guided missiles of India List of ISRO missions Indian Human Spaceflight Programme UDAN, national airport development connectivity scheme List of ISRO missions General Traffic collisions in India Urban rail transit in India Aerial lift in India

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Tourism in India

Tourism in India is 4.6% of the country's gross domestic product (GDP). Unlike other sectors, tourism is not a priority sector for the Government of India. The World Travel and Tourism Council calculated that tourism generated **■13.2 lakh crore** (US\$160 billion) or 5.8% of India's GDP and supported 32.1 million jobs in 2021. Even though, these numbers were lower than the pre-pandemic figures; the country's economy witnessed a significant growth in 2021 after the massive downturn during 2020. The sector is predicted to grow at an annual rate of 7.8% to **■33.8 lakh crore** (US\$400 billion) by 2031 (7.2% of GDP). India has established itself as the 5th largest global travel healthcare destination with an estimated market size of around \$9 billion in 2019, out of the total global travel healthcare industry of \$44.8 billion(2019). In 2014, 184,298 foreign patients travelled to India to seek medical treatment. According to the Ministry of Tourism, over 6.19 million and 1.52 million foreign tourists arrived in India in 2022 and 2021 respectively compared to 10.93 million in 2019, representing a -44% degrowth. In 2022, Gujarat Tops India in Foreign Tourism with 20.17% Share in 2022. Gujarat rose as a global tourism hotspot continues with over 15.40 lakh tourists visiting in 2023. In 2023, 2509.63 million Domestic Tourist Visits (DTV's) were recorded (provisionally) compared to 1731.01 Million DTV's in 2022. The World Economic Forum's Travel and Tourism Development Index 2021, which replaced its previous Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report, ranks India 54th out of 117 countries overall. The last edition of the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report, published in 2019, had ranked India 34th out of 140 countries overall. The report ranked the price competitiveness of India's tourism sector 13th out of 140 countries. It mentioned that India has quite good air transport infrastructure (ranked 33rd), particularly given the country's stage of development, and reasonable ground and port infrastructure (ranked 28th). The country also scored high on natural resources (ranked 14th), and cultural resources and business travel (ranked 8th). The World Tourism Organization reported that India's receipts from tourism during 2012 ranked 16th in the world, and 7th among Asian and Pacific countries. The Ministry of Tourism designs national policies for the development and promotion of tourism. In the process, the Ministry consults and collaborates with other stakeholders in the sector including various central ministries/agencies, state governments, union territories and private sector representatives. Concerted efforts are being made to promote niche tourism products such as rural, cruise, medical and eco-tourism. The Ministry of Tourism maintains the Incredible India campaign focused on promoting tourism in India.

Visa policy of India India requires citizens of most countries to hold a valid passport and apply for a travel visa at their local Indian embassy or consulate before their visit. Travellers can apply directly by mail or in person, or through their local travel services company. In 2014, India implemented an online method for citizens of 156 countries to apply for an e-Tourist Visa. Nationals of Bhutan, Maldives, and Nepal do not require a travel visa to enter India. Citizens of Afghanistan, Argentina, Bangladesh, DPR Korea, Jamaica, Maldives, Mauritius, Mongolia, Nepal, South Africa and Uruguay are not required to pay a fee when obtaining an Indian visa. During the pandemic year 2020, India had access to just 23 countries for travel, whereas now the Indian passport holders can travel visa-free to 60 countries. A Protected Area Permit (PAP) is required to enter the states of Nagaland and Sikkim and some parts of the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur, Mizoram, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand. A Restricted Area Permit (RAP) is required to enter the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and parts of Sikkim. Special permits are needed to visit the Lakshadweep islands.

e-Tourist Visa As a measure to boost tourism, the Indian Government implemented a new visa policy in November 2014, allowing tourists and business visitors to obtain a "visa on arrival" at 28 international airports, by acquiring an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) online before arrival, without having to visit an Indian consulate or visa centre. In April 2015, the "visa on arrival" scheme was renamed "e-Tourist Visa" (or "e-TV") to avoid confusion. The e-Tourist Visa facility requires a tourist to apply online on a secure Government of India website, at least four to thirty days before the date of travel. If approved, the visitor must print and carry the approved visa with their travel documents. The visa allows holders of an ETA to enter and stay anywhere in India for a period of ninety days except for citizens of US, UK, Japan and Canada. Citizens of these countries can stay for up to 180 days at a time. an ETA can be obtained twice in a single calendar year. India first introduced its "visa on arrival" facility on 27 November 2014, soon expanding it to citizens of 74 countries. On 30 July 2015, the facility was extended to China, Macau and Hong Kong. On 15 August 2015, the facility was further extended to citizens of 36 more countries. The facility should eventually be expanded to about 180 countries. As a result of the new visa policy, 56,477 tourists arrived on an e-Tourist Visa during October 2015, compared with 2,705 tourist arrivals during October 2014 (just before the facility was introduced), representing a 1987.9% increase.

Statistics Domestic tourists During 2021, the number of Domestic Tourist Visits to the States/UTs was 67,76,32,981(677 million approx.) as compared to 61,02,16,157(610 million approx.) in 2020 registering a growth of 11.05%.

Foreign tourist arrivals and foreign exchange earnings Foreign and domestic tourist visits by State World Heritage Sites There are 42 World Heritage Sites in India that are recognised by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as of August 2023.

Responsible tourism in India **Elephant camps** Riding elephants is a popular tourist activity in India. While the total number of elephants used for tourism in India is relatively low compared to other Asian countries (350 in India in 2017 compared to almost 2,200 in Thailand), tourists will still have opportunities to ride elephants at historic sites and watch captive elephants perform in sports and shows and religious rituals. In early 2019, several prominent responsible tourism businesses including Responsible Travel and Intrepid Travel stopped selling tours including elephant rides citing reasons of animal cruelty and abuse. Later in 2019, The Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA) updated its animal welfare guidelines, labelling elephant riding as unacceptable.

See also Economy of India Aviation in India Fishing in India Tourism in India by state Aerial lift in India

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Indian cuisine

Indian cuisine consists of a variety of regional and traditional cuisines native to the Indian subcontinent. Given the diversity in soil, climate, culture, ethnic groups, and occupations, these cuisines vary substantially and use locally available ingredients. Indian food is also heavily influenced by religion, in particular Hinduism and Sikhism, cultural choices and traditions. Historical events such as invasions, trade relations, and colonialism have played a role in introducing certain foods to India. The Columbian discovery of the New World brought a number of new vegetables and fruits. A number of these such as potatoes, tomatoes, chillies, peanuts, and guava have become staples in many regions of India. Indian cuisine has shaped the history of international relations; the spice trade between India and Europe was the primary catalyst for Europe's Age of Discovery. Spices were bought from India and traded around Europe and Asia. Indian cuisine has influenced other cuisines across the world, especially those from Europe (Britain in particular), the Middle East, Southern African, East Africa, Southeast Asia, North America, Mauritius, Fiji, Oceania, and the Caribbean. World Wildlife Fund (WWF)'s Living Planet Report released on 10 October 2024 emphasised India's food consumption pattern as the most sustainable among the big economies (G20 countries).

History Indian cuisine reflects an 8,000-year history of various groups and cultures interacting with the Indian subcontinent, leading to diversity of flavours and regional cuisines found in modern-day India. Later, trade with British and Portuguese influence added to the already diverse Indian cuisine.

Prehistory and Indus Valley Civilisation See also: Meluhha, Indus-Mesopotamia relations, and Indian maritime history After 9000 BCE, a first period of indirect contacts between Fertile Crescent and Indus Valley civilisations seems to have occurred as a consequence of the Neolithic Revolution and the diffusion of agriculture. Wheat and barley were first grown around 7000 BCE, when agriculture spread from the Fertile Crescent to the Indus Valley. Sesame and humped cattle were domesticated in the local farming communities. Mehrgarh is one of the earliest sites with evidence of farming and herding in South Asia. By 3000 BCE, turmeric, cardamom, black pepper and mustard were harvested in India. From Around 2350 BCE the evidence for imports from the Indus to Ur in Mesopotamia have been found, as well as Clove heads which are thought to originate from the Moluccas in Maritime Southeast Asia were found in a 2nd millennium BC site in Terqa. Akkadian Empire records mention timber, carnelian and ivory as being imported from Meluhha by Meluhhan ships, Meluhha being generally considered as the Mesopotamian name for the Indus Valley Civilisation.

Vedic age The ancient Hindu text Mahabharata mentions rice and vegetable cooked together, and the word "pulao" or "pallao" is used to refer to the dish in ancient Sanskrit works, such as Yājñalkya Smṛiti. Ayurveda, ancient Indian system of wellness, deals with holistic approach to the wellness, and it includes food, dhyana (meditation) and yoga.

Antiquity Early diet in India mainly consisted of legumes, vegetables, fruits, grains, dairy products, and honey. Staple foods eaten today include a variety of lentils (dal), whole-wheat flour (atta), rice, and pearl millet (bajra), which has been cultivated in the Indian subcontinent since 6200 BCE. The Sangam literature, which is specific to South India, mentions that fish, crab, forest cattle, pork, monitor lizard, and poultry were consumed in the region together with a variety of millets, sago, sugarcane, dairy products, honey, and rice. Over time, segments of the population embraced vegetarianism during the Bhakti movement while an equitable climate

permitted a variety of fruits, vegetables, and grains to be grown throughout the year. A food classification system that categorised any item as saatvic, raajasic, or taamsic developed in Yoga tradition. The Bhagavad Gita proscribes certain dietary practices (chapter 17, verses 8-10). Consumption of beef is taboo, due to cows being considered sacred in Hinduism. Beef is generally not eaten by Hindus in India except for Kerala, parts of southern Tamil Nadu and the north-east.

Ingredients mentioned in ancient Indian scripture While many ancient Indian recipes have been lost in history, one can look at ancient texts to see what was eaten in ancient and pre-historic India.

Barley-(known as Yava in both Vedic and Classical Sanskrit) is mentioned many times in Rigveda and other Indian scriptures as one of the principal grains in ancient India Betel leaf-primary use is as a wrapper for the chewing of areca nut or tobacco, where it is mainly used to add flavour; may also be used in cooking, usually raw, for its peppery taste Breadfruit-fritters called jeev kadge phodi in Konkani or kadachakka varuthath in Malayalam are a local delicacy in coastal Karnataka and Kerala Chickpeas-popular dishes are made with chickpea flour, such as mirchi bajji and mirapakaya bajji Curd-a traditional yogurt or fermented milk product, originating from the Indian subcontinent, usually prepared from cow's milk, and sometimes buffalo milk, or goat milk Figs-cultivated from Afghanistan to Portugal, also grown in Pithoragarh in the Kumaon hills of India; from the 15th century onwards, also grown in areas including Northern Europe and the New World Ghee-a class of clarified butter that originated in ancient India, commonly used in the Indian subcontinent, Middle-Eastern cuisine, traditional medicine, and religious rituals Grape wine-first-known mention of grape-based wines in India is from the late 4th-century BC writings of Chanakya Honey-the spiritual and supposed therapeutic use of honey in ancient India was documented in both the Vedas and the Ayurveda texts Mango-the Jain goddess Ambika is traditionally represented as sitting under a mango tree Mustard-brown mustard is a spice that was cultivated in the Indus Valley civilisation and is one of the important spices used in the Indian subcontinent today Pomegranate-in some Hindu traditions, the pomegranate (Hindi: anar) symbolises prosperity and fertility, and is associated with both Bhoomidevi (the earth goddess) and Lord Ganesha (the one fond of the many-seeded fruit) Rice-cultivated in the Indian subcontinent from as early as 5,000 BC Rice cake-quite a variety are available Rose apple-mainly eaten as a fruit and also used to make pickles (chambakka achar) Saffron-almost all saffron grows in a belt from Spain in the west to Kashmir in the east Salt-considered to be a very auspicious substance in Hinduism and is used in particular religious ceremonies like house-warmings and weddings; in Jainism, devotees lay an offering of raw rice with a pinch of salt before a deity to signify their devotion, and salt is sprinkled on a person's cremated remains before the ashes are buried Sesame oil-popular in Asia, especially in Korea, China, and the South Indian states of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu, where its widespread use is similar to that of olive oil in the Mediterranean Sorghum-commonly called jwaarie, jowar, jola, or jondhalaa, sorghum is one of the staple sources of nutrition Sugar-produced in the Indian subcontinent since ancient times, its cultivation spread from there into modern-day Afghanistan through the Khyber Pass Sugarcane-the earliest known production of crystalline sugar began in northern India; the earliest evidence of sugar production comes from ancient Sanskrit and Pali texts Turmeric-used widely as a spice in South Asian and Middle Eastern cooking

Middle Ages to the 16th century During the Middle Ages, several Indian dynasties were predominant, including the Gupta dynasty. Travel to India during this time introduced new cooking methods and products to the region, including tea. India was later invaded by tribes from Central Asian cultures, which led to the emergence of Mughlai cuisine, a mix of Indian and Central Asian cuisine. Hallmarks include seasonings such as saffron.

Colonial Period The Portuguese and British during their rule introduced cooking techniques such as baking, and foods from the New World and Europe. The new-world vegetables popular in cuisine from the Indian subcontinent include maize, tomato, potato, sweet potatoes, peanuts, squash, and chilli. Most New World vegetables such as sweet potatoes, potatoes, Amaranth, peanuts and cassava based Sago are allowed on Hindu fasting days. Cauliflower was introduced by the British in 1822. In the late 18th/early 19th century, an autobiography of a Scottish Robert Lindsay mentions a Sylheti man called Saeed Ullah cooking a curry for Lindsay's family. This is possibly the oldest record of Indian cuisine in the United Kingdom.

Ingredients Staple foods of Indian cuisine include pearl millet (bajra), rice, whole-wheat flour (atta), and a variety of lentils, such as masoor (most often red lentils), tuar (pigeon peas), urad (black gram), and moong (mung beans). Lentils may be used whole, dehusked-for example, dhuli moong or dhuli urad-or split. Split lentils, or dal, are used extensively. Some pulses, such as channa or cholae (chickpeas), rajma (kidney beans), and lobiya (black-eyed peas) are very common, especially in the northern regions. Channa and moong are also processed into flour (besan). Many Indian dishes are cooked in vegetable oil, but peanut oil is popular in northern and western India, mustard oil in eastern India, and coconut oil along the western coast, especially in Kerala and parts of southern Tamil Nadu. Gingelly (sesame) oil is common in the south since it imparts a fragrant, nutty aroma. In recent decades, sunflower, safflower, cottonseed, and soybean oils have become popular across India. Hydrogenated vegetable oil, known as Vanaspati ghee, is another popular cooking medium. Butter-based ghee, or deshi ghee, is used commonly. Many types of meat are used for Indian cooking, but chicken and mutton tend to be the most commonly consumed meats. Fish and beef consumption are prevalent in some parts of India, but they are not widely consumed except for coastal areas, as well as the north east.

The most important and frequently used spices and flavourings in Indian cuisine are whole or powdered chilli pepper (mirch, introduced by the Portuguese from Mexico in the 16th century), black mustard seed (sarso), cardamom (elaichi), cumin (jeera), turmeric (haldi), asafoetida (hing), ginger (adrak), coriander (dhania), and garlic (lasoon). One popular spice mix is garam masala, a powder that typically includes seven dried spices in a particular ratio, including black cardamom, cinnamon (dalchini), clove (laung), cumin (jeera), black peppercorns, coriander seeds and anise star.. Each culinary region has a distinctive garam masala blend-individual chefs may also have their own. The spices chosen for a dish are freshly ground and then fried in hot oil or ghee to create a paste. The process is called bhuna, the name also being used for a type of curry. There are other spice blends which are popular in various regions. Panch phoron is a spice blend which is popular in eastern India. Goda masala is a sweet spice mix which is popular in Maharashtra. Some leaves commonly used for flavouring include bay leaves (tejpat), coriander leaves, fenugreek (methi) leaves, and mint leaves. The use of curry leaves and roots for flavouring is typical of Gujarati and South Indian cuisine. Sweet dishes are often seasoned with cardamom, saffron, nutmeg, and rose petal essences.

Regional cuisines Cuisine differs across India's diverse regions as a result of variation in local culture, geographical location (proximity to sea, desert, or mountains), and economics. It also varies seasonally, depending on which fruits and vegetables are ripe.

Andaman and Nicobar Islands Seafood plays a major role in the cuisine of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Staples of the diet of the Indigenous Andamanese traditionally include roots, honey, fruits, meat, and fish, obtained by hunting and gathering. Some insects were also eaten as delicacies. Immigration from mainland of India, however, has resulted in variations in the cuisine.

Andhra Pradesh The cuisine of Andhra Pradesh belongs to the two Telugu-speaking regions of Rayalaseema and Coastal Andhra and is part of Telugu cuisine. The food of Andhra Pradesh is known for its heavy use of spices, and the use of tamarind. Seafood is common in the coastal region of the state. Rice is the staple food (as is with all South Indian states) eaten with lentil preparations such as pappu (lentils) and pulusu (stew) and spicy vegetables or curries. In Andhra, leafy greens or vegetables such as bottle-gourd and eggplant are usually added to dal. Pickles are an essential part of the local cuisine; popular among those are mango-based pickles such as avakaya and maagaya, gongura (a pickle made from sorrel leaves), usirikaya (gooseberry or amla), nimmakaya (lime), and tomato pickle. Perugu (yogurt) is a common addition to meals, as a way of tempering spiciness. Breakfast items include dosa, pesarattu (mung bean dosa), vada, and idli.

Arunachal Pradesh The staple food of Arunachal Pradesh is rice, along with fish, meat, and leaf vegetables. Native tribes of Arunachal are meat eaters and use fish, eggs, beef, chicken, pork, and mutton to make their dishes. Many varieties of rice are used. Boiled rice cakes wrapped in leaves are a popular snack. Thukpa is a kind of noodle soup common among the Monpa tribe of the region. Lettuce is the most common vegetable, usually prepared by boiling with ginger, coriander, and green chillies. Apong or rice beer made from fermented rice or millet is a popular beverage in Arunachal Pradesh and is consumed as a refreshing drink.

Assam Assamese cuisine is a mixture of different indigenous styles, with considerable regional variation and some external influences. Although it is known for its limited use of spices, Assamese cuisine has strong flavours from its use of endemic herbs, fruits, and vegetables served fresh, dried, or fermented. Rice is the staple food item and a huge variety of endemic rice varieties, including several varieties of sticky rice are a part of the cuisine in Assam. Fish, generally freshwater varieties, are widely eaten. Other non-vegetarian items include chicken, duck, squab, snails, silkworms, insects, goat, pork, venison, turtle, monitor lizard, etc. The region's cuisine involves simple cooking processes, mostly barbecuing, steaming, or boiling. Spices are not fried before use in the cuisine of Assam. A traditional meal in Assam begins with a khar, a class of dishes named after the main ingredient and ends with a tenga, a sour dish. Homebrewed rice beer or rice wine is served before a meal. The food is usually served in bell metal utensils. Paan, the practice of chewing betel nut, generally concludes a meal.

West Bengal Mughal cuisine is a universal influencer in the Bengali palate, and has introduced Persian and Islamic foods to the region, as well as a number of more elaborate methods of preparing food, like marination using ghee. Fish, meat (chicken, goat meat), egg, rice, milk, and sugar all play crucial parts in Bengali cuisine. Bengali cuisine can be subdivided into four different types of dishes, charbya (চৰ্ভ্যা), or food that is chewed, such as rice or fish; cho■ya, or food that is sucked, such as ambal and tak; lehya (লেহ্যা), or foods that are meant to be licked, like chutney; and peya (পেয়া), which includes drinks, mainly milk.

During the 19th century, many Odia-speaking cooks were employed in Bengal, which led to the transfer of several food items between the two regions. Bengali cuisine is the only traditionally developed multi-course tradition from the Indian subcontinent that is analogous in structure to the modern service la russe style of French cuisine, with food served course-wise rather than all at once. Bengali cuisine differs according to regional tastes, such as the emphasis on the use of chilli pepper in the Chittagong district of Bangladesh. However, across all its varieties, there is predominant use of mustard oil along with large amounts of spices. The cuisine is known for subtle flavours with an emphasis on fish, meat, vegetables, lentils, and rice. Bread is also a common dish in Bengali cuisine, particularly a deep-fried version called luchi is popular. Fresh aquatic fish is one of its most distinctive features; Bengalis prepare fish in many ways, such as steaming, braising, or stewing in vegetables and sauces based on coconut milk or mustard. East Bengali food, which has a high

presence in West Bengal and Bangladesh, is much spicier than the West Bengali cuisine, and tends to use high amounts of chilli, and is one of the spiciest cuisines in India and the World. Shondesh and Rashogolla are popular dishes made of sweetened, finely ground fresh cheese. For the latter, West Bengal and neighbouring Odisha both claim to be the origin of dessert. Each state also has a geographical indication for their regional variety of rasgulla. The cuisine is also found in the state of Tripura and the Barak Valley of Assam.

Bihar Bihari cuisine may include litti chokha, a baked salted wheat-flour cake filled with sattu (baked chickpea flour) and some special spices, which is served with baigan bharta, made of roasted eggplant (brinjal) and tomatoes. Among meat dishes, meat saalan is a popular dish made of mutton or goat curry with cubed potatoes in garam masala. Dalpuri is another popular dish in Bihar. It is salted wheat-flour bread, filled with boiled, crushed, and fried gram pulses. Malpua is a popular sweet dish of Bihar, prepared by a mixture of maida, milk, bananas, cashew nuts, peanuts, raisins, sugar, water, and green cardamom. Another notable sweet dish of Bihar is balushahi, which is prepared by a specially treated combination of maida and sugar along with ghee, and the other worldwide famous sweet, khaja is made from flour, vegetable fat, and sugar, which is mainly used in weddings and other occasions. Silao near Nalanda is famous for its production. During the festival of Chhath, thekua, a sweet dish made of ghee, jaggery, and whole-meal flour, flavoured with aniseed, is made. Other food items that are quite prominent in Bihar are, Pittha, Aaloo Bhujia, Reshmi Kebab, Palwal ki mithai, and Puri Sabzi.

Chandigarh Chandigarh, the capital of Punjab and Haryana is a city of 20th-century origin with a cosmopolitan food culture mainly involving North Indian cuisine. People enjoy home-made recipes such as paratha, especially at breakfast, and other Punjabi foods like roti which is made from wheat, sweetcorn, or other glutenous flour with cooked vegetables or beans. Sarson da saag and dal makhani are well-known dishes among others. Popular snacks include gol gappa (known as panipuri in other places). It consists of a round, hollow puri, fried crisp and filled with a mixture of flavoured water, boiled and cubed potatoes, bengal gram beans, etc.

Chhattisgarh Chhattisgarh cuisine is unique in nature and not found in the rest of India, although the staple food is rice, like in much of the country. Many Chhattisgarhi people drink liquor brewed from the mahuwa flower palm wine (tadi in rural areas). Chhattisgarhi cuisines varies as per special occasions and festivals like Thethari and Khurmi, fara, gulgule bhajiya, chausela, chila, aaersa are prepared in regional festivals. The tribal people of the Bastar region of Chhattisgarh eat ancestral dishes such as mushrooms, bamboo pickle, bamboo vegetables, etc.

Dadra and Nagar Haveli The local cuisine resembles the cuisine of Gujarat. Ubadiyu is a local delicacy made of vegetables and beans with herbs. The common foods include rice, roti, vegetables, river fish, and crab. People also enjoy buttermilk and chutney made of different fruits and herbs.

Daman and Diu Daman and Diu is a union territory of India which, like Goa, was a former colonial possession of Portugal. Consequently, both native Gujarati food and traditional Portuguese food are common. Being a coastal region, the communities are mainly dependent on seafood. Normally, rotli and tea are taken for breakfast, rotla and saak for lunch, and chokha along with saak and curry are taken for dinner. Some of the dishes prepared on festive occasions include puri, lapsee, potaya, dudh-plag, and dhakanu. While alcohol is prohibited in the neighbouring state of Gujarat, drinking is common in Daman and Diu. Better known as the "pub" of Gujarat. All popular brands of alcohol are readily available.

Delhi Delhi was once the capital of the Mughal empire, and it became the birthplace of Mughlai cuisine. Delhi is noted for its street food. The Paranthewali Gali in Chandani Chowk is just one of the culinary landmarks for stuffed flatbread (parathas). Delhi has people from different parts of India, thus the city has different types of food traditions; its cuisine is influenced by the various cultures. Punjabi cuisine is common, due to the dominance of Punjabi communities. Delhi cuisine is actually an amalgam of different Indian cuisines modified in unique ways. This is apparent in the different types of street food available. Kababs, kachauri, chaat, Indian sweets, Indian ice cream (commonly called kulfi), and even Western food items like sandwiches and patties, are prepared in a style unique to Delhi and are quite popular.

Goa The area has a tropical climate, which means the spices and flavours are intense. Use of kokum is a distinct feature of the region's cuisine. Goan cuisine is mostly seafood and meat-based; the staple foods are rice and fish. Kingfish (vison or visvan) is the most common delicacy, and others include pomfret, shark, tuna, and mackerel; these are often served with coconut milk. Shellfish, including crabs, prawns, tiger prawns, lobster, squid, and mussels, are commonly eaten. The cuisine of Goa is influenced by its Hindu origins, 400 years of Portuguese colonialism, and modern techniques. Bread, introduced by the Portuguese, is very popular, and is an important part of the Goan breakfast, most frequently in the form of toast.

Gujarat Gujarati cuisine is primarily vegetarian. The typical Gujarati thali consists of roti (rotli in Gujarati), daal or kadhi, rice, sabzi/shaak, papad and chaas (buttermilk). Sabzi is a dish of different combinations of vegetables and spices which may be stir fried, spicy or sweet. Gujarati cuisine can vary widely in flavour and heat based on personal and regional tastes. North Gujarat, Kathiawad, Kachchh, and South Gujarat are the four major regions of Gujarati cuisine. Many Gujarati dishes are simultaneously sweet, salty (like handvo), and spicy. In mango season, keri no ras (fresh mango pulp) is often an integral part of the meal. Spices also vary seasonally. For example, garam masala is used much less in summer. Gujarati snacks include sev khamani, khakhra, dal vada, methi na bhajiya, khaman, bhakharwadi and more. Regular fasting, with diets limited to milk, dried fruit, and nuts, is a common practice,

Haryana Cattle being common in Haryana, dairy products are a common component of its cuisine. Specific regional dishes include kadhi, pakora, besan masala roti, bajra aloo roti, churma, kheer, bathua raita, methi gajar, singri ki sabzi, and tomato chutney. In the past, its staple diet included bajra khichdi, rabdi, onion chutney, and bajra ki roti. In non-vegetarian cuisine it includes kukad kadhni and chicken tikka masala. Lassi, sharbat, nimbu pani and lassi (a mixture of bajra flour and lassi) are three popular non-alcoholic beverages in Haryana. However, liquor stores are common there, which cater to a large number of truck drivers.

Himachal Pradesh The daily diet of Himachal people is similar to that of the rest of North India, including lentils, broth, rice, vegetables, and bread, although non-vegetarian cuisine is preferred. Some of the specialities of Himachal include sidu, patande, chukh, rajmah, and til chutney.

Jammu and Kashmir The cuisine of Jammu and Kashmir is from two regions of the state: Jammu division and Kashmir Valley. Kashmiri cuisine has evolved over hundreds of years. Its first major influence was the food of the Kashmiri Hindus and Buddhists. The cuisine was later influenced by the cultures which arrived with the invasion of Kashmir by Timur from the area of modern Uzbekistan. Subsequent influences have included the cuisines of Central Asia and the North Indian plains.

The most notable ingredient in Kashmiri cuisine is mutton, of which over 30 varieties are known. Wazwan is a multicourse meal in the Kashmiri tradition, the preparation of which is considered an art. Kashmiri pandit food is elaborate, and an important part of the Pandits' ethnic identity. Kashmiri pandit cuisine usually uses dahi (yogurt), oil, and spices such as turmeric, red chilli, cumin, ginger, and fennel, though they do not use onion and garlic. Biryanis are quite popular, and are the speciality of Kashmir. The Jammu region is famous for its sund panjeeri, patisa, rajma with rice and Kalari cheese. Dogri food includes ambal (sour pumpkin dish), khatta meat, kulthein di dal, dal chawal, maa da madra (black gram lentils in yogurt) and Uriya. Many types of pickles are made including mango, kasrod, and girgle. Street food is also famous which include various types of chaats, specially gol gappas, gulgule, chole bhature, rajma kulcha and dahi bhalla.

Jharkhand Staple foods in Jharkhand are rice, dal and vegetables. Famous dishes include chirka roti, pittha, malpua, dhuska, arsa roti and litti chokha. Local alcoholic drinks include handia, a rice beer, and mahua daru, made from flowers of the mahua tree (*Madhuca longifolia*).

Karnataka A number of dishes, such as idli, rava idli, Mysore masala dosa, etc., were invented here and have become popular beyond the state of Karnataka. Equally, varieties in the cuisine of Karnataka have similarities with its three neighbouring South Indian states, as well as the states of Maharashtra and Goa to its north. It is very common for the food to be served on a banana leaf, especially during festivals and functions. Karnataka cuisine can be very broadly divided into Mysore/Bangalore cuisine, North Karnataka cuisine, Udupi cuisine, Kodagu/Coorg cuisine, Karavali/coastal cuisine, and Saraswat cuisine. This cuisine covers a wide spectrum of food from pure vegetarian and vegan to meats like pork, and from savouries to sweets. Typical dishes include bisi bele bath, jolada rotti, badanekai yennegai, holige, kadubu, chapati, idli vada, ragi rotti, akki rotti, saaru, huli, kootu, vangibath, khara bath, kesari bhath, sajjige, neer dosa, mysoore, haal bai, chiroti, benne dose, majjige huli, ragi mudde, and uppittu. The Kodagu district is known for spicy pork curries, while coastal Karnataka specialises in seafood. Although the ingredients differ regionally, a typical Kannadiga oota (Kannadiga meal) is served on a banana leaf. The coastal districts of Dakshina Kannada and Udupi have slightly varying cuisines, which make extensive use of coconut in curries and frequently include seafood.

Kerala Contemporary Kerala food includes vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes. Fish and seafood play a major role in Kerala cuisine, as Kerala is a coastal state. An everyday Kerala meal in most households consists of rice with fish curry made of sardines, mackerel, seer fish, king fish, pomfret, prawns, shrimp, sole, anchovy, or parrotfish, (mussels, oysters, crabs, squid, scallops are not rare), and vegetable curry and stir-fried vegetables with or without coconut traditionally known as thoran or mizhukkupiratti. As Kerala has large number of inland water bodies, freshwater fish are also abundant, and part of regular meals. It is common in Kerala to have a breakfast with non-vegetarian dishes in restaurants, in contrast to other states in India. Chicken or mutton stews, lamb, chicken, beef, pork, egg curry, and fish curry with tapioca for breakfast are also widely enjoyed. Kerala cuisine reflects its rich trading heritage. Over time, various cuisines have blended with indigenous dishes, while foreign ones have been adapted to local tastes. Significant Arab, Syrian, Portuguese, Dutch, Jewish, and Middle Eastern influences exist in this region's cuisine.

Coconuts grow in abundance in Kerala, so grated coconut and coconut milk are commonly used for thickening and flavouring. Kerala's long coastline and numerous rivers have led to a strong fishing industry in the state, making seafood a common part of the meal. Starchy food like Rice and tapioca forms the major part of Kerala's staple food. Having been a major region of spice cultivation and trade for thousands of years, the spices like black pepper, cardamom, clove, ginger, cumin and cinnamon finds extensive use in Kerala cuisine. Kerala sadhya, an elaborate vegetarian banquet prepared for festivals and ceremonies. A full-course sadhya, which

consists of rice with about 20 different accompaniments and desserts is the ceremonial meal, eaten usually on celebrations such as marriages, Onam, Vishu, etc. and is served on a plantain leaf. Most of Kerala's Hindus, except its Brahmin community, eats fish, chicken, beef, pork, eggs, and mutton. The Brahmin are famed for their vegan cuisine, especially varieties of sambar and rasam. A thick vegetable stew popular in South and Central India called avial is believed to have originated in southern Kerala. The avial, eaten widely in the state, is an important vegetarian dish in Kerala sadya. In most Kerala households, a typical meal consists of rice served along with vegetables and fish or meat dishes. Kerala also has a variety of breakfast dishes like idli, dosa, appam, idiyappam, puttu, parotta and pathiri served with sambar, coconut chutney, mutta curry (egg curry), kadala (chickpea) curry, green peas, chicken curry, beef curry and mutton curry. The Muslim community of Kerala blend Arabian, North Indian, and indigenous Malabari cuisines, using chicken, eggs, beef, and mutton. Thalassery biryani is the only biryani variant, which is of Kerala origin having originated in Talassery, in Malabar region. The dish is significantly different from other biryani variants. Snacks like Pazham nirachathu, Unnakkai, Bread pola- made of bread, eggs, milk and a simple masala, Iftar preparations like Thari kanji, Kozhi pichuporichathu (shredded chicken), Pidi- a preparation of rice dumplings dunked in gravy, Irachi pathiri, Chatti pathiri, Meen pathiri, Neriya pathiri and Kannu vecha pathiri - roti varieties usually made of powdered rice, dishes like Kaai curry etc., are also contributions of Muslim community to the broad Kerala cuisine. The Pathanamthitta region is known for raalan and fish curries. Appam along with wine and curries of duck, pork and cured beef are popular among Syrian Christians in Central Kerala. Popular desserts are payasam (pudding) and halwa. Payasam, especially Ambalappuzha Paalpayasam also known as Gopala Kashayam (Krishnan's potion) prepared at the 17th century Ambalappuzha Sri Krishna swami temple, is a delicacy known for its unique and flavourful taste. Interestingly, on each day the paalpayasam is prepared only after (ritualistically) seeking due permission from the presiding deity - Shri Krishna. Kerala has a number of paayasam varieties including but not limited to Paalpayasam, Vermicelli Payasam, Pradhaman, Ada Pradhaman, Chakka (Jackfruit) Pradhaman, Parippu Paayasam and more. Paayasam like Vermicelli Payasam (Semiya payasam) also finds a place in Iftar feast of Muslim communities in Kerala. Halva is one of the most commonly found or easily recognised sweets in bakeries throughout Kerala, and originated from the Gujarathi community in Calicut. Europeans used to call the dish "sweetmeat" due to its texture, and a street in Kozhikode where became named Sweet Meat Street during colonial rule. This is mostly made from maida (highly refined wheat), and comes in various flavours, such as banana, ghee or coconut. However, karutha haluva (black haluva) made from rice is also very popular.

Ladakh Ladakhi cuisine is from the two districts of Leh and Kargil in the union territory of Ladakh. Ladakhi food has much in common with Tibetan food, the most prominent foods being thukpa (noodle soup) and tsampa, known in Ladakhi as ngampe (roasted barley flour). Edible without cooking, tsampa makes useful trekking food. Strictly Ladakhi dishes include skyu and chutagi, both heavy and rich soup pasta dishes, skyu being made with root vegetables and meat, and chutagi with leafy greens and vegetables. As Ladakh moves toward a cash-based economy, foods from the plains of India are becoming more common. As in other parts of Central Asia, tea in Ladakh is traditionally made with strong green tea, butter, and salt. It is mixed in a large churn and known as gurgur cha, after the sound it makes when mixed. Sweet tea (cha ngarmo) is common now, made in the Indian style with milk and sugar. Most of the surplus barley that is produced is fermented into chang, an alcoholic beverage drunk especially on festive occasions.

Lakshadweep The cuisine of Lakshadweep prominently features seafood and coconut. Local food consists of spicy non-vegetarian and vegetarian dishes. The culinary influence of Kerala is quite evident in the cuisines of Lakshadweep, since the island lies in close proximity to Kerala. Coconut and sea fish serve as the foundation of most meals. The people of Lakshadweep drink large amounts of coconut water, which is the most abundant aerated drink on the island. Coconut milk is the base for most of the curries. All the sweet or savoury dishes

have a touch of famous Malabar spices. Local people also prefer to have dosa, idlis, and various rice dishes.

Madhya Pradesh The cuisine in Madhya Pradesh varies regionally. Wheat and meat are common in the north and west of the state, while the wetter south and east are dominated by rice and fish. Milk is a common ingredient in Gwalior and Indore. The street food of Indore is well known, with shops that have been active for generations. Bhopal is known for meat and fish dishes such as rogan josh, korma, qeema, biryani, pilaf, and kebabs. On a street named Chatori Gali in old Bhopal, one can find traditional Muslim nonvegetarian fare such as paya soup, bun kabab, and nalli-nihari as some of the specialties. Dal bafra is a common meal in the region and can be easily found in Indore and other nearby regions, consisting of a steamed and grilled wheat cake dunked in rich ghee, which is eaten with daal and ladoos. The culinary specialty of the Malwa and Indore regions of central Madhya Pradesh is poha (flattened rice); usually eaten at breakfast with jalebi. Beverages in the region include lassi, beer, rum and sugarcane juice. A local liquor is distilled from the flowers of the mahua tree. Date palm toddy is also popular. In tribal regions, a popular drink is the sap of the sulfi tree, which may be alcoholic if it has fermented.

Maharashtra Maharashtrian cuisine is an extensive balance of many different tastes. It includes a range of dishes from mild to very spicy tastes. Bajri, wheat, rice, jowar, vegetables, lentils, and fruit form important components of the Maharashtrian diet. Popular dishes include puran poli, ukdiche modak, batata wada, sabudana khichdi, masala bhat, pav bhaji, and wada pav. Poha or flattened rice is also usually eaten at breakfast. Kanda poha and aloo poha are some of the dishes cooked for breakfast and snacking in evenings.

Popular spicy meat dishes include those that originated in the Kolhapur region. These are the Kolhapuri Sukka mutton, pandhra rassa, and tabmda rassa. Shrikhand, a sweet dish made from strained yogurt, is a main dessert of Maharashtrian cuisine. The cuisine of Maharashtra can be divided into two major sections, the coastal and the interior. The Konkan, on the coast of the Arabian Sea, has its own type of cuisine, a homogeneous combination of Malvani, Goud Saraswat Brahmin, and Goan cuisine. In the interior of Maharashtra, the Paschim Maharashtra, Khandesh, Vidarbha and Marathwada areas have their own distinct cuisines. The cuisine of Vidarbha uses groundnuts, poppy seeds, jaggery, wheat, jowar, and bajra extensively. A typical meal consists of rice, roti, poli, or bhakar, along with varan and aamtee-lentils and spiced vegetables. Cooking is common with different types of oil. Savji food from Vidarbha is well known all over Maharashtra. Savji dishes are very spicy and oily. Savji mutton curries are very famous. Like other coastal states, an enormous variety of vegetables, fish, and coconuts exists, where they are common ingredients. Peanuts and cashews are often served with vegetables. Grated coconuts are used to flavour many types of dishes, but coconut oil is not widely used; peanut oil is preferred. Kokum, most commonly served chilled, in an appetiser-digestive called sol kadhi, is prevalent. During summer, Maharashtrians consume panha, a drink made from raw mango.

Malwani Malwani cuisine is a specialty of the tropical area which spans from the shore of Deogad Malwan to the southern Maharashtrian border with Goa. The unique taste and flavour of Malwani cuisine comes from Malwani masala and use of coconut and kokam. The staple foods are rice and fish. Various kinds of red and green fish, prawns, crab, and shellfish curries (also called mashacha sar in the Malwani language) are well known, along with kombadi (chicken) wade and mutton prepared Malwani style. Mohari mutton is also one of the distinct delicacies of Malwani cuisine. A large variety of fish is available in the region, which include surmai, karali, bangada, bombil (Bombay duck), paplet (pomfret), halwa, tarali, suandale, kolambi (prawns), tisari (shellfish), kalwa (stone fish) and kurli (crab). All these fish are available in dried form, including prawns, which are known as sode. Local curries and chatanis are also prepared with dried fish. Different types of rice breads and

pancakes add to the variety of Malwani cuisine and include tandlachi bhakari, ghawane, amboli, patole, appe, tandalachi and shavai (rice noodles). These rice breads can be eaten specially flavoured with coconut milk, fish curries, and chicken or mutton curries. Sole kadi made from kokam and coconut milk is a signature appetiser drink. For vegetarians, Malwani delicacies include alloochi bhaji, alloochi gathaya, kalaya watanyacha, and sambara (black gram stew). The sweets and desserts include ukadiche modak, Malawani khaje, khadakahde kundiche ladu, shegdanyache ladu, tandalchi kheer, and tandalachi shavai ani ras (specially flavoured with coconut milk).

Manipur Manipuri cuisine is represented by the cuisine of the Meitei people who form the majority population in the central plain. Meitei food are simple, tasty, organic and healthy. Rice with local seasonal vegetables and fish form the main diet. Most of the dishes are cooked like vegetable stew, flavoured with either fermented fish called ngari, or dried and smoked fish. The most popular Manipuri dish is eromba, a preparation of boiled and mashed vegetables, often including carrots, potatoes or beans, mixed with chilli and roasted fermented fish. Another popular dish is the savoury cake called paknam, made of a lentil flour stuffed with various ingredients such as banana inflorescence, mushrooms, fish, vegetables etc., and baked covered in turmeric leaves. Along with spicy dishes, a mild side dish of steamed or boiled sweet vegetables are often served in the daily meals. The Manipuri salad dish called singju, made of finely julienned cabbage, green papaya, and other vegetables, and garnished with local herbs, toasted sesame powder and lentil flour is extremely popular locally, and often found sold in small street side vendors. Singju is often served with bora, which are fritters of various kinds, and also kanghou, or oil-fried spicy veggies. Cooked and fermented soybean is a popular condiment in all Manipuri kitchens. The staple diet of Manipur consists of rice, fish, large varieties of leafy vegetables (of both aquatic and terrestrial). Manipuris typically raise vegetables in a kitchen garden and rear fishes in small ponds around their house. Since the vegetables are either grown at home or obtained from local market, the cuisines are very seasonal, each season having its own special vegetables and preparations. The taste is very different from mainland Indian cuisines because of the use of various aromatic herbs and roots that are peculiar to the region. They are however very similar to the cuisines of Southeast, East, and Central Asia, Siberia, Micronesia and Polynesia.

Meghalaya Meghalayan cuisine is unique and different from other Northeastern Indian states. Spiced meat is common, from goats, pigs, fowl, ducks, chickens, and cows. In the Khasi and Jaintia Hills districts, common foods include jadoh, ki kpu, tung-rymbai, and pickled bamboo shoots. Other common foods in Meghalaya include minil songa (steamed sticky rice) and sakkin gata. Like other tribes in the northeast, the Garos ferment rice beer, which they consume in religious rites and secular celebrations.

Mizoram The cuisine of Mizoram differs from that of most of India, though it shares characteristics to other regions of Northeast India and North India. Rice is the staple food of Mizoram, while Mizos love to add non-vegetarian ingredients in every dish. Fish, chicken, pork and beef are popular meats among Mizos. Dishes are served on fresh banana leaves. Most of the dishes are cooked in mustard oil. Meals tend to be less spicy than in most of India. Mizos love eating boiled vegetables along with rice. A popular dish is bai, made from boiling vegetables (spinach, eggplant, beans, and other leafy vegetables) with bekang (fermented soya beans) or sa-um, fermented pork fat served with rice. Sawhchiar is another common dish, made of rice and cooked with pork or chicken.

Nagaland The cuisine of Nagaland reflects that of the Naga people. It is known for exotic pork meats cooked with simple and flavourful ingredients, like the extremely hot bhut jolokia (ghost chilli) pepper, fermented bamboo shoots, and akhuni (fermented soya beans). Another unique and strong ingredient used by the Naga

people, is the fermented fish known as ngari. Fresh herbs and other local greens also feature prominently in the Naga cuisine. The Naga use oil sparingly, preferring to ferment, dry, and smoke their meats and fish. Traditional homes in Nagaland have external kitchens that serve as smokehouses. A typical meal consists of rice, meat, a chutney, a couple of stewed or steamed vegetable dishes, flavoured with ngari or akhuni. Desserts usually consist of fresh fruits.

Odisha The cuisine of Odisha relies heavily on local ingredients. Flavours are usually subtle and delicately spiced. Fish and other seafood, such as crab and shrimp, are very popular, and chicken and mutton are also consumed.

Pakhala, a dish made of rice, water, and dahi (yogurt), that is fermented overnight, is very popular in summer in rural areas. Odias are very fond of sweets, so dessert follows most meals. Panch phutana, a mix of cumin, mustard, fennel, fenugreek and kalonji (nigella), is widely used for flavouring vegetables and dals, while garam masala and turmeric are commonly used for meat-based curries. Popular Odia dishes include arna, kanika, dalma, khata (tomato and oou), dali (different types of lentils, i.e. harada [red gram], muga [green gram], kolatha [horsegram], etc.), spinach and other green leaves, and alu-bharta (mashed potato) along with pakhala. Odisha and neighbouring West Bengal both claim to be the origin of rasgulla, each state having a geographical indication for their regional variety of the dessert. Odisha is also known for its chhena- based sweets, including chhena poda, chhena gaja, chhena jhili, and rasabali.

Puducherry The union territory of Puducherry was a French colony for around 200 years, making French cuisine a strong influence on the area. Tamil cuisine is eaten by the territory's Tamil majority. The influence of the neighbouring areas, such as Andhra Pradesh and Kerala, is also visible on the territory's cuisine. Some favourite dishes include coconut curry, tandoori potato, soya dosa, podanlangkai (snake gourd chutney), curried vegetables, stuffed cabbage, and baked beans.

Punjab The cuisine of Punjab is known for its diverse range of dishes. It is closely related to the cuisine of the neighbouring Punjab province of Pakistan. The state, being an agriculture centre, is abundant with whole grains, vegetables, and fruits. Home-cooked and restaurant Punjabi cuisine can vary significantly. Restaurant-style Punjabi cooking puts emphasis on creamy textured foods by using ghee, butter and cream, while home-cooked meals centre around whole wheat, rice, and other ingredients flavoured with various kinds of masalas. Common dishes cooked at home are roti with daal and dahi (yogurt) with a side chutney and salad that includes raw onion, tomato, cucumber, etc. The meals are also abundant of local and seasonal vegetables usually sauted with spices such as cumin, dried coriander, red chilli powder, turmeric, black cloves, etc. Masala chai is a favourite drink and is consumed in everyday life and at special occasions. Many regional differences exist in the Punjabi cuisine based on traditional variations in cooking similar dishes, food combinations, preference of spice combination, etc. It is clear that "the food is simple, robust, and closely linked to the land." Certain dishes exclusive to Punjab, such as makki di roti and sarson da saag, dal makhani, and others are a favourite of many. The masala in a Punjabi dish traditionally consists of onion, garlic, ginger, cumin, garam masala, salt, turmeric, tomatoes sauted in mustard oil. Tandoori food is a Punjabi specialty. Dishes like Bhatti da murg also known as tandoori chicken, Chicken hariyali kabab, Achari paneer tikka, fish ajwaini tikka and Amritsari kulcha are some popular tandoori foods from Punjab.

Common meat dishes in this region are Bhakra curry (goat) and fish dishes. Dairy products are regularly enjoyed and usually accompany main meals in the form of dahi, milk, and milk-derived products such as lassi,

paneer, and more. Punjab has a large number of people following the Sikh religion who traditionally follow a vegetarian diet (which includes plant-derived foods, milk, and milk by-products. See diet in Sikhism) in accordance to their beliefs. No description of Punjabi cuisine is complete without the myriad of famous desserts, such as kheer, gajar ka halwa, sooji (cream of wheat) halwa, rasmalai, gulab jamun and jalebi. Most desserts are ghee or dairy-based, use nuts such as almonds, walnuts, pistachios, cashews, and, raisins. Many of the most popular elements of Anglo-Indian cuisine, such as tandoori foods, naan, pakoras and vegetable dishes with paneer, are derived from Punjabi styles. Punjabi food is well liked in the world for its flavours, spices, and, versatile use of produce, and so it is one of the most popular cuisines from the sub-continent. Last but not least are the chhole bhature and chhole kulche which are famous all over the North India.

Rajasthan Cooking in Rajasthan, an arid region, has been strongly shaped by the availability of ingredients. Food is generally cooked in milk or ghee, making it quite rich. Gram flour is a mainstay of Marwari food mainly due to the scarcity of vegetables in the area. Historically, food that could last for several days and be eaten without heating was preferred. Major dishes of a Rajasthani meal may include daal-baati, tarfini, raabdi, ghevar, bail-gatte, panchkoot, chaavadi, laapsi, kadhi and boondi. Typical snacks include bikaneri bhujia, mirchi bada, pyaaj kachori, and dal kachori. Daal-baati is the most popular dish prepared in the state. It is usually supplemented with choorma, a mixture of finely ground baked rotis, sugar and ghee. Rajasthan is also influenced by the Rajput community who have liking for meat dishes. Their diet consisted of game meat and gave birth to dishes like laal maans, safed maas, khad khargosh and jungli maas.

Sikkim In Sikkim, various ethnic groups such as the Nepalese, Bhutias, and Lepchas have their own distinct cuisines. Nepalese cuisine is very popular in this area. Rice is the staple food of the area, and meat and dairy products are also widely consumed. For centuries, traditional fermented foods and beverages have constituted about 20 percent of the local diet. Depending on altitudinal variation, finger millet, wheat, buckwheat, barley, vegetables, potatoes, and soybeans are grown. Dhindo, daal bhat, gundruk, momo, gya thuk, ningro, phagshapa, and sel roti are some of the local dishes. Alcoholic drinks are consumed by both men and women. Beef is eaten by Bhutias.

Sindh Sindhi cuisine refers to the native cuisine of the Sindhi people from the Sindh region, now in Pakistan. While Sindh is not geographically a part of modern India, its culinary traditions persist, due to the sizeable number of Hindu Sindhis who migrated to India following the independence of Pakistan in 1947, especially in Sindhi enclaves such as Ulhasnagar and Gandhidam. A typical meal in many Sindhi households includes wheat-based flatbread (phulka) and rice accompanied by two dishes, one with gravy and one dry. Lotus stem (known as kamal kakri) is also used in Sindhi dishes. Cooking vegetables by deep frying is common. Some regular Sindhi dishes are sindhi kadhi, sai bhaji, koki and besan bhaji. Ingredients frequently used are mango powder, tamarind, kokum flowers, and dried pomegranate seeds.

Tamil Nadu Tamil Nadu is noted for its deep belief that serving food to others is a service to humanity, as is common in many regions of India. The region has a rich cuisine involving both traditional non-vegetarian and vegetarian dishes. Tamil food is characterised by its use of rice, legumes, and lentils, along with distinct aromas and flavours achieved by the blending of spices such as mustard, curry leaves, tamarind, coriander, ginger, garlic, chilli pepper, cinnamon, clove, cardamom, cumin, nutmeg, coconut and rose water. The traditional way of eating involves being seated on the floor, having the food served on a plantain leaf, and using the right hand to eat. After the meal the plantain leaf is discarded but becomes food for free-ranging cattle and goats. A meal (called saapadu) consists of rice with other typical Tamil dishes on a plantain leaf. A typical Tamilian would eat on a plantain leaf as it is believed to give a different flavour and taste to food. Also growing in popularity are

stainless-steel trays, plates with a selection of different dishes in small bowls. Tamil food is characterised by tiffin, which is a light food taken for breakfast or dinner, and meals which are usually taken during lunch. The word "curry" is derived from the Tamil kari, meaning something similar to "sauce". Southern regions such as Tirunelveli, Madurai, Paramakudi, Karaikudi, Chettinad and Kongu Nadu are noted for their spicy non-vegetarian dishes. Dosa, idli, pongal and biryani are some of the popular dishes that are eaten with chutney and sambar. Fish and other seafoods are also very popular, because the state is located on the coast. Chicken and goat meat are the predominantly consumed meats in Tamil Nadu. A typical Tamil vegetarian meal is heavily dependent on rice, vegetables and lentil preparations such as rasam and sambar, but there are variations. They have influenced Kerala as well in their kootu, arachi vitta sambhar and molagootals (mulligatawny soup). As mentioned above, the Chettinad variety of food uses many strong spices, such as pepper, garlic, fennel seeds and onions. Tamil food tends to be spicy compared to other parts of India so there is a tradition of finishing the meal with dahi (yogurt) is considered a soothing end to the meal. Notably, Tamil Brahmin cuisine, the food of the Iyers and Iyengar community, is characterised by slightly different meal times and meal structures compared to other communities within the state. Historically vegetarian, the cuisine is known for its milder flavour and avoidance of onion and garlic (although this practice appears to be disappearing with time). After a light morning meal of filter coffee and different varieties of porridges (oatmeal and janata kanji are immensely popular), the main meal of the day, lunch/brunch is usually at 11 am and typically follows a two-three course meal structure. Steamed rice is the main dish, and is always accompanied by a seasonally steamed/sauteed vegetable (poriyal), and two or three types of tamarind stews, the most popular being sambhar and rasam. The meal typically ends with thair sadham (rice with yogurt), usually served with pickled mangoes or lemons. Tiffin is the second meal of the day and features several breakfast favourites such as idli, rava idli, upma, dosa varieties, and vada, and is usually accompanied by chai. Dinner is the simplest meal of the day, typically involving leftovers from either lunch or tiffin. Fresh seasonal fruit consumed in the state include bananas, papaya, honeydew and cantaloupe melons, jackfruit, mangos, apples, kasturi oranges, pomegranates, and nongu (hearts of palm).

Telangana The cuisine of Telangana consists of the Telugu cuisine, of Telangana's Telugu people as well as Hyderabadi cuisine (also known as Nizami cuisine), of Telangana's Hyderabadi Muslim community. Hyderabadi food is based heavily on non-vegetarian ingredients, while Telugu food is a mix of both vegetarian and non-vegetarian ingredients. Telugu food is rich in spices and chillies are abundantly used. The food also generally tends to be more on the tangy side with tamarind and lime juice both used liberally as souring agents. Rice is the staple food of Telugu people. Starch is consumed with a variety of curries and lentil soups or broths. Vegetarian and non-vegetarian foods are both popular. Hyderabadi cuisine includes popular delicacies such as biryani, haleem, Baghara baingan and kheema, while Hyderabadi day-to-day dishes see some similarities to Telanganite Telugu food, with its use of tamarind, rice, and lentils, along with meat. Dahi (yogurt) is a common addition to meals, as a way of tempering spiciness.

Tripura The Tripuri people are the original inhabitants of the state of Tripura in northeast India. Today, they comprise the communities of Tipra, Reang, Jamatia, Noatia, and Uchoi, among others. The Tripuri are non-vegetarian, although they have a minority of Vaishnavite vegetarians. The major ingredients of Tripuri cuisine include vegetables, herbs, pork, chicken, mutton, fishes, turtle, shrimps, crabs, freshwater mussels, periwinkles, edible freshwater snails and frogs.

Uttar Pradesh Traditionally, Uttar Pradesh cuisine consists of Awadhi, Bhojpuri, and Mughlai cuisine, though a vast majority of the state is vegetarian, preferring dal, roti, sabzi, and rice. Pooris and kachoris are eaten on special occasions. Chaat, samosa, and pakora, among the most popular snacks in India, originate from Uttar

Pradesh. Well-known dishes include kebabs, dum biryani, and various mutton recipes. Sheer qorma, ghevar, gulab jamun, kheer, and ras malai are some of the popular desserts in this region. Awadhi cuisine (Hindi: **आवधी**) is from the city of Lucknow, which is the capital of the state of Uttar Pradesh in Central-South Asia and North India, and the cooking patterns of the city are similar to those of Central Asia, the Middle East, and other parts of North India. The cuisine consists of both vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes. Awadh has been greatly influenced by Mughal cooking techniques, and the cuisine of Lucknow bears similarities to those of Central Asia, Kashmir, Punjab and Hyderabad. The city is also known for its Nawabi foods. The bawarchis and rakabdars of Awadh gave birth to the dum style of cooking or the art of cooking over a slow fire, which has become synonymous with Lucknow today. Their spread consisted of elaborate dishes like kebabs, kormas, biryani, kaliya, nahari-kulchas, zarda, sheermal, roomali rotis, and warqi parathas. The richness of Awadh cuisine lies not only in the variety of cuisine but also in the ingredients used like mutton, paneer, and rich spices, including cardamom and saffron. Mughlai cuisine is a style of cooking developed in the Indian subcontinent by the imperial kitchens of the Mughal Empire. It represents the cooking styles used in North India (especially Uttar Pradesh). The cuisine is strongly influenced by Central Asian cuisine, the region where the Chagatai-Turkic Mughal rulers originally hailed from, and has strongly influenced the regional cuisines of Kashmir and the Punjab region. The tastes of Mughlai cuisine vary from extremely mild to spicy, and is often associated with a distinctive aroma and the taste of ground and whole spices. A Mughlai course is an elaborate buffet of main course dishes with a variety of accompaniments.

Uttarakhand Food from Uttarakhand is known to be healthy and wholesome to suit the high-energy necessities of the cold, mountainous region. It is a high-protein diet that makes heavy use of pulses and vegetables. Traditionally, it is cooked over wood or charcoal fire mostly using iron utensils. While making use of condiments such as jeera, haldi and rai common in other Indian cuisines, Uttarakhand cuisine also use exotic ingredients such as jambu, timmer, ghandhraini and bhangira. Although the people in Uttarakhand also make dishes common in other parts of northern India, several preparations are unique to Uttarakhand such as rus, chudkani, dubuk, chadanji, jholi, kapa, and more. Among dressed salads and sauces, kheere ka raita, nimbu mooli ka raita, daarim ki khatai and aam ka fajitha are also popular. The cuisine mainly consists of food from two different sub-regions, Garhwal and Kumaon, though their basic ingredients are the same. Both Kumaoni and Garhwali styles make liberal use of ghee, lentils or pulses, vegetables and bhaat (rice). They also use badi (sun-dried urad dal balls) and mungodi (sun-dried moong dal balls) as substitutes for vegetables at times. During festivals and other celebrations, the people of Uttarakhand prepare special refreshments which include both salty preparations such as bada and sweet preparations such as pua and singal. Uttarakhand also has several sweets (mithai) such as singodi, bal-mithai, and malai laddu, native to its traditions.

Gallery North India

Hindu fasting cuisine Hindu people fast on days such as Ekadashi, in honour of Lord Vishnu or his Avatars, Chaturthi in honour of Ganesh, Mondays in honour of Shiva, or Saturdays in honour of Hanuman or Saturn. Only certain kinds of foods are allowed to be eaten. These include milk and other dairy products (such as dahi), fruit, and Western food items such as sago, potatoes, purple-red sweet potatoes, amaranth seeds, nuts and (shama millet). Popular fasting dishes include farari chevdo, sabudana khichadi, and peanut soup.

Diaspora and fusion cuisines The interaction of various Indian diaspora communities with the native cultures in their new homes has resulted in the creation of many fusion cuisines, which blend aspects of Indian and other international cuisines. These cuisines tend to interpolate Indian seasoning and cooking techniques into their

own national dishes.

Indian Chinese cuisine Indian Chinese cuisine, also known as Indo-Chinese cuisine originated in the 19th century among the Chinese community of Calcutta, during the immigration of Hakka Chinese from Canton (present-day Guangzhou) seeking to escape the First and Second Opium Wars and political instability in the region. Upon exposure to local Indian cuisine, they incorporated many spices and cooking techniques into their own cuisine, thus creating a unique fusion of Indian and Chinese cuisine. After 1947, many Cantonese immigrants opened restaurants in Calcutta, serving dishes that combined aspects of Indian cuisine with Cantonese cuisine. In other parts of India, Indian Chinese cuisine is derived from Calcutta-Chinese cuisine, but bears little resemblance to their Chinese counterparts as the dishes tend to be flavoured with cumin, coriander seeds, and turmeric, which with a few regional exceptions, are not traditionally associated with Chinese cuisine. Chilli, ginger, garlic and dahi (yogurt) are also frequently used in dishes. Popular dishes include Chicken Manchurian, chicken lollipop, chilli chicken, Hakka noodles, Hunan chicken, chow mein, and Szechwan fried rice. Soups such as Manchow soup and sweet corn soup are popular, whereas desserts include ice cream on honey-fried noodles and date pancakes.

Indian Thai cuisine Thai cuisine was influenced by Indian cuisine, like as recorded by the Thai monk Buddhadasa Bhikku in his writing 'India's Benevolence to Thailand'. He wrote that Thai people learned how to use spices in their food in various ways from Indians. Thais also obtained the methods of making herbal medicines (Ayurveda) from the Indians. Some plants like sarabhi of family Guttiferae, kanika or harsinghar, phikun or Mimusops elengi and bunnak or the rose chestnut etc. were brought from India.

Malaysian Indian cuisine Malaysian Indian cuisine, or the cooking of the ethnic Indian communities in Malaysia consists of adaptations of authentic dishes from India, as well as original creations inspired by the diverse food culture of Malaysia. A typical Malaysian Indian dish is likely to be redolent with curry leaves, whole and powdered spice, and contains fresh coconut in various forms. Ghee is still widely used for cooking, although vegetable oils and refined palm oils are now commonplace in home kitchens.

Indian Singaporean cuisine Indian Singaporean cuisine refers to foods and beverages produced and consumed in Singapore that are derived, wholly or in part, from South Asian culinary traditions. The great variety of Singaporean food includes Indian food, which tends to be Tamil cuisine, especially local Tamil Muslim cuisine, although North Indian food has become more visible recently. Indian dishes have become modified to different degrees, after years of contact with other Singaporean cultures, and in response to locally available ingredients, as well as changing local tastes.

Indian Indonesian cuisine Indian-Indonesian cuisine refers to food and beverages in Indonesian cuisine that have influenced Indian cuisine-especially from Tamil, Punjabi, and Gujarati cuisine. These dishes are well integrated, such as appam, biryani, murtabak and curry.

Indian Filipino cuisine Filipino cuisine, found throughout the Philippines archipelago, has been historically influenced by the Indian cuisine. Indian influences can also be noted in rice-based delicacies such as bibingka (analogous to the Indonesian bingka), puto, and puto bumbong, where the latter two are plausibly derived from the south Indian puttu, which also has variants throughout Maritime Southeast Asia (e.g. kue putu, putu mangkok). The kare-kare, more popular in Luzon, on the other hand could trace its origins from the Seven Years' War when the British occupied Manila from 1762 to 1764 with a force that included Indian sepoys, who

had to improvise Indian dishes given the lack of spices in the Philippines to make curry. This is said to explain the name and its supposed thick, yellow-to-orange annatto and peanut-based sauce, which alludes to a type of curry. Atchara of Philippines originated from the Indian achar, which was transmitted to the Philippines via the acar of the Indonesia, Malaysia, and Brunei.

Anglo-Indian cuisine Anglo-Indian cuisine developed during the period of British colonial rule in India, as British officials interacted with their Indian cooks. Well-known Anglo-Indian dishes include chutneys, salted beef tongue, kedgerree, ball curry, fish rissoles, and mulligatawny soup.

Desserts Many Indian desserts, or mithai, are fried foods made with sugar, milk or condensed milk. Ingredients and preferred types of dessert vary by region. In the eastern part of India, for example, most are based on milk products. Many are flavoured with almonds and pistachios, spiced with cardamom, nutmeg, cloves and black pepper, and decorated with nuts, or with gold or silver leaf. Popular Indian desserts include rasogolla, gulab jamun, jalebi, laddu, and peda.

Beverages **Non-alcoholic beverages** Tea is a staple beverage throughout India, since the country is one of the largest producers of tea in the world. The most popular varieties of tea grown in India include Assam tea, Darjeeling tea and Nilgiri tea. It is prepared by boiling the tea leaves in a mix of water, milk, and spices such as cardamom, cloves, cinnamon, and ginger. In India, tea is often enjoyed with snacks like biscuits and pakoda. Coffee is another popular beverage, but more popular in South India. Coffee is also cultivated in some parts of India. There are two varieties of coffee popular in India, which include Indian filter coffee and instant coffee. Lassi is a traditional dahi (yogurt)-based drink in India. It is made by blending yogurt with water or milk and spices. Salted lassi is more common in villages of Punjab and in Porbandar, Gujarat. Traditional lassi is sometimes flavoured with ground roasted cumin. Lassi can also be flavoured with ingredients such as sugar, rose water, mango, lemon, strawberry, and saffron. Sharbat is a sweet cold beverage prepared from fruits or flower petals. It can be served in concentrate form and eaten with a spoon, or diluted with water to create a drink. Popular sharbats are made from plants such as rose, sandalwood, bel, gurhal (hibiscus), lemon, orange, pineapple, sarasaparilla and kokum, falsa (Grewia asiatica). In Ayurveda, sharbats are believed to hold medicinal value. Thandai is a cold drink prepared with a mixture of almonds, fennel seeds, watermelon kernels, rose petals, pepper, poppy seeds, cardamom, saffron, milk and sugar. It is native to India and is often associated with the Maha Shivaratri and Holi or Holla mahalla festival. Sometimes bhaang (cannabis) is added to prepare special thandai. Other beverages include nimbu pani (lemonade), chaas, badam doodh (milk with nuts - mostly almonds - and cardamom), Aam panna, kokum sharbat, and coconut water. Modern carbonated cold drinks unique to southern India include beverages, such as panner soda or goli soda, a mixture of carbonated water, rose water, rose milk, and sugar, naranga soda, a mixture of carbonated water, salt and lemon juice, and nannari sarbath, a mixture with sarasaparilla.

Sharbats with carbonated water are the most popular non-alcoholic beverages in Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Street shops in Central Kerala and Madurai region of Tamil Nadu are well known for these drinks which are also called kulukki sarbaths in Kerala.

Alcoholic beverages **Beer** Most beers in India are either lagers (4.8 percent alcohol) or strong lagers (8.9 percent). The Indian beer industry has witnessed steady growth of 10-17 percent per year over the last ten years. Production exceeded 170 million cases during the 2008-2009 financial year. With the average age of the population decreasing and income levels on the rise, the popularity of beer in the country continues to increase.

Others Other popular alcoholic drinks in India include fenny, a Goan liquor made from either coconut or the juice of the cashew apple. The state of Goa has registered for a geographical indicator to allow its fenny distilleries to claim exclusive rights to production of liquor under the name "fenny." Hadia is a rice beer, created by mixing herbs with boiled rice and leaving the mixture to ferment for around a week. It is served cold and is less alcoholic than other Indian liquors. Chuak is a similar drink from Tripura. Palm wine, locally known as neera, is a sap extracted from inflorescences of various species of toddy palms. Chhaang is consumed by the people of Sikkim and the Darjeeling Himalayan hill region of West Bengal. It is drunk cold or at room temperature in summer, and often hot during cold weather. Chhaang is similar to traditional beer, brewed from barley, millet, or rice. Kallu (Chetthu Kallu) is a popular natural alcohol extracted from coconut and pine trees in Kerala. It is sold in local Kallu shops and is consumed with fried fish and chicken. Its alcoholic content is increased by addition of distilled alcohol.

Eating habits Indians consider a healthy breakfast important. They generally prefer to drink tea or coffee with breakfast, though food preferences vary regionally. North Indian people prefer roti, parathas, and a vegetable dish accompanied by achar (a pickle) and some curd. Various types of packaged pickles are available in the market. One of the oldest pickle-making companies in India is Harnarains, which started in the 1860s in Old Delhi. People of Gujarat prefer dhokla and milk, while south Indians prefer idli and dosa, generally accompanied by sambhar or sagu and various chutneys. Traditional lunch in India usually consists of a main dish of rice in the south and the east, and whole-wheat rotis in the north. It typically includes two or three kinds of vegetables, and sometimes items such as kulcha, naan, or parathas. Paan (stuffed, spiced and folded betel leaves) which aids digestion is often eaten after lunch and dinner in many parts of India. Indian families often gather for "evening snack time", similar to tea time to talk and have tea and snacks. Dinner is considered the main meal of the day. Also, many households, especially in north and central India, prefer having sweets after the dinner (similar to the Western concept of dessert after meals).

Dietary practices In India people often follow dietary practices based on their religious beliefs,

Many Hindu communities consider beef taboo since they believed that Hindu scriptures condemn cow slaughter. Cow slaughter has been banned in many states of India, with the exceptions of the North-Eastern states, West Bengal and Kerala. However, buffalo meat is available in some of these states to be consumed by other religious communities. The taboo on beef is defied by the marginalised Hindu castes in the Dalit fold, substantially covered in their literature and often displayed at their food festivals. As Dalit communities were restricted to living outside the village in mostly barren lands, with reduced resources to cultivate their food, discarded cows were essential traditional food that nourished them. Dalit cuisine included dishes made with coagulated beef blood, preserved meat, and intestines. During the independence era, and after, the imposition of beef restrictions on Dalit communities was part of efforts to bring them under a unified nationalist identity. Vaishnavism followers generally are strict lacto-vegetarians due to an emphasis on Ahimsa. They also do not consume garlic and onions. Jains follow a strict form of lacto-vegetarianism, known as Jain vegetarianism, which in addition to being completely lacto-vegetarian, also excludes all root vegetables such as carrots and potatoes because when the root is pulled up, organisms that live around the root also die. Muslims do not eat pork or pork products. They consume buffalo and beef products. In certain North-Eastern regions, canines are part of culinary heritage. While only some communities eat dog meat, it is presently neither universal nor widely consumed. Nevertheless, it has been a constant source of stereotype and racial discrimination against people from the region. In India dietary practices are also closely related to caste discrimination practices as they are rooted in notions of pollution and filth. Dalit and tribal accounts on cooking and eating narrate casteist-racist

treatment accorded to Dalit and tribal culinary practices. This sometimes attract policing on the grounds of creating public nuisance by raising civic concerns. Brahmanical food practices dictate which food is clean and unclean based on their sensorial experiences.

Etiquette Traditionally, meals in India are eaten while seated either on the floor, or on very low stools or mattress. Food is most often eaten with the hands rather than cutlery. Often roti is used to scoop curry without allowing it to touch the hand. In the wheat-producing north, a piece of roti is gripped with the thumb and middle finger and ripped off while holding the roti down with the index finger. A somewhat different method is used in the south for dosai, adai, and utthappam, where the middle finger is pressed down to hold the bread and the forefinger and thumb used to grip and separate a small part. Traditional serving styles vary regionally throughout India. Contact with other cultures has affected Indian dining etiquette. For example, the Anglo-Indian middle class commonly uses spoons and forks, as is traditional in Western culture. In South India, cleaned banana leaves, which can be disposed of after meals, are used for serving food. When hot food is served on banana leaves, the leaves add distinctive aromas and taste to the food. Leaf plates are less common today, except on special occasions.

Outside India Indian migration has spread the culinary traditions of the subcontinent throughout the world. These cuisines have been adapted to local tastes, and have also affected local cuisines. The international appeal of curry has been compared to that of pizza. Indian tandoor dishes such as chicken tikka also enjoy widespread popularity.

Australia A Roy Morgan Research survey taken between 2013 and 2018 found that Indian cuisine was the top-rated international food among 51% of Australians, behind Chinese, Italian, and Thai.

Canada As in the United Kingdom and the United States, Indian cuisine is widely available in Canada, especially in the cities of Toronto, Vancouver, and Ottawa where the majority of Canadians of South Asian heritage live.

China Indian food is gaining popularity in China, where there are many Indian restaurants in Beijing, Shanghai, and Shenzhen. Hong Kong alone has more than 50 Indian restaurants, some of which date back to the 1980s. Most of the Indian restaurants in Hong Kong are in Tsim Sha Tsui.

Fiji Indo-Fijians have a similar cuisine, often with Fijian influence.

Middle East The Indian culinary scene in the Middle East has been influenced greatly by the large Indian diaspora in these countries. Centuries of trade relations and cultural exchange resulted in a significant influence on each region's cuisines. The use of the tandoor, which originated in northwestern India, is an example. The large influx of Indian expatriates into Middle Eastern countries during the 1970s and 1980s led to a boom in Indian restaurants to cater to this population and was also widely influenced by the local and international cuisines.

Nepal Indian cuisine is available in the streets of Nepalese cities, including Kathmandu and Janakpur.

Southeast Asia Other cuisines which borrow inspiration from Indian cooking styles include Cambodian, Lao, Filipino, Vietnamese, Indonesian, Thai, and Burmese cuisines. The spread of vegetarianism in other parts of Asia is often credited to Hindu and Buddhist practices. Indian cuisine is very popular in Southeast Asia, due to the strong Hindu and Buddhist cultural influence in the region. Indian cuisine has had considerable influence on Malaysian cooking styles and also enjoys popularity in Singapore. There are numerous North and South Indian restaurants in Singapore, mostly in Little India. Singapore is also known for fusion cuisine combining traditional Singaporean cuisine with Indian influences. Fish head curry, for example, is a local creation. Indian influence on Malay cuisine dates to the 19th century.

United Kingdom The UK's first Indian restaurant, the Hindoostanee Coffee House, opened in 1810. By 2003, there were as many as 10,000 restaurants serving Indian cuisine in England and Wales alone. According to Britain's Food Standards Agency, the Indian food industry in the United Kingdom is worth 3.2 billion pounds, accounts for two-thirds of all eating out in the country, and serves about 2.5 million customers every week. One of the best known examples of British Indian restaurant cuisine is chicken tikka masala, which has also been called "a true British national dish."

Ireland Ireland's first Indian restaurant, the Indian Restaurant and Tea Rooms, opened in 1908 on Sackville Street, now O'Connell Street, in Dublin. Today, Indian restaurants are commonplace in most Irish cities and towns. Non-Chinese Asians are the fastest growing ethnic group in Ireland.

United States A survey by The Washington Post in 2007 stated that more than 1,200 Indian food products had been introduced into the United States since 2000. There are numerous Indian restaurants across the US, which vary based on regional culture and climate. North Indian and South Indian cuisines are especially well represented. Most Indian restaurants in the United States serve Americanised versions of North Indian food, which is generally less spicy than its Indian equivalents. At sit-down restaurants with North Indian cuisine (the most common), complimentary papadum is served with three dipping sauces-typically hari chutney (mint and cilantro), imli chutney (taramind), and a spicy red chilli or onion chutney-in place of European-style bread before the meal.

See also References Bibliography

== External links ==

Languages of India

Languages of India belong to several language families, the major ones being the Indo-Aryan languages spoken by 78.05% of Indians and the Dravidian languages spoken by 19.64% of Indians; both families together are sometimes known as Indic languages. Languages spoken by the remaining 2.31% of the population belong to the Austroasiatic, Sino-Tibetan, Tai-Kadai, Andamanese, and a few other minor language families and isolates. According to the People's Linguistic Survey of India, India has the second highest number of languages (780), after Papua New Guinea (840). Ethnologue lists a lower number of 456. Article 343 of the Constitution of India stated that the official language of the Union is Hindi in Devanagari script, with official use of English to continue for 15 years from 1947. In 1963, a constitutional amendment, The Official Languages Act, allowed for the continuation of English alongside Hindi in the Indian government indefinitely until legislation decides to change it. The form of numerals to be used for the official purposes of the Union are "the international form of Indian numerals", which are referred to as Arabic numerals in most English-speaking countries. Despite some misconceptions, Hindi is not the national language of India; the Constitution of India does not give any language the status of national language. The Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution lists 22 languages, which have been referred to as scheduled languages and given recognition, status and official encouragement. In addition, the Government of India has awarded the distinction of classical language to Assamese, Bengali, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Pali, Prakrit, Sanskrit, Tamil and Telugu. This status is given to languages that have a rich heritage and independent nature. According to the Census of India of 2001, India has 122 major languages and 1599 other languages. However, figures from other sources vary, primarily due to differences in the definition of the terms "language" and "dialect". The 2001 Census recorded 30 languages which were spoken by more than a million native speakers and 122 which were spoken by more than 10,000 people. Three contact languages have played an important role in the history of India in chronological order: Sanskrit, Persian and English. Persian was the court language during the Indo-Muslim period in India and reigned as an administrative language for several centuries until the era of British colonisation. English continues to be an important language in India. It is used in higher education and in some areas of the Indian government. Hindi, which has the largest number of first-language speakers in India today, serves as the lingua franca across much of northern and central India. However, there have been concerns raised with Hindi being imposed in South India, most notably in the states of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. Some in Maharashtra, West Bengal, Assam, Punjab, Kerala and other non-Hindi regions have also started to voice concerns about imposition of Hindi. Bengali is the second most spoken and understood language in the country with a significant number of speakers in eastern and northeastern regions. Marathi is the third most spoken and understood language in the country with a significant number of speakers in the southwest, followed closely by Telugu, which is most commonly spoken in southeastern areas. Hindi is the fastest growing language of India, followed by Kashmiri in the second place, with Meitei (officially called Manipuri) as well as Gujarati, in the third place, and Bengali in the fourth place, according to the 2011 census of India. According to Ethnologue, India has 148 Sino-Tibetan, 140 Indo-European, 84 Dravidian, 32 Austro-Asiatic, 14 Andamanese, and 5 Kra-Dai languages.

History The Southern Indian languages are from the Dravidian family. The Dravidian languages are indigenous to the Indian subcontinent. Proto-Dravidian languages were spoken in India in the 4th millennium BCE and started disintegrating into various branches around 3rd millennium BCE. The Dravidian languages are classified in four groups: North, Central (Kolami-Parji), South-Central (Telugu-Kui), and South Dravidian (Tamil-Kannada). The Northern Indian languages from the Indo-Aryan branch of the Indo-European family evolved from Old Indo-Aryan by way of the Middle Indo-Aryan Prakrit languages and Apabhraṃśa of the Middle Ages. The

Indo-Aryan languages developed and emerged in three stages - Old Indo-Aryan (1500 BCE to 600 BCE), Middle Indo-Aryan stage (600 BCE and 1000 CE), and New Indo-Aryan (between 1000 CE and 1300 CE). The modern north Indian Indo-Aryan languages all evolved into distinct, recognisable languages in the New Indo-Aryan Age. In the Northeast India, among the Sino-Tibetan languages, Meitei language (officially known as Manipuri language) was the court language of the Manipur Kingdom (Meitei: Meeteileipak). It was honoured before and during the darbar sessions before Manipur was merged into the Dominion of the Indian Republic. Its history of existence spans from 1500 to 2000 years according to most eminent scholars including Padma Vibhushan awardee Suniti Kumar Chatterji. Even according to the "Manipur State Constitution Act, 1947" of the once independent Manipur, Manipuri and English were made the court languages of the kingdom (before merging into Indian Republic). Persian, or Farsi, was brought into India by the Ghaznavids and other Turko-Afghan dynasties as the court language. Culturally Persianized, they, in combination with the later Mughal dynasty (of Turco-Mongol origin), influenced the art, history, and literature of the region for more than 500 years, resulting in the Persianisation of many Indian tongues, mainly lexically. In 1837, the British replaced Persian with English and Hindustani in Perso-Arabic script for administrative purposes and the Hindi movement of the 19th Century replaced Persianised vocabulary with Sanskrit derivations and replaced or supplemented the use of Perso-Arabic script for administrative purposes with Devanagari. Each of the northern Indian languages had different influences. For example, Hindustani was strongly influenced by Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian, leading to the emergence of Modern Standard Hindi and Modern Standard Urdu as registers of the Hindustani language. Bangla on the other hand has retained its Sanskritic roots while heavily expanding its vocabulary with words from Persian, English, French and other foreign languages.

Inventories The first official survey of language diversity in the Indian subcontinent was carried out by Sir George Abraham Grierson from 1898 to 1928. Titled the Linguistic Survey of India, it reported a total of 179 languages and 544 dialects. However, the results were skewed due to ambiguities in distinguishing between "dialect" and "language", use of untrained personnel and under-reporting of data from South India, as the former provinces of Burma and Madras, as well as the princely states of Cochin, Hyderabad, Mysore and Travancore were not included in the survey.

Different sources give widely differing figures, primarily based on how the terms "language" and "dialect" are defined and grouped. Ethnologue, produced by the Christian evangelist organisation SIL International, lists 435 tongues for India (out of 6,912 worldwide), 424 of which are living, while 11 are extinct. The 424 living languages are further subclassified in Ethnologue as follows:

Institutional - 45 Stable - 248 Endangered - 131 Extinct - 11 The People's Linguistic Survey of India, a privately owned research institution in India, has recorded over 66 different scripts and more than 780 languages in India during its nationwide survey, which the organisation claims to be the biggest linguistic survey in India. The People of India (POI) project of Anthropological Survey of India reported 325 languages which are used for in-group communication by 5,633 Indian communities.

Census of India figures The Census of India records and publishes data with respect to the number of speakers for languages and dialects, but uses its own unique terminology, distinguishing between language and mother tongue. The mother tongues are grouped within each language. Many of the mother tongues so defined could be considered a language rather than a dialect by linguistic standards. This is especially so for many mother tongues with tens of millions of speakers that are officially grouped under the language Hindi.

1951 Census Separate figures for Hindi, Urdu, and Punjabi were not issued, due to the fact the returns were intentionally recorded incorrectly in states such as East Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, PEPSU, and Bilaspur.

1961 Census The 1961 census recognised 1,652 mother tongues spoken by 438,936,918 people, counting all declarations made by any individual at the time when the census was conducted. However, the declaring individuals often mixed names of languages with those of dialects, subdialects and dialect clusters or even castes, professions, religions, localities, regions, countries and nationalities. The list therefore includes languages with barely a few individual speakers as well as 530 unclassified mother tongues and more than 100 idioms that are non-native to India, including linguistically unspecific demonyms such as "African", "Canadian" or "Belgian".

1991 Census The 1991 census recognises 1,576 classified mother tongues. According to the 1991 census, 22 languages had more than a million native speakers, 50 had more than 100,000 and 114 had more than 10,000 native speakers. The remaining accounted for a total of 566,000 native speakers (out of a total of 838 million Indians in 1991).

2001 Census According to the census of 2001, there are 1,635 rationalised mother tongues, 234 identifiable mother tongues and 22 major languages. Of these, 29 languages have more than a million native speakers, 60 have more than 100,000 and 122 have more than 10,000 native speakers. There are a few languages like Kodava that do not have a script but have a group of native speakers in Coorg (Kodagu).

2011 Census According to the most recent census of 2011, after thorough linguistic scrutiny, edit, and rationalisation on 19,569 raw linguistic affiliations, the census recognises 1,369 rationalised mother tongues and 1,474 names which were treated as 'unclassified' and relegated to 'other' mother tongue category. Among, the 1,369 rationalised mother tongues which are spoken by 10,000 or more speakers, are further grouped into appropriate set that resulted into total 121 languages. In these 121 languages, 22 are already part of the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India and the other 99 are termed as "Total of other languages" which is one short as of the other languages recognised in 2001 census.

Multilingualism 2011 Census India Language families Ethnolinguistically, the languages of South Asia, echoing the complex history and geography of the region, form a complex patchwork of language families, language phyla and isolates. Languages spoken in India belong to several language families, the major ones being the Indo-Aryan languages spoken by 78.05% of Indians and the Dravidian languages spoken by 19.64% of Indians. The most important language families in terms of speakers are:

Indo-Aryan language family The largest of the language families represented in India, in terms of speakers, is the Indo-Aryan language family, a branch of the Indo-Iranian family, itself the easternmost, extant subfamily of the Indo-European language family. This language family predominates, accounting for some 1035 million speakers, or over 76.5% of the population, per a 2018 estimate. The most widely spoken languages of this group are Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati, Bhojpuri, Awadhi, Odia, Maithili, Punjabi, Marwari, Kashmiri, Assamese (Asamiya), Chhattisgarhi and Sindhi. Aside from the Indo-Aryan languages, other Indo-European languages are also spoken in India, the most prominent of which is English, as a lingua franca.

Dravidian language family The second largest language family is the Dravidian language family, accounting for some 277 million speakers, or approximately 20.5% per 2018 estimate. The Dravidian languages are spoken mainly in southern India and parts of eastern and central India as well as in parts of northeastern Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh. The Dravidian languages with the most speakers are Telugu, Tamil, Kannada and Malayalam. Besides the mainstream population, Dravidian languages are also spoken by small scheduled tribe communities, such as the Oraon and Gond tribes. Only two Dravidian languages are exclusively spoken outside India, Brahui in Balochistan, Pakistan and Dhangar, a dialect of Kurukh, in Nepal.

Austroasiatic language family Families with smaller numbers of speakers are Austroasiatic and numerous small Sino-Tibetan languages, with some 10 and 6 million speakers, respectively, together 3% of the population. The Austroasiatic language family (austro meaning South) is the autochthonous language in Southeast Asia, arrived by migration. Austroasiatic languages of mainland India are the Khasi and Munda languages, including Bhumij and Santali. The languages of the Nicobar islands also form part of this language family. With the exceptions of Khasi and Santali, all Austroasiatic languages on Indian territory are endangered.

Tibeto-Burman language family The Tibeto-Burman language family is well represented in India. However, their interrelationships are not discernible, and the family has been described as "a patch of leaves on the forest floor" rather than with the conventional metaphor of a "family tree". Padma Vibhushan awardee Indian Bengali scholar Suniti Kumar Chatterjee said, "Among the various Tibeto-Burman languages, the most important and in literature certainly of much greater importance than Newari, is the Meitei or Manipuri language". In India, Tibeto-Burman languages are spoken across the Himalayas in the regions of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam (hills and autonomous councils), Himachal Pradesh, Ladakh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura and West Bengal. Sino-Tibetan languages spoken in India include two constitutionally recognised official languages, Meitei (officially known as Manipuri) and Bodo as well as the non-scheduled languages like Karbi, Deori, Lepcha, and many varieties of several related Tibetic, West Himalayish, Tani, Brahmaputran, Angami-Pochuri, Tangkhul, Zeme, Kukish sub linguistic branches, among many others.

Tai-Kadai language family The Ahom language, a Southwestern Tai language, had been once the dominant language of the Ahom Kingdom in modern-day Assam, but was later replaced by the Assamese language (known as Kamrupi in ancient era which is the pre-form of the Kamrupi dialect of today). Nowadays, small Tai communities and their languages remain in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh together with Sino-Tibetans, e.g. Tai Phake, Tai Aiton and Tai Khamti, which are similar to the Shan language of Shan State, Myanmar; the Dai language of Yunnan, China; the Lao language of Laos; the Thai language of Thailand; and the Zhuang language in Guangxi, China.

Andamanese language families The languages of the Andaman Islands form another group:

the Great Andamanese languages, comprising a number of extinct, and one highly endangered language Aka-Jeru. the Ongan family of the southern Andaman Islands, comprising two extant languages, nge and Jarawa, and one extinct language, Jangil. In addition, Sentinelese is thought likely to be related to the above languages.

Niger-Congo language family In addition, a Bantu language, Sidi, was spoken until the mid-20th century in Gujarat by the Siddi.

Language isolates The only language found in the Indian mainland that is considered a language isolate is Nihali. The status of Nihali is ambiguous, having been considered as a distinct Austroasiatic language, as a dialect of Korku and also as being a "thieves' argot" rather than a legitimate language. The other language isolates found in the rest of South Asia include Burushaski, a language spoken in Gilgit-Baltistan (administered by Pakistan), Kusunda (in western Nepal), and Vedda (in Sri Lanka). The validity of the Great Andamanese language group as a language family has been questioned and it has been considered a language isolate by some authorities. The Hruso language, which is long assumed to be a Sino-Tibetan language, it may actually be a language isolate. Roger Blench classifies the Shompen language of the Nicobar Islands as a language isolate. Roger Blench also considers Puroik to be a language isolate.

Official languages **Federal level** After Mughal rule and prior to Independence, in British India, English was the sole language used for administrative purposes as well as for higher education purposes. In 1946, the issue of national language was a bitterly contested subject in the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly of India, specifically what should be the language in which the Constitution of India is written and the language spoken during the proceedings of Parliament and thus deserving of the epithet "national". The Constitution of India does not give any language the status of national language. Members belonging to the northern parts of India insisted that the Constitution be drafted in Hindi with the unofficial translation in English. This was not agreed to by the drafting committee on the grounds that English was much better to craft the nuanced prose on constitutional subjects. The efforts to make Hindi the pre-eminent language were bitterly resisted by the members from those parts of India where Hindi was not spoken natively. Eventually, a compromise was reached not to include any mention of a national language. Instead, Hindi in Devanagari script was declared to be the official language of the union, but for "fifteen years from the commencement of the Constitution, the English Language shall continue to be used for all the official purposes of the Union for which it was being used immediately before such commencement." Article 343 (1) of the Constitution of India states "The Official Language of the Union government shall be Hindi in Devanagari script." Unless Parliament decided otherwise, the use of English for official purposes was to cease 15 years after the constitution came into effect, i.e. on 26 January 1965. As the date for changeover approached, however, there was much alarm in the non-Hindi-speaking areas of India, especially in Kerala, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, West Bengal, Karnataka, Puducherry and Andhra Pradesh. Accordingly, Jawaharlal Nehru ensured the enactment of the Official Languages Act, 1963, which provided that English "may" still be used with Hindi for official purposes, even after 1965. The wording of the text proved unfortunate in that while Nehru understood that "may" meant shall, politicians championing the cause of Hindi thought it implied exactly the opposite. In the event, as 1965 approached, India's new Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri prepared to make Hindi paramount with effect from 26 January 1965. This led to widespread agitation, riots, self-immolations, and suicides in Tamil Nadu. The split of Congress politicians from the South from their party stance, the resignation of two Union ministers from the South, and the increasing threat to the country's unity forced Shastri to concede. As a result, the proposal was dropped, and the Act itself was amended in 1967 to provide that the use of English would not be ended until a resolution to that effect was passed by the legislature of every state that had not adopted Hindi as its official language, and by each house of the Indian Parliament.

Hindi In the 2001 census, 422 million (422,048,642) people in India reported Hindi to be their native language. This figure not only included Hindi speakers of Hindustani, but also people who identify as native speakers of related languages who consider their speech to be a dialect of Hindi, the Hindi belt. Hindi (or Hindustani) is the native language of most people living in Delhi and Western Uttar Pradesh. "Modern Standard Hindi", a standardised language is one of the official languages of the Union of India. In addition, it is one of only two languages used for business in Parliament. However, the Rajya Sabha now allows all 22 official languages on the Eighth Schedule to be spoken. Hindustani, evolved from khari boli (■■■■■ ■■■■■), a prominent tongue of

Mughal times, which itself evolved from Apabhraṃśa, an intermediary transition stage from Prakrit, from which the major North Indian Indo-Aryan languages have evolved. By virtue of its being a lingua franca, Hindi has also developed regional dialects such as Bhojpuri Hindi in Mumbai. In addition, a trade language, Andaman Creole Hindi has also developed in the Andaman Islands. In addition, by use in popular culture such as songs and films, Hindi also serves as a lingua franca across North-Central India. Hindi is widely taught both as a primary language and language of instruction and as a second tongue in many states.

English British colonialism in India resulted in English becoming a language for governance, business, and education. English, along with Hindi, is one of the two languages permitted in the Constitution of India for business in Parliament. Despite the fact that Hindi has official Government patronage and serves as a lingua franca over large parts of India, there was considerable opposition to the use of Hindi in the southern states of India, and English has emerged as a de facto lingua franca over much of India. Journalist Manu Joseph, in a 2011 article in The New York Times, wrote that due to the prominence and usage of the language and the desire for English-language education, "English is the de facto national language of India. It is a bitter truth." English language proficiency is highest among urban residents, wealthier Indians, Indians with higher levels of educational attainment, Christians, men and younger Indians. In 2017, more than 58 per cent of rural teens could read basic English, and 53 per cent of fourteen year-olds & sixty per cent of 18-year-olds could read English sentences.

Scheduled languages Until the Twenty-first Amendment of the Constitution of India in 1967, the country recognised 14 official regional languages. The Eighth Schedule and the Seventy-First Amendment provided for the inclusion of Sindhi, Konkani, Meitei and Nepali, thereby increasing the number of official regional languages of India to 18. The Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India, as of 1 December 2007, lists 22 languages, which are given in the table below together with the regions where they are used.

The individual states, the borders of most of which are or were drawn on socio-linguistic lines, can legislate their own official languages, depending on their linguistic demographics. The official languages chosen reflect the predominant as well as politically significant languages spoken in that state. Certain states having a linguistically defined territory may have only the predominant language in that state as its official language, examples being Karnataka and Gujarat, which have Kannada and Gujarati as their sole official language respectively. Telangana, with a sizeable Urdu-speaking Muslim population, and Andhra Pradesh has two languages, Telugu and Urdu, as its official languages. Some states buck the trend by using minority languages as official languages. Jammu and Kashmir used to have Urdu, which is spoken by fewer than 1% of the population, as the sole official language until 2020. Meghalaya uses English spoken by 0.01% of the population. This phenomenon has turned majority languages into "minority languages" in a functional sense. In addition to official languages, a few states also designate official scripts.

In addition to states and union territories, India has autonomous administrative regions which may be permitted to select their own official language - a case in point being the Bodoland Territorial Council in Assam which has declared the Bodo language as official for the region, in addition to Assamese and English already in use. and Bengali in the Barak Valley, as its official languages.

Prominent languages of India Hindi In British India, English was the sole language used for administrative purposes as well as for higher education purposes. When India became independent in 1947, the Indian legislators had the challenge of choosing a language for official communication as well as for communication

between different linguistic regions across India. The choices available were:

Making "Hindi", which a plurality of the country's population (41%) identified as their native language, the sole official language. Making English, as preferred by non-Hindi speakers, particularly Kannadigas and Tamils and those from Mizoram and Nagaland, the sole official language. (See also Anti-Hindi agitations.) Declaring both Hindi and English to be official languages nationwide and giving each state the freedom to choose its own statewide official language(s). The Indian constitution, in 1950, declared Hindi in Devanagari script to be the official language of the union. Unless Parliament decided otherwise, the use of English for official purposes was to cease 15 years after the constitution came into effect, i.e. on 26 January 1965. The prospect of the changeover, however, led to much alarm in the non-Hindi-speaking areas of India, especially in South India whose native tongues are not related to Hindi. As a result, Parliament enacted the Official Languages Act in 1963, which provided for the continued use of English for official purposes along with Hindi, even after 1965.

Bengali Native to the Bengal region, comprising the nation of Bangladesh and the states of West Bengal, Tripura and Barak Valley region of Assam. Bengali (also spelt as Bangla: **বাংলা**) is the sixth most spoken language in the world. After the partition of India (1947), refugees from East Pakistan were settled in Tripura, and Jharkhand and the union territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands. There is also a large number of Bengali-speaking people in Maharashtra and Gujarat where they work as artisans in jewellery industries. Bengali developed from Abahattha, a derivative of Apabhramsha, itself derived from Magadhi Prakrit. The modern Bengali vocabulary contains the vocabulary base from Magadhi Prakrit and Pali, also borrowings from Sanskrit and other major borrowings from Persian, Arabic, Austroasiatic languages and other languages in contact with. Like most Indian languages, Bengali has a number of dialects. It exhibits diglossia, with the literary and standard form differing greatly from the colloquial speech of the regions that identify with the language. Bengali language has developed a rich cultural base spanning art, music, literature, and religion. Bengali has some of the oldest literature of all modern Indo-Aryan languages, dating from about 7th to 12th century ('Charyapada' Buddhist songs). There have been many movements in defence of this language and in 1999 UNESCO declared 21 Feb as the International Mother Language Day in commemoration of the Bengali Language Movement in 1952.

Assamese Asamiya or Assamese language is most spoken in the state of Assam. It is an Eastern Indo-Aryan language with more than 23 million total speakers including more than 15 million native speakers and more than 7 million L2 speakers per the 2011 Census of India. Along with other Eastern Indo-Aryan languages, Assamese evolved at least before the 7th century CE from the middle Indo-Aryan Magadhi Prakrit. Assamese is unusual among Eastern Indo-Aryan languages for the presence of the /x/ (which, phonetically, varies between velar ([x]) and a uvular ([χ]) pronunciations). The first characteristics of this language are seen in the Charyapadas composed in between the eighth and twelfth centuries. The first examples emerged in writings of court poets in the fourteenth century, the finest example of which is Madhav Kandali's Saptakanda Ramayana composed during 14th century CE, which was the first translation of the Ramayana into an Indo-Aryan language.

Marathi Marathi is an Indo-Aryan language. It is the official language and co-official language in Maharashtra and Goa states of Western India respectively, and is one of the official languages of India. There were 83 million speakers of the language in 2011. Marathi has the third-largest number of native speakers in India and ranks 10th in the list of most spoken languages in the world. Marathi has some of the oldest literature of all modern Indo-Aryan languages; Oldest stone inscriptions from 8th century & literature dating from about 1100 AD (Mukundraj's Vivek Sindhu dates to the 12th century). The major dialects of Marathi are Standard Marathi

(Pramaan Bhasha) and the Varhadi dialect. There are other related languages such as Ahirani, Dangi, Vadvali, Samavedi. Malvani Konkani has been heavily influenced by Marathi varieties. Marathi is one of several languages that descend from Maharashtri Prakrit. The further change led to the Apabhraṃśa languages like Old Marathi. Marathi Language Day (मराठी दिवस/मराठी दिवस) (transl. Marathi Dina/Marathi Diwasa) is celebrated on 27 February every year across the Indian states of Maharashtra and Goa. This day is regulated by the State Government. It is celebrated on the birthday of eminent Marathi Poet Vishnu Vaman Shirwadkar, popularly known as Kusumagraj . Marathi is the official language of Maharashtra and co-official language in the union territories of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu. In Goa, Konkani is the sole official language; however, Marathi may also be used for all official purposes. Over a period of many centuries the Marathi language and people came into contact with many other languages and dialects. The primary influence of Prakrit, Maharashtri, Apabhraṃśa and Sanskrit is understandable. Marathi has also been influenced by the Austroasiatic, Dravidian and foreign languages such as Persian and Arabic. Marathi contains loanwords from Persian, Arabic, English and a little from French and Portuguese.

Meitei Meitei language (officially known as Manipuri language) is the most widely spoken Indian Sino-Tibetan language of Tibeto-Burman linguistic sub branch. It is the sole official language in Manipur and is one of the official languages of India. It is one of the two Sino-Tibetan languages with official status in India, beside Bodo. It has been recognised as one of the advanced modern languages of India by the National Sahitya Academy for its rich literature. It uses both Meitei script as well as Bengali script for writing. Meitei language is currently proposed to be included in the elite category of "Classical Languages" of India. Besides, it is also currently proposed to be an associate official language of Government of Assam. According to Leishemba Sanajaoba, the present titular king of Manipur and a Rajya Sabha member of Manipur state, by recognising Meitei as an associate official language of Assam, the identity, history, culture and tradition of Manipuris residing in Assam could be protected. Meitei Language Day (Manipuri Language Day) is celebrated on 20 August every year by the Manipuris across the Indian states of Manipur, Assam and Tripura. This day is regulated by the Government of Manipur. It is the commemoration of the day on which Meitei was included in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India on 20 August 1992.

Telugu Telugu is the most widely spoken Dravidian language in India and around the world. Telugu is an official language in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Yanam, making it one of the few languages (along with Hindi, Bengali, and Urdu) with official status in more than one state. It is also spoken by a significant number of people in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, and by the Sri Lankan Gypsy people. It is one of six languages with classical status in India. Telugu ranks fourth by the number of native speakers in India (81 million in the 2011 Census), fifteenth in the Ethnologue list of most-spoken languages worldwide and is the most widely spoken Dravidian language.

Tamil Tamil is a Dravidian language predominantly spoken in Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and many parts of Sri Lanka. It is also spoken by large minorities in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Malaysia, Singapore, Mauritius and throughout the world. Tamil ranks fifth by the number of native speakers in India (61 million in the 2001 Census) and ranks 20th in the list of most spoken languages. It is one of the 22 scheduled languages of India and was the first Indian language to be declared a classical language by the Government of India in 2004. Tamil is one of the longest surviving classical languages in the world. It has been described as "the only language of contemporary India which is recognisably continuous with a classical past". The two earliest manuscripts from India, acknowledged and registered by UNESCO Memory of the World register in 1997 and 2005, are in Tamil. Tamil is an official language of Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Sri

Lanka and Singapore. It is also recognised as a minority language in Canada, Malaysia, Mauritius and South Africa.

Urdu After independence, Modern Standard Urdu, the Persianised register of Hindustani became the national language of Pakistan. During British colonial times, knowledge of Hindustani or Urdu was a must for officials. Hindustani was made the second language of British Indian Empire after English and considered as the language of administration. The British introduced the use of Roman script for Hindustani as well as other languages. Urdu had 70 million speakers in India (per the Census of 2001), and, along with Hindi, is one of the 22 officially recognised regional languages of India and also an official language in the Indian states of Andhra Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Telangana that have significant Muslim populations.

Gujarati Gujarati is an Indo-Aryan language. It is native to the west Indian region of Gujarat. Gujarati is part of the greater Indo-European language family. Gujarati is descended from Old Gujarati (c. 1100 - 1500 CE), the same source as that of Rajasthani. Gujarati is the chief and official language in the Indian state of Gujarat. It is also an official language in the union territories of Daman and Diu and Dadra and Nagar Haveli. According to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), 4.5% of population of India (1.21 billion according to 2011 census) speaks Gujarati. This amounts to 54.6 million speakers in India.

Kannada Kannada is a Dravidian language which branched off from Kannada-Tamil sub group around 500 B.C.E according to the Dravidian scholar Zvelebil. It is the official language of Karnataka. According to the Dravidian scholars Steever and Krishnamurthy, the study of Kannada language is usually divided into three linguistic phases: Old (450-1200 CE), Middle (1200-1700 CE) and Modern (1700-present). The earliest written records are from the 5th century, and the earliest available literature in rich manuscript (Kavirajamarga) is from c. 850. Kannada language has the second oldest written tradition of all languages of India. Current estimates of the total number of epigraph present in Karnataka range from 25,000 by the scholar Sheldon Pollock to over 30,000 by the Sahitya Akademi, making Karnataka state "one of the most densely inscribed pieces of real estate in the world". According to Garg and Shipely, more than a thousand notable writers have contributed to the wealth of the language.

Malayalam Malayalam has official language status in the state of Kerala and in the union territories of Lakshadweep and Puducherry. It belongs to the Dravidian family of languages and is spoken by some 38 million people. Malayalam is also spoken in the neighbouring states of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka; with some speakers in the Nilgiris, Kanyakumari and Coimbatore districts of Tamil Nadu, and the Dakshina Kannada and the Kodagu district of Karnataka. Malayalam originated from Middle Tamil (Sen-Tamil) in the 7th century. As Malayalam began to freely borrow words as well as the rules of grammar from Sanskrit, the Grantha alphabet was adopted for writing and came to be known as Arya Eluttu. This developed into the modern Malayalam script.

Odia Odia (formerly spelled Oriya) is one of the modern language officially recognised as a classical language from the Indo-Aryan group. Odia is primarily spoken and has official language status in the Indian state of Odisha and has over 40 million speakers. It was declared as a classical language of India in 2014. Native speakers comprise 91.85% of the population in Odisha. Odia originated from Odra Prakrit which developed from Magadhi Prakrit, a language spoken in eastern India over 2,500 years ago. The history of Odia language can be divided to Old Odia (3rd century BC –1200 century AD), Early Middle Odia (1200-1400), Middle Odia

(1400-1700), Late Middle Odia (1700-1870) and Modern Odia (1870 until present day). The National Manuscripts Mission of India have found around 213,000 unearthed and preserved manuscripts written in Odia.

Santali Santali is a Munda language, a branch of Austroasiatic languages spoken widely in Jharkhand and other states of eastern India by Santhal community of tribal and non-tribal. It is written in Ol Chiki script invented by Raghunath Murmu at the end of 19th century. Santali is spoken by 0.67% of India's population. About 7 million people speak this language. It is also spoken in Bangladesh and Nepal. The language is major tribal language of Jharkhand and thus Santhal community is demanding to make it as the official language of Jharkhand.

Punjabi Punjabi, written in the Gurmukhi script in India, is one of the prominent languages of India with about 32 million speakers. In Pakistan it is spoken by over 80 million people and is written in the Shahmukhi alphabet. It is mainly spoken in Punjab but also in neighbouring areas. It is an official language of Delhi and Punjab.

Maithili Maithili is an Indo-Aryan language native to India and Nepal. In India, it is widely spoken in the Bihar and Jharkhand states. Native speakers are also found in other states and union territories of India, most notably in Uttar Pradesh and the National Capital Territory of Delhi. In the 2011 census of India, It was reported by 13,583,464 people as their mother tongue comprising about 1.12% of the total population of India. In Nepal, it is spoken in the eastern Terai, and is the second most prevalent language of Nepal. Tirhuta was formerly the primary script for written Maithili. Less commonly, it was also written in the local variant of Kaithi. Today it is written in the Devanagari script. In 2003, Maithili was included in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution as a recognised regional language of India, which allows it to be used in education, government, and other official contexts.

Classical languages of India In 2004, the Government of India declared that languages that met certain requirements could be accorded the status of a "Classical Language" of India. Languages thus far declared to be classical:

Tamil (in 2004), Sanskrit (in 2005), Kannada (in 2008), Telugu (in 2008), Malayalam (in 2013), Odia (in 2014), Assamese (in 2024) Bangla (in 2024), Marathi (in 2024) Pali (in 2024) Prakrit (in 2024) Over the next few years, several languages were granted the Classical status, and demands have been made for other languages, including Maithili and Meitei (officially called Manipuri).

Other regional languages and dialects The 2001 census identified the following native languages having more than one million speakers. Most of them are dialects/variants grouped under Hindi.

Practical problems India has several languages in use; choosing any single language as an official language presents problems to all those whose "mother tongue" is different. However, all the boards of education across India recognise the need for training people to one common language. There are complaints that in North India, non-Hindi speakers have language trouble. Similarly, there are complaints that North Indians have to undergo difficulties on account of language when travelling to South India. It is common to hear of incidents that result due to friction between those who strongly believe in the chosen official language, and those who follow the thought that the chosen language(s) do not take into account everyone's preferences. Local official language commissions have been established and various steps are being taken in a direction to reduce tensions and

friction.

Languages by earliest known inscriptions Earliest known manuscripts are often subjected to debates and disputes, due to the conflicting opinions and assumptions of different scholars, claiming high antiquity of the languages. So, inscriptions are studied more in depth for understanding the chronology of the oldest known languages of the Indian subcontinent.

Language policy The Union Government of India formulated the Three language formula.

In the Prime Minister's Office The official website of the Prime Minister's Office of India publishes its official information in 11 Indian official languages, namely Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Meitei (Manipuri), Marathi, Odia, Punjabi, Tamil and Telugu, out of the 22 official languages of the Indian Republic, in addition to English and Hindi.

In the Press Information Bureau The Press Information Bureau (PIB) selects 14 Indian official languages, which are Dogri, Punjabi, Bengali, Odia, Gujarati, Marathi, Meitei (Manipuri), Tamil, Kannada, Telugu, Malayalam, Konkani and Urdu, in addition to Hindi and English, out of the 22 official languages of the Indian Republic to render its information about all the Central Government press releases.

In the Staff Selection Commission The Staff Selection Commission (SSC) selected 13 Indian official languages, which are Urdu, Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu, Kannada, Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Konkani, Meitei (Manipuri), Marathi, Odia and Punjabi, in addition to Hindi and English, out of the 22 official languages of the Indian Republic, to conduct the Multi-Tasking (Non-Technical) Staff examination for the first time in its history.

In the Central Armed Police Forces The Union Government of India selected Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Malayalam, Meitei (Manipuri), Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Odia, Urdu, Punjabi, and Konkani, 13 out of the 22 official languages of the Indian Republic, in addition to Hindi & English, to be used in the recruitment examination of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF). The decision was taken by the Home Minister after having an agreement between the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Staff Selection Commission. The official decision will be converted into action from 1 January 2024 (2024-01-01).

Language conflicts There are conflicts over linguistic rights in India. The first major linguistic conflict, known as the Anti-Hindi agitations of Tamil Nadu, took place in Tamil Nadu against the implementation of Hindi as the official language of India. Political analysts consider this as a major factor in bringing DMK to power and leading to the ousting and nearly total elimination of the Congress party in Tamil Nadu. Strong cultural pride based on language is also found in other Indian states such as Assam, Odisha, Karnataka, West Bengal, Punjab and Maharashtra. To express disapproval of the imposition of Hindi on its states' people as a result of the central government, the government of Maharashtra made the state language Marathi mandatory in educational institutions of CBSE and ICSE through Class/Grade 10. The Government of India attempts to assuage these conflicts with various campaigns, coordinated by the Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore, a branch of the Department of Higher Education, Language Bureau, and the Ministry of Human Resource Development.

Linguistic movements In the history of India, various linguistic movements were and are undertaken by different literary, political and social associations as well as organisations, advocating for the changes and the

developments of several languages, dialects and vernaculars in diverse critical, discriminative and unfavorable circumstances and situations.

Bengali Bengali language movement in India

Bhojpuri The Bhojpuri language movement, a linguistic movement that has been actively campaigning for greater recognition of the Bhojpuri language since 1947. There have been several protests and demands to include the Bhojpuri language in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution for a long time. In 1971, CPI MP Bhogendra Jha introduced a bill on this issue in the Lok Sabha, but it was rejected. In 2009 and 2016, Yogi Adityanath, the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh and former MP from Gorakhpur, raised the issue of Bhojpuri's recognition in the Lok Sabha. He emphasised that Bhojpuri, spoken in parts of India and 27 countries, is one of the world's major languages.

Meitei (Manipuri) Meitei language movements (aka Manipuri language movements), various linguistic movements for the cause of Meitei language (officially called Manipuri language) Meitei linguistic purism movement, an ongoing linguistic movement, aimed to attain linguistic purism in Meitei language Scheduled language movement, a historical linguistic movement in Northeast India, aimed at the recognition of Meitei language as one of the scheduled languages of Indian Republic Meitei classical language movement, an ongoing linguistic movement in Northeast India, aimed at the recognition of Meitei language as an officially recognised "classical language" Meitei associate official language movement, a semi active linguistic movement in Northeast India, aimed at the recognition of Meitei language as an "associate" official language of Assam

Rajasthani Rajasthani language movement, a linguistic movement that has been campaigning for greater recognition for the Rajasthani language since 1947

Tamil Tanittamil Iyakkam (Pure Tamil Movement), a linguistic purism movement for the Tamil language, to ignore the loanwords borrowed from Sanskrit

Developmental works In the age of technological advancements, the Google Translate supports the following Indian languages: Bengali, Bhojpuri, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Maithili, Malayalam, Marathi, Meiteilon (Manipuri) (in Meitei script), Odia, Punjabi (in Gurmukhi script), Santali (Ol Chiki script), Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu.

Meitei (Manipuri) On 4 September 2013, the Directorate of Language Planning and Implementation (DLPI) was established for the development and the promotion of Meitei language (officially called Manipuri language) and the Meitei script (Manipuri script) in Manipur. The Manipuri Sahitya Parishad is given annual financial support of ₹500,000 (equivalent to ₹750,000 or US\$8,900 in 2023) by the Government of Manipur. Since 2020, the Government of Assam is giving annual financial support of ₹500,000 (equivalent to ₹590,000 or US\$7,000 in 2023) to the Assam Manipuri Sahitya Parishad. Besides, the Assam government financed ₹6 crore (equivalent to ₹7.1 crore or US\$840,000 in 2023) for the creation of a corpus for the development of the Meitei language (officially called Manipuri language). In September 2021, the Central Government of India released ₹180 million (US\$2.1 million) as the first instalment for the development and the promotion of the Meitei language (officially called Manipuri language) and the Meitei script (Manipuri script) in Manipur. The Department of Language

Planning and Implementation of the Government of Manipur offers a sum of ₹5,000 (equivalent to ₹8,500 or US\$100 in 2023), to every individual who learns Meitei language (officially called Manipuri language), having certain terms and conditions.

Sanskrit The Central Government of India allocated ₹6438.4 million in the last three years for the development and the promotion of Sanskrit, ₹2311.5 million in 2019-20, around ₹2143.8 million in 2018-19, and ₹1983.1 million in 2017-18.

Tamil The Central Government of India gave an allocation of Rs 105.9 million in 2017-18, Rs 46.5 million in 2018-19 and Rs 77 million in 2019-20 to the "Central Institute of Classical Tamil" for the development and the promotion of Tamil language.

Telugu and Kannada The Central Government of India gave an allocation of Rs 10 million in 2017-18, Rs 9.9 million in 2018-19 and Rs 10.7 million in 2019-20, each for the development and the promotion of Telugu language and Kannada language.

Computerisation Writing systems Most languages in India are written in scripts derived from Brahmi. These include Devanagari, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Meitei Mayek, Odia, Eastern Nagari - Assamese/Bengali, Gurumukhi and other. Urdu is written in a script derived from Arabic. A few minor languages such as Santali use independent scripts (see Ol Chiki script). Various Indian languages have their own scripts. Hindi, Marathi, Maithili and Angika are languages written using the Devanagari script. Most major languages are written using a script specific to them, such as Assamese (Asamiya) with Asamiya, Bengali with Bengali, Punjabi with Gurmukhi, Meitei with Meitei Mayek, Odia with Odia script, Gujarati with Gujarati; Awadhi, Magahi and Bhojpuri with Kaithi script etc. Urdu and Kashmiri, Saraiki and Sindhi are written in modified versions of the Perso-Arabic script. With this one exception, the scripts of Indian languages are native to India. Some languages like Kodava that didn't have a script, as well as some languages such as Tulu which already had a script, adopted the Kannada script due to its readily available printing settings.

See also Notes References External links

Linguistic map of India with a detailed map of the Seven Sister States (India) at Muturzikin.com Languages and Scripts of India Kulkarni-Joshi, Sonal. "Linguistic history and language diversity in India: Views and counterinterviews." Journal of Biosciences 44 (2019): 1-10. Diversity of Languages in India A comprehensive federal government site that offers complete info on Indian Languages Technology Development for Indian Languages, Government of India Archived 15 November 2019 at the Wayback Machine Languages Spoken in Himachal Pradesh - Himachal Pariksha Archived 6 April 2023 at the Wayback Machine

Religion in India

Religion in India is characterised by a diversity of religious beliefs and practices. Throughout India's history, religion has been an important part of the country's culture and the Indian subcontinent is the birthplace of four of the world's major religions, namely Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism, and Sikhism, which are collectively known as native Indian religions or Dharmic religions and represent approx. 83% of the total population of India. India has the largest number of followers of Hinduism, Sikhism, Zoroastrianism, Jainism, and the Bah' Faith in the world. It further hosts the third most followers of Islam, behind Indonesia and Pakistan, and the ninth largest population of Buddhists. The Preamble to the Constitution of India states that India is a secular state, and the Constitution of India has declared the right to freedom of religion to be a fundamental right. According to the 2011 census, 79.8% of the population of India follows Hinduism, 14.2% Islam, 2.3% Christianity, 1.7% Sikhism, 0.7% Buddhism and 0.4% Jainism. Zoroastrianism, Sanamahism and Judaism also have an ancient history in India, and each has several thousands of Indian adherents. India has the largest population of people adhering to both Zoroastrianism (i.e. Parsis and Iranis) and the Bah' Faith in the world; these religions are otherwise largely exclusive to their native Iran where they originated from. Several tribal religions are also present in India, such as Donyi-Polo, Sanamahism, Sarnaism, Niamtre, and others.

Constitutional status The Constitution of India, declares India to be a secular state with no state religion. The Forty-second Amendment of the Constitution of India enacted in 1976 asserts the Preamble to the Constitution of India as secular. The Supreme Court of India in the 1994 case *S. R. Bommai v. Union of India* established that India had been secular since the formation of the Republic on 26 January 1950. Secularism in India is understood to mean not a complete separation of religion from state, but a state that participates in a neutral manner in the affairs of all religious groups and as well as atheism while maintaining equidistance from all. However, the original copy of the Indian constitution has an illustration of Rama, Sita, and Lakshmana in Part III on Fundamental Rights and Rama has been considered as the true guardian of people's rights. Article 48 of the Indian constitution prohibits the slaughter of cows or calves (a sacred animal in Hinduism) and the same is a criminal offence in most states of India. Secularism is defined as a basic structure doctrine of the constitution through the argument of *Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala* case, that cannot be removed or amended by any means. However, there is no mention of the term "Basic Structure" anywhere in the Constitution of India. The idea that the Parliament cannot introduce laws that would amend the basic structure of the constitution have been evolved judicially over time and many cases. The particular provisions regarding secularism and freedom of religion in India in the constitution are:

Article 14: grants equality before the law and equal protection of the laws to all. Article 15: enlarges the concept of secularism to the widest possible extent by prohibiting discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth. Article 25: Freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of any religion. Article 26: Freedom to manage religious affairs. Article 27: Freedom as to payment of taxes for promotion of any particular religion. Article 28: Freedom as to attendance at religious instruction or religious worship in certain educational institutions. Articles 29 and 30: provide cultural and educational rights to the minorities. Article 51A: i.e. Fundamental Duties obliges all the citizens to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood and to value and preserve the heritage of the country's composite diverse culture.

History Prehistoric religion Evidence attesting to prehistoric religion in the Indian "subcontinent" derives from scattered Mesolithic rock paintings depicting dances and rituals. Neolithic pastoralists inhabiting the Indus

Valley buried their dead in a manner suggestive of spiritual practices that incorporated notions of an afterlife. Other South Asian Stone Age sites, such as the Bhimbetka rock shelters in central Madhya Pradesh and the Kupgal petroglyphs of eastern Karnataka, contain rock art portraying religious rites and evidence of possible ritualised music.

Indus Valley Civilization The Harappan people of the Indus Valley Civilisation, which lasted from 3300 to 1400 BCE and was centered on the Indus and Ghaggar-Hakra river valleys, may have worshiped an important mother goddess symbolising fertility. Excavations of Indus Valley Civilisation sites show seals with animals and "fire■altars", indicating rituals associated with fire. A Shivlinga of a type similar to that which is now worshiped by Hindus has also been found, however this interpretation has been disputed by Srinivasan.

Evolution of Hinduism Hinduism is often regarded as the oldest surviving religion in the world, with roots tracing back to prehistoric times, over 5,000 years ago. Hinduism spread through parts of Southeastern Asia, China, and Afghanistan. Hindus worship a single divine entity (paramatma, lit."first-soul") with different forms.

Hinduism's origins include the cultural elements of the Indus Valley Civilisation along with other Indian civilisations. The oldest surviving text of Hinduism is the Rigveda, produced during the Vedic period and dating to 1700-1100 BCE. During the Epic and Puranic periods, the earliest versions of the epic poems, in their current form including Ramayana and Mahabharata were written roughly from 500 to 100 BCE, although these were orally transmitted through families for centuries prior to this period. After 200 BCE, several schools of thought were formally codified in the Indian philosophy, including Samkhya, Yoga, Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Purva-Mimamsa, and Vedanta.

Rise of Shramana religions The ■rama■a tradition includes Jainism, known endonymically as Jain Dharm, and Buddhism known endonymically as Bauddh Dharm, and others such as the ■j■vikas, Ajanas, and others. The historical roots of Jainism in India have been traced to the 9th century BCE with the rise of Parshvanatha, the 23rd Tirthankar, and his Jain philosophy, and to Mahavira (599-527 BCE), the 24th Jain Tirthankara. Jainism traces its roots further back to the first Tirthankara, Rishabhanatha. Mahavira stressed on the five vows. Gautama Buddha, who founded Buddhism, was born to the Shakya clan just before Magadha (which lasted from 546 to 324 BCE) rose to power. His family was native to the plains of Lumbini, in what is now southern Nepal. Indian Buddhism peaked during the reign of Ashoka the Great of the Mauryan Empire, who patronised Buddhism following his conversion and unified the Indian subcontinent in the 3rd century BCE. He sent missionaries abroad, allowing Buddhism to spread across Asia. Indian Buddhism declined following the loss of royal patronage offered by the Kushan Empire and such kingdoms as Magadha and Kosala. The decline of Buddhism in India has been attributed to a variety of factors, which include the resurgence of Hinduism in the 10th and 11th centuries under Sankaracharya, the later Turkish invasion, the Buddhist focus on renunciation as opposed to familial values and private property, Hinduism's own use and appropriation of Buddhist and Jain ideals of renunciation and ahimsa, and others. Although Buddhism virtually disappeared from mainstream India by the 11th century CE, its presence remained and manifested itself through other movements such as the Bhakti tradition, Vaishnavism, and the Bauls of Bengal, who are influenced by the Sahajjyana form of Buddhism that was popular in Bengal during the Pala period.

Bhakti movement During the 14th-17th centuries, when North India was under Muslim rule, the Bhakti movement swept through Central and Northern India. The Bhakti movement actually started in the eighth century in south India (present-day Tamil Nadu and Kerala), and gradually spread northwards. It was initiated

by a loosely associated group of teachers or saints. Dnyaneshwar, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Vallabhacharya, Surdas, Meera Bai, Kabir, Tulsidas, Ravidas, Namdeo, Eknath, Ramdas, Tukaram, and other mystics were some of the saints in the North. They taught that people could cast aside the heavy burdens of ritual and caste and the subtle complexities of philosophy, and simply express their overwhelming love for God. This period was also characterised by an abundance of devotional literature in vernacular prose and poetry in the ethnic languages of the various Indian states or provinces. The Bhakti movement gave rise to several different movements throughout India. During the Bhakti movement, many Hindu groups regarded as outside the traditional Hindu caste system followed Bhakti traditions by worshipping/following saints belonging to their respective communities. For example, Guru Ravidas was a Chamar of Uttar Pradesh; Guru Parsuram Ramnami was a Chura of Chhattisgarh, and Maharishi Ram Naval was a Bhangi of Rajasthan. In their lifetimes, several of these saints even went to the extent of fighting conversion from foreign missionaries, encouraging only Hinduism within their communities. In Assam for example, tribals were led by Gurudev Kalicharan Bramha of the Brahmo Samaj; in Nagaland by Kacha Naga; and in Central India by Birsa Munda, Hanuman Aaron, Jatra Bhagat, and Budhu Bhagat.

Kabir Sect The Kabir Panth is a religious movement based on the teachings of the Indian poet saint Kabir (1398-1518). Kabir sermonised a monotheism that appealed clearly to the poor and convinced them of their access to god with no liaison. He denied both Hinduism and Islam, as well as meaningless religious rituals, and condemned double standards. This infuriated the orthodox aristocracy. No one could frighten Kabir who was bold enough to stand up for himself and his beliefs. The Kabir Panth considers Kabir as its principal guru or even as a divinity-truth incarnate. Kabir's influence is testimony to his massive authority, even for those whose beliefs and practices he condemned so unsparingly. For Sikhs he is a forerunner and converser of Nanak, the originating Sikh Guru (spiritual guide). Muslims place him in Sufi (mystical) lineages, and for Hindus he becomes a Vaishnavite with universalist leanings.

Sikhism Guru Nanak Dev Ji (1469-1539) was the founder of Sikhism, known endonymically as Sikh Dharm. The Guru Granth Sahib was first compiled by the fifth Sikh guru, Guru Arjan Dev, from the writings of the first five Sikh gurus and others saints who preached the concept of universal brotherhood, including those of the Hindu and Muslim faith. Before the death of Guru Gobind Singh, the Guru Granth Sahib was declared the eternal guru. Sikhism recognises all humans as equal before Waheguru, regardless of colour, caste, or lineage. Sikhism strongly rejects the beliefs of fasting (vrata), superstitions, idol worship, and circumcision. The Sikhs believe in one eternal god and follow the teachings of the 10 gurus, the 5 K's of Sikhism, the hukums of Guru Gobind Singh, Sikh Rehat Maryada, and Nitnem.

Introduction of Abrahamic religions Judaism Jews first arrived as traders from Judea in the city of Kochi, Kerala, in 562 BCE. More Jews came as exiles from Jerusalem in the year 70 CE, after the destruction of the Second Temple.

Christianity Christianity was introduced to India by Thomas the Apostle (a direct disciple of Jesus Christ), who visited Muziris in Kerala in 52 CE and proselytised natives, who are known as Saint Thomas Christians (also known as Syrian Christians or Nasrani) today. India's oldest church, the world's oldest existing church structure and built by Thomas the Apostle in 57 CE, called Thiruvithamcode Arappally or Thomaiyar or Kovil as named by the then Chera king Udayancheral, is located at Thiruvithamcode in Kanyakumari (Cape Comorin) district of Tamil Nadu, it was declared an international St Thomas Pilgrim Centre. There is a general scholarly consensus that Christianity was rooted in India by the 6th century CE, including some communities who used Syriac liturgically. Christianity in India consists of various denominations such as the Assyrian Church, Catholicism,

Protestantism, Oriental Orthodoxy and others. Most Christians live in South India, particularly in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Goa, & the average number of Christians is at 3.45% in areas such as Bombay (Mumbai). There are also large Christian populations in Northeast India. Catholic Christianity was spread in the 16th century, particularly by the Portuguese in Goa and Bombay. Protestantism was introduced by Protestant missionaries in the 18th century.

Islam Islam came to India in the early 7th century through the Arab traders in Malabar coast. It started to become a major religion during the Muslim rule in the Indian subcontinent. The Cheraman Juma Mosque is the first mosque in India located in Methala, Kodungallur Taluk, Thrissur District in Kerala. A legend claims that it was built in 629 CE, which makes it the oldest mosque in the Indian subcontinent which is still in use. The growth of Islam in India mostly took place under the Delhi Sultanate (1206-1526) and the Mughal Empire (1526-1858), greatly aided by the mystic Sufi tradition. The growth of Islam was regionally uneven, and Islam had the greatest appeal to those who were not, or only superficially integrated into the Brahmanical fold, as in the case of Bengal. Currently, Islam is the second largest religion in India, with 14.2% of the country's population or roughly 172 million people identifying as adherents of Islam (2011 census). The estimated number of Muslims in India for 2024 is projected to be around 204,760,392. It makes India the country with the largest Muslim population outside Muslim-majority countries.

Census statistics There are six religions in India which have been awarded "National minority" status-Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, and Zoroastrians (Parsis).

The following is a breakdown of India's religious communities:

Note: When compared with 2001, India's population rose by 17.7% in 2011 with an average sex ratio of 943 and a literacy rate of 74.4%. The average work participation stood at 39.79%.

Religions Hinduism Hinduism is an ancient religion with the largest religious grouping in India, with around 966 million adherents as of 2011, composing 79.8% of the population. Hinduism is diverse, with monotheism, henotheism, polytheism, panentheism, pantheism, monism, atheism, animism, agnosticism, and gnosticism being represented. The term Hindu, originally a geographical description, derives from the Sanskrit, Sindhu (the historical appellation for the Indus River), and refers to a person from the land of the river Sindhu. Hindus following the traditional religion call it Sanatana Dharma (or "Eternal Way"). The adherents of Sanatana Dharma call themselves as "Sanatani", the original word for the adherents of Sanatana Dharma.

Islam Islam is a monotheistic religion centered on the belief in one God and following the example of Muhammad; it is the largest minority religion in India. About 14.2% of the country's population or approximately 172.2 million people identify as adherents of Islam (2011 census). It makes India the country with the largest Muslim population outside Muslim-majority countries. Muslims are a majority in states Jammu and Kashmir and Lakshadweep, and live in high concentrations in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Assam, and Kerala. There has been no particular census conducted in India with regards to sects, but sources suggest the largest denomination is Sunni Islam, with substantial populations of Shia and Ahmadiyya Muslims. Indian sources like Times of India and DNA reported the Indian Shia Muslims population in mid-2005-2006 to be between 25% and 31% of entire Muslim population of India, which accounts them in numbers between 40 and 50 million.

Christianity Christianity is a monotheistic religion centred on the life and teachings of Jesus as presented in the New Testament. It is the third largest religion of India, making up 2.3% of the population. St. Thomas is credited with introduction of Christianity in India. He arrived on the Malabar Coast in 52 CE. The tradition of origin among Saint Thomas Christians relates to the arrival of Saint Thomas, one of the 12 disciples of Jesus at the ancient seaport Muziris on the Kerala coast in 52 CE. The families Sankaramangalam, Pakalomattam, Kalli, and Kaliyankal were considered particularly preeminent, and historically the most aristocratic Syriac Christian families tended to claim descent from these families. It is also possible for Aramaic-speaking Jews from Galilee to make a trip to Kerala in the 1st century. The Cochin Jews are known to have existed in Kerala around that time. The earliest known source connecting the apostle to India is the Acts of Thomas, likely written in the early 3rd century, perhaps in Edessa. Marth Mariam Syro-Malabar Catholic Forane Church, Arakuzha was founded in 999. The text describes Thomas' adventures in bringing Christianity to India, a tradition later expanded upon in early Indian sources such as the "Thomma Parvam" ("Song of Thomas"). Generally he is described as arriving in or around Maliankara and founding Seven Churches and half churches, or Ezharapallikal: Kodungallur, Kollam, Niranam, Nilackal (Chayal), Kokkamangalam, Kottakkavu, Palayoor, Thiruvithamcode Arappalli and Aruvithura church (half church). A number of 3rd- and 4th-century Roman writers also mention Thomas' trip to India, including Ambrose of Milan, Gregory of Nazianzus, Jerome, and Ephrem the Syrian, while Eusebius of Caesarea records that his teacher Pantaenus visited a Christian community in India in the 2nd century. There came into existence a Christian community who were mainly merchants. Christianity expanded in the rest of India during the period of British colonial rule. Christians constitute the majority of natives of Nagaland and Mizoram as well as of Meghalaya and have significant populations in Manipur, Goa, Kerala and Mumbai.

Sikhism Sikhism is a monotheistic religion began in fifteenth-century Punjab with the teachings of Guru Nanak and nine successive Sikh gurus. As of 2011, there were 20.8 million Sikhs in India. Punjab is the spiritual home of Sikhs, and is the only state in India where Sikhs form a majority. There are also significant populations of Sikhs in neighbouring Chandigarh, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu division of Jammu and Kashmir, Delhi, and Haryana. These areas were historically a part of Greater Punjab. However, there is no data for specific number of Nanak followers (Nanakpanthis) in India, but they are believed to be in crores somewhere around 14 crores. Karnail Singh Panjoli, member, Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, says that there are several communities within the term 'Nanakpanthis' too. "There are groups like Sikhligarh, Vanjaarey, Nirmaley, Lubaney, Johri, Satnamiye, Udaasiyas etc. who call themselves Nanakpanthis. They follow guru Nanak and Sri Guru Granth Sahib.

Buddhism Buddhism is an Indian, transtheistic religion and philosophy. Around 8.5 million Buddhists live in India, about 0.7% of the total population. Buddhism as a religion is practised mainly in the foothills of the Himalayas and is a significant religion in Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Ladakh, Darjeeling in West Bengal, and the Lahaul and Spiti districts of Himachal Pradesh. Besides, a significant number of Buddhists reside in Maharashtra. They are the Buddhists or Navayana Buddhists who, under the influence of B. R. Ambedkar embraced Buddhism in order to escape the casteist practices within Hinduism. Ambedkar is a crucial figure, along with Anagarika Dharmapala of Sri Lanka and Kripasaran Mahasthavira of Chittagong behind the revival of Buddhism in India in the 19th and 20th centuries. The escape of the 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzing Gyatso to India fleeing Chinese occupation of Tibet in 1959 and the setting up of the Tibetan Government in Exile at Dharamshala in Mcleodganj in Himachal Pradesh has also accelerated the resurgence of Buddhism in India. The effective religion in Sikkim, which joined the Indian Union in 1975 (making it India's 22nd state) remains Vajrayana Buddhism, and Padmasambhava or Guru Ugyen is a revered presence there.

Jainism Jainism is a non-theistic Indian religion and philosophical system originating in Iron Age India. Jains compose 0.4% (around 4.45 million) of India's population, and are concentrated in the states of Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan.

Judaism Also present in India, Judaism is a monotheistic religion from the Levant. There is today a very small community of Indian Jews. There were more Jews in India historically, including the Cochin Jews of Kerala, the Bene Israel of Maharashtra, and the Baghdadi Jews near Mumbai. Since Indian independence, two primarily proselyte Indian Jewish communities have developed in India: the Bnei Menashe of Mizoram and Manipur, and the Bene Ephraim, also called Telugu Jews. Of the approximately 95,000 Jews of Indian extraction, fewer than 20,000 remain in India. Some parts of India are especially popular with Israelis, swelling local Jewish populations seasonally.

Other religions As of the census of 2001, Parsis (followers of Zoroastrianism in India) represent approximately 0.006% of the total population of India, with relatively high concentrations in and around the city of Mumbai. Parsis number around 61,000 in India. There are several tribal religions in India, such as Donyi-Polo. Santhal is also one of the many tribal religions followed by the Santhal people who number around 4 million but only around 23,645 follow the religion. Bathousim is another tribal religion of Boro community of Assam. It is difficult to establish the exact numbers of Bahá'ís in India. The religion came to India from Iran in about 1850 and gained some converts from the Muslim population of India. The first Sikh and Hindu converts came by 1910, and in 1960 there were fewer than 1,000 Bahá'ís in all of India. Beginning in 1961, large numbers from scheduled castes became Bahá'ís, and by 1993 Bahá'ís reported about 2.2 million members, though later sources have claimed 2 million, or "more than 1 million". Sanamahism is the indigenous religion of Meitei community in Manipur which they follow along with Vaishnavism.

Atheism Around 2.9 million people in India did not state their religion in the 2011 census and were counted in the category, "religion not stated". They were 0.24% of India's population. Their number have significantly increased 4 times from 0.7 million in 2001 census at an average annual rate of 15%. K. Veeramani, a Dravidar Kazhagam leader, said that he believed that the number of atheists in India was actually higher as many people don't reveal their atheism out of fear. According to the 2012 WIN-Gallup Global Index of Religion and Atheism report, 81% of Indians were religious, 13% were non-religious, 3% were convinced atheists, and 3% were unsure or did not respond.

Legal status and personal law The preamble to the Constitution of India proclaims India a "sovereign socialist secular democratic republic". The word secular was inserted into the Preamble by the Forty-second Amendment Act of 1976. It mandates equal treatment and tolerance of all religions. India does not have an official state religion; it enshrines the right to practice, preach, and propagate any religion. No religious instruction is imparted in government-supported schools. In *S. R. Bommai v. Union of India*, the Supreme Court of India held that secularism was an integral tenet of the Constitution and that there was separation of state and religion. Freedom of religion is a fundamental right according to the Indian Constitution. The Constitution also suggests a uniform civil code for its citizens as a Directive Principle. This has not been implemented until now as Directive Principles are Constitutionally unenforceable. The Supreme Court has further held that the enactment of a uniform civil code all at once may be counter-productive to the unity of the nation, and only a gradual progressive change should be brought about (*Pannalal Bansilal v State of Andhra Pradesh*, 1996). In *Maharishi Avadesh v Union of India* (1994) the Supreme Court dismissed a petition seeking a writ of mandamus against the government to introduce a common civil code, and thus laid the responsibility of its introduction on the legislature. Major religious communities not based in India continue to be governed by their own personal

laws. While Muslims, Christians, Zoroastrians, and Jews have personal laws exclusive to themselves; Hindus, Jains, Buddhists, and Sikhs are governed by a single personal law known as Hindu personal law. Article 25 (2)(b) of the Constitution of India states that references to Hindus include "persons professing the Sikh, Jain, or Buddhist religion". Furthermore, the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 defines the legal status of Jains, Buddhists, and Sikhs as legal Hindus but not "Hindus by religion". Supreme Court in 2005 gave verdict that Jains, Sikhs, and Buddhist are part of broader Hindu fold, as they are Indic religions and interconnected to each other, though they are distinct religions.

Aspects Religion plays a major role in the Indian way of life. Rituals, worship, and other religious activities are very prominent in an individual's daily life; it is also a principal organiser of social life. The degree of religiosity varies among individuals; in recent decades, religious orthodoxy and observances have become less common in Indian society, particularly among young urban-dwellers.

Rituals The vast majority of Indians engage in religious rituals daily. Most Hindus observe religious rituals at home. Observation of rituals vary greatly among regions, villages, and individuals. Devout Hindus perform daily chores such as worshiping puja, fire sacrifice called Yajna at the dawn after bathing (usually at a family shrine, and typically includes lighting a lamp and offering foods before the images of deities), recitation from religious scripts like Vedas, and Puranas singing hymns in praise of gods. A notable feature in religious ritual is the division between purity and pollution. Religious acts presuppose some degree of impurity, or defilement for the practitioner, which must be overcome or neutralised, before or during ritual procedures. Purification, usually with water, is thus a typical feature of most religious action. Other characteristics include a belief in the efficacy of sacrifice and concept of merit, gained through the performance of charity or good works, that will accumulate over time and reduce sufferings in the next world. Muslims offer five daily prayers at specific times of the day, indicated by adhan (call to prayer) from the local mosques. Before offering prayers, they must ritually clean themselves by performing wudu, which involves washing parts of the body that are generally exposed to dirt or dust. A recent study by the Sachar Committee found that 3-4% of Muslim children study in madrasas (Islamic schools).

Diet Dietary habits in India are significantly influenced by religion. According to a survey, 31% of Indian population claims to be vegetarian, and mainly practice lacto-vegetarianism. Vegetarianism is less common among Sikhs, Muslims, Christians, Bah'is, Parsis, and Jews. Despite the majority of population having no objection to meat consumption, globally India has the lowest meat consumption per capita. Non-vegetarian Indians mostly prefer poultry, fish, other seafood, goat, and sheep as their sources of meat. Hinduism forbids beef while Islam forbids pork. The smaller populations of Christians, tribals, and some dalit communities have no objection to eating either beef or pork. Jainism requires followers, from all its sects and traditions, to be vegetarian. Furthermore, the religion also forbids Jains from eating any vegetable that involves digging it from the ground. This rule, therefore, excludes all root vegetables such as potatoes, sweet potatoes, ginger, carrots, garlic, radishes, etc. from a Jain diet.

Ceremonies Occasions like birth, marriage, and death involve what are often elaborate sets of religious customs. In Hinduism, major life-cycle rituals include annaprashan (a baby's first intake of solid food), upanayanam ("sacred thread ceremony" undergone by boys belonging to some upper-castes such as Brahmin and Kshatriya only), and shraadh (paying homage to a deceased individual). According to the findings of a 1995 national research paper, for most people in India, a betrothal of a young couple placing an expectation upon an exact date and time of a future wedding was a matter decided by the parents in consultation with astrologers. A significant reduction in the proportion of arranged marriages has however taken place since 1995, reflecting an

incremental change. Muslims practice a series of life-cycle rituals that differ from those of Hindus, Jains, and Buddhists. Several rituals mark the first days of life-including the whispering call to prayer, first bath, and shaving of the head. Religious instruction begins early. Male circumcision usually takes place after birth; in some families, it may be delayed until after the onset of puberty. Marriage requires a payment by the husband to the wife, called Meher, and the solemnisation of a marital contract in a social gathering. After the burial of the dead, friends and relatives gather to console the bereaved, read and recite the Quran, and pray for the soul of the deceased. Indian Islam is distinguished by the emphasis it places on shrines commemorating great Sufi saints.

Pilgrimages Many Hindu families have their own family patron deity or the kuladevata. This deity is common to a lineage or a clan of several families who are connected to each other through a common ancestor. The Khandoba of Jejuri is an example of a Kuladevata of some Maharashtrian families; he is a common Kuladevata to several castes ranging from Brahmins to Dalits. The practice of worshipping local or territorial deities as Kuladevata began in the period of the Yadava dynasty. Other family deities of the people of Maharashtra are Bhavani of Tuljapur, Mahalaxmi of Kolhapur, Renuka of Mahur, and Balaji of Tirupati. India hosts numerous pilgrimage sites belonging to many religions. Hindus worldwide recognise several Indian holy cities, including Allahabad (officially known as Prayagraj), Haridwar, Varanasi, Ujjain, Rameshwaram, and Vrindavan. Notable temple cities include Puri, which hosts a major Jagannath temple and Rath Yatra celebration; Tirumala - Tirupati, home to the Tirumala Venkateswara Temple; and Katra, home to the Vaishno Devi temple. Badrinath, Puri, Dwarka, and Rameswaram compose the main pilgrimage circuit of Char Dham (four abodes) hosting the four holiest Hindu temples: Badrinath Temple, Jagannath Temple, Dwarkadheesh Temple and Ramanathaswamy Temple, respectively. The Himalayan towns of Badrinath, Kedarnath, Gangotri, and Yamunotri compose the smaller Chota Char Dham (mini four abodes) pilgrimage circuit. The Kumbh Mela (the "pitcher festival") is one of the holiest of Hindu pilgrimages that is held every four years; the location is rotated among Allahabad (Prayagraj), Haridwar, Nashik, and Ujjain. The Thalaimaipathi at Swamithope is the leading pilgrim center for the Ayyavazhis. Seven of the Eight Great Places of Buddhism are in India. Bodhi Gaya, Sarnath, and Kushinagar are the places where important events in the life of Gautama Buddha took place. Sanchi hosts a Buddhist stupa erected by the emperor Ashoka. Many Buddhist monasteries dot the Himalayan foothills of India, where Buddhism remains a major presence. These include the Rumtek Monastery, Enchey Monastery, and Pemayangtse Monastery in Sikkim, the Tawang Monastery in Arunachal Pradesh, the Kye Monastery and Tabo Monastery in Spiti, the Ghum Monastery in Darjeeling, and Durpin Dara Monastery in Kalimpong, the Thikse Monastery in Leh, the Namgyal Monastery in Dharamshala, among many others. For Sunni Muslims, the Dargah Shareef of Khwaza Moinuddin Chishti in Ajmer is a major pilgrimage site. Other Islamic pilgrimages include those to the Tomb of Sheikh Salim Chishti in Fatehpur Sikri, Jama Masjid in Delhi, and to Haji Ali Dargah in Mumbai. Dilwara Temples in Mount Abu, Palitana, Pavapuri, Girnar, and Shravanabelagola are notable pilgrimage sites (tirtha) in Jainism. The Harmandir Sahib in Amritsar is the most sacred gurdwara of Sikhism. Relatively new pilgrimage sites include the samadhi of Meher Baba in Meherabad, which is visited by his followers from around the world and the Saibaba temple in Shirdi.

Minority beliefs and sects Hinduism contains many different sub-cultures just like most other religions. The major aspects outlined above hold true for the majority of the Hindu population, but not all. Just as each state is home to an individual language, Hinduism harbours various sub-cultures whose traditions may or may not be shared by other Indians. A sect from Gujarat called the Prajapatis for example, holds water as the sacred ornament to every meal. Before and after a meal, an individual is expected to pour water in the palms of their right hand and sip the water three times. This is often seen as a purification gesture: food is regarded as being holy and every individual must purify themselves before touching their food. Other minor sects in India carry no specific name, but they are uniquely identified by the last names of each family. This convention is used more

frequently in South India than in North India. For example, a relatively prominent sect in southern India prohibits making important decisions, commencing new tasks, and doing other intellectually or spiritually engaged actions after sunset. Historians believe that this tradition was derived from the concept of Rahukaalam, in which Hindus believe that a specific period of the day is inauspicious. Stringent family beliefs are thought to have led to the development of a more constrained religious hierarchy. Over time, this belief was extended to discourage taking major actions and even staying awake for long periods after sunset. Examples of families which follow this tradition include Gudivada, Padalapalli, Pantham, and Kashyap.

Religiosity India has a population of 123 crore per a 2012 demographic survey by Indian government. According to the 2012 WIN-Gallup Global Index of Religion and Atheism report, 81% of Indians were religious, 13% were non-religious, 3% were convinced atheists, and 3% were unsure or did not respond. Cambridge University Press in 2004 demographic study, have found that there are 102.87 million atheists and agnostics living in India, thus constituting 9.1% of the total population, out of total 1.1296 billion people respectively.

Religion and politics Politics Religious politics, particularly that expressed by the Hindutva movement, has strongly influenced Indian politics in the last quarter of the 20th century. Many of the elements underlying India's casteism and communalism originated during the colonial era, when the colonial government frequently politicised religion in an attempt to stave off increasing nationalistic sentiments in India. The Indian Councils Act 1909 (widely known as the Morley-Minto Reforms Act), which established separate Hindu and Muslim electorates for the Imperial Legislature and provincial councils, was particularly divisive, increasing tensions between the two communities. Due to the high degree of oppression faced by the lower castes, the Constitution of India included provisions for affirmative action for certain sections of Indian society. Many states ruled by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) introduced laws that made conversion more difficult; they assert that such conversions are often forced or allured. The BJP, a national political party, also gained widespread media attention after its leaders associated themselves with the Ram Janmabhoomi movement and other prominent religious issues. A well-known accusation that Indian political parties make for their rivals is that they play vote bank politics, meaning give political support to issues for the sole purpose of gaining the votes of members of a particular community. Both the Congress Party and the BJP have been accused of exploiting the people by indulging in vote bank politics. The Shah Bano case, a divorce lawsuit, generated much controversy when the Congress was accused of appeasing the Muslim orthodoxy by bringing in a parliamentary amendment to negate the Supreme Court's decision. After the 2002 Gujarat violence, there were allegations of political parties indulging in vote bank politics. All the political parties in India are known to grant money to the State Waqf Boards to appease a particular community. Caste-based politics is also important in India; caste-based discrimination and the reservation system continue to be major issues that are hotly debated.

Communalism Communalism has played a key role in shaping the religious history of modern India. After Indian independence in 1947, India was partitioned along religious lines into two states-the Muslim-majority Dominion of Pakistan (comprising what is now the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the People's Republic of Bangladesh) and the Hindu-majority Union of India (later the Republic of India). The partition led to rioting among Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs in Punjab, Bengal, Delhi, and other parts of India; 500,000 died as a result of the violence. The twelve million refugees that moved between the newly founded nations of India and Pakistan composed one of the largest mass migrations in modern history. Since its independence, India has periodically witnessed large-scale violence sparked by underlying tensions between sections of its majority Hindu and minority Muslim communities. The Republic of India is secular; the Indian government recognises no official religion.

Communal conflicts Communal conflicts have periodically plagued India since it became independent in 1947. The roots of such strife lie largely in the underlying tensions between sections of its majority Hindu and minority Muslim communities, which emerged under the Raj and during the bloody Partition of India. Such conflict also stems from the competing ideologies of Hindu nationalism versus Islamic fundamentalism; both are prevalent in parts of the Hindu and Muslim populations. This issue has plagued India since before independence. The lack of education among the masses and the ease with which corrupt politicians can take advantage of the same has been attributed as the major reason for religious conflicts in India. Even though Freedom of religion is an integral part of the India constitution, the inability to hold a communal mob accountable for its collective actions has limited the exercise of religious freedom in India. Alongside other major Indian independence leaders, Mahatma Gandhi and his Shanti sainiks ("peace soldiers") worked to quell early outbreaks of religious conflict in Bengal, including riots in Calcutta (now in West Bengal) and Noakhali District (in modern-day Bangladesh) that accompanied Muhammad Ali Jinnah's Direct Action Day, which was launched on 16 August 1946. These conflicts, waged largely with rocks and knives and accompanied by widespread looting and arson, were crude affairs. Explosives and firearms, which are rarely found in India, were far less likely to be used. Major post-independence communal conflicts include the 1984 Anti-Sikh riots, which followed Operation Blue Star by the Indian Army; heavy artillery, tanks, and helicopters were employed against the Sikh partisans inside the Harmandir Sahib, causing heavy damage to Sikhism's holiest Gurdwara. According to the Indian government estimates, the assault caused the deaths of up to 100 soldiers, 250 militants, and hundreds of civilians. This triggered Indira Gandhi's assassination by her outraged Sikh bodyguards on 31 October 1984, which set off a four-day period during which Sikhs were massacred; The Government of India reported 2,700 Sikh deaths however human rights organisations and newspapers report the death toll to be 10,000-17,000. In the aftermath of the riot, the Government of India reported 20,000 had fled the city, however the PUCL reported "at least" 50,000 displaced persons. The most affected regions were neighbourhoods in Delhi. Human rights organisations and the newspapers believe the massacre was organised. The collusion of political officials in the massacres and the failure to prosecute any killers alienated normal Sikhs and increased support for the Khalistan movement. The Akal Takht, the governing religious body of Sikhism, considers the killings to be a genocide. Other incidents include the 1992 Bombay riots that followed the demolition of the Babri Mosque as a result of the Ayodhya debate, and the 2002 Gujarat violence where 790 Muslims and 254 Hindus were killed and which was preceded by the Godhra Train Burning. Lesser incidents plague many towns and villages; the representative was the killing of five people in Mau, Uttar Pradesh, during Hindu-Muslim rioting, which was triggered by the proposed celebration of a Hindu festival.

See also Dalit Buddhist movement List of Hindu festivals Religion in Kerala Religious violence in India Violence against Muslims in independent India

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Science and technology in India

After independence, Jawaharlal Nehru, the first prime minister of India, initiated reforms to promote higher education and science and technology in India. The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-conceived by a 22-member committee of scholars and entrepreneurs in order to promote technical education-was inaugurated on 18 August 1951 at Kharagpur in West Bengal by the minister of education Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. More IITs were soon opened in Bombay, Madras, Kanpur and Delhi as well in the late 1950s and early 1960s along with the Regional Engineering Colleges (RECs) (now National Institutes of Technology (NIT)). Beginning in the 1960s, close ties with the Soviet Union enabled ISRO to rapidly develop the Indian space program and advance nuclear power in India even after the first nuclear test explosion by India on 18 May 1974 at Pokhran. India accounts for about 10% of all expenditure on research and development in Asia and the number of scientific publications grew by 45% over the five years to 2007. However, according to former Indian science and technology minister Kapil Sibal, India is lagging in science and technology compared to developed countries. India has only 140 researchers per 1,000,000 population, compared to 4,651 in the United States. India invested US\$3.7 billion in science and technology in 2002-2003. For comparison, China invested about four times more than India, while the United States invested approximately 75 times more than India on science and technology. Research and development spending grew to US\$17.2 Billion in 2020-2021. While India has increased its output of scientific papers fourfold between 2000 and 2015 overtaking Russia and France in absolute number of papers per year, that rate has been exceeded by China and Brazil; Indian papers generate fewer cites than average, and relative to its population it has few scientists. In the quality-adjusted Nature Index India was ranked ninth worldwide in 2023 and recorded faster growth than China in this year, albeit from a lower base. India is ranked 39th in the Global Innovation Index in 2024.

History 1947-1967 India aimed "to convert India's economy into that of a modern state and to fit her into the nuclear age and do it quickly." It was understood that India had not been at the forefront of the Industrial Revolution, and hence made an effort to promote higher education, and science and technology in India. The Planning Commission (1950) fixed investment levels, prescribed priorities, divided funds between agriculture and industry, and divided resources between the state and the federal governments. The result of the efforts between 1947 and 1962 saw the area under irrigation increase by 45 million acres (180,000 km²), food production rise by 34 million metric tons, installed power generating capacity increase by 79 million kilowatts, and an overall increase of 94 percent in industrial production. The enormous population rise, however, would balance the gains. The economically beleaguered country was nevertheless able to build a large scientific workforce, second in numbers only to that of the United States and the Soviet Union. Education-provided by the government of India-was free and compulsory up to the Age of 14. More emphasis was paid to the enhancement of vocational and technical skills. J.P. Naik, member-secretary of the Indian Education Commission, commented on the educational policies of the time:

The main justification for the larger outlay on educational reconstruction is the hypothesis that education is the most important single factor that leads to economic growth [based on] the development of science and technology.

On 18 August 1951 the minister of education Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, inaugurated the Indian Institute of Technology at Kharagpur in West Bengal. Possibly modeled after the Massachusetts Institute of Technology these institutions were conceived by a 22-member committee of scholars and entrepreneurs under the

chairmanship of N.R. Sarkar. The Sino-Indian war (1962) came as a rude awakening to military preparedness. Military cooperation with the Soviet Union-partially aimed at developing advanced military technology-was pursued during subsequent years. The Defence Research and Development Organisation was formed in 1958. Radio broadcasting was initiated in 1927 but became state responsibility only in 1930. In 1947 it was given the name All India Radio and since 1957 it has been called Akashvani. Limited duration of television programming began in 1959, and complete broadcasting followed in 1965. The Indian Government acquired the EVS EM computers from the Soviet Union, which were used in large companies and research laboratories.

1967-1985 The roots of nuclear power in India lie in the early acquisition of nuclear reactor technology from several western countries, particularly the American support for the Tarapur Atomic Power Station and Canada's CANDU reactors. The peaceful policies of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi may have delayed the inception of nuclear technology in India. Stanley Wolpert (2008) describes the measures taken by the Indian government to increase agricultural output: The Indian space program received only financial support from the Soviet Union, which helped the Indian Space Research Organisation achieve aims such as establishing the Thumba Equatorial Rocket Launching Station, launching remote sensing satellites, developing India's first satellite-Aryabhata, and sending astronauts into space. India sustained its nuclear program during the aftermath of Operation Smiling Buddha, the country's first nuclear tests. Though the roots of the Steel Authority of India Ltd. lie in Hindustan Steel Private Limited (1954), the events leading up to the formation of the modern avatar are described below:

The Ministry of Steel and Mines drafted a policy statement to evolve a new model for managing industry. The policy statement was presented to the Parliament on 2 December 1972. On this basis, the concept of creating a holding company to manage inputs and outputs under one umbrella was mooted. This led to the formation of Steel Authority of India Ltd. The company, incorporated on 24 January 1973 with an authorized capital of Rs. 2000 crore, was made responsible for managing five integrated steel plants at Bhilai, Bokaro, Durgapur, Rourkela and Burnpur, the Alloy Steel Plant and the Salem Steel Plant. In 1978 SAIL was restructured as an operating company. In 1981, the Indian Antarctic Programme was started when the first Indian expedition was flagged off for Antarctica from Goa. More missions were subsequently sent each year to India's base Dakshin Gangotri.

1986-1990 Indian agriculture benefited from the developments made in the field of biotechnology, for which the Department of Biotechnology was created in 1986 under the Ministry of Science and Technology. Both the Indian private sector and the government have invested in the medical and agricultural applications of biotechnology. Massive biotech parks were established in India while the government provided tax deduction for research and development under biotechnological firms.

1991-2000 The Indian economy underwent economic reforms in 1991, leading to a new era of globalisation and international economic integration. Economic growth of over 6% annually was seen between 1993 and 2002. In the same year a new permanent Antarctic base Maitri was founded and remains in operation till today.

2001-present On 25 June 2002, India and the European Union agreed to bilateral cooperation in the field of science and technology. A joint EU-India group of scholars was formed on 23 November 2001 to further promote joint research and development. Since 2017, India has held the Associate Member State status at the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN), while a joint India-EU Software Education and Development Centre is due at Bangalore. Certain scientists and activists, such as Massachusetts Institute of

Technology (MIT) systems scientist VA Shiva Ayyadurai, blame caste for holding back innovation and scientific research in India, making it difficult to sustain progress while regressive social organisation prevails. In addition, corruption and inefficiencies in the research sector have resulted in corruption scandals and undermine innovation initiatives. Bangalore is considered to be the technological capital of India. IT, biotechnology, aerospace, nuclear science, manufacturing technology, automobile engineering, chemical engineering, ship building, space science, electronics, computer science and other medical science related research and development are occurring on a large scale in the country.

India's science and technology policy The Government of India has passed four policy documents on science and technology:

Science Policy Resolution 1958 Technology Policy Statement 1983 Science and Technology Policy 2003 Science, Technology, and Innovation Policy 2013 The fifth policy, the National Science, Technology, and Innovation Policy, is in the draft and public consultation stage.

Space exploration Mars Orbit Mission The Mars Orbiter Mission, also called "Mangalyaan", was launched on 5 November 2013 by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). It is India's first interplanetary mission, making ISRO the fourth space agency to reach Mars, after the Soviet space program, NASA, and the European Space Agency. The first Asian nation to reach Mars orbit and the first nation to do so on its first attempt was India.

Chandrayaan programme On 18 November 2008, the Moon Impact probe was released from Chandrayaan-1 at a height of 100 km (62 mi). During its 25-minute descent, Chandra's Altitudinal Composition Explorer (CHACE) recorded evidence of water in 650 mass spectra readings gathered during this time. On 24 September 2009 Science journal reported that the Chandrayaan-1 had detected water ice on the Moon. Chandrayaan-2 was launched on 22 July 2019. It was a partial success: The team wanted to send an additional lander with rover Vikram with the original orbiter in it, to mark India's terrestrial presence on Moon, but the signal connection was lost about 2.1 km (1.3 mi) above the lunar surface. Over several months the team tried to resume contact with lander, but ended up with no success. Later, by the late February 2020, it was claimed that an Indian software engineer from Chennai living in USA studied the NASA data of the proposed crash site and found the Lander. Chandrayaan-3 is the next planned mission of sending only the lander with rover inside on the Moon, with the Japan's JAXA. It was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Gaganyaan Gaganyaan is a future planned, "in development process" space module to send the Indian astronauts into space, who are being trained in Russia. The plan is to establish a new "space station" other than the ISS. India has kept itself from being part of the program, to show its "self reliance". The program was also, delayed due to the pandemic of COVID-19.

Thirty Meter Telescope The Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) is a planned, eighteen story, astronomical observatory and extremely large telescope to be built on the summit of Mauna Kea in the state of Hawaii. The TMT is designed for near-ultraviolet to mid-infrared (0.31 to 28 μm wavelength) observations, featuring adaptive optics to assist in correcting image blur. The TMT will be at the highest altitude of all the proposed Extremely Large Telescopes (ELT). The telescope has government-level support from several R&D spending nations: China, Japan, Canada and India.

Institutions and facilities Science academies in India The idea of science academies in India has evolved along with the Indian independence movement. The three major science academies; Indian National Science Academy, Indian Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Sciences, India were all founded in the pre-independence era (pre-1947) between 1930 and 1935. Indian Academy of Sciences Also colloquially referred to as the "Bangalore Academy", Indian Academy of Sciences (IAS) was founded in 1934 by C. V. Raman, a Nobel laureate in physics of his time in Bangalore (now Bengaluru), Karnataka (formerly known as the State of Mysore), India. ■■ National Academy of Sciences, India The founder and first president of the National Academy of Sciences, India (NASI) was Meghnad Saha in 1930 in Allahabad (Prayag), Uttar Pradesh, India. Indian National Science Academy Founded in 1935 based on a proposal by the Indian Science Congress Association (ISCA) and National Institute of Science of India (NISI) with Meghnad Saha's blessings, Indian National Science Academy (INSA) is based in New Delhi, India. According to its charter, the historical aim of INSA was to be similar to the Royal Society, London, a gathering of learned people to exchange ideas and further science.

Biosafety facilities in India Performance of Indian students in International Science Olympiads India's rank based on number of Gold Medals in last 10 years (2014-2023):

Physics - 9th Chemistry - 11th Biology - 14th Mathematics - 21st

See also Biotechnology in India History of science and technology in the Indian subcontinent List of Indian inventions Communications in India History of Science and Technology in India Open access in India Science and Engineering Research Board Science and technology studies in India Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India List of science centers in India

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Indian Armed Forces

The Indian Armed Forces are the military forces of the Republic of India. It consists of three professional uniformed services: the Indian Army, the Indian Navy, and the Indian Air Force. Additionally, the Indian Armed Forces are supported by the Central Armed Police Forces, the Indian Coast Guard, and the Special Frontier Force and various inter-service commands and institutions such as the Strategic Forces Command, the Andaman and Nicobar Command, and the Integrated Defence Staff. The President of India is the Supreme Commander of the Indian Armed Forces but the executive authority and responsibility for national security is vested in the Prime Minister of India and their chosen Cabinet Ministers. The Indian Armed Forces are under the management of the Ministry of Defence of the Government of India. With strength of over 1.4 million active personnel, it is the world's second-largest military force and has the world's largest volunteer army. It also has the third-largest defence budget in the world. The Indian Armed Forces have been engaged in a number of major military operations, including: the Indo-Pakistani wars of 1947, 1965, and 1971, the Portuguese-Indian War, the Sino-Indian War, the Indo-China War of 1967, the Kargil War, the Siachen conflict, and the 2025 India-Pakistan conflict among others. India honours its armed forces and military personnel annually on Armed Forces Flag Day, 7 December. Armed with the nuclear triad, the Indian Armed Forces are steadily undergoing modernisation, with investments in areas such as futuristic soldier systems and ballistic missile defence systems. The Department of Defence Production of the Ministry of Defence is responsible for the indigenous production of equipment used by the Indian Armed Forces. It comprises 16 Defence PSUs. India remains one of the largest importer of defence equipment with Russia, Israel, France and the United States being the top foreign suppliers of military equipment. The Government of India, as part of the Make in India initiative, seeks to indigenise manufacturing and reduce dependence on imports for defence.

History India has one of the longest military histories, dating back several millennia. The first reference to armies is found in the Vedas as well as the epics Ramayana and Mahabharata. Classical Indian texts on archery in particular, and martial arts in general are known as Dhanurveda.

Ancient to medieval era Indian maritime history dates back 5,000 years. The first tidal dock is believed to have been built at Lothal around 2300 BC during the Indus Valley civilisation period, near the present day port of Mangrol on the Gujarat coast. The Rig Veda written around 1500 BC, credits Varuna with knowledge of the ocean routes and describes naval expeditions. There is reference to the side wings of a vessel called Plava, which gives the ship stability in storm conditions. A compass, Matsya yantra was used for navigation in the fourth and fifth century AD. The earliest known reference to an organisation devoted to ships in ancient India is in the Mauryan Empire from the 4th century BC. Powerful militaries included those of the: Maurya, Satavahana, Chola, Vijayanagara, Mughal and Maratha empires. Emperor Chandragupta Maurya's mentor and advisor Chanakya's Arthashastra devotes a full chapter on the state department of waterways under navadhyaksha (Sanskrit for Superintendent of ships) . The term, nava dvipantaragamanam (Sanskrit for "sailing to other lands by ships," i.e. exploration) appears in this book in addition to appearing in the Vedic text, Baudhayana Dharmashastra as the interpretation of the term, Samudrasamyamam.

Sea lanes between India and neighbouring lands were used for trade for many centuries, and are responsible for the widespread influence of Indian Culture on other societies. The Cholas excelled in foreign trade and maritime activity, extending their influence overseas to China and Southeast Asia. During the 17th and 18th centuries, the Maratha and Kerala fleets were expanded, and became the most powerful Naval Forces in the

subcontinent, defeating European navies at various times (See the Battle of Colachel). The fleet review of the Maratha navy, at which the ships Pal and Qalbat participated, took place at the Ratnagiri fort. The Maratha Kanhoji Angre, and Kunjali Marakkar, the Naval chief of Saamoothiri were two notable naval chiefs of the period.

British India (1857 to 1947) The Royal Indian Navy was first established by the British while much of India was under the control of the East India Company. In 1892, it became a maritime component as the Royal Indian Marine (RIM). During World War I the Indian Army contributed a number of divisions and independent brigades to the European, Mediterranean and Middle Eastern theatres of war. One million Indian troops served overseas; 62,000 died and another 67,000 were wounded. In total, 74,187 Indian soldiers died during the war. It fought against the German Empire in German East Africa and on the Western Front. Indian divisions were also sent to Egypt, Gallipoli and nearly 700,000 served in Mesopotamia against the Ottoman Empire.

Following WWI, the Indian Armed Forces underwent significant transformation. In 1928, Engineer Sub-lieutenant D. N. Mukherji became the first Indian to receive a commission in the Royal Indian Marine. In 1932, the Indian Air Force was established as an auxiliary air force within RAF India; two years later, the RIM was upgraded to the status of a naval service as the Royal Indian Navy (RIN). Though the gradual "Indianisation" of the officer corps began after WWI, at the outbreak of war in 1939, there were no Indian flag, general or air officers in the armed services. The highest-ranking Indian officers were those serving in the non-combatant Indian Medical Service, who held no rank higher than colonel; in the regular Indian Army, there were no Indian officers above the rank of major. The Royal Indian Navy had no Indian senior line officers and only a single Indian senior engineer officer, while the Indian Air Force had no Indian senior officers in 1939, with the highest-ranking Indian air force officer a flight lieutenant. In World War II, the Indian Army began the war in 1939 with just under 200,000 men. By the end of the war it had become the largest volunteer army in history, rising to over 2.5 million men by August 1945. Serving in divisions of infantry, armour and a fledgling airborne forces, they fought on three continents in Africa, Europe and Asia. The Indian Army fought in Ethiopia against the Italian Army, in Egypt, Libya and Tunisia against both the Italian and German Army, and, after the Italian surrender, against the German Army in Italy. However, the bulk of the Indian Army was committed to fighting the Japanese Army, first during the British defeats in Malaya and the retreat from Burma to the Indian border; later, after resting and refitting for the victorious advance back into Burma, as part of the largest British Empire army ever formed. These campaigns cost the lives of over 36,000 Indian servicemen, while another 34,354 were wounded; 67,340 became prisoners of war. Their valour was recognised with the award of some 4,000 decorations, and 38 members of the Indian Army were awarded the Victoria Cross or the George Cross.

The demands of war and increasing recognition that the era of British dominance in the subcontinent was ending increased the pace of "Indianisation." In 1940, Subroto Mukherjee (later the first Indian C-in-C and Chief of the Air Staff) became the first Indian to command an air force squadron and attain the (albeit acting) rank of squadron leader. In July 1941, Indian Medical Service officer Hiraji Cursetji became one of the first Indian officers to be promoted to substantive general officer rank. During the war, several Indian Army officers, notably Kodandera M. Cariappa, S. M. Shrinagesh and Kodandera Subayya Thimayya, all of whom would subsequently command the Indian Army, achieved distinction as the first Indian battalion and brigade commanders. On 1 May 1945, Cariappa became the first Indian officer to be promoted to brigadier.

At the end of hostilities in 1945, the Indian Army's officer corps included Indian Medical Service officer Hiraji Cursetji as its sole Indian major-general, one IMS brigadier, three Indian brigadiers in combatant arms and 220 other Indian officers in the temporary or acting ranks of colonel and lieutenant-colonel. From October 1945, the

granting of regular commissions in the Indian Armed Forces was restricted to Indians, though provisions were made for the continued secondment of British officers for as long as was deemed necessary. In 1946, sailors of the Royal Indian Navy mutinied on board ships and in shore establishments. A total of 78 ships, 20 shore establishments and 20,000 sailors were involved in the rebellion, which had an impact across India. Indianization of the armed forces nevertheless continued to progress. On 15 May 1947, Subroto Mukherjee became the first Indian air officer with the acting rank of air commodore, in the appointment of Deputy Assistant to the Air Officer Commanding (Administration). On 21 July, H.M.S. Choudhry and Bhaskar Sadashiv Soman, both of whom would eventually command the Pakistani and Indian Navies, respectively, became the first Indian Royal Indian Navy officers to be promoted to acting captain. On 30 July, Brigadiers K.M. Cariappa, Muhammad Akbar Khan and Maharaj Shri Rajendrasinhji Jadeja were promoted major-generals, the first Indian general officers in a combat arm of the Indian Army.

Dominion of India (1947-1950) The period immediately following Indian independence was a traumatic time for India and her armed services. Along with the newly independent India, the Indian Armed Forces were forcibly divided between India and Pakistan, with ships, divisions and aircraft allocated to the respective Dominions. Following partition, on 15 August 1947, the Indian Armed Forces comprised:

The Royal Indian Navy (RIN): Four sloops, two frigates, 12 minesweepers, one corvette, one survey vessel, four armed trawlers, four motor minesweepers, four harbour defence launches and all landing craft of the pre-Independence RIN. Indian Army: 15 infantry regiments, 12 armoured corps units, 18.5 artillery regiments and 61 engineer units. Of the Nepalese Gorkha regiments formerly attached to the British Indian Army, the 1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th (Royal), 8th and 9th Gorkha Rifles remained in Indian service, with the first and second battalions of the 2nd, 6th, 7th and 10th Gorkha Rifles placed in British Army service. The Royal Indian Air Force (RIAF): Seven fighter squadrons of Hawker Tempest II aircraft and one transport squadron of Douglas Dakota III/IV aircraft. By the end of 1947, there were a total of 13 Indian major-generals and 30 Indian brigadiers, with all three army commands being led by Indian officers by October 1948, at which time only 260 British officers remained in the new Indian Army as advisers or in posts requiring certain technical abilities. With effect from April 1948, the former Viceroy's Commissioned Officers (VCO) were re-designated Junior Commissioned Officers (JCO), the distinction between King's Commissioned Indian Officers (KCIO) and Indian Commissioned Officers (ICO) was abolished and Indian Other Ranks were re-designated as "other ranks." During this period, the armed forces of India were involved in a number of significant military operations, notably the Indo-Pakistani War of 1947 and Operation Polo, the code name of a military operation in September 1948 where the Indian Armed Forces invaded the State of Hyderabad, annexing the state into the Indian Union. On 15 January 1949, General K. M. Cariappa was appointed the first Indian Commander-in-Chief of the Indian army. In February 1949, the Indian government repealed colonial-era legislation which mandated limits on the recruitment of certain ethnic groups into the armed forces.

Republic of India (1950 to present) Upon India becoming a sovereign republic on 26 January 1950, some of the last vestiges of British rule - such as rank badges, imperial crowns, British ensigns and "Royal" monikers - were dropped and replaced with the Indian tricolour and the Lion Capital of Asoka. On 1 April 1951, the remaining units of Imperial Service Troops of the former princely states were integrated with the regular Indian Army, though only a percentage of the former princely states forces were found capable enough to be retained in active service. While India had become a republic, British officers seconded from the British Armed Forces continued to hold senior positions in the Indian Armed Forces into the early 1960s. On 1 April 1954, Air Marshal Subroto Mukherjee became the first Indian Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Air Force. Effective from 1 April 1955, a parliamentary act, the Commanders-In-Chiefs (Change in Designation) Act, re-designated the office of

Commander-in-Chief as the Chief of Staff of each branch. Not until 1958 would the last British chief of staff that of the Indian Navy, be succeeded by an Indian. On 22 April of that year, Vice Admiral Ram Dass Katari became the first Indian Chief of Naval Staff. The Chiefs of Staff of the Indian Air Force and the Indian Navy were upgraded to four-star rank on par with the Chief of Army Staff in 1966 and 1968, respectively. In 1961 tensions rose between India and Portugal over the Portuguese-occupied territory of Goa, which India claimed for itself. After Portuguese police cracked down violently on a peaceful, unarmed demonstration for union with India, the Indian government decided to invade and initiated Operation Vijay. A lopsided air, sea, and ground campaign resulted in the speedy surrender of Portuguese forces. Within 36 hours, 451 years of Portuguese colonial rule ended, and Goa was annexed by India.

India fought four major wars with its neighbour Pakistan in 1947, 1965, 1971 and 1999, and with China in 1962 and 1967. Indian victory over Pakistan in the 1971 war, helped create the free country of Bangladesh. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Pakistan began organising tourist expeditions to the Siachen Glacier, disputed territory with India. Irked by this development, in April 1984 India initiated the successful Operation Meghdoot during which it gained control over all of the 70-kilometre (41-mile)-long Siachen Glacier, and all of its tributary glaciers, as well as the three main passes of the Saltoro Ridge immediately west of the glacier-Sia La, Bilafond La, and Gyong La. According to TIME magazine, India gained more than 1,000 square miles (3,000 km²) of territory as a result of its military operations in Siachen. In 1987 and in 1989 Pakistan attempted to re-take the glacier but was unsuccessful. The conflict ended with Indian Victory. Since 2003, the two sides have maintained a ceasefire and with "cold peace". The Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) carried out a mission in northern and eastern Sri Lanka in 1987-1990 to disarm the Tamil Tigers under the terms of the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord. It was a difficult battle for the Indian Army, which was not trained for an unconventional war. After losing approximately 1,200 personnel and several T-72 tanks, India ultimately abandoned the mission in consultation with the Sri Lankan government. In what was labelled as Operation Pawan, the Indian Air Force flew about 70,000 sorties to and within Sri Lanka. The beginning of the 21st century saw a reorientation for India on the global stage from a regional role in the subcontinent to a major role in the Indian Ocean stretching from the Gulf of Aden to the Malacca Strait. India's sphere of influence has surpassed the South Asian subcontinent, and it has emerged as a regional power and "net security provider" in the Indo-Pacific region.

Overview The headquarters of the Indian Armed Forces is in New Delhi, the capital city of India. The President of India serves as the formal Supreme Commander of the Indian Armed Forces, while actual control lies with the executive headed by the Prime Minister of India. The Ministry of Defence (MoD) is the ministry charged with the responsibilities of countering insurgency and ensuring external security of India. General Upendra Dwivedi is the Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi is the Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS) and Air Chief Marshal Amar Preet Singh is the Chief of the Air Staff (CAS).

Chiefs of the Indian Armed Forces The Indian armed forces are split into different groups based on their region of operation. The Indian Army is divided into six operational commands and one training command, each under the control of a Lieutenant General. The Indian Navy operates three commands. Each command is headed by a flag officer commanding-in-chief with the rank of vice admiral. The Indian Air Force is divided into five operational and two functional commands. Each command is headed by an air officer commanding-in-chief with the rank of air marshal. There are two joint commands whose head can belong to any of the three services. These are the Strategic Forces Command and the Andaman and Nicobar Command. Apart from these, there is an Integrated Defence Staff. The lack of an overall military commander has helped keep the Indian Armed Forces under civilian control and has prevented the rise of military dictatorships unlike in neighboring Pakistan.

The Armed Forces have four main tasks:

To assert the territorial integrity of India. To defend the country if attacked by a foreign nation. To support the civil community in case of disasters (e.g. flooding). To participate in United Nations peacekeeping operations in consonance with India's commitment to the United Nations Charter. The code of conduct of the Indian military is detailed in a semi-official book called Customs and Etiquette in the Services, written by retired Major General Ravi Arora, which details how Indian personnel are expected to conduct themselves generally. Arora is an executive editor of the Indian Military Review. The major deployments of the Indian army constitute the border regions of India, particularly Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, and Northeast India, to engage in counter-insurgency and anti-terrorist operations. The major commitments of the Indian Navy constitute patrol missions, anti-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia, the 'Singapore Indian Maritime Bilateral Exercise' with the Republic of Singapore Navy in the Straits of Malacca, maintaining a military presence in Southeast Asian waters, and joint exercises with other countries, such as: Brasil, South Africa, the United States and Japan, France (Varuna naval exercises), the People's Republic of China, the Russian Navy (INDRA naval exercises), and others.

Between April 2015 and March 2016, India allocated \$40 billion to Defence Services, \$10 billion to Defence (Civil Estimates) and another \$10 billion to the Home Ministry for Paramilitary and CAPF forces - a total allocation for defence and security of about \$60 billion for the financial year 2015-16. In 2016-17, the contribution to the Home Ministry has been increased from \$10 billion to \$11.5 billion. Contemporary criticism of the Indian military have drawn attention to several issues, such as lack of political reform, obsolete equipment, lack of adequate ammunition, and inadequate research and development due to over-reliance on foreign imports. In addition, the lack of a 'strategic culture' among the political class in India is claimed to have hindered the effectiveness of the Indian military. Critics believe these issues hobble the progress and modernisation of the military. However, analysis by the Central Intelligence Agency indicates that India is projected to have the fourth most capable concentration of power by 2015. According to a report published by the US Congress, India is the developing world's leading arms purchaser. It is investing ₹99.7 billion (US\$1.2 billion) to build a dedicated and secure optical fibre cable (OFC) network for exclusive use of the Army, Navy and Air Force. This will be one of the world's largest closed user group (CUG) networks.

Personnel During 2010, the Indian Armed Forces had a reported strength of 1.4 million active personnel and 2.1 million reserve personnel. In addition, there were approximately 1.3 million paramilitary personnel, making it one of the world's largest military forces. A total of 1,567,390 ex- servicemen are registered with the Indian Army, the majority of them hailing from: Uttar Pradesh (271,928), Punjab (191,702), Haryana (165,702), Maharashtra (143,951), Kerala (127,920), Tamil Nadu (103,156), Rajasthan (100,592) and Himachal Pradesh (78,321). Many of them are re-employed in various Central government sectors.

The highest wartime gallantry award given by the Military of India is the Param Vir Chakra (PVC), followed by the Maha Vir Chakra (MVC) and the Vir Chakra (VrC). Their peacetime equivalents are Ashoka Chakra Award, Kirti Chakra and Shaurya Chakra respectively. The highest decoration for meritorious service is the Param Vishisht Seva Medal (PVSM) followed by Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (AVSM) and Vishisht Seva Medal (VSM). Awards for distinguished services rendered in wartime and hostilities are Uttam Yudh Seva Medal (UYSM) and Yudh Seva Medal (YSM).

Women in the armed forces As of December 2021, the percentages of women serving across all ranks in the Army, Navy and Air Force are 0.59%, 6.0% and 1.08%, respectively. Women may serve at any rank in the Army and Air Force but may only serve in the Navy as commissioned officers. During the British Raj, the Temporary Indian Nursing Service was established in 1914 to meet the nursing needs of Indian soldiers serving in the First World War, with female Indian nurses serving as military auxiliaries. The Indian Military Nursing Service (MNS) was formed on 1 October 1926, with its officers integrated into the armed forces on 15 September 1943 and given the status of commissioned officers. Following Independence, apart from those serving in the MNS, women remained ineligible for regular commissions in the armed forces until 1 November 1958, when the restriction on granting permanent commissions to women was removed for those joining the Army Medical Corps. In 1961, Dr. Barbara Ghosh became the first female medical officer to be granted a permanent naval commission. On 27 August 1976, Gertrude Alice Ram, the military nursing service Matron-in-Chief, became the first woman officer in the Indian Army to attain the rank of major-general, and the first female officer in the Indian Armed Forces to attain two-star rank. In January 1992, the Union government sanctioned the induction of women into non-combatant branches of the Army while holding short-service commissions. On 28 November 1992, the Indian Navy became the first armed force to commission women on short-service commissions in non-medical streams (Education, Logistics and Naval Law). The Air Force approved the induction of women officers for ground duties in 1992, with those officers receiving their commissions on 1 June 1993, and opened the flying (non-fighter) and technical branches to women the same year, commissioning its first seven female pilots on 17 December 1994. Until December 1996, women short-service commission officers in the Armed Forces were limited to five years in service, excepting the technical branch of the air force, in which female officers could only serve for three years. In August 1998, the Navy opened all of its branches to women. Punita Arora was appointed Commandant, Armed Forces Medical College on 1 September 2004 in the rank of lieutenant-general, becoming the first woman in the armed forces to reach three-star rank. In September 2008, women became eligible for permanent commissions in the Judge Advocate General (JAG) and Education Corps in all three services, along with the Naval Constructor branch of the Navy and in the Accounts branch of the Air Force. This made them eligible to be promoted by selection in those streams (to the ranks of colonel, captain and group captain, and to the flag ranks), as short-service commissions are relinquished after 14 years of service. In November 2011, women Air Force officers further became eligible for permanent commissions in the Technical, Administration, Logistics and Meteorology Branches.

Branches Recruitment and Training Army (enlisted) The majority of the personnel in the Indian Army are enlisted soldiers, primarily under the Ground Duty (GD) category. These personnel are generally deployed to perform combat or combat related roles. The soldiers are inducted into the army under the Agnipath scheme for four years, and 25% of them are retained after four years as permanent cadre. A GD soldier shall have passed class 10 along with matriculation certificate, and must be a citizen of India or Nepal or a subject of Bhutan. The age of the soldier must be 17 to 21 years, and the candidates shall have no medical ailment or disease and are evaluated for height, weight, vision, hearing, and physical fitness. Fitness tests include a 1.6 km Run, Pull Ups, jumping a 9 Feet ditch, and doing a zig zag balance test.

The army also recruits personnel for technical roles, such as artillery, signals, aviation technician, nursing assistant, etc. These roles require higher educational qualifications, i.e. Class 12 pass from science stream or diploma qualifications. After selection the candidates are sent for Basic Military Training at regimental centres.

Military academies The Indian Armed Forces have set up numerous military academies across India for training personnel. Military Schools, Sainik Schools, and the Rashtriya Indian Military College were founded to broaden the recruitment base of the Defence Forces. The three branches of the Indian Armed Forces jointly operate

several institutions such as: the National Defence Academy (NDA), the Defence Services Staff College (DSSC), the National Defence College (NDC) and the College of Defence Management (CDM) for training its officers. The Armed Forces Medical College (AFMC) is responsible for providing the entire pool of medical staff to the Armed Forces by giving them in-service training. Officer recruitment is through many military-related academies. Besides the tri-service National Defence Academy (NDA) in Pune, the three services have their own training institutes for this purpose. These include: the Indian Military Academy (IMA) in Dehradun, the Indian Naval Academy (INA) in Ezhimala, the Air Force Academy in Dundigal, the Officers Training Academy (OTA) in Chennai and Gaya. Other notable training institutions are the Army War College (AWC) in Mhow, Madhya Pradesh, the High Altitude Warfare School (HAWS) in Gulmarg, Jammu and Kashmir, the Counter Insurgency and Jungle Warfare School (CIJW) in Vairengte, Mizoram, and the College of Military Engineering (CME) in Pune, Maharashtra. After being commissioned, officers are posted and deputed, and are at the helm of affairs not only inside India but also abroad. Officers are appointed and removed only by the President of India.

Overseas bases and relations Farkhor Air Base is a military air base located near the town of Farkhor in Tajikistan, 130 kilometres (81 mi) southeast of the capital Dushanbe. It is operated by the Indian Air Force in collaboration with the Tajikistan Air Force. Farkhor is India's first and only military base outside its territory. There was an unconfirmed report of India building some assets at Ayni Air Base in Tajikistan, although the Tajik government has denied this. However, India had deployed its Army and Border Roads Organisation personnel to upgrade Ayni airbase by extending its runway, constructing an air-traffic control tower and perimeter fencing around the base. India provided medium-lift choppers to Tajikistan and a dedicated hospital there as part of efforts to build on the strategic ties between the two countries against the backdrop of US-led troops pulling out from Afghanistan in 2014. India is also helping with the development of Chah Bahar Seaport in southeastern Iran, which is speculated to be done to secure India's Maritime assets and also as a gateway to Afghanistan & Central Asia. However, India and Israel also have a very strong defence relationship.

In the 1950 Indo-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship, India took on the obligation to actively assist Nepal in national defence and military preparedness, and both nations agreed not to tolerate threats to each other's security. In 1958, the then-Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru visited Bhutan and reiterated India's support for Bhutan's independence and later declared in the Indian Parliament that any aggression against Bhutan would be seen as aggression against India. India started the process to bring the island country Maldives into India's security grid. India is also one of three countries with whom Japan has a security pact, the others being Australia and the United States. India and Russia maintain strong military co-operation. India has defence pacts with the US focusing on areas including security, joint training, joint development and manufacture of defence equipment and technology. In 1951, India and Burma signed a Treaty of Friendship in New Delhi. Article II of the treaty stipulates that "There shall be everlasting peace and unalterable friendship between the two States who shall ever strive to strengthen and develop further the cordial relations existing between the peoples of the two countries." India had signed a pact to develop ports in Myanmar and various bilateral issues, including economic co-operation, connectivity, security and energy. India has a "comprehensive strategic partnership" with UAE. India has maritime security arrangements in place with Oman and Qatar. In 2008, a landmark defence pact was signed, under which India committed its military assets to protect "Qatar from external threats". On 9 June 2012, the JIMEX 2012 naval exercise took place off the coast of Tamil Nadu in India to Tokyo in Japan. This was the first ever bilateral maritime exercise between the two nations in a long time, reflecting their similar interests, especially those involving spontaneous regional security against common external aggressors. The Indian Navy has berthing rights in Oman and Vietnam. As part of its two-decade-old Look East policy, India has substantially stepped up military engagement with East Asian and ASEAN nations. Although never explicitly stated, ASEAN and East Asian nations want New Delhi to be a counterweight to

increasing Chinese footprints in the region. Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia and, particularly, Vietnam and Myanmar have time and again pressed India to help them both in terms of military training and weapons supply. Myanmar's Navy Chief, Vice Admiral Thura Thet Swe during his four-day visit to India in late July 2012 held wide-ranging consultations with top officials from the Indian Ministry of Defence. Apart from increasing the number of training slots of Myanmar officers in Indian military training establishments, India has agreed to build at least four Offshore Patrol Vehicles (OPV) in Indian Shipyards to be used by Myanmar's navy. For more than a decade now, India has assisted Vietnam in beefing up its naval and air capabilities. For instance, India has repaired and upgraded more than 100 MiG 21 planes of the Vietnam People's Air Force and supplied them with enhanced avionics and radar systems. Indian Air Force pilots have also been training their Vietnamese counterparts. In a first, India has offered a \$100-million credit line to Vietnam to purchase military equipment. A bilateral agreement for the use of facilities in India by the Singapore Air Force and Army was signed in October 2007 and August 2008 respectively and has been extended up to 2017. Singapore is the only country to which India is offering such facilities.

Indian Army The Indian Army is a voluntary service, the military draft having never been imposed in India. It is one of the largest standing armies (and the largest standing volunteer army) in the world, with 1,237,000 active troops and 800,000 reserve troops. The force is headed by the Chief of Army Staff, General Upendra Dwivedi. The highest rank in the Indian Army is Field Marshal, but it is a largely ceremonial rank and appointments are made by the President of India, on the advice of the Union Cabinet of Ministers, only in exceptional circumstances. Sam Manekshaw and the K.M. Cariappa are the only two officers who have attained this rank. The army has combat experience in diverse terrains and also has a distinguished history of serving in United Nations peacekeeping operations. India contributes 6000 of its personnel to the UN peacekeeping efforts making it the second largest contributor. The Indian Army has seen military action during the First Kashmir War, Operation Polo, the Sino-Indian War, the Second Kashmir War, the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971, the Sri Lankan civil war and the Kargil War. The Indian Army has participated in several UN peacekeeping operations including those in: Cyprus, Lebanon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola, Cambodia, Vietnam, Namibia, El Salvador, Liberia, Mozambique and Somalia. The army also provided a paramedical unit to facilitate the withdrawal of the sick and wounded in the Korean War.

Doctrine, corps, field force The current combat doctrine of the Indian Army is based on effectively utilising holding formations and strike formations. In the case of an attack, the holding formations would contain the enemy, and strike formations would counter-attack to neutralise enemy forces. In the case of an Indian attack, the holding formations would pin enemy forces down while the strike formations attack at a point of India's choosing. The Indian Army is large enough to devote several corps to the strike role. The army is also looking at enhancing its special forces capabilities. With the role of India increasing, and the need to protect India's interests on far-off shores becoming important, the Indian Army and Indian Navy are jointly planning to set up a marine brigade. The Army's field force comprises fifteen corps, three armoured divisions, four Reorganised Army Plains Infantry Divisions (RAPID), eighteen infantry divisions and ten mountain divisions, a number of independent brigades, and requisite combat support and service support formations and units. Among the fifteen, four are "strike" corps - Mathura (I Corps), Ambala (II Corps), Bhopal (XXI Corps) and Panagarh (XVII Corps). The main combat and combat support units are 68 armoured regiments, and over 350 infantry battalions and 300 artillery regiments (including two surface-to-surface missile (SSM) units). Among major armaments and equipment, there are 4,614 main battle tanks, more than 150,000 vehicles, 140 self-propelled artillery, 3,243 towed artillery, more than 700 rocket artillery (MLRS) in the Indian Army.

Mountain Strike Corps India has raised a new mountain strike corps to strengthen its defence along its disputed border with China in the high reaches of the Himalayas. However, the entire XVII Corps, with its headquarters at Panagarh in West Bengal, will only be fully raised with 90,274 troops at a cost of ₹646.7 billion (equivalent to ₹870 billion or US\$10 billion in 2023) by 2018-19. With units spread across the 4,057 kilometres (2,521 mi) Line of Actual Control (LAC) from Ladakh to Arunachal Pradesh, the corps will have two high-altitude infantry divisions (59 Div at Panagarh and 72 Div at Pathankot) with their integral units, two independent infantry brigades, two armoured brigades and the like. It will include 30 new infantry battalions and two Para-Special Forces battalions. In other words, it will have "rapid reaction force" capability to launch a counter-offensive into Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) in the event of any Chinese attack.

Army Aviation Corps The Army Aviation Corps is another vital part of the Indian Army formed on 1 November 1986. The army aviation pilots are drawn from other combat arms, including artillery officers, to form a composite third dimensional force for an integrated battle. IAF operates and flies attack Helicopters like the Mil Mi-25/Mi-35 which are owned and administered by the Indian Air Force, but under the operational control of the Army and play a major role to support the armoured columns and infantry. Apart from the attack role, helicopters like the HAL Chetak, HAL Cheetah, and HAL Dhruv provide logistical support for the Indian Army in remote and inaccessible areas, especially the Siachen Glacier. To equip Army Aviation Corps, a procurement process for 197 light utility helicopters (LUH) is ongoing, of which 64 will be used in the Army Aviation Corps to replace the Chetak and Cheetah Helicopters. HAL has obtained a firm order to deliver 114 HAL Light Combat Helicopters to the Indian Army.

Modernisation Mechanised forces India is re-organising its mechanised forces to achieve strategic mobility and high-volume firepower for rapid thrusts into enemy territory. At present, the Indian army has severe deficiencies in its artillery (particularly self-propelled guns) and ammunition stocks, not to mention the inability of some of its modern tanks to operate in the heat and dust of the desert regions around the international border. India proposes to progressively induct as many as 248 Arjun MBT and to develop and induct the Arjun MK-II variant, 1,657 Russian-origin T-90S main-battle tanks, apart from the ongoing upgrade of its T-72 fleet. Arjun MK-II trials had already begun in August 2013. The improved features of the MK-II version of Arjun are night vision capabilities with a thermal imaging system for detecting all kinds of missiles, Explosive Reactive Armour (ERA), mine ploughs, the ability to fire anti-tank missiles with its 120 mm main gun, an Advanced Air Defence gun capable of shooting down helicopters with a 360-degree coverage, Automatic Target Tracking (ATT) lending a greater accuracy when it comes to moving targets and superior Laser Warning and Control systems. The Indian Army will upgrade its entire Boyevaya Mashina Pekhoty-2 (BMP-2)/2K infantry combat vehicle (ICV) fleet to enhance their ability to address operational requirements. Upgrades include integration of the latest generation fire control system, twin missile launchers and commander's thermal imaging panoramic sights, anti-tank guided missiles, as well as automatic grenade launchers.

Artillery Under the Field Artillery Rationalisation Plan, the army plans to procure 3000 to 4000 pieces of artillery at a cost of US\$3,000,000,000 (equivalent to \$4,049,571,429 in 2024). This includes purchasing 1580 towed, 814 mounted, 180 self-propelled wheeled, 100 self-propelled tracked and 145 ultra-light 155 mm/52 calibre artillery guns. After three years of searching and negotiations, India ordered M777 155 mm howitzers from USA in September 2013. To lend greater firepower support to the Mechanized infantry, DRDO has developed the Pinaka multiple rocket launcher. The system has a maximum range of 39-40 kilometres (24-25 mi) and can fire a salvo of 12 HE rockets in 44 seconds, neutralising a target area of 3.9 square kilometres (1.5 sq mi). The system is mounted on a Tatra truck for mobility. Pinaka saw service during the Kargil War, where it was successful in neutralising enemy positions on the mountain tops. It has since been inducted into the Indian

Army in large numbers.

Infantry The Indian Army has also embarked on an infantry modernisation programme known as Futuristic Infantry Soldier As a System (F-INSAS). The infantry soldiers will be equipped with modular weapon systems that will have multiple functions. The core systems include bullet proof helmet and visor. The bullet proof helmet is an integrated assembly equipped with helmet mounted flashlight, thermal sensors and night vision device, miniature computer with audio headsets. The personal clothing of the soldier of the future would be lightweight with a bullet-proof jacket. The futuristic jacket would be waterproof, yet it would be able to breathe. The new attire will enable the troops to carry extra loads and resist the impact of nuclear, chemical and biological warfare. The new uniform will have vests with sensors to monitor the soldier's health parameters and to provide quick medical relief. The weapons sub-system is built around a multi-calibre individual weapon system with the fourth calibre attached to a grenade launcher. These include a 5.56 mm, a 7.62 mm and a new 6.8 mm under development for the first time in India. In November 2013, the Indian Army moved a step closer to the battlefield of the future, where command networks know the precise location of every soldier and weapon, with whom generals can exchange reports, photos, data and verbal and written communications. Army headquarters called in 14 Indian companies and issued them an expression of interest (EoI) for developing a Battlefield Management System (BMS). The BMS will integrate combat units - armoured, artillery and infantry regiments, infantry battalions, helicopter flights, etc. - into a digital network that will link together all components of the future battlefield. While precise costs are still unclear, vendors competing for the contract say the army expects to pay about Rs 40,000 crore for developing and manufacturing the BMS. However, in 2015, the Indian Army decided to replace the F-INSAS program in favour of two separate projects. The new program will have two components: one arming the modern infantry soldier with the best available assault rifle, carbines and personal equipment such as the helmet and bulletproof vests, the second part is the Battlefield Management Systems (BMS).

Indian Navy The Indian Navy is the naval branch of the Indian armed forces. With more than 142,000 personnel in total, including 7,000 personnel of the Indian Naval Air Arm, 1,200 Marine Commandos (MARCOS) and 1,000 personnel of the Sagar Prahari Bal. The Indian Navy is one of the world's largest naval forces and developed into a blue water navy. The Indian Navy has a large operational fleet of total 294 vessels consisting of 2 aircraft carriers, 1 amphibious transport dock, 9 Landing ship tanks, 12 destroyers, 12 frigates, 2 nuclear-powered attack submarine, 17 conventionally powered attack submarines, 18 corvettes, 6 mine countermeasure vessels, 4 fleet tankers and 137 patrol vessels.

Ships The Indian navy operates two aircraft carriers- the first is the INS Vikramaditya, a modified Kiev-class ship, and the indigenous INS Vikrant (2013). The navy also operates one Visakhapatnam-class, three Kolkata-class, three Delhi-class and three Rajput-class guided-missile destroyers. The Rajput-class destroyers will be replaced in the near future by the next-generation Visakhapatnam class (Project 15B destroyers). In addition to destroyers, the navy operates several classes of frigates such as three Shivalik (Project 17 class) and six Talwar-class frigates. Seven additional Nilgiri-class (Project 17A-class) frigates are on order. The older Brahmaputra-class frigates will be replaced systematically one by one as the new classes of frigates are brought into service over the next decade. Smaller littoral zone combatants in service are in the form of corvettes, of which, the Indian Navy operates the Kamorta, Kora, Khukri, Veer and Abhay classes. Replenishment tankers such as the Jyoti-class tanker, the Aditya class and the new Deepak-class fleet tankers help improve the navy's endurance at sea. These tankers will be the mainstay of the replenishment fleet until the first half of the 21st century.

Submarines The Indian Navy operates a sizeable fleet of Sindhughosh (Russian Kilo-class design) and Shishumar (German Type 209/1500 design)-class submarines. A nuclear-powered attack submarine INS Chakra has been leased from Russia. India is completing the construction of six Scorpene-class submarines at Mazagon Dockyards Limited (MDL), in Mumbai under technology transfer from French firm DCNS. The new submarines feature air-independent propulsion and started joining the navy towards the end of 2017; four were in service by the end of 2021. Designed for coastal defence against under-water threats, the 1,750-tonne submarine-submarine-killer (SSK) Scorpene is 67 metres (219 ft 10 in) in length and can dive to a depth of 300 metres (980 ft). According to French naval officials, the submarine can stay at sea for 45 days with a crew of 31. The standard version has six torpedo tubes and anti-shiping missile launchers. Another ambitious project in this regard is the nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine manufacture programme - Arihant class.

Weapons systems In the category of weapon systems, the Indian Navy operates K Missile family submarine launched ballistic missiles, the Prithvi-III ballistic ship-launched missile, and a number of land-attack cruise/Anti-ship missiles such as BrahMos Supersonic Cruise Missile, 3M-54E/3M-14E Klub Anti-Ship/Land Attack Cruise Missile (SS-N-27 Sizzler), Kh-35 (SS-N-25 SwitchBlade), P-20 (SS-N-2D Styx), Sea Eagle missile and Gabriel. Nirbhay long-range subsonic cruise missile and BrahMos Hypersonic Cruise Missile are in development. India has also fitted its P-8I Neptune reconnaissance aircraft with all-weather, active-radar-homing, over-the-horizon AGM-84L Harpoon Block II Missiles and Mk 54 All-Up-Round Lightweight Torpedoes. Indian warships' primary air-defence shield is provided by Barak-1 SAM, while an advanced version Barak-8, developed in collaboration with Israel, has entered service. India's next-generation Scorpene-class submarines will be armed with the Exocet anti-ship missile system. Among indigenous missiles, a ship-launched version of Prithvi-II is called the Dhanush, which has a range of 350 kilometres (220 mi) and can carry a nuclear warhead.

Naval Air Arm The Indian Naval Air Arm is a branch of Indian Navy which is tasked to provide an aircraft carrier based strike capability, fleet air defence, maritime reconnaissance, and anti-submarine warfare. Flag Officer Naval Aviation (FONA) at Goa directs the field operations of the air arm. Naval Air Arm operates eight Tu-142 aircraft, which entered service in 1988. Upgrading of the aircraft is taking place, which helps to extend the service life of the aircraft by sixteen years. The BAE Sea Harrier operates from the INS Viraat. The BAE Sea Harrier FRS Mk.51 / T Mk.60 fly with the INAS 300 and INAS 552 squadrons of the Indian Navy. The Mikoyan MiG-29K will be deployed aboard INS Vikramaditya. The Indian Navy operates five Il-38 planes. They are being upgraded to use Sea Dragon suite. Used principally for anti-submarine warfare (ASW) and search and rescue roles, the helicopter fleet of Westland Sea King and the Sikorsky SH-3 Sea King operate from INS Garuda (Kochi) as well as INS Kunjali-II (Mumbai) air stations. 56 more naval utility helicopters are planned to be inducted from 2016. These will be used for surveillance, anti-submarine warfare, electronic intelligence gathering and search and rescue operations. The helicopters will be equipped with 70 mm rocket launchers, 12.7 mm guns, lightweight torpedoes and depth charges. The Indian Navy will also continue to procure HAL Dhruv as a multi-role utility platform. In the long-range maritime reconnaissance (LRMR) role, the navy uses Boeing P-8I Neptune and has issued a global tender for nine medium-range maritime reconnaissance (MRMR) aircraft for coastal defence.

Defence satellite India's first exclusive defence satellite GSAT-7 was successfully launched by European space consortium Arianespace's Ariane 5 rocket from Kourou spaceport in French Guiana in August 2013, giving a major push to the country's maritime security. The Indian Navy is the user of the multi-band, home-built communication spacecraft, which is operational. GSAT-7 was designed and developed by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and is expected to operate for seven years in its orbital slot at 74 degrees east,

providing UHF, S-band, C-band and Ku-band relay capacity. Its Ku-band capacity is expected to provide high-density data transmission facility both for voice and video. This satellite has been provided with additional power to communicate with smaller and mobile (not necessarily land-based) terminals. This dedicated satellite is expected to provide the Indian navy with an approximately 3,500-4,000 kilometres (2,200-2,500 mi) footprint over the Indian Ocean region, and over both the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal region and enable real-time networking of all its operational assets in the water (and land). It also will help the navy to operate in a network-centric atmosphere.

Exercises India often conducts naval exercises with other friendly countries designed to increase naval interoperability and also to strengthen cooperative security relationships. Some exercises take place annually like: the Varuna with the French Navy, Konkan with the Royal Navy, Indra with Russian Navy, Malabar with the US and Japan navies, Simbex with the Republic of Singapore Navy and IBSAMAR with the Brasil and South African navies. In 2007, Indian Navy conducted naval exercise with the Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force and the US Navy in the Pacific and also signed an agreement with Japan in October 2008 for joint naval patrolling in the Asia-Pacific region. India has also held naval exercise with Vietnam, the Philippines and New Zealand. In 2007, India and South Korea decided to conduct annual naval exercises and India participated in the South Korean international fleet review. In addition, the Indian Navy will also be increasing naval co-operation with other allies, particularly with Germany, and Arab states of the Persian Gulf including Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. Indian Navy also took part in the world's largest naval exercise/war-game RIMPAC 2014 along with 22 other nations and has since taken part in RIMPAC each year.

Modernisation In recent years, the Indian Navy has undergone modernisation and expansion with the intention of countering growing Chinese maritime power in the Indian Ocean and reaching the status of a recognised blue-water navy. New equipment programmes include: the lease of a nuclear-powered submarine INS Chakra from Russia, the ex-Soviet carrier INS Vikramaditya and the first of the indigenously built Arihant-class ballistic missile submarines by 2016, the first of the Scorpene-class submarines by 2016 and the indigenously built aircraft carrier INS Vikrant by 2018. The plan in the near future is to have two aircraft carriers at sea at all times, with a third docked up in maintenance. Other programmes include the Talwar and Shivalik frigates and the Kolkata-class destroyers, all of which will be equipped with the BrahMos cruise missile. In a significant step towards India's pursuit for self-reliance in indigenous warship building, four anti-submarine Kamorta-class stealth corvettes with features such as an X Form Hull and inclined sides for low radar cross-section, infra-red suppression, and acoustic quieting systems are being built for the Indian Navy.

Recent induction of the attack submarine INS Chakra, and the development of INS Arihant, make the Indian Navy one of six navies worldwide capable of building and operating nuclear-powered submarines. (Others include: China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States.) India also launched a 37,500-ton indigenous aircraft carrier INS Vikrant in August 2013 in its bid to join a select group of nations - the United States, the United Kingdom, Russia and France - capable of building such warships. It will undergo extensive tests in the next few years before it is commissioned into the navy. INS Vikrant, is expected to carry MiG 29K fighters and light combat aircraft such as the HAL Tejas. India is also set to become the first country to buy a military aircraft from Japan since World War II. India is expected to sign a deal for the purchase of six Utility Seaplane Mark 2 (US-2) amphibian aircraft when Prime Minister Narendra Modi visits Japan from 31 August - 3 September 2014. The 47-tonne US-2 aircraft does not require a long airstrip to take off or to land. It is capable of taking off from land and water (300 metres (330 yd)-stretch). It can carry loads of up to 18 tonnes and can be engaged in search and rescue operations. With a range of over 4,500 kilometres (2,800 mi) it can patrol areas 1,800 kilometres (1,100 mi) away and react to an emergency by landing 30 armed troops even in waves as high

as 10 feet (3.0 m).

Indian Air Force The Indian Air Force is the air arm of the Indian armed forces. Its primary responsibility is to secure Indian airspace and to conduct aerial warfare during a conflict. It was officially established on 8 October 1932 as an auxiliary air force of the British Raj and the prefix Royal was added in 1945 in recognition of its services during World War II. After India achieved independence from the United Kingdom in 1947, the Royal Indian Air Force served the Dominion of India, with the prefix being dropped when India became a republic in 1950. The Indian Air Force plays a crucial role in securing Indian airspace and also in India's power projection in South Asia and Indian Ocean. Therefore, modernising and expanding the Indian Air Force is a top priority for the Indian government. Over the years, the IAF has grown from a tactical force to one with transoceanic reach. The strategic reach emerges from induction of Force Multipliers like Flight Refuelling Aircraft (FRA), Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) and credible strategic lift capabilities.

Aircraft Historically, the IAF has generally relied on Soviet, British, Israeli and French military craft and technology to support its growth. IAF's primary air superiority fighter with the additional capability to conduct air-ground (strike) missions is Sukhoi Su-30MKI. The IAF have placed an order for a total of 272 Su-30MKIs of which 205 are in service as of May 2015. The Mikoyan MiG-29 is a dedicated air superiority fighter, and constitutes a second line of defence after the Sukhoi Su-30MKI. At present, 66 MiG-29s are in service, all of which are being upgraded to the MiG-29UPG standard. The Dassault Mirage 2000 is the primary multirole fighter in service and the IAF operates 49 Mirage 2000Hs which are being upgraded to the Mirage 2000-5 MK2 standard. As part of the upgrade, the aircraft will also be equipped with MBDA's MICA family of medium-range missiles. To give the IAF fighters an edge in anti-ship and land attack roles, a smaller version of BrahMos missile is being developed to be integrated in Sukhoi Su-30MKI and is expected to be delivered to IAF by 2015.

In the aerial refuelling (tanker) role, the IAF operates six Ilyushin Il-78MKIs. For strategic military transport operations the IAF uses the Ilyushin Il-76, and has placed orders for 10 Boeing C-17 Globemaster III, four of which were delivered by November 2013. The C-130J Super-Hercules planes of the IAF is used by special forces for combined Army-Air Force operations. There are six C-130Js in service and six more are planned to be procured. The Antonov An-32 serves as medium transport aircraft in the IAF. As an airborne early warning system, the IAF operates the Israeli EL/W-2090 Phalcon Airborne Early Warning and Control System AEW&C. A total of three such systems are in service, with possible orders for two more. The DRDO AEW&CS is a project of India's DRDO to develop an AEW&C system for the Indian Air Force. The DRDO AEWACS programme aims to deliver three radar-equipped surveillance aircraft to the Indian Air Force. The aircraft platform selected was the Embraer ERJ 145. Three ERJ 145 were procured from Embraer at a cost of US\$300 Million, including the contracted modifications to the airframe. Probable delivery date for the first batch of three is 2015.

Network-centric warfare The Indian Air Force (IAF) made progress towards becoming a truly network-centric air force with the integration of Air Force Network (AFNET), a reliable and robust digital information grid that enables accurate and faster response to enemy threats, in 2010. The modern, state-of-the-art AFNET is a fully secure communication network, providing IAF a critical link among its command and control centre, sensors such as the Airborne Early Warning and Control Systems, and attack platforms such as fighter aircraft and missile launchers. Integrated Air Command and Control System (IACCS), an automated command and control system for Air Defence (AD) operations will ride the AFNet backbone integrating all ground-based and airborne sensors, AD weapon systems and C2 nodes.

Subsequent integration with other services networks and civil radars will provide an integrated Air Situation Picture to operators to carry out Air Defence role. AFNet will prove to be an effective force multiplier for intelligence analysis, mission planning and control, post-mission feedback and related activities like maintenance, logistics and administration. A comprehensive design with multi-layer security precautions for "Defence in Depth" have been planned by incorporating encryption technologies, Intrusion Prevention Systems to ensure the resistance of the IT system against information manipulation and eavesdropping. In October 2013, IAF launched its own stand-alone ■3 Billion (US\$34 Million) cellular network, through which secure video calling and other information exchange facilities will be provided. The IAF also plans to issue around one hundred thousand mobile handsets to its personnel of the rank of sergeant and above to connect and provide secure 'end-point' connectivity to airborne forces deployed across the country. The captive network has been named 'Air Force Cellular'. While Phase I of the project will ensure mobile connectivity to all air combat units in the National Capital Region, its Phase II will cover the rest of the bases.

Modernisation The Medium Multi-Role Combat Aircraft (MMRCA) competition, also known as the MRCA tender, was a competition to supply 126 multi-role combat aircraft to the Indian Air Force (IAF). The Defence Ministry has allocated ~ US\$13 billion for the purchase of these aircraft, making it India's single largest defence deal. On 31 January 2012, it was announced that Dassault Rafale won the competition due to its lower life-cycle cost. However the tender was cancelled in July 2015. The Indian Air Force (IAF) is also in the final stages of acquiring 22 Apache Longbow gunships, armed with Hellfire and Stinger missiles in a \$1.2 billion contract and 15 heavy-lift Boeing CH Chinook helicopters. The IAF has initiated the process for acquisition of additional Mi-17 IV helicopters, heavy lift helicopters, Advanced Light Helicopter and Light Combat Helicopters. Among trainer aircraft, the Hawk Advanced Jet Trainer has been inducted and the Intermediate Jet Trainer (IJT) would be acquired in the near future.

In recent times, India has also manufactured its own aircraft such as the HAL Tejas, a 4th generation fighter, and the HAL Dhruv, a multi-role helicopter, which has been exported to several countries, including Israel, Burma, Nepal and Ecuador. A weaponised version of Dhruv is called the HAL Rudra, which is armed with high-velocity M621 20 mm cannon, long-range 70 mm rockets (8 km), air-to-air missiles (Mistral-II), and MAWS (missile approach warning system). Combat in Kargil highlighted the requirement of an attack helicopter specially made for such high-altitude operations. The HAL Light Combat Helicopter (LCH) is a multi-role combat helicopter being developed in India by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for use by the Indian Air Force and the Indian Army. The LCH is being designed to fit into an anti-infantry and anti-armour role and will be able to operate at high altitudes. LCH will be fitted with indigenous anti-tank missile Helina. India also maintains unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) squadrons (primarily Searcher-II and Heron from Israel) which can be used to carry out ground and aerial surveillance. India is also testing its own long-range Beyond Visual Range missile (BVR) an air-to-air missile named Astra, and also building a Medium Altitude Long Endurance Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) called Rustom. India is also in an ambitious collaboration programme with Russia to build fifth-generation fighter aircraft, called HAL/Sukhoi FGFA which will be based on the Russian Sukhoi Su-57 fighter. Earlier in 2013, the two sides completed the preliminary design of the FGFA and are now negotiating a detailed design contract. Although there is no reliable information about the Su-57 and FGFA specifications yet, it is known from interviews with individuals in the Russian Air Force that it will be stealthy, have the ability to supercruise, be outfitted with the next generation of air-to-air, air-to-surface, and air-to-ship missiles, and incorporate an AESA radar. Joint co-development and co-production of Multi-role Transport Aircraft (MTA), by Russian partners and HAL, is being launched to meet the requirements of the Russian and Indian Air Forces. The aircraft will be designed for the roles of a 15-20 ton cargo / troop transport, paratrooping / airdrop of supplies including Low Altitude Parachute Extraction System (LAPES) capability. It will be configured such that all types of cargo can be transported, and the aircraft would be capable of operating from semi-prepared

runways. The MTA is expected to replace the Indian Air Force's ageing fleet of Antonov An-32 transport aircraft. The aircraft is expected to conduct its first flight by 2017, and to enter service by 2018. To protect IAF assets on the ground, there has been a search for short-range surface-to-air missile. India has begun deploying six Akash surface-to-air missile (SAM) squadrons in the northeast to deter Chinese jets, helicopters and drones against any misadventure in the region. The IAF has started taking delivery of the six Akash missile squadrons, which can "neutralise" multiple targets at a 25 kilometres (16 mi) interception range in all weather conditions, earmarked for the eastern theatre. The IAF has already deployed the first two Akash squadrons at the Mirage-2000 base in Gwalior and the Sukhoi base in Pune.

Indian Coast Guard The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) protects India's maritime interests and enforces maritime law, with jurisdiction over the territorial waters of India, including its contiguous zone and exclusive economic zone. The Indian Coast Guard was formally established on 18 August 1978 by the Coast Guard Act, 1978 of the Parliament of India as an independent Armed force of India. It operates under the Ministry of Defence. The Coast Guard works in close co-operation with the Indian Navy, the Department of Fisheries, the Department of Revenue (Customs) and the Central and State police forces.

Central Armed Police Forces The following are the seven paramilitary police forces termed as Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs). These forces were earlier referred to as the "central paramilitary forces". In 2011, the nomenclature CAPF was adopted to refer them.

Assam Rifles The Assam Rifles trace their lineage to a paramilitary police force that was formed under the British in 1835 called Cachar Levy. Since then the Assam Rifles have undergone a number of name changes before the name Assam Rifles was finally adopted in 1917. Over the course of its history, the Assam Rifles, and its predecessor units, have served in a number of roles, conflicts and theatres including World War I where they served in Europe and the Middle East, and World War II where they served mainly in Burma. In the post-World War II period, the Assam Rifles have expanded greatly as has their role. There are currently 46 battalions of Assam Rifles under the control of the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). They perform many roles including: the provision of internal security under the control of the army through the conduct of counter insurgency and border security operations, provision of aid to the civil power in times of emergency, and the provision of communications, medical assistance and education in remote areas. In times of war they can also be used as a combat force to secure rear areas if needed.

Central Reserve Police Force Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) is the largest of the CAPFs with 325,000 personnel in 246 battalions. The CRPF includes the Rapid Action Force (RAF), a 15 battalion anti-riot force trained to respond to sectarian violence, and the Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (COBRA), a 10 battalion strong anti-Naxalite force.

Border Security Force The primary role of the Border Security Force (BSF) is to guard the land borders of the country, except the mountains. The sanctioned strength is 265,277 personnel in 193 battalions, and is headed by an Indian Police Service officer.

Indo-Tibetan Border Police The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) is deployed for guard duties on the border with China from Karakoram Pass in Ladakh to Diphu La in Arunachal Pradesh covering a total distance of 2,488 kilometres (1,546 mi). It has 90,000 personnel in 60 battalions.

Sashastra Seema Bal The objective of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) is to guard the Indo-Nepal and Indo-Bhutan Borders. As of 2019, it has 94,261 active personnel in 73 battalions and a strength of 98,965 is sanctioned.

Central Industrial Security Force One of the largest industrial security forces in the world, the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) provides security to various public sector companies (PSUs) and other critical infrastructure installations across the country, such as airports. It has a total strength of about 144,418 personnel in 132 battalions.

National Security Guard The National Security Guard (NSG) is an elite counter-terrorist and rapid response force. Its roles include conducting anti-sabotage checks, rescuing hostages, neutralising terrorist threats to vital installations, engaging terrorists, responding to hijacking and piracy and protecting VIPs. It has 8636 personnel (including 1086 personnel for regional hubs.). The NSG also includes the Special Ranger Group (SRG), whose 3,000 personnel provide protection to India's VVIPs.

Other forces **Special Frontier Force** The Special Frontier Force (SFF) is India's paramilitary unit. It was initially conceived in the post Sino-Indian war period as a guerrilla force composed mainly of Tibetan refugees whose main goal was to conduct covert operations behind Chinese lines in case of another war between the People's Republic of China and India. Later, its composition and roles were expanded. Based in Chakrata, Uttarakhand, SFF is also known as the Establishment 22. The force is under the direct supervision of the Research and Analysis Wing, India's external intelligence agency.

Special Protection Group The Special Protection Group (SPG) was formed in 1988 by an act of the Parliament of India to "provide proximate security to the Prime Minister of India and former Prime Minister of India and members of their immediate families (wife, husband, children and parents)". For former Prime Ministers and their dependents, a regular review is held to decide whether the threat to their life is high enough to warrant SPG protection.

Railway Protection Force The Railway Protection Force (RPF) was established under the Railway Protection Force Act 1957. The RPF is charged with providing security for Indian Railways. As of March 2020, it had a sanctioned strength of 74,830 personnel, with 61,869 of them on roll.

National Disaster Response Force The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) is a specialised force constituted "for the purpose of specialist response to a threatening disaster situation or disaster". It is manned by persons on deputation from the various Central Armed Police Forces. At present it has 12 battalions, located in different parts of India. The control of NDRF lies with the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), which is headed by the Prime Minister.

Special Forces The Special Forces of India are Indian military units with specialised training in the field of special operations such as "Direct action, Hostage rescue, Counter-terrorism, Unconventional warfare, Special reconnaissance, Foreign Internal Defence, Personnel recovery, Asymmetric warfare and Counter-proliferation". The various branches include,

Para (Special Forces): Formed in 1966, the Para (SF) are the largest and most important part of the Special Forces of India. They are a part of the highly trained Parachute Regiment of the Indian Army. The main aim of having a Parachute Regiment is for quick deployment of soldiers behind the enemy lines to attack the enemy from behind and destroy their first line of defence. Para (SF) conducts an annual series of joint exercises with US Army Special Forces called Vajra Prahar. Marine Commandos (MARCOS):

Marine Commandos (MARCOS) is an elite special operations unit of the Indian Navy. It is specially organised, trained and equipped for the conduct of special operations in a maritime environment. The force has gradually acquired experience and a reputation for professionalism over the two decades it has been in existence. Now it is one of the finest Special Forces units in the world and among the few units qualified to jump in the water with a full combat load. The MARCOS are capable of undertaking operations in all types of terrain, but are specialised in maritime operations in Jammu and Kashmir through the Jhelum River and Wular Lake. To strengthen its capabilities to carry out special operations, the navy is planning to procure advanced Integrated Combat System (ICS) for the MARCOS. The Navy wants the ICS for effective command, control and information sharing to maximise capabilities of individuals and groups of the MARCOS while engaging enemies. The individual equipment required by the navy in the ICS includes light weight helmets, head-mounted displays, tactical and soft ballistic vests along with communication equipment. The group-level gear requirements include command and control and surveillance systems along with high speed communication equipment.

Garud Commando Force: The Garud Commando Force is the Special Forces unit of the Indian Air Force. It was formed in September 2004 and has a strength of approximately 2000 personnel. The unit derives its name from Garuda, a divine bird-like creature of Hindu Mythology. Garud is tasked with the protection of critical Air Force bases and installations; search and rescue during peace and hostilities and disaster relief during calamities. Garuds are deployed in the Congo as part of the UN peace keeping operations.

Nuclear weapons India has been in possession of nuclear weapons since 1974. Its most recent nuclear test took place on 11 May 1998, when Operation Shakti (Pokhran-II) was initiated with the detonation of one fusion and three fission bombs. On 13 May 1998, two additional fission devices were detonated. However, India maintains a "no-first use" and a nuclear deterrence policy against nuclear adversaries. Its nuclear doctrine envisages building a credible minimum deterrent for maintaining a "second strike capability" which would be massive and designed to induce unacceptable damage on the enemy. India is one of only four nations in the world to possess a Nuclear triad. India's nuclear missiles include the Prithvi, the Agni, the Shourya, the Sagarika, the Dhanush, and others. India conducted its first test with the Agni-V in April 2012 and a second test in September 2013. With its 7,000 kilometres (4,300 mi) range, it can carry a nuclear warhead to the east to include all of China, and to the west deep into Europe. Agni-VI, with a perceived range of 10,000-12,000 kilometres (6,200-7,500 mi) is also under development with features like multiple independently targetable re-entry warheads (MIRVs). India also had bomber aircraft such as the Tupolev Tu-142 and well as fighter jets like the Dassault Rafale, Sukhoi Su-30MKI, the Dassault Mirage 2000, the MiG-29 and the HAL Tejas capable of being armed with nuclear tipped bombs and missiles. Since India does not have a nuclear first use policy against an adversary, it becomes important to protect from a first strike. This protection is being developed in the form of the two layered Anti-ballistic missile defence system. India's Strategic Nuclear Command controls its land-based nuclear warheads, while the navy controls the ship and submarine based missiles and the air force the air-based warheads. India's nuclear warheads are deployed in five areas:

Ship based mobile, like the Dhanush. (operational) Land-based mobile, like the Agni. (operational) Fixed underground silos (operational) Submarine based, like the Sagarika. (operational) Air-based warheads of the Indian Air Forces' strategic bomber force like the Dassault Mirage 2000 and the Jaguar (operational)

Nuclear-armed cruise missiles BrahMos:

The BrahMos is a Mach 3 Supersonic Cruise Missile developed in collaboration with Russia. Its land attack and anti-ship variants are in service with the Indian Army and Indian Navy. Sub-Launched and Air Launched variants are under development or testing.

The BrahMos II is a Mach 7 Hypersonic Cruise Missile being developed in collaboration with Russia. Nirbhay:

The Nirbhay is a Long Range Sub-Sonic Cruise Missile. This Missile has a range of over 1,000 kilometres (620 mi).

Other missiles Akash:

The Aakash is a medium-range, mobile surface-to-air missile defence system. The missile system can target aircraft up to 30 kilometres (19 mi) away, at altitudes up to 18,000 metres (20,000 yd) Nag:

The Nag is a third generation "Fire-and-forget" anti-tank missile developed in India. It is one of five missile systems developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) under the Integrated Guided Missile Development Program (IGMDP). HELINA:

The HELINA is a variant of the NAG Missile to be launched from a helicopter. It will be structurally different from the Nag. Shaurya:

The Shaurya is a canister launched hypersonic surface-to-surface tactical missile with a range more than 750 kilometres (470 mi). It provides the potential to strike an adversary in the short-intermediate range. Prahaar:

The Prahaar is a solid-fuelled surface-to-surface guided short-range tactical ballistic missile. Astra:

The Astra is a "Beyond Visual Range Air-to-Air Missile" (BVRAAM) developed for the Indian Air Force.

India's nuclear doctrine India has a declared nuclear no-first-use policy and is in the process of developing a nuclear doctrine based on "credible minimum deterrence". In August 1999, the Indian government released a draft of the doctrine which asserts that nuclear weapons are solely for deterrence and that India will pursue a policy of "retaliation only". The document also maintains that India "will not be the first to initiate a nuclear first strike, but will respond with punitive retaliation should deterrence fail". The fourth National Security Advisor of India Shivshankar Menon signalled a significant shift from "no first use" to "no first use against non-nuclear weapon states" in a speech on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the National Defence College

in New Delhi on 21 October 2010, a doctrine Menon said reflected India's "strategic culture, with its emphasis on minimal deterrence". However, whether the policy shift actually took place or not is unclear. Some argued that this was not a substantive change but "an innocent typographical or lexical error in the text of the speech". India's current PM Modi has, in the run up to the recent general elections, reiterated commitment to no first use policy. In April 2013 Shyam Saran, convener of the National Security Advisory Board, affirmed that regardless of the size of a nuclear "attack against India," be it a miniaturised version or a "big" missile, India will "retaliate massively to inflict unacceptable damage". Here, the term "attack against India" means attack against the "Union of India" or "Indian forces anywhere".

Missile defence programme India's missile defence network has two principal components - the Air Defence Ground Environment System (ADGES) and the Base Air Defence Zones (BADZ). The ADGES network provides for wide area radar coverage and permits the detection and interception of most aerial incursions into Indian airspace. The BADZ system is far more concentrated with radars, interceptors, surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) and anti-aircraft artillery (AAA) units working together to provide an intense and highly effective defensive barrier to attacks on vital targets.

Ballistic missile defence The Ballistic Missile Defence Program is an initiative to develop and deploy a multi-layered ballistic missile defence system to protect India from ballistic missile attacks. Introduced in light of the ballistic missile threat from Pakistan, it is a double-tiered system consisting of two interceptor missiles, namely the Prithvi Air Defence (PAD) missile for high-altitude interception, and the Advanced Air Defence (AAD) Missile for lower altitude interception. The two-tiered shield should be able to intercept any incoming missile launched 5,000 kilometres (3,100 mi) away. PAD was tested in November 2006, followed by AAD in December 2007. With the test of the PAD missile, India became the fourth country to have successfully developed an anti-ballistic missile system, after the United States, Russia and Israel. On 6 March 2009, India again successfully tested its missile defence shield, during which an incoming "enemy" missile was intercepted at an altitude of 75 kilometres (47 mi). On 6 May 2012, it was announced that Phase-I is complete and can be deployed on short notice to protect Indian cities. New Delhi, the national capital, and Mumbai, have been selected for the ballistic missile defence shield. After successful implementation in Delhi and Mumbai, the system will be used to cover other major cities in the country. This shield can destroy incoming ballistic missiles launched from as far as 2,500 kilometres (1,600 mi) away. When the Phase II is completed and the PDV is developed, the two anti-ballistic missiles can intercept targets up to 5,000 kilometres (3,100 mi) both at exo and endo-atmospheric (inside the atmosphere) regions. The missiles will work in tandem to ensure a hit probability of 99.8 per cent. This system can handle multiple targets simultaneously with multiple interceptors. India is reported to have procured a squadron of S-300V systems which are in use as an anti-tactical ballistic missile screen.

Cruise missile defence Defending against an attack by a cruise missile on the other hand is similar to tackling low-flying manned aircraft and hence most methods of aircraft defence can be used for a cruise missile defence system. To ward off the threats of nuclear-tipped cruise missile attack India has a new missile defence programme which will be focused solely on intercepting cruise missiles. The technological breakthrough has been created with an AAD missile. DRDO Chief, Dr. V K Saraswat stated in an interview: "Our studies have indicated that this AAD will be able to handle a cruise missile intercept." Furthermore, India is acquiring airborne radars like AWACS to ensure detection of cruise missiles in order to stay on top of the threat. Barak-8 is a long-range anti-air and anti-missile naval defence system being developed jointly by Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) and the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) of India. The Indian Army is considering the induction of a variant of the Barak 8 missile to meet its requirement for a medium-range

surface-to-air air defence missile. The naval version of this missile has the capability to intercept incoming enemy cruise missiles and combat jets targeting its warships at sea. It would also be inducted into the Indian Air Force, followed by the Army. Recently developed, India's Akash missile defence system also has the capability to "neutralise aerial targets like fighter jets, cruise missiles and air-to-surface missiles". Both the Barak-8 and the Akash missile defence systems can engage multiple targets simultaneously during saturation attacks. On 17 November 2010, in an interview Rafael's vice-president Mr. Lova Drori confirmed that the David's Sling system has been offered to the Indian Armed Forces. This system is further designed to distinguish between decoys and the actual warhead of a missile.

S-400 Triumph In October 2018, India inked an agreement with Russia for US\$5.43 billion to purchase five S-400 Triumph surface-to-air missile defence systems.

Defence intelligence The Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) is an organisation responsible for providing and co-ordinating intelligence for the Indian armed forces. It was created in March 2002 and is administered within the Union Ministry of Defence. It is headed by a Director General who is also the principal adviser to the Minister of Defence and the Chief of Defence Staff. Traditionally, the bulk of intelligence work in India has been carried out by the Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW) and the Intelligence Bureau (IB). The various services intelligence directorates namely the Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI), the Directorate of Air Intelligence (DAI), Directorate of Naval Intelligence (DNI) and some other agencies are also involved but their activity is smaller by comparison. The R&AW and IB agencies are composed largely of civilians. Military personnel are often deputed to these agencies, but the letter of the law and concerns of deniability limit the use of serving military officers in some types of activity (especially collection and action). The creation of an intelligence agency co-ordinating the intelligence arms of the three military services had long been called for by senior Indian military officers. It was formally recommended by the Cabinet Group of Ministers, headed by the then Deputy Prime Minister of India Lal Krishna Advani. The Group of Ministers investigated intelligence lapses that occurred during the Kargil War and recommended a comprehensive reform of Indian intelligence agencies. The Defence Intelligence Agency was created and became operational in March 2002. As part of expanding bilateral co-operation on gathering intelligence and fighting terrorism, the United States military also provided advice to Indian military officers on the creation of the DIA. DIA has control of MoD's prized technical intelligence assets - the Directorate of Signals Intelligence and the Defence Image Processing and Analysis Centre (DIPAC). While the Signals Directorate is responsible for acquiring and decrypting enemy communications, the DIPAC controls India's satellite-based image acquisition capabilities. The DIA also controls the Defence Information Warfare Agency (DIWA) which handles all elements of the information warfare repertoire, including psychological operations, cyber-war, electronic intercepts and the monitoring of sound waves.

Research and development The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is an agency of the Republic of India, responsible for the development of technology for use by the military, headquartered in New Delhi, India. It was formed in 1958 by the merger of the Technical Development Establishment and the Directorate of Technical Development and Production with the Defence Science Organisation. DRDO has a network of 52 laboratories which are engaged in developing defence technologies covering various fields, like aeronautics, armaments, electronic and computer sciences, human resource development, life sciences, materials, missiles, combat vehicles development and naval research and development. The organisation includes more than 5,000 scientists and about 25,000 other scientific, technical and supporting personnel. Annual operating budget of the DRDO is pegged at \$1.6 billion (2011-12).

Electronic-warfare, Cyber-warfare, military hardware The DRDO's avionics programme has been a success story with its mission computers, radar warning receivers, high accuracy direction finding pods, synthetic aperture radar, Active Phased Array Radar, airborne jammers and flight instrumentation in use across a wide variety of Indian Air Force aircraft and satellites. DRDO labs have developed many electronic warfare systems for IAF and the Indian Army and high-performance Sonar systems for the navy. DRDO also developed other critical military hardware, such as the Arjun Main Battle Tank, and is engaged in the development of a future Infantry Combat Vehicle. The DRDO is also a member of the trials teams for the T-72 upgrade and its fire control systems. INSAS, India's de facto standard small arms family including assault rifle, light machine guns and carbine, is developed at the Armament Research and Development Establishment, a DRDO laboratory. ARDE also worked on the development of Pinaka Multi Barrel Rocket Launcher, which has a maximum range of 39 kilometres (24 mi) - 40 kilometres (25 mi) and can fire a salvo of 12 high-explosive rockets in 44 seconds, neutralising a target area of 3.9 square km. This project was one of the first major Indian defence projects involving the Private sector. India has created the Defence Cyber Agency, which has the responsibility of conducting Cyberwarfare.

Missile development programme DRDO executed the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP) to establish the ability to develop and design a missile locally, and manufacture a range of missile systems for the three defence services. The programme has seen significant success in its two most important constituents - the Agni missiles and the Prithvi missiles, while two other programmes, the Akash SAM and the anti-tank Nag Missile have seen significant orders. Another significant project of DRDO has been the Astra beyond-visual-range air-to-air missile (BVR), for equipping IAF's air-superiority fighters. The crown jewel of DRDO has been the BrahMos programme (as a joint venture with Russian NPO), which aims at creating a range of supersonic cruise missiles derived from the Yakhont system. The DRDO has been responsible for the navigational systems on the BrahMos, aspects of its propulsion, airframe and seeker, fire control systems, mobile command posts and the Transporter Erector Launcher. The US Department of Defence (Pentagon) has written to India's Ministry of Defence (MoD), proposing the two countries collaborate in jointly developing a next-generation version of the Javelin anti-tank missile.

Unmanned aerial vehicles The DRDO has also developed many unmanned aerial vehicles- such as the Nishant tactical UAV and the Lakshya Pilotless Target Aircraft (PTA). The Lakshya PTA has been ordered by all three services for their gunnery target training requirements. Efforts are ongoing to develop the PTA further, with an improved all-digital flight control system, and a better turbojet engine. The DRDO is also going ahead with its plans to develop a new class of UAV, referred to by the HALE (High Altitude Long Endurance) and MALE (Medium Altitude Long Endurance) designations. The MALE UAV has been tentatively named the Rustom, and will feature canards and carry a range of payloads, including optronic, radar, laser designators and ESM. The UAV will have conventional landing and take off capability. The HALE UAV will have features such as SATCOM links, allowing it to be commanded beyond line of sight. Other tentative plans speak of converting the LCA into an unmanned combat aerial vehicle (UCAV), and weaponising UAVs such as AURA.

Anti-satellite weapon In 2010, the defence ministry drafted a 15-year "Technology Perspective and Roadmap", which held development of ASAT weapons "for electronic or physical destruction of satellites in both LEO (2,000-km altitude above earth's surface) and the higher geosynchronous orbit" as a thrust area in its long-term integrated perspective plan under the management of DRDO. On 10 February 2010, Defence Research and Development Organisation Director-General, and Scientific Advisor to the Defence Minister, Dr VK Saraswat stated that India had "all the building blocks necessary" to integrate an anti-satellite weapon to neutralise hostile satellites in low earth and polar orbits. India is known to have been developing an exo-atmospheric kill vehicle

that can be integrated with the missile to engage satellites. On 27 March 2019, India conducted the first test of an ASAT weapon.

Future programmes Directed-energy weapons It is also known that DRDO is working on a slew of directed energy weapons (DEWs) and has identified DEWs, along with space security, cyber-security, and hypersonic vehicles/missiles as focus areas in the next 15 years.

Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle The Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle (HSTDV) is an unmanned scramjet demonstration aircraft for hypersonic flight (Mach 6.5). The HSTDV program is run by the DRDO.

Peace keeping, anti-piracy, and exploration missions United Nations peacekeeping India has been the largest troop contributor to UN missions since their inception. So far India has taken part in 43 peacekeeping missions with a total contribution exceeding 160,000 troops and a significant number of police personnel having been deployed. India has so far, provided one Military Advisor (Lt Gen R K Mehta), one Police Adviser (Ms Kiran Bedi), one Deputy Military Adviser (Lt Gen Abhijit Guha), 14 Force Commanders and numerous Police Commissioners in various UN Missions. The Indian Army has also contributed lady officers as Military Observers and Staff Officers apart from them forming part of Medical Units being deployed in UN Missions. The first all women contingent in a peacekeeping mission, was a Formed Police Unit from India, deployed in 2007 to the UN Operation in Liberia(UNMIL). India has suffered 127 soldier deaths while serving on peacekeeping missions. India has also provided army contingents performing a peacekeeping operation in Sri Lanka between 1987 and 1990 as the Indian Peace Keeping Force. In November 1988, India also helped to restore the government of Maumoon Abdul Gayoom in the Maldives under Operation Cactus. As of June 2013, about 8000 Indian UN peacekeepers, both men and women, are deployed in nine missions, including the Congo, South Sudan, Liberia, UNDOF, Haiti, Lebanon, Abeyi, Cyprus and Cote de Ivoire.

Anti-piracy mission India sought to augment its naval force in the Gulf of Aden by deploying the larger INS Mysore to patrol the area. Somalia also added India to its list of states, including the US and France, who are permitted to enter its territorial waters, extending up to 12 nautical miles (22 km; 14 mi) from the coastline, in an effort to check piracy. An Indian naval official confirmed receipt of a letter acceding to India's prerogative to check such piracy. "We had put up a request before the Somali government to play a greater role in suppressing piracy in the Gulf of Aden in view of the United Nations resolution. The TFG government gave its nod recently." In November 2008, an Indian navy warship destroyed a suspected Somali pirate vessel after it came under attack in the Gulf of Aden. In a report on Somalia submitted to the Security Council, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said "I welcome the decision of the governments of India and the Russian Federation to cooperate with the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia to fight piracy and armed robbery against ships." India also expressed the desire to deploy up to four more warships in the region. On 2010-09-06, a team of Indian marine commandos (MARCOS) boarded MV Jag Arnav and overpowered attacking pirates - seven heavily armed Somalis and one Yemeni national. In the seven-year time frame India deployed 52 warships to combat piracy, which resulted in the area up to 65 degrees east being cleared of pirates.

Relief operations The Indian Air Force provides regular relief operation for food and medical facilities around the world using its cargo aircraft most notably the Ilyushin Il-76. The most recent relief operation of the IAF was in Kyrgyzstan. During the 2010 Ladakh floods, two Ilyushin Il-76 and four Antonov-32 aircraft of the IAF carried 30

tonnes of load, which include 125 rescue and relief personnel, medicines, generators, tents, portable X-ray machines and emergency rescue kits. A MI-17 helicopter and Cheetah helicopter were used to increase the effectiveness of the rescue operations. During the 2013 Uttarakhand Floods, the Indian armed forces took part in rescue operations. By 21 June 2013, the Army had deployed 10,000 soldiers and 11 helicopters, the navy had sent 45 naval divers, and the Air force had deployed 43 aircraft including 36 helicopters. From 17 to 30 June 2013, the IAF airlifted a total of 18,424 people - flying a total of 2,137 sorties and dropping/landing a total of 3,36,930 kg of relief material and equipment. The IAF participated in the rescue operation codenamed Operation Raahat and evacuated more than 4640 Indian citizens (along with 960 foreign nationals from 41 countries) from Yemen during the 2015 military intervention by Saudi Arabia and its allies in that country during the Yemeni Crisis.

IAF efforts in eclipse study The Indian Air Force successfully undertook sorties to help Indian scientists study the total solar eclipse that took place on 23 July 2010. Two separate missions from Agra and Gwalior were flown along the path of the Moon's shadow, a mission that was deemed hugely successful by scientists associated with the experiment. While one AN-32 transport aircraft carrying scientific equipment, cameras and scientists took off from Agra and landed back after a three-hour flight, a Mirage-2000 trainer from Gwalior took images of the celestial spectacle from 40,000 feet (12,000 m). With weather being clear at such altitudes and coordinates planned by the IAF pilots, both the AN-32 and Mirage-2000 pilots were able to accomplish the mission successfully.

Indian Navy exploration The Indian Navy regularly conducts adventure expeditions. The sailing ship and training vessel INS Tarangini began circumnavigating the world on 23 January 2003, intending to foster good relations with other nations; she returned to India in May of the following year after visiting 36 ports in 18 nations. Lt. Cdr. M.S. Kohli led the Indian Navy's first successful expedition to Mount Everest in 1965. Another Navy team also successfully scaled Everest from the north face, the more technically challenging route. An Indian Navy team comprising 11 members successfully completed an expedition to the North Pole in 2006. The Indian Naval ensign first flew in Antarctica in 1981. The Indian Navy succeeded in Mission Dakshin Dhruv by traversing to the South Pole on skis in 2006. With this historic expedition, they set the record for being the world's first military team to have successfully completed a ski traverse to the geographic south pole.

Misconceptions in nomenclature There are a number of uniformed forces in India apart from the Indian Armed Forces. All such forces are established under the acts of Parliament. They are: the Central Reserve Police Force, the Border Security Force, the Indo-Tibetan Border Police, the Central Industrial Security Force, the Sashastra Seema Bal, the Assam Rifles, the National Security Guard under the Ministry of Home Affairs (India), the Special Protection Group under the Cabinet Secretariat of India, the Railway Protection Force under Ministry of Railways (India), and the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) under the Ministry of Defence (India). These forces are referred to as "Armed Force of the Union" in their respective acts, which means a force with armed capability and not necessarily "Armed Forces", the term as per international standards and conventionally referred to as "Army", "Navy" and "Air Force". The Supreme Court in its judgements reported in AIR 1996 SC 1705 held that the military service is only confined to three principal wings of the armed forces i.e. Army, Navy and Air Force. Further the Supreme Court of India in a case reported in AIR 2000 SC 3948 clarified that unless it is a service in the three principal wing of the Armed Forces, a force included in the expression "Armed forces of the Union" does not constitute part of the military service/military. To differentiate from Armed Forces, Some of other forces were commonly referred to as Central Paramilitary Forces which caused confusion and give the impression of them being part of the military forces. To remove such confusion, in 2011 the Ministry of Home Affairs adopted the uniform nomenclature of Central Armed Police Forces for only five of its Primary Police

organisations. These were formerly called as Paramilitary Forces. Central Armed Police Forces are still incorrectly referred to as "Paramilitary Forces" in the media and in some correspondences. These forces are headed by officers from the Indian Police Service and are under the Ministry of Home Affairs. Other uniform services are referred to by their names only such as: the Railway Protection Force, the NSG, the SPG, the ICG, the Assam Rifles etc., but not under any collective nomenclature. However, conventionally some forces are referred to as the Paramilitary Forces of India, for example the Assam Rifles, the SFF and the ICG. The Indian Coast Guard is often confused incorrectly as being a part of the military forces due to the organisation being under the Ministry of Defence. The Supreme Court in its judgement has held that unless it is a service in the three principal wings of the Armed Forces, a force included in the expression "Armed forces of the Union" does not constitute part of military service/military. The Indian Coast Guard works closely with civilian agencies such as Customs, the Department of Fisheries, the Coastal Police etc. with its primary role being that of a non-military, maritime law enforcement agency. It is independent of the command and control of the Indian Navy. ICG was initially planned to be kept under the Ministry of Home Affairs but has been kept under the Ministry of Defence for better synergy since it is patterned like the navy. The ICG does not take part in any protocol of military forces such as the President's Body Guard, ADCs, the Tri-Services Guard of Honour etc. Their recruitment is also not under the Combined Defence Services Exam/National Defence Academy Exam which is one of the prime modes of commissioning officers to the Armed Forces. Indian Coast Guard Officers continue to get their training with Indian Navy Officers since the ICG does not have its own training academy. Already a new Indian Coast Guard Academy for training of their officers is under construction. Often ICG loses its credit for being incorrectly recognised as part of Indian military Forces and not as a unique independent force.

See also References Footnotes ^ Does not include members of the Indian Police Service.

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Foreign relations of India

India, officially the Republic of India, has full diplomatic relations with 201 states, including Palestine, the Holy See, Niue and the Cook Islands. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) is the government agency responsible for the conduct of foreign relations of India. With the world's third largest military expenditure, second largest armed force, fourth largest economy by GDP nominal rates and third largest economy in terms of purchasing power parity, India is a prominent regional power and a potential superpower. According to the MEA, the main purposes of Indian diplomacy include protecting India's national interests, promoting friendly relations with other states, and providing consular services to "foreigners and Indian nationals abroad." In recent decades, India has pursued an expansive foreign policy, including the neighborhood-first policy embodied by SAARC as well as the Look East policy to forge more extensive economic and strategic relationships with East and Southeast Asian countries. It has also maintained a policy of strategic ambiguity, which involves its "no first use" nuclear policy and its neutral stance on the Russo-Ukrainian War. India is a member of several intergovernmental organisations, such as the United Nations, the Asian Development Bank, BRICS, and the G-20, which is widely considered the main economic locus of emerging and developed nations. India exerts a salient influence as the founding member of the Non-Aligned Movement. India has also played an important and influential role in other international organisations, such as the East Asia Summit, World Trade Organization, International Monetary Fund (IMF), G8+5 and IBSA Dialogue Forum. India is also a member of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. As a former British colony, India is a member of the Commonwealth of Nations and continues to maintain relationships with other Commonwealth countries.

History India's relations with the world have evolved since the British Raj (1857-1947) when the British Empire took responsibility for handling external and defence relations. When India gained independence in 1947, few Indians had experience in making or conducting foreign policy. However, the country's oldest political party, the Indian National Congress, had established a small foreign department in 1925 to make overseas contacts and to publicise its independence struggle. From the late 1920s on, Jawaharlal Nehru, who had a long-standing interest in world affairs among independence leaders, formulated the Congress's stance on international issues in tandem with V. K. Krishna Menon; after 1947, they articulated India's worldview as Prime Minister and de facto Foreign Minister. India's international influence varied over the years after independence. Indian prestige and moral authority were high in the 1950s and facilitated the acquisition of developmental assistance from both East and West. Although the prestige stemmed from India's nonaligned stance, and in particular the position it placed Indian diplomats, like Menon, to mediate or conciliate in others' disputes, the nation was unable to prevent Cold War politics from becoming intertwined with interstate relations in South Asia. On the intensely debated Kashmir issue with Pakistan, India lost credibility by rejecting United Nations' calls for a plebiscite in the disputed area. In the 1960s and 1970s, India's international position among developed and developing countries faded during wars with China and Pakistan, disputes with other countries in South Asia, and India's attempt to match Pakistan's support from the United States and China by signing the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation in August 1971. Although India obtained substantial Soviet military and economic aid, which helped to strengthen the nation, India's influence was undercut regionally and internationally by the perception that its friendship with the Soviet Union prevented a more forthright condemnation of the Soviet presence in Afghanistan. In the late 1980s, India improved relations with the United States, other developed countries, and China while continuing close ties with the Soviet Union. Relations with its South Asian neighbours, especially Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Nepal, occupied much of the energies of the Ministry of External Affairs. Even before independence, the Indian colonial government maintained semi-autonomous diplomatic relations. It had colonies (such as the Aden Settlement), that sent and received full missions. India

was a founder member of both the League of Nations and the United Nations. After India gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1947, it soon joined the Commonwealth of Nations and strongly supported independence movements in other colonies, like the Indonesian National Revolution. The partition and various territorial disputes, particularly that over Kashmir, would strain its relations with Pakistan for years to come. During the Cold War, India adopted a foreign policy of not aligning itself with any major power bloc. However, India developed close ties with the Soviet Union and received extensive military support from it.

Post-Cold War The end of the Cold War significantly affected India's foreign policy, as it did for much of the world. The country now seeks to strengthen its diplomatic and economic ties with the United States, the European Union trading bloc, Japan, Israel, Mexico, and Brazil. India has also forged close ties with the member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the African Union, the Arab League and Iran. Though India continues to have a military relationship with Russia, Israel has emerged as India's second-largest military partner while India has built a strong strategic partnership with the United States. The foreign policy of Narendra Modi indicated a shift towards focusing on the Asian region and, more broadly, trade deals.

Policy India's foreign policy has always regarded the concept of neighbourhood as one of widening concentric circles, around a central axis of historical and cultural commonalities. As many as 44 million people of Indian origin live and work abroad and constitute an important link with the mother country. An important role of India's foreign policy has been to ensure their welfare and well-being within the framework of the laws of the country where they live.

Role of the Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister, promoted a strong personal role for the Prime Minister. Nehru served concurrently as Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs; he made all major foreign policy decisions himself after consulting with his advisers and then entrusted the conduct of international affairs to senior members of the Indian Foreign Service. He was the main founding father of the Panchsheel or the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence.

His successors continued to exercise considerable control over India's international dealings, although they appointed separate ministers of external affairs. India's second prime minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri (1964-66), expanded the Prime Minister's Office (sometimes called the Prime Minister's Secretariat) and enlarged its powers. By the 1970s, the Office of the Prime Minister had become the de facto coordinator and supra-ministry of the Indian government. The enhanced role of the office strengthened the prime minister's control over foreign policymaking at the expense of the Ministry of External Affairs. Advisers in the office provided channels of information and policy recommendations in addition to those offered by the Ministry of External Affairs. A subordinate part of the office-the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW)-functioned in ways that significantly expanded the information available to the prime minister and his advisers. The RAW gathered intelligence, provided intelligence analysis to the Office of the Prime Minister, and conducted covert operations abroad. The prime minister's control and reliance on personal advisers in the Office of the Prime Minister was particularly strong under the tenures of Indira Gandhi (1966-77 and 1980-84) and her son, Rajiv (1984-89), who succeeded her, and weaker during the periods of coalition governments. Observers find it difficult to determine whether the locus of decision-making authority on any issue lies with the Ministry of External Affairs, the Council of Ministers, the Office of the Prime Minister, or the prime minister himself.

The Prime Minister is however free to appoint advisers and special committees to examine various foreign policy options and areas of interest. In a recent instance, Manmohan Singh appointed K. Subrahmanyam in 2005 to head a special government task force to study 'Global Strategic Developments' over the next decade. The Task Force submitted its conclusions to the Prime Minister in 2006. The report has not yet been released in the public domain. India's historical inclination towards a "non-aligned" foreign policy has witnessed a shift under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership since 2014, as New Delhi has displayed a heightened level of "assertiveness" in its international engagements.

Ministry of External Affairs The Ministry of External Affairs is the Indian government's agency responsible for the foreign relations of India. The Minister of External Affairs holds cabinet rank as a member of the Council of Ministers.

Subrahmanyam Jaishankar is the current Minister of External Affairs. The Ministry has a Minister of State V Muraleedharan. The Indian Foreign Secretary is the head of the Indian Foreign Service (IFS) and therefore, serves as the head of all Indian (ambassadors) and high commissioners. Vinay Mohan Kwatra is the current Foreign Secretary of India.

Act East Policy In the post-Cold War era, a significant aspect of India's foreign policy is the Look East Policy. During the cold war, India's relations with its Southeast Asian neighbours were not strong. After the end of the cold war, the government of India particularly realised the importance of redressing this imbalance in India's foreign policy. Consequently, the Narsimha Rao government in the early 1990s unveiled the look east policy. Initially, it focused on renewing political and economic contacts with the countries of East and South-East Asia.

At present, under the Look East Policy, the Government of India is giving special emphasis on the economic development of the backward northeastern region of India taking advantage of a huge market of ASEAN as well as of the energy resources available in some of the member countries of ASEAN like Burma. The look-east policy was launched in 1991 just after the end of the cold war, following the dissolution of the Soviet Union. After the start of liberalisation, it was a very strategic policy decision taken by the government in foreign policy. To quote Prime Minister Manmohan Singh "it was also a strategic shift in India's vision of the world and India's place in the evolving global economy". The policy was given an initial thrust with the then Prime Minister Narasimha Rao visiting China, Japan, South Korea, Vietnam and Singapore and India becoming an important dialogue partner with ASEAN in 1992. Since the beginning of this century, India has given a big push to this policy by becoming a summit-level partner of ASEAN (2002) and getting involved in some regional initiatives such as the BIMSTEC and the Ganga-Mekong Cooperation and now becoming a member of the East Asia Summit (EAS) in December 2005.

Ties with Western countries Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, India has forged a closer partnership with Western powers. In the 1990s, India's economic problems and the demise of the bipolar world political system forced India to reassess its foreign policy and adjust its foreign relations. Previous policies proved inadequate to cope with the serious domestic and international problems facing India. The end of the Cold War gutted the core meaning of nonalignment and left Indian foreign policy without significant direction. The hard, pragmatic considerations of the early 1990s were still viewed within the nonaligned framework of the past, but the disintegration of the Soviet Union removed much of India's international leverage, for which relations with Russia and the other post-Soviet states could not compensate. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, India improved its relations with the United States, Canada, France, Japan, and Germany. In 1992, India established

formal diplomatic relations with Israel and this relationship grew during the tenures of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government and the subsequent United Progressive Alliance (UPA) governments. In the mid-1990s, India attracted the world's attention to Pakistan-backed terrorism in Kashmir. The Kargil War resulted in a major diplomatic victory for India. The United States and European Union recognised the fact that the Pakistani military had illegally infiltrated Indian territory and pressured Pakistan to withdraw from Kargil. Several anti-India militant groups based in Pakistan were labelled as terrorist groups by the United States and European Union. In 1998, India tested nuclear weapons for the second time (see Pokhran-II) which resulted in several US, Japanese and European sanctions on India. India's then defence minister, George Fernandes, said that India's nuclear programme was necessary as it provided a deterrence to potential Chinese nuclear threat. Most of the sanctions imposed on India were removed by 2001.

After September 11 attacks in 2001, Indian intelligence agencies provided the US with significant information on Al-Qaeda and related groups' activities in Pakistan and Afghanistan. India's extensive contribution to the War on Terror, coupled with a surge in its economy, has helped India's diplomatic relations with several countries. Over the past three years, India has held numerous joint military exercises with US and European nations that have resulted in a strengthened US-India and EU-India bilateral relationship. India's bilateral trade with Europe and the United States had more than doubled in the five years since 2003. India has been pushing for reforms in the UN and WTO with mixed results. India's candidature for a permanent seat at the UN Security Council is currently backed by several countries including France, Russia, the United Kingdom, Germany, Japan, Brazil, Australia and UAE. In 2004, the United States signed a nuclear cooperation agreement with India even though the latter is not a part of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. The US argued that India's strong nuclear non-proliferation record made it an exception, however, this has not persuaded other Nuclear Suppliers Group members to sign similar deals with India. During a state visit to India in November 2010, US President Barack Obama announced US support for India's bid for permanent membership to UN Security Council as well as India's entry to Nuclear Suppliers Group, Wassenaar Arrangement, Australia Group and Missile Technology Control Regime. As of January 2018, India has become a member of Wassenaar Arrangement, Australia Group and Missile Technology Control Regime.

Strategic partners India's growing economy, strategic location, a mix of friendly and diplomatic foreign policy and large and vibrant diaspora has won it more allies than enemies. India has friendly relations with several countries in the developing world. Though India is not a part of any major military alliance, it has a close strategic and military relationship with most of its fellow major powers.

Countries considered India's closest include the United Arab Emirates, Russian Federation, Israel, Afghanistan, France, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and the United States. Russia is the largest supplier of military equipment to India, followed by Israel and France. According to some analysts, Israel is set to overtake Russia as India's largest military and strategic partner. The two countries also collaborate extensively in the sphere of counter-terrorism and space technology. India also enjoys strong military relations with several other countries, including the United Kingdom, the United States, Japan, Singapore, Brazil, South Africa and Italy. In addition, India operates an airbase in Tajikistan, signed a landmark defence accord with Qatar in 2008, and has leased out Assumption Island from Seychelles to build a naval base in 2015. India has also forged relationships with developing countries, especially South Africa, Brazil, and Mexico. These countries often represent the interests of developing countries through economic forums such as the G8+5, IBSA and WTO. India was seen as one of the standard bearers of the developing world and claimed to speak for a collection of more than 30 other developing nations at the Doha Development Round. Indian Look East policy has helped it develop greater economic and strategic partnerships with Southeast Asian countries, South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan. India

also enjoys friendly relations with the Persian Gulf countries and most members of the African Union.

The Foundation for National Security Research in New Delhi published India's Strategic Partners: A Comparative Assessment and ranked India's top strategic partners with a score out of 90 points: Russia comes out on top with 62, followed by the United States (58), France (51), UK (41), Germany (37), and Japan (34). One of the outcomes of the 2023 G20 summit is a transportation project that would facilitate Indian trade to the Middle East and Europe.

Partnership agreements India has signed strategic partnership agreements with over 40 countries/supranational entities listed here in the chronological order of the pacts:

Future agreements As of 2025, India is currently taking steps towards establishing strategic partnerships with Canada and Colombia. Although India has not signed any formal strategic partnership agreement with Bhutan, its foreign ministry often describes relations with Bhutan as 'strategic'.

Diplomatic relations List of countries which India maintains diplomatic relations with:

Africa India admitted the African Union as a permanent member of the G20 during the 2023 G20 New Delhi summit, making it the 21st member of the group.

Algeria Burkina Faso Both countries established diplomatic relations on 24 March 1962

Burundi has an embassy in New Delhi. India is represented in Burundi by its embassy in Kampala, Uganda. Both countries have a number of bilateral agreements.

Chad Both countries established diplomatic relations on 18 October 1975

Both countries established diplomatic relations in June 1976. Both countries are full members of the Indian-Ocean Rim Association.

Congo Both countries established diplomatic relations on 26 August 1967. DR Congo Djibouti Both countries established diplomatic relations on 7 December 1981

Ethiopia Both countries established diplomatic relations on 1 July 1948. India and Ethiopia have warm bilateral ties based on mutual cooperation and support. India has been a partner in Ethiopia's developmental efforts, training Ethiopian personnel under its ITEC programme, providing it with several lines of credit and launching the Pan-African e-Network project there in 2007. The Second India-Africa Forum Summit was held in Addis Ababa in 2011. India is also Ethiopia's second-largest source of foreign direct investments.

Egypt Both countries established diplomatic relations on 18 August 1947.

Modern Egypt-India relations go back to the contacts between Saad Zaghloul and Mohandas Gandhi on the common goals of their respective movements of independence. In 1955, Egypt under Gamal Abdul Nasser and India under Jawaharlal Nehru became the founders of the Non-Aligned Movement. During the 1956 War, Nehru stood supporting Egypt to the point of threatening to withdraw his country from the Commonwealth of Nations. In 1967, following the Arab-Israeli conflict, India supported Egypt and the Arabs. In 1977, New Delhi described the visit of President Anwar al-Sadat to Jerusalem as a "brave" move and considered the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel a primary step on the path of a just settlement of the Middle East problem. Major Egyptian exports to India include raw cotton, raw and manufactured fertilisers, oil and oil products, organic and non-organic chemicals, and leather and iron products. Major imports into Egypt from India are cotton yarn, sesame, coffee, herbs, tobacco, lentils, pharmaceutical products and transport equipment. The Egyptian Ministry of Petroleum is also currently negotiating the establishment of a natural gas-operated fertiliser plant with another Indian company. In 2004 the Gas Authority of India Limited bought 15% of Egypt's Nat Gas distribution and marketing company. In 2008 Egyptian investment in India was worth some 750 million dollars, according to the Egyptian ambassador. After the Arab Spring of 2011, with ousting of Hosni Mubarak, Egypt asked for the help of India in conducting nationwide elections.

Gabon maintains an embassy in New Delhi. The Embassy of India in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo is jointly accredited to Gabon.

Ghana Both countries established diplomatic relations on 6 March 1957. Relations between Ghana and India are generally close and cordial mixed with economic and cultural connections. Trade between India and Ghana amounted to US\$818 million in 2010-11 and is expected to be worth US\$1 billion by 2013. Ghana imports automobiles and buses from India and companies like Tata Motors and Ashok Leyland have a significant presence in the country. Ghanaian exports to India consist of gold, cocoa and timber while Indian exports to Ghana comprise pharmaceuticals, agricultural machinery, electrical equipment, plastics, steel and cement. The Government of India has extended \$228 million in lines of credit to Ghana which has been used for projects in sectors like agro-processing, fish processing, waste management, rural electrification and the expansion of Ghana's railways. India has also offered to set up an India-Africa Institute of Information Technology (IAIIT) and a Food Processing Business Incubation Centre in Ghana under the India-Africa Forum Summit. India is among the largest foreign investors in Ghana's economy. At the end of 2011, Indian investments in Ghana amounted to \$550 million covering some 548 projects. Indian investments are primarily in the agriculture and manufacturing sectors of Ghana while Ghanaian companies manufacture drugs in collaboration with Indian companies. The IT sector in Ghana too has a significant Indian presence in it. India and Ghana also have a Bilateral Investment Protection Agreement between them. India's Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilisers is in the process of setting up a fertiliser plant in Ghana at Nyankrom in the Shama District of the Western Region of Ghana. The project entails an investment of US\$1.3 billion and the plant would have an annual production capacity of 1.1 million tones, the bulk of which would be exported to India. There are also plans to develop a sugar processing plant entailing an investment of US\$36 million. Bank of Baroda, Bharti Airtel, Tata Motors and Tech Mahindra are amongst the major Indian companies in Ghana. There are about seven to eight thousand Indians and Persons of Indian Origin living in Ghana today with some of them having been there for over 70 years. Ghana is home to a growing indigenous Hindu population that today numbers 3000 families. Hinduism first came to Ghana only in the late 1940s with the Sindhi traders who migrated here following India's Partition. It has been growing in Ghana and neighbouring Togo since the mid-1970s when an African Hindu monastery was established in Accra. Guinea Both countries established diplomatic relations on 8 July 1960.

The bilateral relations between India and Ivory Coast have expanded considerably in recent years as India seeks to develop an extensive commercial and strategic partnership in the West African region. The Indian diplomatic mission in Abidjan was opened in 1979. Ivory Coast opened its resident mission in New Delhi in September 2004. Both nations are currently fostering efforts to increase trade, investments and economic cooperation.

Kenya Both countries established diplomatic relations on 14 December 1963. As littoral states of the Indian Ocean, trade links and commercial ties between India and Kenya go back several centuries. Kenya has a large minority of Indians and Persons of Indian Origin living there who are descendants of labourers who were brought in by the British to construct the Uganda Railway and Gujarati merchants. India and Kenya have growing trade and commercial ties. Bilateral trade amounted to \$2.4 billion in 2010-2011 but with Kenyan imports from India accounting for \$2.3 billion, the balance of trade was heavily in India's favour. India is Kenya's sixth-largest trading partner and the largest exporter to Kenya. Indian exports to Kenya include pharmaceuticals, steel, machinery and automobiles while Kenyan exports to India are primary commodities such as soda ash, vegetables and tea. Indian companies have a significant presence in Kenya with Indian corporates like the Tata Group, Essar Group, Reliance Industries and Bharti Airtel operating there.

Lesotho Both countries established diplomatic relations on 8 June 1971. India operates a High Commission in Pretoria which serves Lesotho and Lesotho operates a residential mission in India. Lesotho and India have strong ties. Lesotho has backed India's bid for a Permanent UN seat and has also recognised Jammu and Kashmir as a part of India. India exported US\$11 Million to Lesotho in the 2010-2011 year while only importing US\$1 Million in goods from Lesotho. Since 2001, an Indian Army Training Team has trained several soldiers in the LDF.

Liberia Both countries established diplomatic relations on 7 July 1960. The bilateral relations between the Republic of India and the Republic of Liberia have expanded on growing bilateral trade and strategic cooperation. India is represented in Liberia through its embassy in Abidjan (Ivory Coast) and an active honorary consulate in Monrovia since 1984. Liberia was represented in India through its resident mission in New Delhi which subsequently closed due to budgetary constraints.

Libya Both countries established diplomatic relations on 20 July 1952. **Malawi** Both countries established diplomatic relations on 19 October 1964. **Mali** Both countries established diplomatic relations on 24 January 1962.

Mauritania Both countries established diplomatic relations on 22 October 1965. India is represented in Mauritania by its embassy in Bamako, Mali. India also has an honorary consulate in Nouakchott.

Mauritius Both countries established diplomatic relations on 12 March 1968. The relations between India and Mauritius existed since 1730, diplomatic relations were established in 1948 before Mauritius became an independent state. The relationship is very cordial due to cultural affinities and long historical ties that exist between the two nations. More than 68% of the Mauritian population are of Indian origin, most known as Indo-Mauritian. The economic and commercial corporation has been increasing over the years. India has become Mauritius' largest source of imports since 2007 and Mauritius imported US\$816 million worth of goods in the April 2010 - March 2011 financial year. Mauritius has remained the largest source of FDI for India for more than a decade with FDI equity inflows totalling US\$55.2 billion in the period April 2000 to April 2011. India

and Mauritius co-operate in combating piracy which has emerged as a major threat in the Indian Ocean region and support India's stand against terrorism. The relationship between Mauritius and India date back to the early 1730s, when artisans were brought from Puducherry and Tamil Nadu. Diplomatic relations between India and Mauritius were established in 1948. Mauritius maintained contacts with India through successive Dutch, French and British rule. From the 1820s, Indian workers started coming to Mauritius to work on sugar plantations. From 1833 when slavery was abolished by Parliament, large numbers of Indian workers began to be brought into Mauritius as indentured labourers. On 2 November 1834, the ship named 'Atlas' docked in Mauritius carrying the first batch of Indian indentured labourers.

Morocco has an embassy in New Delhi. It also has an Honorary Consul based in Mumbai. India operates an embassy in Rabat. Both nations are part of the Non-Aligned Movement. In the United Nations, India supported the decolonisation of Morocco and the Moroccan freedom movement. India recognised Morocco on 20 June 1956 and established relations in 1957. The Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India states that "India and Morocco have enjoyed cordial and friendly relations and over the years bilateral relations have witnessed significant depth and growth." The Indian Council for Cultural Relations promotes Indian culture in Morocco. Morocco seeks to increase its trade ties with India and is seeking Indian investment in various sectors. The bilateral relations between India and Morocco strengthened after the Moroccan Ambassador to India spent a week in Srinagar, the capital city of Jammu and Kashmir. This showed Moroccan solidarity with India regarding Kashmir.

Mozambique Both countries established diplomatic relations on 25 June 1975. India has a high commissioner in Maputo and Mozambique has a high commissioner in New Delhi.

Relations between India and Namibia are warm and cordial. India was one of SWAPO's earliest supporters during the Namibian liberation movement. The first SWAPO embassy was established in India in 1986. India's observer mission was converted to a full High Commissioner on Namibia's Independence Day of 21 March 1990. India has helped train the Namibian Air Force since its creation in 1995. The two countries work closely in mutual multilateral organisations such as the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Commonwealth of Nations. Namibia supports the expansion of the United Nations Security Council to include a permanent seat for India. In 2008-09, trade between the two countries stood at approximately US\$80 million. Namibia's main imports from India were drugs and pharmaceuticals, chemicals, agricultural machinery, automobile and automobile parts, glass and glassware, and plastic and linoleum products. India primarily imported nonferrous metals, ores, and metal scraps. Indian products are also exported to neighbouring South Africa and re-imported to Namibia as South African imports. Namibian diamonds are often exported to European diamond markets before being again imported to India. In 2009, the first direct sale of Namibian diamonds to India took place. In 2008, two Indian companies won a US\$105 million contract from NamPower to lay a high-voltage direct current bi-polar line from Katima Mulilo to Otjiwarongo. Namibia is a beneficiary of the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme for telecommunications professionals from developing countries. India has a high commissioner in Windhoek and Namibia has a high commissioner in New Delhi. Namibia's high commissioner is also accredited for Bangladesh, the Maldives and Sri Lanka.

Niger Both countries established diplomatic relations on 18 July 1977.

India has close relations with this oil-rich West African country. Twenty per cent of India's crude oil needs are met, by Nigeria. 40,000 barrels per day (6,400 m³/d) of oil, is the amount of oil, that India receives from Nigeria.

Trade, between these two countries stands at \$875 million in 2005-2006. Indian companies have also invested in manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, iron ore, steel, information technology, and communications, amongst other things. Both India and Nigeria, are members of the Commonwealth of Nations, G-77, and the Non-Aligned Movement. Former Nigerian President, Olusegun Obasanjo was the guest of honour, at the Republic Day parade, in 1999, and the Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visited Nigeria in 2007 and addressed the Nigerian Parliament.

Indo-Rwandan relations are the foreign relations between the Republic of India and the Republic of Rwanda. India is represented in Rwanda through its honorary consulate in Kigali. Rwanda has been operating its Embassy in New Delhi since 1998 and appointed its first resident Ambassador in 2001.

India-Seychelles relations are bilateral relations between the Republic of India and the Republic of Seychelles. India has a High Commission in Victoria while Seychelles maintains a High Commission in New Delhi.

South Africa India and South Africa, have always had strong relations even though India revoked diplomatic relations in protest of the apartheid regime in the mid-20th century. The history of British rule connects both lands. There is a large group of Indian South Africans. Mahatma Gandhi, spent many years in South Africa, during which time, he fought for the rights of the ethnic Indians. Nelson Mandela was inspired by Gandhi. After India's independence, India strongly condemned apartheid and refused diplomatic relations while apartheid was conducted as state policy in South Africa. The two countries, now have close economic, political, and sports relations. Trade between the two countries grew from \$3 million in 1992-1993 to \$4 billion in 2005-2006, and aim to reach trade of \$12 billion by 2010. One-third of India's imports from South Africa is gold bar. Diamonds, that are mined from South Africa, are polished in India. Nelson Mandela was awarded the Gandhi Peace Prize. The two countries are also members of the IBSA Dialogue Forum, with Brazil. India hopes to get large amounts of uranium, from resource-rich South Africa, for India's growing civilian nuclear energy sector. South Sudan

India recognised South Sudan on 10 July 2011, a day after South Sudan became an independent state. Right now, relations are economic. Pramit Pal Chaudhuri wrote in the Hindustan Times that South Sudan "has other attractions. As the Indian Foreign Ministry's literature notes, South Sudan is reported to have "some of the largest oil reserves in Africa outside Nigeria and Angola". An article in The Telegraph reported that South Sudan is "one of the poorest [countries] in the world, [but] is oil rich. Foreign ministry officials said New Delhi has [a] keen interest in increasing its investments in the oil fields in South Sudan, which now owns over two-thirds of erstwhile united Sudan's oil fields." In return for the oil resources that can be provided by South Sudan, India said it was willing to assist in developing infrastructure, training officials in health, education, and rural development. "We have compiled a definite road map using [sic] which India can help South Sudan."

Sudan Both countries established diplomatic relations on 7 May 1956. Indo-Sudanese relations have always been characterised as longstanding, close, and friendly, even since the early development stages of their countries. At the time of Indian independence, Sudan had contributed 70,000 pounds, which was used to build part of the National Defence Academy in Pune. The main building of NDA is called Sudan Block. The two nations established diplomatic relations shortly after India became known as one of the first Asian countries to recognise the newly independent African country. India and Sudan also share geographic and historical similarities, as well as economic interests. Both countries are former British colonies, and remotely border Saudi Arabia using a body of water. India and Sudan continue to have cordial relations, despite issues such as India's close relationship with Israel, India's solidarity with Egypt over border issues with Sudan, and Sudan's intimate

bonds with Pakistan and Bangladesh. India had also contributed some troops as United Nations peacekeeping force in Darfur. Togo Both countries established diplomatic relations on 31 August 1962. Togo opened its embassy in New Delhi in October 2010. The High Commission of India in Accra, Ghana is concurrently accredited to Togo. Togolese President Gnassingb Eyadma made an official state visit to India in September 1994. During the visit, the two countries agreed to establish Joint Commission.

Uganda Both countries established diplomatic relations on 9 October 1962. India and Uganda established diplomatic relations in 1965 and each maintains a High Commissioner in the other's capital. The Indian High Commission in Kampala has concurrent accreditation to Burundi and Rwanda. Uganda hosts a large Indian community and India-Uganda relations cover a broad range of sectors including political, economic, commercial, cultural, and scientific cooperation. Relations between India and Uganda began with the arrival of over 30,000 Indians in Uganda in the 19th century who were brought there to construct the Mombasa-Kampala railway line. Ugandan independence activists were inspired in their struggle for Ugandan independence by the success of the Indian independence movement and were also supported in their struggle by the Prime Minister of India Jawaharlal Nehru. Indo-Ugandan relations have been good since Uganda's independence except during the regime of Idi Amin. Amin in 1972 expelled over 55,000 people of Indian origin and 5,000 Indians who had formed the commercial and economic backbone of the country accusing them of exploiting native Ugandans. Since the mid-1980s when President Yoweri Museveni came to power, relations have steadily improved. Today some 20,000 Indians and PIOs live or work in Uganda. Ethnic tensions between Indians and Ugandans have been a recurring issue in bilateral relations given the role of Indians in the Ugandan economy.

African Union As of the year 2011, India's total trade with Africa is over US\$46 billion and its total investment is over US\$11 billion with a US\$5.7 billion line of credit for executing various projects in Africa. India has had good relationships with most sub-Saharan African nations for most of its history. In the Prime Minister's visit to Mauritius in 1997, the two countries secured a deal to new Credit Agreement of INR 105 million (US\$3 million) to finance the import by Mauritius of capital goods, consultancy services and consumer durable from India. The government of India secured a rice and medicine agreement with the people of Seychelles. India continued to build upon its historically close relations with Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania. Visits from political ministers from Ethiopia provided opportunities for strengthening bilateral cooperation between the two countries in the fields of education and technical training, water resources management and development of small industries. This has allowed India to gain benefits from nations that are forgotten by other Western Nations. The South African President, Thabo Mbeki has called for a strategic relationship between India and South Africa to avoid imposition by Western Nations. India continued to build upon its close and friendly relations with Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The Minister of Foreign Affairs arranged for the sending of Special Envoys to each of these countries during 1996-97 as a reaffirmation of India's assurance to strengthening cooperation with these countries in a spirit of South-South partnership. These relations have created a position of strength with African nations that other nations may not possess.

Americas India's commonalities with developing nations in Latin America, especially Brazil and Mexico have continued to grow. India and Brazil continue to work together on the reform of the Security Council through the G4 nations while having also increased strategic and economic cooperation through the IBSA Dialogue Forum. The process of finalising a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) with MERCOSUR (Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay) is on the itinerary and negotiations are being held with Chile. Brazilian President Luiz Incio Lula da Silva was the guest of honour at the 2004 Republic Day celebrations in New Delhi.

North Antigua and Barbuda

Both countries have established diplomatic relations and have an Extradition Arrangement.

India and Barbados established diplomatic relations on 30 November 1966 (the date of Barbados' national independence). On that date, the government of India gifted Barbados the throne in Barbados' national House of Assembly. India is represented in Barbados through its embassy in Suriname and an Indian consulate in Holetown, St. James. In 2011-12 the Indian-based firm Era's Lucknow Medical College and Hospital, established the American University of Barbados (AUB), as the island's first Medical School for international students. In 2015 the governments of Barbados and India signed a joint Open Skies Agreement. Today around 3,000 persons from India call Barbados home. Two-thirds are from India's Surat district of Gujarat known as Suratis. Most of the Suratis are involved in trading. The rest are of Sindhis ancestry.

India has an Honorary Consulate in Belize City and Belize has an Honorary Consulate in New Delhi. Bilateral trade stood at US\$45.3 Million in 2014 and has steadily increased since. Belize and India have engaged in dialogue in Central American Integration System (SICA) discussing anti-terrorism, climate change and food security. India signed a Tax Information Exchange Agreement in 2013 with Belize. India also provides Belize with US\$30 Million as part of its foreign aid commitment to SICA countries. Citizens of Belize are eligible for scholarships in Indian universities under Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations. The two nations share a close cultural link due to Belize's large East Indian Population, estimated at 4% of the total population.

Indo-Canadian relations are the longstanding bilateral relations between India and Canada, which are built upon a "mutual commitment to democracy", "pluralism", and "people-to-people links", according to the government of Canada. In 2004, bilateral trade between India and Canada was at about C\$2.45 billion. However, the botched handling of the Air India investigation and the case, in general, suffered a setback to Indo-Canadian relations. India's Smiling Buddha nuclear test led to connections between the two countries being frozen, with allegations that India broke the terms of the Colombo Plan. Although Jean Chrétien and Romo LeBlanc both visited India in the late 1990s, relations were again halted after the Pokhran-II tests.

Canada-India relations have been on an upward trajectory since 2005. Governments at all levels, private-sector organisations, academic institutes in two countries, and people-to-people contacts-especially diaspora networks-have contributed through individual and concerted efforts to significant improvements in the bilateral relationship. The two governments have agreed on important policy frameworks to advance the bilateral relationship. In particular, the Nuclear Cooperation Agreement (signed in June 2010) and the current successful negotiations of the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) constitute a watershed in Canada-India relations. The two governments have attempted to make up for lost time and are eager to complete CEPA negotiations by 2013 and ensure its ratification by 2014. After the conclusion of CEPA, Canada and India must define the areas for their partnership which will depend on their ability to convert common interests into common action and respond effectively for steady cooperation. For example, during "pull-aside" meetings between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Stephen Harper at the G-20 summit in Mexico in June 2012, and an earlier meeting in Toronto between External Affairs Minister S. M. Krishna and John Baird, the leaders discussed developing a more comprehensive partnership going beyond food security and including the possibility of tie-ups in the energy sector, hydrocarbon.

Relations between India and Cuba are close and warm. Both nations are part of the Non-Aligned Movement. Cuba has repeatedly called for a more "democratic" representation of the United Nations Security Council and supports India's candidacy as a permanent member of a reformed Security Council. Fidel Castro said that "The maturity of India..., its unconditional adherence to the principles which lay at the foundation of the Non-Aligned Movement give us the assurances that under the wise leadership of Indira Gandhi (the former Prime Minister of India), the non-aligned countries will continue advancing in their inalienable role as a bastion for peace, national independence and development..." India has an embassy in Havana, the capital of Cuba which opened in January 1960. This had particular significance as it symbolised Indian solidarity with the Cuban revolution. India had been one of the first countries in the world to have recognised the new Cuban government after the Cuban Revolution. Cuba has an embassy in New Delhi, the Indian capital.

Relations between India and Jamaica are generally cordial and close. There are many cultural and political connections inherited from British colonial rule, such as membership in the Commonwealth of Nations, parliamentary democracy, the English language and cricket. Both nations are members of the Non-Aligned Movement, the United Nations and the Commonwealth, and Jamaica supports India's candidacy for permanent membership in a reformed UN Security Council. During the British era, Indians voluntarily went to jobs in Jamaica and the West Indies. This has created a considerable population of people of Indian origin in Jamaica. India has a High Commission in Kingston, whilst Jamaica has a consulate in New Delhi and plans to upgrade it to a High Commission soon.

Mexico is a very important and major economic partner of India. Nobel Prize laureate and ambassador to India Octavio Paz wrote his book *In Light of India* which is an analysis of Indian history and culture. Both nations are regional powers and members of the G-20 major economies.

India has an embassy in Mexico City. Mexico has an embassy in New Delhi and a consulate in Mumbai. Nicaragua

Bilateral relations between India and Nicaragua have been limited to SICA dialogue and visits by Nicaraguan Ministers to India. India maintains an honorary consul general in Nicaragua, concurrently accredited to the Indian embassy in Panama City and Nicaragua used to maintain an embassy in India but was reduced to an honorary consulate general in New Delhi. the current Foreign minister Samuel Santos Lopez visited India in 2008 for the SICA-India Foreign ministers' meeting and in 2013 for high-level talks with the then External Affairs Minister Salman Khurshid which also expanded bilateral trade with the two countries reaching a total of US\$60.12 million during 2012-13.

Bilateral relations between Panama and India have been growing steadily, reflecting the crucial role the Panama Canal plays in global trade and commerce. Moreover, with over 15,000 Indians living in Panama, diplomatic ties have considerably increased over the past decade. The opening of the expanded Canal in 2016 is expected to provide new prospects for maritime connectivity. In seeking to rapidly strengthen trade relations such as the flow of trade triples between the two countries, India is keen to leverage these transit trade facilities in Panama to access the wider market of Latin America. Along with pursuing a free trade agreement, India wants to promote investment in various sectors of Panama's economy, including the banking and maritime industry and the multimodal centre of the Coln Free Trade Zone.

The bilateral relations between the Republic of India and Paraguay have been traditionally strong due to strong commercial, cultural and strategic cooperation. India is represented in Paraguay through its embassy in Buenos Aires in Argentina. India also has an Honorary Consul-General in Asuncion. Paraguay opened its embassy in India in 2005. In May 2012, Fernando Lugo became the first Paraguayan President to visit India. He was accompanied by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Agriculture and Animal Husbandry and Commerce, and other senior government officials. Paraguay supported India's bid for election to the UN Human Rights Council for the term 2015-17. On 30 December 2020, the Union Cabinet of India approved the opening an embassy in Asuncin. The embassy was inaugurated in 2022. Prime Minister of Paraguay, Santiago Pea visited India on June 2025 and held delegation-level discussions with the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi during which Paraguay informed of their stand with India in the fight against terrorism. Both countries agreed on strategic outlook and a commitment to a shared future of sustainable growth and close economic cooperation. Also agreed to cooperate in sectors like digital technology, critical minerals, energy, agriculture, health, and space.

Trinidad & Tobago

Bilateral relations between the Republic of India and the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago have considerably expanded in recent years with both nations building strategic and commercial ties. Both nations formally established diplomatic relations in 1962. Both nations were part of the British Empire; India supported the independence of Trinidad and Tobago from British rule and established its diplomatic mission in 1962 - the year that Trinidad and Tobago officially gained independence. They possess diverse natural and economic resources and are the largest economies in their respective regions. Both are members of the Commonwealth of Nations, the United Nations, G-77 and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). The Republic of India operates a High Commission in Port of Spain, whilst the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago operates a High Commission in New Delhi.

United States of America Before and during the Second World War, the United States under President Roosevelt gave strong support to the Indian independence movement despite being allies to Britain. Relations between India and the United States were lukewarm following Indian independence, as India took a leading position in the Non-Aligned Movement, and received support from the Soviet Union. The US provided support to India in 1962 during its war with China. For most of the Cold War, the USA tended to have warmer relations with Pakistan, primarily as a way to contain Soviet-friendly India and to use Pakistan to back the Afghan Mujahideen against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. An Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, signed in 1971, also positioned India against the USA. After the Sino-Indian War and the Indo-Pakistani War of 1965, India made considerable changes to its foreign policy. It developed a close relationship with the Soviet Union and started receiving massive military equipment and financial assistance from the USSR. This harmed the Indo-US relationship. The United States saw Pakistan as a counterweight to pro-Soviet India and started giving the former military assistance. This created an atmosphere of suspicion between India and the US. The Indo-US relationship suffered a considerable setback when the Soviets took over Afghanistan and India overtly supported the Soviet Union. Relations between India and the United States came to an all-time low during the early 1970s. Despite reports of atrocities in East Pakistan, and being told, most notably in the Blood telegram, of genocidal activities being perpetrated by Pakistani forces, the US. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and US President Richard Nixon did nothing to discourage then-Pakistani President Yahya Khan and the Pakistan Army. Kissinger was particularly concerned about Soviet expansion into South Asia as a result of a treaty of friendship that had recently been signed between India and the Soviet Union and sought to demonstrate to the People's Republic of China the value of a tacit alliance with the United

States. During the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971, Indian Armed Forces, along with the Mukti Bahini, succeeded in liberating East Pakistan which soon declared independence. Nixon feared that an Indian invasion of West Pakistan would mean total Soviet domination of the region and that it would seriously undermine the global position of the United States and the regional position of America's new tacit ally, China. To demonstrate to China the bona fides of the United States as an ally, and in direct violation of the Congress-imposed sanctions on Pakistan, Nixon sent military supplies to Pakistan, routing them through Jordan and Iran, while also encouraging China to increase its arms supplies to Pakistan.

When Pakistan's defeat in the eastern sector seemed certain, Nixon sent the USS Enterprise to the Bay of Bengal, a move deemed by the Indians as a nuclear threat. The Enterprise arrived at the station on 11 December 1971. On 6 and 13 December, the Soviet Navy dispatched two groups of ships, armed with nuclear missiles, from Vladivostok; they trailed US Task Force 74 into the Indian Ocean from 18 December 1971 until 7 January 1972. The Soviets also sent nuclear submarines to ward off the threat posed by USS Enterprise in the Indian Ocean. Though American efforts had no effect in turning the tide of the war, the incident involving USS Enterprise is viewed as the trigger for India's subsequent interest in developing nuclear weapons. American policy towards the end of the war was dictated primarily by a need to restrict the escalation of the war on the Western sector to prevent the 'dismemberment' of West Pakistan. Years after the war, many American writers criticised the White House policies during the war as being badly flawed and ill-serving to the interests of the United States. India carried out nuclear tests a few years later resulting in sanctions being imposed by the United States, further drifting the two countries apart. In recent years, Kissinger came under fire for comments made during the Indo-Pakistan War in which he described Indians as "bastards". Kissinger has since expressed his regret over the comments. After the Cold War Since the end of the Cold War, India-USA relations have improved dramatically. This has been fostered by the fact that the United States and India are both democracies and have a large and growing trade relationship. During the Gulf War, the economy of India went through an extremely difficult phase. The Government of India adopted liberalised economic systems. After the break-up of the Soviet Union, India improved diplomatic relations with the members of NATO, particularly Canada, France, and Germany. In 1992, India established formal diplomatic relations with Israel.

In recent years, India-United States relations have still improved significantly during the Premiership of Narendra Modi since 2014. Both sides are committed to a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific". Pokhran tests reaction

In 1998, India tested nuclear weapons which resulted in several US, Japanese and European sanctions on India. India's then defence minister, George Fernandes, said that India's nuclear programme was necessary as it provided a deterrence to some potential nuclear threats. Most of the sanctions imposed on India were removed by 2001. India has categorically stated that it will never use weapons first but will defend itself if attacked. The economic sanctions imposed by the United States in response to India's nuclear tests in May 1998 appeared, at least initially, to seriously damage Indo-American relations. President Bill Clinton imposed wide-ranging sanctions according to the 1994 Nuclear Proliferation Prevention Act. US sanctions on Indian entities involved in the nuclear industry and opposition to international financial institution loans for non-humanitarian assistance projects in India. The United States encouraged India to sign the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) immediately and without condition. The United States also called for restraint in missile and nuclear testing and deployment by both India and Pakistan. The non-proliferation dialogue initiated after the 1998 nuclear tests has bridged many of the gaps in understanding between the countries.

South Argentina Formal relations between both countries were first established in 1949. India has an embassy in Buenos Aires and Argentina has an embassy in New Delhi. As of January 2025, the Indian Ambassador to

Argentina (concurrently accredited to Uruguay and Paraguay) is Shri Ajaneesh Kumar. According to the Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India, "Under the 1968 Visa agreement, (Argentine) fees for transit and tourist visas have been abolished. Under the new visa agreement signed during the Argentine Presidential visit in October 2009, it has been agreed that five-year multi-entry business visas would be given free of cost. The Embassy of India in Buenos Aires gives Cafe Con Visa (coffee with visa) to Argentine visitors. The applicants are invited for coffee and a visa is given immediately. This has been praised by the Argentine media, public and the Foreign Minister himself."

Brazil Relations between Brazil and India have been extended to diverse areas such as science and technology, pharmaceuticals and space as both are member nations of BRICS. The two-way trade in 2007 nearly tripled to US\$3.12 billion from US\$1.2 billion in 2004. India attaches tremendous importance to its relationship with this Latin American giant and hopes to see the areas of cooperation expand in the coming years. Both countries want the participation of developing countries in the UNSC permanent membership since the underlying philosophy for both of them are: UNSC should be more democratic, legitimate and representative - the G4 is a novel grouping for this realisation.

Brazil and India are deeply committed to IBSA (South-South cooperation) initiatives and attach utmost importance to this trilateral cooperation between the three large, multi-ethnic, multi-racial and multi-religious developing countries, which are bound by the common principle of pluralism and democracy. Bolivia

Both countries established diplomatic ties on 19 January 1959. Since then, the relationship between the two countries has been gradually increasing with more frequent diplomatic visits to promote political, commercial cultural and academic exchanges. Colombia is currently the commercial point of entry into Latin America for Indian companies.

Diplomatic relations between India and Venezuela were established on 1 October 1959. India maintains an embassy in Caracas, while Venezuela maintains an embassy in New Delhi.

There have been several visits by heads of state and government, and other high-level officials between the countries. President Hugo Chavez visited New Delhi on 4-7 March 2005. Chavez met with Indian President APJ Abdul Kalam and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. The two countries signed six agreements including one to establish a Joint Commission to promote bilateral relations and another on cooperation in the hydrocarbon sector. Foreign Minister Nicols Maduro visited India to attend the First Meeting of the India-CELAC Troika Foreign Ministers meeting in New Delhi on 7 August 2012. The Election Commission of India (ECI) and the National Electoral Council (CNE) of Venezuela signed an MoU during a visit by Indian Election Commissioner V S Sampath to Caracas in 2012. The Minister of State for Corporate Affairs visited Venezuela to attend the state funeral of President Chavez in March 2013. The President and Prime Minister of India expressed condolences on the death of Chavez. The Rajya Sabha, the upper house of Parliament, observed a minute's silence to mark his death. Ambassador Smita Purushottam represented India at the swearing-in ceremony of Chavez's successor Nicols Maduro on 19 April 2013. Citizens of Venezuela are eligible for scholarships under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations.

Asia Central Kazakhstan

India is working towards developing strong relations with this resource-rich Central Asian country. The Indian oil company, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation has got oil exploration and petroleum development grants in Kazakhstan. The two countries are collaborating in petrochemicals, information technology, and space technology. Kazakhstan has offered India five blocks for oil and gas exploration. India and Kazakhstan, are to set up joint projects in construction, minerals and metallurgy. India also signed four other pacts, including an extradition treaty, in the presence of President Prathibha Patil and her Kazakh counterpart Nursultan Nazarbayev. Kazakhstan will provide Uranium and related products under the MoU between Nuclear Power Corp. of India and Kazatomprom. These MoU also open possibilities of joint exploration of uranium in Kazakhstan, which has the world's second-largest reserves, and India building atomic power plants in the Central Asian country.

Diplomatic relations were established between India and Tajikistan following Tajikistan's independence from the 1991 dissolution of the Soviet Union, which had been friendly with India. Tajikistan occupies a strategically important position in Central Asia, bordering Afghanistan, the People's Republic of China and separated by a small strip of Afghan territory from Pakistan. India's role in fighting the Taliban and Al-Qaeda and its strategic rivalry with both China and Pakistan have made its ties with Tajikistan important to its strategic and security policies. Despite their common efforts, bilateral trade has been comparatively low, valued at US\$12.09 million in 2005; India's exports to Tajikistan were valued at US\$6.2 million and its imports at US\$5.89 million. India's military presence and activities have been significant, beginning with India's extensive support of the anti-Taliban Afghan Northern Alliance (ANA). India began renovating the Farkhor Air Base and stationed aircraft of the Indian Air Force there. The Farkhor Air Base became fully operational in 2006, and 12 MiG-29 bombers and trainer aircraft are planned to be stationed there.

India has an embassy in Tashkent. Uzbekistan has an embassy in New Delhi. Uzbekistan has had a great impact on Indian culture mostly due to the Mughal Empire which was founded by Babur of Ferghana (in present-day Uzbekistan) who created his empire southward first in Afghanistan and then in India.

Despite lingering suspicions remaining from the 1962 Sino-Indian War, the 1967 Nathu La and Cho La incidents, and continuing boundary disputes over Aksai Chin and Arunachal Pradesh, Sino-Indian relations have improved gradually since 1988. Both countries have sought to reduce tensions along the frontier, expand trade and cultural ties, and normalise relations. A series of high-level visits between the two nations have helped improve relations. In December 1996, PRC President Jiang Zemin visited India during a tour of South Asia. While in New Delhi, he signed with the Indian Prime Minister a series of confidence-building measures for the disputed borders. Sino-Indian relations suffered a brief setback in May 1998 when the Indian Defence minister justified the country's nuclear tests by citing potential threats from the PRC. However, in June 1999, during the Kargil crisis, then-External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh visited Beijing and stated that India did not consider China a threat. By 2001, relations between India and the PRC were on the mend, and the two sides handled the move from Tibet to India of the 17th Karmapa in January 2000 with delicacy and tact. In 2003, India formally recognised Tibet as a part of China, and China recognised Sikkim as a formal part of India in 2004. Since 2004, the economic rise of both China and India has also helped forge closer relations between the two. Sino-Indian trade reached US\$65.47 billion in 2013-14, making China the single largest trading partner of India. The increasing economic reliance between India and China has also bought the two nations closer politically, with both India and China eager to resolve their boundary dispute. They have also collaborated on several issues ranging from WTO's Doha round in 2008 to regional free trade agreement. Similar to Indo-US nuclear deal, India and China have also agreed to cooperate in the field of civilian nuclear energy. However, China's economic interests have clashed with those of India. Both countries are the largest Asian investors in

Africa and have competed for control over their large natural resources. There was a tense situation due to the soldiers' stand-off in Doklam, Bhutan; but that was resolved early. Relations were lost due to Galwan Valley skirmishes and its progress. India ceased imports of Chinese products. Various measures were taken, such as several contracts with the Chinese companies involved in railways, networks and several items productions, which were cancelled in response. The outbreak of the Coronavirus pandemic from Wuhan also hampered the relations. Following the straining of the bonds, both sides blamed each other for the conflict on LAC. On 29-30 August, it was reported that China had allegedly attempted to cross LAC to attain important hilltops, which was filed by Indian troops, as they were an advantage of acquiring important tops near LAC. India banned more than 250 Chinese apps, and on 16 October, it banned the import of ACs, Refrigerators and Coolers from China. Several core commanders' negotiations and talks were held, which resulted in nothing other than vague promises then. Cross-media blaming was common. There was even a conference held in Moscow, Russia, on 5 September between the Defence Minister of India, Rajnath Singh and Chinese Army General, Wei Fenghe, but that also ended up with no success. The recent meeting of the Quad-alliance was also questioned by China, but was then downed by India.

In mid-January 2021, it was reported that both countries had finally agreed upon the de-escalation from their positions. Footage of Chinese troops removing tents/barracks was released. Both countries also agreed that India would move back to Finger-3, while China retained its position back to Finger-8, and also declared the area from Finger-3 to Finger-8 to be "No man's land". Japan

India-Japan relations have always been strong. India has culturally influenced Japan through Buddhism. During World War II, the Imperial Japanese Army helped Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose's Indian National Army. Relations have remained warm since India's independence, despite Japan imposing sanctions on India after the 1998 Pokhran-II nuclear tests (the sanctions were removed in 2001). Japanese companies, like Sony, Toyota, and Honda, have manufacturing facilities in India, and with the growth of the Indian economy, India is a big market for Japanese firms. The most prominent Japanese company to have a big investment in India is automobiles giant Suzuki which is in partnership with Indian automobile company Maruti Suzuki, the largest car manufacturer in India. Honda was also a partner in "Hero Honda", one of the largest motorcycle sellers in the world (the companies split in 2011).

According to Former Prime Minister Shinzō Abe's arc of freedom theory, it is in Japan's interests to develop closer ties with India, the world's most populous democracy, while its relations with China remain chilly. To this end, Japan has funded many infrastructure projects in India, most notably in New Delhi's metro subway system. In December 2006, then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Japan culminated in the signing of the "Joint Statement Towards Japan-India Strategic and Global Partnership". Indian applicants were welcomed in 2006 to the JET Programme, starting with just one slot available in 2006 and 41 in 2007. Also, in 2007, the Japan Self-Defense Forces took part in a naval exercise in the Indian Ocean, known as Malabar 2007, which also involved the naval forces of India, Australia, Singapore and the United States. In October 2008, Japan signed an agreement with India under which it would grant the latter a low-interest loan worth US\$4.5 billion to construct a high-speed rail line between Delhi and Mumbai. This is the single largest overseas project being financed by Japan and reflects a growing economic partnership between the two. India and Japan signed a security cooperation agreement in which both will hold military exercises, police the Indian Ocean and conduct military-to-military exchanges on fighting terrorism, making India one of only three countries, the other two being the United States and Australia, with which Japan has such a security pact. There are 25,000 Indians in Japan as of 2008.

The relations between India and Mongolia are still at a nascent stage and Indo-Mongolian cooperation is limited to diplomatic visits, the provision of soft loans and financial aid and collaborations in the IT sector. India established diplomatic relations in December 1955. India was the first country outside the Soviet bloc to establish diplomatic relations with Mongolia. Since then, there have been treaties of mutual friendship and cooperation between the two countries in 1973, 1994, 2001 and 2004.

India and North Korea have growing trade and diplomatic relations. India had a fully functioning embassy in Pyongyang which was closed down due to COVID-19 pandemic in the host country while North Korea still operates an embassy in New Delhi. India has said that it wants the "reunification" of Korea.

The cordial relationship between the two countries extends back to 48AD, when Queen Suro, or Princess Heo, travelled from the kingdom of Ayodhya to Korea. According to the Samguk Yusa, the princess had a dream about a heavenly king who was awaiting heaven's anointed ride. After Princess Heo had the dream, she asked her parents, the king and queen, for permission to set out and seek the man, which the king and queen urged with the belief that god orchestrated the whole fate. Upon approval, she set out on a boat, carrying gold, silver, a tea plant, and a stone which calmed the waters. Archeologists discovered a stone with two fish kissing each other, a symbol of the Gaya kingdom that is unique to the Mishra royal family in Ayodhya, India. This royal link provides further evidence that there was an active commercial engagement between India and Korea since the queen's arrival in Korea. Current descendants live in the city of Gimhae as well as abroad in the America states of New Jersey and Kentucky. Many of them became prominent and well known around the world like President Kim Dae Jung and Prime Minister Kim Jong-pil. The relations between the countries have been relatively limited, although much progress arose during the three decades. Since the formal establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries in 1973, several trade agreements have been reached. Trade between the two nations has increased exponentially, exemplified by the \$530 million during the fiscal year of 1992-1993, and the \$10 billion during 2006-2007. During the 1997 Asian financial crisis, South Korean businesses sought to increase access to the global markets and began trade investments with India. The last two presidential visits from South Korea to India were in 1996 and 2006, and the embassy works between the two countries are seen as needing improvements. Recently, there have been acknowledgements in the Korean public and political spheres that expanding relations with India should be a major economic and political priority for South Korea. Much of the economic investments of South Korea have been drained into China; however, South Korea is currently the fifth largest source of investment in India. To The Times of India, President Roh Moo-hyun voiced his opinion that cooperation between India's software and Korea's IT industries would bring very efficient and successful outcomes. The two countries agreed to shift their focus to the revision of the visa policies between the two countries, expansion of trade, and establishment of free trade agreement to encourage further investment between the two countries. Korean companies such as LG, Hyundai and Samsung have established manufacturing and service facilities in India, and several Korean construction companies won grants for a portion of the many infrastructural building plans in India, such as the "National Highway Development Project". Tata Motor's purchase of Daewoo Commercial Vehicles at the cost of \$102 million highlights India's investments in Korea, which consist mostly of subcontracting.

South Afghanistan Both countries established diplomatic relations on 10 December 1947. Bilateral relations between India and Afghanistan have been traditionally strong and friendly. While India was the only South Asian country to recognise the Soviet-backed Democratic Republic of Afghanistan in the 1980s, its relations were diminished during the Afghan civil wars and the rule of the Islamist Taliban in the 1990s. India aided the overthrow of the Taliban and became the largest regional provider of humanitarian and reconstruction aid. The new democratically elected Afghan government strengthened its ties with India in the wake of persisting

tensions and problems with Pakistan, which is continuing to shelter and support the Taliban. India pursues a policy of close cooperation to bolster its standing as a regional power and contains its rival Pakistan, which it maintains is supporting Islamic militants in Kashmir and other parts of India. India is the largest regional investor in Afghanistan, having committed more than US\$3 billion for reconstruction purposes. After the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan collapsed, India participated in the evacuation of non-Muslim minorities and provided food aid to Taliban-ruled Afghanistan. Bangladesh

India was the second country to recognise Bangladesh as a separate and independent state, doing so on 6 December 1971. India fought alongside the Bangladeshis to liberate Bangladesh from West Pakistan in 1971. Bangladesh's relationship with India has been difficult in terms of border killing, irrigation and land border disputes post-1976. However, India has enjoyed a favourable relationship with Bangladesh during governments formed by the Awami League in 1972 and 1996. The recent solutions to land and maritime disputes have taken out irritants in ties. At the outset, India's relations with Bangladesh could not have been stronger because of India's unalloyed support for independence and opposition against Pakistan in 1971. During the independence war, many refugees fled to India. When the struggle of resistance matured in November 1971, India also intervened militarily and may have helped bring international attention to the issue through Indira Gandhi's visit to Washington, D.C. Afterwards India furnished relief and reconstruction aid. India extended recognition to Bangladesh before the end of the war in 1971 (the second country to do so after Bhutan) and subsequently lobbied others to follow suit. India also withdrew its military from the land of Bangladesh when Sheikh Mujibur Rahman requested Indira Gandhi to do so during the latter's visit to Dhaka in 1972.

Indo-Bangladesh relations have been somewhat less friendly since the fall of the Mujib government in August 1975. Over the years over issues such as South Talpatti Island, the Tin Bigha Corridor and access to Nepal, the Farakka Barrage and water sharing, border conflicts near Tripura and the construction of a fence along most of the border which India explains as security provision against migrants, insurgents and terrorists. Many Bangladeshis feel India likes to play "big brother" to smaller neighbours, including Bangladesh. Bilateral relations warmed in 1996, due to a softer Indian foreign policy and the new Awami League Government. A 30-year water-sharing agreement for the Ganges River was signed in December 1996, after an earlier bilateral water-sharing agreement for the Ganges River lapsed in 1988. Both nations also have cooperated on the issue of flood warnings and preparedness. The Bangladesh Government and tribal insurgents signed a peace accord in December 1997, which allowed for the return of tribal refugees who had fled to India, beginning in 1986, to escape violence caused by an insurgency in their homeland in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The Bangladesh Army maintains a very strong presence in the area to this day. The army is increasingly concerned about the growing problem of the cultivation of illegal drugs. There are also small pieces of land along the border region that Bangladesh is diplomatically trying to reclaim. Padua, part of Sylhet Division before 1971, has been under Indian control since the war in 1971. This small strip of land was re-occupied by the BDR in 2001 but later given back to India after the Bangladesh government decided to solve the problem through diplomatic negotiations. The Indian New Moore island no longer exists, but Bangladesh repeatedly claims it to be part of the Satkhira district of Bangladesh.

In recent years India has increasingly complained that Bangladesh does not secure its border properly. It fears an increasing flow of poor Bangladeshis and it accuses Bangladesh of harbouring Indian separatist groups like ULFA and alleged terrorist groups. The Bangladesh government has refused to accept these allegations. India estimates that over 20 million Bangladeshis are living illegally in India. One Bangladeshi official responded that "there is not a single Bangladeshi migrant in India". Since 2002, India has been constructing an India - Bangladesh Fence along much of the 2500-mile border. The failure to resolve migration disputes bears a

human cost for illegal migrants, such as imprisonment and health risks (namely HIV/AIDS). India's prime minister Narendra Modi and his Bangladeshi counterpart Sheikh Hasina have completed a landmark deal redrawing their messy shared border and thereby solving disputes between India and Bangladesh. Bangladesh has also given India a transit route to travel through Bangladesh to its North East states. India and Bangladesh also have free trade agreement on 7 June 2015. Both countries solved their border dispute on 6 June 2015. The Agartala-Akhaura rail link between Indian Railway and Bangladesh Railway will reduce the current 1700 km road distance between Kolkata to Agartala via Siliguri to just 350 kilometre by railway. To connect Kolkata with Tripura via Bangladesh through railway, the Union Government on 10 February 2016 sanctioned about 580 crore rupees. The project which is expected to be completed by 2017 will pass through Bangladesh.

The project ranks high on Prime Minister's 'Act East Policy', and is expected to increase connectivity and boost trade between India and Bangladesh. Bhutan

Historically, there have been close ties with India. Both countries signed a friendship treaty in 1949, where India would assist Bhutan in foreign relations. On 8 February 2007, the Indo-Bhutan Friendship Treaty was substantially revised under the Bhutanese King, Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck. Whereas in the Treaty of 1949 Article 2 read as "The Government of India undertakes to exercise no interference in the internal administration of Bhutan. On its part, the Government of Bhutan agrees to be guided by the advice of the Government of India regarding its external relations." In the revised treaty it now reads as, "In keeping with the abiding ties of close friendship and cooperation between Bhutan and India, the Government of the Kingdom of Bhutan and the Government of the Republic of India shall cooperate closely with each other on issues relating to their national interests. Neither government shall allow the use of its territory for activities harmful to the national security and interest of the other". The revised treaty also includes in it the preamble "Reaffirming their respect for each other's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity", an element that was absent in the earlier version. The Indo-Bhutan Friendship Treaty of 2007 strengthens Bhutan's status as an independent and sovereign nation.

India continues to be the largest trade and development partner of Bhutan. Planned development efforts in Bhutan began in the early 1960s. The First Five Year Plan (FYP) of Bhutan was launched in 1961. Since then, India has been extending financial assistance to Bhutan's FYPs. The 10th FYP ended in June 2013. India's overall assistance to the 10th FYP was a little over Rs. 5000 crores, excluding grants for hydropower projects. India has committed Rs. 4500 crores for Bhutan's 11th FYP along with Rs. 500 crores as an Economic Stimulus Package. The hydropower sector is one of the main pillars of bilateral cooperation, exemplifying mutually beneficial synergy by providing clean energy to India and exporting revenue to Bhutan (power contributes 14% to the Bhutanese GDP, comprising about 35% of Bhutan's total exports). Three hydroelectric projects (HEPs) totalling 1416 MW, (336 MW Chukha HEP, the 60 MW Kurichu HEP, and the 1020 MW Tala HEP), are already exporting electricity to India. In 2008 the two governments identified ten more projects for development with a total generation capacity of 10,000 MW. Of these, three projects totalling 2940 MW (1200 MW Punatsangchu-I, 1020 MW Punatsangchu-II and 720 MW Mangdechu HEPs) are under construction and are scheduled to be commissioned in the last quarter of 2017-2018. Out of the remaining 7 HEPs, 4 projects totalling 2120 MW (600 MW Kholongchhu, 180 MW Bunakha, 570 MW Wangchu and 770 MW Chamkarchu) will be constructed under a Joint Venture model, for which a Framework Inter-Governmental Agreement was signed between both governments in 2014. Of these 4 JV-model projects, pre-construction activities for Kholongchhu HEP have commenced. Tata Power is also building a hydroelectric dam in Bhutan.

India had assisted Bhutan by deploying its troops in Doklam in 2017- a territory claimed and controlled by the Bhutanese government- to resist a Chinese army's control and construction of military structures. Maldives

India enjoys a considerable influence over Maldives' foreign policy and provides extensive security cooperation, especially after Operation Cactus in 1988 during which India repelled Tamil mercenaries who invaded the country. As a founder member in 1985 of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, SAARC, which brings together Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, the country plays a very active role in SAARC. The Maldives has taken the lead in calling for a South Asian Free Trade Agreement, the formulation of a Social Charter, the initiation of informal political consultations in SAARC forums, the lobbying for greater action on environmental issues, the proposal of numerous human rights measures such as the regional convention on child rights and for setting up a SAARC Human Rights Resource Centre. The Maldives is also an advocate of greater international profile for SAARC such as through formulating common positions at the UN. India is starting the process to bring the island country into India's security grid. The move comes after the moderate Islamic nation approached New Delhi earlier this year over fears that one of its island resorts could be taken over by terrorists given its lack of military assets and surveillance capabilities. India also signed an agreement with the Maldives in 2011 which is centred around the following:

India shall permanently base two helicopters in the country to enhance its surveillance capabilities and ability to respond swiftly to threats. One helicopter from the Coast Guard was handed over during A. K. Antony's visit while another from the Navy will be cleared for transfer shortly. Maldives has coastal radars on only two of its 26 atolls. India will help set up radars on all 26 for seamless coverage of approaching vessels and aircraft. The coastal radar chain in the Maldives will be networked with the Indian coastal radar system. India has already undertaken a project to install radars along its entire coastline. The radar chains of the two countries will be interlinked and a central control room in India's Coastal Command will get a seamless radar picture. The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) will carry out regular Dornier sorties over the island nation to look out for suspicious movements or vessels. The Southern Naval Command will facilitate the inclusion of Maldives into the Indian security grid. Military teams from Maldives will visit the tri-services Andaman & Nicobar Command (ANC) to observe how India manages security and surveillance of the critical island chain. Relations faced a strain in January 2024 due to derogatory remarks by Maldivian officials and concerns over racism, targeted towards Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi as well as India, triggering the 2024 India-Maldives diplomatic row. This was seen very negatively in India, with citizens calling for a boycott of vacations in Maldives, with many renowned Bollywood actors and personalities criticising the Maldivian government. This also led to the death of a young Maldivian teenager, who had to be taken to India via an air ambulance, after the request at the last minute was denied by Maldivian authorities due to the ongoing tensions against the country.

Relations between India and Nepal are close yet fraught with difficulties stemming from border disputes, geography, economics, the problems inherent in big power-small power relations, and common ethnic and linguistic identities that overlap the two countries borders. In 1950 New Delhi and Kathmandu initiated their intertwined relationship with the Treaty of Peace and Friendship and accompanying secret letters that defined security relations between the two countries, and an agreement governing both bilateral trade and trade transiting Indian soil. The 1950 treaty and letters stated that "neither government shall tolerate any threat to the security of the other by a foreign aggressor" and obligated both sides "to inform each other of any serious friction or misunderstanding with any neighboring state likely to cause any breach in the friendly relations subsisting between the two governments", and also granted the Indian and Nepali citizens right to get involved in any economic activity such as work and business-related activity in each other's territory. These accords cemented a "special relationship" between India and Nepal that granted Nepalese in India the same economic

and educational opportunities as Indian citizens.

Relations between India and Nepal reached their lowest in 1989 when India imposed a 13-month-long economic blockade on Nepal. Indian PM Narendra Modi visited Nepal in 2014, the first by an Indian PM in nearly 17 years. In 2015, a blockade of the India-Nepal border affected relations. The blockade is led by ethnic communities angered by Nepal's recently promulgated new constitution. However, the Nepalese government accuses India of deliberately worsening the embargo, but India denies it. India aided Nepal during the 2015 Kathmandu earthquake with the financial aid of \$1 billion and launched Operation Maitri. The relations were strained during mid-2020, when it was reported that a firing took place by the Nepalese police across the Indo-Nepalese border of Bihar on 12 July. Nepalese Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli commented about the pandemic of Coronavirus that the "Indian virus was deadlier" than the one which spread from Wuhan. As time progressed, certain claims were also made on the Indian territories, for example, Kalapani, Limpiyadhura and Lipulekh of Uttarakhand. Similarly, the claims were also made culturally, when it was said that Hindu God Ram was Nepalese, that he was born in Thori, west of Birgunj, and that Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh was fake. Rules were made strict for Indians in Nepal along with banning some Indian media.

Indian media stated that the actions of the Oli government were souring the relations, "and these were being done on the direction of China and propelled by Chinese ambassador Hou Yanqi". Speculations were made that since China could not handle India directly, in the aftermath of the LAC skirmish, it was lurking and trapping its neighbouring countries and provoking them against India. In August, there were reports about the Chinese "illegal occupations" in Nepal's border states' areas. Pakistan

Both countries established diplomatic relations on 15 August 1947.

Despite historical, cultural and ethnic links between them, relations between India and Pakistan have been "plagued" by years of mistrust and suspicion ever since the partition of India in 1947. The principal source of contention between India and its western neighbour has been the Kashmir conflict. After an invasion by Pashtun tribesmen and Pakistani paramilitary forces, the Hindu Maharaja of the Dogra Kingdom of Jammu and Kashmir, Hari Singh, and its Muslim Prime Minister, Sheikh Abdullah, signed an Instrument of Accession with New Delhi. The First Kashmir War started after the Indian Army entered Srinagar, the capital of the state, to secure the area from the invading forces. The war ended in December 1948 with the Line of Control dividing the erstwhile princely state into territories administered by Pakistan (northern and western areas) and India (southern, central and northeastern areas). Pakistan contested the legality of the Instrument of Accession since the Dogra Kingdom has signed a standstill agreement with it. The Indo-Pakistani War of 1965 started following the failure of Pakistan's Operation Gibraltar, which was designed to infiltrate forces into Jammu and Kashmir to precipitate an insurgency against rule by India. The five-week war caused thousands of casualties on both sides. It ended in a United Nations (UN) mandated ceasefire and the subsequent issuance of the Tashkent Declaration. India and Pakistan went to war again in 1971, this time the conflict being over East Pakistan. The large-scale atrocities committed there by the Pakistan army led to millions of Bengali refugees pouring over into India. India, along with the Mukti Bahini, defeated Pakistan and the Pakistani forces surrendered on the eastern front. The war resulted in the creation of Bangladesh. In 1998, India carried out the Pokhran-II nuclear tests which was followed by Pakistan's Chagai-I tests. Following the Lahore Declaration in February 1999, relations briefly improved. A few months later, however, Pakistani paramilitary forces and Pakistan Army, infiltrated in large numbers into the Kargil district of Indian Kashmir. This initiated the Kargil War after India moved in thousands of troops to successfully flush out the infiltrators. Although the conflict did not result in a full-scale

war between India and Pakistan, relations between the two reached an all-time low which worsened even further following the involvement of Pakistan-based terrorists in the hijacking of the Indian Airlines Flight 814 in December 1999. Attempts to normalise relations, such as the Agra summit held in July 2001, failed. An attack on the Indian Parliament in December 2001, which was blamed on Pakistan, which had condemned the attack caused a military standoff between the two countries which lasted for nearly a year raising fears of nuclear warfare. However, a peace process, initiated in 2003, led to improved relations in the following years. Since the initiation of the peace process, several confidence-building measures (CBMs) between India and Pakistan have taken shape. The Samjhauta Express and Delhi-Lahore Bus service are two of these successful measures which have played a crucial role in expanding people-to-people contact between the two countries. The initiation of the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad Bus service in 2005 and the opening of a historic trade route across the Line of Control in 2008 further reflects increasing eagerness between the two sides to improve relations. Although bilateral trade between India and Pakistan was a modest US\$1.7 billion in March 2007, it is expected to cross US\$10 billion by 2010. After the 2005 Kashmir earthquake, India sent aid to affected areas in Pakistani Kashmir and Punjab as well as Indian Kashmir. The 2008 Mumbai attacks seriously undermined the relations between the two countries. India alleged Pakistan harbouring militants on their soil, while Pakistan vehemently denied such claims. A new chapter started in India-Pakistan relations when a new NDA government took charge in Delhi after victory in the 2014 election and invited SAARC members' leaders to an oath-taking ceremony. Subsequently, the visit of the Indian prime minister on 25 December informally wished Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on his Birthday and participate in his daughter's wedding. It was hoped that the relationship between the neighbour will improve but an attack on an Indian army camp by Pakistani infiltrators on 18 September 2016 and a subsequent surgical strike by India aggravated the already strained relationship between the nations.

A SAARC summit scheduled in Islamabad was called off because of a boycott by India and other SAARC members subsequently. The relationship took a further nosedive after another attack on CRPF in February 2019 by a terrorist associated with the Pakistan-based terror organisation, Jaish-e-Mohammed, when the terrorist rammed his vehicle packed with explosives against a bus carrying CRPF soldiers in Pulwama, Kashmir, killing 40. India blamed Pakistan which was denied by the Pakistani establishment. India retaliated with an airstrike on Balakot, a region claimed and controlled by Pakistan. A new chapter in peace was ignited when it was suddenly declared that a back-door peace settlement over ceasing the cross-border firing across LOC was signed between the armies of both sides, and a steady growth in the countries coming together was observed.

Bilateral relations between Sri Lanka and India have enjoyed historically a good relationship. The two countries share near-identical racial and cultural ties. According to traditional Sri Lankan chronicles (Dipavamsa), Buddhism was introduced into Sri Lanka in the 4th century BCE by Venerable Mahinda, the son of Indian Emperor Ashoka, during the reign of Sri Lanka's King Devanampiya Tissa. During this time, a sapling of the Bodhi Tree was brought to Sri Lanka and the first monasteries and Buddhist monuments were established. Nevertheless, relations post-independence were affected by the Sri Lankan Civil War and by the failure of Indian intervention during the civil war as well as India's support for Tamil Tiger militants. India is Sri Lanka's only neighbour, separated by the Palk Strait; both nations occupy a strategic position in South Asia and have sought to build a common security umbrella in the Indian Ocean. India-Sri Lanka relations have undergone a qualitative and quantitative transformation in the recent past. Political relations are close, trade and investments have increased dramatically, infrastructural linkages are constantly being augmented, defence collaboration has increased and there is a general, broad-based improvement across all sectors of bilateral cooperation. India was the first country to respond to Sri Lanka's request for assistance after the tsunami in December 2004. In July 2006, India evacuated 430 Sri Lankan nationals from Lebanon, first to Cyprus by

Indian Navy ships and then to Delhi and Colombo by special Air India flights. There exists a broad consensus within the Sri Lankan polity on the primacy of India in Sri Lanka's external relations matrix. Both the major political parties in Sri Lanka, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party and the United Nationalist Party have contributed to the rapid development of bilateral relations in the last ten years. Sri Lanka has supported India's candidature to the permanent membership of the UN Security Council.

SAARC Certain aspects of India's relations within the subcontinent are conducted through the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). Its members other than India are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Established in 1985, SAARC encourages cooperation in agriculture, rural development, science and technology, culture, health, population control, narcotics control and anti-terrorism. SAARC has intentionally stressed these "core issues" and avoided more divisive political issues, although the political dialogue is often conducted on the margins of SAARC meetings. In 1993, India and its SAARC partners signed an agreement to gradually lower tariffs within the region. Forward movement in SAARC has come to a standstill because of the tension between India and Pakistan, and the SAARC Summit originally scheduled for, but not held in, November 1999 has not been rescheduled. The Fourteenth SAARC Summit was held during 3-4 April 2007 in New Delhi. The 19th SAARC summit that was scheduled to be held in Islamabad was cancelled due to terrorist acts, particularly the Uri attack.

BIMSTEC Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation is now an "organization of member states" that are littorals of the Bay of Bengal or adjacent to it. The BIMSTEC member states - Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand - are among the major South and Southeast Asia countries dependent on the Bay of Bengal. India and some other countries, frustrated by the obstacles in SAARC's efforts to promote regional cooperation, have been working to make BIMSTEC the premier vehicle in this regard.

Southeast Brunei

Brunei has a high commission in New Delhi, and India has a high commission in Bandar Seri Begawan. Both countries are full members of the Commonwealth of Nations.

Both nations have been in friendly relations. Indonesia

The ties between Indonesia and India date back to the times of the Ramayana, "Yawadvipa" (Java) is mentioned in India's earliest epic, the Ramayana. Sugriva, the chief of Rama's army dispatched his men to Yawadvipa, the island of Java, in search of Sita. Indonesians had absorbed many aspects of Indian culture since almost two millennia ago. The most obvious trace is the large adoption of Sanskrit into the Indonesian language. Several Indonesian toponymy has Indian parallel or origin, such as Madura with Mathura, Serayu and Sarayu rivers, Kalingga from Kalinga Kingdom, and Ngayogyakarta from Ayodhya. Indianised Hindu-Buddhist kingdoms, such as Kalingga, Srivijaya, Mataram, Sunda, Kadiri, Singhasari and Majapahit were the predominant governments in Indonesia, and lasted from 200 to the 1500s, with the last remaining being in Bali. An example of profound Hindu-Buddhist influences in Indonesian history is the 9th-century Prambanan and Borobudur temples. In 1950, the first President of Indonesia - Sukarno called upon the peoples of Indonesia and India to "intensify the cordial relations" that had existed between the two countries "for more than 1000

years" before they had been "disrupted" by colonial powers. In the spring of 1966, the foreign ministers of both countries began speaking again of an era of friendly relations. India had supported Indonesian independence and Nehru had raised the Indonesian question in the United Nations Security Council. India has an embassy in Jakarta and Indonesia operates an embassy in Delhi. India regards Indonesia as a key member of ASEAN. Today, both countries maintain cooperative and friendly relations. India and Indonesia are one of the few (and also one of the largest) democracies in the Asian region which can be projected as a real democracy. Both nations had agreed to establish a strategic partnership. As fellow Asian democracies that share common values, it is natural for both countries to nurture and foster strategic alliances. Indonesia and India are member states of the G-20, the E7, the Non-Aligned Movement, and the United Nations.

In recent years, India has endeavoured to build relations, with this small Southeast Asian nation. They have strong military relations, and India shall be building an Airforce Academy in Laos. Malaysia

India has a high commission in Kuala Lumpur, and Malaysia has a high commission in New Delhi. Both countries are full members of the Commonwealth of Nations and the Asian Union. India and Malaysia are also connected by various cultural and historical ties that date back to antiquity. The two countries are on friendly terms with each other and Malaysia harbours a small population of Indian immigrants. Mahathir bin Mohamad the fourth and longest-serving Prime Minister of Malaysia is of Indian origin. His father Mohamad Iskandar, is a Malayalee Muslim who migrated from Kerala and his mother Wan Tampawan, is a Malay. Relations escalated when the Malaysian PM Mahathir Mohamad questioned the action of revocating the special status of Jammu and Kashmir and on CAA-NRC protests. The relations continue to be diminished, also during the palm oil export from Malaysia to India. Even with the new government in power, currently, there seems no recovery, as former Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad still favoured Pakistan.

India established diplomatic relations after Burma's independence from Great Britain in 1948. For many years, Indo-Burmese relations were strong due to cultural links, flourishing commerce, common interests in regional affairs and the presence of a significant Indian community in Burma. India provided considerable support when Myanmar struggled with regional insurgencies. However, the overthrow of the democratic government by the Military of Burma led to strains in ties. Along with much of the world, India condemned the suppression of democracy and Myanmar ordered the expulsion of the Burmese Indian community, increasing its isolation from the world. Only China maintained close links with Myanmar while India supported the pro-democracy movement. However, due to geopolitical concerns, India revived its relations and recognised the military junta ruling Myanmar in 1993, overcoming strains over drug trafficking, the suppression of democracy and the rule of the military junta in Myanmar. Myanmar is situated to the south of the states of Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh in Northeast India. and the proximity of the People's Republic of China gives strategic importance to Indo-Burmese relations. The Indo-Burmese border stretches over 1,600 kilometres and some insurgents in North-east India seek refuge in Myanmar. Consequently, India has been keen on increasing military cooperation with Myanmar in its counter-insurgency activities. In 2001, the Indian Army completed the construction of a major road along its border with Myanmar. India has also been building major roads, highways, ports and pipelines within Myanmar in an attempt to increase its strategic influence in the region and also to counter China's growing strides in the Indochina peninsula. Indian companies have also sought active participation in oil and natural gas exploration in Myanmar. In February 2007, India announced a plan to develop the Sittwe port, which would enable ocean access from Indian Northeastern states like Mizoram, via the Kaladan River. India is a major customer of Burmese oil and gas. In 2007, Indian exports to Myanmar totalled US\$185 million, while its imports from Myanmar were valued at around US\$810 million, consisting mostly of oil and gas. India has granted US\$100 million credit to fund highway infrastructure projects in

Myanmar, while US\$57 million has been offered to upgrade Burmese railways. A further US\$27 million in grants has been pledged for road and rail projects. India is one of the few countries that has provided military assistance to the Burmese junta. However, there has been increasing pressure on India to cut some of its military supplies to Burma. Relations between the two remain close which was evident in the aftermath of Cyclone Nargis, when India was one of the few countries whose relief and rescue aid proposals were accepted by Myanmar's junta.

India maintains embassies in Rangoon and consulate generals in Mandalay. Philippines

Through the Srivijaya and Majapahit empires, Hindu influence has been visible in Philippine history from the 10th to 14th centuries. During the 18th century, there was robust trade between Manila with the Coromandel Coast and Bengal, involving Philippine exports of tobacco, silk, cotton, indigo, sugar cane and coffee.

Formal diplomatic relations between the Philippines and India were established on 16 November 1949. The first Philippine envoy to India was the late Foreign Secretary Narciso Ramos. Seven years after India's independence in 1947, the Philippines and India signed a Treaty of Friendship on 11 July 1952 in Manila to strengthen the friendly relations existing between the two countries. Soon after, the Philippine Legation in New Delhi was established and then elevated to an embassy. However, due to foreign policy differences as a result of the bipolar alliance structure of the Cold War, the development of bilateral relations was stunted. It was only in 1976 that relations started to normalise when Aditya Birla, one of India's successful industrialists, met with then-President Ferdinand E. Marcos to explore possibilities of setting up joint ventures in the Philippines. Today, like India, the Philippines is the leading voice-operated business process outsourcing (BPO) source in terms of revenue (US\$5.7) and number of people (500,000) employed in the sector. In partnership with the Philippines, India has 20 IT/BPO companies in the Philippines. Philippines-India bilateral trade stood at US\$986.60 million in 2009. In 2004 it was US\$600 million. Both countries aim to reach US\$1 billion by 2010. 60,000 Indians are living in the Philippines. The Philippines and India signed in October 2007 the Framework for Bilateral Cooperation which created the PH-India JCBC. It has working groups in trade, agriculture, tourism, health, and renewable energy, a regular policy consultation mechanism and security dialogue. Singapore

India and Singapore share long-standing cultural, commercial and strategic relations, with Singapore being a part of the "Greater India" cultural and commercial region. More than 300,000 people of Indian Tamil "■■■■■" origin live in Singapore. Following its independence in 1965, Singapore was concerned with China-backed communist threats as well as domination from Malaysia and Indonesia and sought a close strategic relationship with India, which it saw as a counterbalance to Chinese influence and a partner in achieving regional security. Singapore had always been an important strategic trading post, giving India trade access to Maritime Southeast Asia and the Far East. Although the rival positions of both nations over the Vietnam War and the Cold War caused consternation between India and Singapore, their relationship expanded significantly in the 1990s; Singapore was one of the first to respond to the Indian Look East policy of expanding its economic, cultural and strategic ties in Southeast Asia to strengthen its standing as a regional power. Singapore, and especially, the Singaporean Foreign Minister, George Yeo, have taken an interest, in re-establishing the ancient Indian university, Nalanda University. Singapore is the 8th largest source of investment in India and the largest among ASEAN member nations. It is also India's 9th biggest trading partner as of 2005-06. Its cumulative investment in India totals US\$3 billion as of 2006 and is expected to rise to US\$5 billion by 2010 and US\$10 billion by 2015. India's economic liberalisation and its "Look East" policy have led to a major expansion in bilateral trade, which grew from US\$2.2 billion in 2001 to US\$9-10 billion in 2006 - a 400% growth in five years - and to US\$50 billion by 2010. Singapore accounts for 38% of India's trade with ASEAN member nations and 3.4% of its total foreign

trade. India's main exports to Singapore in 2005 included petroleum, gemstones, jewellery, and machinery and its imports from Singapore included electronic goods, organic chemicals and metals. More than half of Singapore's exports to India are basically "re-exports" - items that had been imported from India.

India's Indian Look East policy, saw India grow relations with ASEAN countries including Thailand, and Thailand's Look West policy, also saw it grow its relations with India. Both countries are members of BIMSTEC. Indian Prime Ministers Rajiv Gandhi, P.V. Narasimha Rao, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, and Manmohan Singh, have visited Thailand, which was reciprocated by contemporary Thai Prime Ministers Chatchai Choonhavan, Thaksin Sinawatra, and Surayud Chulanont. In 2003, a Free Trade Agreement was signed between the two countries. India is the 13th largest investor in Thailand. The spheres of trade are in chemicals, pharmaceuticals, textiles, nylon, tyre cord, real estate, rayon fibres, paper-grade pulps, steel wires, and rods. However, IT services, and manufacturing, are the main spheres. Through Buddhism, India has culturally influenced Thailand. The Indian epics, Mahabharata, and Ramayana, are popular and are widely taught in schools as part of the curriculum in Thailand. The example can also be seen in temples around Thailand, where the story of Ramayana and renowned Indian folk stories are depicted on the temple wall. Thailand has become a big tourist destination for Indians. Moreover, India and Thailand have been culturally linked for centuries and India has had a deep influence on Thai culture. There are a substantial number of words in Thai that are borrowed from Sanskrit, India's classical language. Pali, which was the language of Magadha and is a medium of Theravada, is another important root of Thai vocabulary. Buddhism, the major religion of Thailand, itself originates from India. The Hindu story of Ramayana is also well known throughout Thailand in the name Ramakien.

Both nations have friendly and collateral relations. Vietnam

India supported Vietnam's independence from France, opposed US involvement in the Vietnam War and supported the unification of Vietnam. India established official diplomatic relations in 1972 and maintained friendly relations, especially in the wake of Vietnam's hostile relations with the People's Republic of China, which had become India's strategic rival. India granted the "Most favoured nation" status to Vietnam in 1975 and both nations signed a bilateral trade agreement in 1978 and the Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPPA) on 8 March 1997. In 2007, a fresh joint declaration was issued during the state visit of the Prime Minister of Vietnam Nguyen Tan Dung. Bilateral trade has increased rapidly since the liberalisation of the economies of both Vietnam and India. India is the 13th-largest exporter to Vietnam, with exports having grown steadily from US\$11.5 million in 1985-86 to US\$395.68 million by 2003. Vietnam's exports to India rose to US\$180 million, including agricultural products, handicrafts, textiles, electronics and other goods. Between 2001 and 2006, the volume of bilateral trade expanded at 20-30% per annum to reach \$1 billion by 2006. Continuing the rapid pace of growth, bilateral trade is expected to rise to \$2 billion by 2008, two years ahead of the official target. India and Vietnam have also expanded cooperation in information technology, education and collaboration of the respective national space programmes. Direct air links and lax visa regulations have been established to bolster tourism.

India and Vietnam are members of the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation, created to develop to enhance close ties between India and nations of Southeast Asia. Vietnam has supported India's bid to become a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council and join the Indo-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). In the 2003 joint declaration, India and Vietnam envisaged creating an "Arc of Advantage and Prosperity" in Southeast Asia; to this end, Vietnam has backed a more important relationship and role between India and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and its negotiation of an Indo-ASEAN free trade agreement. India and

Vietnam have also built strategic partnerships, including extensive cooperation in developing nuclear power, enhancing regional security and fighting terrorism, transnational crime and drug trafficking.

ASEAN India's interaction with ASEAN during the Cold War was very limited. India declined to get associated with ASEAN in the 1960s when full membership was offered even before the grouping was formed. It is only with the formulation of the Look East policy in the last decade (1992), India started giving this region due importance in the foreign policy. India became a sectoral dialogue partner with ASEAN in 1992, a full dialogue partner in 1995, a member of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in 1996, and a summit-level partner (on par with China, Japan and Korea) in 2002. The first India-ASEAN Business Summit was held in New Delhi in October 2002. The then Prime Minister A. B. Vajpayee addressed this meeting and since then this business summit has become an annual feature before the India-ASEAN Summits, as a forum for networking and exchange of business experiences between policymakers and business leaders from ASEAN and India. Four India-ASEAN Summits, first in 2002 at Phnom Penh (Cambodia), second in 2003 at Bali, Indonesia, third in 2004 at Vientiane, Laos, and the fourth in 2005 at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, have taken place.

The following agreements have been entered into with ASEAN:

Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation (for establishing an FTA in a time frame of 10 years) was concluded in Bali in 2003. An ASEAN-India Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism has been adopted. India acceded to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) in 2003, on which ASEAN was formed initially (in 1967). The agreement on "India-ASEAN Partnership for Peace, Progress and Shared Prosperity" was signed at the 3rd ASEAN-India Summit in November 2004. Setting up of Entrepreneurship Development Centres in ASEAN member states - Cambodia, Burma, Laos, and Vietnam. (The one in Laos is already functional) The following proposals were announced by the Prime Minister at the 4th ASEAN-India Summit:

Setting up centres for English Language Training (ELT) in Cambodia, Laos, Burma and Vietnam. Setting up a telemedicine and tele-education network for Cambodia, Burma, Laos and Vietnam. Organising special training courses for diplomats from ASEAN countries. Organising an India-ASEAN Technology Summit in 2006. Organising education fairs and road shows in ASEAN countries. Conducting an India-ASEAN IT Ministerial and Industry Forum in 2006. The ASEAN region has an abundance of natural resources and significant technological skills. These provide a natural base for the integration between ASEAN and India in both trade and investment. The present level of bilateral trade with ASEAN of nearly US\$18 billion is reportedly increasing by about 25% per year. India hopes to reach the level of US\$30 billion by 2007. India is also improving its relations with the help of other policy decisions like offers of lines of credit, better connectivity through the air (open skies policy), and rail and road links. India's prime minister Narendra Modi declared 2026 the ASEAN-India Year Of Maritime Cooperation during the 47th ASEAN summit.

India established diplomatic relations with Armenia in December 1992. It wasn't recognised by some countries including Pakistan, which most of the nations did. As of the earliest days of the silk route, there have been strong cultural, moral and ancient other traditional relations among the nations. It fully supports India's bid for a permanent seat in UNSC and even completely supports India on Kashmir conflicts. There exists a small community of Armenians in India while there is also a small community of Indians.

India has an embassy in Baku and Azerbaijan has an embassy in New Delhi. Both have been connected through ancient cultural links and trade routes (especially the Silk Route).

India is a close ally of Bahrain, the Kingdom along with its GCC partners are (according to Indian officials) among the most prominent backers of India's bid for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, and Bahraini officials have urged India to play a greater role in international affairs. For instance, over concerns about Iran's nuclear programme Bahrain's Crown Prince appealed to India to play an active role in resolving the crisis. Ties between India and Bahrain go back generations, with many of Bahrain's most prominent figures having close connections: poet and constitutionalist Ebrahim Al-Arrayedh grew up in Bombay, while 17th-century Bahraini theologians Sheikh Salih Al-Karzakani and Sheikh Ja'far bin Kamal al-Din were influential figures in the Kingdom of Golkonda and the development of Shia thought in the sub-continent. Bahraini politicians have sought to enhance these long-standing ties, with Parliamentary Speaker Khalifa Al Dhahrani in 2007 leading a delegation of parliamentarians and business leaders to meet the then Indian President Pratibha Patil, the then opposition leader L K Advani, and take part in training and media interviews. Politically, it is easier for Bahrain's politicians to seek training and advice from India than it is from the United States or other Western alternatives. Adding further strength to the ties, Sheikh Hamad Bin Isa Al-Khalifa visited India during which MOUs and bilateral deals worth \$450 million were approved. India expressed its support for Bahrain's bid for a non-permanent seat in the UNSC in 2026-27.

Cyprus has a High Commission in New Delhi and 2 honorary consulates (in Mumbai and Kolkata). India has a High Commission in Nicosia. Both countries are full members of the Commonwealth of Nations. Cypriot Ministry of Foreign Affairs: list of bilateral treaties with India India supported Cyprus during its struggle for independence from British colonial rule. India supported the Greeks in Cyprus during the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974 and lobbied for the international recognition of the Government of Nicosia as the sole legal representative of the entire nation. India has consistently supported and voted for a peaceful resolution of the Cyprus dispute at the United Nations.

Georgia has an embassy in New Delhi. India is represented in Georgia through its embassy in Yerevan (Armenia) and an honorary consulate in Tbilisi. Georgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs about relations with India

Independent India and Iran established diplomatic links on 15 March 1950. After the Iranian Revolution of 1979, Iran withdrew from CENTO and dissociated itself from US-friendly countries, including Pakistan, which automatically meant an improved relationship with the Republic of India. Currently, the two countries have friendly relations in many areas. There are significant trade ties, particularly in crude oil imports into India and diesel exports to Iran. Iran frequently objected to Pakistan's attempts to draft anti-India resolutions at international organisations such as the OIC. India welcomed Iran's inclusion as an observer state in the SAARC regional organisation. Lucknow continues to be a major centre of Shiite culture and Persian study in the subcontinent.

In the 1990s, India and Iran both supported the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan against the Taliban regime. They continue to collaborate in supporting the broad-based anti-Taliban government led by Hamid Karzai and backed by the United States. However, one complex issue in Indo-Iran relations is the issue of Iran's nuclear programme. In this intricate issue, India tries to make a delicate balance. According to Rejaul Laskar, an Indian expert on international relations, "India's position on Iran's nuclear programme has been consistent, principled and balanced, and makes an endeavour to reconcile Iran's quest for energy security with the international

community's concerns on proliferation. So, while India acknowledges and supports Iran's ambitions to achieve energy security and in particular, its quest for peaceful use of nuclear energy, it is also India's principled position that Iran must meet all its obligations under international law, particularly its obligations under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and other such treaties to which it is a signatory" Following an attack on an Israeli diplomat in India in February 2012, the Delhi Police contended that the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps had some involvement in the attack. This was subsequently confirmed in July 2012, after a report by the Delhi Police found evidence that members of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps had been involved in the 13 February bomb attack in the capital.

Iraq was one of the few countries in the Middle East with which India established diplomatic relations at the embassy level immediately after its independence in 1947. Both nations signed the "Treaty of Perpetual Peace and Friendship" in 1952 and an agreement of cooperation on cultural affairs in 1954. India was amongst the first to recognise the Ba'ath Party-led government, and Iraq remained neutral during the Indo-Pakistani War of 1965. However, Iraq sided alongside other Persian Gulf states in supporting Pakistan against India during the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971, which saw the creation of Bangladesh. The eight-year-long Iran-Iraq War caused a steep decline in trade and commerce between the two nations. During the 1991 Persian Gulf War, India remained neutral but permitted refuelling for US aircraft. It opposed UN sanctions on Iraq, but the period of war and Iraq's isolation further diminished India's commercial and diplomatic ties. From 1999 onwards, Iraq and India began to work towards a stronger relationship. Iraq had supported India's right to conduct nuclear tests following its tests of five nuclear weapons on 11 and 13 May 1998. In 2000, the then-Vice-President of Iraq Taha Yassin Ramadan visited India, and on 6 August 2002 President Saddam Hussein conveyed Iraq's "unwavering support" to India over the Kashmir conflict with Pakistan. India and Iraq established joint ministerial committees and trade delegations to promote extensive bilateral cooperation. Although initially disrupted during the 2003 invasion of Iraq, diplomatic and commercial ties between India and the new democratic government of Iraq have since been normalised.

The establishment of Israel at the end of World War II was a complex issue. Based on its own experience during partition, when 14 million people were displaced and an estimated 200,000 to 500,000 people were killed in Punjab Province, India had recommended a single state, as did Iran and Yugoslavia (later to undergo its genocidal partition). The state could allocate Arab- and Jewish-majority provinces to prevent the partition of historic Palestine and prevent widespread conflict. But, the final UN resolution recommended the partition of Mandatory Palestine into Arab and Jewish states based on religious and ethnic majorities. India opposed this in the final vote as it did not agree with the concept of partition based on religion. Due to the security threat from a US-backed Pakistan and its nuclear programme in the 1980s, Israel and India started a clandestine relationship that involved cooperation between their respective intelligence agencies. Israel shared India's concerns about the growing danger posed by Pakistan and nuclear proliferation to Iran and other Arab states. Since the establishment of full diplomatic relations with Israel in 1992, India has improved its relationship with the Jewish state. India is regarded as Israel's strongest ally in Asia, and Israel is India's second-largest arms supplier. Since India achieved its independence in 1947, it has supported Palestinian self-determination. India recognised Palestine's statehood following Palestine's declaration on 18 November 1988 and Indo-Palestinian relations was first established in 1974. This has not adversely affected India's improved relations with Israel.

India entertained the Israeli Prime Minister in a visit in 2003, and Israel has entertained Indian dignitaries such as Finance Minister Jaswant Singh in diplomatic visits. India and Israel collaborate in scientific and technological endeavours. Israel's Minister for Science and Technology has expressed interest in collaborating with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) towards using satellites to better manage land and other

resources. Israel has also expressed interest in participating in ISRO's Chandrayaan Mission involving an uncrewed mission to the moon. On 21 January 2008, India successfully launched an Israeli spy satellite into orbit from the Sriharikota space station in southern India. Israel and India share intelligence on terrorist groups. They have developed close defence and security ties since establishing diplomatic relations in 1992. India has bought more than \$5 billion worth of Israeli equipment since 2002. In addition, Israel is training Indian military units and in 2008 was discussing an arrangement to give Indian commandos instruction in counter-terrorist tactics and urban warfare. In December 2008, Israel and India signed a memorandum to set up an Indo-Israel Legal Colloquium to facilitate discussions and exchange programmes between judges and jurists of the two countries. Following the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 2006, India stated that the Israeli use of force was "disproportionate and excessive". The India-Israel relationship has been very close and warm under the premiership of Narendra Modi since 2014. In 2017, he was the first ever Prime Minister of India to visit Israel.

India and Lebanon enjoy cordial and friendly relations based on many complementarities such as a political system based on parliamentary democracy, non-alignment, human rights, commitment to a just world order, regional and global peace, a liberal market economy and a vibrant entrepreneurial spirit. India has a peacekeeping force as part of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). One infantry battalion is deployed in Lebanon and about 900 personnel are stationed in the Eastern part of Southern Lebanon. The force also provided non-patrol aid to citizens. India and Lebanon have had very good relations since the 1950s.

India-Oman relations are foreign relations between India and the Sultanate of Oman. India has an embassy in Muscat, Oman. The Indian consulate was opened in Muscat in February 1955 and five years later it was upgraded to a consulate general and later developed into a full-fledged embassy in 1971. The first Ambassador of India arrived in Muscat in 1973. Oman established its embassy in New Delhi in 1972 and a consulate general in Mumbai in 1976. \$5.6 bn Oman-India energy pipeline plans progressing: Fox Petroleum Group envisions a roughly five-year timeframe for the execution of the pipeline project. Ajay Kumar, the chairman and managing director of Fox Petroleum, based in New Delhi, which is an associate company of Fox Petroleum FZC in the UAE, said that Mr. Modi had "fired the best weapon of economic development and growth". "He has given a red carpet for global players to invest in India," Mr. Kumar added. "It will boost all sectors of the industry - especially for small-scale manufacturing units and heavy industries too."

Bilateral relations between India and Saudi Arabia have strengthened considerably owing to cooperation in regional affairs and trade. Saudi Arabia is the one of largest suppliers of oil to India, which is one of the top seven trading partners and the 5th biggest investor in Saudi Arabia.

India was one of the first nations to establish ties with the Third Saudi State. During the 1930s, India heavily funded Nejd through financial subsidies. India's strategic relations with Saudi Arabia have been affected by the latter's close ties with Pakistan. Saudi Arabia supported Pakistan's stance on the Kashmir conflict during the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971 at the expense of its relations with India. The Soviet Union's close relations with India also served as a source of consternation. During the Persian Gulf War (1990-91), India officially maintained neutrality. Saudi Arabia's close military and strategic ties with Pakistan have also been a source of continuing strain. Since the 1990s, both nations have taken steps to improve ties. Saudi Arabia has supported granting observer status to India in the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and has expanded its cooperation with India to fight terrorism. In January 2006, King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia made a special visit to India, becoming the first Saudi monarch in 51 years to do so. The Saudi king and former Prime Minister of India Manmohan Singh signed an agreement forging a strategic energy partnership that was termed the "Delhi Declaration". The pact provides for a "reliable, stable and increased volume of crude oil supplies to India

through long-term contracts." Both nations also agreed on joint ventures and the development of oil and natural gas in public and private sectors. An Indo-Saudi joint declaration in the Indian capital New Delhi described the king's visit as "heralding a new era in India-Saudi Arabia relations".

Bilateral relations between India and Syria are historic and the two have ancient civilizational ties. Both countries were on the Silk Road through which civilizational exchanges took place for centuries. Syriac Christianity, originating in ancient Syria, spread further to the East and created the first Christian communities in ancient India. The ancient Syriac language among the Syrian Christians of Kerala was also brought to Kerala by St Thomas in the 1st century CE. Even today the language continues to be taught in colleges and universities in Kerala. A common nationalism and secular orientation, membership of NAM and similar perceptions on many issues further strengthened the bond between the two states. India supported "Syria's legitimate right to regain the occupied Golan Heights". In turn, this was reciprocated with Syrian recognition that Kashmir is a bilateral issue as well as general support of India's concerns and even candidature at various international forums.

Due to controversial issues such as Turkey's close relationship with Pakistan, relations between the two countries have often been blistered at certain times, but better at others. India and Turkey's relationship alters from unsureness to collaboration when the two nations work together to combat terrorism in Central and South Asia, and the Middle East. India and Turkey are also connected by history, seeing as they have known each other since the days of the Ottoman Empire, and seeing as India was one of the countries to send aid to Turkey following its war of independence. The Indian real estate firm GMR has invested in and is working towards the modernisation of Istanbul's Sabiha Gken International Airport. The relations took a nose-dive after Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan spoke against India on the Kashmir issue and supported Pakistan, during his address at United Nations General Assembly after Pakistan PM Imran Khan, in September 2019. In February 2020, he visited Islamabad and held talks with Imran Khan, on "improving and bolding the relations with Islamabad". At the end of the month, during the riots in Delhi and CAA-NRC protests in India, he criticised the government for its policies. He also criticised the move of the Indian Government on the Galwan Valley skirmishes with China on LAC.

United Arab Emirates

India-United Arab Emirates relations refer to the bilateral relations that exist between the Republic of India and the United Arab Emirates. After the creation of the Federation in 1971, India-UAE relations flourished. Today UAE and India share political, economic and cultural links. There are over a million Indians in the United Arab Emirates, being by far the largest migrant group in the country. A large Indian expatriate community resides and engages in the UAE in economically productive activities and has played a significant role in the evolution of the UAE. In 2008-09, India emerged as the largest trade partner of the UAE with bilateral trade between the two countries exceeding US\$44.5 billion. UAE and India are each other's main trading partners. The trade totals over \$75 billion (AED275.25 billion).

Arab states of the Persian Gulf India and the Arab states of the Persian Gulf enjoy strong cultural and economic ties. This is reflected in the fact that more than 50% of the oil consumed by India comes from the Persian Gulf countries and Indian nationals form the largest expatriate community in the Arabian peninsula. The annual remittance by Indian expatriates in the region amounted to US\$20 billion in 2007. India is one of the largest trading partners of the CCASG with non-oil trade between India and Dubai alone amounting to US\$19 billion in

2007. The Persian Gulf countries have also played an important role in addressing India's energy security concerns, with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait regularly increasing their oil supply to India to meet the country's rising energy demand. In 2005, Kuwait increased its oil exports to India by 10% increasing the net oil trade between the two to US\$4.5 billion. In 2008, Qatar decided to invest US\$5 billion in India's energy sector. India has maritime security arrangements in place with Oman and Qatar. In 2008, a landmark defence pact was signed, under which India committed its military assets to protect "Qatar from external threats". There has been progress in a proposed deep-sea gas pipeline from Qatar, via Oman, to India.

Austria-India relations refers to the bilateral ties between Austria and India. Indo-Austrian relations were established in May 1949 by the first Prime Minister of India Jawaharlal Nehru and the Chancellor of Austria Leopold Figl. Historically, Indo-Austrian ties have been particularly strong and India intervened in June 1953 in Austria's favour whilst negotiations were going on with the Soviet Union about the Austrian State Treaty. There is a fully functioning Indian embassy in Vienna, Austria's capital, which is concurrently accredited to the United Nations offices in the city. Austria is represented in India by its embassy and Trade Commission in New Delhi, India's capital, as well as honorary consulates in Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai and Goa.

Belarus has an embassy in New Delhi. Since 14 May 1992, India has an embassy in Minsk.

Belgium has an embassy in New Delhi, consulates in Chennai and Mumbai, and an honorary consulate in Kolkata. India has an embassy in Brussels.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bulgaria has an embassy in New Delhi and an honorary consulate in Kolkata. India has an embassy in Sofia.

Since February 1995, Croatia has an embassy in New Delhi and an honorary consulate in Mumbai. Since 28 April 1996, India has an embassy in Zagreb.

Czech-Indian relations were established in 1921 by a consulate in Bombay. The Czech Republic has an embassy in New Delhi. Consulates of the Czech Republic in India are in Chennai, Mumbai and Kolkata. India has an embassy in Prague. Denmark

Denmark has an embassy in New Delhi, and India has an embassy in Copenhagen. Tranquebar, a town in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, was a Danish colony in India from 1620 to 1845. It is spelled Trankebar or Tranquebar in Danish, which comes from the native Tamil, Tarangambadi, meaning "place of the singing waves". It was sold, along with the other Danish settlements in mainland India, most notably Serampore (now in West Bengal), to Great Britain in 1845. The Nicobar Islands were also colonised by Denmark until sold to the British in 1868, who made them part of the British Indian Empire.

After Independence in 1947, Indian prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru's visit to Denmark in 1957 laid the foundation for a friendly relationship between India and Denmark that has endured ever since. The bilateral relations between India and Denmark are cordial and friendly, based on synergies in political, economic, academic and research fields. There have been periodic high-level visits between the two countries. Anders

Fogh Rasmussen, former Prime Minister of Denmark, accompanied by a large business delegation, paid a state visit to India from 4 to 8 February 2008. He visited Infosys, Biocon and IIM Bangalore in Bangalore and Agra. He launched an 'India Action Plan', which called for strengthening of the political dialogue, strengthening of cooperation in trade and investments, research in science and technology, energy, climate and environment, culture, education, student exchanges and attracting skilled manpower and IT experts to Denmark for short periods. The two countries signed an Agreement for the establishment of a Bilateral Joint Commission for Cooperation. In July 2012, the Government of India decided to scale down its diplomatic ties with Denmark after that country's refusal to appeal in their Supreme Court against a decision of its lower court rejecting the extradition of Purulia arms drop case prime accused Kim Davy a.k.a. Niels Holck. Agitated over Denmark's refusal to act on India's repeated requests to appeal in their apex court to facilitate Davy's extradition to India, the government issued a circular directing all senior officials not to meet or entertain any Danish diplomat posted in India.

India's first recognition of Estonia came on 22 September 1921 when the former had just acquired membership in the League of Nations. India re-recognised Estonia on 9 September 1991 and diplomatic relations were established on 2 December of the same year in Helsinki. Neither country has a resident ambassador. Estonia is represented in India by an embassy in New Delhi one honorary consulate in Mumbai. India is represented in Estonia through its embassy in Helsinki (Finland) and an honorary consulate in Tallinn.

France and India established diplomatic relations before India's independence from the British Empire on 17 February 1947. France's Indian possessions were returned to India after a treaty of cession was signed by the two countries in May 1956. On 16 August 1962, India and France exchanged the instruments of ratification under which France ceded to India full sovereignty over the territories it held. Pondicherry and the other enclaves of Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam came to be administered as the Union Territory of Puducherry on 1 July 1963. France, Russia and Israel were the only countries that did not condemn India's decision to go nuclear in 1998. In 2003, France became the largest supplier of nuclear fuel and technology to India and remains a large military and economic trade partner. India's candidacy for permanent membership in the UN Security Council has found very strong support from former French President Nicolas Sarkozy. The Indian Government's decisions to purchase French Scorpene-class submarines worth US\$3 billion and 43 Airbus aircraft for Air India worth US\$2.5 billion have further cemented the strategic, military and economic cooperation between India and France. France's decision to ban schoolchildren from wearing headdresses and veils had the unintended consequence of affecting Sikh children who have been refused entry into public schools. The Indian Government, citing the historic traditions of the Sikh community, has requested French authorities to review the situation to not exclude Sikh children from education. President Nicolas Sarkozy and Francois Hollande visited India in January 2008 and 2016 respectively as the Chief Guest of the annual Republic Day parade in New Delhi. France was the first country to sign a nuclear energy cooperation agreement with India; this was done during Prime Minister Singh's visit, following the waiver by the Nuclear Suppliers Group. During the Bastille Day celebrations on 14 July 2009, a detachment of 400 Indian troops marched alongside the French troops and the then Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was the guest of honour.

India has an embassy in Helsinki. Finland has an embassy in New Delhi and three honorary consulates in Kolkata, Chennai, and Mumbai.

Germany During the Cold War India maintained diplomatic relations with both West Germany and East Germany. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the reunification of Germany, relations have further improved. Germany is India's largest trade partner in Europe. Between 2004 and 2013, Indo-German trade grew in

volume but dropped in importance. According to Indian Ministry of Commerce MX data: Total trade between India and Germany was \$5.5 billion (3.8% share of Indian trade and ranked 6) in 2004 and \$21.6 billion (2.6% share of Indian trade and ranked 9) in 2013. Indian exports to Germany were \$2.54 billion (3.99% ranked 6) in 2004 and \$7.3billion (2.41% ranked 10) in 2013. Indian imports from Germany were \$2.92 billion (3.73% ranked 6) in 2004 and \$14.33 billion (2.92% ranked 10) in 2013.

Indo-German ties are transactional. The strategic relationship between Germany and India suffers from sustained anti-Asian sentiment, institutionalised discrimination against minority groups, and xenophobic incidents against Indians in Germany. The 2007 MgeIn mob attack on Indians and the 2015 Leipzig University internship controversy have clouded the predominantly commercial-oriented relationship between the two countries. Stiff competition between foreign manufactured goods within the Indian market has seen machine tools, automotive parts and medical supplies from German Mittelstand ceding ground to high-technology imports manufactured by companies located in ASEAN & BRICS countries. The Volkswagen emissions scandal drew the spotlight on corrupt behaviour in German boardrooms and brought back memories of the HDW bribery scandal surrounding the procurement of Shishumar-class submarines by the Indian Navy. The India-Germany strategic relationship is limited by the insignificance of German geopolitical influence in Asian affairs. Germany has no strategic footprint in Asia. Germany like India is working towards gaining permanent seats in the United Nations Security Council.

Greece For the Ancient Greeks "India" (Greek: Ἰνδία) meant only the upper Indus until the time of Alexander the Great. Afterwards, "India" meant to the Greeks most of the northern half of the Indian subcontinent. The Greeks referred to the Indians as "Indi" (Greek: Ἰνδοί), literally meaning "the people of the Indus River". Indians called the Greeks Yonas or "Yavanas" from Ionians. Indo-Greek kingdoms were founded by the successor of Alexander the Great. (Greek conquests in India) The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea was a manual written in Greek for navigators who carried trade between Roman Empire and other regions, including ancient India. It gives detailed information about the ports, routes and commodities. The Greek ethnographer and explorer of the Hellenistic period, Megasthenes was the ambassador of Seleucus I in India. In his work, Indika (Greek: Ἰνδική), he wrote the history of Indians and their culture. Megasthenes also mentioned the prehistoric arrival of the God Dionysus and Herakles (Megasthenes' Herakles) in India. There is now tangible evidence indicating that the settlement of Greek merchants in Bengal must have begun as early as the beginning of the seventeenth century. Dimitrios Galanos (Greek: Δημήτριος Γαλανός, 1760-1833) was the earliest recorded Greek Indologist. His translations of Sanskrit texts into Greek made knowledge of the philosophical and religious ideas of India available to many Europeans. A "Dimitrios Galanos" Chair for Hellenic Studies was established at Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi, India in September 2000. In modern times, diplomatic relations between Greece and India were established in May 1950. The new Greek Embassy building in New Delhi was inaugurated on 6 February 2001. As of 2020, the relationship between the two countries is closer than ever and is considered historical and strategic by both parties.

The Indian embassy is located in Budapest.

Iceland and India established diplomatic relations in 1972. The Embassy of Iceland in London was accredited to India and the Embassy of India in Oslo, Norway, was accredited to Iceland. However, it was only after 2003 that the two countries began close diplomatic and economic relationships. In 2003, President of Iceland lafur Ragnar Grmsson visited India on a diplomatic mission. This was the first visit by an Icelandic President to India. During the visit, Iceland pledged support to New Delhi's candidature for a permanent seat in the United Nations

Security Council thus becoming the first Nordic country to do so. This was followed by an official visit of President of India A. P. J. Abdul Kalam to Iceland in May 2005. Following this, a new embassy of Iceland was opened in New Delhi on 26 February 2006. Soon, an Indian Navy team visited Iceland on a friendly mission. Gunnar Plsson is the ambassador of Iceland to India. The Embassy's area of accreditation, apart from India includes Bangladesh, Indonesia, the Seychelles, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius and Nepal. India appointed S. Swaminathan as the first resident ambassador to Iceland in March 2008.

India has an embassy established in 2006 in Reykjavk. Iceland has an embassy established in 2005 in New Delhi.

Indo-Irish relations picked up steam during their respective campaigns for independence from the British Empire. Political relations between the two states have largely been based on socio-cultural ties, although political and economic ties have also helped build relations. Indo-Irish relations were greatly strengthened by Pandit Nehru, amon de Valera, Rabindranath Tagore, W. B. Yeats, James Joyce, and, above all, Annie Besant. Politically, relations have not been cold or warm. Mutual benefit has led to economic ties that are fruitful for both states. Visits by government leaders have kept relations cordial at regular intervals.

India has an embassy in Dublin. Ireland has an embassy in New Delhi.

Italy

Both countries established diplomatic relations on 25 March 1948 India maintains an embassy in Rome and a consulate-general in Milan. Italy has an embassy in New Delhi, and consulate-generals in Mumbai and Calcutta. Indo-Italian relations have historically been cordial. In recent times, their state has mirrored the political fortunes of Sonia Maino-Gandhi, the Italian-born leader of the Indian National Congress and de facto leader of the UPA government of Manmohan Singh. Since 2012 the relationship has been affected by the ongoing Enrica Lexie case: two Indian fishermen were killed on the Indian fishing vessel St. Antony as a result of gunshot wounds following a confrontation with the Italian oil tanker Enrica Lexie in international waters, off the Kerala coast.

After a period of tension, in 2017 Italian Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni visited India and met his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi; they held extensive talks to strengthen the political cooperation and to boost the bilateral trade. There are around 150,000 people of Indian Origins living in Italy. Around 1,000 Italian citizens reside in India, mostly working on behalf of Italian industrial groups. Lithuania

Relations were established in 1947, following India's independence. Luxembourg operates an embassy in New Delhi whilst India operates a Consulate General in Luxembourg City. Bilateral Trade stood at US\$37 Million in 2014 and trade continues to grow every year. Diplomats from both countries have visited the other several times. In 2019, Luxembourg plans to host the annual Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and open an economic mission in India.

Malta opened a High Commission of Malta, New Delhi in New Delhi in 2007. Malta also has an honorary consulate in Mumbai. India is represented in Malta by its high commission in Valletta.

The Indian embassy to Moldova is accredited by Bucharest, Romania. Moldova maintains an honorary consulate in New Delhi and a consulate in Mumbai. Both countries have taken steps to deepen their ties, which are still maintained at a modest level. Both countries have been found supporting each other on many international platforms like the United Nations through reciprocal support mechanisms. India-Moldova bilateral trade has been rather modest.

India-Netherlands relations refer to foreign relations between India and the Netherlands. India maintains an embassy in The Hague, Netherlands and the Netherlands maintains an embassy in New Delhi and a consulate general in Mumbai. Both countries established diplomatic relations on 17 April 1947.

In 2012, Trond Giske met with Minister of Finance Pranab Mukherjee, to save Telenor's investments to put forth Norway's "strong wish" that there must not be a waiting period between the confiscation of telecom licences and the re-sale of those. The leader of Telenor attended the meeting.

Mother Teresa, honoured in the Catholic Church as Saint Teresa of Calcutta became an Indian citizen in 1951, and was born in Skopje (in present-day North Macedonia) in 1910. India has an embassy in Sofia, Bulgaria jointly accredited to the Republic of Macedonia. Both Macedonia has an embassy in New Delhi and an honorary consulate in Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai and Bangalore.

Historically, relations have generally been close and friendly, characterised by understanding and cooperation on the international front.

India has an embassy in Warsaw. Poland has an embassy in New Delhi.

India and Portugal have a long history of relations ever since the Portuguese colonisation in British Raj.

Both countries established diplomatic relations on 13 April 1947 India's ties with the Russian Federation are time-tested and based on continuity, trust and mutual understanding. There is a national consensus in both countries on the need to preserve and strengthen India-Russia relations and further consolidate the strategic partnership between the two countries. A Declaration on Strategic Partnership was signed between present Russian President Vladimir Putin and former Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in October 2000 the partnership is also referred to as a "special and privileged strategic partnership".

Russia and India have decided not to renew the 1971 Indo-Soviet Peace and Friendship Treaty and have sought to follow what both describe as a more pragmatic, less ideological relationship. Russian President Yeltsin's visit to India in January 1993 helped cement this new relationship. Ties have grown stronger with President Vladimir Putin's 2004 visit. The pace of high-level visits has since increased, as discussed in major defence purchases. Russia is working on the development of the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant, which will be capable of producing 1000 MW of electricity. Gazprom is working for the development of oil and natural gas, in the Bay of Bengal. India and Russia, have collaborated extensively, on space technology. Other areas of collaboration include software, Ayurveda, etc. India and Russia, have set a determination in increasing trade to \$10 billion. Cooperation between clothing manufacturers of the two countries continues to strengthen. India and Russia signed an agreement on joint efforts to increase investment and trade volumes in the textile industry in

both countries. In signing the document included representatives of the Russian Union of Entrepreneurs of Textile and Light Industry Council and apparel exports of India (AEPC). A cooperation agreement provides, inter alia, the exchange of technology and know-how in textile production. For this purpose, a special Commission on Affairs Textile (Textile Communication Committee). Counter-terrorism techniques are also in place between Russia and India. In 2007 President Vladimir Putin was the guest of honour at the Republic Day celebration on 26 January 2007. 2008, has been declared by both countries as the Russia-India Friendship Year. Bollywood films are quite popular in Russia. The Indian public sector oil company ONGC bought Imperial Energy Corporation in 2008. In December 2008, during President Medvedev's visit, to New Delhi, India and Russia, signed a nuclear energy cooperation agreement. In March 2010, Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin signed an additional 19 pacts with India which included civilian nuclear energy, space and military cooperation and the final sale of Admiral Gorshkov (Aircraft Carrier) along with MiG-29K fighter jets. During the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation, India refused to support American sanctions against Russia and one of India's national security advisers Shivshankar Menon was reported to have said "There are legitimate Russian and other interests involved and we hope they are discussed and resolved." On 7 August 2014, India and Russia held a joint counter-terrorism exercise near the Moscow boundary with China and Mongolia. It involved the use of tanks and armoured vehicles. India and Russia have so far conducted three rounds of INDRA exercises. The first exercise was carried out in 2005 in Rajasthan, followed by Prshkov in Russia. The third exercise was conducted at Chaubattia in Kumaon Hills in October 2010.

India has an embassy in Bucharest and an honorary consulate in Timișoara. Romania has an embassy in New Delhi and an honorary consulate in Kolkata.

India has an embassy in Belgrade. Serbia has an embassy in New Delhi and an honorary consulate in Chennai. The relations are seen as one of the closest for both nations. Slovakia

India has an embassy in Bratislava and Slovakia has an embassy in New Delhi.

India has an embassy in Ljubljana. Slovenia has an embassy in New Delhi. Spain

Diplomatic ties with Spain started in 1956. The first Spanish embassy was established in Delhi in 1958. India and Spain have had a cordial relationship with each other, especially after the establishment of democracy in Spain in 1978. Spain has been a main tourist spot for Indians over the years. Many presidents including Prathibha Patil visited Spain. The royal family of Spain has always liked the humble nature of the Indian government and they have thus paid several visits to India. There was no direct flight from India to Spain but it all changed in 1986 when Iberian travels started to fly directly from Mumbai to Madrid. However, it was stopped in 22 months. In 2006 this issue of the direct flight was reconsidered to improve the ties between India and Spain. "Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara" was shot completely in Spain in 2011. The tourism ministry of Spain is using this movie to promote tourism to Spain in India.

India has an embassy in Stockholm, which is also accredited to Latvia. Sweden has an embassy in New Delhi, which is also accredited to Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan and the Maldives. It has three honorary consulates in

Chennai, Kolkata and Mumbai. Switzerland

Switzerland has an embassy in New Delhi and a consulate in Bangalore and Mumbai. India has an embassy in Bern and consulates in Geneva and Zurich. India is one of Switzerland's most important partners in Asia. Bilateral and political contacts are constantly developing, and trade and scientific cooperation between the two countries are flourishing. Switzerland was the first country in the World to sign a Friendship treaty with India in 1947.

Diplomatic relations between India and Ukraine were established in January 1992. The Indian Embassy in Kyiv was opened in May 1992 and Ukraine opened its mission in New Delhi in February 1993. The Consulate General of India in Odesa functioned from 1962 until its closure in March 1999.

India has an embassy in Kyiv. Ukraine has an embassy in New Delhi and an honorary consulate in Mumbai. United Kingdom

India established diplomatic relations with the United Kingdom on 14 August 1947.

India maintains a high commission in London. The United Kingdom is accredited to India through its high commission in New Delhi, as well as Deputy High Commissions in Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Chandigarh, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Mumbai, and a Nationals Assistance Office in Goa. The UK governed the India from 1858 to 1947, when it achieved full independence. Both countries share common membership of the Commonwealth, the G20, the United Nations, and the World Trade Organization. Bilaterally the two countries have a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, a Development Partnership, and a Free Trade Agreement. Since 1947, India's relations with the United Kingdom have been bilateral, as well as through the Commonwealth of Nations framework. Although the Sterling Area no longer exists and the Commonwealth is much more an informal forum, India and the UK still have many enduring links. This is in part due to the significant number of people of Indian origin living in the UK. The large South Asian population in the UK results in steady travel and communication between the two countries. The British Raj allowed for both cultures to imbibe tremendously from the other. The English language and cricket are perhaps the two most evident British exports, whilst in the UK food from the Indian subcontinent is very popular. The United Kingdom's favourite food is often reported to be Indian cuisine, although no official study reports this. Economically the relationship between Britain and India is also strong. India is the second largest investor in Britain after the US. Britain is also one of the largest investors in India.

Vatican City & the Holy See

Formal bilateral relations between India and Vatican City have existed since 12 June 1948. An Apostolic Delegation existed in India from 1881. The Holy See has a nunciature in New Delhi whilst India has accredited its embassy in Bern, Switzerland to the Holy See as well. India's Ambassador in Bern has traditionally been accredited to the Holy See. The connections between the Catholic Church and India can be traced back to the apostle St. Thomas, who, according to tradition, came to India in 52 CE in the 9th century, the patriarch of the Nestorians in Persia sent bishops to India. There is a record of an Indian bishop visiting Rome in the early part of the 12th century. The diplomatic mission was established as the Apostolic Delegation to the East Indies in 1881, and included Ceylon, and was extended to Malaca in 1889, then to Burma in 1920, and eventually

included Goa in 1923. It was raised to an Internunciature by Pope Pius XII on 12 June 1948 and to a full Apostolic Nunciature by Pope Paul VI on 22 August 1967. There have been three Papal visits to India. The first Pope to visit India was Pope Paul VI, who visited Mumbai in 1964 to attend the Eucharistic Congress. Pope John Paul II visited India in February 1986 and November 1999. Several Indian dignitaries have, from time to time, called on the Pope in the Vatican. These include Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1981 and Prime Minister I. K. Gujral in September 1987. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Prime Minister, called on the Pope in June 2000 during his official visit to Italy. Vice-President Bhairon Singh Shekhawat represented the country at the funeral of Pope John Paul II.

India was one of the first countries to develop relations with the European Union. The Joint Political Statement of 1993 and the 1994 Cooperation Agreement were the foundational agreements for the bilateral partnership. In 2004, India and European Union became "Strategic Partners". A Joint Action Plan was agreed upon in 2005 and updated in 2008. India-EU Joint Statements were published in 2009 and 2012 following the India-European Union Summits. India and the European Commission initiated negotiations on a Broad-based Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA) in 2007. Seven rounds of negotiations have been completed without reaching a Free Trade Agreement. According to the Government of India, trade between India and the EU was \$57.25 billion between April and October 2014 and stood at \$101.5 billion for the fiscal period of 2014-2015. The European Union is India's second largest trade bloc, accounting for around 20% of Indian trade (Gulf Cooperation Council is the largest trade bloc with almost \$160 billion in total trade). India was the European Union's 8th largest trading partner in 2010. EU-India trade grew from €28.6 billion in 2003 to €72.7 billion in 2013. France, Germany and UK collectively represent the major part of EU-India trade. Annual trade in commercial services tripled from €5.2 billion in 2002 to €17.9 billion in 2010. Denmark, Sweden, Finland and the Netherlands are the other more prominent European Union countries that trade with India.

Oceania Australia

India & Australia are both Commonwealth members. Sporting and cultural ties are significant. Australian cricketers often undertake large commercial ventures in India, enhanced with the IPL, and, to a lesser degree, the ICL. Bollywood productions enjoy a large market in Australia. In 2007, PM John Howard visited Mumbai and its entertainment industry, in efforts to increase Tourism in India to Australia.

There are ongoing strategic attempts to form an "Asian NATO" with India, Japan, the US and Australia through the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue. During the first decade of the 21st century, the deepening of strategic relations between the two nations was prevented by a range of policy disagreements, such as India's refusal to sign the NPT and Australia's consequent refusal to provide India with uranium. Australia's parliament later allowed for the sale of uranium to India, following changes in government. Closer strategic cooperation between India, Japan, the United States and Australia also began during the second half of the 2010s, which some analysts attributed to a desire to balance Chinese initiatives in the Indo-Pacific region.

Fiji's relationship with the Republic of India is often seen by observers against the backdrop of the sometimes tense relations between its indigenous people and the 44 per cent of the population who are of Indian descent. India has used its influence in international forums such as the Commonwealth of Nations and United Nations on behalf of ethnic Indians in Fiji, lobbying for sanctions against Fiji in the wake of the 1987 coups and the 2000 coup, both of which removed governments, one dominated and one led, by Indo-Fijians.

Marshall Islands

India and Nauru relations have been established since the island nation's independence in 1968. Leaders of both countries have been meeting on the sidelines of some of the international forums of which both nations are part such as the United Nations and the Non-Aligned Movement. India is one of the largest donors to the island by improving the education ministry and creating transportation and computer connections for the MPs and the Speaker of the Parliament of Nauru. There were numerous visits by the President of Nauru to the republic to further strengthen ties and cooperation. New Zealand

Bilateral relations were established between India and New Zealand in 1952. India has a High Commission in Wellington with an Honorary Consulate in Auckland, while New Zealand has a High Commission in New Delhi along with a Consulate in Mumbai, trade offices in New Delhi and Mumbai and an Honorary Consulate in Chennai. India-New Zealand relations were cordial but not extensive after Indian independence. More recently, New Zealand has shown interest in extending ties with India due to India's impressive GDP growth.

Papua New Guinea

India and Papua New Guinea established relations in 1975, following PNG's independence from Australia. Since 1975, relations have grown between the two nations. India maintains a High Commission in Port Moresby while Papua New Guinea maintains a High Commission in New Delhi. In the 2010 Fiscal Year, Trade between the two nations grew to US\$239 Million. PNG has sent numerous military officers and students to be trained and educated in India's academies and universities respectively. In recent years, India and PNG have signed an Economic Partnership Agreement, allowing India to further invest in PNG's infrastructure, telecommunications and educational institutions.

Both countries established diplomatic relations in June 1970.

Vanuatu India has its High Commission in Wellington, New Zealand, accredited to Vanuatu.

Since its declaration of independence from Serbia, Kosovo sought recognition from the major of the world's most influential countries, among them, India. Indian views regarding the developments followed initial constringent to comment but dismissed to give recognition of statehood. There are almost negligible interactions.

After India achieved its independence in 1947, the country moved to support Palestinian self-determination following the partition of India. In light of a religious partition between India and Pakistan, the impetus to boost ties with Muslim states around the world was a further tie to India's support for the Palestinian cause. Though it started to waver in the late 1980s and 1990s, as the recognition of Israel led to diplomatic exchanges, the ultimate support for the Palestinian cause, was still an underlying concern. Beyond the recognition of Palestinian self-determination ties have been largely dependent upon socio-cultural bonds, while economic relations were neither cold nor warm. India recognised Palestine's statehood following its declaration on 18 November 1988; although relations were first established in 1974. PNA President Abbas paid a State visit to

India in September 2012, during which India pledged \$10 million as aid. Indian officials said it was the third such donation, adding that New Delhi was committed to helping other development projects. India also pledged support to Palestine's bid for full and equal membership of the UN.

India recognised the Republic of China (R.O.C) from 1947 to 1950. On 1 April 1950, India officially recognised the People's Republic of China (P.R.C) as "China" and continued to recognise the PRC's "One China" policy in which the island of Taiwan is a part of the Chinese territory. However, the bilateral relations between India and Taiwan have improved since the 1990s despite both nations not maintaining official diplomatic relations. Taiwan and India maintain non-governmental interaction via India-Taipei Association and Taipei Economic and Cultural Centre respectively. In July 2020, the Indian government appointed a top career diplomat, Joint Secretary Gourangalal Das, the former head of the US division in India's Ministry of External Affairs, as its new envoy to Taiwan.

International organisations India participates in the following international organisations:

AALCO - Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization ADB - Asian Development Bank AfDB - African Development Bank (non-regional members) AG - Australia Group ASEAN Regional Forum ASEAN (dialogue partner) BIMSTEC - Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation BIS - Bank for International Settlements BRICS - Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa Commonwealth of Nations CERN - European Organization for Nuclear Research CP - Colombo Plan EAS - East Asia Summit FAO - Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations G-4 G-15 G-20 G-24 G-77 IAEA - International Atomic Energy Agency IBRD - International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank) ICAO - International Civil Aviation Organization ICC - International Chamber of Commerce ICRM - International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement IDA - International Development Association IEA - International Energy Agency IFAD - International Fund for Agricultural Development IFC - International Finance Corporation IFRCS - International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies IHO - International Hydrographic Organization ILO - International Labour Organization IMF - International Monetary Fund IMO - International Maritime Organization IMSO - International Mobile Satellite Organization Interpol - International Criminal Police Organization IOC - International Olympic Committee IOM - International Organization for Migration (observer) IORA - Indian Ocean Rim Association IPEEC - International Partnership for Energy Efficiency Cooperation IPU - Inter-Parliamentary Union ISA - International Solar Alliance ISO - International Organization for Standardization ITSO - International Telecommunications Satellite Organization ITU - International Telecommunication Union ITUC - International Trade Union Confederation (the successor to ICFTU (International Confederation of Free Trade Unions) and the WCL (World Confederation of Labour)) LAS - League of Arab States (observer) MIGA - Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency MTCR - Missile Technology Control Regime NAM - Non-Aligned Movement OAS - Organization of American States (observer) OPCW - Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons PCA - Permanent Court of Arbitration PIF - Pacific Islands Forum (partner) SAARC - South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation SACEP - South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme SCO - Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (member) UN - United Nations UNAIDS- United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS UNCTAD - United Nations Conference on Trade and Development UNDOF - United Nations Disengagement Observer Force UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization UNHCR - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees UNIDO - United Nations Industrial Development Organization UNIFIL - United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon UNMEE - United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea UNMIS - United Nations Mission in Sudan UNOCI - United Nations Operation in Cte d'Ivoire MONUSCO - United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo UNWTO - World Tourism Organization UPU - Universal Postal Union WA -

Wassenaar Arrangement WCL - World Confederation of Labour WCO - World Customs Organization WFTU - World Federation of Trade Unions WHO - World Health Organization WIPO - World Intellectual Property Organization WMO - World Meteorological Organization WTO - World Trade Organization

Commonwealth of Nations India became independent within the British Commonwealth in August 1947 as the Dominion of India after the partition of India into India and the Dominion of Pakistan. King George VI, the last Emperor of India became the King of India with the Governor-General of India as his viceregal representative. India became the very first Commonwealth republic on 26 January 1950, as a result of the London Declaration. Staying in the Commonwealth allowed India to maintain contact with the Indian diaspora, much of which was by then dispersed among the former British colonies. It also was arguably meant to avoid an overly strong Pakistan-United Kingdom relationship.

Non-Aligned Movement

India played an important role in the multilateral movements of colonies and newly independent countries that developed into the Non-Aligned Movement. Nonalignment had its origins in India's colonial experience and the nonviolent Indian independence movement led by the Congress, which left India determined to be the master of its fate in an international system dominated politically by Cold War alliances and economically by Western capitalism and Soviet communism. The principles of nonalignment, as articulated by Nehru and his successors, were the preservation of India's freedom of action internationally through refusal to align India with any bloc or alliance, particularly those led by the United States or the Soviet Union; nonviolence and international cooperation as a means of settling international disputes. Nonalignment was a consistent feature of Indian foreign policy by the late 1940s and enjoyed strong, almost unquestioning support among the Indian elite. The term "Non-Alignment" was coined by V K Menon in his speech at the UN in 1953 which was later used by Indian Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru during his speech in 1954 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. In this speech, Nehru described the five pillars to be used as a guide for China-India relations, which were first put forth by PRC Premier Zhou Enlai. Called Panchsheel (five restraints), these principles would later serve as the basis of the Non-Aligned Movement. The five principles were:

Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty Mutual non-aggression Mutual non-interference in domestic affairs Equality and mutual benefit Peaceful co-existence Jawaharlal Nehru's concept of nonalignment brought India considerable international prestige among newly independent states that shared India's concerns about the military confrontation between the superpowers and the influence of the former colonial powers. New Delhi used nonalignment to establish a significant role for itself as a leader of the newly independent world in such multilateral organisations as the United Nations (UN) and the Nonaligned Movement. The signing of the Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation between India and the Soviet Union in 1971 and India's involvement in the internal affairs of its smaller neighbours in the 1970s and 1980s tarnished New Delhi's image as a nonaligned nation and led some observers to note that in practice, nonalignment applied only to India's relations with countries outside South Asia. Quad Alliance

The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QSD, also known as the Quad) is an informal strategic dialogue between the United States, India, Japan and Australia that is maintained by talks between member countries. The dialogue was initiated in 2007 by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, with the support of American Vice-President Dick Cheney, Australian Prime Minister John Howard and Former Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. The dialogue was paralleled by joint military exercises of an unprecedented scale, titled

Exercise Malabar. The diplomatic and military arrangement was widely viewed as a response to increased Chinese economic and military power. On 12 March 2021, the first summit meeting was held virtually between U.S President Joe Biden, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga and Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison.

United Nations India was among the original members of the United Nations that signed the Declaration by United Nations at Washington on 1 January 1942 and also participated in the United Nations Conference on International Organization in San Francisco from 25 April to 26 June 1945. As a founding member of the United Nations, India strongly supports the purposes and principles of the UN and has made significant contributions to implementing the goals of the Charter and the evolution of the UN's specialised programmes and agencies. India is a charter member of the United Nations and participates in all of its specialised agencies and organisations. India has contributed troops to United Nations peacekeeping efforts in Korea, Egypt and the Congo in its earlier years and in Somalia, Angola, Haiti, Liberia, Lebanon and Rwanda in recent years, and more recently in the South Sudan conflict. India has been a member of the UN Security Council for eight terms (a total of 16 years). India is a member of the G4 group of nations who back each other in seeking a permanent seat on the security council and advocate in favour of the reformation of the UNSC. India is also part of the Group of 77. World Trade Organization Described by the WTO's former chief, Pascal Lamy, as one of the organisation's "big brothers", India was instrumental in bringing down the Doha Development Round of talks in 2008. It has played an important role in representing as many as 100 developing nations during WTO summits.

Former Soviet Union

The dissolution of the Soviet Union and the emergence of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) had major repercussions for Indian foreign policy. Substantial trade with the former Soviet Union plummeted after the Soviet collapse and has yet to recover. Longstanding military supply relationships were similarly disrupted due to questions over financing, although Russia continues to be India's largest supplier of military systems and spare parts. The relationship with USSR was tested (and proven) during the 1971 war with Pakistan, which led to the subsequent liberation of Bangladesh. Soon after the victory of the Indian Armed Forces, one of the foreign delegates to visit India was Admiral S.G. Gorshkov, Chief of the Soviet Navy. During his visit to Mumbai (Bombay), he came on board INS Vikrant. During a conversation with Vice Admiral Swaraj Prakash, Gorshkov asked the Vice Admiral, "Were you worried about a battle against the American carrier?" He answered himself: "Well, you had no reason to be worried, as I had a Soviet nuclear submarine trailing the American task force all the way into the Indian Ocean."

India had formal relations with the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia until 1992 with the Breakup of Yugoslavia.

Border disputes India's territorial disputes with neighbouring Pakistan and the People's Republic of China have played a crucial role in its foreign policy. India is also involved in minor territorial disputes with neighbouring Bangladesh, Nepal and Maldives. India currently maintains two manned stations in Antarctica but has made some unofficial territorial claims, which are yet to be clarified. India is involved in the following border disputes:

Nepal Kalapani village of India is claimed by Nepal and Susta village in Nawalparasi district of Nepal is claimed by India. The dispute between India and Nepal involves about 75 km² (30 sq mi) of area in Kalapani, where

China, India, and Nepal meet. Indian forces occupied the area in 1962 after China and India fought their border war. Three villages are located in the disputed zone: Kuti [Kuthi, 3019'N, 8046'E], Gunji, and Knabe. India and Nepal disagree about how to interpret the 1816 Sugauli treaty between the British East India Company and Nepal, which delimited the boundary along the Maha Kali River (Sarda River in India). The dispute intensified in 1997 as the Nepali parliament considered a treaty on the hydroelectric development of the river. India and Nepal differ as to which stream constitutes the source of the river. Nepal regards the Limpiyadhura as the source; India claims the Lipu Lekh. Nepal has reportedly tabled an 1856 map from the British India Office to support its position. The countries have held several meetings about the dispute and discussed jointly surveying to resolve the issue. Although the Indo-Nepali dispute appears to be minor, it was aggravated in 1962 by tensions between China and India. Because the disputed area lies near the Sino-Indian frontier, it gains strategic value.

The unresolved Kashmir conflict and the status of Kashmir with India: Pakistan claims that it is a disputed territory with India, meanwhile Pakistan claims its side of the disputed territory and calls it "Azad Kashmir". Dispute over Sir Creek and the maritime boundary regarding the Rann of Kachchh area of the southern tip of Sindh. Water-sharing problems with Pakistan over the Indus River (Wular Barrage). (Indus Waters Treaty) China India claims Aksai Chin and Trans-Karakoram Tract, as part of Ladakh. China claims most of Arunachal Pradesh, a contested disputed territory of north-east India by not recognising the McMahon Line. Two regions are claimed by both India and China. Aksai Chin is in the disputed territory of Ladakh, at the junction of India, Tibet and Xinjiang, India claims the 38,000-square-kilometre territory, currently administered by China after Sino-Indian War. India also considers the cessation of Shaksam Valley to China by Pakistan as illegal and a part of its territory. Arunachal Pradesh is a state of India in the country's northeast, bordering on Bhutan, Burma and China's Tibet, though it is under Indian administration since 1914, China claims the 90,000-square-kilometre area as South Tibet. Also, the boundary between the North Indian states of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand with China's Tibet is not properly demarcated with some portions under the de facto administration of India.

Diplomatic relations with India through philately List of countries commemorating anniversaries of diplomatic relations with India through philately

See also India and the United Nations India and the Non-Aligned Movement Cold War in Asia#India, 1947-1991 List of diplomatic missions in India List of diplomatic missions of India List of diplomatic visits to India List of Republic of India extradition treaties Research and Analysis Wing Visa policy of India Visa requirements for Indian citizens

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Climate of India

The climate of India includes a wide range of weather conditions, influenced by its vast geographic scale and varied topography. Based on the Kppen system, India encompasses a diverse array of climatic subtypes. These range from arid and semi-arid regions in the west to highland, sub-arctic, tundra, and ice cap climates in the northern Himalayan regions, varying with elevation. The Indo-Gangetic Plains in the north experience a humid subtropical climate which become more temperate at higher altitudes, like the Sivalik Hills, or continental in some areas like Gulmarg. In contrast, much of the south and the east exhibit tropical climate conditions, which support lush rainforests in parts of these territories. Many regions have starkly different microclimates, making it one of the most climatically diverse countries in the world. The country's meteorological department follows four seasons with some local adjustments: winter (December to February), summer (March to May), monsoon or south-west monsoon (June to September) and post-monsoon or north-east monsoon (October to November). Some parts of the country with subtropical, temperate or continental climates also experience spring and autumn. India's geography and geology are climatically pivotal: the Thar Desert in the northwest and the Himalayas in the north work in tandem to create a culturally and economically important monsoonal regime. As Earth's highest and most massive mountain range, the Himalayas bar the influx of frigid katabatic winds from the icy Tibetan Plateau and northerly Central Asia. Most of North India is thus kept warm or is only mildly chilly or cold during winter; the same thermal dam keeps most regions in India hot in summer. The climate in South India is generally warmer, and more humid due to its coastlines. However some hill stations in South India such as Ooty are well known for their cold climate. Though the Tropic of Cancer-the boundary that is between the tropics and subtropics-passes through the middle of India, the bulk of the country can be regarded as climatically tropical. As in much of the tropics, monsoonal and other weather patterns in India can be strongly variable: epochal droughts, heat waves, floods, cyclones, and other natural disasters are sporadic, but have displaced or ended millions of human lives. Such climatic events are likely to change in frequency and severity as a consequence of human-induced climate change. Ongoing and future vegetative changes, sea level rise and inundation of India's low-lying coastal areas are also attributed to global warming.

Paleoclimate History During the Triassic period of 251-199.6 Ma, the Indian subcontinent was the part of a vast supercontinent known as Pangaea. Despite its position within a high-latitude belt at 55-75 S-latitudes now occupied by parts of the Antarctic Peninsula, as opposed to India's current position between 8 and 37 N-India likely experienced a humid temperate climate with warm and frost-free weather, though with well-defined seasons. India later merged into the southern supercontinent Gondwana, a process beginning some 550-500 Ma. During the Late Paleozoic, Gondwana extended from a point at or near the South Pole to near the equator, where the Indian craton (stable continental crust) was positioned, resulting in a mild climate favorable to hosting high-biomass ecosystems. This is underscored by India's vast coal reserves-much of it from the late Paleozoic sedimentary sequence-the fourth-largest reserves in the world. During the Mesozoic, the world, including India, was considerably warmer than today. With the coming of the Carboniferous, global cooling stoked extensive glaciation, which spread northwards from South Africa towards India; this cool period lasted well into the Permian. Tectonic movement by the Indian Plate caused it to pass over a geologic hotspot-the Runion hotspot-now occupied by the volcanic island of Runion. This resulted in a massive flood basalt event that laid down the Deccan Traps some 60-68 Ma, at the end of the Cretaceous period. This may have contributed to the global Cretaceous-Paleogene extinction event, which caused India to experience significantly reduced insolation. Elevated atmospheric levels of sulphur gases formed aerosols such as sulphur dioxide and sulphuric acid, similar to those found in the atmosphere of Venus; these precipitated as acid rain. Elevated carbon dioxide emissions also contributed to the greenhouse effect, causing warmer weather that lasted long after the

atmospheric shroud of dust and aerosols had cleared. Further climatic changes 20 million years ago, long after India had crashed into the Laurasian landmass, were severe enough to cause the extinction of many endemic Indian forms. The formation of the Himalayas resulted in blockage of frigid Central Asian air, preventing it from reaching India; this made its climate significantly warmer and more tropical in character than it would otherwise have been. More recently, in the Holocene epoch (4,800-6,300 years ago), parts of what is now the Thar Desert were wet enough to support perennial lakes; researchers have proposed that this was due to much higher winter precipitation, which coincided with stronger monsoons. Kashmir's erstwhile subtropical climate dramatically cooled 2.6-3.7 Ma and experienced prolonged cold spells starting 600,000 years ago.

Regions India has many different climates, from tropical in the south to temperate and alpine in the Himalayan north, where higher areas get snowfall in winter. The nation's climate is strongly influenced by the Himalayas and the Thar Desert. The Himalayas, along with the Hindu Kush mountains in Pakistan, prevent cold Central Asian katabatic winds from blowing in, keeping the bulk of the Indian subcontinent warmer than most locations at similar latitudes. Simultaneously, the Thar Desert plays a role in attracting moisture-laden south-west monsoon winds between June and October, which provide the majority of India's rainfall. Four major climatic groupings predominate, into which fall the seven climatic zones, that as designated by experts, are defined on the basis of such traits as temperature and precipitation. Groupings are assigned codes (see chart) according to the Kppen climate classification system.

Tropical A tropical rainy climate governs regions experiencing persistent warm or high temperatures, which normally do not fall below 18 degrees Celsius (64 F). India predominantly hosts two climatic subtypes that fall into this group: tropical monsoon climate and tropical savanna climate. The most humid is the tropical wet climate-also known as the tropical monsoon climate-that covers a strip of southwestern lowlands abutting the Malabar Coast, the Western Ghats, and southern Assam. India's two island territories, Lakshadweep and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, are also subject to this climate. Characterised by moderate to high year-round temperatures, even in the foothills, its rainfall is seasonal but heavy-typically above 2,000 millimetres (79 inches) per year. Most rainfall occurs between May and November; this moisture is enough to sustain lush forests, swampy areas and other vegetation for the rest of the mainly dry year. December to March are the driest months, when days with precipitation are rare. The heavy monsoon rains are responsible for the exceptional biodiversity of tropical wet forests in parts of these regions. In India a tropical savanna climate is more common. Noticeably drier than areas with a tropical monsoon type of climate, it prevails over most of inland peninsular India except for a semi arid rain shadow east of the Western Ghats. Winter and early summer are long and dry periods with temperatures averaging above 18 C (64 F). Summer is exceedingly hot; temperatures in low-lying areas may exceed 50 C (122 F) during May, leading to heat waves that can each kill hundreds of Indians. The rainy season lasts from June to September; annual rainfall averages between 750 and 1,500 mm (30 and 59 in) across the region. Once the dry northeast monsoon begins in September, most significant precipitation in India falls on Tamil Nadu and Puducherry leaving other states comparatively dry. The Ganges Delta lies mostly in the tropical wet climate zone: it receives between 1,500 and 2,000 mm (59 and 79 in) of rainfall each year in the western part, and 2,000 and 3,000 mm (79 and 118 in) in the eastern part. The coolest month of the year, on average, is January; April and May are the warmest months. Average temperatures in January range from 14 to 25 C (57 to 77 F), and average temperatures in April range from 25 to 35 C (77 to 95 F). July is on average the coldest and wettest month: over 330 mm (13 in) of rain falls on the delta. Additionally, Nicobar Islands rain forests experience a Tropical rainforest climate.

Arid and semi-arid regions Arid and semi-arid climate dominates regions where the rate of moisture loss through evapotranspiration exceeds that from precipitation; A semi-arid steppe climate (hot semi-arid climate)

predominates over a long stretch of land south of Tropic of Cancer and east of the Western Ghats and the Cardamom Hills. The region, which includes Karnataka, inland Tamil Nadu, western Andhra Pradesh, and central Maharashtra, gets between 400 and 750 millimetres (15.7 and 29.5 in) annually. It is drought-prone, as it tends to have less reliable rainfall due to sporadic lateness or failure of the southwest monsoon. Karnataka is divided into three zones-coastal, north interior and south interior. Of these, the coastal zone receives the most precipitation, averaging 3,638 mm (143.2 in) per annum, far in excess of the state average of 1,139 mm (44.8 in). In contrast to norm, Agumbe in the Shivamogga district receives the second highest annual rainfall in India. North of the Krishna River, the summer monsoon is responsible for most rainfall; to the south, significant post-monsoon rainfall also occurs in October and November. In December, the coldest month, temperatures still average around 20-24 C (68-75 F). The months between March and May are hot and dry; mean monthly temperatures hover around 32 C (90 F), with 320 millimetres (12.6 in) precipitation. Hence, without artificial irrigation, this region is not suitable for permanent agriculture.

Most of western Rajasthan experiences an arid climatic regime (hot desert climate). Cloudbursts are responsible for virtually all of the region's annual precipitation, which totals less than 300 millimetres (11.8 in). Such bursts happen when monsoon winds sweep into the region during July, August, and September. Such rainfall is highly erratic; regions experiencing rainfall one year may not see precipitation for the next couple of years or so. Atmospheric moisture is largely prevented from precipitating due to continuous downdrafts and other factors. The summer months of May and June are exceptionally hot; mean monthly temperatures in the region hover around 35 C (95 F), with daily maxima occasionally topping 50 C (122 F). During winters, temperatures in some areas can drop below freezing due to waves of cold air from Central Asia. There is a large diurnal range of about 14 C (25 F) during summer; this widens by several degrees during winter. There is a small desert area in the south near Adoni in Andhra Pradesh, the only desert in South India, experiencing maximum temperatures of 47 C (117 F) in summers and 18 C (64 F) in winters.

To the west, in Gujarat, diverse climate conditions prevail. The winters are mild, pleasant, and dry with average daytime temperatures around 29 C (84 F) and nights around 12 C (54 F) with virtually full sun and clear nights. Summers are hot and dry with daytime temperatures around 41 C (106 F) and nights no lower than 29 C (84 F). In the weeks before the monsoon temperatures are similar to the above, but high humidity makes the air more uncomfortable. Relief comes with the monsoon. Temperatures are around 35 C (95 F) but humidity is very high; nights are around 27 C (81 F). Most of the rainfall occurs in this season, and the rain can cause severe floods. The sun is often occluded during the monsoon season. East of the Thar Desert, the Punjab-Haryana-Kathiawar region experiences a tropical and sub-tropical steppe climate. Haryana's climate resembles other states of the northern plains: extreme summer heat of up to 50 C (122 F) and winter cold as low as 1 C (34 F). May and June are hottest; December and January are coldest. Rainfall is varied, with the Shivalik Hills region being the wettest and the Bagar region being the driest. About 80 percent of the rainfall occurs in the monsoon season of July-September, which can cause flooding. The Punjabi climate is also governed by extremes of hot and cold. Areas near the Himalayan foothills receive heavy rainfall whereas those eloiigned from them are hot and dry. Punjab's three-season climate sees summer months that span from mid-April to the end of June. Temperatures in Punjab typically range from -2 to 40 C (28-104 F), but can reach 47 C (117 F) in summer and fall to -4 C (25 F) in winter (while most of the nation does not experience temperatures below 10 C (50 F) even in winter). The zone, a transitional climatic region separating tropical desert from humid sub-tropical savanna and forests, experiences temperatures that are less extreme than those of the desert. Although the average annual rainfall is 300-650 millimetres (11.8-25.6 in), it is very unreliable; like in much of the rest of India, the southwest monsoon accounts for most precipitation. Summer daily maxima are around 40 C (104 F). All this results in a natural vegetation typically comprising short, coarse grasses.

Humid subtropical Most of Northeast India and much of North India are subject to a humid subtropical climate and a subtropical highland climate. Though they experience warm to hot summers, temperatures during the coldest months generally fall as low as 0 C (32 F). Due to ample monsoon rains, India has two subtropical climate subtypes under the Kppen system: Cwa and Cwb. In most of this region, there is very little precipitation during the winter, owing to powerful anticyclonic and katabatic (downward-flowing) winds from Central Asia. Humid subtropical regions are subject to pronounced dry winters. Winter rainfall-and occasionally snowfall-is associated with large storm systems known as "Western disturbances", which are steered by westerlies towards the Himalayas and the Punjab-Haryana Plains. Most summer rainfall occurs during powerful mesoscale convective thunderstorms known as nor'westers in the pre-monsoon season (March-May/June) and monsoonal thunderstorms brought by the South Asian monsoon (June/July-September); occasional tropical cyclones also contribute. Annual rainfall ranges from less than 1,000 millimetres (39 in) in the west to over 2,500 millimetres (98 in) in parts of the northeast. As most of this region is far from the ocean, the wide temperature swings more characteristic of a continental climate predominate; the swings are wider than in those in tropical wet regions, ranging from 24 C (75 F) in north-central India to 27 C (81 F) in the east.

Mountain India's northernmost areas are subject to a montane, or alpine, climate. In the Himalayas, the rate at which an air mass's temperature falls per kilometre (3,281 ft) of altitude gained (the dry adiabatic lapse rate) is 9.8 C/km. In terms of environmental lapse rate, ambient temperatures fall by 6.5 C (11.7 F) for every 1,000 metres (3,281 ft) rise in altitude. Thus, climates ranging from nearly tropical in the foothills to tundra above the snow line can coexist within several hundred metres of each other. Sharp temperature contrasts between sunny and shady slopes, high diurnal temperature variability, temperature inversions, and altitude-dependent variability in rainfall are also common. The northern side of the western Himalayas, also known as the trans-Himalayan belt, has a cold desert climate. It is a region of barren, arid, frigid and wind-blown wastelands. Areas south of the Himalayas are largely protected from cold winter winds coming in from the Asian interior. The leeward side (northern face) of the mountains receives less rain. The southern slopes of the western Himalayas, well-exposed to the monsoon, get heavy rainfall. Areas situated at elevations of 1,070-2,290 metres (3,510-7,510 ft) receive the heaviest rainfall, which decreases rapidly at elevations above 2,290 metres (7,513 ft). Most precipitation occurs as snowfall during the late winter and spring months. The Himalayas experience their heaviest snowfall between December and February and at elevations above 1,500 metres (4,921 ft). Snowfall increases with elevation by up to several dozen millimetres per 100 metre (~2 in; 330 ft) increase. Elevations above 6,000 metres (19,685 ft) never experience rain; all precipitation falls as snow.

Seasons The India Meteorological Department (IMD) designates four climatological seasons:

Winter, occurring from December to February. The year's coldest months are December and January, when temperatures average around 10-15 C (50-59 F) in the northwest; temperatures rise as one proceeds towards the equator, peaking around 20-25 C (68-77 F) in mainland India's southeast. **Summer or Pre-monsoon season**, lasting from March to June. In western and southern regions, the hottest month is April and the beginning of May and for northern regions of India, May is the hottest Month. In May, Temperatures average around 32-40 C (90-104 F) in most of the interior. **Monsoon or South-west monsoon season**, lasting from June to September. The season is dominated by the humid southwest summer monsoon, which slowly sweeps across the country beginning in late May or early June. Monsoon rains begin to recede from North India at the beginning of October. South India typically receives more rainfall. **Post-monsoon or North-east monsoon season**, lasting from October to November. In the north of India, October and November are usually cloudless. Tamil Nadu receives most of its annual precipitation in the northeast monsoon season. The Himalayan and Upper Gangetic Plains, being more temperate, experience an additional season, spring, which coincides with

the first weeks of summer in southern India. Traditionally, North Indians note six seasons or Ritu, each about two months long. These are the spring season (Sanskrit: vasanta), summer (gr̥̐ṣma), monsoon season (var̥̐ṣa), autumn (śarada), winter (hemanta), and prevernal season (śiśira). These are based on the astronomical division of the twelve months into six parts. The ancient Hindu calendar also reflects these seasons in its arrangement of months.

Tamil seasons In Tamil the seasons are called paruvam which means part or a season and they are summer k̥̐ṣai(hot summer) paruvam or k̥̐ṣam, winter ku̥̐ṣir(chill) K̥̐ṣam or paruvam and rainy which is mḁ̐ṣai K̥̐ṣam or paruvam and Autumn which is ilaiyudhir(means leaf falling) K̥̐ṣam or paruvam and spring is Ila Venir K̥̐ṣam(leaf growing) or paruvam and rainy or monsoon is K̥̐ṣr(black clouds) paruvam or K̥̐ṣam. The word K̥̐ṣam or paruvam is the word for season in tamil standard. These words are generally derived from proto dravidian and is continuously used till today to refer seasons which is independent to that of sanskrit. It's not present in other south indian languages but some village dialects of malayalam.

Winter Once the monsoons subside, average temperatures gradually fall across India. As the Sun's vertical rays move south of the equator, most of the country experiences moderately cool weather. December and January are the coldest months, with the lowest temperatures occurring in the Indian Himalayas. Temperatures are higher in the east and south. In northwestern India region, virtually cloudless conditions prevail in October and November, resulting in wide diurnal temperature swings; as in much of the Deccan Plateau, they register at 16-20 C (61-68 F). However, from January to February, "western disturbances" bring heavy bursts of rain and snow. These extra-tropical low-pressure systems originate in the eastern Mediterranean Sea. They are carried towards India by the subtropical westerlies, which are the prevailing winds blowing at North India's range of latitude. Once their passage is hindered by the Himalayas, they are unable to proceed further, and they release significant precipitation over the southern Himalayas. There is a huge variation in the climatic conditions of Himachal Pradesh due to variation in altitude (450-6500 metres). The climate varies from hot and subtropical humid (450-900 metres) in the southern low tracts, warm and temperate (900-1800 metres), cool and temperate (1900-2400 metres) and cold glacial and alpine (2400-4800 metres) in the northern and eastern elevated mountain ranges. By October, nights and mornings are very cold. Snowfall at elevations of nearly 3000 m is about 3 m and lasts from December start to March end. Elevations above 4500 m support perpetual snow. The spring season starts from mid February to mid April. The weather is pleasant and comfortable in the season. The rainy season starts at the end of the month of June. The landscape lushes green and fresh. During the season streams and natural springs are replenished. The heavy rains in July and August cause a lot of damage resulting in erosion, floods and landslides. Out of all the state districts, Dharamshala receives the highest rainfall, nearly about 3,400 mm (134 in). Spiti is the driest area of the state, where annual rainfall is below 50 mm. The five Himalayan states (Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir in the extreme north, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh in far east) and Northern West Bengal experience heavy snowfall, Manipur and Nagaland are not located in the Himalayas but experience occasional snowfall; in Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir, blizzards occur regularly, disrupting travel and other activities. The rest of North India, including the Indo-Gangetic Plain and Madhya Pradesh almost never receives snow. Temperatures in the plains occasionally fall below freezing, though never for more than one or two days. Winter highs in Delhi range from 16 to 21 C (61 to 70 F). Nighttime temperatures average 2-8 C (36-46 F). In the plains of Punjab, lows can fall below freezing, dropping to around -3 C (27 F) in Amritsar. Frost sometimes occurs, but the hallmark of the season is the notorious fog, which frequently disrupts daily life; fog grows thick enough to hinder visibility and disrupt air travel 15-20 days annually. In Bihar in middle of the Ganges plain, hot weather sets in and the summer lasts until the middle of June. The highest temperature is often registered in late May or early June which is the hottest time. Like the rest of the north, Bihar also experiences dust-storms, thunderstorms and dust raising winds during the hot season. Dust storms having a velocity of 48-64 km/h

(30-40 mph) are most frequent in May and with second maximum in April and June. The hot winds (loo) of Bihar plains blow during April and May with an average velocity of 8-16 km/h (5-10 mph). These hot winds greatly affect human comfort during this season. Rain follows. The rainy season begins in June. The rainiest months are July and August. The rains are the gifts of the southwest monsoon. There are in Bihar three distinct areas where rainfall exceeds 1,800 mm (71 in). Two of them are in the northern and northwestern portions of the state; the third lies in the area around Netarhat. The southwest monsoon normally withdraws from Bihar in the first week of October. Eastern India's climate is milder but gets colder as one moves north west, experiencing moderately warm days to cool days and cool nights to cold nights. Highs range from 18 C to 23 C (64 F to 73 F) in Patna; to 22 C to 27 C (72 F to 80 F) in Kolkata (Calcutta); lows average from 7 C to 10 C (45 F to 50 F) in Patna; to 12 C to 15 C (54 F to 59 F) in Kolkata. In Madhya Pradesh which is towards the south-western side of the Gangetic Plain similar conditions prevail albeit with much less humidity levels. Capital Bhopal averages low of 9 C (48 F) and high of 24 C (75 F).

Frigid winds from the Himalayas can depress temperatures near the Brahmaputra River. The Himalayas have a profound effect on the climate of the Indian subcontinent and the Tibetan plateau by preventing frigid and dry Arctic winds from blowing south into the subcontinent, which keeps South Asia much warmer than corresponding temperate regions in the other continents. It also forms a barrier for the monsoon winds, keeping them from travelling northwards, and causing heavy rainfall in the Terai region instead. The Himalayas are indeed believed to play an important role in the formation of Central Asian deserts such as the Taklamakan and Gobi. The mountain ranges prevent western winter disturbances in Iran from travelling further east, resulting in much snow in Kashmir and rainfall for parts of Punjab and northern India. Despite the Himalayas being a barrier to the cold northerly winter winds, the Brahmaputra valley receives part of the frigid winds, thus lowering the temperature in Northeast India and Bangladesh. The Himalayas contain the greatest area of glaciers and permafrost outside of the poles, and account for the origin of ten of Asia's largest rivers. The two Himalayan states in the east, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh, receive substantial snowfall. The extreme north of West Bengal centred on Darjeeling experiences snowfall, but only rarely. In South India, particularly the hinterlands of Maharashtra, parts of Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh, somewhat cooler weather prevails. Minimum temperatures in eastern Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh hover around 10 C (50 F); in the southern Deccan Plateau, they reach 16 C (61 F). Coastal areas-especially those near the Coromandel Coast and adjacent low-elevation interior tracts-are warm, with daily high temperatures of 30 C (86 F) and lows of around 21 C (70 F). The Western Ghats, including the Nilgiri Range, are exceptional; lows there can fall below freezing. This compares with a range of 12-14 C (54-57 F) on the Malabar Coast; there, as is the case for other coastal areas, the Indian Ocean exerts a strong moderating influence on weather. The region averages 800 millimetres (31 in)

Summer Summer in northwestern India starts from April and ends in July, and in the rest of the country from March to May but sometimes lasts to mid June. The temperatures in the north rise as the vertical rays of the Sun reach the Tropic of Cancer. The hottest month for the western and southern regions of the country is April; for most of North India, it is May. Temperatures of 50 C (122 F) and higher have been recorded in parts of India during this season. Another striking feature of summer is the Loo. These are strong, gusty, hot, dry winds that blow during the day in India. Direct exposure to the heat that comes with these winds may be fatal. In cooler regions of North India, immense pre-monsoon squall-line thunderstorms, known locally as "Nor'westers", commonly drop large hailstones. In Himachal Pradesh, Summer lasts from mid April till the end of June and most parts become very hot (except in alpine zone which experience mild summer) with the average temperature ranging from 28 C (82 F) to 32 C (90 F). Near the coast, the temperature hovers around 36 C (97 F), and the proximity of the sea increases the level of humidity. In southern India, the temperatures are higher on the east coast by a few degrees compared to the west coast. By May, most of the Indian interior experiences mean temperatures over 32 C (90 F), while maximum temperatures often exceed 40 C (104 F). In the hot

months of April and May, western disturbances, with their cooling influence, may still arrive, but rapidly diminish in frequency as summer progresses. Notably, a higher frequency of such disturbances in April correlates with a delayed monsoon onset (thus extending summer) in northwest India. In eastern India, monsoon onset dates have been steadily advancing over the past several decades, resulting in shorter summers there. Altitude affects the temperature to a large extent, with higher parts of the Deccan Plateau and other areas being relatively cooler. Hill stations, such as Ootacamund ("Ooty") in the Western Ghats and Kalimpong in the eastern Himalayas, with average maximum temperatures of around 25 C (77 F), offer some respite from the heat. At lower elevations, in parts of northern and western India, a strong, hot, and dry wind known as the loo blows in from the west during the daytime; with very high temperatures, in some cases up to around 45 C (113 F); it can cause fatal cases of sunstroke. Tornadoes may also occur, concentrated in a corridor stretching from northeastern India towards Pakistan. They are rare, however; only several dozen have been reported since 1835.

Monsoon The southwest summer monsoon, a four-month period when massive convective thunderstorms dominate India's weather, is Earth's most productive wet season. A product of southeast trade winds originating from a high-pressure mass centred over the southern Indian Ocean, the monsoonal torrents supply over 80% of India's annual rainfall. Attracted by a low-pressure region centred over South Asia, the mass spawns surface winds that ferry humid air into India from the southwest. These inflows ultimately result from a northward shift of the local jet stream, which itself results from rising summer temperatures over Tibet and the Indian subcontinent. The void left by the jet stream, which switches from a route just south of the Himalayas to one tracking north of Tibet, then attracts warm, humid air. The main factor behind this shift is the high summer temperature difference between Central Asia and the Indian Ocean. This is accompanied by a seasonal excursion of the normally equatorial intertropical convergence zone (ITCZ), a low-pressure belt of highly unstable weather, northward towards India. This system intensified to its present strength as a result of the Tibetan Plateau's uplift, which accompanied the Eocene-Oligocene transition event, a major episode of global cooling and aridification which occurred 34-49 Ma. The southwest monsoon arrives in two branches: the Bay of Bengal branch and the Arabian Sea branch. The latter extends towards a low-pressure area over the Thar Desert and is roughly three times stronger than the Bay of Bengal branch. The monsoon typically breaks over Indian territory by around 25 May, when it lashes the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the Bay of Bengal. It strikes the Indian mainland around 1 June near the Malabar Coast of Kerala. By 9 June, it reaches Mumbai; it appears over Delhi by 29 June. The Bay of Bengal branch, which initially tracks the Coromandel Coast northeast from Cape Comorin to Orissa, swerves to the northwest towards the Indo-Gangetic Plain. The Arabian Sea branch moves northeast towards the Himalayas. By the first week of July, the entire country experiences monsoon rain; on average, South India receives more rainfall than North India. However, Northeast India receives the most precipitation. Monsoon clouds begin retreating from North India by the end of August; it withdraws from Mumbai by 5 October. As India further cools during September, the southwest monsoon weakens. By the end of November, it has left the country.

Monsoon rains affect the health of the Indian economy; as Indian agriculture employs 600 million people and constitutes 20% of the national GDP, good monsoons correlate with a booming economy. Weak or failed monsoons (droughts) result in widespread agricultural losses and substantially hinder overall economic growth. Yet such rains reduce temperatures and can replenish groundwater tables and rivers.

Post-monsoon During the post-monsoon or autumn months of October to December, a different monsoon cycle, the northeast (or "retreating") monsoon, brings dry, cool, and dense air masses to large parts of India. Winds spill across the Himalayas and flow to the southwest across the country, resulting in clear, sunny skies.

Though the India Meteorological Department (IMD) and other sources refer to this period as a fourth ("post-monsoon") season, other sources designate only three seasons. Depending on location, this period lasts from October to November, after the southwest monsoon has peaked. Less and less precipitation falls, and vegetation begins to dry out. In most parts of India, this period marks the transition from wet to dry seasonal conditions. Average daily maximum temperatures range between 25 and 34 C (77 and 93 F) in the Southern parts. The northeast monsoon, which begins between September and October, lasts through the post-monsoon seasons, and only ends between December and January. It carries winds that have already lost their moisture out to the ocean (opposite from the summer monsoon). They cross India diagonally from northeast to southwest. However, the large indentation made by the Bay of Bengal into India's eastern coast means that the flows are humidified before reaching Cape Comorin and rest of Tamil Nadu, meaning that the state, and also some parts of Kerala, experience significant precipitation in the post-monsoon and winter periods. However, parts of West Bengal, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Mumbai also receive minor precipitation from the north-east monsoon.

Statistics Shown below are temperature and precipitation data for selected Indian cities; these represent the full variety of major Indian climate types. Figures have been grouped by the four-season classification scheme used by the Indian Meteorological Department; year-round averages and totals are also displayed.

Temperature Precipitation Disasters Climate-related natural disasters cause massive losses of Indian life and property. Droughts, flash floods, cyclones, avalanches, landslides brought on by torrential rains, and snowstorms pose the greatest threats. Other dangers include frequent summer dust storms, which usually track from north to south; they cause extensive property damage in North India and deposit large amounts of dust from arid regions. Hail is also common in parts of India, causing severe damage to standing crops such as rice and wheat.

Floods and landslides In the Lower Himalayas, landslides are common. The young age of the region's hills result in labile rock formations, which are susceptible to slippages. Short duration high intensity rainfall events typically trigger small scale landslides while long duration low intensity rainfall periods tend to trigger large scale catastrophic landslides. Rising population and development pressures, particularly from logging and tourism, cause deforestation. The result, denuded hillsides, exacerbates the severity of landslides, since tree cover impedes the downhill flow of water. Parts of the Western Ghats also suffer from low-intensity landslides. Avalanches occur in Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh. Floods are the most common natural disaster in India. The heavy southwest monsoon rains cause the Brahmaputra and other rivers to distend their banks, often flooding surrounding areas. Though they provide rice paddy farmers with a largely dependable source of natural irrigation and fertilisation, the floods can kill thousands and displace millions. Excess, erratic, or untimely monsoon rainfall may also wash away or otherwise ruin crops. Almost all of India is flood-prone, and extreme precipitation events, such as flash floods and torrential rains, have become increasingly common in central India over the past several decades, coinciding with rising temperatures. Mean annual precipitation totals have remained steady due to the declining frequency of weather systems that generate moderate amounts of rain.

Tropical cyclones Tropical cyclones, which are severe storms spun off from the Intertropical Convergence Zone, may affect thousands of Indians living in coastal regions. Tropical cyclogenesis is particularly common in the northern reaches of the Indian Ocean in and around the Bay of Bengal. Cyclones bring with them heavy rains, storm surges, and winds that often cut affected areas off from relief and supplies. In the North Indian Ocean Basin, the cyclone season runs from April to December, with peak activity between May and November.

Each year, an average of eight storms with sustained wind speeds greater than 63 km/h (39 mph) form; of these, two strengthen into true tropical cyclones, which sustain gusts greater than 117 km/h (73 mph). On average, a major (Category 3 or higher) cyclone develops every other year. During summer, the Bay of Bengal is subject to intense heating, giving rise to humid and unstable air masses that morph into cyclones. The 1737 Calcutta cyclone, the 1970 Bhola cyclone, and the 1991 Bangladesh cyclone rank among the most powerful cyclones to strike India, devastating the coasts of eastern India and neighbouring Bangladesh. Widespread death and property destruction are reported every year in the exposed coastal states of West Bengal, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu. India's western coast, bordering the more placid Arabian Sea, experiences cyclones only rarely; these mainly strike Gujarat and Maharashtra, less frequently in Kerala. The 1999 Odisha cyclone was the most intense tropical cyclone in this basin and also the most powerful tropical cyclone to make landfall in India. With peak winds of 260 kilometres per hour (162 mph), it was the equivalent of a Category 5 hurricane. Almost two million people were left homeless; another 20 million people lives were disrupted by the cyclone. Officially, 9,803 people died from the storm; unofficial estimates place the death toll at over 10,000.

Droughts Indian agriculture is heavily dependent on the monsoon as a source of water. In some parts of India, the failure of the monsoons results in water shortages, resulting in below-average crop yields. This is particularly true of major drought-prone regions such as southern and eastern Maharashtra, northern Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Western Orissa, Gujarat, and Rajasthan. In the past, droughts have periodically led to major Indian famines. These include the Bengal famine of 1770, in which up to one third of the population in affected areas died; the 1876-1877 famine, in which over five million people died; the 1899 famine, in which over 4.5 million died; and the Bengal famine of 1943, in which over five million died from starvation and famine-related illnesses. All such episodes of severe drought correlate with El Nio-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) events. El Nio-related droughts have also been implicated in periodic declines in Indian agricultural output. Nevertheless, ENSO events that have coincided with abnormally high sea surfaces temperatures in the Indian Ocean-in one instance during 1997 and 1998 by up to 3 C (5 F)-have resulted in increased oceanic evaporation, resulting in unusually wet weather across India. Such anomalies have occurred during a sustained warm spell that began in the 1990s. A contrasting phenomenon is that, instead of the usual high pressure air mass over the southern Indian Ocean, an ENSO-related oceanic low pressure convergence centre forms; it then continually pulls dry air from Central Asia, desiccating India during what should have been the humid summer monsoon season. This reversed air flow causes India's droughts. The extent that an ENSO event raises sea surface temperatures in the central Pacific Ocean influences the extent of drought.

Heat waves A study from 2005 concluded that heat waves significantly increased in frequency, persistence and spatial coverage in the decade 1991-2000, when compared to the period between 1971-80 and 1981-90. A severe heat wave in Orissa in 1998 resulted in nearly 1300 deaths. Based on observations, heat wave related mortality has increased in India prior to 2005. The 2015 Indian heat wave killed more than 2,500 people. In April 2024, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) forecasted a heat wave spell lasting approximately ten to twenty days longer than normal length of four to eight days during the three-month period between April and June. In June 2024, day temperatures reached 44.9 C (112.8 F) in New Delhi and temperatures were at their highest in six years overnight. Five people have been reported as dead due to this current heatwave.

Extremes Extreme temperatures: low India's lowest recorded temperature was -45.0 C (-49 F) in Dras, Ladakh. However, temperatures on Siachen Glacier near Bilafond La (5,450 metres or 17,881 feet) and Sia La (5,589 metres or 18,337 feet) have fallen below -55 C (-67 F), while blizzards bring wind speeds in excess of 250 km/h (155 mph), or hurricane-force winds ranking at 12-the maximum-on the Beaufort scale. These conditions, not hostile actions, caused more than 97% of the roughly 15,000 casualties suffered among Indian

and Pakistani soldiers during the Siachen conflict.

Extreme temperatures: high The highest temperature ever recorded in India occurred on 16 May 2016 in Phalodi, Rajasthan at 51.0 C (124 F). A temperature of up to 52.4 C (126 F) has been recorded in Jaisalmer District on 2 May 2016 near the border of Pakistan but the standard conditions are yet to be verified.

Rain The average annual precipitation of 11,861 millimetres (467 in) in the village of Mawsynram, in the hilly northeastern state of Meghalaya, is the highest recorded in Asia, and possibly on Earth. The village, which sits at an elevation of 1,401 metres (4,596 ft), benefits from its proximity to both the Himalayas and the Bay of Bengal. However, since the town of Cherrapunji, 5 kilometres (3.1 mi) to the east, is the nearest town to host a meteorological office-none has ever existed in Mawsynram-it is officially credited as being the world's wettest place. In recent years the Cherrapunji-Mawsynram region has averaged between 9,296 and 10,820 millimetres (366 and 426 in) of rain annually, though Cherrapunji has had at least one period of daily rainfall that lasted almost two years. India's highest recorded one-day rainfall total occurred on 26 July 2005, when Mumbai received 944 mm (37 in); the massive flooding that resulted killed over 900 people.

Snow Remote regions of Jammu and Kashmir, such as the Pir Panjal Range, experience exceptionally heavy snowfall. Kashmir's highest recorded monthly snowfall occurred in February 1967, when 8.4 metres (27.6 ft) fell in Gulmarg, though the IMD has recorded snowdrifts up to 12 metres (39.4 ft) in several Kashmiri districts. In February 2005, more than 200 people died when, in four days, a western disturbance brought up to 2 metres (6.6 ft) of snowfall to parts of the state.

Climate change **Atmospheric pollution** Thick haze and smoke originating from burning biomass in northwestern India and air pollution from large industrial cities in northern India often concentrate over the Ganges Basin. Prevailing westerlies carry aerosols along the southern margins of the sheer-faced Tibetan Plateau towards eastern India and the Bay of Bengal. Dust and black carbon, which are blown towards higher altitudes by winds at the southern margins of the Himalayas, can absorb shortwave radiation and heat the air over the Tibetan Plateau. The net atmospheric heating due to aerosol absorption causes the air to warm and convect upwards, increasing the concentration of moisture in the mid-troposphere and providing positive feedback that stimulates further heating of aerosols.

See also Climatological normals of india Geography of India Borders of India Extreme points of India Exclusive economic zone of India List of disputed territories of India Outline of India

Notes Citations References Articles

== External links ==

Wildlife of India

India is one of the most biodiverse regions and is home to a large variety of wildlife. It is one of the 17 megadiverse countries and includes four of the world's 36 biodiversity hotspots - the Western Ghats, the Himalaya, the Nicobar Islands and the Indo-Burma hotspot. About 24.6% of the total land area is covered by forests. It has various ecosystems ranging from the high altitude Himalayas, tropical evergreen forests along the Western Ghats, desert in the north-west, coastal plains and mangroves along the peninsular region. India lies within the Indomalayan and palearctic realms, and is home to about 7.6% of mammal, 14.7% of amphibian, 6% of bird, 6.2% of reptilian, and 6.2% of flowering plant species. Human encroachment, deforestation and poaching are significant challenges that threaten the existence of certain fauna and flora. Government of India established a system of national parks and protected areas in 1935, which have been subsequently expanded to nearly 1022 protected areas by 2023. India has enacted the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972 and special projects such as Project Tiger, Project Elephant and Project Dolphin for protection of critical species.

Fauna India has an estimated 92,873 species of fauna, roughly about 7.5% of the species available worldwide. Insects form the major category with 63,423 recorded species. India is home to 423 mammals, 1233 birds, 526 reptiles, 342 amphibians, 3022 fish apart from other species which form 7.6% of mammal, 14.7% of amphibian, 6% of bird, 6.2% of reptilian species worldwide. Among Indian species, only 12.6% of mammals and 4.5% of birds are endemic, contrasting with 45.8% of reptiles and 55.8% of amphibians. The Indian subcontinent was formerly an island landmass (Insular India) that split away from Gondwana around 125 million years ago, during the Early Cretaceous. Late Cretaceous Insular Indian faunas were very similar to those found on Madagascar due to their shared connection until around 90 million years ago. The Cretaceous-Paleogene extinction event around 66 million years ago caused the extinction of many animals native to Insular India, such as its titanosaurian and abelisaurid dinosaurs. During the early Cenozoic era, around 55-50 million years ago, the Indian subcontinent collided with Laurasia, allowing animals from Asia to migrate into the Indian subcontinent. Some elements of India's modern fauna, such as the frog family Nasikabatrachidae and the caecilian family Chikilidae, are suggested to have been present in India prior to its collision with Asia. Four species of megafauna (large animals) native to India became extinct during the Late Pleistocene around 10,000-50,000 years ago as part of a global wave of megafauna extinctions, these include the very large elephant *Palaeoloxodon namadicus* (possibly the largest land mammal to have ever lived), the elephant relative *Stegodon*, the hippopotamus *Hexaprotodon*, and the equine *Equus namadicus*. These extinctions are thought to have been after the arrival of modern humans on the Indian subcontinent. Ostriches were also formerly native to India, but also became extinct during the Late Pleistocene. India is home to several well-known large animals, including the Indian elephant, Indian rhinoceros, and Gaur. India is the only country where the big cats tiger and lion exist in the wild. Members of the cat family include Bengal tiger, Asiatic lion, Indian leopard, snow leopard, and clouded leopard. Representative and endemic species include blackbuck, nilgai, bharal, barasingha, Nilgiri tahr, and Nilgiri langur. There are about 31 species of aquatic mammals including dolphins, whales, porpoises, and dugong. Reptiles include the gharial, the only living members of *Gavialis* and saltwater crocodiles. Birds include peafowl, pheasants, geese, ducks, mynas, parakeets, pigeons, cranes, hornbills, and sunbirds. Endemic bird species include great Indian hornbill, great Indian bustard, nicobar pigeon, ruddy shelduck, Himalayan monal, and Himalayan quail.

Flora About 24.6% of the total land area is covered by forests. It has various ecoregions ranging from the high altitude Himalayas, tropical evergreen forests along the Western Ghats, desert in the north-west, coastal plains

and mangroves along the peninsular region. India's climate has become progressively drier since the late Miocene, reducing forest cover in northern India in favour of grassland. There are about 29,015 species of plants including 17,926 species of flowering plants. This is about 9.1% of the total plant species identified worldwide and 6,842 species are endemic to India. Other plant species include 7,244 algae, 2,504 bryophytes, 1,267 pteridophytes and 74 gymnosperms. One-third of the fungal diversity of the world exists in India with over 27,000 recorded species, making it the largest biotic community after insects.

Conservation India harbors 172 (2.9%) IUCN-designated threatened species. These include 39 species of mammals, 72 species of birds, 17 species of reptiles, three species of amphibians, two species of fish, and a number of insects including butterflies, moths, and beetles. Human encroachment, deforestation and poaching are significant challenges that threaten the existence of certain fauna and flora. Government of India established a system of national parks and protected areas in 1935, which have been subsequently expanded to nearly 1022 protected areas by 2023. Various laws have been enacted such as Indian Forest Act, 1927 and Wildlife Protection Act of 1972 and special projects such as Project Tiger, Project Elephant and Project Dolphin have been initiated for the protection of forests, wildlife and critical species. As of 2023, there are 1022 protected areas including 106 national parks, 573 wildlife sanctuaries, 220 conservation reserves and 123 community reserves. In addition, there are 55 tiger reserves, 18 biosphere reserves and 32 elephant reserves.

National symbols See also List of birds of India List of mammals of India List of reptiles of South Asia Wildlife population of India

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Agriculture in India

The history of agriculture in India dates back to the Neolithic period. India ranks second worldwide in farm outputs. As per the Indian economic survey 2020 -21, agriculture employed more than 50% of the Indian workforce and contributed 20.2% to the country's GDP. In 2016, agriculture and allied sectors like animal husbandry, forestry and fisheries accounted for 17.5% of the GDP (gross domestic product) with about 41.49% of the workforce in 2020. India ranks first in the world with highest net cropped area followed by US and China. The economic contribution of agriculture to India's GDP is steadily declining with the country's broad-based economic growth. Still, agriculture is demographically the broadest economic sector and plays a significant role in the overall socio-economic fabric of India. The total agriculture commodities export was US\$3.50 billion in March - June 2020. India exported \$38 billion worth of agricultural products in 2013, making it the seventh-largest agricultural exporter worldwide and the sixth largest net exporter. Most of its agriculture exports serve developing and least developed nations. Indian agricultural/horticultural and processed foods are exported to more than 120 countries, primarily to Japan, Southeast Asia, SAARC countries, the European Union and the United States. Pesticides and fertilizers used in Indian agriculture have helped increase crop productivity, but their unregulated and excessive use has caused different ecosystem and fatal health problems. Several studies published between 2011 and 2020 attribute 45 different types of cancers afflicting rural farm workers in India to pesticide usage. The chemicals have been shown to cause DNA damage, hormone disruption, and lead to a weakened immune system. Occupational exposure to pesticides has been identified as a major trigger of the development of cancer. The principal classes of pesticides investigated in relation to their role in intoxication and cancer were insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides. Punjab, a state in India, utilises the highest amount of chemical fertilizers in the country. Many of the pesticides sprayed on the state's crops are classified as class I by the World Health Organization because of their acute toxicity and are banned in places around the world, including Europe.

Definition of farmer Indian farmers are people who grow crops as a profession. Various government estimates (Census, Agricultural Census, National Sample Survey assessments, and Periodic Labour Force Surveys) give a different number of farmers in the country ranging from 37 million to 118 million as per the different definitions. Some definitions take in to account the number of holdings as compared to the number of farmers. Other definitions take into account possession of land, while others try to delink land ownership from the definition of a farmer. Other terms also used include 'cultivator'. India's National Policy for Farmers 2007 defines farmer as:

For the purpose of this Policy, the term "FARMER" will refer to a person actively engaged in the economic and/or livelihood activity of growing crops and producing other primary agricultural commodities and will include all agricultural operational holders, cultivators, agricultural labourers, sharecroppers, tenants, poultry and livestock rearers, fishers, beekeepers, gardeners, pastoralists, non-corporate planters and planting labourers, as well as persons engaged in various farmingrelated occupations such as sericulture, vermiculture, and agro-forestry. The term will also include tribal families / persons engaged in shifting cultivation and in the collection, use and sale of timber and non-timber forest produce. However this definition has not been adopted.

Overview As per the 2014 FAO world agriculture statistics India is the world's largest producer of many fresh fruits like banana, mango, guava, papaya, lemon and vegetables like chickpea, okra and milk, major spices like chili pepper, ginger, fibrous crops such as jute, staples such as millets and castor oil seed. India is the second largest producer of wheat and rice, the world's major food staples. India is currently the world's second largest

producer of several dry fruits, agriculture-based textile raw materials, roots and tuber crops, pulses, farmed fish, eggs, coconut, sugarcane and numerous vegetables. India is ranked under the world's five largest producers of over 80% of agricultural produce items, including many cash crops such as coffee and cotton, in 2010. India is one of the world's five largest producers of livestock and poultry meat, with one of the fastest growth rates, as of 2011. One report from 2008 claimed that India's population is growing faster than its ability to produce rice and wheat. While other recent studies claim that India can easily feed its growing population, plus produce wheat and rice for global exports, if it can reduce food staple spoilage/wastage, improve its infrastructure and raise its farm productivity like those achieved by other developing countries such as Brazil and China. In fiscal year ending June 2011, with a normal monsoon season, Indian agriculture accomplished an all-time record production of 85.9 million tonnes of wheat, a 6.4% increase from a year earlier. Rice output in India hit a new record at 95.3 million tonnes, a 7% increase from the year earlier. Lentils and many other food staples production also increased year over year. Indian farmers, thus produced about 71 kilograms of wheat and 80 kilograms of rice for every member of Indian population in 2011. The per capita supply of rice every year in India is now higher than the per capita consumption of rice every year in Japan. India exported \$39 billion worth of agricultural products in 2013, making it the seventh largest agricultural exporter worldwide, and the sixth largest net exporter. This represents explosive growth, as in 2004 net exports were about \$5 billion. India is the fastest growing exporter of agricultural products over a 10-year period, its \$39 billion of net export is more than double the combined exports of the European Union (EU-28). It has become one of the world's largest supplier of rice, cotton, sugar and wheat. India exported around 2 million metric tonnes of wheat and 2.1 million metric tonnes of rice in 2011 to Africa, Nepal, Bangladesh and other regions around the world. Aquaculture and catch fishery is among the fastest growing industries in India. Between 1990 and 2010, the Indian fish capture harvest doubled, while aquaculture harvest tripled. In 2008, India was the world's sixth largest producer of marine and freshwater capture fisheries and the second largest aquaculture farmed fish producer. India exported 600,000 metric tonnes of fish products to nearly half of the world's countries. Though the available nutritional standard is 100% of the requirement, India lags far behind in terms of quality protein intake at 20% which is to be tackled by making available protein rich food products such as eggs, meat, fish, chicken etc. at affordable prices India has shown a steady average nationwide annual increase in the mass-produced per hectare for some agricultural items, over the last 60 years. These gains have come mainly from India's green revolution, improving road and power generation infrastructure, knowledge of gains and reforms. Despite these recent accomplishments, agriculture has the potential for major productivity and total output gains, because crop yields in India are still just 30% to 60% of the best sustainable crop yields achievable in the farms of developed and other developing countries. Additionally, post harvest losses due to poor infrastructure and unorganised retail, caused India to experience some of the highest food losses in the world.

One of India's major agricultural products, rice, is suffering as a result of shifting monsoon patterns. States in the East of the country (Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Odisha), have experienced high temperatures and insufficient rainfall in 2022, in contrast to Central and Southern India, which has experienced excessive rain in recent months, resulting in flooding in the Southern states of Kerala, Karnataka, and Madhya Pradesh. The rice crop this season is therefore anticipated to decrease by roughly 6.77 million tonnes to 104.99 million, according to India's ministry of agriculture. A study on India's food and land-use systems highlights the need for improved skills, stronger institutional linkages, and increased research investment to enhance sustainability and resilience in agriculture.

History Vedic literature provides some of the earliest written record of agriculture in India. Rigveda hymns, for example, describes ploughing, fallowing, irrigation, fruit and vegetable cultivation. Other historical evidence suggests rice and cotton were cultivated in the Indus Valley, and ploughing patterns from the Bronze Age have been excavated at Kalibangan in Rajasthan. Bhumivargaha, an Indian Sanskrit text, suggested to be 2500

years old, classifies agricultural land into 12 categories: urvara (fertile), ushara (barren), maru (desert), aprahata (fallow), shadvala (grassy), pankikala (muddy), jalaprayah (watery), kachchaha (contiguous to water), sharkara (full of pebbles and pieces of limestone), sharkaravati (sandy), nadimatruka (watered from a river), and devamatraka (rainfed). Some archaeologists believe that rice was a domesticated crop along the banks of the river Ganges in the sixth millennium BC. So were species of winter cereals (barley, oats, and wheat) and legumes (lentil and chickpea) grown in northwest India before the sixth millennium BC. Other crops cultivated in India 3000 to 6000 years ago, include sesame, linseed, safflower, mustard, castor, mung bean, black gram, horse gram, pigeon pea, field pea, grass pea (khesari), fenugreek, cotton, jujube, grapes, dates, jack fruit, mango, mulberry, and black plum. Indians may have domesticated river buffalo 5000 years ago. According to some scientists agriculture was widespread in the Indian peninsula, 10000-3000 years ago, well beyond the fertile plains of the north. For example, one study reports 12 sites in the southern Indian states of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka providing clear evidence of agriculture of pulses *Vigna radiata* and *Macrotyloma uniflorum*, millet-grasses (*Brachiaria ramosa* and *Setaria verticillata*), wheats (*Triticum dicoccum*, *Triticum durum/aestivum*), barley (*Hordeum vulgare*), hyacinth bean (*Lablab purpureus*), sorghum (*Sorghum bicolor*), pearl millet (*Pennisetum glaucum*), finger millet (*Eleusine coracana*), cotton (*Gossypium* sp.), linseed (*Linum* sp.), as well as gathered fruits of *Ziziphus* and two *Cucurbitaceae*. Some claim Indian agriculture began by 9000 BC as a result of early cultivation of plants, and domestication of crops. Settled life soon followed with implements and techniques being developed for agriculture. Double monsoons led to two harvests being reaped in one year. Indian products soon reached trading networks and foreign crops were introduced. Plants and animals-considered essences "reeds that produce honey without bees" being grown. These were locally called ■■■■, (S■khara). On their return journey soldiers carried the "honey bearing reeds", thus spreading sugar and sugarcane agriculture. People in India had invented, by about 500 BC, the process to produce sugar crystals. In the local language, these crystals were called khanda (■■■■), which is the source of the word candy. Before the 18th century, cultivation of sugarcane was largely confined to India. A few merchants began to trade in sugar - a luxury and an expensive spice in Europe until the 18th century. Sugar became widely popular in 18th-century Europe, then graduated to become a human necessity in the 19th century all over the world. Sugarcane plantations, just like cotton farms, became a major driver of large and forced human migrations in the 19th century and early 20th century - of people from Africa and from India, both in millions - influencing the ethnic mix, political conflicts and cultural evolution of Caribbean, South American, Indian Ocean and Pacific Island nations. The history and past accomplishments of Indian agriculture thus influenced, in part, colonialism, slavery and slavery-like indentured labour practices in the new world, Caribbean wars and world history in 18th and 19th centuries.

Indian agriculture after independence Despite some stagnation during the later modern era the independent Republic of India was able to develop a comprehensive agricultural programme. In the years since its independence, India has made immense progress towards food security. Indian population has tripled, and food-grain production more than quadrupled. There has been a substantial increase in available food-grain per capita.

Before the mid-1960s, India relied on imports and food aid to meet domestic requirements. However, two years of severe drought in 1965 and 1966 convinced India to reform its agricultural policy and that it could not rely on foreign aid and imports for food security. India adopted significant policy reforms focused on the goal of food grain self-sufficiency. This ushered in India's Green Revolution. It began with the decision to adopt superior yielding, disease resistant wheat varieties in combination with better farming knowledge to improve productivity. The state of Punjab led India's green revolution and earned the distinction of being the country's breadbasket. The initial increase in production was centred on the irrigated areas of the states of Punjab, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh. With the farmers and the government officials focusing on farm productivity and

knowledge transfer, India's total food grain production soared. A hectare of Indian wheat farm that produced an average of 0.8 tonnes in 1948, produced 4.7 tonnes of wheat in 1975 from the same land. Such rapid growth in farm productivity enabled India to become self-sufficient by the 1970s. It also empowered the smallholder farmers to seek further means to increase food staples produced per hectare. By 2000, Indian farms were adopting wheat varieties capable of yielding 6 tonnes of wheat per hectare.

With agricultural policy success in wheat, India's Green Revolution technology spread to rice. However, since irrigation infrastructure was very poor, Indian farmers innovated with tube-wells, to harvest ground water. When gains from the new technology reached their limits in the states of initial adoption, the technology spread in the 1970s and 1980s to the states of eastern India - Bihar, Odisha and West Bengal. The lasting benefits of the improved seeds and new technology extended principally to the irrigated areas which account for about one-third of the harvested crop area. In the 1980s, Indian agriculture policy shifted to "evolution of a production pattern in line with the demand pattern" leading to a shift in emphasis to other agricultural commodities like oilseed, fruit and vegetables. Farmers began adopting improved methods and technologies in dairying, fisheries and livestock, and meeting the diversified food needs of a growing population. As with rice, the lasting benefits of improved seeds and improved farming technologies now largely depends on whether India develops infrastructure such as irrigation network, flood control systems, reliable electricity production capacity, all-season rural and urban highways, cold storage to prevent spoilage, modern retail, and competitive buyers of produce from Indian farmers. This is increasingly the focus of Indian agriculture policy. India ranks 74 out of 113 major countries in terms of food security index. India's agricultural economy is undergoing structural changes. Between 1970 and 2011, the GDP share of agriculture has fallen from 43% to 16%. This isn't because of reduced importance of agriculture or a consequence of agricultural policy; rather, it is largely due to the rapid economic growth in services, industrial output, and non-agricultural sectors in India between 2000 and 2010. Agricultural scientist MS Swaminathan has played a vital role in the green revolution. In 2013, NDTV named him one of 25 living legends of India for outstanding contributions to agriculture and making India a food-sovereign country.

Two states, Sikkim and Kerala have planned to shift fully to organic farming by 2015 and 2016 respectively. Rates of electricity usage for agricultural purposes have been discussed extensively over the years.

Irrigation Indian irrigation infrastructure includes a network of major and minor canals from rivers, groundwater well-based systems, tanks, and other rainwater harvesting projects for agricultural activities. Of these, the groundwater system is the largest. Of the 219.158 million hectares of cultivated land in India, about 66 million hectare can be irrigated by groundwater wells and an additional 58.5 million hectares by irrigation canals. In 2010, only about 35% of agricultural land in India was reliably irrigated. About 2/3rd cultivated land in India is dependent on monsoons. The improvements in irrigation infrastructure in the last 50 years have helped India improve food security, reduce dependence on monsoons, improve agricultural productivity and create rural job opportunities. Dams used for irrigation projects have helped provide drinking water to a growing rural population, control flood and prevent drought-related damage to agriculture. However, free electricity and attractive minimum support price for water intensive crops such as sugarcane and rice have encouraged ground water mining leading to groundwater depletion and poor water quality. A news report in 2019 states that more than 60% of the water available for farming in India is consumed by rice and sugar, two crops that occupy 24% of the cultivable area.

Output As of 2011, India had a large and diverse agricultural sector, accounting, on average, for about 16% of GDP and 10% of export earnings. India's arable land area of 1,597,000 km² (394.6 million acres) is the second

largest in the world, after the United States. Its gross irrigated crop area of 826,000 km² (215.6 million acres) is the largest in the world. India is among the top three global producers of many crops, including wheat, rice, pulses, cotton, peanuts, fruits and vegetables. Worldwide, as of 2011, India had the largest herds of buffalo and cattle, is the largest producer of milk and has one of the largest and fastest growing poultry industries.

Major products and yields The following table presents the 20 most important agricultural products in India, by economic value, in 2009. Included in the table is the average productivity of India's farms for each produce. For context and comparison, included is the average of the most productive farms in the world and name of country where the most productive farms existed in 2010. The table suggests India has large potential for further accomplishments from productivity increases, in increased agricultural output and agricultural incomes.

In 2019, as per Food and Agriculture Organization Corporate Statistical Database (FAOSTAT) data, India produces various agriculture products in following values:

In addition to growth in total output, agriculture in India has shown an increase in average agricultural output per hectare in last 60 years. The table below presents average farm productivity in India over three farming years for some crops. Improving road and power generation infrastructure, knowledge gains and reforms has allowed India to increase farm productivity between 40% and 500% over 40 years. India's recent accomplishments in crop yields while being impressive, are still just 30% to 60% of the best crop yields achievable in the farms of developed as well as other developing countries. Additionally, despite these gains in farm productivity, losses after harvest due to poor infrastructure and unorganised retail cause India to experience some of the highest food losses in the world.

World's largest producer The Statistics Office of the Food and Agriculture Organization reported that, per final numbers for 2009, India had grown to become the world's largest producer of the following agricultural products:

Per final numbers for 2009, India is the world's second largest producer of the following agricultural products:

In 2009, India was the world's third largest producer of eggs, oranges, coconuts, tomatoes, peas and beans. India and China are competing to establish the world record on rice yields. Yuan Longping of China National Hybrid Rice Research and Development Centre set a world record for rice yield in 2010 at 19 tonnes per hectare in a demonstration plot. In 2011, this record was surpassed by an Indian farmer, Sumant Kumar, with 22.4 tonnes per hectare in Bihar, also in a demonstration plot. These farmers claim to have employed newly developed rice breeds and system of rice intensification (SRI), a recent innovation in farming. The claimed Chinese and Indian yields have yet to be demonstrated on 7 hectare farm lots and that these are reproducible over two consecutive years on the same farm.

Horticulture The total production and economic value of horticultural produce, such as fruits, vegetables and nuts has doubled in India over the 10-year period from 2002 to 2012. In 2012, the production from horticulture exceeded grain output for the first time. The total horticulture produce reached 277.4 million metric tonnes in 2013, making India the second largest producer of horticultural products after China. Of this, India in 2013 produced 81 million tonnes of fruits, 162 million tonnes of vegetables, 5.7 million tonnes of spices, 17 million tonnes of nuts and plantation products (cashew, cacao, coconut, etc.), 1 million tonnes of aromatic horticulture

produce and 1.7 million tonnes of flowers (7.6 billion cut flowers).

During the 2013 fiscal year, India exported horticulture products worth ■14,365 crore (US\$1.7 billion), nearly double the value of its 2010 exports. Along with these farm-level gains, the losses between farm and consumer increased and are estimated to range between 51 and 82 million metric tonnes a year.

Organic agriculture History Organic agriculture is the practice of using ecologically based manures and compost to cultivate food. It prohibits the use of any synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, or genetically modified organisms. Organic farming was the norm in India for most of its history, but significant population growth in the mid-20th century forced farmers to find new ways to provide enough food to support the country. M. S. Swaminathan, an agricultural scientist, led an initiative known as the Green Revolution to integrate new technology into existing Indian agrarian practices to increase the farms' yields and general productivity. India began to adopt synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, and new irrigation technology to accomplish this goal. The revolution slowly decreased the frequency of organic farming.

Current status Due to the Green Revolution, a large majority of farmland in India is not organic. Most Indian farmland is concentrated in large commercial farms that prioritise high yields and maximum economic gain. Organic farmland occupies around 2% of all farmland in India, which is most commonly divided into many small subsistence farms. Despite this, India still holds the ninth most organic farmland in the world. There are several reasons why only a few large-scale organic farms exist in India. Organic farming requires more land, materials, and labour to achieve the same production levels as non-organic farms, so large-scale organic farming is highly inefficient. Organic agriculture is more expensive and time-consuming compared to conventional farming practices, which further explains the lack of large organic farms. Organic agriculture has fed India for centuries and it is again a growing sector in India. Organic production offers clean and green production methods without the use of synthetic fertilisers and pesticides and it achieves a premium price in the market place. India has 6,50,000 organic producers, which is more than any other country. India also has 4 million hectares of land certified as organic wildculture, which is third in the world (after Finland and Zambia). As non availability of edible biomass is impeding the growth of animal husbandry in India, organic production of protein rich cattle, fish and poultry feed using biogas /methane/natural gas by cultivating *Methylococcus capsulatus* bacteria with tiny land and water foot print is a solution for ensuring adequate protein rich food to the population.

Agriculture based cooperatives India has seen a huge growth in cooperative societies, mainly in the farming sector, since 1947 when the country gained independence from Britain. The country has networks of cooperatives at the local, regional, state and national levels that assist in agricultural marketing. The commodities that are mostly handled are food grains, jute, cotton, sugar, milk, fruit and nuts Support by the state government led to more than 25,000 cooperatives being set up by the 1990s in the state of Maharashtra.

Sugar industry Most of the sugar production in India takes place at mills owned by local cooperative societies. The members of the society include all farmers, small and large, supplying sugarcane to the mill. Over the last fifty years, the local sugar mills have played a crucial part in encouraging political participation and as a stepping stone for aspiring politicians. This is particularly true in the state of Maharashtra where a large number of politicians belonging to the Congress party or NCP had ties to sugar cooperatives from their local area and has created a symbiotic relationship between the sugar factories and local politics. However, the policy of "profits for the company but losses to be borne by the government", has made a number of these operations inefficient.

Marketing As with sugar, cooperatives play a significant part in the overall marketing of fruit and vegetables in India. Since the 1980s, the amount of produce handled by Cooperative societies has increased exponentially. Common fruit and vegetables marketed by the societies include bananas, mangoes, grapes, onions and many others.

Dairy industry Dairy farming based on the Amul Pattern, with a single marketing cooperative, is India's largest self-sustaining industry and its largest rural employment provider. Successful implementation of the Amul model has made India the world's largest milk producer. Here small, marginal farmers with a couple or so heads of milch cattle queue up twice daily to pour milk from their small containers into the village union collection points. The milk after processing at the district unions is then marketed by the state cooperative federation nationally under the Amul brand name, India's largest food brand. With the Anand pattern three-fourth of the price paid by the mainly urban consumers goes into the hands of millions of small dairy farmers, who are the owners of the brand and the cooperative.

Banking and rural credit Cooperative banks play a great part in providing credit in rural parts of India. Just like the sugar cooperatives, these institutions serve as the power base for local politicians.

Problems "Slow agricultural growth is a concern for policymakers as some two-thirds of India's people depend on rural employment for a living. Current agricultural practices are neither economically nor environmentally sustainable and India's yields for many agricultural commodities are low. Poorly maintained irrigation systems and almost universal lack of good extension services are among the factors responsible. Farmers' access to markets is hampered by poor roads, rudimentary market infrastructure, and excessive regulation." "With a population of just over 1.3 billion, India is the world's largest democracy. In the past decade, the country has witnessed accelerated economic growth, emerged as a global player with the world's fourth largest economy in purchasing power parity terms, and made progress towards achieving most of the Millennium Development Goals. India's integration into the global economy has been accompanied by impressive economic growth that has brought significant economic and social benefits to the country. Nevertheless, disparities in income and human development are on the rise. Preliminary estimates suggest that in 2009-10 the combined all India poverty rate was 32 % compared to 37 % in 2004-05. Going forward, it will be essential for India to build a productive, competitive, and diversified agricultural sector and facilitate rural, non-farm entrepreneurship and employment. Encouraging policies that promote competition in agricultural marketing will ensure that farmers receive better prices." A 2003 analysis of India's agricultural growth from 1970 to 2001 by the Food and Agriculture Organization identified systemic problems in Indian agriculture. For food staples, the annual growth rate in production during the six-year segments 1970-76, 1976-82, 1982-88, 1988-1994, 1994-2000 were found to be respectively 2.5, 2.5, 3.0, 2.6, and 1.8% per annum. Corresponding analyses for the index of total agricultural production show a similar pattern, with the growth rate for 1994-2000 attaining only 1.5% per annum. The biggest problem of farmers is the low price for their farm produce. A recent study showed that proper pricing based on energy of production and equating farming wages to Industrial wages may be beneficial for the farmers.

Infrastructure India has very poor rural roads affecting timely supply of inputs and timely transfer of outputs from Indian farms. Irrigation systems are inadequate, leading to crop failures in some parts of the country because of lack of water. In other areas regional floods, poor seed quality and inefficient farming practices, lack of cold storage and harvest spoilage cause over 30% of farmer's produce going to waste, lack of organised retail and competing buyers thereby limiting Indian farmer's ability to sell the surplus and commercial crops. The Indian

farmer receives just 10% to 23% of the price the Indian consumer pays for exactly the same produce, the difference going to losses, inefficiencies and middlemen. Farmers in developed economies of Europe and the United States receive 64% to 81%.

Productivity Although India has attained self-sufficiency in food staples, the productivity of its farms is below that of Brazil, the United States, France and other nations. Indian wheat farms, for example, produce about a third of the wheat per hectare per year compared to farms in France. Rice productivity in India was less than half that of China. Other staples productivity in India is similarly low. Indian total factor productivity growth remains below 2% per annum; in contrast, China's total factor productivity growths is about 6% per annum, even though China also has smallholding farmers. Several studies suggest India could eradicate its hunger and malnutrition and be a major source of food for the world by achieving productivity comparable with other countries. By contrast, Indian farms in some regions post the best yields, for sugarcane, cassava and tea crops. Crop yields vary significantly between Indian states. Some states produce two to three times more grain per acre than others. As the map shows, the traditional regions of high agricultural productivity in India are the north west (Punjab, Haryana and Western Uttar Pradesh), coastal districts on both coasts, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu. In recent years, the states of Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh in central India and Gujarat in the west have shown rapid agricultural growth. The table compares the statewide average yields for a few major agricultural crops in India, for 2001-2002.

Crop yields for some farms in India are within 90% of the best achieved yields by farms in developed countries such as the United States and in European Union. No single state of India is best in every crop. Tamil Nadu achieved highest yields in rice and sugarcane, Haryana in wheat and coarse grains, Karnataka in cotton, Bihar in pulses, while other states do well in horticulture, aquaculture, flower and fruit plantations. These differences in agricultural productivity are a function of local infrastructure, soil quality, micro-climates, local resources, farmer knowledge and innovations. The Indian food distribution system is highly inefficient. Movement of agricultural produce is heavily regulated, with inter-state and even inter-district restrictions on marketing and movement of agricultural goods. One study suggests Indian agricultural policy should best focus on improving rural infrastructure primarily in the form of irrigation and flood control infrastructure, knowledge transfer of better yielding and more disease resistant seeds. Additionally, cold storage, hygienic food packaging and efficient modern retail to reduce waste can improve output and rural incomes. The low productivity in India is a result of the following factors:

The average size of land holdings is very small (less than 2 hectares) and is subject to fragmentation due to land ceiling acts, and in some cases, family disputes. Such small holdings are often over-manned, resulting in disguised unemployment and low productivity of labour. Some reports claim smallholder farming may not be cause of poor productivity, since the productivity is higher in China and many developing economies even though China smallholder farmers constitute over 97% of its farming population. A Chinese smallholder farmer is able to rent his land to larger farmers, China's organised retail and extensive Chinese highways are able to provide the incentive and infrastructure necessary to its farmers for sharp increases in farm productivity. Adoption of modern agricultural practices and use of technology is inadequate in comparison with Green Revolution methods and technologies, hampered by ignorance of such practices, high costs and impracticality in the case of small land holdings. According to the World Bank, Indian branch's Priorities for Agriculture and Rural Development, India's large agricultural subsidies are hampering productivity-enhancing investment. This evaluation is based largely on a productivity agenda and does not take any ecological implications into account. According to a neo-liberal view, over-regulation of agriculture has increased costs, price risks and uncertainty because the government intervenes in labour, land, and credit markets. India has inadequate infrastructure and

services. The World Bank also says that the allocation of water is inefficient, unsustainable and inequitable. The irrigation infrastructure is deteriorating. The overuse of water is being covered by over-pumping aquifers but, as these are falling by one foot of groundwater each year, this is a limited resource. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released a report that food security may be a big problem in the region post 2030. Illiteracy, general socio-economic backwardness, slow progress in implementing land reforms and inadequate or inefficient finance and marketing services for farm produce. Inconsistent government policy. Agricultural subsidies and taxes are often changed without notice for short term political ends. Irrigation facilities are inadequate, as revealed by the fact that only 52.6% of the land was irrigated in 2003-04, which result in farmers still being dependent on rainfall, specifically the monsoon season. A good monsoon results in a robust growth for the economy, while a poor monsoon leads to a sluggish growth. Farm credit is regulated by NABARD, which is the statutory apex agent for rural development in the subcontinent. At the same time, over-pumping made possible by subsidised electric power is leading to an alarming drop in aquifer levels. A third of all food that is produced rots due to inefficient supply chains and the use of the "Walmart model" to improve efficiency is blocked by laws against foreign investment in the retail sector.

Farmer suicides In 2012, the National Crime Records Bureau of India reported 13,754 farmer suicides. Farmer suicides account for 11.2% of all suicides in India. Activists and scholars have offered a number of conflicting reasons for farmer suicides, such as monsoon failure, high debt burdens, genetically modified crops, government policies, public mental health, personal issues and family problems. According to an NCRB data, in 2022, India saw 11,290 suicides in the farming sector. This was a 3.75 per cent rise from the 10,881 suicides in 2021. In 2022, there were 5,207 farmers suicides compared to 5,318 in 2021. There were 6,083 suicides of farm labourers in 2022, as compared to 5,563 in 2021.

Marketing Agromarketing is poorly developed in India.

Diversion of agricultural land for non-agricultural purpose Indian National Policy for Farmers of 2007 stated that "prime farmland must be conserved for agriculture except under exceptional circumstances, provided that the agencies that are provided with agricultural land for non-agricultural projects should compensate for treatment and full development of equivalent degraded or wastelands elsewhere". The policy suggested that, as far as possible, land with low farming yields or that was not farmable should be earmarked for non-agricultural purposes such as construction, industrial parks and other commercial development. Amartya Sen offered a counter viewpoint, stating that "prohibiting the use of agricultural land for commercial and industrial development is ultimately self-defeating". He stated that agricultural land may be better suited for non-agriculture purposes if industrial production could generate many times more than the value of the product produced by agriculture. Sen suggested India needed to bring productive industry everywhere, wherever there are advantages of production, market needs and the locational preferences of managers, engineers, technical experts as well as unskilled labour because of education, healthcare and other infrastructure. He stated that instead of government controlling land allocation based on soil characteristics, the market economy should determine productive allocation of land. Please check the validity of the source listed above.

Climate change Initiatives The required level of investment for the development of marketing, storage and cold storage infrastructure is estimated to be huge. The government has not been able to implement schemes to raise investment in marketing infrastructure. Among these schemes are 'Construction of Rural Godowns', 'Market Research and Information Network', and 'Development / Strengthening of Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure, Grading and Standardisation'. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), established in

1905, was responsible for the search leading to the "Indian Green Revolution" of the 1970s. The ICAR is the apex body in agriculture and related allied fields, including research and education. The Union Minister of Agriculture is the president of the ICAR. The Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute develops new techniques for the design of agricultural experiments, analyses data in agriculture, and specialises in statistical techniques for animal and plant breeding. Recently (May 2016) the government of India has set up the Farmers Commission to completely evaluate the agriculture programme. Its recommendations have had a mixed reception. In November 2011, India announced major reforms in organised retail. These reforms would include logistics and retail of agricultural produce. The announcement led to major political controversy. The reforms were placed on hold by the government in December 2011. In the summer of 2012, the subsidised electricity for pumping, which has caused an alarming drop in aquifer levels, put additional strain on the country's electrical grid due to a 19% drop in monsoon rains and may have contributed to a blackout across much of the country. In response the state of Bihar offered farmers over \$100 million in subsidised diesel to operate their pumps. In 2015, Narendra Modi announced to double farmer's income by 2022. Startups with niche technology and new business models are working to solve problems in Indian agriculture and its marketing. Kandawale is one such e-commerce website which sells Indian red onions to bulk users direct from farmers, reducing unnecessary cost escalations. In July 2025, the Government of India launched the Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana, a six-year initiative with an annual outlay of ₹24,000 crore, aimed at boosting crop yields and farmers' income in 100 low-performing districts. Starting from the 2025-26 rabi season, the scheme will benefit around 1.7 crore farmers through convergence of 36 existing schemes across multiple ministries. It focuses on crop diversification, sustainable practices, irrigation, storage infrastructure, and improved access to credit. District-level plans, monitored through 117 key indicators, will align with national goals of self-reliance, organic farming, and increased agricultural productivity. The initiative is a major step towards achieving Atmanirbhar Bharat in the agriculture sector.

Agriculture and the Indian economy The contributions of agriculture in the Indian economy have been increasing over the years. According to the economic survey, the share of agriculture in gross domestic product (GDP) reached almost 20% for the first time in 17 years, making a sole bright spot in performance during financial year 2020-2021. Modern farms and agriculture operations have changed over the years primarily because of advancements in technology, including sensors, devices, machines, and information technology. Personalized e-commerce stores and market places have brought farming products like fertilizers, seeds, machines and equipment that help farmers grow quality products. Educational portals let farmers know innovative things about farming that increase the contributions of agriculture to the economy.

Organic farming Historical initiatives The Green Revolution's shift to new farming methods, such as irrigation and synthetic fertilizers, led to negative impacts on the environment. The rise of commercial farms to support the Indian population, coupled with demands from other countries, resulted in mass deforestation. Excess water from irrigation systems collects toxic chemicals from pesticides, leading to runoff into streams that kills wildlife and pollutes freshwater sources. These and other effects have prompted concerns about the sustainability of non-organic farming, thereby raising awareness about the importance of adopting more sustainable organic farming practices. One leader of this development was Sir Albert Howard. He was an English botanist who helped advance organic agricultural developments through numerous publications on sustainable organic farming methods in India. He raised awareness about the adverse effects of non-organic farming on the environment and helped educate the Indian population about the benefits of organic farming. His work and contributions to the field of organic agriculture led him to be known as the founder of the organic farming movement.

Recent initiatives With the recent concerns about non-organic farming practices and their possibly adverse health effects, there has been a noticeable increase in demand for organic food in India. As more people notice the negative impacts of non-organic farming on sustainability, it contributes to grow the organic farming movement. The Government of India is also playing an active role in promoting organic agriculture, as its various initiatives, like Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana and zero-budget natural farming, are making organic farming more accessible and sustainable. Most initiatives now focus on how organic agriculture can lead to improvements in the country's sustainability. Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) was launched in 2015 by the Narendra Modi regime to promote organic farming, under which farmers form organic farming clusters of 50 or more farmers with a minimum total area of 50 acres to share organic methods using traditional sustainable methods, costs, and marketing, etc. It initially aimed to have 10,000 clusters by 2018 with at least 500,000 acres under organic farming. I also aimed for the government to cover certification costs while promoting the use of traditional resources in organic farming. Government provides INR 20,000 per acre benefit over three years. Other techniques of organic farming like zero budget natural farming (ZBNF) have been implemented by many small-scale farmers in Wayanad, Kerala. In this process they implement more natural and ecological methods of farming that decrease or completely cease use of pesticides and damaging chemicals. This alleviates damage caused by chemical overuse and mono cropping which is depleting the formerly fertile forest-land in the area. Along with progression with organic farming methods, new technologies in the form of moisture sensors and artificial intelligence are also being implemented in the Indian farming sector. Farmers are using moisture sensors to ensure that different crops have the exact amount of water that they need, which ensures that farmers can maximise crop yield. Along with this, artificial intelligence techniques are being implemented in food processing plants across India. AI provides more efficient ways to produce, harvest, and sell crops products as well as an emphasis on checking defective crops and improving the potential for healthy crop production. This further helps maximise crop yield as Rayda Ayed describes in her research on the impact of artificial intelligence in India.

Sustainability Organic farming practices are currently having a positive effect on India's environment and will further improve the country's sustainability if continued. Specifically, it has a direct link to improving the economic sustainability of non-commercial farmers. Organic farmers can sell products on a small scale at a higher price than non-organic products. This enables them to increase their earnings on food sales and achieve greater economic sustainability. Further, organic farming is also creating more jobs in rural areas, as organic farms require more labour compared to non-organic ones. The market for organic food is evolving, as the potential health risks associated with non-organic food continue to steer people towards organic alternatives. In terms of environmental sustainability, organic farms do not use any artificial pesticides or fertilizers. This means that there is no toxic runoff or other environmentally damaging effects from organic farms. Avoiding these dangerous chemicals also leads to a healthier environment for farmers, as they do not have to deal with any threatening chemicals.

The future of organic agriculture Organic farming has a combination of positive and negative outlooks in India. On the positive side, organic farming's high levels of sustainability offer it a promising future. Organic farms contribute to safer and healthier lives for both farmers and consumers due to their lack of dangerous chemicals, making the industry's projected outlook long-lasting and promising. On the other hand, organic farms have some adverse effects. For example, organic farms have lower yields compared to non-organic farms. Compensating for this issue results in organic farmers cultivating more land to produce similar amounts of crops. This leads to deforestation, which is not sustainable. The ideal form of agriculture in India calls for a combination of both organic and non-organic farming techniques to maximise yields while promoting economic and environmental sustainability.

Government schemes 2020 Indian agriculture acts Atal Bhujal Yojana E-NAM for online agrimarketing Gramin Bhandaran Yojana for local storage Micro Irrigation Fund (MIF) National Mission For Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) National Scheme on Fisheries Training and Extension National Scheme on Welfare of Fishermen Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PMKSN) for minimum support scheme Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY) for irrigation Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) for organic farming Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) for crop insurance

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Indian art

Indian art consists of a variety of art forms, including painting, sculpture, pottery, and textile arts such as woven silk. Geographically, it spans the entire Indian subcontinent, including what is now India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, and at times eastern Afghanistan. A strong sense of design is characteristic of Indian art and can be observed in its modern and traditional forms. The earliest Indian art originated during the prehistoric settlements of the 3rd millennium BCE, such as the rock shelters of Bhimbetka, which contain some of the world's oldest known cave paintings. On its way to modern times, Indian art has had cultural influences, as well as religious influences such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism and Islam. In spite of this complex mixture of religious traditions, generally, the prevailing artistic style at any time and place has been shared by the major religious groups. In historic art, sculpture in stone and metal, mainly religious, has survived the Indian climate better than other media and provides most of the best remains. Many of the most important ancient finds that are not in carved stone come from the surrounding, drier regions rather than India itself. Indian funeral and philosophic traditions exclude grave goods, which is the main source of ancient art in other cultures. Indian artist styles historically followed Indian religions out of the subcontinent, having an especially large influence in Tibet, South East Asia and China. Indian art has itself received influences at times, especially from Central Asia and Iran, and Europe.

Early Indian art Rock Art Rock art of India includes rock relief carvings, engravings and paintings, some (but by no means all) from the South Asian Stone Age. It is estimated there are about 1300 rock art sites with over a quarter of a million figures and figurines. The earliest rock carvings in India were discovered by Archibald Carlleyle, twelve years before the Cave of Altamira in Spain, although his work only came to light much later via J Cockburn (1899). Dr. V. S. Wakankar discovered several painted rock shelters in Central India, situated around the Vindhya mountain range. Of these, the c. 750 sites making up the Bhimbetka rock shelters have been enrolled as a UNESCO World Heritage Site; the earliest paintings are some 10,000 years old. The paintings in these sites commonly depicted scenes of human life alongside animals, and hunts with stone implements. Their style varied with region and age, but the most common characteristic was a red wash made using a powdered mineral called geru, which is a form of iron oxide (hematite).

Indus Valley civilisation (c. 3300 BCE - c. 1750 BCE) Despite its wide spread and sophistication, the Indus Valley civilisation seems to have taken no interest in public large-scale art, unlike many other early civilizations. A number of gold, terracotta and stone figurines of girls in dancing poses reveal the presence of some forms of dance. Additionally, the terracotta figurines included cows, bears, monkeys, and dogs. By far the most common form of figurative art found is small carved seals. Thousands of steatite seals have been recovered, and their physical character is fairly consistent. In size they range from 3/4 inch to 1 1/2 inches square. In most cases they have a pierced boss at the back to accommodate a cord for handling or for use as personal adornment. Seals have been found at Mohenjo-Daro depicting a figure standing on its head, and another, on the Pashupati Seal, sitting cross-legged in a yoga-like pose. This figure has been variously identified. Sir John Marshall identified a resemblance to the Hindu god, Shiva. The animal depicted on a majority of seals at sites of the mature period has not been clearly identified. Part bull, part zebra, with a majestic horn, it has been a source of speculation. As yet, there is insufficient evidence to substantiate claims that the image had religious or cultist significance, but the prevalence of the image raises the question of whether or not the animals in images of the IVC are religious symbols. The most famous piece is the bronze Dancing Girl of Mohenjo-Daro, which shows remarkably advanced modelling of the human figure for this early date. After the end of the Indus Valley

Civilization, there is a surprising absence of art of any great degree of sophistication until the Buddhist era. It is thought that this partly reflects the use of perishable organic materials such as wood.

Vedic period The millennium following the collapse of the Indus Valley civilisation, coinciding with the Indo-Aryan migration during the Vedic period, is devoid of anthropomorphical depictions. It has been suggested that the early Vedic religion focused exclusively on the worship of purely "elementary forces of nature by means of elaborate sacrifices", which did not lend themselves easily to anthropomorphological representations. Various artefacts may belong to the Copper Hoard culture (2nd millennium BCE), some of them suggesting anthropomorphological characteristics. Interpretations vary as to the exact signification of these artifacts, or even the culture and the periodization to which they belonged. Some examples of artistic expression also appear in abstract pottery designs during the Black and red ware culture (1450-1200 BCE) or the Painted Grey Ware culture (1200-600 BCE), with finds in a wide area, including the area of Mathura. After a gap of about a thousand years, most of the early finds correspond to what is called the "second period of urbanization" in the middle of the 1st millennium BCE. The anthropomorphic depiction of various deities apparently started in the middle of the 1st millennium BCE, possibly as a consequence of the influx of foreign stimuli initiated with the Achaemenid conquest of the Indus Valley, and the rise of alternative local faiths challenging Vedism, such as Buddhism, Jainism and local popular cults.

Mauryan art (c. 322 BCE - c. 185 BCE) The north Indian Maurya Empire flourished from 322 BCE to 185 BCE, and at its maximum extent controlled all of the sub-continent except the extreme south as well as influences from Indian ancient traditions, and Ancient Persia, as shown by the Pataliputra capital. The emperor Ashoka, who died in 232 BCE, adopted Buddhism about half-way through his 40-year reign, and patronized several large stupas at key sites from the life of the Buddha, although very little decoration from the Mauryan period survives, and there may not have been much in the first place. There is more from various early sites of Indian rock-cut architecture. The most famous survivals are the large animals surmounting several of the Pillars of Ashoka, which showed a confident and boldly mature style and craft and first of its kind iron casting without rust until date, which was in use by Vedic people in rural areas of the country, though we have very few remains showing its development. The famous detached Lion Capital of Ashoka, with four animals, was adopted as the official Emblem of India after Indian independence. Mauryan sculpture and architecture is characterized by a very fine Mauryan polish given to the stone, which is rarely found in later periods. Many small popular terracotta figurines are recovered in archaeology, in a range of often vigorous if somewhat crude styles. Both animals and human figures, usually females presumed to be deities, are found.

Colossal Yaksha statuary (2nd century BCE) Yakshas seem to have been the object of an important cult in the early periods of Indian history, many of them being known such as Kubera, king of the Yakshas, Manibhadra or Mudgarpani. The Yakshas are a broad class of nature-spirits, usually benevolent, but sometimes mischievous or capricious, connected with water, fertility, trees, the forest, treasure and wilderness, and were the object of popular worship. Many of them were later incorporated into Buddhism, Jainism or Hinduism. In the 2nd century BCE, Yakshas became the focus of the creation of colossal cultic images, typically around 2 meters or more in height, which are considered as probably the first Indian anthropomorphic productions in stone. Although few ancient Yaksha statues remain in good condition, the vigor of the style has been applauded, and expresses essentially Indian qualities. They are often pot-bellied, two-armed and fierce-looking. The Yakshas are often depicted with weapons or attributes, such as the Yaksha Mudgarpani who in the right hand holds a mudgar mace, and in the left hand the figure of a small standing devotee or child joining hands in prayer. It is often suggested that the style of the colossal Yaksha statuary had an important influence on the creation of later divine images and human figures in India. The female equivalent of the Yakshas were the Yakshinis, often

associated with trees and children, and whose voluptuous figures became omnipresent in Indian art. Some Hellenistic influence, such as the geometrical folds of the drapery or the walking stance of the statues, has been suggested. According to John Boardman, the hem of the dress in the monumental early Yaksha statues is derived from Greek art. Describing the drapery of one of these statues, John Boardman writes: "It has no local antecedents and looks most like a Greek Late Archaic mannerism", and suggests it is possibly derived from the Hellenistic art of nearby Bactria where this design is known. In the production of colossal Yaksha statues carved in the round, which can be found in several locations in northern India, the art of Mathura is considered as the most advanced in quality and quantity during this period.

Buddhist art (c. 150 BCE - c. 500 CE) The major survivals of Buddhist art begin in the period after the Mauryans, from which good quantities of sculpture survives. Some key sites are Sanchi, Bharhut and Amaravati, some of which remain in situ, with others in museums in India or around the world. Stupas were surrounded by ceremonial fences with four profusely carved toranas or ornamental gateways facing the cardinal directions. These are in stone, though clearly adopting forms developed in wood. They and the walls of the stupa itself can be heavily decorated with reliefs, mostly illustrating the lives of the Buddha. Gradually life-size figures were sculpted, initially in deep relief, but then free-standing. Mathura was the most important centre in this development, which applied to Hindu and Jain art as well as Buddhist. The facades and interiors of rock-cut chaitya prayer halls and monastic viharas have survived better than similar free-standing structures elsewhere, which were for long mostly in wood. The caves at Ajanta, Karle, Bhaja and elsewhere contain early sculpture, often outnumbered by later works such as iconic figures of the Buddha and bodhisattvas, which are not found before 100 CE at the least. Buddhism developed an increasing emphasis on statues of the Buddha, which was greatly influenced by Hindu and Jain religious figurative art. The figures of this period which were also influenced by the Greco-Buddhist art of the centuries after the conquests of Alexander the Great. This fusion developed in the far north-west of India, especially Gandhara in modern Afghanistan and Pakistan. The Indian Kushan Empire spread from Central Asia to include northern India in the early centuries CE, and briefly commissioned large statues that were portraits of the royal dynasty.

Shunga Dynasty (c. 185 BCE - 72 BCE) With the fall of the Maurya Empire, control of India was returned to the older custom of regional dynasties, one of the most significant of which was the Shunga Dynasty (c. 185 BCE - 72 BCE) of central India. During this period, as well as during the Satavahana Dynasty which occurred concurrently with the Shunga Dynasty in south India, some of the most significant early Buddhist architecture was created. Arguably, the most significant architecture of this dynasty is the stupa, a religious monument which usually holds a sacred relic of Buddhism. These relics were often, but not always, in some way directly connected to the Buddha. Due to the fact that these stupas contained remains of the Buddha himself, each stupa was venerated as being an extension of the Buddha's body, his enlightenment, and of his achievement of nirvana. The way in which Buddhists venerate the stupa is by walking around it in a clockwise manner.

One of the most notable examples of the Buddhist stupa from the Shunga Dynasty is The Great Stupa at Sanchi, which was thought to be founded by the Mauryan emperor Ashoka c. 273 BCE - 232 BCE during the Maurya Empire. The Great Stupa was enlarged to its present diameter of 120 feet, covered with a stone casing, topped with a balcony and umbrella, and encircled with a stone railing during the Shunga Dynasty c. 150 BCE - 50 BCE. In addition to architecture, another significant art form of the Shunga Dynasty is the elaborately moulded terracotta plaques. As seen in previous examples from the Mauryan Empire, a style in which surface detail, nudity, and sensuality is continued in the terracotta plaques of the Shunga Dynasty. The most common figural representations seen on these plaques are women, some of which are thought to be goddesses, who are mostly shown as bare-chested and wearing elaborate headdresses.

Satavahana dynasty (c. 1st/3rd century BCE - c. 3rd century CE) The Satavahana dynasty ruled in central India, and sponsored many large Buddhist monuments, stupas, temples, and prayer-halls, including the Amaravati Stupa, the Karla Caves, and the first phase of the Ajanta Caves.

Stupas are religious monuments built on burial mounds, which contain relics beneath a solid dome. Stupas in different areas of India may vary in structure, size, and design; however, their representational meanings are quite similar. They are designed based on a mandala, a graph of cosmos specific to Buddhism. A traditional stupa has a railing that provides a sacred path for Buddhist followers to practice devotional circumambulation in ritual settings. Also, ancient Indians considered caves as sacred places since they were inhabited by holy men and monks. A chaitya was constructed from a cave. Relief sculptures of Buddhist figures and epigraphs written in Brahmi characters are often found in divine places specific to Buddhism. To celebrate the divine, Satavahana people also made stone images as the decoration in Buddhist architectures. Based on the knowledge of geometry and geology, they created ideal images using a set of complex techniques and tools such as chisels, hammers, and compasses with iron points. In addition, delicate Satavahana coins show the capacity of creating art in that period. The Satavahanas issued coins primarily in copper, lead and potin. Later on, silver came into use when producing coins. The coins usually have detailed portraits of rulers and inscriptions written in the language of Tamil and Telugu.

Kushan Empire (c. 30 CE - c. 375 CE) Officially established by Kujula Kadphises, the first Kushan emperor who united the Yuezhi tribes, the Kushan empire was a syncretic empire in central and southern Asia, including the regions of Gandhara and Mathura in northern India. From 127 to 151 CE, Gandharan reached its peak under the reign of Kanishka the Great. In this period, Kushan art inherited the Greco-Buddhist art. Mahayana Buddhism flourished, and the depictions of Buddha as a human form first appeared in art. Wearing a monk's robe and a long length of cloth draped over the left shoulder and around the body, the Buddha was depicted with 32 major lakshanas (distinguishing marks), including a golden-colored body, an ushnisha (a protuberance) on the top of his head, heavy earrings, elongated earlobes, long arms, the impression of a chakra (wheel) on the palms of his hands and the soles of his feet, and the urna (a mark between his eyebrows). One of the hallmarks of Gandharan art is its relation to naturalism of Hellenistic art. The naturalistic features found in Gandharan sculptures include the three-dimensional treatment of the drapery, with unregularized folds that are in realistic patterns of random shape and thickness. The physical form of the Buddha and his bodhisattvas are well-defined, solid, and muscular, with swelling chests, arms, and abdomens. Buddhism and Buddhism art spread to Central Asia and the far East across Bactria and Sogdia, where the Kushan Empire met the Han Dynasty of China.

Gupta art (c. 320 CE - c. 550 CE) The Gupta period is generally regarded as a classic peak of north Indian art for all the major religious groups. Although painting was evidently widespread, and survives in the Ajanta Caves, the surviving works are almost all religious sculpture. The period saw the emergence of the iconic carved stone deity in Hindu art, as well as the Buddha-figure and Jain tirthankara figures, these last often on a very large scale. The main centres of sculpture were Mathura Sarnath, and Gandhara, the last the centre of Greco-Buddhist art. The Gupta period marked the "golden age" of classical Hinduism, and saw the earliest constructed Hindu temple architecture, though survivals are not numerous.

Middle kingdoms and the Early Medieval period (c. 600 CE - c. 1206 CE/1526 CE) Over this period Hindu temple architecture matured into a number of regional styles, and a large proportion of the art historical record for this period consists of temple sculpture, much of which remains in place. The political history of the middle

kingdoms of India saw India divided into many states, and since much of the grandest building was commissioned by rulers and their court, this helped the development of regional differences. Painting, both on a large scale on walls, and in miniature forms, was no doubt very widely practiced, but survivals are rare. Medieval bronzes have most commonly survived from either the Tamil south, or the Himalayan foothills.

Dynasties of South India (c. 3rd century CE - c. 1200 CE) Inscriptions on the Pillars of Ashoka mention coexistence of the northern kingdoms with the triumvirate of Chola, Chera and Pandya Tamil dynasties, situated south of the Vindhya mountains. The medieval period witnessed the rise and fall of these kingdoms, in conjunction with other kingdoms in the area. It is during the decline and resurgence of these kingdoms that Hinduism was renewed. It fostered the construction of numerous temples and sculptures.

The Shore Temple at Mamallapuram constructed by the Pallavas symbolizes early Hindu architecture, with its monolithic rock relief and sculptures of Hindu deities. They were succeeded by Chola rulers who were prolific in their pursuit of the arts. The Great Living Chola Temples of this period are known for their maturity, grandeur and attention to detail, and have been recognized as a UNESCO Heritage Site. The Chola period is also known for its bronze sculptures, the lost-wax casting technique and fresco paintings. Thanks to the Hindu kings of the Chalukya dynasty, Jainism flourished alongside Islam evidenced by the fourth of the Badami cave temples being Jain instead of Vedic. The kingdoms of South India continued to rule their lands until the Muslim invasions that established sultanates there and destroyed much of the temples and marvel examples of architectures and sculptures. Other Hindu states are now mainly known through their surviving temples and their attached sculpture. These include Badami Chalukya architecture (5th to 6th centuries), Western Chalukya architecture (11th to 12th centuries) and Hoysala architecture (11th to 14th centuries), all centred on modern Karnataka.

Eastern India In east India, Odisha and West Bengal, Kalinga architecture was the broad temple style, with local variants, before the Muslim conquest. In antiquity, Bengal was a pioneer of painting in Asia under the Pala Empire. Miniature and scroll painting flourished during the Mughal Empire. Kalighat painting or Kalighat Pat originated in the 19th century Bengal, in the vicinity of Kalighat Kali Temple of Kolkata, and from being items of souvenir taken by the visitors to the Kali temple, the paintings over a period of time developed as a distinct school of Indian painting. From the depiction of Hindu gods other mythological characters, the Kalighat paintings developed to reflect a variety of themes.

Late Medieval Period and Colonial Era (c. 1526 CE - c. 1757 CE) Mughal art Although Islamic conquests in India were made as early as the first half of the 10th century, it wasn't until the Mughal Empire that one observes emperors with a patronage for the fine arts. Emperor Humayun, during his reestablishment of the Delhi Sultanate in 1555, brought with him Mir Sayyid Ali and Abd al-Samad, two of the finest painters from Persian Shah Tahmasp's renowned atelier.

During the reign of Akbar (1556-1605), the number of painters grew from around 30 during the creation of the Hamzanama in the mid-1560s, to around 130 by the mid-1590s. According to court historian Abu'l-Fazal, Akbar was hands-on in his interest of the arts, inspecting his painters regularly and rewarding the best. It is during this time that Persian artists were attracted to bringing their unique style to the empire. Indian elements were present in their works from the beginning, with the incorporation of local Indian flora and fauna that were otherwise absent from the traditional Persian style. The paintings of this time reflected the vibrancy and inclusion of Akbar's kingdom, with production of Persian miniatures, the Rajput paintings (including the Kangra

school) and the Pahari style of Northern India. They also influenced the Company style watercolor paintings created during the British rule many years later. With the death of Akbar, his son Jahangir (1605-1627) took the throne. He preferred each painter work on a single piece rather than the collaboration fostered during Akbar's time. This period marks the emergence of distinct individual styles, notably Bishan Das, Manohar Das, Abu al-Hasan, Govardhan, and Daulat. Jahangir himself had the capability to identify the work of each individual artist, even if the work was unnamed. The Razmnama (Persian translation of the Hindu epic Mahabharata) and an illustrated memoir of Jahangir, named Tuzuk-i Jahangiri, were created under his rule. Jahangir was succeeded by Shah Jahan (1628-1658), whose most notable architectural contribution is the Taj Mahal. Paintings under his rule were more formal, featuring court scenes, in contrast to the personal styles from his predecessor's time. Aurangzeb (1658-1707), who held increasingly orthodox Sunni beliefs, forcibly took the throne from his father Shah Jahan. With a ban of music and painting in 1680, his reign saw the decline of Mughal patronage of the arts. As painting declined in the imperial court, artists and the general influence of Mughal painting spread to the princely courts and cities of north India, where both portraiture, the illustration of the Indian epics, and Hindu religious painting developed in many local schools and styles. Notable among these were the schools of Rajput, Pahari, Deccan, Kangra painting.

Other medieval Indian kingdoms The last empire in southern India has left spectacular remains of Vijayanagara architecture, especially at Hampi, Karnataka, often heavily decorated with sculpture. These developed the Chola tradition. After the Mughal conquest, the temple tradition continued to develop, mainly in the expansion of existing temples, which added new outer walls with increasingly large gopurams, often dwarfing the older buildings in the centre. These became usually thickly covered with plaster statues of deities and other religious figures, which need have their brightly coloured paint kept renewed at intervals so they do not erode away. In South-Central India, during the late fifteenth century after the Middle kingdoms, the Bahmani sultanate disintegrated into the Deccan sultanates centered at Bijapur, Golconda, Ahmadnagar, Bidar, and Berar. They used vedic techniques of metal casting, stone carving, and painting, as well as a distinctive architectural style with the addition of citadels and tombs from Mughal architecture. For instance, the Baridi dynasty (1504-1619) of Bidar saw the invention of bidri ware, which was adopted from Vedic and Maurya period ashoka pillars of zinc mixed with copper, tin, and lead and inlaid with silver or brass, then covered with a mud paste containing sal ammoniac, which turned the base metal black, highlighting the colour and sheen of the inlaid metal. Only after the Mughal conquest of Ahmadnagar in 1600 did the Persian influence patronized by the Turco-Mongol Mughals begin to affect Deccan art.

British period (1857-1947) British colonial rule had a great impact on Indian art, especially from the mid-19th century onwards. Many old patrons of art became less wealthy and influential, and Western art more ubiquitous as the British Empire established schools of art in major cities. The oldest, the Government College of Fine Arts, Chennai, was established in 1850. In major cities with many Europeans, the Company style of small paintings became common, created by Indian artists working for European patrons of the East India Company. The style mainly used watercolour, to convey soft textures and tones, in a style combining influences from Western prints and Mughal painting. By 1858, the British government took over the task of administration of India under the British Raj. Many commissions by Indian princes were now wholly or partly in Western styles, or the hybrid Indo-Saracenic architecture. The fusion of Indian traditions with European style at this time is evident from Raja Ravi Varma's oil paintings of sari-clad women in a graceful manner.

Bengal School of Art The Bengal School of Art commonly referred as Bengal School, was an art movement and a style of Indian painting that originated in Bengal, primarily Kolkata and Shantiniketan, and flourished throughout the Indian subcontinent, during the British Raj in the early 20th century. Also known as 'Indian style

of painting' in its early days, it was associated with Indian nationalism (swadeshi) and led by Abanindranath Tagore (1871-1951), but was also promoted and supported by British arts administrators like E. B. Havell, the principal of the Government College of Art and Craft, Kolkata from 1896; eventually it led to the development of the modern Indian painting. Tagore later attempted to develop links with Japanese artists as part of an aspiration to construct a pan-Asianist model of art. Through the paintings of 'Bharat Mata', Abanindranath established the pattern of patriotism. Painters and artists of Bengal school were Nandalal Bose, M.A.R Chughtai, Sunayani Devi (sister of Abanindranath Tagore), Manishi Dey, Mukul Dey, Kalipada Ghoshal, Asit Kumar Haldar, Sudhir Khastgir, Kshitindranath Majumdar, Sughra Rababi, Sukhvir Sanghal. Between 1920 and 1925, Gaganendranath pioneered experiments in modernist painting. Partha Mitter describes him as "the only Indian painter before the 1940s who made use of the language and syntax of Cubism in his painting". From 1925 onwards, the artist developed a complex post-cubist style.

With the Swadeshi Movement gaining momentum by 1905, Indian artists attempted to resuscitate pre-colonial Indian cultural identities, rejecting the Romanticized style of the Company paintings and the mannered work of Raja Ravi Varma and his followers. Thus was created what is known today as the Bengal School of Art, led by the reworked Asian styles (with an emphasis on Indian nationalism) of Abanindranath Tagore (1871-1951), who has been referred to as the father of Modern Indian art. Other artists of the Tagore family, such as Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) and Gaganendranath Tagore (1867-1938) as well as new artists of the early 20th century such as Amrita Sher-Gil (1913-1941) were responsible for introducing Avant-garde western styles into Indian Art. Many other artists like Jamini Roy and later S.H. Raza took inspiration from folk traditions. In 1944, K.C.S. Paniker founded the Progressive Painters' Association (PPA) thus giving rise to the "madras movement" in art.

Contemporary art (c. 1900 CE-present) In 1947, India became independent of British rule. A group of six artists - K. H. Ara, S. K. Bakre, H. A. Gade, M.F. Husain, S.H. Raza and Francis Newton Souza - founded the Bombay Progressive Artists' Group in the year 1952, to establish new ways of expressing India in the post-colonial era. Though the group was dissolved in 1956, it was profoundly influential in changing the idiom of Indian art. Almost all India's major artists in the 1950s were associated with the group. Some of those who are well-known today are Bal Chabda, Manishi Dey, V. S. Gaitonde, Krishen Khanna, Ram Kumar, Tyeb Mehta, K. G. Subramanyan, A. Ramachandran, Devender Singh, Akbar Padamsee, John Wilkins, Himmat Shah and Manjit Bawa. Present-day Indian art is varied as it had been never before. Among the best-known artists of the newer generation include Bose Krishnamachari and Bikash Bhattacharjee. Painting and sculpture remained important in the later half of the twentieth century, though in the work of leading artists such as Nalini Malani, Subodh Gupta, Narayanan Ramachandran, Vivan Sundaram, Jitish Kallat, GR Iranna, Bharati Kher, Chittravanu Muzumdar, they often found radical new directions. Bharti Dayal has chosen to handle the traditional Mithila painting in most contemporary way and created her own style through the exercises of her own imagination, they appear fresh and unusual.

The increase in discourse about Indian art, in English as well as vernacular Indian languages, changed the way art was perceived in the art schools. Critical approach became rigorous; critics like Geeta Kapur, R. Siva Kumar, Shivaji K. Panikkar, Ranjit Hoskote, amongst others, contributed to re-thinking contemporary art practice in India.

By materials and art forms Sculpture The first known sculpture in the Indian subcontinent is from the Indus Valley civilisation (3300-1700 BC), found in sites at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa in modern-day Pakistan. These include the famous small bronze male dancer Nataraja. However such figures in bronze and stone are rare and

greatly outnumbered by pottery figurines and stone seals, often of animals or deities very finely depicted. After the collapse of the Indus Valley civilization there is little record of sculpture until the Buddhist era, apart from a hoard of copper figures of (somewhat controversially) c. 1500 BCE from Daimabad. The great tradition of Indian monumental sculpture in stone appears to begin relatively late, with the reign of Ashoka from 270 to 232 BCE, and the Pillars of Ashoka he erected around India, carrying his edicts and topped by famous sculptures of animals, mostly lions, of which six survive. Large amounts of figurative sculpture, mostly in relief, survive from Early Buddhist pilgrimage stupas, above all Sanchi; these probably developed out of a tradition using wood. Indeed, wood continued to be the main sculptural and architectural medium in Kerala throughout all historic periods until recent decades. During the 2nd to 1st century BCE in far northern India, in the Greco-Buddhist art of Gandhara from what is now southern Afghanistan and northern Pakistan, sculptures became more explicit, representing episodes of the Buddha's life and teachings. Although India had a long sculptural tradition and a mastery of rich iconography, the Buddha was never represented in human form before this time, but only through some of his symbols. This may be because Gandharan Buddhist sculpture in modern Afghanistan displays Greek and Persian artistic influence. Artistically, the Gandharan school of sculpture is said to have contributed wavy hair, drapery covering both shoulders, shoes and sandals, acanthus leaf decorations, etc. The pink sandstone Hindu, Jain and Buddhist sculptures of Mathura from the 1st to 3rd centuries CE reflected both native Indian traditions and the Western influences received through the Greco-Buddhist art of Gandhara, and effectively established the basis for subsequent Indian religious sculpture. The style was developed and diffused through most of India under the Gupta Empire (c. 320-550) which remains a "classical" period for Indian sculpture, covering the earlier Ellora Caves, though the Elephanta Caves are probably slightly later. Later large scale sculpture remains almost exclusively religious, and generally rather conservative, often reverting to simple frontal standing poses for deities, though the attendant spirits such as apsaras and yakshi often have sensuously curving poses. Carving is often highly detailed, with an intricate backing behind the main figure in high relief. The celebrated lost wax bronzes of the Chola dynasty (c. 850-1250) from south India, many designed to be carried in processions, include the iconic form of Shiva as Nataraja, with the massive granite carvings of Mahabalipuram dating from the previous Pallava dynasty. The Chola period is also remarkable for its sculptures and bronzes. Among the existing specimens in the various museums of the world and in the temples of South India may be seen many fine figures of Siva in various forms, Vishnu and his wife Lakshmi, Siva saints and many more.

Wall painting The tradition and methods of Indian cliff painting gradually evolved throughout many thousands of years - there are multiple locations found with prehistoric art. The early caves included overhanging rock decorated with rock-cut art and the use of natural caves during the Mesolithic period (6000 BCE). Their use has continued in some areas into historic times. The Rock Shelters of Bhimbetka are on the edge of the Deccan Plateau where deep erosion has left huge sandstone outcrops. The many caves and grottos found there contain primitive tools and decorative rock paintings that reflect the ancient tradition of human interaction with their landscape, an interaction that continues to this day. The oldest surviving frescoes of the historical period have been preserved in the Ajanta Caves with Cave 10 having some from the 1st century CE, though the larger and more famous groups are from the 5th century. Despite climatic conditions that tend to work against the survival of older paintings, in total there are known more than 20 locations in India with paintings and traces of former paintings of ancient and early medieval times (up to the 8th to 10th centuries CE), although these are just a tiny fraction of what would have once existed. The most significant frescoes of the ancient and early medieval period are found in the Ajanta, Bagh, Ellora, and Sittanavasal caves, the last being Jain of the 7th-10th centuries. Although many show evidence of being by artists mainly used to decorating palaces, no early secular wall-paintings survive. The Chola fresco paintings were discovered in 1931 within the circumambulatory passage of the Brihadisvara Temple at Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu, and are the first Chola specimens discovered. Researchers have discovered the technique used in these frescoes. A smooth batter of

limestone mixture is applied over the stones, which took two to three days to set. Within that short span, such large paintings were painted with natural organic pigments. During the Nayak period the Chola paintings were painted over. The Chola frescoes lying underneath have an ardent spirit of saivism is expressed in them. They probably synchronised with the completion of the temple by Rajaraja Cholan the Great. Kerala mural painting has well-preserved fresco or mural or wall painting in temple walls in Pundarikapuram, Ettumanoor and Aymanam and elsewhere.

Miniature painting Although few Indian miniatures survive from before about 1000 CE, and some from the next few centuries, there was probably a considerable tradition. Those that survive are initially illustrations for Buddhist texts, later followed by Jain and Hindu equivalents, and the decline of Buddhist as well as the vulnerable support material of the palm-leaf manuscript probably explain the rarity of early examples. Mughal painting in miniatures on paper developed very quickly in the late 16th century from the combined influence of the existing miniature tradition and artists trained in the Persian miniature tradition imported by the Mughal Emperor's court. New ingredients in the style were much greater realism, especially in portraits, and an interest in animals, plants and other aspects of the physical world. Deccan painting developed around the same time in the Deccan sultanates courts to the south, in some ways more vital, if less poised and elegant. Miniatures either illustrated books or were single works for muraqqas or albums of painting and Islamic calligraphy. The style gradually spread in the next two centuries to influence painting on paper in both Muslim and Hindu princely courts, developing into a number of regional styles often called "sub-Mughal", including Rajput painting, Pahari painting, and finally Company painting, a hybrid watercolour style influenced by European art and largely patronized by the people of the British Raj]. In "pahari" ("mountain") centres like that of Kangra painting the style remained vital and continued to develop into the early decades of the 19th century. From the mid-19th century Western-style easel paintings became increasingly painted by Indian artists trained in Government art schools.

Jewellery The Indian subcontinent has the longest continuous legacy of jewellery-making, with a history of over 5,000 years. Using jewellery as a store of capital remains more common in India than in most modern societies, and gold appears always to have been strongly preferred for the metal. India and the surrounding areas were important sources of high-quality gemstones, and the jewellery of the ruling class is typified by using them lavishly. One of the first to start jewellery-making were the people of the Indus Valley civilization. Early remains are few, as they were not buried with their owners.

Other materials Wood was undoubtedly extremely important, but rarely survives long in the Indian climate. Organic animal materials such as ivory or bone were discouraged by the Dharmic religions, although Buddhist examples exist, such as the Begram ivories, many of Indian manufacture, but found in Afghanistan, and some relatively modern carved tusks. In Muslim settings they are more common.

Temple art Obscurity shrouds the period between the decline of the Harappans and the definite historic period starting with the Mauryas, and in the historical period, the earliest Indian religion to inspire major artistic monuments was Buddhism. Though there may have been earlier structures in wood that have been transformed into stone structures, there are no physical evidences for these except textual references. Soon after the Buddhists initiated rock-cut caves, Hindus and Jains started to imitate them at Badami, Aihole, Ellora, Salsette, Elephanta, Aurangabad and Mamallapuram and Mughals. It appears to be a constant in Indian art that the different religions shared a very similar artistic style at any particular period and place, though naturally adapting the iconography to match the religion commissioning them. Probably the same groups of artists worked for the different religions regardless of their own affiliations.

Buddhist art first developed during the Gandhara period and Amaravati periods around the 1st century BCE. It continued to flourish during the Gupta Periods and Pala periods that comprise the Golden Age of India, even as rulers became mostly Hindu. Buddhist art largely disappeared by the end of the first millennium, after which Hindu dynasties like the Pallava, Chola, Hoysala and Vijayanagara Empires developed their own styles. There is no time line that divides the creation of rock-cut temples and free-standing temples built with cut stone as they developed in parallel. The building of free-standing structures began in the 5th century, while rock-cut temples continued to be excavated until the 12th century. An example of a free-standing structural temple is the Shore Temple, a part of the Mahabalipuram World Heritage Site, with its slender tower, built on the shore of the Bay of Bengal with finely carved granite rocks cut like bricks and dating from the 8th century.

Folk and tribal art Folk and tribal art in India takes on different manifestations through varied media such as pottery, painting, metalwork, paper-art, weaving and designing of objects such as jewellery and toys. These are not just aesthetic objects but in fact have an important significance in people's lives and are tied to their beliefs and rituals. The objects can range from sculpture, masks (used in rituals and ceremonies), paintings, textiles, baskets, kitchen objects, arms and weapons, and the human body itself (tattoos and piercings). There is a deep symbolic meaning that is attached to not only the objects themselves but also the materials and techniques used to produce them. Often puranic gods and legends are transformed into contemporary forms and familiar images. Fairs, festivals, local heroes (mostly warriors) and local deities play a vital role in these arts (Example: Nakashi art from Telangana or Cherial Scroll Painting). Folk art also includes the visual expressions of the wandering nomads. This is the art of people who are exposed to changing landscapes as they travel over the valleys and highlands of India. They carry with them the experiences and memories of different spaces and their art consists of the transient and dynamic pattern of life. The rural, tribal and arts of the nomads constitute the matrix of folk expression. Examples of folk arts are:

Warli Painting - The Warli region of Maharashtra had the tribal art form known as "Warli painting" first appear. The art genre uses straightforward geometric patterns and shapes to produce images of everyday life, the natural world, and religious themes. The paintings are often created in white on a background of red or ochre. Madhubani Painting: Folk art, known as "Madhubani painting", has its roots in the Mithila area of Bihar. The paintings incorporate sophisticated geometric patterns frequently and depict images of deities, nature, and everyday life in vivid colors. Gond Painting: The Gond region of Madhya Pradesh had the tribal art form known as "Gond painting" first appear. The elaborate patterns and designs of the art form are frequently influenced by nature and the spiritual practices of the Gond people. The paintings are typically done in bright colors and feature bold, graphic lines. While most tribes and traditional folk artist communities are assimilated into the familiar kind of civilized life, they still continue to practice their art. Unfortunately though, market and economic forces have ensured that the numbers of these artists are dwindling. A lot of effort is being made by various NGOs and the Government of India to preserve and protect these arts and to promote them. Several scholars in India and across the world have studied these arts and some valuable scholarship is available on them. The folk spirit has a tremendous role to play in the development of art and in the overall consciousness of indigenous cultures.

Contextual Modernism The year 1997 bore witness to two parallel gestures of canon formation. On the one hand, the influential Baroda Group, a coalition whose original members included Vivan Sundaram, Ghulam Mohammed Sheikh, Bhupen Khakhar, and Nalini Malani-and which had left its mark on history in the form of the 1981 exhibition "Place for People"-was definitively historicized in 1997 with the publication of Contemporary Art in Baroda, an anthology of essays edited by Sheikh. On the other hand, the art historian R. Siva Kumar's benchmark exhibition and related publication, A Contextual Modernism, restored the Santiniketan

artists-Rabindranath Tagore, Nandalal Bose, Benode Behari Mukherjee, and Ramkinkar Baij-to their proper place as the originators of an indigenously achieved yet transcultural modernism in the 1930s, well before the Progressives composed their manifesto in the late 1940s. Of the Santiniketan artists, Siva Kumar observed that they "reviewed traditional antecedents in relation to the new avenues opened up by cross-cultural contacts. They also saw it as a historical imperative. Cultural insularity, they realized, had to give way to eclecticism and cultural impurity."

The idea of Contextual Modernism emerged in 1997 from R. Siva Kumar's *Santiniketan: The Making of a Contextual Modernism* as a postcolonial critical tool in the understanding of an alternative modernism in the visual arts of the erstwhile colonies like India, specifically that of the Santiniketan artists. Several terms including Paul Gilroy's counter culture of modernity and Tani Barlow's Colonial modernity have been used to describe the kind of alternative modernity that emerged in non-European contexts. Professor Gall argues that 'Contextual Modernism' is a more suited term because "the colonial in colonial modernity does not accommodate the refusal of many in colonized situations to internalize inferiority. Santiniketan's artist teachers' refusal of subordination incorporated a counter vision of modernity, which sought to correct the racial and cultural essentialism that drove and characterized imperial Western modernity and modernism. Those European modernities, projected through a triumphant British colonial power, provoked nationalist responses, equally problematic when they incorporated similar essentialisms."

According to R. Siva Kumar "The Santiniketan artists were one of the first who consciously challenged this idea of modernism by opting out of both internationalist modernism and historicist indigenouslyness and tried to create a context sensitive modernism." He had been studying the work of the Santiniketan masters and thinking about their approach to art since the early 80s. The practice of subsuming Nandalal Bose, Rabindranath Tagore, Ram Kinker Baij and Benode Behari Mukherjee under the Bengal School of Art was, according to Siva Kumar, misleading. This happened because early writers were guided by genealogies of apprenticeship rather than their styles, worldviews, and perspectives on art practice. Contextual Modernism in the recent past has found its usage in other related fields of studies, specially in Architecture.

Art museums of India Major cities National Museum, New Delhi Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (CSMVS), Mumbai (formerly Prince of Wales Museum of Western India) Indian Museum, Kolkata Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad Government Museum (Bangalore) Government Museum, Chennai Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh

Archaeological museums AP State Archaeology Museum, Hyderabad Archaeological Museum, Thrissur City Museum, Hyderabad Government Museum, Mathura Government Museum, Tiruchirappalli Hill Palace, Tripunithura, Ernakulam Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar Patna Museum Pazhassi Raja Archaeological Museum, Kozhikode Sanghol Museum Sarnath Museum State Archaeological Gallery, Kolkata Victoria Jubilee Museum, Vijayawada

Modern art museums National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi - established 1954. National Gallery of Modern Art, Mumbai - established 1996. National Gallery of Modern Art, Bangalore - inaugurated 2009. Kolkata Museum of Modern Art - foundation laid in 2013.

Other museums Albert Hall Museum, Jaipur Allahabad Museum Asutosh Museum of Indian Art, Kolkata Baroda Museum & Picture Gallery Goa State Museum, Panaji Napier Museum, Thiruvananthapuram National

Handicrafts and Handlooms Museum, New Delhi Sanskriti Museums, Delhi Watson Museum, Rajkot Srimanthi Bai Memorial Government Museum, Mangalore

See also Indian painting Government College of Fine Arts, Chennai Indian architecture Indian vernacular architecture Crafts of India Rasa (art) Other Indian Art and Architecture forms Architecture of India Indo-Greek art Art of Mathura Gupta art Mauryan art Kushan art Sundari painting Hoysala architecture Vijayanagara architecture Greco-Buddhist art Chola art and architecture Pallava art and architecture Badami Chalukya architecture

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Andhra Pradesh

Andhra Pradesh is a state on the east coast of southern India. It is the seventh-largest state and the tenth-most populous in the country. Telugu, one of the classical languages of India, is the most widely spoken language in the state, as well as its official language. Amaravati is the state capital, while the largest city is Visakhapatnam. Andhra Pradesh shares borders with Odisha to the northeast, Chhattisgarh to the north, Karnataka to the southwest, Tamil Nadu to the south, Telangana to northwest and the Bay of Bengal to the east. It has the longest coastline in India (aerial distance between extreme ends) at about 1,000 kilometres (620 mi). Archaeological evidence indicates that Andhra Pradesh has been continuously inhabited for over 247,000 years, from early archaic hominins to Neolithic settlements. The earliest reference to the Andhras appears in the Aitareya Brahmana (c. 800 BCE) of the Rigveda. Around 300 BCE, the Andhras living in the Godavari and Krishna river deltas were renowned for their formidable military strength-second only to the Maurya Empire in the subcontinent. The first major Andhra polity was the Satavahana dynasty (2nd century BCE-2nd century CE) which ruled over the entire Deccan Plateau and even distant areas of western and central India. They established trade relations with the Roman Empire, and their capital, Dhanyakataka, was the most prosperous city in India during the 2nd century CE. Subsequent major dynasties included the Vishnukundinas, Eastern Chalukyas, Kakatiyas, Vijayanagara Empire, and Qutb Shahis, followed by British rule. After gained independence, Andhra State was carved out of Madras State in 1953. In 1956, it merged with Telangana, comprising the Telugu-speaking regions of the former Hyderabad State, to form Andhra Pradesh. It reverted to its earlier form in 2014, when the new state of Telangana was bifurcated from it. The Eastern Ghats separate the coastal plains from the peneplains. Major rivers include the Krishna, Godavari, Tungabhadra and Penna. Andhra Pradesh holds about one-third of India's limestone reserves and significant deposits of baryte and granite. Agriculture and related activities employ 62.17% of the population, with rice being the staple crop. The state contributes 30% to India's fish production and accounts for 35% of the country's seafood exports. The Sriharikota Range, located on Sriharikota island in Tirupati district, serves as India's primary satellite launch centre. Andhra is the birthplace of the Amaravati school of art, an ancient Indian art style that influenced South Indian, Sri Lankan, and Southeast Asian art. It is also home to Kuchipudi, one of India's classical dance forms, and has produced several renowned Carnatic music composers. The state features prominent pilgrimage centres and natural attractions, including the Venkateswara temple in Tirumala and the Araku Valley. Notable products with geographical indication (GI) registration include Tirupati Laddu, Banganapalle mangoes, Kondapalli toys, Dharmavaram sarees, and Pootharekulu.

Etymology Andhras were mentioned in Aitareya Brahmana of the Rigveda (c. 800-500 BCE) as descendants of the sage Vishvamitra. Andhras were referred to as non-Aryans living on the fringes of Aryan settlements. The Satavahanas, the earliest kings who ruled this region were mentioned by the names Andhra, Andhrara-jateeya, and Andhrabhrtya in the Puranic literature. "Andhra" is both a tribal and a territorial name. The region inhabited by Andhras was called Andhradesa.

History Pre-history Excavated stone tools from Hanumanthunipadu in Prakasam district were dated to be 2.47 lakh (247,000) years old (Middle Paleolithic). This finding means that these tools were developed by archaic hominins (pre-humans) as such tools were thought to be used by modern man migrating out of Africa about 2.10 lakh (210,000) years ago. In the absence of fossil evidence, it became a riddle to understand what happened to them. The discovery of petroglyphs, pictographs, and dolmens in Chakrala Bodu, near Boyalapalli village in the Yerragondapalem mandal area of Prakasam district indicates the presence of Neolithic-age

human settlements in the region.

Early and medieval history Megasthenes reported in his *Indica* (c. 310 BCE) that Andhras were living in the Godavari and Krishna river deltas and were famous for their military strength which was second only to Mauryans in all of India. Archaeological evidence from places such as Bhattiprolu, Amaravathi, and Dharanikota suggests that the Andhra region was part of the Mauryan empire. After the death of Emperor Ashoka, Mauryan rule weakened around 200 BCE and was replaced by several smaller kingdoms in the Andhra region. One of the earliest examples of the Brahmi script, from Bhattiprolu was used on an urn containing the relics of Buddha. This is considered as the rosetta stone for decipherment of Tamil Brahmi. Kadamba script, derived from Bhattiprolu Brahmi later led to the evolution of Telugu and Kannada scripts. The Satavahana dynasty dominated the Deccan Plateau from the 1st century BCE to the 3rd century CE. It had trade relations with the Roman Empire. The Satavahanas made Dhanyakataka-Amaravathi their capital. According to historian Stanley Wolpert, it might have been the most prosperous city in India in 2nd century CE. Nagarjuna, the philosopher of Mahayana, lived in this region. Mahayana spread to China, Japan, and Korea. It became the largest Buddhist denomination in the world. Amaravati School of Art is regarded as one of the three major styles of ancient Indian art and had a great influence on art in South India, Sri Lanka, and Southeast Asia. The Andhra Ikshvakus, with their capital at Vijayapuri, succeeded the Satavahanas in the Krishna River valley in the latter half of the 2nd century CE. The Salankayanas were an ancient dynasty that ruled the Andhra region between Godavari and Krishna rivers with their capital at Vengi (modern Pedavegi) around 300 CE. Telugu Cholas ruled present-day Kadapa region from the six to the thirteenth centuries intermittently. Kallamalla sasanam (law), engraved in 575 CE during the rule of Dhanamjaya, is the earliest completely Telugu inscription.

The Vishnukundinas was the first dynasty in the fifth and sixth centuries to hold sway over South India. Undavalli Caves is an example of Indian rock-cut architecture of that time. The Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi, whose dynasty lasted for around five hundred years from the 7th century until 1130 CE, eventually merged with the Chola dynasty. They continued to rule under the protection of the Chola dynasty until 1189 CE. At the request of King Rajaraja Narendra, Nannaya, considered the first Telugu poet, took up the translation of the Mahabharata into Telugu in 1025 CE. Kakatiyas ruled this region and Telangana for nearly two hundred years between the 12th and 14th centuries. They were defeated by the Delhi Sultanate. Bahamani sultanate took over when Delhi sultanate became weak. Around the same time, Musunuris and Reddi Kingdom ruled parts of this region in the early 14th century. Reddy kings constructed Kondaveedu Fort and Kondapalli Fort. Gajpathis ruled parts of this region, before the entire region became part of the Vijayanagara Empire during the reign of Krishnadevaraya. Pemmasani Nayaks controlled parts of Andhra Pradesh and had large mercenary armies that were the vanguard of the empire in the 16th century. Several tanks and anicuts were built. Some of these include the Cumbum tank, Mopad tank, and Koregal anicut, Vallabhapur anicut across the Tungabhadra River. The empire's patronage enabled fine arts and literature to reach new heights in Kannada, Telugu, Tamil, and Sanskrit, while Carnatic music evolved into its current form. The Lepakshi group of monuments built during this period have mural paintings of the Vijayanagara kings, Dravidian art, and inscriptions. These are put on the tentative list of the UNESCO World Heritage committee.

Modern history Following the defeat of the Vijayanagara Empire, the Qutb Shahi dynasty held sway over most of present-day general Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Later, this region came under the rule of the Mughal Empire. Chin Qilich Khan who was initially appointed as viceroy of Deccan by the Mughal in 1713, established himself as a semi-independent ruler as Nizam of Hyderabad. In 1765, British Lord Robert Clive obtained from the Mughal emperor Shah Alam II a grant of four circars to the British East India Company, that was formalised

in 1778 treaty with Nizam Ali, the 5th Nizam of Hyderabad state with addition of another circar. Later, four territories were ceded to the British by Nizam Ali in 1800, which eventually became the Rayalaseema region. Meanwhile, in the present day North Andhra, Raja Viziam Raz (Vijayaram Raj) established a sovereign kingdom and acquired neighbouring estates with the support of British. Later it fell out with the British and as a result, was attacked and defeated in the battle of Padmanabham in 1794. It was annexed as a tributary estate like other principalities and remained so until it acceded to the Indian Union in 1949. Following the annexation of Carnatic sultanate in 1801, the last major piece of the present day Andhra Pradesh came under British East India Company rule as part of Madras Presidency. After the Indian Rebellion of 1857, the region became part of British crown till India became independent in 1947.

Anicut at Dowleswaram built in 1850 by Arthur Cotton and several others at Vijayawada, Nellore, Sangam, Sunkesula, and Polampalli are examples of irrigation facilities built during the British raj, that irrigated lacs of acres across coastal districts. Buckingham Canal built during 1806-1878, running parallel to the Coromandal coast from Kakinada to Marakkanam in Tamil Nadu served as a major water transportation route for goods till the 1960s. Telegraph service initiated in 1850 served for over 160 years till it was stopped on 15 July 2013 citing poor patronage due to advances in mobile communications and short message service. Charles Philip Brown did pioneering work in transforming Telugu to the print era and introduced Vemana poems to English readers. Kandukuri Veeresalingam is considered the father of the Telugu renaissance movement, as he encouraged the education of women and lower caste people. He fought against Brahmin marriage customs such as child marriage, the bride price system, and the prohibition of widow remarriage.

To gain an independent state based on linguistic identity and to protect the interests of the Telugu-speaking people of Madras State, Potti Sreeramulu fasted to death in 1952. The Telugu-speaking area of Andhra State was carved out of Madras state on 1 October 1953, with Kurnool as its capital city. On the basis of the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1956, the States reorganisation act created Andhra Pradesh by merging the neighbouring Telugu-speaking areas of the Hyderabad State with Hyderabad as the capital on 1 November 1956. Hyderabad grew rapidly partly through investments flowing in from agrarian change and 'green revolution' in coastal Andhra. In the unified state, Indian National Congress (INC) enjoyed a monopoly in ruling the state till 1983. After that Telugu Desam Party (TDP) led by N. T. Rama Rao (NTR) came to power and became another major party to rule the state. Nagarjuna Sagar Dam commissioned in 1967, Srisaillam hydro electric project commissioned in 1982 are few examples of irrigation and electricity projects. The increased presence of women, Dalits, and tribals in the social and political spheres of the state, driven by social movements, led to a rise in violence against these groups. Securing access to resources like land remains an unachieved objective in the effort to expand their economic opportunities in the state. When the union cabinet decided to consider the formation of Telangana state in 2009 heeding to the demand of relaunched Telangana movement, Samaikyandhra Movement opposing it took shape and the state went through a turmoil. Finally, the Andhra Pradesh reorganisation act bill was passed by the parliament of India for the formation of the Telangana state, despite opposition by the state legislature. The new state of Telangana came into existence on 2 June 2014 after approval from the president of India, with the residual state continuing as Andhra Pradesh. TDP formed the first government of the residual state with Chandrababu Naidu as chief minister. In 2017, the government of Andhra Pradesh began operating from its new greenfield capital, Amaravati, for which 33,000 acres were acquired from farmers through an innovative land pooling scheme. In the 2019 elections, Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, leader of the YSR Congress Party, became the chief minister by winning 151 out of 175 seats. He introduced the 'village and ward volunteers' system, and reorganised the state with 26 districts. Introduction of English as the medium of instruction was done in almost all the state schools. The move to three capitals with Amaravati getting reduced to being the legislative capital, Vizag as the executive capital and Kurnool as the judicial capital was stuck down by the High Court. His government appealed to the Supreme Court.

Geography Andhra Pradesh is the seventh-largest state with an area of 162,970 km² (62,920 sq mi). Politically, the state shares borders with Orissa to the northeast, Chhattisgarh to the north, Karnataka to the southwest, Tamil Nadu to the south, Telangana to northwest and the Bay of Bengal to the east. Yanam district, an enclave of Puducherry, is in the state bordering Kakinada district. It has a coastline of around 974 kilometres (605 mi), which makes it the second-longest coastline in the nation. The Eastern Ghats are a major dividing line separating coastal plains and peneplains in the state's geography. These are discontinuous, and individual sections have local names. The ghats become more pronounced towards the south and extreme north of the coast. Some of these consist of the Horsley Hills, the Seshachala Hills, the Nallamala Hills, and the Papi Hills. Arma Konda, located in Visakhapatnam district, is the highest peak in the state. Peneplains, part of Rayalaseema, slope towards the east. The Eastern Coastal Plains comprise the area of coastal districts up to the Eastern ghats as their border along the Bay of Bengal, with variable width. These are, for the most part, delta regions formed by the Krishna, Godavari, and Penna rivers. The state has five different soil types with the majority soil types being red lateritic and black soil types. Most of the coastal plains are put to intensive agricultural use. The Kadapa basin, formed by two arching branches of the Eastern ghats, is a mineral-rich area.

The valleys include Araku Valley, which is rich in biodiversity and Gandikota gorge. Gandikota gorge is a canyon formed between the Erramala range of hills, through which the Penna (Pennar) river flows. Borra Caves, created millions of years ago by water activity and the country's second-longest cave system, the Belum Caves are in the state. The state has several beaches in its coastal districts, such as Rushikonda, Mypadu, Suryalanka.

Flora and fauna The total forest cover of the state is 29,784.3 square kilometres (11,499.8 sq mi), amounting to 18.28% of the total area. The Eastern ghats region is home to dense tropical forests, while the vegetation becomes sparse as the ghats give way to the peneplains, where shrub vegetation is more common. The vegetation found in the state is largely of dry deciduous types, with a mixture of teak, and genera of Terminalia, Dalbergia, Pterocarpus, etc. The state possesses some rare and endemic plants like Cycas beddomei, Pterocarpus santalinus, Terminalia pallida, Syzygium alternifolium, Shorea tumburgia etc. The state has 3 national parks and 13 wildlife sanctuaries as of 2019. The diversity of fauna includes tigers, leopards, cheetals, sambars, sea turtles, and several birds and reptiles. The estuaries of the Godavari and Krishna rivers support rich mangrove forests with fishing cats and otters as keystone species. Coringa Wildlife Sanctuary is an example of mangrove forests and salt-tolerant forest ecosystems near the sea. The area of these forests is 582 km² (225 sq mi), accounting for about 9% of the local forest area of the state. Other sanctuaries include Nagarjunsagar-Srisailem Tiger Reserve, Kolleru Bird Sanctuary, and Nelapattu Bird Sanctuary. Neem (*Azadirachta indica*) is the state tree, jasmine is the state flower, rose ringed parakeet is the state bird, and blackbuck is the state mammal.

Mineral resources The state, with its varied geological formations, contains a variety of industrial minerals and building stones. Major minerals found in significant quantities in the state include beach sand, bauxite, limestone, granite, and diamonds. Minor minerals include barytes, calcite, and mica. The largest reserves of uranium are in Tummalapalli village of YSR district. The state also has reserves of oil and natural gas.

Climate The climate varies considerably, depending on the geographical region. Summers last from March to June. In the coastal plain, the summer temperatures are generally higher than in the rest of the state, with temperatures exceeding 35 C (95 F). The minimum temperature during summer is about 20 C (68 F) in the far

southwest. July to September is the season for tropical rains from the southwest monsoon. The winter season is from October to February. Low-pressure systems and tropical cyclones form in the Bay of Bengal along with the northeast monsoon during October to December, bringing rains to the southern and coastal regions of the state. The range of winter temperatures is generally 30 to 35 C (86 to 95 F) except in the northeast where it could fall below 15 C (59 F). Lambasingi in Visakhapatnam district is nicknamed the "Kashmir of Andhra Pradesh" as its temperature ranges from 0 to 10 C (32 to 50 F). The normal rainfall for the state is 966 mm (38.0 in).

Demographics Based on the 2011 Census of India, the population of Andhra Pradesh is 49,577,103, with a density of 304/km² (790/sq mi). The rural population accounts for 70.53%, while the urban population accounts for 29.47%. The state has 17.08% scheduled caste (SC) and 5.53% scheduled tribe (ST) population. Children in the age group of 0-6 years number 5,222,384, constituting 10.6% of the total population. The state has a sex ratio of 997 females per 1000 males, higher than the national average of 926 per 1000. The literacy rate in the state stands at 67.35%. Erstwhile West Godavari district has the highest literacy rate of 74.32%, and erstwhile Vizianagaram district has the lowest with 58.89%. Human Development Index (HDI) of the state for the year 2022 is 0.673. As of 1 January 2023, there are 39,984,868 voters including 3,924 third-gender voters. Kurnool district has the maximum number of voters at 1,942,233, while Alluri Sitharama Raju district has the minimum at 729,085. Telugu is the first official language, and Urdu is the second official language of the state. Telugu is the mother tongue of nearly 90% of the population. Tamil, Kannada, and Odia are spoken in the border areas. Lambadi and several other languages are spoken by the scheduled tribes of the state. 19% of the population aged 12+ years can read and understand English, as per the Indian readership survey for Q4 2019.

Religion According to the 2011 census, the major religious groups in the state are Hindus (90.89%), Muslims (7.30%), and Christians (1.38%). Some of the popular Hindu religious pilgrim destinations include Tirumala Venkateswara temple at Tirupati, Mallikarjuna temple at Srisailem, Kanaka Durga Temple at Vijayawada, and Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha temple at Simhachalam. Buddhist sites at Amaravati and Nagarjuna Konda are also popular.

Sub categorisation For the state of Andhra Pradesh, there are 59 entries in the SC category, 34 entries in the ST category, and 104 entries in Other Backward Classes (OBC) category. Komati, Brahmin, Kamma, Kapu, Raju, Reddy, and Velama communities constitute the forward castes.

Culture Andhra Pradesh has 32 museums featuring a varied collection of ancient sculptures, paintings, idols, weapons, cutlery, inscriptions, and religious artefacts. The Amaravathi archaeological museum has a display of art traditions of Amaravathi and images of Buddha. Bapu museum in Vijayawada has historical galleries, stone cut writings, coins, swords, body armour, shields, arms, and ornamentation. Telugu Samskruthika Niketanam in Visakhapatnam displays historical artefacts of the pre-independence era. The Archaeological Survey of India identified 135 centrally protected monuments in the state of Andhra Pradesh. These include the reconstructed monuments at Anupu and Nagarjunakonda. The state has 17 geographical indication (GI) registrations in the categories of agriculture, handicrafts, foodstuffs, and textiles as per the Geographical indications of goods (Registration and protection) act, 1999.

Clothing The men's traditional wear consists of Pancha, a 4.5 metres (15 ft) long, white rectangular piece of non-stitched cloth often bordered in brightly coloured stripes. Women traditionally wear a sari, a garment that consists of a drape varying from 5 to 9 yards (4.6 to 8.2 m) in length and 2 to 4 feet (0.61 to 1.22 m) in breadth

that is typically wrapped around the waist, with one end draped over the shoulder, baring the midriff, as according to Indian philosophy, the navel is considered as the source of life and creativity. Women wear colourful silk saris on special occasions such as marriages. The traditional wear of young girls is a half-saree with blouse. The shift to wearing western clothing of pant and shirt has become common for boys and men, while women also wear salwar kameez in addition to saris. Dharmavaram textiles, Machilipatnam, and Srikalahasti Kalamkari handicrafts are few examples in clothes category with GI status.

Cuisine Andhra meals are combinations of spicy, tangy, and sweet flavours. The use of chillies, tamarind, and gongura (leaves of roselle) is common in Andhra food. Curry leaves are used copiously in most preparations of curries and chutneys. Various types of Pappu are made using lentils in combination with tomatoes, spinach, gongura, ridge gourd, etc. Apart from curries, pulusu, a stew made using tamarind juice in combination with vegetables, seafood, chicken, mutton, etc., is popular. Pachchadi, a paste usually made with a combination of groundnuts, fried vegetables, and chillies, is a must in a meal. Pickles made using mangoes, gooseberries, lemons, etc. are enjoyed in combination with Pappu. Buttermilk and yoghurt mixed with rice eaten towards the end of the meal soothe the body, especially after eating spicy food items earlier. A tamarind-rich dish popularly known as Pulihora is made with a thick sauce of tamarind, chillies, salt and asafoetida. It is tempered with mustard, curry leaves, peanuts and mixed with rice. It is offered even to the gods and then served as a prasadam (divine offering) in the temples to the devotees. Popular vegetarian curries include Dondakaya koora (ivy gourd cooked with coconut and green chilli) and Guttivankaya koora(stuffed brinjal curry). Thalakaya koora (lamb head gravy), Royyala koora (prawns cooked in tamarind), and Natukodi koora (freehold chicken curry with chillies) are popular non-vegetarian dishes across Guntur and surrounding regions. Yeta mamsam kobbari biryani (mutton cooked with coconut), Seema kodi (Rayalaseema-style chicken), Chennuru dum biryani, and Gongura mamsam (mutton cooked in sorrel gravy) are popular non-vegetarian dishes in Rayalaseema. Among fish preparations, Pulasa pulusu, thick aromatic and tangy gravy made from a single fish of the Godavari Pulasa variety is most desired in Konaseema. Ariselu, Burelu, Laddu, and Pootharekulu are some of the sweets made for special festivals and occasions. Pootharekulu, a preparation of sugar and rice flour and Taandri, a mango-flavoured sun-dried fruit jelly are popular sweets originating from Athreyapuram in Konaseema. Kakinada Khaaja layered flour deep fried and dipped in sugar is another popular sweetmeat. Bandar laddu, Tirupati Laddu are some of the food products with GI status.

Literature Nannayya, Tikkana, and Yerrapragada form the trinity who translated the Sanskrit epic Mahabharata into Telugu during 11-14 centuries. Nannayya wrote the first treatise on Telugu grammar, called Andhra Shabda Chintamani in Sanskrit. Pothana translated Bhagavatam into Telugu. Vemana was an Indian philosopher who wrote Telugu poems using simple language and native idioms on a variety of subjects including yoga, wisdom, and morality. Potuluri Veerabrahmendra swami, a clairvoyant and social reformer of 17th century, wrote Kalagnanam, a book of predictions. Telugu literature after Kandukuri Veeresalingam is termed Adhunika Telugu Sahityam (modern Telugu literature). He was the author of the first Telugu social novel Rajasekhara Charitram, published in 1880. The use of colloquial idiom rather than grandhik (classical) in literature, championed by Gurajada Apparao and Gidugu Ramamurthy Panthulu led to increased literacy. Various forms of literature such as poetry, novel, short story were vibrant as indicated by the responses to national and international developments in various spheres of human life. The modern Telugu poetry, which began around 1900 developed into three forms - Bhava kavitham (lyrical poetry), Abhyudaya kavitham (progressive poetry), and new experimental poetry, including Viplava kavitham (revolutionary poetry). Gurajada Apparao, Rayaprolu Subbarao, Gurram Jashuva, Viswanatha Satyanarayana, Devulapalli Krishnasastri, and Sri Sri were some of the modern Telugu poets. Palagummi Padmaraju's short story Galivaana won second prize in World Short Story competition in 1952. Rachakonda Viswanadha Sastry initiated a new trend by focussing on the downtrodden in his novel Raju-Mahishi. Women writers such as Malati Chandur and

Ranganayakamma dominated novels in the 1950s and 1960s. However, in the late 1970s, Yandamuri Veerendranath started writing popular novels with a focus on sex, suspense and violence, which were serialised in magazines. Viswanatha Satyanarayana was conferred the first Jnanpith Award for Telugu literature in 1970. Telugu film song as literature took shape in the 1930s. Some of the famous lyric writers include Samudrala Senior, Arudra, Athreya, Daasarathi, and C. Narayana Reddy.

Architecture Traditional temple architecture is influenced by Dravidian and Vijayanagara styles. In Dravidian architecture for which Tirumala temple is an example, the temples consisted of porches or mantapas preceding the door leading to the sanctum, gate-pyramids or gopurams in quadrangular enclosures that surround the temple, and pillared halls used for many purposes. Besides these, the temple usually has a tank called the Kalyani or pushkarni. The gopuram is a monumental tower, usually ornate at the entrance of the temple forms a prominent feature. They are topped by the kalasam, a bulbous stone finial. Vimanam are similar structures built over the garbhagriha or inner sanctum of the temple but are usually smaller than the gopurams. In the Vijayanagar style for which Lepakshi Veerabhadra temple is an example, the main temple is laid out in three parts, these are: The assembly hall known as the mukha mantapa; arda mantapa or antaraala (ante chamber); and the garbhagriha or the sanctum sanctorum. Sri Venkateswara institute of traditional sculpture and architecture, run by Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams offers diploma courses. Civic architecture which mainly featured courtyard structure to support joint family system and simple round houses is giving way to modern apartments.

Arts Kondapalli Toys, the soft limestone idol carvings of Durgi and Etikoppaka lacquered wooden toys are few handicrafts with GI status. Kuchipudi, the cultural dance recognised as the official dance form of the state of Andhra Pradesh, originated in the village of Kuchipudi in Krishna district. Several renowned composers of Carnatic music like Annamacharya, Kshetrappa, Tyagaraja, and Bhadrachala Ramadas hailed from the state. Sannai and Dolu are common musical instruments of marriages, household, and temple functions in the state. Harikatha Kalakshepam (or Harikatha) involves the narration of a story, intermingled with various songs relating to the story. Burra katha is an oral storytelling technique in which the topic is either a Hindu mythological story or a contemporary social issue. Drama is an Indian theatre art form that is still popular. Gurajada Apparao wrote the play Kanyasulkam in spoken dialect for the first time. It was first presented in 1892. It is considered the greatest play in the Telugu language. The Telugu film industry (known as "Tollywood") is primarily based in Hyderabad, though several films are shot in Vizag, Tirupati, Rajamahendravaram. About 300 films are produced annually, C. Pullaiah is cited as the father of the Telugu cinema. Film producer D. Ramanaidu holds a Guinness record for the most films produced by a person. Music composers and playback singers of the state include Ghantasala, S. P. Balasubrahmanyam, P. Susheela, S. Janaki, and P. B. Sreenivas. "Naatu Naatu" from the film RRR became the first song from an Asian film to win the Academy Award for Best Original Song in 2023. Efforts are on to make Vizag as the hub of film industry by offering incentives.

Festivals Sankranti is the major harvest festival celebrated across the state. It is celebrated for four days in the second week of January. The first day of the Telugu new year Ugadi which occurs during March/April is also a special festival with the preparation and sharing of pickles (pachhadi) made from raw mangoes, neem flowers, pepper powder, jaggery and tamarind. Tasting this pickle which is a mix of different tastes teaches the importance of taking positive/negative life experiences in one's stride. Celebrations end with the recitation of the coming year's astrological predictions called Panchanga sravanam. Vijaya Dasami known commonly as Dussera and Deepavali, the festival of lights are other major Hindu festivals. Shivaratri is celebrated at Kotappakonda, with people from nearby villages preparing 80-100 ft height frames called prabhalu and taking it

in a procession to the shrine. Eid is celebrated with special prayers. Rottela Panduga is celebrated at Bara Shaheed Dargah in Nellore with participation across religious lines. Christians celebrate their religious festivals Good Friday, Easter and Christmas with processions and prayers.

Government and administration There are a total of 175 assembly constituencies in the state legislative assembly. The legislative council is the upper house with 58 members. In the Indian parliament, the state has 25 seats in the Lok Sabha and 11 seats in the Rajya Sabha. In accordance with the Constitution of India, the governor is a state's de jure head and appoints the chief minister who has the de facto executive authority. Reddy, Kamma and Kapu communities cornered a share of 66% of seats in the 2019 election results. In the 2024 assembly elections, Reddy, Kamma and Kapu communities among the forward classes got more allocation than OBC in the unreserved category by major political parties or alliances. TDP-led National Democratic Alliance with Janasena Party and Bharatiya Janata Party emerged victorious defeating the incumbent YSRCP led by Jagan Mohan Reddy. It won 164 seats, while YSRCP got 11, a big drop from 151 it held. N. Chandrababu Naidu became the chief minister of the state for the fourth time. According to an opinion by Ayesha Minhaz in The Hindu daily, several factors including the prevailing anti-incumbency against the previous government and the alliance's promise of "Welfare with wealth generation" contributed to the success of TDP-led alliance. Andhra Pradesh police are structured in district, subdivision, circle, and police station hierarchy. In 2022, crimes against women and children saw a rise of 43.66% with a case count of 25,503 cases in Andhra Pradesh as per the National crime records bureau (NCRB) data. The state stood fifth in the country with 2,341 cybercrime cases. Andhra Pradesh High Court at Amaravati is headed by Chief justice with 37 judges. District judiciary is organised in a three-tier system with district courts at the top, civil (senior) and assistant sessions courts in the middle and civil (junior) and judicial first-class magistrate courts at the lower level. Apart from these, there are special courts such as family, CBI, ACB, Land reforms appellate tribunals, and industrial tribunals. Andhra Pradesh comprises two regions, namely Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema from a historical perspective. The northern part of Coastal Andhra is sometimes mentioned separately as North Andhra, to raise voice against underdevelopment. The state is further divided into 26 districts. These districts are made up of 76 revenue divisions, 679 mandals and 13,324 village panchayats as part of the administrative organisation.

Administrative divisions Andhra Pradesh is divided into 26 districts for administrative purposes. These districts are further grouped into 77 revenue divisions and subdivided into 685 mandals. Each district is administered by a District Collector, who oversees land revenue administration, law and order, elections, and developmental activities. Revenue divisions are headed by Revenue Divisional Officers (RDOs), who may be Sub-Collectors (IAS officers) or Deputy Collectors. Mandals, the key sub-district units, consist of multiple villages and are managed by Mandal Revenue Officers (MROs), serving as the primary link between the district administration and village-level governance.

Local government Local government in Andhra Pradesh functions through a three-tier Panchayati Raj system in rural areas and urban local bodies in towns and cities. Rural governance includes Gram Panchayats, Mandal Parishads, and Zilla Parishads, while urban areas are managed by Nagar Panchayats, Municipalities and Municipal Corporations. These bodies are responsible for local administration, development works, and delivery of basic services. There are 17 municipal corporations, 77 municipalities, and 29 Nagar Panchayats for urban governance in Andhra Pradesh. Rural governance is managed by 13,234 Gram Panchayats at the village level, 676 Mandal Parishads at the mandal level, and 26 Zilla Parishads at the district level. Each of these bodies has elected councils and members.

Cities and towns There are 123 urban local bodies, comprising 17 municipal corporations, 79 municipalities, and 27 nagar panchayats, in the state. The urban population is 14.9 million (1.49 crores) as per the 2011 census. There are two cities with more than one million inhabitants, namely Visakhapatnam and Vijayawada.

Government revenue and expenditure For 2021-22, total receipts of the Andhra Pradesh government were ₹2.05 lakh crore (US\$24 billion), inclusive of ₹53,284 crore (US\$6.3 billion) of loans. States' tax revenue was ₹70,979 crore (US\$8.4 billion). The top three sources of tax revenue are states' goods and services tax (GST) (₹23,809 crore), sales tax/value added tax (VAT) (₹20,808 crores), and state excise (₹14,703 crores). The government earned a revenue of ₹7,345 crore from 2.574 million transactions for registration services. Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada, Guntur, and Tirupati are the top contributors to the revenue. The government's total expenditure was ₹1,91,594 crore, which includes debt repayment of ₹13,920 crore. The fiscal deficit was 2.1% of the GSDP. Outstanding debt was ₹3.89 lakh crore, an increase of almost ₹40,000 crore compared to the previous year. This accounts for 32.4 per cent of the GSDP, which is more than the usual limit of 25% as per the Fiscal Responsibility Budget Management Act and Budget Management Act. The outstanding guarantee estimate was ₹1,38,875 crore, of which power sector accounts for ₹38,473 crore equal to 12% of GDP. Out of the audited total expenditure of ₹1,77,674 crore of the state in 2021-22, social services accounted for 42.65% and capital expenditure 9.21%. When compared to 2020-21, the capital expenditure decreased by 14 per cent. Of the total expenditure, major components of the social services breakdown are as follows. The social welfare category accounted for 16%, education, sport, arts and culture had a share of 15% and health and family welfare had a share of 6.3%. Comptroller and Auditor general in its 2023 report warned that the trend of increasing levels of revenue expenditure coupled with a low level of capital spend will adversely impact infrastructure development, development, aggregate demand, employment generation, and revenue generation in the long run.

Economy Gross state domestic product (GSDP/GDP) at current prices for the year 2022-23 is estimated at ₹1,317,728 crore (US\$160 billion) (advanced estimates). The share of agriculture's contribution to the GSDP is at 36.19%, while industry is at 23.36%, and services are at 40.45%. The state posted a record growth of 7.02% at constant prices (2011-12) against the country's growth of 7%. GDP per capita is estimated at ₹219,518 (US\$2,600). The sectoral growth rates at constant 2011-12 prices were for agriculture at 4.54%; industry at 5.66 and services at 10.05%. Poverty rate is reduced to 4.2% in 2023 from 11.77% in 2015-16 as per Niti Ayog report. The methodology, based on the global multidimensional poverty index uses 10 indicators, covering three areas health, education, and standard of living and additionally maternal health and bank accounts. Unemployment rate of people with graduation in Andhra Pradesh is estimated at 24% as per periodic labour force survey of July 2022 to June 2023, the third highest in the country. The number for the whole of India is at 13.4%. According to the Economic Survey of India 2024-25, Andhra Pradesh was identified as the "leading performer" in the agriculture and allied sectors (excluding forestry and logging), recording a Compounded Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 8.80%. It was followed by Madhya Pradesh with 6.30% and Tamil Nadu with 4.80%. Andhra Pradesh also ranked 10th in Gross State Value Added (GSVA) in the services sector.

Agriculture The agricultural economy comprises agriculture, livestock, poultry farming, and fisheries. Four important rivers in India, the Godavari, Krishna, Penna, and Tungabhadra, flow through the state and provide irrigation. The population engaged in agriculture and related activities as per 2020-21 fiscal data is 62.17%. Rice is the state's major food crop and staple food. Besides rice, farmers grow jowar, bajra, maize, many varieties of pulses, sugarcane, cotton, tobacco, fruits, and vegetables. The state contributed to 30% of fish production of India and it had a share of 35% in total sea food exports of India in 2022-23. The state has three agricultural export zones: the undivided Chittoor district for mango pulp and vegetables, the undivided Krishna

district for mangoes, and the undivided Guntur district for chillies. Banaganapalle mangoes produced in the state were accorded GI status in 2017. Rythu Seva Kendras (RSK) or farmer facilitation centres are initiated by the government in 2020 to serve as a hassle-free, one-stop solution for the requirements of farmers from seed-to-sale. Banking services through banking correspondent are also integrated. As of 2023, 10,778 RSKs are functioning. AP land titling act 2023 was brought in to change from presumptive land ownership system based on possession, registration or inheritance documents to conclusive land ownership system, with government standing as surety for the ownership. Lands in 6000 villages were surveyed with drones and land title certificates were issued to owners, with georeferencing of their land parcels. The benefits of the act include a reduction in land disputes and easier acquisition of lands for public requirements. The newly formed TDP led NDA alliance government decided to repeal the act citing the scope for misuse of authority and deviation from the centre's draft bill. The Commission on Inclusive and Sustainable Agricultural Development of Andhra Pradesh, chaired by Prof. R. Radhakrishna, estimated the number of tenant farmers at 24.25 lakh in 2014. This consists of 6.29 lakh landless tenants and the rest owning some land. Out of 60.73 lakh hectares under cultivation, 27.15 lakh hectares or 44% was cultivated by tenants. Departmental estimates for 2021 put the number of tenant farmers at about 16 lakh. To identify and serve the needs of tenants, the Crop Cultivator Rights Act (CCRA) of 2019 was brought out. Only 26% of tenants obtained the CCRA or loan eligibility cards as per 2022 data.

Industries As per the annual survey of industries 2019-20, the number of factories was 12,582 with 681,224 employees. The top four employment providers are food products (25.48%), non-metallic minerals (11.26%), textiles (9.35%), and pharmaceuticals (8.68%). Gross value added (GVA) contributed by the industrial sector is ₹55,035 crore (US\$6.5 billion), of which food products (18.95%), pharmaceuticals (17.01%), and non-metallic minerals (16.25%) are the top three contributors. From a district perspective, the top three districts were undivided Visakhapatnam, Chittoor, and Krishna. The defence administered Hindustan Shipyard Limited built the first ship in India in 1948. The state has 36 big auto players, such as Ashok Leyland, Hero Motors, Isuzu Motors India, and Kia Motors. The mining sector contributed ₹3,390 crore (US\$400 million) in revenue to the state during 2021-22. Nearly 225 million barrels of crude oil was produced from Ravva block, in the shallow offshore area of the Krishna Godavari basin during 1994-2011. The state accounted for 0.6% of had and condensate production, and 2.9% of natural gas production of India in 2020-21. As of 20 June 2023, there are 190 science and technology organisations in Andhra Pradesh, including 12 central labs and research institutions. Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC), known as Sriharikota range (SHAR), on the barrier island of Sriharikota in Tirupati district, is the primary satellite launching station operated by the Indian Space Research Organisation.

Services Trade, hotels & restaurants registered the highest growth rate of 16.64%, while public administration, the lowest growth rate of 4.24% for the year 2022-23 at constant 2011-12 prices among the services category. The state is ranked third in domestic tourist footfalls for the year 2021, with 93.2 million domestic tourists, which amounts to 13.8% of all domestic tourists in India. A major share of the tourists visit temples in Tirupati, Vijayawada, and Srisailem. The value of information technology exports from the state in 2021-22 was ₹926 crore (US\$110 million), which is 0.14% of the IT exports from India. Exports have remained below 0.2% in the past five years.

Infrastructure Transport Roads As of 2023, the state has a total major road network of 47,244.83 km (29,356.58 mi). This comprises 8,163.72 km (5,072.70 mi) of national highways, 12,595.60 km (7,826.54 mi) of state highways, and 26,485.51 km (16,457.33 mi) of major district roads. In the category of national highways, NH 16, with a highway network of around 1,000 km (620 mi) in the state, is a part of the Golden Quadrilateral

project. Vehicles on the register consist of 1.828 million transport vehicles and 13.7 million non-transport vehicles. In the transport category, goods carriages constitute 53.61%, auto rickshaws 36.21%, and stage carriages 1.14% constitute the top 3 categories. In the non-transport category, motorcycles constitute 89.5%, four-wheelers 7.29%, and cabs 5.96% occupy the top 3 ranks. The state government-owned Andhra Pradesh state road transport organisation is the public bus transport provider. It is split into 129 depots across four zones. It has a fleet strength of 11,098 buses and a staff count of 49,544. It operates 1.11 billion kilometres and serves 3.68 million passengers daily as per the socio-economic survey of 2023. As of 2023,

Railways Renigunta was the first among major stations to appear on the railway map of Andhra Pradesh when Madras railway connected it to Madras in 1862. Rajahmundry-Vijag and Vijayawada-Kovvur sections were opened in 1893. Vijayawada-Madras section was started in 1899. It was extended to Howrah in 1900. As of 2022, The state has a total broad-gauge railway route of 3,969 km (2,466 mi) with rail density at 24.36 km per 1000 square kilometres. The railway network in Andhra Pradesh is under the South Central railway, East Coast railway, and South Western railway zones. During 2014-2022, 350 km of new lines were constructed at a rate of 44 km per year in Andhra Pradesh under the South Central railway division. The rate of construction was only 2 km per year in the preceding five years. The Nadikudi-Srikalahasti line of 308.70 km sanctioned at a budget of ₹22.89 billion (US\$270 million) in 2011-12 as a joint project of the centre and state is progressing slowly, with only phase one of 46 km between New Piduguralla station and Savalyapuram completed in 2021-22. There are three A1 and 23 A-category railway stations in the state, as per the assessment in 2017. Visakhapatnam was declared the cleanest railway station in the country, as per the assessment in 2018. The railway station in Shimiliguda is the second broad gauge railway station at high altitude in the country next to Qazigund in Jammu and Kashmir. A new railway zone South Coast railway (SCoR), with headquarters in Visakhapatnam, was announced in 2019, but is yet to be implemented.

Airports Tirupati Airport was established in 1976. Visakhapatnam became a part of civil aviation in 1981. Daily flights to Vijayawada were started in 2003. Apart from these three which are international airports, the state has three domestic airports, namely Rajahmundry, Kadapa, and Kurnool. A privately owned airport for emergency flights and chartered flights is at Puttaparthi. Bhogapuram international airport is being constructed with a budget of ₹4,750 crore on an area of 2,300 acres near Visakhapatnam. It is expected to be completed by 2025. Andhra Pradesh saw a 60% increase in domestic air passenger traffic, with 24.74 lakh visitors at its five airports during the 2021-22 fiscal year (up to January 2022), compared to 15.48 lakh in the same period the previous fiscal year.

Sea ports The state has one major port at Visakhapatnam under the administrative control of the central government and 15 notified ports, including three captive ports, under the control of the state government. Visakhapatnam port was the earliest port to be commissioned in 1933. Gangavaram port is a deep seaport that can accommodate ocean liners up to 200,000-250,000 DWT. Cargo of 189.21 million tonnes was handled by Gangavaram, Kakinada deepwater, Krishnapatnam, Ravva, Kakinada anchorage, and Visakhapatnam during 2023-24, with a growth of 7.9% over the previous year. New sea ports are under construction at Ramayapatnam, Machilipatnam, Mulapeta, and Kakinada.

Communication As per socio-economic survey released in January 2023, Andhra Pradesh has 10,605 post offices. Bharat sanchar nigam limited (BSNL) operates 1,310 telephone exchanges with 20.6 million landline connections and also has 5.4 million wireless subscribers. Airtel, Jio, Vodafone Idea, and BSNL provide mobile services in the state. As of 2023, the number of mobile phone users reached 82 million, while the number of internet subscribers reached 67.1 million in Andhra Pradesh. Mobile network services are available

in 15,322 out of 17,328 villages. 5G network connectivity is provided by 16,714 base transfer stations. Several providers including state government owned Andhra Pradesh state fibre net limited operate wireline services supporting internet connectivity, telephony, and Internet Protocol television. The AP statewide area network connects 2,164 offices of state administration at 668 locations down to the level of mandal headquarters. The network supports both data and video communications. BSNL and the National Knowledge Network multi-purpose Cricket link district headquarters with state headquarters with a bandwidth of 34 Mbit/s. Mandal headquarters are connected with a bandwidth of 8 Mbit/s.

Water The state has 40 major and medium rivers and 40,000 minor irrigation sources. Godavari, Krishna, and Penna are major rivers. The total cultivable area is 19.904 million acres. Major, medium, and minor irrigation projects irrigate 10.172 million acres or 51.1% as of 2015. Several water projects in the state are facing issues. The Polavaram Project is a multi purpose terminal reservoir project located 42 km upstream of Davaleswaram barrage. It is a national project as per the AP Reorganisation Act of 2014. It has a reservoir capacity of 194.6 TMC and is expected to utilise 322.73 TMC of water in a year. The under-construction project suffered setbacks with damage to its diaphragm wall during the 2022 floods. The Veligonda Project, taken up to serve needs of Prakasam, Nellore, and Madala districts is progressing slowly. The Annamayya project, washed away in the 2021 floods, is set to be redesigned for 787 crores. Following the bifurcation, disputes with Telangana regarding the allocation of Krishna and Godavari waters continue to dog the state.

Power Thermal, hydel and renewable power plants supply power to the state. The installed capacity share of the state in the public sector generating stations was 7,245 MW. The private sector installed capacity was 9,370 MW, which includes an independent power producer capacity of 1,961 MW. The total installed capacity was 16,615 MW. Peak power demand for the state in 2021-22 was 12,032 MW and per capita consumption was 1,285 kilowatt hours. The energy consumed was 68,972 million units. Energy consumption increased from 54,555 MU in 2018-19 to 69,113 MU in 2023-24, at a growth rate of 4.8% which is among the lowest in the country. The per capita electricity consumption of AP. Increased by only 123 kWh in the same period when there was an increase of 146 kWh at the national level. The reasons were because of steep tariff increases and re-imposing power cuts as there was a delay in commissioning of the Polavaram hydro-electric power project (960 MW), Sri Damodaram Sanjeevaiah thermal power station (Krishnapatnam) stage-II unit-3 (800 MW) and Dr. Narla Tata Rao thermal power station stage-V unit-8 (800 MW) stations.

Healthcare The health infrastructure consists of 13 district hospitals, 28 sub-district hospitals, and 6,049 urban and rural health centres as of 2019-20. Doorstep healthcare support services are provided through 42,060 Accredited social health activist(ASHA) workers as of July 2019. The 108 service provides fast emergency management services by shifting patients to a nearby healthcare facility. The 104 service provides health care services at the doorstep of villages through mobile medical units that visit at least once a month. All the poor families are covered by the free state health insurance scheme up to a limit of ₹2,500,000 (US\$30,000). The scheme serves 42.5 million people. The services are provided in government and private hospitals under the network. During 2014-2018, though the nominal mean claim amount of beneficiaries went up significantly, it decreased after accounting for inflation. Mortality rates have significantly decreased, which indicates better outcomes are being achieved at a lower cost. Out of 2,700 private hospitals registered under the state health insurance scheme, 540 (20%) are speciality hospitals. The number of patients treated under the state health insurance scheme increased from 1.2 million in 2022-23 to 1.39 million in 2023-24. whereas the budget remained constant at ₹3,350 crore. The National family health survey-5 conducted in 2019-21 data provided an insight into the economic and health status of households. Housing, electricity, clean fuel, access to toilets, mobile phone usage, and bank account access were available for more than 85% of households. Piped water

facilities were available for only 22% of households. The state health insurance scheme, the employee health scheme, the Rashtriya swasthya bima yojana, the Employees' state insurance scheme, and the Central government health scheme covered 70% of households with at least one member covered.

Banking As of 31 March 2023, there are 33 private sector banks, 12 public sector banks, three rural banks, three small finance banks, three payment banks, one cooperative bank, and one state financial corporation operating in the state. The total number of branches is 7,881. As of September 2022, Banks have deposits amounting to ₹435,183.49 crore (US\$51 billion) and extended credit amounting to ₹628,134.9 crore (US\$74 billion), with credit deposit ratio of 144% against Reserve Bank of India norm of 60%. Primary sector advances amounted to 60.13% of total bank credit. Till March 2011, the microfinance industry flourished in united Andhra Pradesh with a share of 65% of pan India gross loans. Due to state regulation enacted in 2010, the loan portfolio shrank to 0.8% in Andhra Pradesh as of 31 March 2023. With the court deciding against state regulation, the industry is likely to pick up again.

Education Primary and secondary school education is imparted by government and private schools, regulated by the school education department of the state. The government decided to stop financial aid to aided schools with history dating to 1870s, forcing them to handover the schools with the aided staff to government or become private in 2021. As per Unified district information system for education plus (UDISE+) report of 2021-22, there were a total of 8,244,647 students enrolled in 61,948 schools. Performance of rural students on reading, arithmetic skills in grades 1-8 declined during 2018-2022 partly attributed to Covid outbreak. As an example, for the reading assessment in Class VIII students, it nosedived 67% in 2022 from over 78% in 2018. However, the student enrolment at government schools improved from 63.2% to 71%. In the March 2024 secondary school certificate (SSC) exam 616,615 students appeared in the regular stream. Parvathipuram-Manyam district achieved the highest pass percentage of 96.37 among districts. The overall pass percentage was 86.69%, an increase of 14.43% over the previous year, with 100% in 2,803 schools. In intermediate (higher secondary) examinations held in March 2024, 393,757 students appeared. The pass percentage was 78%, which is an increase of 7% over the previous year. The state initiated education reforms in 2020 by creating six types of schools: satellite foundation schools (pre-primary), foundational schools (pre-primary - class II), foundational school plus (pre-primary - class V), pre-high school (class III - class VII/VIII), high school (class III - class X), and high school plus (class III - class XII). The transition to English-medium education in all government schools was started in the academic year 2020-2021. It is expected to reach completion by 2024-25. Affiliation of 1,000 government schools to the Central Board of Secondary Education in 2022-23 was done as an initial step. The state government went ahead with the English medium based on the parents survey despite protests and court cases. The state initiative is being funded in part by a loan from the World Bank to the tune of \$250 million over 2021-2026 through the "Supporting Andhra's learning transformation" project to improve the learning outcomes of children up to class II level. As of 2023, there are 169 government-aided degree colleges and 55 private-aided degree colleges in the state. National assessment and accreditation council grades were awarded to 66 government colleges and 48 private-aided colleges. There are 85 government-aided and 175 private polytechnic colleges with a sanctioned strength of 75,906 students. In the category of technical education, there are 685 institutions offering diploma, undergraduate, and postgraduate Visakhapatnamthe courses, with an intake of 299,608. The AP state council of higher education organises various entrance tests for different streams and conducts counselling for admissions. The AP state skill development corporation is set up to support skill development and placement for the educated. As of 2021, there are a total of 36 universities: three central universities, 23 state public universities, six state private universities, and four deemed universities. Andhra University is the oldest of the universities in the state, established in 1926. The government established Rajiv Gandhi university of knowledge technologies in 2008 to cater to the education needs of the rural youth of the state. NTR University of health sciences oversees medical education in 348 affiliated colleges

spanning the entire range from traditional medicine to modern medicine. The public universities, including the legacy universities such as Andhra, Sri Venkateswara, and Nagarjuna, are suffering from a severe fund crunch and staff shortage, managing with only 20% of sanctioned full-time staff. KL University bagged the 50th rank, while Andhra university bagged the 76th rank in the overall category of India rankings for 2023 as per the national institute ranking framework of the union ministry of education in which 2,478 institutions, including 242 institutions from the state, participated. The gross enrolment ratio (GER) in higher education for the age group 18-23 for the state was at 35.2% for the year 2019-20, which comparing favourably with the GER for all of India at 27.1%. With a female GER of 35.3 and a male GER of 38.2, the Gender Parity Index was 0.84. The corresponding ratio for India was 1.01. There were 510 industrial training institutes (ITI) in 2020-21 in Andhra Pradesh, with 82 under government management and 417 under private management. The total available seats in 2021 were 93,280, out of which 48.90% were filled. In 2020, 10,053 students completed ITI. The state has 2,510 public libraries, including four regional libraries and 13 district central libraries under government management. Saraswata Niketanam at Vetapalem in Bapatla district, one of the oldest libraries established under private management in 1918, is losing its attraction as the Internet spreads. The government is planning to develop digital libraries at the village panchayat level.

Media The total number of registered newspapers and periodicals in the state for the years 2020-21 was 5,798. There were 1,645 dailies, 817 weeklies, 2,431 monthlies, and 623 fortnightlies. Telugu dailies number 787 with a circulation of 9,911,005, while English dailies account for 103 with a circulation of 1,646,453. Eenadu, Sakshi, and Andhra Jyothi are the top three Telugu daily newspapers in terms of circulation in India and are also the top three Telugu news sites. BBC Telugu news was launched on 2 October 2017. Several privately owned news media outlets are considered biased towards specific political parties in the state. There were 23 news channels, 10 general entertainment channels, two health channels, six religious channels, two other channels, and two cable distribution channels, for a total of 45 channels empanelled by the Andhra Pradesh information and public relations department. As of 2019, Akashvani previously known as All India Radio, operates 3 MW, 17 FM transmitters from 14 locations in the state. It reaches 99% of the area and 99.5% of the population. Akashvani's FM coverage alone reaches 36% of the area and 45% of the population. Five private operators run 13 FM stations, with Red FM operating from five locations.

Sports Traditional games played during childhood include Dagudu Mootalu (Hide and seek), Tokkudu Billa, Yedu Penkulata, Vamanaguntalu, Chadarangam (Chess), Puli Joodam, Ashta Chamma, Vaikuntapali (Snakes and ladders), Nalugu Stambalata, and Nalugu ralla aata. Karra samu (stick fight) is a traditional martial art form of the state. It is a form of self-defence to prevent thefts and robbery in villages. It is a discipline in the national sports, though it is not recognised for the sports quota category of reservations in Andhra Pradesh. Sports Authority of Andhra Pradesh is the governing body that looks after the infrastructure development, coaching, and administration of sports promotion schemes. Sports authority of India (SAI) operates three SAI Training centres in Andhra Pradesh as of 2022. Dr. YSR Sports School, Putlampalli, Kadapa district was selected for upgradation as Khelo India centre of excellence in 2021. Andhra Cricket Visakhapatnam District Association cricket Association (ACA-VDCA) stadium in Visakhapatnam is known for hosting international cricket matches. Pullela Gopichand is a former Indian badminton player. He won the All England Open Badminton Championships in 2001, becoming the second Indian to win after Prakash Padukone. P. V. Sindhu is one of India's most successful athletes, having won medals in major tournaments like the Olympics and the BWF circuit, including a gold at the 2019 World Championships. She is the first Indian to become a badminton world champion and only the second to win two consecutive Olympic medals. Karnam Malleswari is the first female Indian to win an Olympic medal. She won bronze medal in 69 kg weightlifting event at 2000 Olympics games. Srikanth Kidambi, a badminton player, is the first Indian to reach the world championships final in 2021 in the men's singles and win a silver medal. The state secured 16 medals at the 36th national games held in 2022. It

was ranked 21st in the competition. The state sportpersons won 11 medals in Tennis, Archery, Badminton, Athletics, Chess and Cricket disciplines in the 19th Asian games held in China in 2022. The state was ranked at 13th spot in the sixth edition of Khelo India youth games-2023, by winning 27 medals.

See also Outline of Andhra Pradesh Disputes between Andhra Pradesh and Telangana

Notes References Bibliography External links Government Official website

General information Geographic data related to Andhra Pradesh at OpenStreetMap

Arunachal Pradesh

Arunachal Pradesh (; lit. 'Dawn-Lit Mountain Province') is a state in northeast India. It was known as the North-East Frontier Agency till 1972, after which it became a union territory under the name Arunachal Pradesh. It became a state on 20 February 1987. Itanagar is its capital and largest town. Spread over an area of 83,743 km² (32,333 sq mi), Arunachal Pradesh is bordered by the Indian states of Assam and Nagaland to the south. It shares international borders with Bhutan in the west, Myanmar in the east, and China in the north. The 1,129 km (702 mi) border shared with China's Tibet Autonomous Region at the McMahon Line, has been subject to various border disputes and skirmishes. China claims the state in its entirety as South Tibet. China occupied some parts of the state during the Sino-Indian War in 1962 but later withdrew its forces. As per the 2011 census, Arunachal Pradesh has a population of 1,383,727. With only 17 inhabitants per square kilometre, it has the least densely populated state in India. It is an ethnically diverse state, with predominantly Monpa people in the west, Tani people in the centre, Mishmi and Tai people in the east, and Naga people in the southeast of the state. About 23 major tribes and 100 sub-tribes live in the state, including Nocte, Adi, Nyishi, Singpho, Galo, Tagin, and Apatani. The Nyishi are the largest ethnic group in the region. The Mishmi tribe has three sub-tribes, namely Idu-Mishmi, Digaru-Mishmi, and Miju-Mishmi.

Etymology Arunachal Pradesh means Land of the Dawn-Lit Mountains, which is the sobriquet for the state in Sanskrit. The term was coined during the formation of the state. Prior to the year 1972, it was called North-East Frontier Agency. The People's Republic of China (PRC) claims the land to be part of Tibet, and calls it South Tibet (Chinese: 藏南 pinyin: Zàngnán). In ancient Tibetan texts, eastern Arunachal Pradesh and some parts of Tibet were called Lhoy while the residents were called Lhobha people, while Tawang district and West Kameng district in western Arunachal Pradesh were called Monyul.

History Ancient period Very little ancient history is known about the region apart from the Northwestern corner, and the areas bordering current Assam. The Northwestern regions came under Monpa and Tibetan control. Northwestern parts of this area came under the control of the Monpa kingdom of Monyul under Tibet which flourished between 500 BCE and 600 CE. The Monpa and Sherdukpen keep historical records of the existence of local chiefdoms in the northwest as well. According to Tibetan chronicles, Monyul was ruled by Gongkar Gyal, descendent of an exiled Tibetan ruler named Lhasé Tsangma, the brother of Tibetan king Ralpacan who arrived in Monyul in 837 A.D or earlier. A descendant of Gongkar Gyal became the ruler of Trashiyangtse region of Bhutan and Gapde Tsan another descendant was the ruler of Khorwong valley in Thembang town (now West Kameng district, Arunachal Pradesh).

Later, the second son of Gongkar Gyal, Wongme Palde who returned to Tibet owing to the poverty in Khorwong valley came back to Monyul to become its ruler. The Rgyal rigs text written in 1668 or 1728 contains a record of taxes collected. Taxes were paid via coins, foodstuffs, or livestock from area around present-day Kameng district and Tawang district. The Monpas (Tibetan: མོན་པ་) known to the Chinese as Menba were responsible for trade between Assam and Tibet and held the Koriapar Dooar at Sonitpur district of Assam. The Monpa chief were subordinate to the ruler of Tawang who in turn were subordinate to the Government of Tibet or Ganden Phodrang in Lhasa. The Tibetan government at Lhasa appointed Tibetan officials called Gellongs to supervise the local Monpa chief. The Monpa chief who looked after the Duar were called Tsorgon, a position created in the 16th century. According to historical Tibetan text the state of Arunachal Pradesh known as Lhoyu came under the control of Tubo Kingdom or Tibetan Empire in the 7th century CE.

Medieval period In the 17th century, the 5th Dalai Lama Ngawang Lobsang Gyatso (1617-1682), who achieved political supremacy over Tibet in 1642, imposed a tax called Khrey over Monyul and instructed the construction of fortresses in Monpa area called Dzong which served as centers for administration and tax collection.

The fortresses built were Dirang Dzong, Taklung Dzong and Gyangkhar Dzong to collect tax from the Dirang Monpa, Kalaktang Monpa and Tawang Monpa respectively. The officials who collected the taxes were called Dzongpon. The tax was carried to Tawang Monastery and then to Lhasa via Tsona city (present-day China).

The 6th Dalai Lama Tsangyang Gyatso (1683-1706) was born in Tawang and died in Amdo (present-day China) on his way to Beijing after being kidnapped by the Mongol forces under Lha-bzang Khan, the last ruler of Khoshut Khanate on the approval of Kangxi Emperor of the Qing dynasty. Before his death the 6th Dalai Lama instructed the construction of notable buildings like Tromzikhang in Barkhor, Lhasa.

Arunachal Pradesh falls under Kham (Tibetan: ཁམ་) and -Tsang (Tibetan: བོད་བར་བྱ་) cultural region of Tibet which also includes the Brahmaputra River watershed. The foothills and the plains, were under the control of the Chutia kings of Assam. Inner parts of the state remained independent and self-governed even though interactions with external parties did exist. The main archaeological sites of the state include:

British India In 1912-13, the British Indian government established the North-East Frontier Tracts. It was divided into three sections, which eventually came to be called the Ballipara Frontier Tract, Lakhimpur Frontier Tract and Sadiya Frontier Tract.

The McMahon line In 1913-1914, representatives of the de facto independent state of Tibet and Britain met in India to define the borders of 'Outer Tibet' (with respect to China). British administrator Sir Henry McMahon drew the 550 miles (890 km) McMahon Line as the border between British India and Tibet, placing Tawang and other areas within British India. The Tibetan and British representatives devised the Simla Accord including the McMahon Line, but the Chinese representatives did not concur. The Simla Accord denies other benefits to China while it declines to assent to the Accord. The Chinese position was that Tibet was not independent from China and could not sign treaties, so the Accord was invalid, like the Anglo-Chinese (1906) and Anglo-Russian (1907) conventions. British records show that the condition for the Tibetan government to accept the new border was that China must accept the Simla Convention. As Britain was not able to get an acceptance from China, Tibetans considered the McMahon line invalid. In the time that China did not exercise power in Tibet, the line had no serious challenges. In 1935, a Deputy Secretary in the Foreign Department, Olaf Caroe, "discovered" that the McMahon Line was not drawn on official maps. The Survey of India published a map showing the McMahon Line as the official boundary in 1937. In 1938, two decades after the Simla Conference, the British finally published the Simla Accord as a bilateral accord and the Survey of India published a detailed map showing the McMahon Line as a border of India. In April 1938, a small British force led by Captain G. S. Lightfoot arrived in Tawang and informed the monastery that the district was now Indian territory. The Tibetan government at Lhasa protested and its authority was restored after Lightfoot's return. In 1944, Britain established administrations in the area, from Dirang Dzong in the west to Walong in the east. Administrative control extended over the area of the Tawang tract lying south of the Sela Pass when J.P. Mills set up an Assam Rifles post at Dirang Dzong and sent the Tibetan tax-collectors packing. Tibetan protests were brushed aside. However, no steps were taken to evict Tibet from the area north of the pass which contained Tawang town. The Tawang district remained under Tibetan authority until 1951.

Sino-Indian War Following the conclusion of British rule, India gained independence in 1947, while the People's Republic of China (PRC) was founded in 1949. The new Chinese administration maintained the position that the McMahon Line was not valid. In October 1947, independent Tibet wrote a note to the Government of India asking for a "return" of the territories that the British had allegedly occupied from Tibet. Among these were listed Zayul and Walong and in direction of Pemakoe, Lonag, Lopa, Mon, Bhutan, Sikkim, Darjeeling. After negotiation with the Indian government, Tibet relinquished claims on these territories. In November 1950, the PRC was poised to take over Tibet by force, and India supported Tibet. Journalist Sudha Ramachandran argued that China claimed Tawang on behalf of Tibetans, though Tibetans did not claim Tawang as part of Tibet. In February 1951, India sent Ralengnao Khathing of Manipur with a small escort and several hundred porters to Tawang and took control of the remainder of the Tawang tract from the Tibetans, removing the Tibetan administration. The Indian efforts were warmly welcomed by the native population as a respite from the oppressive feudal regime. What is now Arunachal Pradesh was established as the North-East Frontier Agency (NEFA) in 1954. Sino-Indian relations were cordial until 1960. Resurgence of the border disagreement was a factor leading to the Sino-Indian War in 1962, during which China captured most of Arunachal Pradesh, including the Tawang tract. China soon declared victory, withdrew back to the McMahon Line, and returned Indian prisoners of war in 1963. The war resulted in the termination of barter trade with Tibet, although since 2007 the Indian government has shown signs of wanting to resume barter trade.

Renaming and statehood Under the leadership of Indira Gandhi, The North-East Frontier Agency (NEFA) was renamed Arunachal Pradesh by Bibhabasu Das Shastri, Daya Krishna Goswami and O. P. Upadhyaya on 20 January 1972, and it became a union territory. Later on, Arunachal Pradesh became a state on 20 February 1987 during Rajiv Gandhi's government. NB: K A A Raja, as Chief Commissioner to NEFA, under Assam, whose Capital used to be Shillong, later on went to become the first Lieutenant Governor to the Union Territory of Arunachal Pradesh.

Recent claims The 14th Dalai Lama did not originally recognise India's sovereignty over Arunachal Pradesh. As late as 2003, he said that "Arunachal Pradesh was actually part of Tibet". In January 2007, the Dalai Lama said that both Britain and Tibet had recognised the McMahon Line in 1914. In 2008, he said that Arunachal Pradesh was a part of India under the agreement signed by Tibetan and British representatives. According to the Dalai Lama, "In 1962 during the India-China war, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) occupied all these areas (Arunachal Pradesh) but they announced a unilateral ceasefire and withdrew, accepting the current international boundary". In recent years, China has occasionally asserted its claims on Tawang. India rebutted these claims and told the Chinese government that Tawang is an integral part of India. India reiterated this to China when the two prime ministers met in Thailand in October 2009. A report that the Chinese Army had briefly invaded Arunachal Pradesh in 2016 was denied by India's Minister of State for Home Affairs, Kiren Rijiju. In April 2017, China strongly objected to a visit to Tawang by the Dalai Lama, as it had to an earlier visit by the US ambassador. China had objected to the Dalai Lama's previous visits to the area. In 2024, The New York Times reported that, according to satellite imagery, China had constructed villages along and inside of disputed territory within Arunachal Pradesh. Chinese individuals, called "border guardians", received annual subsidies to relocate to newly built villages and paid to conduct border patrols.

Insurgency Arunachal Pradesh has faced threats from insurgent groups, notably the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN), who are believed to have base camps in the districts of Changlang and Tirap. These groups seek to decrease the influence of Indian government in the region and merge part of Arunachal Pradesh into Nagaland. The Indian army is present along the Tibetan border to thwart any Chinese incursion. Under the

Foreigners (Protected Areas) Order 1958 (India), Inner Line Permits (ILPs) are required to enter Arunachal Pradesh through any of its checkgates on the border with Assam.

Geography Arunachal Pradesh is located between 26.28 N and 29.30 N latitude and 91.20 E and 97.30 E longitude and has an area of 83,743 km² (32,333 sq mi). The highest peak in the state is Kangto, at 7,060 metres (23,160 ft). Nyegi Kangsang, the main Gorichen peak, and the Eastern Gorichen peak are other tall Himalaya peaks. The state's mountain ranges, in the extreme East of India, are described as "the place where the sun rises" in historical Indian texts and named the Aruna Mountains, which inspired the name of the state. The villages of Dong (more accessible by car, and with a lookout favoured by tourists) and Vijaynagar (on the edge of Myanmar) receive the first sunlight in all of India.

Major rivers of Arunachal Pradesh include the Kameng, Subansiri, Siang (Brahmaputra), Dibang, Lohit and Noa Dihing rivers. Subsurface flows and summer snow melt contribute to the volume of water. Mountains until the Siang river are classified as the Eastern Himalayas. Those between the Siang and Noa Dihing are classified as the Mishmi Hills that may be part of the Hengduan Mountains. Mountains south of the Noa Dihing in Tirap and Longding districts are part of the Patkai Range.

Climate The climate of Arunachal Pradesh varies with elevation. The low-altitude areas have a humid subtropical climate. High-altitude areas (3,500-5,500 m) have a subtropical highland climate and alpine climate. Arunachal Pradesh receives 2,000 to 5,000 millimetres (79 to 197 in) of rainfall annually, 70%-80% obtained between May and October.

Biodiversity Arunachal Pradesh has among the highest diversity of mammals and birds in India. There are around 750 species of birds and more than 200 species of mammals in the state.

Arunachal's forests account for one-third of habitat area within the Himalayan biodiversity hot-spot. In 2013, 31,273 km² (12,075 sq mi) of Arunachal's forests were identified as part of a vast area of continuous forests (65,730 km² or 25,380 sq mi, including forests in Myanmar, China and Bhutan) known as Intact forest landscapes. There are three tiger reserves in the state: a reserve in Namdapha National Park, Mouling National Park and Pakke Tiger Reserve.

Flora In the year 2000, Arunachal Pradesh was covered with 63,093 km² (24,360 sq mi) of tree cover (77% of its land area). It harbours over 5,000 plants. At the lowest elevations, essentially at Arunachal Pradesh's border with Assam, are Brahmaputra Valley semi-evergreen forests. Much of the state, including the Himalayan foothills and the Patkai hills, are home to Eastern Himalayan broadleaf forests. Toward the northern border with Tibet, with increasing elevation, come a mixture of Eastern and Northeastern Himalayan subalpine conifer forests followed by Eastern Himalayan alpine shrub and meadows and ultimately rock and ice on the highest peaks. It supports many medicinal plants and within Ziro valley of Lower Subansiri district 158 medicinal plants are being used by its inhabitants. The mountain slopes and hills are covered with alpine, temperate, and subtropical forests of dwarf rhododendron, oak, pine, maple and fir. The state has Mouling and Namdapha national parks.

Fauna The major animal species are tiger, leopard, snow leopard, Asian elephant, sambar deer, chital deer, barking deer, sloth bear, mithun (*Bos frontalis*), gaur, dhole, giant squirrel, marbled cat, leopard cat. A new

subspecies of hoolock gibbon has been described from the state which has been named as the Mishmi Hills hoolock gibbon (*H. h. mishmiensis*). Three new giant flying squirrels were also described from the state during the last one and half-decade. These were, Mechuka giant flying squirrel, Mishmi Hills giant flying squirrel, and Mebo giant flying squirrel.

Administration Districts Arunachal Pradesh comprises three divisions, namely, Central, East and West, each headed by a divisional commissioner and twenty-five districts, each administered by a deputy commissioner. Arunachal Pradesh has a total of 28 districts, West Siang being the largest district in terms of area and Tawang being the smallest district. Papum is the largest district in terms of population and Diwang Valley is the smallest district.

Major towns Below are the major towns in Arunachal Pradesh.

Municipal corporation Itanagar Municipal Corporation

Municipal councils Pasighat Municipal council

Municipal committees Towns Demographics As per the 2011 Census, Arunachal Pradesh has 12 Scheduled Tribes, comprising 68.79% of its population. The state can be roughly divided into a set of semi-distinct cultural spheres, on the basis of tribal identity, language, religion and material culture: the Tibetic-speaking Monpa area bordering Bhutan in the west, the Tani area in the centre of the state, the Mishmi area to the east of the Tani area, the Tai/Singpho/Tangsa area bordering Myanmar, and the Naga area to the south, which also borders Myanmar. In between there are transition zones, such as the Aka/Hruso/Miji/Sherdukpen area, between the Tibetan Buddhist tribes and the animist Tani hill tribes. In addition, there are isolated peoples scattered throughout the state, such as the Sulung.

Within each of these cultural spheres, one finds populations of related tribes speaking related languages and sharing similar traditions. In the Tibetic area, one finds large numbers of Monpa tribespeople, with several subtribes speaking closely related but mutually incomprehensible languages, and also large numbers of Tibetan refugees. Within the Tani area, major tribes include the Nyishi. Apatani also live among the Nyishi, but are distinct. In the north one finds the Tagin People. In the centre, one finds predominantly Galo people, with the major sub-groups of Karka, Lodu, Bogum, Lare and Pugo among others, extending to the Ramo and Pailibo areas (which are close in many ways to Galo). In the east, one finds the Adi with many subtribes including Padam, Pasi, Minyong and Bokar, among others. Milang, while also falling within the general Adi sphere, are in many ways quite distinct. Moving east, the Idu, Miju and Digaru make up the Mishmi cultural-linguistic area. Moving southeast, the Tai Khamti are linguistically distinct from their neighbours and culturally distinct from the majority of other Arunachalese tribes. They follow the Theravada sect of Buddhism. They also exhibit considerable convergence with the Singpho and Tangsa Naga tribes of the same area, all of which are also found in Burma. They are one of the most recent people group migrated to Arunachal region from Burma. The Nocte Naga and Wancho Naga are another two major ethnic tribes. Both the tribes exhibit very much cultural similarities. Finally, the Deori tribe is also a major community in the state, with their own distinctive identity. They are the descendants of the priestly class of Chutia people who were allowed to continue their livelihood after the defeat of the Chutias. Deoris are one of the only Arunachal tribes in the historical records - which

shows they are among the first ethnic groups to inhabit the Himalayas of the districts of Dibang Valley and Lohit, before the arrival of many other tribes in the region between 1600 and 1900.

Religion According to the 2011 Indian Census, 418,732 (30.26%) are Christians, 401,876 (29.04%) are Hindus, 162,815 (11.77%) Buddhists, 27,045 (1.95%) Muslims, 3,287 (0.24%) Sikhs, 771 (0.06%) Jains and 362,553 (26.20%) are adherents of various tribal beliefs including Donyi-Polo. However, the religious landscape of Arunachal Pradesh is diverse with no single religious group representing the majority of the population, although it is one of the few Indian states where Christianity has the most followers. A relatively large percentage of Arunachal's population are nature worshippers (indigenous religions), and follow their own distinct traditional institutions like the Nyedat Namlo by the Nyishi, the Rangrah by the Tangsa & Nocte, Medar Nelo by the Apatani, the Kargu Gamgi by the Galo and Donyi-Polo Dere by the Adi under the umbrella of the indigenous religion the Donyi-Polo. A small number of Arunachali people have traditionally identified as Hindus, although the number may grow as animist traditions are absorbed into Hinduism. Tibetan Buddhism predominates in the districts of Tawang, West Kameng, and isolated regions adjacent to Tibet. Theravada Buddhism is practised by groups living near the Myanmar border. Around 30% of the population are Christians. Buddhism arrived in Arunachal Pradesh in 8th century CE from Tibet. In 1971, the percentage of Christians in the state was 0.79%. This increased to 10.3% by 1991 and by 2011 it had crossed 25%.

Languages The speakers of major languages of the state according to the 2011 census are Nyishi (20.74%), Adi (17.35%, includes Adi and Gallong), Nepali (6.89%), Tagin (4.54%), Bhotia (4.51%), Wancho (4.23%), Assamese (3.9%), Bangla (3.65%), Hindi (3.45%), Chakma (3.40%), Apatani (3.21%), Mishmi (3.04%), Tangsa (2.64%), Nocte (2.19%), Bhojpuri (2.04%) and Sadri (1.03%). The vast majority of Arunachal Pradesh speaks Tani languages of the Tibeto-Burman language family. Tani people are indigenous to central Arunachal Pradesh, including (moving from west to east) the Nyishi, the Apatani, the Tagin, the Galo, the Bokar, the Adi, the Padam, the Pasi, and the Minyong. The Tani languages are noticeably characterised by an overall relative uniformity, suggesting relatively recent origin and dispersal within their present-day area of concentration. Most of the Tani languages are mutually intelligible with at least one other Tani language, meaning that the area constitutes a dialect chain, as was once found in much of Europe; only Apatani and Milang stand out as relatively unusual in the Tani context. Tani languages are among the better-studied languages of the region. To the east of the Tani area lie three virtually undescribed and highly endangered languages of the "Mishmi" group of Tibeto-Burman: Idu, Digaru and Mishmi people. A number of speakers of these languages are also found in Tibet. The relationships of these languages, both among one another and to other area languages, are as yet uncertain. Further south, one finds the Singpho (Kachin) language, which is primarily spoken by large populations in Myanmar's Kachin State, and the Nocte and Wancho languages, which show affiliations to certain Naga languages spoken to the south in modern-day Nagaland. To the west and north of the Tani area are found at least one and possibly as many as four Bodic languages, including Dakpa and Tshangla language; within modern-day India, these languages go by the cognate but, in usage, distinct designations Monpa and Memba. Most speakers of these languages or closely related Bodic languages are found in neighbouring Bhutan and Tibet, and Monpa and Memba populations remain closely adjacent to these border regions. Between the Bodic and Tani areas lie many almost completely undescribed and unclassified languages, which, speculatively considered Tibeto-Burman, exhibit many unique structural and lexical properties that probably reflect both a long history in the region and a complex history of language contact with neighbouring populations. Among them are Sherdukpen, Bugun, Hruso, Koro, Miji, Bangru and Puroik/Sulung. The high linguistic significance these languages is belied by the extreme paucity of documentation and description of them, even in view of their highly endangered status. Puroik, in particular, is perhaps one of the most culturally and linguistically unique and significant populations in all of Asia from proto-historical and anthropological-linguistic perspectives, and yet virtually no information of any real reliability regarding their

culture or language can be found in print. Finally, other than the Bodic and Tani groups, there are also certain migratory languages that are largely spoken by migratory and central government employees serving in the state in different departments and institutions in modern-day Arunachal Pradesh. They are classified as Non-Tribal as per the provisions of the Constitution of India. Outside of Tibeto-Burman, one finds in Arunachal Pradesh a single representative of the Tai family, spoken by Tai Khamti, which is closely affiliated to the Shan language of Myanmar's Shan State. Seemingly, Khampti is a recent arrival in Arunachal Pradesh whose presence dates to 18th and/or early 19th-century migrations from northern Myanmar. In addition to English, various Indo-Aryan languages Assamese, Bengali, Nepali and especially Hindi are making strong inroads into Arunachal Pradesh. Primarily as a result of the primary education system-in which classes are generally taught by Hindi-speaking migrant teachers from Bihar and other Hindi-speaking parts of northern India, a large and growing section of the population now speaks a semi-creolised variety of Hindi as a mother tongue. Hindi acts as a lingua franca for most of the people in the state. Despite, or perhaps because of, the linguistic diversity of the region, English is the only official language recognised in the state.

Education Literacy has risen in official figures to 66.95% in 2011 from 54.74% in 2001. The literate population is said to number 789,943. The number of literate males is 454,532 (73.69%) and the number of literate females is 335,411 (59.57%).

Economy The chart below displays the trend of the gross state domestic product of Arunachal Pradesh at market prices by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation with figures in billions of Indian Rupees.

Arunachal Pradesh's gross state domestic product was estimated at US\$706 million at current prices in 2004 and US\$1.75 billion at current prices in 2012. Agriculture primarily drives the economy. Jhum, the local term used for shifting cultivation is being widely practised among the tribal groups, though owing to the gradual growth of other sources of income in the recent years, it is not being practised as prominently as it was earlier. Arunachal Pradesh has close to 61,000 km² of forests, and forest products are the next most significant sector of the economy. Among the crops grown here are rice, maize, millet, wheat, pulses, sugarcane, ginger, and oilseeds. Arunachal is also ideal for horticulture and fruit orchards. Its major industries are rice mills, fruit preservation and processing units, and handloom handicrafts. Sawmills and plywood trades are prohibited under law. There are many saw mills in the state. A significant portion of India's unexplored hydroelectric capacity is attributed to Arunachal Pradesh. In 2008, the Arunachal Pradesh government entered into several memoranda of understanding with multiple companies, outlining around 42 hydroelectric projects intended to generate over 27,000 MW of electricity. Construction of the Upper Siang Hydroelectric Project, which is expected to generate between 10,000 and 12,000 MW, began in April 2009.

Transport Air Itanagar Airport, a Greenfield project serving Itanagar was constructed at Holongi at a cost of **■**6.5 billion. In 2022, IndiGo began direct flights to Itanagar from Mumbai and Kolkata. Alliance Air operates flights to the state flying from Kolkata via Guwahati to Pasighat Airport. This route commenced in May 2018 under the Government's Regional Connectivity Scheme UDAN following the completion of a passenger terminal at Pasighat Airport in 2017. State-owned Daporijo Airport, Ziro Airport, Along Airport, and Tezu Airport are small and not in operation, but the government has proposed to develop them. Before the state was connected by roads, these airstrips were used to distribute food.

Roads The main highway of Arunachal Pradesh is the Trans-Arunachal Highway, National Highway 13 (1,293 km (803 mi); formerly NH-229 and NH-52). It originates in Tawang and spans most of the width of Arunachal Pradesh, then crosses south into Assam and ends at Wakro. The project was announced by then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in 2008 for completion by 2015-16, but only became operational in 2018. NH-15 through Assam follows the southern border of Arunachal Pradesh. Access to central Arunachal Pradesh has been facilitated by the Bogibeel Bridge, an earthquake-resistant rail and road bridge over the Brahmaputra River in Assam, opened for public use on 25 December 2018 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. A spur highway numbered NH-415 services Itanagar. State-owned Arunachal Pradesh State Transport Services (APSTS) runs daily bus service from Itanagar to most district headquarters including Tezpur, Guwahati in Assam, Shillong in Meghalaya, and Dimapur in Nagaland. As of 2007, every village is connected by road, thanks to funding provided by the central government. Every small town has its own bus station with daily bus service. Connections to Assam have increased commerce. In 2014, two additional east-west highways were proposed: an Industrial Corridor Highway in the lower foothills, and a Frontier Highway along the McMahon Line. The proposed alignment of the Frontier Highway has been published.

Railway Arunachal Pradesh got its first railway line in late 2013 with the opening of the new link line from Harmuti on the main Rangpara North-Murkongselak railway line to Naharlagun in Arunachal Pradesh. The construction of the 33-kilometre 5 ft 6 in (1,676 mm) broad-gauge railway line was completed in 2012, and the link became operational after the gauge conversion of the main line from Assam. The state capital Itanagar was added to the Indian railway map on 12 April 2014 via the newly built 20-kilometre Harmuti-Naharlagun railway line, when a train from Dekargaon in Assam reached Naharlagun railway station, 10 kilometres from the centre of Itanagar, a total distance of 181 kilometres. On 20 February 2015, the first through train was run from New Delhi to Naharlagun, flagged off from the capital by the Indian prime minister, Narendra Modi. India plans to eventually extend the railway to Tawang, near the border with China.

Education The state government is expanding the relatively underdeveloped education system with the assistance of NGOs like Vivekananda Kendra, leading to a sharp improvement in the state's literacy rate. The main universities are the Rajiv Gandhi University (formerly known as Arunachal University), under which come 36 institutions offering regular undergraduate courses as well as teacher education and health sciences and nursing degrees, both under governmental and private managements, Indira Gandhi Technological and Medical Sciences University and Himalayan University as well. The first college, Jawaharlal Nehru College, Pasighat, was established in 1964. The First Technical University is Established in 2014 namely North East Frontier Technical University (NEFTU). In Aalo, West Siang District by The Automobile Society India, New Delhi. There is also a deemed university, the North Eastern Regional Institute of Science and Technology as well as the National Institute of Technology, Arunachal Pradesh, established on 18 August 2010, is located in Yupia (headquarter of Itanagar). NERIST plays an important role in technical and management higher education. The directorate of technical education conducts examinations yearly so that students who qualify can continue on to higher studies in other states.

Of the above institutions, only the following institutions are accredited by NAAC (National Assessment and Accreditation Council), in the order of their grade: Jawaharlal Nehru College, Pasighat (Grade A), St Clare College, Ziro (Grade A), Indira Gandhi Govt. College, Tezu (Grade B++), Rajiv Gandhi University (Grade B), National Institute of Technology, Arunachal Pradesh (Grade B), Dera Natung Government College, Itanagar (Grade B), Govt. College, Bomdila (Grade B), Donyi Polo Govt. College, Kamki (Grade B), and Rang Frah Govt. College, Changeling (Grade C). Wangcha Rajkumar Government College, Deomali is the only college in the southeastern part of Arunachal Pradesh. It caters to the students from Tirap, Changlang and Longding

districts. There are also trust institutes, like Pali Vidyapith, run by Buddhists. They teach Pali and Khamti scripts in addition to typical education subjects. Khamti is the only tribe in Arunachal Pradesh that has its own script. Libraries of scriptures are in a number of places in Lohit district, the largest one being in Chowkham. The state has two polytechnic institutes: Rajiv Gandhi Government Polytechnic in Itanagar established in 2002 and Tomi Polytechnic College in Basar established in 2006. There are two law colleges, namely, the private-owned Arunachal Law Academy at Itanagar and the government-owned Jarbom Gamlin Government Law College at Jote, Itanagar. The College of Horticulture and Forestry is affiliated to the Central Agricultural University, Imphal.

Politics Arunachal Pradesh suffered political crisis between April 2016 and December 2016. The Indian National Congress Chief Minister Nabam Tuki replaced Jarbom Gamlin as the Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh on 1 November 2011 and continued until January 2016. After a political crisis in 2016, President's rule was imposed ending his tenure as the chief minister. In February 2016, Kalikho Pul became the Chief Minister when 14 disqualified MLAs were reinstated by the Supreme Court. On 13 July 2016, the Supreme Court quashed the Arunachal Pradesh Governor J.P. Rajkhowa's order to advance the Assembly session from 14 January 2016 to 16 December 2015, which resulted in President's rule in Arunachal Pradesh. As a result, Nabam Tuki was reinstated as the Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh on 13 July 2016. But hours before floor test, he resigned as the chief minister on 16 July 2016. He was succeeded by Pema Khandu as the INC Chief Minister who later joined PPA in September 2016 along with majority of MLAs. Pema Khandu further joined BJP in December 2016 along with majority of MLAs. Arunachal Pradesh becomes second northeast Indian state to achieve ODF status. During 2017, 2021, and 2023, China compiled a list of name alterations for multiple locations in Arunachal Pradesh, in both Chinese and Tibetan languages. China asserts these areas as belonging to "Southern Tibet" and being integral parts of China. The proposed changes encompassed 11 alterations, covering geographical landmarks like mountain summits and rivers, as well as residential zones. The Indian government has continued to reject Chinese claims of geographical ownership of parts of Arunachal Pradesh. National military forces on both sides have increased over the Indian-Chinese border. On 28 August 2023, China further provoked India when the PRC's Ministry of Natural Resources released its new 'standard map' in which Arunachal Pradesh was depicted as a part of PRC. Other internationally disputed lands and waters were also depicted as PRC territory on their new map.

State symbols Geographical indication Arunachal Pradesh Khaw Tai (Khamti Rice) was awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) status tag from the Geographical Indications Registry, under the Union Government of India, on 3 October 2023 and is valid until 12 December 2031. Namsai Organic Spices and Agricultural Producer Company Limited from Lohit, proposed the GI registration of Arunachal Pradesh Khaw Tai (Khamti Rice). After filing the application in December 2021, the rice was granted the GI tag in 2023 by the Geographical Indication Registry in Chennai, making the name "Arunachal Pradesh Khaw Tai (Khamti Rice)" exclusive to the rice grown in the region. It thus became the first rice variety from Arunachal Pradesh and the 3rd type of goods from Arunachal Pradesh to earn the GI tag. The GI tag protects the rice from illegal selling and marketing, and gives it legal protection and a unique identity.

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Assam

Assam is a state in northeastern India, south of the eastern Himalayas along the Brahmaputra and Barak River valleys. Assam covers an area of 78,438 km² (30,285 sq mi). It is the second largest state in northeastern India by area and the largest in terms of population, with more than 31 million inhabitants. The state is bordered by Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh to the north; Nagaland and Manipur to the east; Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram and Bangladesh to the south; and West Bengal to the west via the Siliguri Corridor, a 22-kilometre-wide (14 mi) strip of land that connects the state to the rest of India. Assamese and Bodo are two of the official languages for the entire state and Meitei (Manipuri) is recognised as an additional official language in three districts of Barak Valley and Hojai district. In Hojai district and for the Barak Valley region, alongside Bengali, which is also an official language in the Barak Valley. The state has 35 districts with 5 divisions. Guwahati (containing the state capital Dispur) is the largest city in northeastern India. Assam is known for Assam tea and Assam silk. The state was the first site for oil drilling in Asia. Assam is home to the one-horned Indian rhinoceros, along with the wild water buffalo, pygmy hog, tiger and various species of Asiatic birds, and provides one of the last wild habitats for the Asian elephant. The Assamese economy is aided by wildlife tourism to Kaziranga National Park and Manas National Park, which are World Heritage Sites. Dibru-Saikhowa National Park is famed for its feral horses. Sal tree forests are found in the state which, as a result of abundant rainfall, look green all year round. Assam receives more rainfall than most parts of India; this rain feeds the Brahmaputra River, whose tributaries and oxbow lakes provide the region with a distinctive hydro-geomorphic environment.

Etymology The first dated mention of the region comes from Periplus of the Erythraean Sea (1st century) and Ptolemy's Geographia (2nd century), which calls the region Kirrhadia, apparently after the Kirata population. In the classical period and up to the 12th century, the region east of the Karatoya River, largely congruent to present-day Assam, was called Kamarupa, and alternatively, Pragjyotisha. Though a western portion of Assam as a region continued to be called Kamrup, the Ahom kingdom that emerged in the east, and which came to dominate the entire Brahmaputra Valley, was called Assam (e.g. Mughals used Asham); and the British province too was called Assam. Though the precise etymology of Assam is not clear, the name Assam is associated with the Ahom people, originally called Shyam (Shan).

History Pre-history Assam and adjoining regions have evidences of human settlement from the beginning of the Stone Age. The hills at the height of 1,500 to 2,000 feet (460-615 m) were popular habitats probably due to availability of exposed dolerite basalt, useful for tool-making. Ambari site in Guwahati has revealed Shunga-Kushana era artefacts including flight of stairs and a water tank which may date from 1st century BCE and may be 2,000 years old. Experts speculate that another significant find at Ambari is Roman era Roman roulette pottery from the 2nd century BCE. Gupta explains that while Guwahati, formerly known as Pragjyotishpur in ancient times, is mentioned in epics like the Mahabharata and the Puranas, there is a lack of substantial archaeological evidence regarding its ancient history, especially before the 7th century AD.

Legend According to a late text, Kalika Purana (c. 9th-10th century CE), the earliest ruler of Assam was Mahiranga Danava of the Danava dynasty, which was removed by Narakasura of Mithila and established the Bhauma dynasty. The last of these rulers, also Narakasura, was slain by Krishna. Naraksura's son Bhagadatta became the king, who (it is mentioned in the Mahabharata) fought for the Kauravas in the battle of Kurukshetra with an army of kiratas, chinas and dwellers of the eastern coast. At the same time towards the east in central Assam, Asura kingdom was ruled by another line of kings.

Ancient era Evidence indicates presence of civilisation in Assam around 2nd century BCE, a rock cut stupa at Sri Surya Pahar has been dated to 200 BCE contemporary with rock cut Karle and Bhaja caves of Maharashtra. The site is located in a hilly terrain where several rock-cut shivalingas, votive stupas and the deities of Hindu, Buddhist and Jain pantheon are scattered. Samudragupta's 4th-century-CE Allahabad pillar inscription mentions Kamarupa and Davaka (Central Assam) as frontier kingdoms of the Gupta Empire. Davaka was later absorbed by Kamarupa, which grew into a large kingdom that spanned from Karatoya River to near present Sadiya and covered the entire Brahmaputra Valley, North Bengal, parts of Bangladesh and, at times Purnea and parts of West Bengal. The kingdom was ruled by three dynasties who traced their lineage from a mlechha or Kirata Naraka; the Varmanas (c. 350-650 CE), the Mlechchha dynasty (c.655-900 CE) and the Kamarupa-Palas (c. 900-1100 CE), from their capitals in present-day Guwahati (Pragjyotishpura), Tezpur (Haruppeswara) and North Gauhati (Durjaya) respectively. All three dynasties claimed descent from Narakasura. In the reign of the Varman king, Bhaskaravarman (c. 600-650 CE), the Chinese traveller Xuanzang visited the region and recorded his travels. Later, after weakening and disintegration (after the Kamarupa-Palas), the Kamarupa tradition was extended to c. 1255 CE by the Lunar I (c. 1120-1185 CE) and Lunar II (c. 1155-1255 CE) dynasties.

Medieval era The Medieval Assam history may have started with the advent of Ahoms in the early part of the 13th century and covers their entire rule of 600 years till 1826. After the Bengal-Kamata War, the Khen dynasty ended, and Alauddin Hussain Shah issued coins in his name to be "Conqueror of Kamarup and Kamata". The medieval history of Assam is especially known for its conflict with Muslim powers under Turko-Afghan and Mughals, finally resulting in Assamese victory, however, this military glory was shattered in the early 19th century when it failed to resist the Burmese invasions, which led to its annexation.

Chutia kingdom Chutia, a Bodo-Kachari group by origin, held the regions on both the banks of Brahmaputra with its domain in the area eastwards from Vishwanath (north bank) and Buridihing (south bank), in Upper Assam and in the state of Arunachal Pradesh. It was annexed by the Ahoms in the year 1524. The rivalry between the Chutias and Ahoms for the supremacy of eastern Assam led to a series of conflicts between them from the early 16th century.

Kachari kingdom The Dimasa, a Bodo-Kachari dynasty that ruled from the 13th century until 1854, controlled territories stretching from the Dikhow River to central and southern Assam, with their capital at Dimapur. By the early 17th century, with the expansion of the Ahom kingdom, the Chutia regions were annexed, and by around 1536, the Kacharis were confined to the areas of Cachar and North Cachar. At this point, they became more of an ally to the Ahoms than a rival force.

Ahom kingdom Early period The Ahoms, a Tai group, ruled Upper Assam for almost 600 years. In the year 1228 the Tai-Ahoms came to the Brahmaputra Valley under the leadership of Sukapha along with 9,000 men from Mong Mao, a Tai state, situated in South-Western Yunnan of China, and established his kingdom in Upper Assam. In 1253, he founded the capital city in a hillock and named it Charaideo. At the time of his advent, the area was inhabited by Morans and Borahis, to the north, to the north-east was the Chutia kingdom and to the south was the Kachari kingdom and to the west on the plains were the Baro-Bhuyans. For more than two and a half centuries, Sukapha and his descendants, while primarily focused on administering the kingdom, upheld their dominance in the valley through their military prowess.

Expansion The reign of Suhungmung marked the first massive expansion of Ahom kingdom. Besides sending a punitive expeditions against the Nagas, they fought numerous battles with the Bhuyans, Chutias, Kacharis, Turko-Afghans, and the Naras. In 1522-23 the Chutia kingdom was annexed and the captured tract was placed under the administration of Sadiya-Khowa-Gohain. After securing the eastern tract, Suhungmung then expanded his kingdom westwards through conquest and extended it till Marangi to the west of the Dhansiri River. When the Kacharis tried to regain the lost territory they were defeated and their capital Dimapur was sacked. Over the remaining part of the Kachari kingdom, a new king Detsung was placed as a tributary, but Detsung proved disloyal and revolted against the Ahoms. He was subsequently executed. A new dependent king was set up on the Kachari throne with the name of Nirbhaynarayan. Since then the Kachari kings were regarded as 'thapita sanchita' meaning - established and maintained by the Ahom rulers. Suhungmung's reign also witnessed the first Muslim-invasions of the kingdom. After a series of battle, the invaders were roundly defeated and were chased up to Karatoya River. The Sultan of Bengal, terrified by the approaching army of Suhungmung, made peace with the king. The rising Koch king Biswa Singha also offered his submission, and the Ahom general Ton-Kham granted him all the territories that were received as dowry from the Sultan of Bengal on the condition of annual tribute. The successors of Suhungmung, Suklenmung and Sukhaamphaa, sent many expeditions against the Bhuyans and Nagas. But were significant with the wars with the Koch. During the reign of Sukhaamphaa, the Ahoms lost to a Koch army led by Chilarai and the Ahoms had to accept Koch supremacy and had to give up the tracts of north of Brahmaputra. However, the lost tract was soon recovered with further military expeditions.

Later Period War with Mughals Soon after the death of Nara Narayan, his kingdom was divided between the sons of Nara Narayan and Chilarai as Koch Hajo and Koch Bihar. In 1609, Laxmi Narayan king of Cooch Behar accepted the vassalage of Mughals, and the Koch Hajo king Raghudev, and later his son Parikshit, sought assistance from the Ahoms. In 1612, the Mughals attacked Koch Hajo, and his territory up to Barnadi River was annexed in the Mughal domain. This brought the Mughals into direct contact with the Ahoms. Meanwhile, Parikshit was trying to renew his friendship with the Ahoms, but was captured, and died on his way to his kingdom. Later, Balinarayan, a brother of Parikshit who had taken refuge with the Ahoms, was made the king of Darrang in 1615 by the Ahom king Pratap Singha. From 1616 onwards, many battles were fought with the Mughal without any tangible result, starting with the Battle of Samdhara. After the last battle, the treaty was established in 1639, which fixed the Asurar ali on the south bank and the Barnadi on the north bank of the Brahmaputra as the boundary between the two. Pratap Singha also enacted the Paik system and created a number of army and civil administration posts such as the Borbarua and Borphukan. Jayadhwaj Singha took advantage of a war of succession between the sons of Shah Jahan, and occupied the imperial territories up to Dhaka. Aurangzeb, after becoming the emperor, appointed Mir Jumla II, to recover the lost territory. After failed negotiations in November 1661, Mir Jumla proceeded with a huge army and fleet to invade the Ahom kingdom. The Ahoms lost at several places, and then captured the Ahom capital Garhgaon. During the rainy season, Mir Jumla and his army suffered immeasurable hardship due to the climatic condition of the valley, in addition to the guerrilla fighting against the invaders. After no noticeable gain, negotiation started and in January 1663, the Treaty of Ghilajharighat was established. According to the treaty, the Ahoms acknowledged Mughal supremacy, ceding the territory west of the Bharali on the north bank and the Kalang on the south bank, along with a huge amount of war indemnity, and handing over the sons of the Gohains as hostages, and two Ahom princesses to the Mughal harem. Soon after the departure of Mir Jumla, Jayadhwaj Singha died and the new king Chakradhwaj Singha began preparations to overthrow Mughal supremacy and to recover the lost territory. After numerous battles, and finally the Battle of Saraighat, the Mughals were forced to retreat.

The period after 1671 was very unstable due to the rivalry among the nobles, who wanted to establish their political power and influence by placing their own choice of prince in the throne. In 1679, Lakuksola Borphukan,

in hopes of becoming king with the help of the Mughals, surrendered Guwahati without any battle. But after the accession of Gadadhar Singha, at the final Battle of Itakhuli, the Mughals were badly defeated. The border was then fixed at Manah on the north bank, and the Nagarbera hill on the south bank of the Brahmaputra till its annexation by the East India Company in 1826.

18th century Rudra Singha succeeded Gadadhar Singha, his reign is notable because of his military achievements and his socio-culture contributions. He had both subjugated the Kachari and Jaintia kingdoms, and had captured their kings and forced to accept Ahom suzerainty and agreed them to pay annual tribute. Other than that, several expeditions were sent against the Miris, the Daflas, the Naga Mishmis and the Nagas of Namsung, Dayang and the Rengma Nagas during late 17th century and early 18th century. Rudra Singha had made extensive preparations for his invasion of Bengal but remained unfulfilled due to his sudden death in 1714. After Rudra Singha, the Ahoms achieved no notable military achievement. During this period from, Siva Singha to Rajeswar Singha, the kingdom witnessed peace and prosperity and was significant for constructive activities and other development. In the field of religion also, Ekasarana Dharma spread all over the kingdom and started to influence all aspects of people's life. The religious heads of Vaisnavite monastery exalted great influence with royal patronage and established numerous Satras and most of the people became their disciples. So got the Ahom court greatly came under the influence of Sakta Brahman priests and astrologers. The religious policies concluded by Phuleshwari and the persecutions of unfavored Satras, embroiled the situation more along with the pressure of Paik system in the 18th century. This finally resulted in the Moamoria rebellion (1769-1805), which greatly weakened the Ahom kingdom where the country was greatly depopulated and unorganised. The political rivalry between the nobles made a pathway for a devastating set of invasions by the Burmese, weakening it more and finally leading to its annexation.

Colonial era The discovery of *Camellia sinensis* in 1834 in Assam was followed by testing in 1836-37 in London. The British allowed companies to rent land from 1839 onwards. Thereafter tea plantations proliferated in Eastern Assam, where the soil and the climate were most suitable. Problems with the imported Han Chinese labourers from China and hostility from native Assamese resulted in the migration of forced labourers from central and eastern parts of India. After initial trial and error with planting the Chinese and the Assamese-Chinese hybrid varieties, the planters later accepted the local *Camellia assamica* as the most suitable variety for Assam. By the 1850s, the industry started seeing some profits. The industry saw initial growth, when in 1861, investors were allowed to own land in Assam and it saw substantial progress with the invention of new technologies and machinery for preparing processed tea during the 1870s. Despite the commercial success, tea labourers continued to be exploited, working and living under poor conditions. Fearful of greater government interference, the tea growers formed the Indian Tea Association in 1888 to lobby to retain the status quo. The organisation was successful in this, but even after India's independence, conditions of the labourers have improved very little. In the later part of the 18th century, religious tensions and atrocities by the nobles led to the Moamoria rebellion (1769-1805), resulting in tremendous casualties of lives and property. The rebellion was suppressed but the kingdom was severely weakened by the civil war. Political rivalry between Prime Minister Purnananda Burhagohain and Badan Chandra Borphukan, the Ahom Viceroy of Western Assam, led to an invitation to the Burmese by the latter, in turn leading to three successive Burmese invasions of Assam. The reigning monarch Chandrakanta Singha tried to check the Burmese invaders but he was defeated after fierce resistance, which led to the Burmese occupation of Assam. A reign of terror was unleashed by the Burmese on the Assamese people, who fled to neighbouring kingdoms and British-ruled Bengal. The Burmese reached the East India Company's borders, and the First Anglo-Burmese War ensued in 1824. The war ended under the Treaty of Yandabo in 1826, with the Company taking control of Western Assam and installing Purandar Singha as king of Upper Assam in 1833. The arrangement lasted until 1838 and thereafter the British gradually annexed the entire region. Thereafter the court language and medium of

instruction in educational institutions of Assam was made Bengali, instead of Assamese. Starting from 1836 until 1873, this imposition of a foreign tongue created greater unemployment among the People of Assam and Assamese literature naturally suffered in its growth.

Initially, Assam was made a part of the Bengal Presidency, then in 1906 it was made a part of Eastern Bengal and Assam province, and in 1912 it was reconstituted into a chief commissioners' province. In 1913, a legislative council and, in 1937, the Assam Legislative Assembly, were formed in Shillong, the erstwhile capital of the region. The British tea planters imported labour from central India adding to the demographic canvas. The Assam territory was first separated from Bengal in 1874 as the 'North-East Frontier' non-regulation province, also known as the Assam Chief-Commissionership. It was incorporated into the new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam in 1905 after the partition of Bengal (1905-1911) and re-established in 1912 as Assam Province. After a few initially unsuccessful attempts to gain independence for Assam during the 1850s, anti-colonial Assamese joined and actively supported the Indian National Congress against the British from the early 20th century, with Gopinath Bordoloi emerging as the preeminent nationalist leader in the Assam Congress. Bordoloi's major political rival in this time was Sir Saidullah, who was representing the Muslim League, and had the backing of the influential Muslim cleric Maulana Bhasani. The Assam Postage Circle was established by 1873 under the headship of the Deputy Post Master General. At the turn of the 20th century, British India consisted of eight provinces that were administered either by a governor or a lieutenant-governor. Assam Province was one among the major eight provinces of British India. The table below shows the major original provinces during British India covering the Assam Province under the Administrative Office of the Chief Commissioner. With the partition of India in 1947, Assam became a constituent state of India. The Sylhet District of Assam (excluding the Karimganj subdivision) was given up to East Pakistan, which later became Bangladesh.

Modern history The government of India, which has the unilateral powers to change the borders of a state, divided Assam into several states beginning in 1970 within the borders of what was then Assam. In 1963, the Naga Hills district became the 16th state of India under the name of Nagaland. Part of Tuensang was added to Nagaland. In 1970, in response to the demands of the Khasi, Jaintia and Garo people of the Meghalaya Plateau, the districts containing the Khasi Hills, Jaintia Hills, and Garo Hills were formed into an autonomous state within Assam; in 1972 this became a separate state under the name of Meghalaya. In 1972, Arunachal Pradesh (the North East Frontier Agency) and Mizoram (from the Mizo Hills in the south) were separated from Assam as union territories; both became states in 1986. Since the restructuring of Assam after independence, communal tensions and violence remain. Separatist groups began forming along ethnic lines, and demands for autonomy and sovereignty grew, resulting in the fragmentation of Assam. In 1961, the government of Assam passed legislation making use of the Assamese language compulsory. It was withdrawn later under pressure from Bengali speaking people in Cachar. In the 1980s the Brahmaputra Valley saw a six-year Assam Agitation triggered by the discovery of a sudden rise in registered voters on electoral rolls. It tried to force the government to identify and deport foreigners illegally migrating from neighbouring Bangladesh and to provide constitutional, legislative, administrative and cultural safeguards for the indigenous Assamese majority, which they felt was under threat due to the increase of migration from Bangladesh. The agitation ended after an accord (Assam Accord 1985) between its leaders and the Union Government, which remained unimplemented, causing simmering discontent. The post 1970s experienced the growth of armed separatist groups such as the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) and the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB). In November 1990, the Government of India deployed the Indian army, after which low-intensity military conflicts and political homicides have been continuing for more than a decade. In recent times, ethnically based militant groups have grown. The Panchayati Raj Act has been applied in Assam, after agitation of the communities due to the sluggish rate of development and general apathy of successive state governments towards Indigenous

Assamese communities. Deadly floods hit the state in 2020 and 2022.

Geography A significant geographical aspect of Assam is that it contains three of six physiographic divisions of India - The Northern Himalayas (Eastern Hills), The Northern Plains (Brahmaputra plain) and Deccan Plateau (Karbi Anglong). As the Brahmaputra flows in Assam the climate here is cold and there is rainfall most of the month. Geomorphic studies conclude that the Brahmaputra, the life-line of Assam, is an antecedent river older than the Himalayas, which has entrenched itself since they started rising. The river with steep gorges and rapids in Arunachal Pradesh entering Assam, becomes a braided river (at times 10 mi/16 km wide) and with tributaries, creates a flood plain (Brahmaputra Valley: 50-60 mi/80-100 km wide, 600 mi/1000 km long). The hills of Karbi Anglong, North Cachar and those in and close to Guwahati (also Khasi-Garo Hills) now eroded and dissected are originally parts of the South Indian Plateau system. In the south, the Barak River originating in the Barail Range (Assam-Nagaland border) flows through the Cachar district with a 25-30 miles (40-50 km) wide valley and enters Bangladesh with the name Surma River. Urban centres include Guwahati, one of the 100 fastest growing cities in the world. Guwahati is also referred to as the "Gateway to the North-East India". Silchar, (in the Barak valley) is the second most populous city in Assam and an important centre of business. Other large cities include Dibrugarh, an oil and natural gas industry centre,

Climate With the tropical monsoon climate, Assam is temperate (summer max. at 95-100 F or 35-38 C and winter min. at 43-46 F or 6-8 C) and experiences heavy rainfall and high humidity. The climate is characterised by heavy monsoon downpours reducing summer temperatures and affecting foggy nights and mornings in winters, frequent during the afternoons. Spring (March-April) and autumn (September-October) are usually pleasant with moderate rainfall and temperature. Assam's agriculture usually depends on the south-west monsoon rains.

Flooding Every year, rivers like the Brahmaputra and Barak overflow due to heavy rainfall, causing widespread flooding across Assam. The rising water levels submerge nearby areas, washing away houses, livestock, and damaging infrastructure such as bridges, railway tracks, and roads, leading to communication breakdowns in many regions. This natural disaster also results in numerous fatalities throughout the state.

Fauna Assam is one of the richest biodiversity zones in the world and consists of tropical rainforests, deciduous forests, riverine grasslands, bamboo orchards and numerous wetland ecosystems; Many are now protected as national parks and reserved forests. Assam has wildlife sanctuaries, the most prominent of which are two UNESCO World Heritage Sites-the Kaziranga National Park, on the bank of the Brahmaputra River, and the Manas Wildlife Sanctuary, near the border with Bhutan. The Kaziranga is a refuge for the fast-disappearing Indian one-horned rhinoceros. The state is the last refuge for numerous other endangered and threatened species including the white-winged wood duck or deohanh, Bengal florican, black-breasted parrotbill, red-headed vulture, white-rumped vulture, greater adjutant, Jerdon's babbler, rufous-necked hornbill, Bengal tiger, Asian elephant, pygmy hog, gaur, wild water buffalo, Indian hog deer, hoolock gibbon, golden langur, capped langur, barasingha, Ganges river dolphin, Barca snakehead, Ganges shark, Burmese python, Brahminy river turtle, black pond turtle, Asian forest tortoise, and Assam roofed turtle. Threatened species that are extinct in Assam include the gharial, a critically endangered fish-eating crocodilian, and the pink-headed duck (which may be extinct worldwide). For the state bird, the white-winged wood duck, Assam is a globally important area. In addition to the above, there are three other National Parks in Assam namely Dibru Saikhowa National Park, Nameri National Park and the Orang National Park. Assam has conserved the one-horned Indian rhinoceros from near extinction, along with the pygmy hog, tiger and numerous species of birds, and it provides one of the last wild habitats for the Asian elephant. Kaziranga and Manas are both World Heritage Sites. The state

contains Sal tree forests and forest products, much depleted from earlier times. A land of high rainfall, Assam displays greenery. The Brahmaputra River tributaries and oxbow lakes provide the region with hydro-geomorphic environment. The state has the largest population of the wild water buffalo in the world. The state has the highest diversity of birds in India with around 820 species. With subspecies the number is as high as 946. The mammal diversity in the state is around 190 species.

Flora Assam is remarkably rich in Orchid species and the Foxtail orchid is the state flower of Assam. The recently established Kaziranga National Orchid and Biodiversity Park boasts more than 500 of the estimated 1,314 orchid species found in India.

Geology Assam has petroleum, natural gas, coal, limestone and other minor minerals such as magnetic quartzite, kaolin, sillimanites, clay and feldspar. A small quantity of iron ore is available in western districts. Discovered in 1889, all the major petroleum-gas reserves are in Upper parts. A recent USGS estimate shows 399 million barrels (63,400,000 m³) of oil, 1,178 billion cubic feet (3.341010 m³) of gas and 67 million barrels (10,700,000 m³) of natural gas liquids in the Assam Geologic Province. The region is prone to natural disasters like annual floods and frequent mild earthquakes. Strong earthquakes were recorded in 1869, 1897, and 1950.

Demographics Population The total population of Assam was 26.66 million with 4.91 million households in 2001. Higher population concentration was recorded in the districts of Kamrup, Nagaon, Sonitpur, Barpeta, Dhubri, Darrang, and Cachar. Assam's population was estimated at 28.67 million in 2006 and at 30.57 million in 2011 and is expected to reach 34.18 million by 2021 and 35.60 million by 2026. As per the 2011 census, the total population of Assam was 31,169,272. The total population of the state has increased from 26,638,407 to 31,169,272 in the last ten years with a growth rate of 16.93%. Of the 33 districts, Dhubri, Goalpara, Barpeta, Morigaon, Nagaon, and Hailakandi, recorded growth rates ranging from 20 per cent to 24 per cent during the last decade, whereas Sivasagar and Jorhat, registered around 9 per cent population growth. These districts do not have any international border.

In 2011, the literacy rate in the state was 73.18%. The male literacy rate was 78.81% and the female literacy rate was 67.27%. In 2001, the census had recorded literacy in Assam at 63.3% with male literacy at 71.3% and female at 54.6%. The urbanisation rate was recorded at 12.9%. The growth of population in Assam has increased since the middle decades of the 20th century. The population grew from 3.29 million in 1901 to 6.70 million in 1941. It increased to 14.63 million in 1971 and 22.41 million in 1991. The growth in the Western districts and Southern districts was high primarily due to the influx of large number of illegal immigrants from East Pakistan, now Bangladesh. The mistrust and clashes between indigenous Assamese people and Bengali Muslims started as early as 1952, but is rooted in anti Bengali sentiments of the 1940s. At least 77 people died and 400,000 people were displaced in the 2012 Assam violence between indigenous Bodos and Bengali Muslims. The People of India project has studied 115 of the ethnic groups in Assam. 79 (69%) identify themselves regionally, 22 (19%) locally, and 3 trans-nationally. The earliest settlers were Austroasiatic, Dravidian followed by Tibeto-Burman, Indo-Aryan, and Tai-Kadai people. Forty-five languages are spoken by different communities, including three major language families: Austroasiatic (5), Sino-Tibetan (24) and Indo-European (12). Three of the spoken languages do not fall in these families. There is a high degree of bilingualism. According to the World Air Quality Report 2024 by IQAir, Byrnihat located along the Assam-Meghalaya border is the most polluted city in India.

Religions According to the 2011 census, 61.47% were Hindus, 34.22% were Muslims. Christian minorities (3.7%) are found among the Scheduled Tribe and Castes population. The Scheduled Tribe population in Assam is around 13%, of which Bodos account for 40%. Other religious groups in Assam include Jainism (0.1%), Buddhism (0.2%), Sikhism (0.1%) and Animism (among Khamti, Phake, Aiton etc. communities). The three popular sects of Hinduism, namely, Shaivism, Shaktism, and Vaishnavism are prevalent here. Many Assamese Hindus are also followers of the Ekasarana Dharma sect of Hinduism.

Out of 32 districts of Assam, 9 are Muslim majority according to the 2011 census of India: Dhubri, Goalpara, Barpeta, Morigaon, Nagaon, Karimganj, Hailakandi, Darrang and Bongaigaon.

Languages Assamese and Bodo are the official languages of the state, Meitei (Manipuri) is official in Hojai district and all the three districts of Barak Valley, while Bengali is official in the three districts of Barak Valley, where Sylheti is most commonly spoken.

According to the language census of 2011 in Assam, out of a total population of around 31 million, Assamese is spoken by more than 22 million total speakers, with more than 15 million people speaking it as their mother tongue and around 7 million as L2 speakers. Although the number of speakers is growing, the percentage of Assam's population who have it as a mother tongue has fallen slightly. Assamese serves as lingua franca of the region as it is spoken by over 71% of the population (including the one who have listed Assamese as their 2nd language, while 48.38% of them speak it as their mother tongue. According to the 24th Edition of Ethnologue: Languages of the World, Assamese is spoken by 15,327,990 persons as mother tongue across the world as of 2021. However, 2016 Assam Legislative Assembly election results, have found that 10 million people speaks Assamese as their mother tongue in Assam, which is significantly fewer than the census result of 2011. The Assamese speakers constituted 48% of the State population according to the 2011 Census.

The various Bengali dialects and closely related languages are spoken by around 9 million people in Assam, and the portion of the population that speaks these languages has grown slightly as per the census. However, the number of Bengali speakers is estimated to be more than the expected census results, as 30% of the 35% Muslim population in Assam as per 2011 are thought to speak different dialects of Bengali as their native language but during census enumeration, they have reported their mother tongue as Assamese. In the Brahmaputra Valley, the main Bengali dialect is that of Mymensingh (now in Bangladesh), while in the Barak Valley and Hojai district, Sylheti is the main language which is also considered to be a dialect of Bengali in census. Bodo is the third most-spoken language followed by Hindi which comes under fourth position.

The population of the Brahmaputra Valley is 27,580,977 according to the 2011 census report by the Assam government. Assamese is the official language of the Brahmaputra Valley and is spoken by 15 million people comprising 55.65% of the valley population. Bengali is spoken by 6.09 million people representing 22.1% of the valley, Hindi is spoken by 2.1 million comprising 7.61% of the region, Bodo is spoken by 1.41 million comprising 5.13% of the valley's population and 2.98 million people speak various indigenous tribal languages of Assam, such as Karbi, Tiwa (Lalung), Hmar, Deori, Rabha, Mishng, Koch, Rajbangshi, Garo, Dimasa, Gorkha, Halam, Ao and Motak. Traditionally, Assamese was the language of the common folk in the ancient Kamarupa kingdom and in the medieval kingdoms of Dimasa Kachari, Chutiya Kachari, Borahi Kachari, Ahom and Kamata kingdoms. Traces of the language are found in many poems by Luipa, Sarahapa, and others, in Charyapada (c. 7th-8th century CE). Modern dialects such as Kamrupi and Goalpariya are remnants of this language, which blend into the Rajbanshi and Rangpuri lects spoken in North Bengal which have the same origin. Moreover,

Assamese in its traditional form was used by the ethno-cultural groups in the region as lingua-franca, which spread during the stronger kingdoms and was required for economic integration. Localised forms of the language still exist in Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh. Linguistically modern Assamese traces its roots to the version developed by the American Missionaries based on the local form used near Sivasagar (Xiwxagr) district. Assamese (xmiya) is a rich language due to its hybrid nature and unique characteristics of pronunciation and softness. The presence of Voiceless velar fricative in Assamese makes it a unique among other similar Indo-Aryan languages. Bodo is spoken largely in Western Assam. It is official language of the Bodoland territorial region and co-official language of the state of Assam. It is also one of twenty-two languages listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India. Spatial distribution patterns of the ethno-cultural groups, cultural traits and the phenomenon of naming all the major rivers in the North East Region with Bodo-Kachari words (e.g. Dihing, Dibru, Dihong, D/Tista, and Dikrai) reveal that it was more widely-spoken in ancient times. Other languages of Tibeto-Burman origin and related to Bodo-Kachari are Deori, Mising, Karbi, Rabha, and Tiwa. There are approximately 590,000 Nepali speakers spread all over the state forming about 1.98% of Assam's total population according to 2011 census. There are speakers of Tai languages in Assam. A total of six Tai languages were spoken in Assam. Two are now extinct.

Tai Phake Tai Aiton Khamti Khamyang (critically endangered) Ahom (extinct) Turung (extinct) There are also speakers of Dravidian Kurukh and Austroasiatic Khasi speakers scattered across Assam.

Government and politics Assam has Governor Lakshman Acharya as the head of the state, the unicameral Assam Legislative Assembly of 126 members, and a government led by the Chief Minister of Assam. The state is divided into five regional divisions. On 19 May 2016, BJP under the leadership of Sarbananda Sonowal won the Assembly elections, thus forming the first BJP-led government in Assam.

Administrative districts The 35 administrative districts of Assam are delineated based on geographic features such as rivers, hills, and forests. On 15 August 2015, five new districts were formed:

Part of Sonitpur became the Biswanath district (9 in the nearby map) Part of Sivasagar became the Charaideo district (4) Part of Nagaon became the Hojai district (14) Part of Dhubri became the South Salmara-Mankachar district (33) The Karbi Anglong district was divided into East (11) and West (15) districts On 27 June 2016, an island in the Brahmaputra River was bifurcated from the Jorhat district and declared the Majuli district, India's first district that is a river island. On 12 January 2021, Bajali was carved out from Barpeta district and formally declared as a district. With the announcement made by Governor Jagdish Mukhi, it has become the 34th district of Assam. On 31 December 2022, existing four districts Bajali (with Barpeta), Tamulpur(with Udalguri), Biswanath (with Sonitpur) and Hojai(with Nagaon) and number of district came down to 31. However, after the delimitation exercise was carried out in Assam, the Assam Cabinet reconstituted the 4 new districts (Bajali, Tamulpur, Biswanath and Hojai), taking the number of districts to 35 again.

Subdivisions The administrative districts are further subdivided into 54 "Subdivisions" or Mahakuma. Every district is administered from a district headquarters with the office of the Deputy Commissioner, District Magistrate, Office of the District Panchayat and usually with a district court. The local governance system is organised under the jila-parishad (District Panchayat) for a district, panchayat for group of or individual rural areas and under the urban local bodies for the towns and cities. There are now 2489 village panchayats covering 26247 villages in Assam. The 'town-committee' or nagar-somiti for small towns, 'municipal board' or pouro-sobha for medium towns and municipal corporation or pouro-nigom for the cities consist of the urban

local bodies. For revenue purposes, the districts are divided into revenue circles and mouzas; for the development projects, the districts are divided into 219 'development-blocks' and for law and order these are divided into 206 police stations or thana. Guwahati is the largest metropolitan area and urban conglomeration administered under the highest form of urban local body - Guwahati Municipal Corporation in Assam. The Corporation administers an area of 216.79 km² (83.70 sq mi). Apart from Guwahati Municipal Corporation and Dibrugarh Municipal Corporation All other urban centres are managed under Municipal Boards. A list of 9 oldest, classified and prominent, and constantly inhabited, recognised urban centres based on the earliest years of formation of the civic bodies, before the Indian independence of 1947 is tabulated below:

Autonomous Council The state has three autonomous councils under the sixth schedule of the Indian Constitution.

Bodoland Autonomous Territorial Council Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council. Dima Hasao Autonomous Council. The state has further statutory autonomous councils constituted under State Act-

Tiwa Autonomous Council for ethnic Tiwa people (Lalung) Rabha Hasong Autonomous Council Mising Autonomous Council for Mising people Deori Autonomous Council Sonowal Kachari Autonomous Council for Sonowal Kachari people Thengal Kachari Autonomous Council Moran Autonomous Council for Moran people Dudhnoi for ethnic Rabha Kachari Mising Autonomous Council for Mising people Matak Autonomous Council for Matak people Kamatapur Autonomous Council for Rajbongshi people Bodo Kachari Welfare Autonomous Council for Bodo-Kachari people living outside the Bodoland Territorial Region In March 2024, the Assam cabinet had given green signal for 'Kiran Sheikh' development council for the 'Kiran Sheikh' community in Barak Valley.

Social issues Inter-state dispute According to Assam Government, Assam has border dispute with four states namely Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh.

Assam-Mizoram dispute Mizoram used to be a district of Assam as Lushai hills before being carved out as a separate union territory and later, becoming another state in 1987. Because of the history, the district's borders did not really matter for locals for a long time. Mizoram shares a border with the districts Cachar, Hailakandi and Karimganj which comes under Barak valley region of Assam. Over time, the two states started having different perceptions about where the demarcation should be. While Mizoram wants it to be along an Inner Line Permit notified in 1875 to protect tribals from outside influence, which Mizos feel is part of their historical homeland, Assam wants it to be demarcated according to district boundaries drawn up much later.

Assam-Meghalaya dispute Meghalaya has identified close to a dozen areas on which it has a dispute with Assam about the state's borders. The chief ministers of the two states, Himanta Biswa Sarma and Meghalaya's Conrad Sangma, recently held the first-ever meeting on inter-state border dispute. Both the states have agreed to individually assess the claims for all 12 areas flagged by Meghalaya in the past. A second round of discussion between the two state CMs will be held next month of August. On the question of the role the Union Government is playing in redressing the inter-State border dispute in the country, minister of state for home affairs Nityanand Rai said, "The approach of the Central Government has consistently been that inter-state disputes can be resolved only with the cooperation of the State Governments concerned and that the Central Government acts only as a facilitator for amicable settlement of the dispute in the spirit of mutual understanding."

Assam-Nagaland dispute The border dispute between the two states has been going on since the formation of Nagaland in 1963. The two states lay claim to Merapani, a small village next to the plains of Assam's Golaghat district. There have been reports of violent clashes in the region since the 1960s.

Assam-Arunachal Pradesh dispute Assam shares an 804.10 km inter-state boundary with Arunachal Pradesh. The state of Arunachal Pradesh, created in 1987, claims some land that traditionally belonged to its residents has been given to Assam. A tripartite committee had recommended that certain territories be transferred from Assam to Arunachal. The two states have since been battling it out in the Supreme court of India over the issue. Some incidents of local violence have been reported from the borders.

Separate statehood demand within Assam Ahomland Upper Assam's various Tai-Ahom organisations like "Ahom Tai Mangoliya Rajya Parishad" (ATMRP), has been demanding a separate Ahomland state since 1967, comprising erstwhile Un-divided Sivasagar and Lakhimpur districts (today's Upper Assam and North Assam divisions) respectively. On 2023, "TAI Ahom Yuba Parishad, Assam" (TAYPA) have organised a protest at Chachal and have demanded separate Ahomland state.

Barak state The Barak Valley of Assam comprising the present districts of Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi is contiguous to Sylhet (Bengal plains), where the Bengalis, according to historian J.B. Bhattacharjee, had settled well before the colonial period, influencing the culture of Dimasas Kacharis. Bhattacharjee describes that the Dimasa kings spoke Bengali, the inscriptions and coins were written in Bengali script and the official language of the court was also Bengali. Migrations to Cachar increased after the British annexation of the region. The native Bengali people of Southern Assam demanded separate state for themselves within the Bengali majority areas of Assam particularly Bengali majority Barak valley comprising three districts: Cachar, Hailakandi, Karimganj along with Dima Hasao and parts of Hojai was also demanded to meet the criteria for creating a separate state for themselves by carving out from Assam's Assamese majority Brahmaputra Valley post NRC. Silchar is the proposed capital of Barak state. Barak valley is the most neglected part of Assam in terms of its infrastructure development, tourism sector, educational institutions, hospitals, IT industries, G.D.P, H.D.I etc. which is still lagging behind in comparison to the Assam's mainland Brahmaputra Valley which have access to all of those facilities mentioned above. In fact, the Assam's Southern part have an overall indigenous Bengali majority population, particularly Hojai have overall (54%) Bengali-speaking population, Barak Valley region have an overwhelming Bengali majority of about 80.3%, while Dima Hasao have approximately 30.2% significant Bengali plurality on certain pockets specially in the urban areas of the district.

Bodoland The agitation for the creation of a separate Bodoland state resulted in an agreement between the Indian Government, the Assam state government and the Bodo Liberation Tigers Force. According to the agreement made on 10 February 2003, the Bodoland Territorial Council, an entity subordinate to the government of Assam, was created to govern four districts covering 3082 Bodo Kachari-majority villages in Assam. Elections to the council were held on 13 May 2003, and Hagrama Mohilary was sworn in as the chief of the 46-member council on 4 June. Demographic wise, the Indigenous Bodo tribe constitutes half of the region's population, along with the region have also significant large number of other ethnic minorities which includes: Assamese, Koch Rajbangshi, Garo, Rabha tribe, Adivasis, Nepalis, Tea tribes, Bengalis, Biharis, Marwaris and Muslims.

Dimaraji The Dimasa people of northeast India have been demanding a separate state called Dimaraji or "Dimaland" for several decades. It would comprise the Dimasa-Kachari inhabited areas, namely Dima Hasao

district, Cachar district, parts of Barak Valley, Nagaon district, Hojai district and Karbi Anglong district in Assam together with part of Dimapur district in Nagaland.

Karbiland Karbi Anglong is one of the 35 districts of Assam. Karbi Anglong was previously known as Mikir Hills. It was part of the Excluded Areas and Partially Excluded Areas (the present North East India) in British India. The British Indian government had never included this area under their government's jurisdiction. Thereby, no government development work or activity were done, nor any tax levied from the hills including Karbi Anglong. The first memorandum for a Karbi homeland was presented to Governor Reid on 28 October 1940 by Semsonsing Ingti and Khorsing Terang at Mohongdijua. The Karbi leaders were then, a part of the All Party Hill Leaders' Conference (APHLC) which was formed on 6 July 1960. The movement again gained momentum when the Karbi Anglong District Council passed a resolution demanding a Separate State in 1981. Then again from 1986 through the leadership of Autonomous State Demand Committee (ASDC), demanded Autonomous statehood of Karbi Anglong and Dima Hasao under Article 244(A). In 2002, the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council passed another resolution to press for the demand of statehood. Several other memoranda were submitted at different times by several organisations. The demand for a separate state turned violent on 31 July 2013 when student demonstrators set government buildings on fire. Following the incident, the elected leaders of Karbi Anglong jointly submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister of India demanding a separate State. Demographic wise, more than half of the Karbi Anglong population is made up of Indigenous Karbi tribe with significant migrants from other parts of India.

Migration from Bangladesh Assam has been a major site of migration since the Partition of the subcontinent, with the first wave being composed largely of Bengali Hindu refugees arriving during and shortly after the establishment of India and Pakistan (current day Bangladesh was originally part of Pakistan, known as East Pakistan) in 1947-1951. Between the period of first patches (1946-1951), around 274,455 Bengali Hindu refugees have arrived from what is now called Bangladesh (former East Pakistan) in various locations of Assam as permanent settlers and again in second patches between (1952-1958) of the same decade, around 212,545 Bengali Hindus from Bangladesh took shelter in various parts of the state permanently. After the 1964 East Pakistan riots many Bengali Hindus have poured into Assam as refugees and the number of Hindu migrants in the state rose to 1,068,455 in 1968 (sharply after 4 years of the riot). The fourth patches numbering around 347,555 have just arrived after Bangladesh liberation war of 1971 as refugees and most of them being Bengali speaking Hindus have decided to stay back in Assam permanently afterwards. Though the governments of India and Bangladesh made agreements for the repatriation of certain groups of refugees after the second and third waves, a large presence of refugees and other migrants and their descendants remained in the state. Nevertheless, still people of Bangladesh have been immigrating to Assam on regular basis. As per reports, about 635 of Bangladeshi people mostly Hindus, use to immigrate to Assam daily. Besides migration caused by displacement, there is also a large and continual unregulated movement between Assam and neighbouring regions of Bangladesh with an exceptionally porous border. The situation is called a risk to Assam's as well as India's security. The continual illegal entry of people into Assam, mostly from Bangladesh, has caused economic upheaval and social and political unrest. During the Assam Movement (1979-1985), the All Assam Students Union (AASU) and others demanded that government stop the influx of immigrants and deport those who had already settled. During this period, 855 people (the AASU says 860) died in various conflicts with migrants and police. The 1983 Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunal) Act, applied only to Assam, decreed that any person who entered the Assam after Bangladesh declared independence from Pakistan in 1971 and without authorisation or travel documents is to be considered a foreigner, with the decision on foreigner status to be carried out by designated tribunals. In 1985, the Indian Government and leaders of the agitation signed the Assam accord to settle the conflict. The 1991 census made the changing demographics of border districts more visible. Since 2010, the Indian Government has undertaken the updating of the National Register of

Citizens for Assam, and in 2018 the 32.2 million residents of Assam were subject to a review of their citizenship. In August 2019, India released the names of the 2 million residents of Assam that had been determined to be non-citizens and whose names had therefore been struck off the Register of Citizens, depriving them of rights and making them subject to action, and potentially leaving some of them stateless, and the government has begun deporting non-citizens, while detaining 1,000 others that same year. In January 2019, the Assam's peasant organisation Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti (KMSS) claimed that there are around 20 lakh Hindu Bangladeshis in Assam who would become Indian citizens if the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill is passed. BJP, however claimed that only eight lakh Hindu Bangladeshis will get citizenship. According to various sources, the total number of illegal Hindu Bangladeshis is hard to ascertain. According to the census data, the number of Hindu immigrants have been largely exaggerated. In February 2020, the Assam Minority Development Board announced plans to segregate illegal Bangladeshi Muslim immigrants from the indigenous Muslims of the state, though some have expressed problems in identifying an indigenous Muslim person. According to the board, there are 1.4 crore Muslims in the state, of which 1 crore are of Bangladeshi origin. A report reveals that out of total 33 districts in Assam, Bangladeshis dominate almost 15 districts of Assam.

Floods In the rainy season every year, the Brahmaputra and other rivers overflow their banks and flood adjacent land. Flood waters wash away property including houses and livestock. Damage to crops and fields harms the agricultural sector. Bridges, railway tracks, and roads are also damaged, harming transportation and communication, and in some years requiring food to be air-dropped to isolated towns. Some deaths are attributed to the floods.

Unemployment Unemployment is a chronic problem in Assam. It is variously blamed on poor infrastructure, limited connectivity, and government policy; on a "poor work culture"; on failure to advertise vacancies; and on government hiring candidates from outside Assam. In 2020 a series of violent lynchings occurred in the region.

Education Universities, colleges and institutions include:

Universities Assam University Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat Assam Don Bosco University, Assam down town University, Assam Rajiv Gandhi University of Cooperative Management, (ARGUCOM), Sivasagar Assam Science and Technology University, Guwahati Assam Women's University, Jorhat Bodoland University, Kokrajhar Cotton University, Guwahati Dibrugarh University, Dibrugarh Gauhati University, Guwahati Kaziranga University, Jorhat Krishnaguru Adhyatmik Vishvavidyalaya Krishna Kanta Handique State Open University Kumar Bhaskar Varma Sanskrit and Ancient Studies University Mahapurusha Srimanta Sankaradeva Viswavidyalaya National Law University and Judicial Academy, Assam Royal Global University Srimanta Sankaradeva University of Health Sciences Tezpur University, Tezpur

Medical colleges AIIMS, Guwahati Assam Medical College, Dibrugarh Gauhati Medical College and Hospital, Guwahati Jorhat Medical College and Hospital, Jorhat Diphu Medical College and Hospital, Diphu Lakhimpur Medical college and Hospital, Lakhimpur Silchar Medical College and Hospital, Silchar Tezpur Medical College & Hospital, Tezpur Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed Medical College, Barpeta Nagaon Medical College and Hospital, Nagaon Kokrajhar Medical College and Hospital, Kokrajhar Dhubri Medical College and Hospital, Dhubri Regional Dental College, Guwahati Government Dental College, Silchar Assam has 12 medical colleges at present with 4 more scheduled to be completed by 2026-27.

Engineering and technological colleges Indian Institute of Technology in Guwahati Indian Institute of Information Technology, Guwahati National Institute of Technology, Silchar, Assam Engineering College, Guwahati Assam Science and Technology University Bineswar Brahma Engineering College, Kokrajhar Central Institute of Technology, Kokrajhar Institute of Engineering and Technology, Dibrugarh University Institute of Science and Technology, Guwahati University Jorhat Engineering College, Jorhat Jorhat Institute of Science & Technology, Jorhat NETES Institute of Technology & Science Mirza, Barak Valley Engineering College Nirala Karimganj Golaghat Engineering College, Golaghat Dhemaji Engineering College, Dhemaji Research institutes present in the state include National Research Centre on Pig, (ICAR) in Guwahati,

Economy Assam's economy is based on agriculture and oil. Assam produces more than half of India's tea. The Assam-Arakan basin holds about a quarter of the country's oil reserves, and produces about 12% of its total petroleum. According to the recent estimates, Assam's per capita GDP is ■6,157 at constant prices (1993-94) and ■10,198 at current prices; almost 40% lower than that in India. According to the recent estimates, per capita income in Assam has reached ■6756 (1993-94 constant prices) in 2004-05, which is still much lower than India's.

Tea plantations **Macro-economy** The economy of Assam today represents a unique juxtaposition of backwardness amidst plenty. Despite its rich natural resources, and supplying of up to 25% of India's petroleum needs, Assam's growth rate has not kept pace with that of India; the difference has increased rapidly since the 1970s. The Indian economy grew at 6% per annum over the period of 1981 to 2000; the growth rate of Assam was only 3.3%. In the Sixth Plan period, Assam experienced a negative growth rate of 3.78% when India's was positive at 6%. In the post-liberalised era (after 1991), the difference widened further. According to recent analysis, Assam's economy is showing signs of improvement. In 2001-02, the economy grew (at 1993-94 constant prices) at 4.5%, falling to 3.4% in the next financial year. During 2003-04 and 2004-05, the economy grew (at 1993-94 constant prices) at 5.5% and 5.3% respectively. The advanced estimates placed the growth rate for 2005-06 at above 6%. Assam's GDP in 2004 is estimated at \$13 billion in current prices. Sectoral analysis again exhibits a dismal picture. The average annual growth rate of agriculture, which was 2.6% per annum over the 1980s, has fallen to 1.6% in the 1990s. The manufacturing sector showed some improvement in the 1990s with a growth rate of 3.4% per annum than 2.4% in the 1980s. For the past five decades, the tertiary sector has registered the highest growth rates of the other sectors, which even has slowed down in the 1990s than in the 1980s.

Employment Unemployment is one of the major problems in Assam. This problem can be attributed to overpopulation and a faulty education system. Every year, large numbers of students obtain higher academic degrees but because of non-availability of proportional vacancies, most of these students remain unemployed. A number of employers hire over-qualified or efficient, but under-certified, candidates, or candidates with narrowly defined qualifications. The problem is exacerbated by the growth in the number of technical institutes in Assam which increases the unemployed community of the State. The reluctance on the part of the departments concerned to advertise vacancies in vernacular language has also made matters worse for local unemployed youths particularly for the job-seekers of Grade C and D vacancies. Reduction of the unemployed has been threatened by illegal immigration from Bangladesh. This has increased the workforce without a commensurate increase in jobs. Immigrants compete with local workers for jobs at lower wages, particularly in construction, domestics, Rickshaw-pullers, and vegetable sellers. The government has been identifying (via NRC) and deporting illegal immigrants. Continued immigration is exceeding deportation.

Agriculture In Assam among all the productive sectors, agriculture makes the highest contribution to its domestic sectors, accounting for more than a third of Assam's income and employs 69% of workforce. Assam's biggest contribution to the world is Assam tea. It has its own variety, *Camellia sinensis* var. *assamica*. The state produces rice, rapeseed, mustard seed, jute, potato, sweet potato, banana, papaya, areca nut, sugarcane and turmeric. Assam's agriculture is yet to experience modernisation in a real sense. With implications for food security, per capita food grain production has declined in the past five decades. Productivity has increased marginally, but is still low compared to highly productive regions. For instance, the yield of rice (a staple food of Assam) was just 1531 kg per hectare against India's 1927 kg per hectare in 2000-01 (which itself is much lower than Egypt's 9283, US's 7279, South Korea's 6838, Japan's 6635 and China's 6131 kg per hectare in 2001). On the other hand, after having strong domestic demand, and with 1.5 million hectares of inland water bodies, numerous rivers and 165 varieties of fishes, fishing is still in its traditional form and production is not self-sufficient.

Floods in Assam greatly affect the farmers and the families dependent on agriculture because of large-scale damage of agricultural fields and crops by flood water. Every year, flooding from the Brahmaputra and other rivers deluges places in Assam. The water levels of the rivers rise because of rainfall resulting in the rivers overflowing their banks and engulfing nearby areas. Apart from houses and livestock being washed away by flood water, bridges, railway tracks and roads are also damaged by the calamity, which causes communication breakdown in many places. Fatalities are also caused by the natural disaster in many places of the state.

Infrastructure On 30 August 2023, Nilachal Flyover was inaugurated. The flyover is Assam's longest flyover, spanning 2.63 kilometres and connecting Maligaon Chariali to Kamakhya Gate in Guwahati.

Industry Handlooms and handicrafts are traditional industries that continue to survive, especially among rural women, in the state. Assam's proximity to some neighbouring countries such as Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan, benefits its trade. The major Border checkpoints through which border trade flows to Bangladesh from Assam are : Sutarkandi (Karimganj), Dhubri, Mankachar (Dhubri) and Golokanj. To facilitate border trade with Bangladesh, Border Trade Centres have been developed at Sutarkandi and Mankachar. It has been proposed in the 11th five-year plan to set up two more Border Trade Center, one at Ledo connecting China and other at Darrang connecting Bhutan. There are several Land Custom Stations (LCS) in the state bordering Bangladesh and Bhutan to facilitate border trade. The government of India has identified some thrust areas for industrial development of Assam:

Although, the region in the eastern periphery of India is landlocked and is linked to the mainland by the narrow Siliguri Corridor (or the Chicken's Neck) improved transport infrastructure in all the three modes - rail, road and air - and developing urban infrastructure in the cities and towns of Assam are giving a boost to the entire industrial scene. The Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport at Guwahati, with international flights to Bangkok and Singapore offered by Druk Air of Bhutan, was the 12th busiest airport of India in 2012. The cities of Guwahati in the west and Dibrugarh in the east with good rail, road and air connectivity are the two important nerve centres of Assam, to be selected by Asian Development Bank for providing \$200 million for improvement of urban infrastructure. Assam is a producer of crude oil and it accounts for about 15% of India's crude output, exploited by the Assam Oil Company Ltd., and natural gas in India and is the second place in the world (after Titusville in the United States) where petroleum was discovered. Asia's first successful mechanically drilled oil well was drilled in Makum way back in 1867. Most of the oilfields are located in the Eastern Assam region. Assam has four oil refineries in Digboi (Asia's first and world's second refinery), Guwahati, Bongaigaon and Numaligarh and with a total capacity of 7 million metric tonnes (7.7 million short tons) per annum. Asia's first

refinery was set up at Digboi and discoverer of Digboi oilfield was the Assam Railways & Trading Company Limited (AR&T Co. Ltd.), a registered company of London in 1881. One of the biggest public sector oil company of the country Oil India Ltd. has its plant and headquarters at Duliajan. There are several other industries, including a chemical fertiliser plant at Namrup, petrochemical industries in Namrup and Bongaigaon, paper mills at Jagiroad, Hindustan Paper Corporation Ltd. Township Area Panchgram and Jogighopa, sugar mills in Barua Bamun Gaon, Chargola, Kampur, cement plants in Bokajan and Badarpur, and a cosmetics plant of Hindustan Unilever (HUL) at Doom Dooma. Moreover, there are other industries such as jute mill, textile and yarn mills, Assam silk, and silk mills. Many of these industries are facing losses and closure due to lack of infrastructure and improper management practices.

Tourism Wildlife, cultural, and historical destinations have attracted visitors.

Culture Assamese Culture is described as a hybrid and syncretic in nature developed due to the assimilation of numerous ethnic groups and cultural practices of Austroasiatic, Tibeto-Burman, Indo-aryan and Tai inhabitants. Therefore, both local elements or the local elements in Sanskritised forms are distinctly found. The major milestones in the evolution of Assamese culture are:

Assimilation in the Kamarupa kingdom for almost 800 years (Varman dynasty for 300 years, Mlechchha dynasty for 250 years and the Pala dynasty for 200 years. Establishment of the Chutia kingdom in the 12th century in eastern Assam and assimilation for next 400 years. Establishment of the Ahom kingdom in the 13th century CE and assimilation for next 600 years. Assimilation in the Koch kingdom (15th-16th century CE) of western Assam and Kachari kingdom (12th-18th century CE) of central and southern Assam. Neo-Vaishnavite (Ekasarana Dharma) Movement led by Srimanta Shankardeva (Xongkordeu) made an enormous impact on the socio-cultural and religious sphere of Assam. This 15th century religio-cultural movement under the leadership of Srimanta Sankardeva (Xonkordeu) and his disciples have provided another dimension to Assamese culture. A renewed Hinduisation in local forms took place, which was initially greatly supported by the Koch and later by the Ahom kingdoms. The resultant social institutions such as namghar and sattra (the Vaishnav Monasteries) have become an integral part of the Assamese way of life. The movement contributed greatly towards language, literature, and performing and fine arts.. It was also an egalitarian reform movement as it broke away with the old caste barriers of Brahmanical Hinduism and converted into its fold people of all castes, ethnicity and religions (including Islam).

The modern culture has been influenced by events in the British and the post-British era. Assamese language was standardised by American Baptist Missionaries such as Nathan Brown, Dr. Miles Bronson and local pundits such as Hemchandra Barua with the dialect spoken in undivided Sibsagar district (the centre of the Ahom kingdom) forming the standardised dialect. Increasing efforts of standardisation in the 20th century alienated the localised forms present in different areas and with the less-assimilated ethno-cultural groups (many source-cultures). However, Assamese culture in its hybrid form and nature is one of the richest, still developing and in true sense is a 'cultural system' with sub-systems. Many source-cultures of the Assamese cultural-system are still surviving either as sub-systems or as sister entities, e.g. the; Bodo or Karbi or Mishing. It is important to keep the broader system closer to its roots and at the same time focus on development of the sub-systems. Some of the common and unique cultural traits in the region are peoples' respect towards areca-nut and betel leaves, symbolic (gamosa, arnai, etc.), traditional silk garments (e.g. mekhela chador, traditional dress of Assamese women) and towards forefathers and elderly. Moreover, great hospitality and bamboo culture are common.

Symbols Symbolism is an ancient cultural practice in Assam and is still a very important part of the Assamese way of life. Various elements are used to represent beliefs, feelings, pride, identity, etc. Tamulpan (areca nut and betel leaves), Xorai and Gamosa are three important symbolic elements in Assamese culture. Tamulpan or guapan (gua from kwa) are considered along with the Gamosa (a typical woven cotton or silk cloth with embroidery) as the offers of devotion, respect and friendship. The Tamulpan-tradition is an ancient one and is being followed since time-immemorial with roots in the aboriginal Austric culture. Xorai is a traditionally manufactured bell-metal article of great respect and is used as a container-medium while performing respectful offers. Moreover, symbolically many ethno-cultural groups use specific clothes to portray respect and pride.

There were many other symbolic elements and designs, but are now only found in literature, art, sculpture, architecture, etc. or in use today for only religious purposes. The typical designs of Assamese-lion, dragon (ngi-ngao-kham), and flying-lion (Naam-singho) are used for symbolising various purposes and occasions. The archaeological sites such as the Madan Kamdev (c. 9th-10th centuries CE) exhibits mass-scale use of lions, dragon-lions and many other figures of demons to show case power and prosperity. The Vaishnavite monasteries (Sattras) and many other architectural sites of the late medieval period display the use of lions and dragons for symbolic effects.

Festivals and traditions There are diversified important traditional festivals in Assam. Bihu is the most important festival of Assam and is celebrated all over the state. The Assamese new year (Ek Bohag) is celebrated in April of the Gregorian calendar.

Bihu is described as the soul and life of Assam. It is a series of three prominent festivals each associated with a certain stage during the cultivation of paddy. Primarily a secular festival celebrated to mark the seasons and the significant points of a cultivator's life over yearly cycle. Three Bihus, rongali (in the month of bohag), celebrated with the coming of spring and the beginning of the sowing season; kongali or kati, the barren bihu when the fields are lush but the barns are empty and bhogali (in the month of magh), the thanksgiving when the crops have been harvested and the granaries are full. Bihu songs and Bihu dance are associated with rongali and bhogali bihu. The day before the each bihu is known as the day of Uruka. The first day of 'Rongali bihu' is called 'Goru bihu' (the bihu of the cows), when the cows are taken to the nearby rivers or ponds to be bathed with special care. In recent times the form and nature of celebration has changed with the growth of urban centres.

Bwisagu is one of the most popular seasonal festivals of the Bodos. Baisagu is a Boro word which originated from the word "Baisa" which means year or age, and "Agu" meaning starting or beginning. Bwisagu marks the beginning of the new year. It is celebrated at the beginning of the first month of the Boro year, around mid-April in the Gregorian Calendar. It has remarkable similarities to the festival of Rongali Bihu, also celebrated at the same time in Assam. The worship of Bathow is done on the second day of the festival.

Ali-Aye-Ligang or Ali-Ai-Ligang is a spring festival associated with agriculture celebrated by the indigenous Mising of Assam and other Northeast Indian states. It marks the beginning of the Ahu paddy cultivation in the farms. The term "Ali" denotes legumes, "Aye" means seed and "Ligang" is 'to sow'. The festival is celebrated on a Wednesday of the month of Fagun of the Assamese calendar and in the month of February in English calendar. The gumrag dance is associated with this festival.

Bushu Dima or simply Bushu is a major harvest festival of the Dimasa people. This festival is celebrated during the end of January. Officially 27 January has been declared as the day of Bushu Dima festival. The Dimasa

people celebrate by playing musical instruments- khram (a type of drum), muri (a kind of huge long flute). The people dance to the different tunes of "murithai" and each dance has its own unique name, the most prominent being the "Baidima". There are three types of Bushu celebrated by the Dimasas- Jidap, Surem and Hangsou. Me-Dam-Me-Phi is the day of the veneration of the dead ancestors for the Tai-Ahom community. It bears striking similarity in the concept of ancestor worship that the Tai-Ahoms share with other peoples originating from the Tai stock. The word 'Me' means offerings, 'Dam' means ancestors and 'Phi' means gods. According to the Buranjis, Lengdon (God of thunder), the king of Mong Phi (The heavenly kingdom), sent two of his grandsons Khunlung and Khunlai to Mong Ri Mong Ram (present day Xishuangbanna, China) and at that moment Ye-Cheng-Pha, the God of knowledge, advised them to perform Umpha, Phuralong, Mae Dam Mae Phi and Rik-khwan rituals in different months of the year on different occasions to pay respect to the Phi-Dam (Ancestral Spirit) and Khwan elements. Since that day till now Mae Dam Mae Phi has been observed by the Tai-Ahoms. It is celebrated on 31 January every year according to the Gregorian calendar.

Rongker also called Dehal is an annual winter festival of merriment celebrated by the Karbi people of Assam. It is observed in order to appease the local deities associated with the welfare of the village and the harvest of crops and also to get rid of all evil spirits. Although the festival does have a specific time it is usually observed at the beginning of the Karbi New year (Thang thang) which falls on February of the Gregorian calendar.

Doul Mohutsav, also called Fakuwa or Doul Utsav is a festival of colours and happiness popular in Lower Assam and especially in Barpeta. It is synonymous with the festival of Holi celebrated in Northern India. Holigeets of Barpeta are sung which is incredibly popular and enthalls the heart of every Assamese. These holigeets are the exquisite compositions in praise of Lord Krishna. People from different parts of the state visit Barpeta Satra to experience this colourful and joyful festival. Chavang Kut is a post harvesting festival of the Kuki people. The festival is celebrated on the first day of November every year. Hence, this particular day has been officially declared as a Restricted Holiday by the Assam government. In the past, the celebration was primarily important in the religio-cultural sense. The rhythmic movements of the dances in the festival were inspired by animals, agricultural techniques and showed their relationship with ecology. Today, the celebration witnesses the shifting of stages and is revamped to suit new contexts and interpretations. The traditional dances which form the core of the festival is now performed in out-of-village settings and are staged in a secular public sphere. In Assam, the Kukis mainly reside in the two autonomous districts of Dima Hasao and Karbi Anglong. Beshoma is a festival of Deshi people (one of the indigenous Muslim groups of Assam). It is a celebration of sowing crop. The Beshoma starts on the last day of Chaitra and goes on until the sixth of Baisakh. With varying locations it is also called Bishma or Chait-Boishne. Moreover, there are other important traditional festivals being celebrated every year on different occasions at different places. Many of these are celebrated by different ethno-cultural groups (sub and sister cultures). Some of these are:

Christmas is observed with great merriment by Christians of various denominations, including Catholics, Protestants and Baptists, throughout Assam. Durga Puja is widely celebrated across the state. Muslims celebrate two Eids (Eid ul-Fitr and Eid al-Adha) with much eagerness all over Assam. Other few yearly celebrations are Brahmaputra Beach Festival, Guwahati, Kaziranga Elephant Festival, Kaziranga and Dehing Patkai Festival, Lekhapani, Karbi Youth Festival of Diphu and International Jatinga Festival, Jatinga can not be forgotten. Few yearly Mela's like Jonbeel Mela, started in the 15th century by the Ahom Kings, Ambubachi Mela, Guwahati etc. Asom Divas or Sukapha Divas (2 December) is celebrated to commemorate the advent of the first king of the Ahom kingdom in Assam after his journey over the Patkai Hills. Lachit Divas (24 November) is celebrated on the birth anniversary of the great Ahom general Lachit Borphukan. Sarbananda Sonowal, the chief minister of Assam took part in the Lachit Divas celebration at the statue of Lachit Borphukan at

Brahmaputra riverfront on 24 November 2017. He said, the first countrywide celebration of 'Lachit Divas' would take place in New Delhi followed by state capitals such as Hyderabad, Bangalore and Kolkata in a phased manner.

Music, dance, and drama Performing arts include: Ankia Naat (Onkeeya Naat), a traditional Vaishnav dance-drama (Bhaona) popular since the 15th century CE. It makes use of large masks of gods, goddesses, demons and animals and in between the plays a Sutradhar (Xutrodhar) continues to narrate the story. Besides Bihu dance and Husori performed during the Bohag Bihu, dance forms of tribal minorities such as; Kushan nritya of Rajbongshi's, Bagurumba and Bordoicikhla dance of Bodos, Mishing Bihu, Banjar Kekan performed during Chomangkan by Karbis, Jhumair of Tea-garden community are some of the major folk dances. Sattriya (Sotriya) dance related to Vaishnav tradition is a classical form of dance. Moreover, there are several other age-old dance-forms such as Barpeta's Bhortal Nritya, Deodhani Nritya, Ojapali, Beula Dance, Ka Shad Inglong Kardom, Nimso Kerung, etc. The tradition of modern moving theatres is typical of Assam with immense popularity of many Mobile theatre groups such as Kohinoor, Brindabon, etc. The indigenous folk music has influenced the growth of a modern idiom, that finds expression in the music of artists like Jyoti Prasad Agarwala, Bishnuprasad Rabha, Parvati Prasad Baruwa, Bhupen Hazarika, Pratima Barua Pandey, Anima Choudhury, Luit Konwar Rudra Baruah, Jayanta Hazarika, Khagen Mahanta, Dipali Barthakur, among many others. Among the new generation, Zubeen Garg, Angaraag Mahanta and Joi Barua. There is an award given in the honour of Bishnu Prasad Rabha for achievements in the cultural/music world of Assam by the state government. Contemporary Assamese music also saw the rise of Zubeen Garg, one of the most popular modern singers of the region. His Assamese song "Mayabini Raatir Bukut" has achieved iconic status and is widely regarded as an anthem in Assam.

Cuisine Typically, an Assamese meal consists of many things such as bhat (rice) with dayl/ daly (lentils), masor jool (fish stew), mangx (meat stew) and stir fried greens or herbs and vegetables.

The two main characteristics of a traditional meal in Assam are khar (an Alkali, named after its main ingredient) and tenga (preparations bearing a characteristically rich and tangy flavour). Khorika is the smoked or fire grilled meat eaten with meals. Pitika (mash) is another delicacy of Assam. It includes alu pitika (mashed potatoes), bilahi (tomatoes), bengena (brinjals) or even masor pitika (fish). Commonly consumed varieties of meat include Mutton, fowl, duck/goose, fish, pigeon, pork and beef (among Muslim and Christian indigenous Assamese ethnic groups). Grasshoppers, locusts, silkworms, snails, eels, bat wild fowl, squab and other birds, and venison are also eaten, albeit in moderation.

Khorisa (fermented bamboo shoots) are used at times to flavour curries while they can also be preserved and made into pickles. Koldil (banana flower) and squash are also used in popular culinary preparations.

A variety of different rice cultivars are grown and consumed in different ways, viz., roasted, ground, boiled or just soaked. Fish curries made of free range wild fish as well as Bral, ru, illish, or sitl are the most popular. Another favourite combination is luchi (fried flatbread), a curry which can be vegetarian or non-vegetarian. Many indigenous Assamese communities households still continue to brew their traditional alcoholic beverages; examples include: Laupani, Xaaj, Paniyo, Jou, Joumai, Hor, Apong, Sujen etc. Such beverages are served during traditional festivities. Declining them is considered socially offensive. Assamese food is generally served in traditional bell metal dishes and platters like Kanhi, Maihang and so on.

Literature Assamese literature dates back to the composition of Charyapada, and later on works like Saptakanda Ramayana by Madhava Kandali, which is the first translation of the Ramayana into an Indo-Aryan language, contributed to Assamese literature. Sankardeva's Borgeet, Ankia Naat, Bhaona and Satra tradition backed the 15th-16th century Assamese literature. Written during the Reign of Ahoms, the Buranjis are notable literary works which are prominently historical manuscripts. Most literary works are written in Assamese although other local language such as Bodo and Dimasá are also represented. In the 19th and 20th century, Assamese and other literature was modernised by authors including Lakshminath Bezbaroa, Birinchi Kumar Barua, Hem Barua, Dr. Mamoni Raisom Goswami, Bhabendra Nath Saikia, Birendra Kumar Bhattacharya, Hiren Bhattacharyya, Homen Borgohain, Bhabananda Deka, Rebati Mohan Dutta Choudhury, Mahim Bora, Lil Bahadur Chettri, Syed Abdul Malik, Surendranath Medhi, Hiren Gohain etc.

Fine arts The archaic Mauryan Stupas discovered in and around Goalpara district are the earliest examples (c. 300 BCE to c. 100 CE) of ancient art and architectural works. The remains discovered in Daparvatiya (Doporboteeya) archaeological site with a beautiful doorframe in Tezpur are identified as the best examples of artwork in ancient Assam with influence of Sarnath School of Art of the late Gupta period. Painting is an ancient tradition of Assam. Xuanzang (7th century CE) mentions that among the Kamarupa king Bhaskaravarma's gifts to Harshavardhana there were paintings and painted objects, some of which were on Assamese silk. Many of the manuscripts such as Hastividhyarnava (A Treatise on Elephants), the Chitra Bhagawata and in the Gita Govinda from the Middle Ages bear excellent examples of traditional paintings.

Traditional crafts Assam has a rich tradition of crafts, Cane and bamboo craft, bell metal and brass craft, silk and cotton weaving, toy and mask making, pottery and terracotta work, wood craft, jewellery making, and musical instruments making have remained as major traditions. Cane and bamboo craft provide the most commonly used utilities in daily life, ranging from household utilities, weaving accessories, fishing accessories, furniture, musical instruments, construction materials, etc. Utilities and symbolic articles such as Sorai and Bota made from bell metal and brass are found in every Assamese household. Hajo and Sarthebari (Sorthebaary) are the most important centres of traditional bell-metal and brass crafts. Assam is the home of several types of silks, the most prestigious are: Muga - the natural golden silk, Pat - a creamy-bright-silver coloured silk and Eri - a variety used for manufacturing warm clothes for winter. Apart from Sualkuchi (Xualkuchi), the centre for the traditional silk industry, in almost every parts of the Brahmaputra Valley, rural households produce silk and silk garments with excellent embroidery designs. Moreover, various ethno-cultural groups in Assam make different types of cotton garments with unique embroidery designs and wonderful colour combinations. Moreover, Assam possesses unique crafts of toy and mask making mostly concentrated in the Vaishnav Monasteries, pottery and terracotta work in western Assam districts and wood craft, iron craft, jewellery, etc. in many places across the region.

Media Print media include Assamese dailies Amar Asom, Asomiya Khabar, Asomiya Pratidin, Dainik Agradoot, Dainik Janambhumi, Dainik Asam, Gana Adhikar, Janasadharan and Niyomiya Barta. Asom Bani, Sadin and Janambhumi are Assamese weekly newspapers. The English dailies of Assam include The Assam Tribune, The Sentinel, The Telegraph, The Times of India, The North East Times, Eastern Chronicle and The Hills Times. Thekar, in the Karbi language has the largest circulation of any daily from Karbi Anglong district. Bodosa has the highest circulation of any Bodo daily from BTR. Dainik Jugasankha is a Bengali daily with editions from Dibrugarh, Guwahati, Silchar and Kolkata. Dainik Samayik Prasanga, Dainik Prantojyoti, Dainik Janakantha and Nababarta Prasanga are other prominent Bengali dailies published in the Barak Valley towns of Karimganj and Silchar. Hindi dailies include Purvanchal Prahari, Pratah Khabar and Dainik Purvoday. Broadcasting stations of All India Radio have been established in 22 cities across the state. Local news and music are the

main priority for those stations. Assam has three public service broadcasting service stations of state-owned Doordarshan at Dibrugarh, Guwahati and Silchar. The Guwahati-based satellite news channels include Assam Talks, DY 365, News Live, News18 Assam North East, North East Live, Prag News and Pratidin Time.

Geographical indications Boka Chaul Boka Chaul was awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) status tag from the Geographical Indications Registry, under the Union Government of India, on 30 July 2018 and is valid until 24 July 2026. Lotus Progressive Centre (LPC) and Centre for Environment Education (CEE) from Guwahati, proposed the GI registration of Boka Chaul. After filing the application in July 2018, the rice was granted the GI tag in 2023 by the Geographical Indication Registry in Chennai, making the name "Boka Chaul" exclusive to the rice grown in the region. It thus became the second rice variety from Assam after Joha rice and the 7th type of goods from Assam to earn the GI tag. The GI tag protects the rice from illegal selling and marketing, and gives it legal protection and a unique identity.

See also India portal Outline of Assam - comprehensive topic guide listing articles about Assam. List of people from Assam 2022 Silchar Floods Emblem of Assam

Notes References Sources Further reading External links

Government Official site of the Government of Assam Official Tourism site of Assam General information Geographic data related to Assam at OpenStreetMap

Bihar

Bihar (pronounced [bʰaːr]), also spelled Behar in colonial documents, is a state in Eastern India. It is the second largest state by population, the 12th largest by area, and the 14th largest by GDP in 2024. Bihar borders Uttar Pradesh to its west, Nepal to the north, the northern part of West Bengal to the east, and Jharkhand to the south. Bihar is split by the river Ganges, which flows from west to east. On 15 November 2000, a large chunk of southern Bihar was ceded to form the new state of Jharkhand. Around 11.27% of Bihar's population live in urban areas as per a 2020 report. Additionally, almost 58% of Biharis are below the age of 25, giving Bihar the highest proportion of young people of any Indian state. The official language is Hindi, which shares official status alongside that of Urdu. The main native languages are Maithili, Magahi and Bhojpuri, but there are several other languages being spoken at smaller levels. In Ancient and Classical India, the area that is now Bihar was considered the centre of political and cultural power and as a haven of learning. Parshvanatha, the 23rd Tirthankar led the shramana order in this region in 9th century BCE. Jainism was revived and re-organised by Mahavira, the 24th Tirthankar in 6th century BCE. From Magadha arose India's first empire, the Maurya empire, as well as one of the world's most widely adhered-to religions: Buddhism. Magadha empires, notably under the Maurya and Gupta dynasties, unified large parts of South Asia under a central rule. Another region of Bihar, Mithila, was an early centre of learning and the centre of the Videha kingdom. However, since the late 1970s, Bihar has lagged far behind other Indian states in terms of social and economic development. Many economists and social scientists claim that this is a direct result of the policies of the central government: such as the freight equalisation policy, its apathy towards Bihar, lack of Bihari sub-nationalism, and the Permanent Settlement of 1793 by the British East India Company. The state government has, however, made significant strides in developing the state. Improved governance has led to an economic revival in the state through increased investment in infrastructure, better healthcare facilities, greater emphasis on education, and a reduction in crime and corruption.

Etymology The name Bihar is derived from the Sanskrit and Pali word *vihāra* (Devanagari: विहार), meaning 'abode' and usually referred to a Buddhist monastery. The region roughly encompassing the present state had many Buddhist *vihāras*, the abodes of Buddhist monks in the ancient and medieval periods.

History Ancient period Chirand, on the northern bank of the Ganga River, in Saran district, has an archaeological record from the Neolithic age (c. 2500-1345 BCE). Regions of Bihar - such as Magadha, Mithila, and Anga - are mentioned in religious texts and epics of ancient India. Mithila gained prominence after the establishment of the Videha Kingdom. During the late Vedic period (c. 1100-500 BCE), Videha became one of the major political and cultural centers of South Asia, along with Kuru and Pañcāla. The kings of the Videha Kingdom were called Janakas. Sita, a daughter of one of the Janaks of Mithila is mentioned as the consort of Lord Rama, in the Hindu epic Ramayana, written by Valmiki. The Videha Kingdom later became incorporated into the Vajjika League which had its capital in the city of Vaishali, which is also in Mithila. Vajji had a republican form of government where the head of state was elected from the rajas. Based on the information found in texts pertaining to Jainism and Buddhism, Vajji was established as a republic by the sixth century BCE, before the birth of Gautama Buddha in 563 BCE, making it the first known republic in India. The Haryanka dynasty, founded in 684 BCE, ruled Magadha from the city of Rajgriha (modern Rajgir). The two well-known kings from this dynasty were Bimbisara and his son Ajatashatru, who imprisoned his father to ascend the throne. Ajatashatru founded the city of Pataliputra which later became the capital of Magadha. He declared war and conquered the Vajjika League. The Haryanka dynasty was followed by the Shishunaga dynasty. Later, the

Nanda dynasty ruled a vast tract stretching from Punjab to Odisha.

The Nanda dynasty was replaced by the Maurya Empire, India's first empire. The Maurya Empire and the religion of Buddhism arose in the region that now makes up modern Bihar. The Mauryan Empire, which originated from Magadha in 321 BCE, was founded by Chandragupta Maurya, who was born in Magadha. It had its capital at Pataliputra (modern Patna). Mauryan Emperor Ashoka, who was born in Pataliputra (Patna), is often considered to be among the most accomplished rulers in world history. The Gupta Empire, which originated in Magadha in 240 CE, is referred to as the Golden Age of India in science, mathematics, astronomy, commerce, religion, and Indian philosophy. Bihar and Bengal were invaded by Rajendra Chola I of the Chola dynasty in the 11th century.

Medieval period Buddhism in Magadha declined due to the invasion of Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khalji, during which many of the viharas were destroyed along with the universities of Nalanda and Vikramashila. Some historians believe that thousands of Buddhist monks were massacred during the 12th century. D. N. Jha suggests, instead, that these incidents were the result of Buddhist-Brahmin skirmishes in a fight for supremacy. After the rule of the Pala Empire, the Karnat dynasty came into power in the Mithila region in the 11th century and they were succeeded by the Oiniwar dynasty in the 14th century. Aside from Mithila, there were other small kingdoms in medieval Bihar. The area around Bodh Gaya and much of Magadha came under the Buddhist Pithipatis of Bodh Gaya. The Khayaravala dynasty were present in the southwestern portions of the state until the 13th century. Many famous Buddhist and Hindu philosophers and scholars have originated or studied in Bihar during the period from the 5th to 13th century at institutions like Nalanda and Vikramashila including Kamalamalla, Ratnakarantika, Antarakita, Abhayakaragupta, Udayana and Gangeśa.

Sasaram was also the first capital city of the Sur Empire founded by the ruler of Bihar, Sultan Sher Shah Suri who was Pashtun.

Colonial era After the Battle of Buxar (1764), the British East India Company obtained the diwani rights (rights to administer and collect tax revenue) for Bihar, Bengal, and Odisha. The rich resources of fertile land, water, and skilled labour had attracted the foreign imperialists, particularly the Dutch and British, in the 18th century. A number of agriculture-based industries had been started in Bihar by foreign entrepreneurs. Bihar remained a part of the Bengal Presidency of British India until 1912, when Bihar and Orissa were carved out as separate provinces.

Pre- and post-Independence Farmers in Champaran had revolted against indigo cultivation in 1914 (at Pipra) and 1916 (Turkaulia). In April 1917, Mahatma Gandhi visited Champaran, where Raj Kumar Shukla had drawn his attention to the exploitation of the peasants by European indigo planters. The Champaran Satyagraha that followed received support from many Bihari nationalists, such as Rajendra Prasad, Shri Krishna Sinha and Anugrah Narayan Sinha. In the northern and central regions of Bihar, the Kisan Sabha (peasant movement) was an important consequence of the independence movement. It began in 1929 under the leadership of Swami Sahajanand Saraswati who formed the Bihar Provincial Kisan Sabha (BPKS), to mobilise peasant grievances against the zamindari attacks on their occupancy rights. The movement intensified and spread from Bihar across the rest of India, culminating in the formation of the All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) at the Lucknow session of the Indian National Congress in April 1936, where Saraswati was elected as its first president. Following independence, Bihari migrant workers have faced violence and prejudice in many parts of India, such as Maharashtra, Punjab, and Assam. Decades following the independence in 1947 were full of violent conflicts

between the landless section of Bihari society and the landed elite who controlled the government at various level. This was an outcome of the failed land reform drive and improper implementation of the land ceiling laws that were passed by Indian National Congress government in the 1950s. Landed castes like Rajput and Bhumihaar became suspicious of the land reforms and used their influence in government to hinder the efforts of the land redistribution programme, which may have alleviated the huge caste based income inequalities. Unscrupulous tactics such as absentee landlordism neutralised the reforms which was architected by Krishna Ballabh Sahay. In the Zamindari areas of Bihar, such as Bhojpur district, the Dalits were also subjected to frequent humiliation and practice of begar existed. This led to first spark of mass scale naxalism to grew up in the plains of Bhojpur. This armed struggle was led initially by Master Jagdish Mahto, a school teacher turned naxalite. Soon, the struggle spread into other parts of Bihar, where the landlords and agricultural labourers locked horns against each other. Between 1950 and 2000, several massacres took place. In Bihar, unlike the other parts of India, the naxalism took the form of caste conflict as the landed section of society belonged primarily to Forward Castes and a section of Upper Backward Castes, on the other hand, the landless were the people belonging to Schedule Castes and a section of Other Backward Castes. Formation of caste based private armies called senas took place in response to violent activities of the naxalites. One of the most dreaded caste army of the landlord was Ranvir Sena, which was involved in massacres of Dalits in Laxmanpur Bathe. The Dalit struggle against these caste armies was led by Indian People's Front and its successor Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) Liberation, which was controlled at the upper echelon by the middle peasant castes such as the Koeris and Yadavs, with Dalits and Extremely Backward Castes forming its mass support base and activists. Meanwhile, the 1960s saw the rise of political instability in the state with dwindling power of Indian National Congress and rise of parties like Samyukta Socialist Party. The leaders belonging to Backward Castes became vocal for their political rights. The toppling of Mahamaya Prasad Sinha government by Jagdeo Prasad hastened the end of dominance of Forward Caste backed Indian National Congress in the state.

Geography Bihar covers a total area of 94,163 km² (36,357 sq mi), with an average elevation above sea level of 173 feet (53 m). It is landlocked by Nepal in the north, Jharkhand in the south, West Bengal in the east and Uttar Pradesh in the west. It has three parts on the basis of physical and structural conditions: the Southern Plateau, the Shivalik Region, and Bihar's Gangetic Plain. Furthermore, the vast stretch of the fertile Bihar Plain is divided by the Ganges River into two unequal parts - North Bihar and South Bihar. The Ganges flows west-east and, along with its tributaries, regularly floods parts of the Bihar plain. The main northern tributaries are the Gandak and Koshi, which originate in the Nepalese Himalayas, and the Bagmati, which originates in the Kathmandu Valley. Other tributaries are the Son, Budhi Gandak, Chandan, Orhani and Phalgu. Bihar has some small hills, such as the Rajgir hills in center, Kaimur Range in south-west and Shivalik Range in North. Bihar has a forest area of 6,764.14 km², which is 7.1 per cent of its geographical area. The sub-Himalayan foothills of Shivalik ranges, primary Someshwar and Dun mountain, in West Champaran district are clad in a belt of moist deciduous forest. As well as trees, this consists of brush, grasses and reeds. Bihar lies completely in the Subtropical region of the Temperate Zone, and its climatic type is humid subtropical. Its temperature is subtropical in general, with hot summers and cold winters. Bihar has an average daily high temperature of only 26 C with a yearly average of 26 C. The climate is very warm, but has only a very few tropical and humid months. Several months of the year it is warm to hot at temperatures continuously above 25 C, sometimes up to 29 C. Due to less rain the best time for travelling is from October to April. The rainiest days occur from May to September.

Flora and fauna Bihar has a nature conservation area of 6,845 km² (2,643 sq mi), which is 7.27% of its geographical area. The sub-Himalayan foothill of Someshwar and the Dun ranges in the Champaran district have belts of moist deciduous forests, mixed with shrubs, grass and reeds. High rainfall (above 1,600 mm [63 in]) promotes forests of Sal (*Shorea robusta*) in these areas. Other important trees are Sal *Cedrela Toona*,

Khair, and Semal. Deciduous forests also occur in the Saharsa and Purnia districts, with common trees including *Shorea robusta* (sal), *Diospyros melanoxylon* (kendu), *Boswellia serrata* (salai), *Terminalia tomentosa* (asan), *Terminalia bellerica* (bahera), *Terminalia arjuna* (arjun), *Pterocarpus marsupium* (paisar), and *Madhuca indica* (mahua). Valmiki National Park covers about 800 km² (309 sq mi) of forest and is the 18th Tiger Reserve of India, ranked fourth in terms of the density of its tiger population. It has a diverse landscape and biodiversity in addition to sheltering protected carnivores. Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary in Bhagalpur region is a reserve for the endangered South Asian river dolphin. Other species in Bihar include leopard, bear, hyena, bison, chital and barking deer. Crocodilians including gharials and muggers as well as Gangetic turtles can be found in the river systems. Karkatgarh Waterfall on Karmanasa River is a natural habitat of the crocodilians. In 2016, the government of Bihar has accepted the proposal of the forest authorities to turn the area into a Crocodile Conservation Reserve (CCR). Other notable wildlife sanctuaries include Kaimur Wildlife Sanctuary, Bhimbandh Wildlife Sanctuary and Gautam Buddha Wildlife Sanctuary. Many varieties of local and migratory bird species can be seen in natural wetland of Kanwar Lake Bird Sanctuary, Asia's largest oxbow lake and only Ramsar site in Bihar, and other notable wetlands of Baraila lake, Kusheshwar Nath Lake, Udaypur lake.

Natural resource Bihar is the principal holder of the country's pyrite reserves and possesses 95% of all known resources. In May 2022, a gold mine was found in the district of Jamui. It accounts for more than 44% of the country's gold reserve, approximately 223 million tons.

Demographics At the 2011 census, Bihar was the third most populous state of India with a total population of 104,099,452. It was also India's most densely populated state, with 1,106 persons per square kilometre. The sex ratio was 1090 females per 1000 males in the year 2020. Almost 58% of Bihar's population was below 25 years age, which is the highest in India. In 2021, Bihar has had an urbanisation rate of 20%. Bihar has an adult literacy rate of 70.9% (79.7% for males and 60.5% for females) in 2017 according to NSC report 2017. According to Bihar caste survey 2023, Bihar's literacy rate grew upto 79.8% (which is 18% increase from 61.18% of Census 2011) showing remarkable growth in education sector from past decades. Population increased to 130,725,310 as per the Bihar caste survey conducted in 2023.

Religion According to the 2023 census, 81.99% of Bihar's population practised Hinduism, while 17.70% followed Islam. Christianity (0.05%), Buddhism (0.08%), and Sikhism (0.01%) are religious minorities in Bihar. Most of Bihar's population belongs to Indo-Aryan-speaking ethnic groups. It also attracted Punjabi Hindu refugees during the Partition of British India in 1947.

Languages Hindi is the official language of the state and is spoken natively by 25.54% of the total population. At 8.42%, Urdu is the second official language in 15 districts of the state. However, the majority of the people speak one of the Bihari languages, most of which were classified as dialects of Hindi during the census. The major ones are Bhojpuri (24.86%), Maithili (12.55%) and Magahi (10.87%) Angika and Bajjika, two other notable Bihari languages, but are not represented in the census. Maithili is a recognised regional language of India under the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India. Proponents have called for Bhojpuri, Magahi, Angika, and Bajjika to receive the same status. Smaller communities of Bengali and Surjapuri speakers are found in some parts of the state, especially in the eastern districts and urban areas.

Government and administration Under the Constitution of India, the Governor is the head of the government of Bihar, and is appointed by the President of India. The Chief minister is the executive head of the government who, with its cabinet ministers, makes all important policy decisions. The political party or coalition of political

parties having a majority in the Bihar Legislative Assembly forms the government. The Chief Secretary is the head of the bureaucracy of the state, under whom a hierarchy of officials is drawn from the Indian Administrative Service, Indian Police Service, Indian Forest Service, and different wings of the state civil services. The judiciary is headed by the Chief Justice of the High Court. Bihar has a high court in Patna, which has been functioning since 1916. All the branches of the government are located in the state capital, Patna. The state is administratively divided into nine divisions and 38 districts. For the administration of urban areas, Bihar has 19 municipal corporations, 89 nagar parishads (city councils), and 154 nagar panchayats (town councils). For the governance of rural areas, Bihar has Panchayati Raj Institutions, comprising 8,053 gram panchayats (village councils), 533 panchayat samitis (block-level councils), and 38 zila parishads (district councils).

* Population data obtained from the sum of the populations of the districts.

Politics The politics of Bihar have been based on caste since the onset of Indian independence. The important castes with political presence and influence in Bihar includes: Yadav, Koeri, Kurmi, Rajput, Bhumihar, and Brahmin. Before 1990, politics was dominated by Forward Castes- Brahmin, Rajput, Bhumihar, and Kayastha. The numerous Other Backward Class group was only given a token representation in the government. This over representation of upper castes was due to their dominance in the Indian National Congress, which dominated the politics of the state for three decades after the independence of India. According to political scientist Sanjay Kumar: "Using their dominant role in state's government, in the period before 1990, the Forward Castes deliberately subverted the 'land reforms', which could have helped Backward Castes and the Scheduled Castes". The upper backwards relied on the political parties of Lok Dal and later Janata Dal for increasing their political representation. The year of 1989-90 saw the implementation of Mandal Commission's recommendation by V. P. Singh's government, which reserved 27% per cent seats in government jobs and educational institutions for the members of Other Backward Class. This event mobilised them against the "politics of religion" of the Bhartiya Janata Party, which was backed by the Forward Castes. Important figures such as Lalu Prasad Yadav and Nitish Kumar took a leading role in this mobilisation, and by 1990, the upper backwards- Koeri, Kurmi, Yadav became the new political elites of the state. Historically, a caste troika consisting the three communities, Kushwaha, Kurmi and Yadav also led an anti-upper caste agitation in the state of Bihar, pushing them to the prominence in the state's politics. However, the tipping point of this Backward Caste unity came in 1995 Bihar Legislative Assembly election, when the dominant OBC castes, who were at the forefront in the collective struggle against the Forward Castes, were divided into two rival political camps. While one of these camps was led by Yadavs under Janata Dal, the other camp was led by Koeri and Kurmis, who assembled under the Samata Party. According to Sanjay Kumar, this was the election in which the caste divide in the state was most evident not between the Forward and Backward Castes, but rather between two groups of Backward Castes itself. It was this election from which the Forward Castes felt completely marginalised in Bihar's electoral politics and from then onwards, no longer held any significant role in the state's politics. By 2004, The Economist magazine said that "Bihar [had] become a byword for the worst of India, of widespread and inescapable poverty, of corrupt politicians indistinguishable from mafia-dons they patronise, caste-ridden social order that has retained the worst feudal cruelties". In 2005, the World Bank believed that issues faced by the state were "enormous" because of "persistent poverty, complex social stratification, unsatisfactory infrastructure and weak governance". As of 2023, there are two main political formations: the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) which comprises Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Rashtriya Lok Janshakti Party (RLJP); and the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) between Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), Hindustani Awam Morcha, Rashtriya Lok Samta Party, Janata Dal (United) (JDU) and Indian National Congress (INC). There are many other political formations. The Communist Party of India had a strong presence in Bihar at one time, which has since weakened. The Communist Party of India (Marxist) CPI(M) and CPM and All India Forward Bloc (AIFB) have a minor presence, along with the other extreme leftist parties. Nitish Kumar has been

chief minister of Bihar for 13 years between 2005 and 2020. In contrast to prior governments, which emphasised divisions of caste and religion, his political platform was based on economic development, reduction of crime and corruption, and greater social equality. Since 2010, the government confiscated the properties of corrupt officials and redeveloped them into school buildings. They also introduced the Bihar Special Court Act to curb crime. It also legislated a two-hour lunch break on Fridays, to enable Muslim employees to pray and thereby reduce absenteeism. The government has prohibited the sale and consumption of alcohol in the state since March 2016, which has been linked to a drop in tourism and a rise in substance abuse.

Public health Bihar generally ranks among the weakest in health outcomes in comparison to other Indian states because it lacks adequate health care facilities. While the National Health Mission, the Clinical Establishments Act of 2010, and the formation of the Empowered Action Group (EAG) provide federal funds to expand and improve healthcare services, Bihar's ability to fully utilise this funding is lacking. Research indicates that Bihar relies on privatised hospitals to provide healthcare to the masses, with the second-highest ratio among Indian states for private to public spending and high levels of corruption. These factors are associated with slower healthcare delivery and steep healthcare costs. Corruption is enabled as Bihar lacks continuity and transparency of health reporting as required by the Clinical Establishments Act of 2010. In turn, this prevents the government from making evidence-based conclusions about policy changes and hospital effectiveness, resulting in patterns of ill-informed spending and inconsistent hiring. When comparing Bihar to Kerala, the number of healthcare professionals (including registered nurses, auxiliary nurses, physicians and health supervisors) at each hospital are significantly lower, and remain constant over time while they steadily increase in number in Kerala. According to Ministry of Health statistics, the greatest shortfalls are for physicians and specialists at 75%. Bihar has only 50% of the sub-health centres, 60% of the primary health centres, and 9% of the community health centres required by the national supply-to-population standards. The number of public hospital beds in Bihar decreased between 2008 and 2015. Given the high population density of the state, Bihar is significantly behind in the number of healthcare professionals that should be employed. Despite these shortcomings, Bihar has shown gradual signs of improvement for female health workers, the overall death rate, and infant, neo-natal, child and maternal mortality rates.

Economy Bihar's gross state domestic product (GSDP) for the fiscal year (FY) 2024- was around ■9,765.67 billion. By sectors, its composition is 19.9% agriculture, 21.5% industry and 58.6% services. Bihar has one of the fastest-growing state economy in terms of GSDP, with a growth rate of 13.5% in FY 2024-25. The economy of Bihar was projected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 13.4% during 2012-2017 (the 12th Five-Year Plan). Bihar has experienced strong growth in per capita net state domestic product (NSDP). At current prices, per capita NSDP of the state grew at a CAGR of 12.91% from 2004 to 2005 to 2014-15. Bihar's per capita income went up by 40.6% in FY 2014-15. The state's debt was estimated at 77% of GDP by 2007.

Agriculture Among the states of India, Bihar is the fourth-largest producer of vegetables and the eighth-largest producer of fruits. About 80% of the state's population is employed in agriculture, which is above the national average. The main agricultural products are litchi, guava, mango, pineapple, brinjal, lady's finger, cauliflower, cabbage, rice, wheat, sugarcane, and sunflower. Though good soil and favourable climatic conditions favour agriculture, this can be hampered by floods and soil erosion. The southern parts of the state endure annual droughts, which affect crops such as paddy.

Industry Industrial development of the state is supported by the Bihar Industrial Area Development Authority. Begusarai hosts enterprises like Barauni Refinery, NTPC, Barauni (BTPS), Barauni Fertiliser Plant (HURL

Barauni), Sudha Dairy Plant, Pepsi Bottling Plant. Hajipur, Muzaffarpur Dalmianagar, Munger, Jamalpur and Barauni are the major industrial cities in Bihar. The capital city, Patna, is one of the better-off cities in India when measured by per capita income. Hajipur is also known for presence of private industries like Competence Exports, which gained international recognition in 2024, when it was reported to be catering to the demand of many European countries. In 2024, Hajipur was reported to become the exporter of designer shoes for European companies. It also exported shoes for Russian Army amidst their Ukrainian campaign. The Finance Ministry has sought to create investment opportunities for big industrial houses like Reliance Industries. Further developments have taken place in the growth of small industries, improvements in IT infrastructure, a software park in Patna, Darbhanga, Bhagalpur, and the completion of the expressway from the Purvanchal border through Bihar to Jharkhand. In August 2008, a Patna-registered company called the Security and Intelligence Services took over the Australian guard and mobile patrol services business of American conglomerate, United Technologies Corporation (UTC). SIS is registered and taxed in Bihar. Prior to prohibition, Bihar emerged as a brewery hub with numerous production units. In August 2018, United Breweries Limited announced it would begin production of non-alcoholic beer at its previously defunct brewery in Bihar.

Startup The Bihar Startup Policy 2022-2027 aims to make Bihar a preferred destination for startups and entrepreneurs by leveraging local youth for inclusive growth. The policy offers various incentives, including interest-free seed funding up to ₹10 lakh, tax exemptions, and access to incubation centers. The government has established a Startup Bihar Fund Trust (SBFT) with an initial corpus of ₹500 crore to provide venture capital for startups. Key sectors witnessing significant growth include agritech, healthcare, edtech, and e-commerce. With a focus on skill development, mentorship, and ease of doing business, Bihar is steadily transforming into an emerging hub for startups, driving both economic growth and employment.

Income distribution In terms of income, the districts of Patna, Begusarai, Bhagalpur, Munger, and placed highest among the 38 districts in the state, recording the highest per capita gross district domestic product of ₹2,15,049, ₹84,279, ₹80,471, ₹79,272 respectively, in FY 2022-23.

Bihar also ranks very low in per capital income in comparison to other cities in India. Patna has per capital income of 1.85L, which is much lower than other cities like Gurugram (₹7.41L), Noida (₹6.13), Bengaluru (₹6.21L), Hyderabad (₹6.58L) and Mumbai (₹6.43).

Income disparity among social groups Rumela Sen, a lecturer at Columbia University, outlines the inequalities and backwardness prevalent in Bihar in the post-independence period as a consequence of the "delaying tactics" against the implementation of land reform and utilisation of kinship ties by the upper-caste landlords, who had an obstructionist attitude towards land reform policies. The upper-caste not only dominated the administration, but also the politics in the post-independence period; they utilised their caste ties in order to prevent the distribution of about 9000 acres of land intended for the poor. Since the landlords primarily belonged to upper-castes, just like the politicians and administrators in the early decades after independence, they were successful in grabbing large holdings of land amidst the passage of the Zamindari abolition act of 1952.

Culture Paintings There are several traditional styles of painting practised in Bihar. One is Mithila painting, a style used in the Mithila region of Bihar. Traditionally, this form was practised mainly by women, passed down generation to generation. Painting was usually done on walls during festivals, religious events, births, marriages, and other cultural milestones. It was traditionally done on the plastered walls of mud huts, and is

also done on cloth, handmade paper and canvas. Famous Mithila painters include Smt Bharti Dayal, Mahasundari Devi, the late Ganga Devi, and Sita Devi. Mithila painting is also called Madhubani art. It mostly depicts human beings and their association with nature. Common scenes illustrate deities and Saraswati from ancient epics, celestial objects, and religious plants like Tulsi, and scenes from the royal court and social events. Generally, no space is left empty. Bhojpuri painting is a folk painting style that has flourished in the Bhojpuri region of Bihar thousands of years ago. This painting style is a type of wall painting primarily done on temple walls or on walls of the rooms of newly married couples and the main motifs are that of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati. Although in recent times motifs of natural objects and life and struggles of village people are also depicted to make the painting more acceptable among the common people and bring the style close to reality. The Patna School of Painting (Patna Kalam), sometimes called "Company Painting", flourished in Bihar during the early 18th to mid-20th centuries. It was an offshoot of the Mughal Miniature School of Painting. Those who practised this art form were descendants of Hindu artisans of Mughal painting. Facing persecution from the Mughal Emperor, Aurangzeb, these artisans found refuge, via Murshidabad, in Patna during the late 18th century. Their art shared the characteristics of the Mughal painters, expanded subject matter from court scenes to bazaar scenes, daily life and ceremonies. They used watercolours on paper and on mica. This school of painting formed the basis for the formation of the Patna Art School under the leadership of Shri Radha Mohan. The school is an important centre of the fine arts in Bihar.

Performing arts Bihar has produced musicians like Bharat Ratna and Ustad Bismillah Khan, and dhrupad singers like the Malliks (Darbhanga Gharana) and the Mishras (Bettiah Gharana), along with poets like Vidyapati Thakur who contributed to the genre of Maithili music. The classical music in Bihar is a form of Hindustani classical music. Gaya is another centre of classical music, particularly of the Tappa and Thumri varieties. Pandit Govardhan Mishra-son of the Ram Prasad Mishra, himself an accomplished singer- is perhaps the finest living exponent of Tappa singing in India, according to Padma Shri Gajendra Narayan Singh, founding secretary of the Sangeet Natak Academi of Bihar. Gajendra Narayan Singh also writes, in his memoir, that Champanagar, Banaili, was another major centre of classical music. Rajkumar Shyamanand Sinha of Champanagar, Banaili princely state, was a great patron of music and was himself a renowned figure in the world of classical vocal music in Bihar in his time. Singh, on the subject of Indian classical music in a separate book of his, wrote that "Kumar Shyamanand Singh of Banaili estate had such expertise in singing that many great singers including Kesarbai Kerkar acknowledged his ability. After listening to bandishes from Kumar Sahib, Pandit Jasraj was moved to tears and lamented that, alas, he did not have such ability himself." During the 19th century, many Biharis emigrated as indentured labourers to the West Indies, Fiji, and Mauritius. During this time many sorrowful plays and songs called birha became popular in the Bhojpur region, as Bhojpuri Birha. Dramas incorporating this theme continue to be popular in the theatres of Patna.

Cinema Bihar has a robust Bhojpuri-language film industry. There is also a smaller production of Magadhi-, Maithili language films. The first film with Bhojpuri dialogue was Ganga Jamuna, released in 1961. Bhaiyaa, the first Magadhi film, was released in 1961. The first Maithili movie was Kanyadan released in 1965. Maithili film Mithila Makhaan won the National Film Award for Best Maithili Film in 2016. The history of films entirely in Bhojpuri begins in 1962 with the well-received film Ganga Maiyya Tohe Piyari Chadhaibo ("Mother Ganges, I will offer you a yellow sari"), which was directed by Kundan Kumar. 1963's Lagi nahin chute ram was the all-time hit Bhojpuri film, and had higher attendance than Mughal-e-Azam in the eastern and northern regions of India. Bollywood's Nadiya Ke Paar is another well-known Bhojpuri-language movie. Films such as Bidesiya ("Foreigner", 1963, directed by S. N. Tripathi) and Ganga ("Ganges", 1965, directed by Kundan Kumar) were profitable and popular, but in general Bhojpuri films were not commonly produced in the 1960s and 1970s. In the 1980s, enough Bhojpuri films were produced to support a dedicated industry. Films such as Mai ("Mom", 1989, directed by Rajkumar Sharma) and Hamar Bhauji ("My Brother's Wife", 1983, directed by Kalpataru) had

success at the box office. However, this trend faded during the 1990s. In 2001, Bhojpuri films regained popularity with Saiyyan Hamar ("My Sweetheart", directed by Mohan Prasad), which raised actor Ravi Kishan to prominence. Several other commercially successful films followed, including Panditji Batai Na Biyah Kab Hoi ("Priest, tell me when I will marry", 2005, directed by Mohan Prasad) and Sasura Bada Paisa Wala ("My father-in-law, the rich guy", 2005). These films did much better business in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar than mainstream Bollywood hits at the time, and were both made on extremely tight budgets. Sasura Bada Paisa Wala also introduced Manoj Tiwari, formerly a well-loved folk singer, to the wider audiences of Bhojpuri cinema. The success of Ravi Kishan and Manoj Tiwari's films led to a revival in Bhojpuri cinema, and the industry began to support an awards show and trade magazine Bhojpuri City. The industry produces over one hundred films per year. In 2019, the Maithili film Mithila Makhaan won Best Maithili Film in the 63rd National Film Awards.

Mass media Biharbandhu was the first Hindi newspaper published in Bihar. It was started in 1872 by Madan Mohan Bhatta, a Marathi Brahman who settled in Bihar Sharif. Hindi journalism often failed until it became an official language in the state. Hindi was introduced in the law courts in Bihar in 1880. Urdu journalism and poetry have a long history in Bihar, with many poets such as Shaad Azimabadi, Kaif Azimabadi, Kalim Ajiz and Bismil Azimabadi. Bihar publishes many Urdu dailies, such as Qomi Tanzim and Sahara, and the monthly Voice of Bihar. The beginning of the 20th century was marked by a number of notable new publications. A monthly magazine named Bharat Ratna was started in Patna, in 1901. It was followed by Ksahtriya Hitaishi, Aryavarta from Dinapore, Udyoga, and Chaitanya Chandrika. Udyog was edited by Vijyaanand Tripathy, a famous poet of the time, and Chaitanya Chandrika by Krishna Chaitanya Goswami, a literary figure of that time. The literary activity was not confined to Patna alone but to other districts of Bihar.

Festivals Chhath Puja is the biggest and most popular festival in Bihar. The four-day-long holy Hindu festival includes intense celebration across the state. Chhath Puja are done in various cities, towns, and villages throughout Bihar. All of Bihar involves itself in devotion to Chhath Puja. The city is decked up in lighting decorations and thousands of colourful ghats are set up, where effigies of the goddess Chhath Maiya and her brother God Surya are displayed and worshipped at both sunset and sunrise. People of all religious backgrounds go to the bank of any river or near by a pond or lake in order to give arghya to the Sun. They carry fruits and thekuaa along with them in soop and daura (a bowl-like structure made of bamboo) for their worship activities. Nowadays, these traditions have spread to multiple countries worldwide wherever Bihari community is present. Durga Puja is also the biggest, most popular and widely celebrated festival in Bihar. The ten-day-long colourful Hindu festival includes intense celebration across the state. Pandals are erected in various cities, towns, and villages throughout Bihar. The cities of Bihar are transformed during Durga Puja. Urban areas are decked up in lighting decorations and thousands of colourful pandals are set up where effigies of the goddess Durga and her four children are displayed and worshipped. The idols of the goddess are brought in from Kumortuli, where idol-makers work throughout the year fashioning clay models of the goddess. Since independence in 1947, Durga Puja has slowly changed into more of a glamorous carnival than that of a religious festival. Today people of diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds partake in the festivities. On Vijayadashami, the last day of the festival, the effigies are paraded through the streets with riotous pageantry before being immersed into the rivers. Other than Chhath Puja and Durga Puja, Bihar is home to a diverse range of festivals that reflect its rich cultural, religious, and folk traditions. Makar Sankranti marks the winter harvest and is celebrated with sweets made of sesame and jaggery. Buddha Jayanti, observed with reverence in Bodhi Gaya, commemorates the birth and enlightenment of Gautama Buddha, while Mahavir Jayanti honours the birth of Lord Mahavira in Vaishali, a significant Jain pilgrimage. Rajgir Mahotsav is a grand cultural event showcasing classical music, dance, and traditional crafts in the historic town of Rajgir. The Sonapur Mela, held at the confluence of the Ganga and Gandak rivers, is Asia's largest cattle fair blending commerce with spirituality. Folk festivals like Sama-Chakeva celebrate sibling bonds through clay figurines and songs during Kartik in the

Mithila region. Jitiya, a fasting festival by mothers for the well-being of their sons, and Bihula-Bishari Puja, rooted in Bhagalpur's traditions, reflect deep familial and mythological beliefs. Agricultural and seasonal observances such as Jur Sital (Maithili New Year) and Adra Nakshatra mark ecological cycles. Tribal festivals like Sarhul and Karam, celebrated by indigenous communities in southern Bihar, further enrich the region's pluralistic festival calendar. Together, these festivals illustrate Bihar's layered identity, uniting ancient spirituality with vibrant folk and tribal customs.

Tourism Bihar is visited by many tourists from around the world. In 2019, 33 million tourists visited Bihar, including more than 1 million foreign tourists. Bihar is home to two UNESCO World Heritage Sites, as well as many other ancient monuments. The Mahabodhi Temple (literally: "Great Awakening Temple"), a UNESCO World Heritage site, is an ancient Buddhist temple in Bodh Gaya, marking the location where the Buddha is said to have attained enlightenment. Bodh Gaya (in Gaya district) is about 96 km (60 mi) from Patna. The Khuda Bakhsh Library, which has one of the world's largest collection of books, rare manuscripts and paintings is located in Patna. Nalanda Mahavihara, a UNESCO World Heritage site, is among the oldest universities in the world, situated in Nalanda, Bihar. It comprises the archaeological remains of a monastic and scholastic institution dating from the third century BCE to the 13th century CE. It includes stupas, shrines, viharas (residential and educational buildings) and important art works in stucco, stone and metal. Nalanda stands out as the most ancient university of the Indian subcontinent. Archaeological Survey of India has recognised 72 monuments in Bihar as Monuments of National Importance. Furthermore, Archaeological Survey of India has recognised 30 additional monument as protected monuments in Bihar. Rajgir, located in Nalanda district of Bihar, is a prominent tourist destination known for its historical, religious, and natural attractions. Once the capital of the Magadha empire, Rajgir holds significance for Buddhists, Jains, and Hindus alike. In recent years, it has emerged as a modern eco-tourism hub with the addition of attractions like the Rajgir Glass Sky Walk Bridge; India's first of its kind offering panoramic views from atop the Vaibhav Hill. Another major draw is the Rajgir Zoo Safari, spread over 191 hectares, which allows visitors to observe wildlife like lions, tigers, leopards, and bears in open enclosures via guided safaris. Together, these sites combine heritage with adventure, making Rajgir a unique blend of ancient legacy and modern tourism. Bihar has many places for ecotourism, which includes Valmiki National Park, famous for its national park and tiger reserve. Vikramshila Dolphin Sanctuary is home to the endangered Gangetic Dolphin. Bihar has many wildlife sanctuaries such as Bhimbandh Wildlife Sanctuary, Gautam Buddha Wildlife Sanctuary, Kaimur Sanctuary, Udaypur Wildlife Sanctuary, and the Pant Wildlife Sanctuary. Bihar is host to many species of migratory birds at bird sanctuaries like Kanwar Lake Bird Sanctuary and the Nagi Dam Bird Sanctuary. Many tourists visit Bihar because of the religious significance of the area. The Hindu Goddess Sita, the consort of Lord Rama, is believed to have been born in Sitamarhi in the Mithila region of modern-day Bihar. Gautama Buddha is believed to have attained Enlightenment at Bodh Gaya, a town located in the modern day district of Gaya in Bihar. Vasupujya, the 12th Jain Tirthankara was born in Champapuri, Bhagalpur. Mahavira, the 24th and last Tirthankara of Jainism, was born in Vaishali around the sixth century BCE. The Purnima ritual performed in the Pitru Paksha period is considered to be most powerful in the holy city of Gaya, which is seen as a special place to perform the rite, and hosts a fair during the Pitri Paksha period.

Transport Airports Bihar has a total of three operational airports as of 2020: Lok Nayak Jayaprakash Airport in Patna, Gaya Airport in Gaya, and Darbhanga Airport in Darbhanga. All three airports have scheduled flights to major cities around India. Gaya Airport is the only international airport in Bihar, having seasonal flights to countries like Thailand, Bhutan, and Myanmar.

Railways Railways in Bihar form a crucial component of the state's transport infrastructure, with the East Central Railway (ECR), headquartered at Hajipur and rail network length of 3,794 km (2,357 mi) in 2020. All major cities, districts and towns are well connected. Major stations in Bihar are Patna, Ara, Buxar, Gaya, Samastipur, Sasaram, Siwan, Chapra, Barauni, Hajipur, Saharsa, Rajgir, Muzaffarpur, Jamalpur and Bhagalpur. Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor passes through Kaimur, Rohtas, Aurangabad, and Gaya with a total length of 239 km (149 mi) in Bihar. The following are the three divisions in ECR zone:

State Expressways and highways Gaya-Darbhanga Expressway (access controlled highway) will be Bihar's first expressway, with a length of 189 km. It is expected to be completed by 2024. Bihar also has state highways with a total length of 4,006 km (2,489 mi) and national highways with a total length of 5,358 km (3,329 mi).

Metro transit Patna will be the first city in Bihar to have mass rapid transit system. Patna Metro with network of 31 km (19 mi) length is under construction as of 2022. However, it is currently delayed due to land acquisition process.

Bus transit Bihar State Road Transport Corporation (BSRTC) runs interstate, intrastate, and international route buses. BSRTC has a daily ridership of around 100,000. Its fleet includes non-electric and electric buses, and AC and non-AC buses. Delhi, Ranchi, and Kathmandu in Nepal are some of the destinations served outside Bihar. BSRTC has undergone significant expansion and modernisation since 2020. BSRTC runs intercity and local buses, and it has introduced new low-emission, air-conditioned buses (including electric and CNG models) equipped with Wi-Fi, GPS tracking, CCTV surveillance cameras, panic buttons, and mobile charging points. In 2021, BSRTC launched the Chalo mobile application to provide live bus tracking and enable cashless e-ticketing via mobile passes, encouraging more commuters to use public transport. Urban transport infrastructure has also been upgraded, notably with the opening of the Patliputra Inter-State Bus Terminal in Patna in 2020 the state's first modern ISBT and a 24-acre central bus depot called Parivahan Parisar in 2023 as a hub for all Patna city and intercity buses. For rural areas, the Mukhyamantri Gram Parivahan Yojana (launched in 2018 and expanded in recent years) provides a 50% subsidy (up to ₹1 lakh) for selected panchayat-level beneficiaries to purchase passenger vehicles, improving village connectivity and creating transport jobs for disadvantaged groups. The state has also introduced women-only "Pink Bus" services in 2025 across six cities to enhance safety and inclusivity for female travellers - deploying 22-seater buses run by female conductors (with plans to train women drivers) and outfitting them with CCTV, GPS and panic-button alarms as security measures.

Inland Waterways National Waterways-1 runs along the Ganges river. Gaighat in Patna has a permanent terminal of inland waterways for handling cargo vessels. The Ganges is navigable throughout the year, and was the principal river highway across the vast Indo-Gangetic Plain. Vessels capable of accommodating five hundred merchants were known to ply this river in the ancient period, when it served as a conduit for overseas trade. The role of the Ganges as a channel for trade was enhanced by its natural links to major rivers and streams in north and south Bihar.

Education Historically, Bihar has been a major centre of learning, home to the ancient universities of Nalanda (est. 450 CE), Odantapur (est. 550 CE), and Vikramashila (est. 783 CE). Nalanda and Vikramashila universities were destroyed by the invading forces of Bakhtiyar Khilji in 1200 CE. Bihar saw a revival of its education system during the later part of the British rule, when Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Library was established in 1891 by Sir Khan Bahadur Khuda Bakhsh which is currently one of the world's largest functioning library and

boasts more than five million items. It is known for its paintings and rare manuscripts. Patna University, the seventh oldest university on the Indian subcontinent, was established in 1917. Some other centres of high learning established under British rule are Patna College (est. 1839), Bihar School of Engineering (est. 1900; now known as National Institute of Technology, Patna), Prince of Wales Medical College (est. 1925; now Patna Medical College and Hospital), Science College, Patna (est. 1928), Patna Women's College, Bihar Veterinary College (est. 1927), and Imperial Agriculture Research Institute (est. 1905; now Dr. Rajendra Prasad Central Agriculture University, Pusa). The Patna University, one of the oldest universities in Bihar, was established in 1917, and is the seventh oldest university of the Indian subcontinent. NIT Patna, the second oldest engineering college of India, was established as a survey training school in 1886 and later renamed as the Bihar College of Engineering in 1932. Today, Bihar is home to eight Institutes of National Importance: IIT Patna, IIM Bodh Gaya, AIIMS, Patna, NIT Patna, IIIT Bhagalpur, NIPER Hajipur, Khuda bakhsh Oriental Library, and the Nalanda International University. In 2008, Indian Institutes of Technology Patna was inaugurated with students from all over India and in the same year the National Institute of Fashion Technology Patna was established as the ninth such institute in India. The Indian Institute of Management Bodh Gaya was established in 2015. In March 2019, the government of Bihar sent a proposal to the centre government to upgrade Darbhanga Medical College and Hospital into an AIIMS-like institution. Bihar is home of four Central universities which includes Central University of South Bihar, Mahatma Gandhi Central University, Dr. Rajendra Prasad Central Agriculture University and Nalanda University. In 2015, the central government proposed the re-establishment of Vikramshila in Bhagalpur and had designated ₹500 crores (₹5 billion) for it. Bihar also has the National Institute of Fashion Technology Patna, National Law University, Patna Institute of Hotel Management (IHM), Footwear Design and Development Institute, Bihta and Central Institute of Plastic Engineering & Technology (CIPET) Center. CIPET and IHM was established in Hajipur in 1994 and 1998 respectively. Bihar Engineering University was established under Bihar Engineering University Act, 2021 of Bihar Government with the purpose of the development and management of educational infrastructure related to technical, medical, management, and related professional education in Bihar. Based on 2020-21 data, Bihar Engineering University has 56 and Bihar medical science University under the Bihar medical science University act, 2021. There are Pharmacy colleges, 15 Medical colleges, and 36 Nursing colleges after establishing this university. Aryabhatta Knowledge University has 33 educational colleges, 8 community colleges, and one vocational college. Chanakya National Law University and Chandragupt Institute of Management were established in the later half of 2008 and now attracts students from not just within Bihar but also students from far flung states. Nalanda International University was established in 2014 with active investment from countries such as Japan, Korea, and China. The A.N. Sinha Institute of Social Studies is a premier research institute in the state. Bihar has eight medical colleges which are funded by the government, namely Patna Medical College and Hospital, Nalanda Medical College and Hospital, Vardhman Institute of Medical Sciences, Indira Gandhi Institute of Medical Sciences, Darbhanga Medical College and Hospital, Anugrah Narayan Magadh Medical College and Hospital Gaya, Sri Krishna Medical College and Hospital, Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College, Bhagalpur, Government Medical College, Bettiah and five private medical colleges Bihar has the seven oldest Government Engineering colleges; Muzaffarpur institute of technology, Bhagalpur college of Engineering, Gaya college of Engineering, Nalanda College of Engineering, Darbhanga college of Engineering, Motihari college of Engineering, and the Loknayak Jai Prakash Institute of Technology. Bihta, a suburb of the state capital Patna, is home of institutes like IIT Patna, AIIMS Patna, BIT Patna and is now emerging as an educational hub. With institutes like Super 30, Patna has emerged as a major center for engineering and civil services coaching. The major private IIT-JEE coaching institutes have opened up their branches in Bihar and this has reduced the number of students who go to, for example, Kota and Delhi for engineering/medical coaching. Bihar e-Governance Services & Technologies (BeST) and the government of Bihar have initiated a unique program to establish a centre of excellence called Bihar Knowledge Center, a school to equip students with the latest skills and customised short-term training programs at an affordable cost. The centre aims to attract the youth of the state to improve their technical, professional, and soft skills, to meet the current requirements of the industrial job market. The

National Employability Report of Engineering Graduates, 2014, puts graduates from Bihar in the top 25 per cent of the country, and rates Bihar as one of the three top states at producing engineering graduates in terms of quality and employability.

Notable people See also Bihar Day List of Bihari singers Outline of Bihar Timeline of Bihar Bihari culture Cuisine of Bihar Chhotanagpur Front Chhotanagpur Plateau Praja Parishad Zerat Bihta Dry Port Ghats in Bhagalpur Software Technology Park of India, Darbhanga

Notes References Further reading External links Government Official site of Bihar Archived 15 June 2011 at the Wayback Machine Bihar State Tourism Development Corporation Archived 27 January 2010 at the Wayback Machine General information Bihar web resources provided by GovPubs at the University of Colorado Boulder Libraries Bihar at the Encyclopdia Britannica Wikimedia Atlas of Bihar Geographic data related to Bihar at OpenStreetMap

Chhattisgarh

Chhattisgarh (; Hindi: [tʃʰətʃʰtʃʰiːsgʌr]) is a landlocked state in Central India. It is the ninth largest state by area, and with a population of roughly 30 million, the seventeenth most populous. It borders seven states - Uttar Pradesh to the north, Madhya Pradesh to the northwest, Maharashtra to the southwest, Jharkhand to the northeast, Odisha to the east, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana to the south. Formerly a part of Madhya Pradesh, it was granted statehood on 1 November 2000 with Raipur as the designated state capital. The Sitabenga caves in Chhattisgarh, one of the earliest examples of theatre architecture in India, are dated to the Mauryan period of 3rd century BCE. The region was split between rivaling dynasties from the sixth to twelfth centuries, and parts of it were briefly under the Chola dynasty in the 11th century. Eventually, most of Chhattisgarh was consolidated under the Kingdom of Haihayavansi, whose rule lasted for 700 years until they were brought under Maratha suzerainty in 1740. The Bhonsles of Nagpur incorporated Chhattisgarh into the Kingdom of Nagpur in 1758 and ruled until 1845, when the region was annexed by the East India Company, and was later administered under the Raj until 1947 as the Chhattisgarh Division of the Central Provinces. Some areas constituting present-day Chhattisgarh were princely states that were later merged into Madhya Pradesh. The States Reorganisation Act, 1956 placed Chhattisgarh in Madhya Pradesh, and it remained a part of that state for 44 years. Chhattisgarh is one of the fastest-developing states in India. Its Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) is ₹5.09 lakh crore (US\$60 billion) (2023-24 est.), with a per capita GSDP of ₹152,348 (US\$1,800) (2023-24 est.). A resource-rich state, it has the third largest coal reserves in the country and provides electricity, coal, and steel to the rest of the nation. It also has the third largest forest cover in the country after Madhya Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh with over 41.21% of the state covered by forests.

Etymology There are several theories as to the origin of the name Chhattisgarh, which in ancient times was known as Dakshina Kosala (South Kosala), the native place of Rama's mother Kausalya. "Chhattisgarh" was popularised later during the time of the Maratha Empire and was first used in an official document in 1795. The Bastar region was previously referred to as Chakrakotya and Cakkarakotam. The most popular theory claims that Chhattisgarh takes its name from the 36 ancient forts (from chhattis meaning thirty-six and garh meaning fort) in the area. The old state had 36 demesnes (feudal territories): Ratanpur, Vijaypur, Kharound, Maro, Kautgarh, Nawagarh, Sondhi, Aukhar, Padarbhata, Semriya, Champa, Lafa, Chhuri, Kenda, Matin, Aparora, Pendra, Kurkuti-kandri, Raipur, Patan, Simaga, Singarpur, Lavan, Omera, Durg, Saradha, Sirasa, Menhadi, Khallari, Sirpur, Figeswar, Rajim, Singhangarh, Suvarmar, Tenganagarh and Akaltara. However, most historians disagree with this theory as 36 forts have not been found and identified. According to the opinion of Hiralal, it is said that at one time there were 36 strongholds in this area, that is why its name was Chhattisgarh. But even after the increase in the number of strongholds, there was no change in the name, Chhattisgarh is the State of India which has been given the status of 'Mahtari' (Mother). There are two regions in India which are named for special reasons - one was 'Magadha' which became "Bihar" due to the abundance of Buddhism viharas and the other was 'Dakshina Kosala' which became "Chhattisgarh" due to the inclusion of thirty-six strongholds. Another view, more popular with experts and historians, is that Chhattisgarh is the corrupted form of Chedisgarh meaning Raj or "Empire of the Chedis". In ancient times, Chhattisgarh region had been part of the Chedi dynasty of Kalinga, in modern Odisha. In the medieval period up to 1803, a major portion of present eastern Chhattisgarh was part of the Sambalpur Kingdom of Odisha.

History Ancient and medieval history During post Vedic period the Chhattisgarh region south-east to Dandakaranya was referred as Pulinda. Pulinda tribe were dominating tribe in this region. Surguja District of Chhattisgarh is

notable for finding of Mauryan and Nanda period coins. Few gold and silver coins of the Nanda - Mauryan ages, picked up at Akaltara and Thathari of the adjacent district of Bilaspur. Another major discovery was Sirpur of Chhattisgarh. According to the Chinese traveler Hiuen Tsang, Ashoka erected Buddhist stupas in Shripura (modern-day Sirpur), the ancient capital of Dakshina Kosala. Sitabenga caves are one of the earliest examples of theatre architecture in India located on Ramgarh hill of Chhattisgarh dated to Mauryan period of 3rd century BCE.

Jogimara caves contain ancient Brahmi inscription and the oldest painting known in India. The inscription can be translated as either a love proclamation by a girl or a dancer-painter creating a cave theatre together. In ancient times, this region was known as Dakshina Kosala. This area is also mentioned in Ramayana and Mahabharata. One of the earliest statues of Vishnu has been excavated from Shunga period site at Malhar.

The plains region of Chhattisgarh was formerly under the Mauryas, although they likely did not exercise much direct control in the region. After the collapse of the Mauryas, Kharavela of the Mahameghavahana dynasty, which was based in neighbouring Kalinga, took over most of Dakshina Kosala. Later in the third century, the Sathavahanas took over Dakshina Kosala, but this was contested and it returned to Megha rule. Mahendra of Dakshina Kosala, who is believed to be identified with a Megha monarch, was the ruler when Samudragupta carried out his Dakshinapatha conquests and conquered Dakshina Kosala, as recorded in Gupta inscriptions in the early 4th century CE. Afterwards the Guptas held control over Chhattisgarh through vassal rulers, and shared control with the contemporaneous Vakatakas. In the late 5th century CE, the Vakataka ruler Harisena recorded his conquest of the Dakshina Kosala region. After the death of Vakataka ruler Harisena, the Rajarsitulyakula dynasty centred at Arang, former Gupta feudatories, took power and briefly ruled all of Dakshina Kosala. They were contemporaneous with the Nala dynasty, which was centered on the Bastar and Koraput regions. Both these dynasties were succeeded by the Sharabhpurias in the early 6th century, who were likely also former Gupta vassals who had their capital at present-day Sirpur. The Panduvanshis of Mekala, centered in the northern Chhattisgarh plain, and the Panduvamshis of Dakshina Kosala both ruled parts of Chhattisgarh, but the chronology of these kingdoms is not certain. These kingdoms variously controlled the region from the 6th to 8th centuries CE. There is some evidence that the Somavanshis, who later gained power in Kalinga, originated from the Panduvanshis of Dakshina Kosala and were driven out by the Kalachuris of Tripuri in the late 8th century. The Kalachuris of Tripuri held on to the region for the next 200 years, splitting off their territories in Kosala in the late 10th century to be given to a vassal branch which also called itself Kalachuris. The Kalachuris of Ratnapura, who were these vassals, became independent at the start of the 11th century to rule and fight off challenges to their authority by neighbouring kingdoms, most notably the Eastern Gangas. The last known successor is from the late 13th century, after which the records become less available. By the early 14th century, it appears as if the dynasty split into two branches: one ruling from Ratnapur and another moving to Raipur. This is attested to by inscriptions of the king Vahara in the late 15th century, identified with a figure Bahar Sahai in local tradition at the end of the 18th century. Vahara fought against the Afghans and shifted the capital to Kosgain from Ratnapur. These rulers are now identified as the Haihaiyavanshis and acknowledged the nominal overlordship of the Mughals when they arrived. In the late 14th century, Bastar was ruled by a dynasty which claimed descent from the brother of Prataparudra, the last Kakatiya king, Annamaraja. Most of Chhattisgarh was consolidated under the Haihaiyavanshi Kingdom, who ruled central Chhattisgarh and held smaller kingdoms like Kanker under their authority. The Haihaiyavanshis continued to rule the region for 700 years until they were invaded by the Marathas in 1740 and came under their authority. Chhattisgarh was directly annexed to the Maratha Nagpur Kingdom in 1758 on the death of Mohan Singh, the last independent ruler of Chhattisgarh.

Modern history Chhattisgarh was under Maratha Rule (Bhonsles of Nagpur) from 1741 to 1845. It came under British rule from 1845 to 1947 as the Chhattisgarh Division of the Central Provinces. Raipur gained prominence over the capital Ratanpur with the advent of the British in 1845. In 1905, the Sambalpur district was transferred to Odisha and the estates of Surguja were transferred from Bengal to Chhattisgarh. The area constituting the new state merged into Madhya Pradesh on 1 November 1956, under the States Reorganisation Act, 1956, and remained a part of that state for 44 years. Prior to that, the region was part of the Central Provinces and Berar (CP and Berar) under British rule. Some areas constituting the Chhattisgarh state were princely states under British rule, but were later on merged into Madhya Pradesh.

Separation of Chhattisgarh The demand for Chhattisgarh to be a separate state first rose in the 1920s, with similar demands appearing at regular intervals; however, a well-organised movement was never initiated. Several all-party platforms were created and usually resolved around petitions, public meetings, seminars, rallies and strikes. The demand was raised by the Raipur Congress unit in 1924 and was also discussed in the Indian Congress at Tripuri. A discussion about forming a Regional Congress organisation for Chhattisgarh took place. In 1954, when the State Reorganisation Commission was set up, the demand was put forward but was rejected. In 1955, the demand was raised in the Nagpur assembly of Madhya Bharat. In the 1990s, the demand became more prominent, resulting in the formation of a statewide political forum known as the Chhattisgarh Rajya Nirman Manch. The forum was led by Chandulal Chadrakar and several successful region-wide strikes and rallies were organised under it, all of which were supported by major political parties, such as the Indian National Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party. The new National Democratic Alliance government sent the Separate Chhattisgarh Bill for approval by the Madhya Pradesh Assembly, where it was unanimously approved and then submitted to the Lok Sabha. The bill was passed in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, which allowed the creation of the state of Chhattisgarh. K. R. Narayanan gave his consent to the Madhya Pradesh Reorganisation Act on 25 August 2000 and the government of India set 1 November 2000 as the day Chhattisgarh would be separated from Madhya Pradesh. As such, Chhattisgarh was formed from Madhya Pradesh.

Geography The northern and southern parts of the state are hilly, while the central part is a fertile plain. The highest point in the state is the Gaurata near Samri, Balrampur-Ramanujan district. Deciduous forests of the Eastern Highlands Forests cover roughly 44% of the state. In the north lies the edge of the great Indo-Gangetic plain. The Rihand River, a tributary of the Ganges, drains this area. The eastern end of the Satpura Range and the western edge of the Chota Nagpur Plateau form an east-west belt of hills that divide the Mahanadi River basin from the Indo-Gangetic plain. The outline of Chhattisgarh is like a sea horse. The central part of the state lies in the fertile upper basin of the Mahanadi and its tributaries, of which Shivenath River is a major one running around 300 km long. This area has extensive rice cultivation. The upper Mahanadi basin is separated from the upper Narmada basin to the west by the Maikal Hills (part of the Satpuras) and from the plains of Odisha to the east by ranges of hills. The southern part of the state lies on the Deccan plateau, in the watershed of the Godavari River and its tributary, the Indravati River. The Mahanadi is the chief river of the state. The other main rivers are Hasdeo (a tributary of Mahanadi), Rihand, Indravati, Jonk, Arpa and Shivenath.

Forest The state has the third largest forest by area in India. The state animal is the van bhainsa, or wild Asian buffalo. The state bird is the pahari myna, or hill myna. The state tree is the Sal (Sarai) found in Bastar division.

Chhattisgarh has the 3rd largest forest cover in the country. The state is surrounded by the forests in Madhya Pradesh (1st), Odisha (4th), Maharashtra (5th), Jharkhand and Telangana making it India's largest covered forests across state boundaries. There are multiple National Parks, Tiger Reserves across the state.

Achanakmar-Amarkantak Biosphere Reserve is UNESCO recognised Biosphere with total area of 383,551 hectares (3,835.51 square kilometres; 1,480.90 square miles)

Climate Chhattisgarh has a tropical climate. It is hot and humid in the summer because of its proximity to the Tropic of Cancer and its dependence on the monsoons for rains. Summer temperatures in Chhattisgarh can reach up to 49 C (120 F). The monsoon season is from late June to October and is a welcome respite from the heat. Chhattisgarh receives an average of 1,292 millimetres (50.9 in) of rain. Winter is from November to January. Winters are pleasant with low temperatures and less humidity. Ambikapur, Mainpat, Pendra Road, Samri and Jashpur are some of the coldest places in the state.

Transport Roads Chhattisgarh has four-lane or two-lane roads that provide connectivity to major cities. A total of 20 national highways pass through the state, together measuring 3,078 km (1,913 mi). Many national highways exist only on paper and are not fully converted into four-lane, let alone six-lane or eight-lane, highways. These include:

The state highways and major district roads constitute another network of 8,031 km (4,990 mi).

Rail network Almost the entire railway network spread over the state comes under the geographical jurisdiction of the South East Central Railway Zone of Indian Railways centred around Bilaspur, which is the zonal headquarters of this zone. Almost 85% of tracks are electrified, the non-electrified route is the Maroda-Bhanupratappur line from the Durg-Bhanupratappur branch line, which is 120 km long. The main railway junctions are Bilaspur Junction, Durg Junction, and Raipur, which is also a starting point of many long-distance trains. These three junctions are well-connected to the major cities of India and also these station comes under the top 50 booking stations in India. The state has the highest freight loading in the country, and one-sixth of the Indian Railway's revenue comes from Chhattisgarh. The length of the rail network in the state is 1,108 km, while a third track has been commissioned between Durg and Raigarh. Construction of some new railway lines include Dalli-Rajhara-Jagdalpur rail line, Pendra Road-Gevra Road rail line, Raigarh-Mand Colliery to Bhupdeopur rail line and Barwadih-Chirmiri rail line. Freight/goods trains provide services mostly to coal and iron ore industries in east-west corridor (Mumbai-Howrah route). There is a lack of passenger services to the north and south of Chhattisgarh.

Major railway stations of Chhattisgarh Air The air infrastructure in Chhattisgarh is gradually improving. Swami Vivekananda Airport in Raipur is the primary airport (domestic) and is well connected to all major cities of India. Besides this, the smaller Bilaspur Airport, Jagdalpur Airport and Ambikapur Airport are regionally connected with scheduled commercial services. A massive reduction in sales tax on aviation turbine fuel (ATF) from 25 to 4% in Chhattisgarh in 2003 contributed to a sharp rise in passenger flow. The passenger flow increased by 58% between 2011 and November 2012.

Governance The State Legislative Assembly is composed of 90 members of the Legislative Assembly. There are 11 members of the Lok Sabha from Chhattisgarh. The Rajya Sabha has five members from the state

Administration Divisions Districts Chhattisgarh comprises 33 districts. The following are the list of the districts of Chhattisgarh State with major cities:

Major cities Economy Chhattisgarh's nominal gross state domestic product (GSDP) is estimated at ₹5.09 lakh crore (US\$60 billion) in 2023-24, the 17th largest state economy in India. The economy of Chhattisgarh recorded a growth rate of 11.2% in 2023-24. Chhattisgarh's success factors in achieving high growth rate are growth in agriculture and industrial production.

Agriculture Agriculture is counted as the chief economic occupation of the state. According to a government estimate, the net sown area of the state is 4.828 million hectares and the gross sown area is 5.788 million hectares. Horticulture and animal husbandry also engage a major share of the total population of the state. About 80% of the population of the state is rural and the main livelihood of the villagers is agriculture and agriculture-based small industry. The majority of the farmers are still practicing the traditional methods of cultivation, resulting in low growth rates and productivity. The farmers have to be made aware of modern technologies suitable to their holdings. Providing adequate knowledge to the farmers is essential for a better implementation of the agricultural development plans and to improve productivity. Considering this and a very limited irrigated area, the productivity of not only rice but also other crops is low, hence the farmers are unable to obtain economic benefits from agriculture and it has remained as subsistence agriculture till now.

Agricultural products The main crops are rice, maize, kodo-kutki and other small millets and pulses (tuar and kulthi); oilseeds, such as groundnuts (peanuts), soybeans and sunflowers are also grown. In the mid-1990s, most of Chhattisgarh was still a monocrop belt. Only one-fourth to one-fifth of the sown area was double-cropped. When a very substantial portion of the population is dependent on agriculture, a situation where nearly 80% of a state's area is covered only by one crop, immediate attention to turn them into double crop areas is needed. Also, very few cash crops are grown in Chhattisgarh, so there is a need to diversify the agricultural produce towards oilseeds and other cash crops. Chhattisgarh is also called the "rice bowl of central India".

Irrigation In Chhattisgarh, rice, the main crop, is grown on about 77% of the net sown area. Only about 20% of the area is under irrigation; the rest depends on rain. Of the three agroclimatic zones, about 73% of the Chhattisgarh plains, 97% of the Bastar plateau, and 95% of the northern hills are rainfed. The irrigated area available for double cropping is only 87,000 ha in the Chhattisgarh plains and 2300 ha in Bastar plateau and northern hills. Due to this, the productivity of rice and other crops is low, hence the farmers are unable to obtain economic benefits from agriculture and it has remained as subsistence agriculture till now, though agriculture is the main occupation of more than 80% of the population. In the Chhattisgarh region, about 22% of the net cropped area was under irrigation as compared to 36.5% in Madhya Pradesh in 1998-99, whereas the average national irrigation was about 40%. The irrigation is characterised by a high order of variability ranging from 1.6% in Bastar to 75.0% in Dhamtari. Based on an average growth trend in the irrigated area, about 0.43% of additional area is brought under irrigation every year as compared to 1.89% in Madhya Pradesh and 1.0% in the country as a whole. Thus, irrigation has been growing at a very low rate in Chhattisgarh and the pace of irrigation is so slow, that it would take about 122 years to reach the 75% level of net irrigated area in Chhattisgarh at the present rate of growth. Chhattisgarh has a limited irrigation system, with dams and canals on some rivers. Average rainfall in the state is around 1400 mm and the entire state falls under the rice agroclimatic zone. The Large variation in the yearly rainfall directly affects the production of rice. Irrigation is the prime need of the state for its overall development and therefore the state government has given top priority to the development of irrigation. A total of four major, 33 medium, and 2199 minor irrigation projects have been completed and five major, nine medium, and 312 minor projects are under construction, as of 31 March 2006.

Industrial sector Power sector Chhattisgarh is one of the few states of India where the power sector is effectively developed. Based on the current production of surplus electric power, the position of the State is comfortable and profitable. The Chhattisgarh State Electricity Board (CSEB) is in a strong position to meet the electricity requirement of the state and is in good financial health. According to Central Electricity Authority (CEA), Chhattisgarh provides electricity to several other states because of surplus production. In Chhattisgarh, National Thermal Power Corporation Limited (NTPC) has Sipat Thermal Power Station with a capacity of 2,980 MW at Sipat, Bilaspur; LARA Super Thermal Power Station with a nameplate capacity of 1600MW and Korba Super Thermal Power Station with a capacity of 2,600 MW at Korba, while CSEB's units have a thermal capacity of 1,780 MW and hydel capacity of 130 MW. Apart from NTPC and CSEB, there are several private generation units of large and small capacity. The state government has pursued a liberal policy with regard to captive generation which has resulted in a number of private companies coming up. The state has a potential of 61,000 MW of additional thermal power in terms of availability of coal for more than 100 years and more than 2,500 MW hydel capacity. To use this vast potential, substantial additions to the existing generation capacity are already underway.

Steel sector The steel industry is one of the biggest heavy industries of Chhattisgarh. Bhilai Steel Plant, Bhilai operated by SAIL, with a capacity of 5.4 million tonnes per year, is regarded as a significant growth indicator of the state. More than 100 steel rolling mills, 90 sponge iron plants, and ferro-alloy units are in Chhattisgarh. Along with Bhilai, today Jagdalpur, Raipur, Bilaspur, Korba and Raigarh have become the steel hub of Chhattisgarh. Today, Raipur and Jagdalpur has become the centre of the steel sector, the biggest market for steel in India.

Aluminium sector The aluminium industry of Chhattisgarh was established by the erstwhile Bharat Aluminium Company (now Vedanta Resources) in Korba, Chhattisgarh, which has a capacity of around 5,700,000 tonnes each year.

Natural resources Gevra, Dipka, Kusmunda open cast coal mines in Korba are the largest in India and the biggest man-made structure visible in satellite images of India. Major coal companies are SECL, Adani, Jindal which operate multiple coal mines across northeast Chhattisgarh.

Central India Coalfields The Central India Coalfields are spread over the districts of Surguja, Koriya (both in Chhattisgarh), Shahdol and Umaria (both in Madhya Pradesh). The group covers an area of about 5,345 square kilometres (2,064 sq mi) with estimated reserves of 15,613.98 million tonnes. The deposits are at a depth of 0-1200 meters. Therefore, extraction is mainly amenable to underground mining except for a few blocks in the eastern part of these coalfields which have opencast potential. Jhilimili Coalfield located in Surguja district is spread over an area of 180 square kilometres (69 sq mi). Estimated total reserves are 215.31 million tonnes, out of which about half have been indicated to be Grade I. According to the Geological Survey of India, total reserves of non-coking coal (as of 1 January 2004) in Jhilimili Coalfield (up to a depth of 300m) was 267.10 million tonnes. The Sonhat is a large coal field representing one of the largest coal reserves in India having estimated reserves of 2.67 billion tonnes of coal. Bistrampur coal field represents one of the largest coal reserves in India having estimated reserves of 1.61 billion tonnes of coal. Chirimiri Coalfield is located in the valley of the Hasdeo River, a tributary of the Mahanadi. Opened in 1930 with production starting in 1932, and has been owned by several companies and owners such as Chirimiri Colliery Company Pvt. Ltd., Dababhoys New Chirimiri Ponri Hill Company (Private) Limited, United Collieries Limited, K.N. Dhady and Indra Singh & Sons (Private) Limited. These were nationalized in 1973. This coalfield is spread over 125 square kilometres (48 sq mi) of hilly country and includes both the sections - Kurasia and Chirimiri. Total reserves in the Chirimiri

coalfield have been estimated to be around 312.11 million tonnes. According to Geological Survey of India reserves of non-coking coal up to a depth of 300 m in Chirimiri Coalfield was 362.16 million tonnes.

South Chhattisgarh coalfields The South Chhattisgarh Coalfields are made up of the Mand Raigarh, Korba, and Hasdo Arand coalfields. Of at least twelve seams in the Mand Valley, the Mand and Taraimar seams are important. Mand Raigarh Coalfield includes the areas earlier known as North Raigarh, South Raigarh, and Mand River Coalfields and is located in Raigarh district and lies in the valley of the Mand River, a tributary of the Mahanadi. This coalfield is spread over an area of 520 square kilometres (200 sq mi). The field has a potential for mining power-grade coal, much of which can be extracted through open-cast mining. Gare block has been identified for captive mining by private companies. According to the Geological Survey of India total reserves (including proved, indicated, and inferred reserves) of non-coking coal in the Mand Raigarh Coalfield is 18,532.93 million tonnes. Out of this 13,868.20 million tonnes is up to a depth of 300 metres, 4569.51 million tonnes is at a depth of 300-600 metres and 95.22 million tonnes is at a depth of 600-1200 m.

Mineral deposits Chhattisgarh is rich in minerals. It produces 50% of the country's total cement production. Due to its proximity to the western States of Maharashtra and Gujarat, it has the highest producing coal mines in India. It has the highest output of coal in the country with the second-highest reserves. It is third in iron ore production and first in tin production. Limestone, dolomite and bauxite are abundant. It is the only tin ore-producing state in India. Other commercially extracted minerals include corundum, garnet, quartz, marble, alexandrite and diamonds. Rowghat iron ore deposits are located in the Antagarh Tahsil of Kanker district and contain the largest iron ore deposits after the Bailadila Iron Ore Mine. Rowghat Mines' reserves have been assessed at 731.93 Mn tonnes. Bailadila has reserves assessed at 1.343 Bn tonnes. Iron ore deposits in Rowghat were discovered in 1899 and in 1949 Geological Survey of India investigated the area. Rowghat deposit is 29 km (18 mi) NNW of Narayanpur, and about 140 km (87 mi) from Jagdalpur. Fe content varies in the various blocks - A Block (62.58% Fe), B Block (50.29% Fe), C Block (57.00% Fe), D Block (60.00% Fe), E Block (52.93% Fe), and F Block (59.62% Fe).

Information and technologies In recent years, Chhattisgarh has also received exposure in information technology (IT) projects and consultancy. Its government is also promoting IT and has set up a body to take care of IT solutions. The body, known as CHiPS, is providing large IT projects such as Choice, Swan, and so forth.

Major companies Major companies with a presence in the state include:

Metal: Bhilai Steel Plant, Jindal Steel and Power, Bharat Aluminium Company **Oil:** Indian Oil Corporation, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited **Mining:** NMDC, South Eastern Coalfields **Power :** NTPC, Lanco Infratech, KSK Energy Ventures, Jindal Power Limited

Exports Chhattisgarh's total exports were US\$353.3 million in 2009-10. Nearly 75% of exports come from Bhilai and the remaining are from Urla, Bhanpuri, and Sirgitti. The major export products include steel, handicrafts, handlooms, blended yarn, food and agri-products, iron, aluminum, cement, minerals, and engineering products. CSIDC (Chhattisgarh State Industrial Development Corporation Limited) is the nodal agency of the government of Chhattisgarh for export promotion in the state.

Media Mainline print media present in Chhattisgarh are Hari Bhoomi, Dainik Bhaskar, Patrika, Navabharat, and Nai Duniya.

Human Development Indicators HDI As of 2018, Chhattisgarh state had a Human Development Index value of 0.613 (medium), ranking 31st in Indian states & union territories. The national average is 0.647 according to Global Data Lab.

Standard of living The standard of living in Chhattisgarh is extremely imbalanced. The cities such as Durg, Raipur, Bhilai and Bilaspur have a medium to high standard of living, while the rural and forested areas lack even the basic resources and amenities. For example, Bhilai has a literacy rate of 86%, while Bastar has a literacy rate of 54%. Raipur, the capital of Chhattisgarh, is one of the fastest-developing cities in India. Atal Nagar (Formerly Naya Raipur) is the new planned city that is touted to become the financial hub of the Central Indian region. New world-class educational institutions and hospitals have already been established in the city. According to the NITI Aayog's Fiscal Health Index 2025, Chhattisgarh ranks second with a score of 55.2.

Education Index Chhattisgarh has an Education Index of 0.526 according to the 2011 NHDR, which is higher than that of the states of Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan. The Average Literacy rate in Chhattisgarh for Urban regions was 84.05 percent in which males were 90.58% literate while female literacy stood at 73.39%. Total literates in the urban region of Chhattisgarh were 4,370,966. Among the marginalized groups, STs are at the bottom of the rankings, further emphasizing the lack of social development in the state. Bastar and Dantewada in south Chhattisgarh are the most illiterate districts and the dropout ratio is the highest among all the districts. The reason for this is the extreme poverty in rural areas. Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama Narainpur serves the tribals in the abjhmajad jungle region of Chhattisgarh for their upliftment and education. As per census 2011, the State has a population of 25.5 million and six medical colleges (five Government and one private) with an intake capacity of 700 students and a doctor-patient ratio of 1:17,000. Under The NITI Aayog released Health Index report titled, "Healthy States, Progressive India", Chhattisgarh has an index of 52.02 Out of 100, which is better than states such as Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan, Odisha, Bihar, Assam and Uttar Pradesh. Despite different health-related schemes and programs, the health indicators such as the percentage of women with BMI<18.5, Under Five Mortality Rate and underweight children, are poor. This may be due to the difficulty in accessing the remote areas in the state. The prevalence of female malnutrition in Chhattisgarh is higher than the national average-half of the ST females are malnourished. The performance of SCs is a little better than the corresponding national and state average. The Under Five Mortality Rate among STs is significantly higher than the national average.

Net state domestic product Chhattisgarh is one of the emerging states with relatively high growth rates of net state domestic product (NSDP) (8.2% vs. 7.1% All India over 2002-2008) and per capita NSDP (6.2% vs. 5.4% All India over 2002-2008). The growth rates of the said parameters are above the national averages and thus it appears that Chhattisgarh is catching up with other states in this respect. However, the state still has very low levels of per capita income as compared to the other states.

Urbanisation Out of the total population of Chhattisgarh, 23.24% live in urban regions. The total population living in urban areas is 5,937,237, of which 3,035,469 are males and the remaining 2,901,768 are females. Raipur, Durg, Bhilai Nagar, Bilaspur, Korba, Jagdalpur, Rajnandgaon, Ambikapur and Raigarh are some of the urban towns and cities in the region.

Sex ratio There are more than 13 million males and 12.9 million females in Chhattisgarh, which constitutes 2.11% of the country's population. The sex ratio in the state is one of the most balanced in India with 991 females per 1,000 males, as is the child sex ratio with 964 females per 1,000 males (Census 2011)

Fertility rate Chhattisgarh has a fairly high fertility rate (2.4) as of 2017 compared to All India (2.2) and the replacement rate (2.1). It has a rural fertility rate of 2.6 and an urban fertility rate of 1.9

SC and ST population With the exception of the hilly states of the north-east, Chhattisgarh has one of highest shares of Scheduled Tribe (ST) populations within a state, accounting for about 10 percent of the STs in India. Scheduled Tribes make up 30.62% of the population. The tribals are an important part of the state population and mainly inhabit the dense forests of Bastar and other districts of south Chhattisgarh. The percentage increase in the population of the scheduled list of tribals during the 2001-2011 decade had been at the rate of 18.23%. The Scheduled Caste (SC) population of Chhattisgarh is 2,418,722 as per the 2001 census constituting 11.6 percent of the total population (20,833,803). The proportion of Scheduled Castes has increased from 11.6 percent in 2001 to 12.8% in 2011.

Poverty The incidence of poverty in Chhattisgarh is very high. The estimated poverty ratio in 2004-05 based on uniform reference period consumption was around 50 percent, which is approximately double the all-India level. The incidence of poverty in the rural and urban areas is almost the same. More than half of the rural STs and urban SCs are poor. In general, the proportion of poor SC and ST households in the state is higher than the state average and their community's respective national averages (except for rural SC households). Given that more than 50 percent of the state's population is ST and SC, the high incidence of income poverty among them is a matter of serious concern in the state. This indicates that the good economic performance in recent years has not percolated to this socially deprived group, which is reflected in their poor performance in human development indicators.

Access to drinking water In terms of access to improved drinking water sources, at the aggregate level, Chhattisgarh fared better than the national average and the SCs of the state performed better than the corresponding national average. Scheduled Tribes are marginally below the state average, but still better than the STs at the all-India level. The proportion of households with access to improved sources of drinking water in 2008-09 was 91%. This proportion was over 90% even in states like Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. This was largely because these states had over 70% of their households accessing tube wells/hand pumps as sources of drinking water.

Sanitation Sanitation facilities in the state were abysmally low with only about 41 percent having toilet facilities before the Swachh Bharat Mission was launched by the Government of India. The Urban areas of Chhattisgarh attained the title of open defecation free on 2 October 2017 and the rural areas have achieved a 90.31% sanitation coverage. What sets Chhattisgarh apart from other states of India is an approach to bring in behavioral change in order to get open defecation-free status. In Chhattisgarh, people don't get toilet incentives before the construction of toilets, so they have to construct the toilet with their own money, and only after using the toilet for 3 months are they entitled to the incentive amount. In 2020, it again won the title of the cleanest state with more than 100 Urban Local Bodies, as announced by Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs Hardeep Singh Puri following the 'Swachh Survekshan 2020'. In the Swachh Survekshan Awards-2023, Chhattisgarh secured the third rank in the 'Best Performing States' category.

Teledensity Across states, it has been found that teledensity (telephone density) was below 10 percent in 2010 for Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand, reflecting a lack of access to telephones in these relatively poorer states. But due to development of new technology the teledensity in 2017 is 68.08 percent which shows improvement of telecom infrastructure. On the other hand, for states like Delhi and Himachal Pradesh and metropolitan cities like Kolkata, Mumbai, and Chennai, teledensity was over 100 percent in 2010 implying that individuals have more than one telephone connection.

Road density The total density of National Highways (NHs) in Chhattisgarh is at 23.4 km per 1,000 km² out of the total length of 3,168 km in the State, the Central Government has informed. Chhattisgarh Government had completed construction of 5,266 cement concrete (CC) roads having a total length of 1,530 km in various villages of the State as on 31 May 2016 under 'Mukhyamantri Gram Sadak Yojana'.

Witchcraft To bring about social reforms and with a view to discourage undesirable social practices, Chhattisgarh government has enacted the Chhattisgarh Tonhi Atyachar (Niwaran) Act, 2005 against witchery. Much has to be done on the issue of law enforcement by judicial authorities to protect women in this regard, bringing such persecution to an end. Some sections of tribal population of Chhattisgarh state believe in witchcraft. Women are believed to have access to supernatural forces and are accused of being witches (tonhi) often to settle personal scores. As of 2010, they are still hounded out of villages on the basis of flimsy accusations by male village sorcerers paid to do so by villagers with personal agendas, such as property and goods acquisition. According to National Geographic Channel's investigations, those accused are fortunate if they are only verbally bullied and shunned or exiled from their village.

Demographics Chhattisgarh has an urban population of 23.4% (around 5.1 million people in 2011) residing in urban areas. According to a report by the government of India, at least 30% are Scheduled Tribes, 12% are Scheduled Castes and over 45.5% belong to the official list of Other Backward Classes. The plains are numerically dominated by castes such as Teli, Satnami and Yadav while forest areas are mainly occupied by tribes such as Gond, Halba, Kamar/Bujia and Oraon. There is also a major general population like Rajputs, Brahmin, Kurmi, Bania, etc. A community of Bengalis has existed in major cities since the times of the British Raj. They are associated with education, industry, and services.

Religion According to the 2011 census, 93.25% of Chhattisgarh's population practised Hinduism, while 2.02% followed Islam, 1.92% followed Christianity and a smaller number followed Buddhism, Sikhism, Jainism or other religions. Hindus are the majority in the state and are the dominant religion in all districts of the state. One sect particular to Chhattisgarh are the Satnamis aka Satnampanthis, who follow Guru Ghasidas, a saint who promoted bhakti towards God and against the caste system. Chhattisgarh has many famous pilgrimage sites, such as the Bambleshwari Temple in Dongargarh and Danteshwari temple in the Dantewada, one of the Shakti Peethas. Buddhism was once a major religion in Chhattisgarh. Islam is the second-largest religion, concentrated in urban centres. Most Christians are tribals from the Surguja region.

Language The official languages of the state are Modern Standard Hindi and Chhattisgarhi, both of which are Central Indo-Aryan languages (also known as Hindi languages, forming a part of the Hindi Belt). Chhattisgarhi is spoken and understood by the majority of people in Chhattisgarh and is the dominant language in the Chhattisgarh plain. Chhattisgarhi is called Khaltahi by tribals and Laria in Odia. Chhattisgarhi is itself divided into many dialects, one of the most distinct being Surguja from the Surguja region, which is sometimes considered its own language. Near the Uttar Pradesh border this dialect merges into Bhojpuri, while it merges

with Bagheli near the Madhya Pradesh border. Surgujia also merges into Sadri in the northeast along the border with Jharkhand. Standard Hindi is spoken by many migrants from outside the state, and is a major language in the cities and industrial centres, while many whose language is actually Chhattisgarhi record their speech as "Hindi" in the census. Odia is widely spoken in eastern Chhattisgarh, especially near the Odisha border. Telugu and Marathi speaking minorities can be found along the Telangana and Maharashtra borders respectively. In the eastern Bastar region, Halbi and Bhatia are major languages. In addition, Chhattisgarh has several indigenous languages. Kurukh and Korwa are both spoken in the Surguja region. Gondi is a major language in southern Chhattisgarh: Bastar and the adjoining districts. Gondi has many dialects, such as Muria in north Bastar, which transitions to Madia further south and Dorli, transitional between Gondi and Koya, along the borders of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. In the east of Bastar. Most Gonds in the north and east of Bastar, as well as the rest of the state, speak regional languages and have largely forgotten their original tongue.

Gender ratio Chhattisgarh has a high female-male sex ratio (991) ranking at the fifth position among other states of India. Although this ratio is small compared to other states, it is unique in India because Chhattisgarh is the 10th-largest state in India. The gender ratio (number of females per 1,000 males) has been steadily declining over 20th century in Chhattisgarh. But it is conspicuous that Chhattisgarh always had a better female-to-male ratio compared with national average.

Rural women, although poor, are independent, better organised, and socially outspoken. According to another local custom, women can choose to terminate a marriage relationship through a custom called chudi pahanana, if she desires. Most of the old temples and shrines follow Shaktism and are goddess-centric (e.g., Shabari, Mahamaya, Danteshwari) and the existence of these temples gives insight into the historical and current social fabric of this state. However, a mention of these progressive local customs in no way suggests that the ideology of female subservience does not exist in Chhattisgarh. On the contrary, male authority and dominance are seen quite clearly in social and cultural life.

Culture Dance Panthi, the folk dance of the Satnami community, has religious overtones. Panthi is performed on Maghi Purnima, the anniversary of the birth of Guru Ghasidas. The dancers dance around a jaitkhamb set up for the occasion, to songs eulogising their spiritual head. The songs reflect a view of nirvana, conveying the spirit of their guru's renunciation and the teachings of saint poets like Kabir, Ramdas and Dadu. Dancers with bent torsos and swinging arms dance, carried away by their devotion. As the rhythm quickens, they perform acrobatics and form human pyramids.

Pandavani Pandavani is a folk ballad form performed predominantly in Chhattisgarh. It depicts the story of the Pandavas, the leading characters in the epic Mahabharata. The artists in the Pandavani narration consist of a lead artist and some supporting singers and musicians. There are two styles of narration in Pandavani, Vedamati, and Kapalik. In the Vedamati style, the lead artist narrates in a simple manner by sitting on the floor throughout the performance. The Kapalik style is livelier, where the narrator actually enacts the scenes and characters. Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan, and Padma Vibhushan Teejan Bai is most popular artist of Pandavani

Raut Nacha Raut Nacha, the folk dance of cowherds, is a traditional dance of Yaduvanshis (clan of Yadu) as symbol of worship to Krishna from the 4th day of Diwali (Goverdhan Puja) till the time of Dev Uthani Ekadashi (day of awakening of the gods after a brief rest) which is the 11th day after Diwali according to the Hindu

calendar. The dance closely resembles Krishna's dance with the gopis (milkmaids). In Bilaspur, the Raut Nach Mahotsav folk dance festival has been organised annually since 1978. Tens of hundreds of Raut dancers from remote areas participate.

Suwa Nacha Soowa or Suwa tribal dance in Chhattisgarh is also known as Parrot Dance. It is a symbolic form of dancing related to worship. Dancers keep a parrot in a bamboo pot and form a circle around it. Then performers sing and dance, moving around it with clapping. This is one of the main dance forms of tribal women of Chhattisgarh.

Karma Tribal groups like Gonds, the Baigas and the Oraons in Chhattisgarh have the Karma dance as part of their culture. Both men and women arrange themselves in two rows and follow the rhythmic steps, directed by the singer group. The Karma tribal dance marks the end of the rainy season and the advent of spring season.

Cinema Chollywood is Chhattisgarh's film industries. Every year many Chhattisgarhi films are produced by local producers. Lata Mangeshkar sang a song for Chhattisgarhi film Bhakla of Dhriti pati sarkar. Mohammed Rafi sang a song for Chhattisgarhi film. He had also sung songs for various Chhattisgarhi films like Ghardwaar, Kahi Debe Sandesh, Punni Ke Chanda, etc.

Cuisine Chhattisgarh is known as the rice bowl of India and has a rich tradition of food culture. The typical Chhattisgarhi thali consists of roti, bhat, dal or kadhi, curry, chutney and bhaji. Few Chhattisgarhi dishes are Aamat, Bafauri, Bhajia, Chousela, Dubkikadhi, Farra, Khurmi, Moong Bara, Thethari, and Muthia.

Festivals of Chhattisgarh Major festivals of Chhattisgarh include Bastar Dussehra/ Durga Puja, Bastar Lokotsav, Madai Festival, Rajim Kumbh Mela, and Pakhanjore Mela (Nara Narayan Mela).

Tourism Chhattisgarh, situated in the heart of India, is endowed with a rich cultural heritage and attractive natural diversity. The state is full of ancient monuments, rare wildlife, exquisitely carved temples, Buddhist sites, palaces, waterfalls, caves, rock paintings, and hill plateaus. Maitri Bagh in Bilai is the largest and oldest zoo of Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. Mainpat is mini Shimla of Chhattisgarh. There are many waterfalls, hot springs, caves, temples, dams and national parks, tiger reserves and wildlife sanctuaries in Chhattisgarh. India's first man-made jungle safari is also situated in Raipur.

Sports Abujhmad Peace Marathon is the largest sports event of Narainpur. The Chhattisgarhiya Olympics are an annual Chhattisgarhi celebration of traditional Indian games such as kabaddi and kho-kho. The inaugural 2022 edition drew in around 2.6 million participants (almost 10% of the state's population).

Education According to the census of 2011, Chhattisgarh's literacy, the most basic indicator of education, was at 71.04 percent. Female literacy was at 60.59 percent.

Absolute literates and literacy rate Data from Census of India, 2011.

Notable people See also Dadaria List of states and union territories of India by area Outline of Chhattisgarh

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Goa

Goa (GOH-█; Konkani: [███]; Portuguese: [██o█]) is a state on the southwestern coast of India within the Konkan region, geographically separated from the Deccan highlands by the Western Ghats. It is bordered by the Indian states of Maharashtra to the north and Karnataka to the east and south, with the Arabian Sea forming its western coastline. It is India's smallest state by area and fourth-smallest by population. Panaji (also Panjim) is the state's capital, while Vasco da Gama is its largest city by population. The state's official language is Konkani, spoken by the majority of its inhabitants. The Portuguese, who first voyaged to the subcontinent in the early 16th century as merchants, conquered it shortly thereafter. Goa became an overseas territory of the Portuguese Empire and part of what was then known as Portuguese India, remaining under Portuguese rule for approximately 451 years until its annexation by India in December 1961. The historic city of Margo, or Madgaon, still reflects the cultural legacy of colonisation. Goa is one of India's most developed small states and has the second-highest GDP per capita among all Indian states, more than twice the national average GDP per capita. The Eleventh Finance Commission of India named Goa the best-placed state in terms of infrastructure, while India's National Commission on Population ranked it as having the highest quality of life in the country based on 12 socio-economic indicators. It ranks highest among Indian states in the Human Development Index, and it is the only Indian state classified as very high on the index. Goa attracts a significant influx of both international and domestic tourists annually due to its white-sand beaches, active nightlife, religious landmarks, and UNESCO World Heritage-listed architecture. It also boasts rich biodiversity, lying near the Western Ghats, a biodiversity hotspot. The North Goa district draws more visitors owing to its numerous restaurants, accommodation options, and a vibrant nightlife. In contrast, South Goa is noted for its serene beaches and luxury resorts, catering primarily to high-end tourists seeking privacy and tranquility.

Etymology After the Bahmani-Bijapuri city of Goa was captured by Afonso de Albuquerque in 1510, and made the capital of the Estado da ndia, the city gave its name to the contiguous territories. The origin of the city name Goa is unclear. In ancient literature, Goa was known by many names, such as Gomanchala, Gopakapattana, Gopakapattam, Gopakapuri, Govapuri, Govem, and Gomantak. Other historical names for Goa are Sindapur, Sandabur, and Mahassapatam.

History **Prehistory** Rock art engravings found in Goa are one of the earliest known traces of human life in India. Goa, situated within the Shimoga-Goa Greenstone Belt in the Western Ghats (an area composed of metavolcanics, iron formations and ferruginous quartzite), yields evidence for Acheulean occupation. Rock art engravings (petroglyphs) are present on laterite platforms and granite boulders in Usgalimal near the west flowing Kushavati river and in Kajur. In Kajur, the rock engravings of animals, tectiforms and other designs in granite have been associated with what is considered to be a megalithic stone circle with a round granite stone in the centre. Petroglyphs, cones, stone-axe, and choppers dating to 10,000 years ago have been found in various locations in Goa, including Kazur, Mauxim, and the Mandovi-Zuari basin. Recently these petroglyphs have been included in the tentative list of UNESCO world heritage sites. Evidence of Paleolithic life is visible at Dabolim, Adkon, Shigao, Fatorpa, Arli, Maulinguinim, Diwar, Sanguem, Pilerne, and Aquem-Margaon. Difficulty in carbon dating the laterite rock compounds poses a problem for determining the exact time period. Early Goan society underwent radical change when Indo-Aryan and Dravidian migrants amalgamated with the aboriginal locals, forming the base of early Goan culture.

Early history In the 3rd century BC, Goa was part of the Maurya Empire, ruled by the Buddhist emperor, Ashoka of Magadha. Buddhist monks laid the foundation of Buddhism in Goa. Between the 2nd century BC and the 6th century AD, Goa was ruled by the Bhojas of Goa. Chutus of Karwar also ruled some parts as feudatories of the Satavahanas of Kolhapur (2nd century BC to the 2nd century AD), Western Kshatrapas (around 150 AD), the Abhiras of Western Maharashtra, Bhojas of Goa, and the Konkani Mauryas as feudatories of the Kalachuris. The rule later passed to the Chalukyas of Badami, who controlled it between 578 and 753, and later the Rashtrakutas of Malkhed from 753 to 963. From 765 to 1015, the Southern Silharas of Konkani ruled Goa as the feudatories of the Chalukyas and the Rashtrakutas. Over the next few centuries, Goa was successively ruled by the Kadambas as the feudatories of the Chalukyas of Kalyani. They patronised Jainism in Goa. In 1312, Goa came under the governance of the Delhi Sultanate. The kingdom's grip on the region was weak, and by 1370 it was forced to surrender it to Harihara I of the Vijayanagara Empire. The Vijayanagara monarchs held on to the territory until 1469 when it was appropriated by the Bahmani Sultanate. After that dynasty crumbled, the area fell into the hands of the Sultanate of Bijapur, who established as their auxiliary capital the city known under the Portuguese as Velha Goa (or Old Goa).

Portuguese period In 1510, the Portuguese defeated the ruling Bijapur sultan Yusuf Adil Shah with the help of a local ally, Thimmayya or Timoji, a privateer. They set up a permanent settlement in Velha Goa (Old Goa). This was the beginning of Portuguese colonial rule in Goa that would last for four and a half centuries, until its annexation by India in 1961. The Goa Inquisition, a formal tribunal, was established in 1560, and was finally abolished in 1812. From the latter decades of the eighteenth century, the territory of Goa was composed of two segments: the central nucleus of the Velhas Conquistas (Old Conquests)-Bardes, Ilhas de Goa, and Salcette-which territories had been under Portuguese administration since the sixteenth century; and the Novas Conquistas (New Conquests)-Bicholim, Canacona, Pernem, Quepem, Sattari, and Sanguem-territories which had been successively added through the eighteenth century. In 1787, Goa experienced its first revolt from its Catholic elite, with the Pinto Revolt led by a Goan noble family who revolted against the Portuguese due to racial discrimination in administration and clergy. They were betrayed by a member of the revolt. The Portuguese government executed some of the family members, while others, such as Abbe Faria, went on to join the French Revolution. This remains legend in Goa today.

In 1843, the Portuguese moved the capital to the Cidade da Nova Goa (City of New Goa), today known as Panaji (Panjim), from Velha Goa (Old Goa). By the mid-18th century, Portuguese expansions lost other possessions in India until their borders stabilised and formed the Goa, Daman and Diu, which included Silvassa prior to the Annexation, it was known as Estado da ndia in Portuguese. Some wealthy Goan zamindars such as Baron Dempo and Viscount Deshpriabhu were included in the Portuguese nobility, and were among the richest men in Independent India due to the mineral wealth of Goa.

Contemporary period After India gained independence from British rule in 1947, India requested that Portuguese territories on the Indian subcontinent be ceded to India. Portugal refused to negotiate on the sovereignty of its Indian enclaves. On 19 December 1961, the Indian Army invaded with Operation Vijay resulting in the annexation of Goa, and of Daman and Diu islands into the Indian union. Goa, Daman and Diu, were organised as a single centrally administered union territory of India. On 16 January 1967 a referendum was held in Goa, to decide the future of the Union Territory of Goa, Daman and Diu. It was the only referendum to have been held in independent India. The referendum offered the people of Goa a choice between continuing as a union territory or merging with the state of Maharashtra and the majority chose the former. On 30 May 1987, the union territory was split, and Goa was made India's twenty-fifth state, with Daman and Diu remaining a union territory.

Geography Goa encompasses an area of 3,702 km² (1,429 sq mi). It lies between the latitudes 14°53'54" N and 15°40'00" N and longitudes 73°40'33" E and 74°20'13" E. Goa is a part of the coastal country known as the Konkan, which is an escarpment rising up to the Western Ghats range of mountains, which separate it from the Deccan Plateau. The highest point is the Sonsogor Peak, with an altitude of 1,026 m (3,366 ft). Goa has a coastline of 160 km (99 mi). Goa's seven major rivers are the Mandovi, Zuari, Terekhol, Chapora, Galgibag, Cumbarjua canal, Talpona, and the Sal. The Zuari and the Mandovi are the most important rivers, interspaced by the Cumbarjua canal, forming a major estuarine complex. These rivers are fed by the Southwest monsoon rain and their basin covers 69% of the state's geographical area. These rivers are some of the busiest in India. Goa has more than 40 estuarine, eight marine, and about 90 riverine islands. The total navigable length of Goa's rivers is 253 km (157 mi). Goa has more than 300 ancient water tanks built during the rule of the Kadamba dynasty and over 100 medicinal springs. Mormugao harbour on the mouth of the Zuari river is considered one of the best natural harbours in South Asia. Most of Goa's soil cover is made up of laterites rich in ferric-aluminum oxides and reddish in colour. Further inland and along the riverbanks, the soil is mostly alluvial and loamy. The soil is rich in minerals and humus, thus conducive to agriculture. Some of the oldest rocks in the Indian subcontinent are found in Goa between Molem and Anmod on Goa's border with Karnataka. The rocks are classified as Trondjemeitic Gneiss estimated to be 3,600 million years old, dated by rubidium isotope dating. A specimen of the rock is exhibited at Goa University.

Climate Goa features a tropical monsoon climate under the Kppen climate classification. Goa, being in the torrid zone and near the Arabian Sea, has a hot and humid climate for most of the year. The month of May is usually the hottest, seeing daytime temperatures of over 35 C (95 F) coupled with high humidity due to proximity to the sea. Due to high humidity, the 'feels-like' temperature may reach upto 48 C during summer afternoons which can cause severe discomfort and excessive sweating. The state's three seasons are southwest monsoon period (June-September), post-monsoon period (October-January), and pre-monsoon period (February-May). Over 90% of the average annual rainfall (3,048 mm or 120 in) is received during the monsoon season.

Flora and fauna Equatorial forest cover in Goa stands at 1,500 km² (579 sq mi), most of which is owned by the government. Government-owned forest is estimated at 1,300 km² (502 sq mi) while private is given as 200 km² (77 sq mi). Most of the forests in the state are located in the interior eastern regions of the state. The Western Ghats, which form most of eastern Goa, have been internationally recognised as one of the biodiversity hotspots of the world. In the February 1999 issue of National Geographic Magazine, Goa was compared with the Amazon and the Congo basins for its rich tropical biodiversity. Goa's wildlife sanctuaries boast of more than 1512 documented species of plants, over 275 species of birds, over 48 kinds of animals and over 60 genera of reptiles. Nanda Lake is the first and the only Ramsar wetland site in Goa. Goa is also known for its coconut cultivation. The coconut tree has been reclassified by the government as a palm (like grass), enabling farmers and real estate developers to clear land with fewer restrictions. Rice is the main food crop, and pulses (legume), Ragi (Finger Millet), and other food crops are also grown. Main cash crops are arecanut, coconut, cashew nut, sugar cane, and fruits like banana, mango, and pineapple. Goa's state animal is the Gaur, the state bird is the Flame-throated Bulbul, and the state tree is the Indian Laurel.

The important forest products are bamboo canes, Maratha barks, chillar barks, and the bhirand. Coconut palm trees are common throughout Goa barring the elevated regions. A variety of deciduous trees, such as teak, Sal tree, cashew, and mango trees are present. Fruits include jackfruit, mango, pineapple, and blackberry. Goa's forests are rich in medicinal plants. Foxes, wild boar and migratory birds are found in the jungles of Goa. The avifauna (bird species) includes kingfisher, myna and parrot. Numerous types of fish are also caught off the

coast of Goa and in its rivers. Crab, lobster, shrimp, jellyfish, oysters, and catfish are the basis of the marine fishery. Goa also has a high snake population. Goa has many famous national parks, including the renowned Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary on the island of Choro. Other wildlife sanctuaries include the Bondla Wildlife Sanctuary, Molem Wildlife Sanctuary, Cotigao Wildlife Sanctuary, Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary, Netravali Wildlife Sanctuary, and Mahaveer Wildlife Sanctuary. Goa has more than 33% of its geographic area under government forests (1,224.38 km² or 472.74 sq mi) of which about 62% has been brought under Protected Areas (PA) of Wildlife Sanctuaries and National Park. Since there is a substantial area under private forests and a large tract under cashew, mango, coconut, etc. plantations, the total forest and tree cover constitutes 56.6% of the geographic area.

Demographics Population A native of Goa is called a Goenkar (Romani Konkani), Goan. Goa has a population of 1.459 million residents as of 2011, making it the fourth least populated state of India after Sikkim, Mizoram, and Arunachal Pradesh. Population density of Goa is 394 per km² which is higher than national average 382 per km². Goa is the state with highest proportion of urban population with 62.17% of the population living in urban areas. The sex ratio is 973 females to 1,000 males. The birth rate was 15.70 per 1,000 people in 2007. Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes make up 1.74% and 10.23% of the population respectively. As of the 2011 census, over 76% of the population was born in Goa, while just over half of migrants to the state are from the neighbouring states of Karnataka and Maharashtra. As per a 2021 report, over 50% of the permanent resident population is of non-Goan origin, outnumbering the native ethnic Goan population. According to the NITI Aayog's Fiscal Health Index 2025, Goa ranks third with a score of 53.6.

Languages The Official Language Act, 1987, of the erstwhile Union Territory of Goa, Daman and Diu makes Konkani in the Devanagari script the sole official language of Goa, but provides that Marathi may also be used "for all or any of the official purposes". Portuguese was the sole official language during Portuguese colonial rule. The government also has a policy of replying in Marathi to correspondence received in Marathi. There have been demands for according Konkani in the Roman script official status in the state. There is widespread support for keeping Konkani as the sole official language of Goa. Konkani is spoken as a first language by about 66.11% of the people in the state, but almost all Goans can speak and understand Konkani. A large population of people can speak and understand English as well. Other linguistic groups in the state per the 2011 census are speakers of Marathi (10.89%), Hindi (8.64%), Kannada (4.65%), Urdu (2.83%), and Portuguese (1%). Historically, Konkani was neither the official nor the administrative language of the many rulers of the State. Under the Kadambas (c. 960-1310), the court language was Kannada. When under Muslim rule (1312-1370 and 1469-1510), the official and cultural language was Persian. Various stones in the Archaeological Museum and Portrait Gallery from the period are inscribed in Kannada and Persian. During the period in between the two periods of Muslim rule, the Vijayanagara Empire, which had control of the state, mandated the use of Kannada and Telugu.

Religion According to the 2011 census, in a population of 1,458,545 people, 66.1% were Hindu, 25.1% were Christian, 8.3% were Muslim, and 0.1% were Sikh. However, in September 2024, Goa Governor P.S. Sreedharan Pillai stated that the Muslim population of Goa has increased from 3% to 12% while the Christian population decreased from 36% to 25%. He later clarified that his remarks referred to "brain drain" and were not intended as a commentary on religious demographics. In 1909, the Catholic Encyclopedia documented the total Catholic population in Portuguese Goa as 293,628 out of a total population of 365,291 (80.33%). Since the 20th century, the percentage of Goan Catholics has gradually declined caused by a combination of permanent emigration from Goa to cosmopolitan Indian cities (e.g. Mumbai, Pune, Bangalore) and foreign countries (e.g. Portugal, the United Kingdom) with the mass immigration of non-Christians from the rest of India since the 20th

century. By 2021, ethnic Goans accounted for less than half of the state's residents. The Catholics in Goa state and Daman and Diu union territory are served by the Metropolitan Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Goa and Daman, the primatial see of India, in which the titular Patriarchate of the East Indies is vested.

Government and politics The politics of Goa are a result of the uniqueness of this region due to 450 years of Portuguese rule, in comparison to two centuries of British rule experienced by most of the rest of India. The Indian National Congress was unable to achieve electoral success in the first two decades after the State's incorporation into India. Instead, the state was dominated by the regional political parties like Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party and the United Goans Party.

Government Goa has two members of parliament (MP) elected from each district representing the state in the Lok Sabha (House of the People), the lower house of the national Parliament of India. It also has one member of parliament in the Rajya Sabha (Council of the States), the upper house of the Indian parliament. Goa's administrative capital is based in Panaji, often referred to as Panjim in English, Pangim in Portuguese and Pongj in Konkani, the official language of the state. It lies on the left bank of the Mandovi river. The seat of the Goa Legislative Assembly is in Porvorim, across the Mandovi from Panaji. The state's highest judiciary is the Goa Bench of the Bombay High Court, a branch of the Bombay High Court permanently seated at Panjim. Unlike other states, which follow the model of personal laws framed for individual religions introduced in the days of British Raj, the Portuguese Civil Code of Goa and Damaon, a uniform code based on the Napoleonic code was retained in Goa as well as the union territory of Damaon, Diu & Silvassa. Goa has a unicameral legislature, the Goa Legislative Assembly, of 40 members, headed by a speaker. The chief minister heads the executive, which is made up of the party or coalition elected with a majority in the legislature. The governor, the head of the state, is appointed by the president of India. After having stable governance for nearly thirty years up to 1990, Goa is now notorious for its political instability having seen fourteen governments in the span of the fifteen years between 1990 and 2005. In March 2005, the assembly was dissolved by the Governor and President's Rule was declared, which suspended the legislature. A by-election in June 2005 saw the Indian National Congress coming back to power after winning three of the five seats that went to polls. The Congress Party and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) are the two largest parties in the state. In the assembly poll of 2007, the INC-led coalition won and formed the government. In the 2012 Vidhan Sabha Elections, the Bharatiya Janata Party along with the Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party won a clear majority, forming the new government with Manohar Parrikar as the Chief Minister. Other parties include the United Goans Democratic Party, the Nationalist Congress Party. In the 2017 assembly elections, the Indian National Congress gained the most seats, with the BJP coming in second. However, no party was able to gain a majority in the 40 member house. The BJP was invited to form the Government by Governor Mridula Sinha. The Congress claimed the use of money power to blame its struggle on BJP and took the case to the Supreme Court. However, the Manohar Parikkar led Government was able to prove its majority in the Supreme Court mandated "floor test". In the 2022 Goa Legislative Assembly Elections, the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) won 20 seats with support of 2 seats by MGP and 3 seats by independents while on 14 September 2022 when 8 Congress MLA switched party and joined BJP. The current seats of NDA lies at 33 with 28 of BJP , 2 of MGP and 3 independents while the opposition Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) with 7 seats consisting of Congress at 3 seats AAP with 2 seats GFP and RGP with 1 seats each.

Subdivisions The state is divided into two civil districts-North Goa and South Goa. Each district is administered by a District Collector, appointed by the Government of Goa. These two districts are further divided into subdivisions and talukas, headed by a Deputy Collector-cum-Sub Divisional Officer and a Mamlatdar, respectively. The talukas are further divided into villages, each headed by a Talathi, who is responsible for land

revenue and related matters. Panaji (Panjim) is the headquarters of North Goa district and is also the capital of Goa. North Goa is further divided into three subdivisions-Panaji, Mapusa, and Bicholim; and five talukas (subdistricts)-Tiswadi (Panaji), Bardez (Mapusa), Pernem, Bicholim, and Sattari (Valpoi). Margao (Madgaon) is the headquarters of the South Goa district. It is also the cultural and commercial capital of Goa. South Goa is further divided into five subdivisions-Ponda, Mormugao-Vasco, Margao, Quepem, and Dharbandora; and seven talukas-Ponda, Mormugao, Salcete (Margao), Quepem, and Canacona (Chaudi), Sanguem, and Dharbandora. Goa has a total number of 334 villages.

Local governance Goa's major cities are-Panaji, Margao, Vasco-Mormugao, Mapusa, Ponda, Bicholim, and Valpoi. Panaji (Panjim) has the only Municipal Corporation in Goa. There are thirteen Municipal Councils-Margao, Mormugao (merged with Vasco), Pernem, Mapusa, Bicholim, Sanquelim, Valpoi, Ponda, Cuncolim, Quepem, Curchorem, Sanguem, and Canacona. There are two Zilla Panchayats - South Goa and North Goa - and 191 Gram Panchayats for rural governance. Local governance in Goa is administered through a two-tier system in rural areas and a municipal system in urban areas. Rural local bodies consist of the Zilla Panchayats at the district level and Gram Panchayats at the village level, functioning under the Goa Panchayat Raj Act, 1994. Urban areas are governed by municipal councils or municipal corporations in accordance with the Goa Municipalities Act, 1968, and the Corporation of the City of Panaji Act, 2002. These institutions are responsible for local administration, civic amenities, and community development within their respective jurisdictions.

Economy Goa's state domestic product for 2017 is estimated at \$11 billion at current prices. Goa is India's richest state with the highest GDP per capita-two and a half times that of the country-with one of its fastest growth rates: 8.23% (yearly average 1990-2000). Tourism is Goa's primary industry: it gets 12% of foreign tourist arrivals in India. Goa has two main tourist seasons: winter and summer. In winter, tourists from abroad (mainly Europe) come, and summer (which, in Goa, is the rainy season) sees tourists from across India. Goa's net state domestic product (NSDP) was around US\$7.24 billion in 2015-16. The land away from the coast is rich in minerals and ores, and mining forms the second largest industry. Iron, bauxite, manganese, clays, limestone, and silica are mined. The Mormugao port handled 31.69 a million tonnes of cargo in 2007, which was 39% of India's total iron ore exports. Sesa Goa (now owned by Vedanta Resources) and Dempo are the lead miners. Rampant mining has been depleting the forest cover as well as posing a health hazard to the local population. Corporations are also mining illegally in some areas. During 2015-16, the total traffic handled by Mormugao port was recorded to be 20.78 million tonnes.

Agriculture, while of shrinking importance to the economy over the past four decades, offers part-time employment to a sizeable portion of the populace. Rice is the main agricultural crop, followed by areca, cashew, and coconut. Fishing employs about 40,000 people, though recent official figures indicate a decline in the importance of this sector and also a fall in the catch, due perhaps, to traditional fishing giving way to large-scale mechanised trawling. Medium-scale industries include the manufacturing of pesticides, fertilizers, tires, tubes, footwear, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, wheat products, steel rolling, fruits and fish canning, cashew nuts, textiles, brewery products. Currently, there are 16 planned SEZs in Goa. The Goa government has recently decided to not allow any more Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in Goa after strong opposition to them by political parties and the Goa Catholic Church. Goa is also notable for its low-priced beer, wine, and spirits prices due to its very low excise duty on alcohol. Another main source of cash inflow to the state is remittance, from many of its citizens who work abroad, to their families. It is said to have some of the largest bank savings in the country. In 1976, Goa became the first state in India to legalise some types of gambling. This enabled the state to levy taxes on gambling, strengthening the economy. Manohar Parrikar granted permanent licences to

casinos in 2014. There are several casinos available in Goa. From 2018 to 2019, tax revenue from casinos reached Rs 414 crore. Goa is the second state in India to achieve a 100 per cent automatic telephone system with a solid network of telephone exchanges. As of September 2017, Goa had a total installed power generation capacity of 547.88 MW. Goa is also one of the few states in India to achieve 100 per cent rural electrification.

Tourism Tourism is generally focused on the coastal areas of Goa, with lower tourist activity inland. In 2010, there were more than 2 million tourists reported to have visited Goa, about 1.2 million of whom were from abroad. As of 2013, Goa was a destination of choice for Indian and foreign tourists, particularly Britons who wanted to vacation outside their countries. The state was hopeful that changes could be made which would attract a more upscale demographic. Goa stands 6th in the Top 10 Nightlife cities in the world in National Geographic Travel. One of the biggest tourist attractions in Goa is water sports. Beaches like Baga and Calangute offer jet-skiing, parasailing, banana boat rides, water scooter rides, and more. Patnem beach in Palolem stood third in CNN Travel's Top 20 Beaches in Asia. Over 450 years of Portuguese rule and the influence of the Portuguese culture presents to visitors to Goa a cultural environment that is not found elsewhere in India. Goa is often described as a fusion between Eastern and Western culture with Portuguese culture having a dominant position in the state be it in its architectural, cultural or social settings. The state of Goa is famous for its excellent beaches, churches, and temples.

Historic sites and neighbourhoods Goa has one World Heritage Site: the Bom Jesus Basilica with churches and convents of Old Goa. The basilica holds the mortal remains of Francis Xavier, regarded by many Catholics as the patron saint of Goa (the patron of the Archdiocese of Goa is actually Saint Joseph Vaz). These are both Portuguese-era monuments and reflect a strong European character. The relics are taken down for veneration and for public viewing, per the prerogative of the Church in Goa, not every ten or twelve years as popularly thought and propagated. The last exposition was held in 2014.

The Velhas Conquistas regions are known for Goa-Portuguese style architecture. There are many forts in Goa such as Tiracol, Chapora, Corjuem, Aguada, Reis Magos, Nanus, Mormugao, Fort Gaspar Dias and Cabo de Rama. In many parts of Goa, mansions constructed in the Indo-Portuguese style architecture still stand, though, in some villages, most of them are in a dilapidated condition. Fontainhas in Panaji has been declared a cultural quarter, showcasing the life, architecture and culture of Goa. Influences from the Portuguese era are visible in some of Goa's temples, notably the Shanta Durga Temple, the Mangueshi Temple, the Shri Damodar Temple and the Mahalasa Temple. After 1961, many of these were demolished and reconstructed in the indigenous Indian style.

Museums and science centre Goa has three important museums: the Goa State Museum, the Naval Aviation Museum and the National Institute of Oceanography. The aviation museum is one of three in India (the others are in Delhi and Bangalore). The Goa Science Centre is in Miramar, Panaji. The National Institute of Oceanography, India (NIO) is in Dona Paula. Museum of Goa is a privately owned contemporary art gallery in Pilerne Industrial Estate, near Calangute.

Beaches Most of the beauty of Goa is present on the beaches. The coastline of about 103 kilometres (64 mi) has some of the most attractive beaches flanked by the Arabian Sea. The beaches of Goa are counted among the most beautiful in the world. Some of the beaches include Anjuna Beach, Baga Beach, Bambolim Beach, Calangute Beach, Candolim Beach, Colva Beach, and Miramar Beach. Goa has around 54 beaches minimum

by a tourist website, however including small minor beaches could take the count to 100+.

Culture Having been a Portuguese colony for over 450 years, Goan culture is an amalgamation of both Eastern and Western styles, with the latter having a more dominant role. The tableau of Goa showcases religious harmony by focusing on the Deepastambha, the Christian cross, and Ghode Modni followed by a chariot. European royal attire of kings is as much part of Goa's cultural heritage as are regional dances performed depicting a unique blend of different religions and cultures of this State. Prominent local festivals are Christmas, Easter, Carnival, Diwali, Shigmo, Chavoth, Samvatsar Padvo, Dasara etc. The Goan Carnival and Christmas-new year celebrations attract many tourists. The Gomant Vibhushan, the highest civilian honour of the state of Goa, is given annually by the Government of Goa since 2010.

Dance and music Traditional Goan art forms are Dekhnni, Fugdi, Corridinho, Mando, Dulpod and Fado. Goan Hindus are very fond of Natak, Bhajan and Kirtan. Many famous Indian classical singers hail from Goa, including Mogubai Kurdikar, Kishori Amonkar, Kesarbai Kerkar, Jitendra Abhisheki and Pandit Prabhakar Karekar. Other famous Goan singers and musicians are Lorna Cordeiro (Nightingale of Goa), Chris Perry and Alfred Rose (Melody King of Goa).

Theatre Natak, Tiatr (most popular) and Zagor are the chief forms of Goa's traditional performance arts. Other forms are Ranmale, Dashavatari, Kalo, Goulankala, Lalit, Kala and Rathkala. Stories from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata along with more modern social subjects are narrated with song and dance. Jagor, the traditional folk dance-drama, is performed by the Hindu Kunbi and Christian Gauda communities of Goa, to seek the Divine Grace for protection and prosperity of the crop. The literal meaning of Jagor is "jagran", or wakeful nights. The strong belief is that the night-long performance awakens the deities once a year and they continue to remain awake throughout the year guarding the village. Perni Jagor is the ancient mask dance-drama of Goa, performed by Perni families, using well crafted and painted wooden masks, depicting various animals, birds, supernatural power, deities, demons, and social characters. Gauda Jagor is an impression of social life that displays all the existing moods and modes of human characters. It is predominantly based on three main characters, Gharasher, Nikhandar, and Parpati, wearing shining dresses and headgear. The performance is accompanied by vibrant tunes of Goan folk instruments like Nagara/Dobe, Ghumat, Madale, and Kansale. In some places, Jagor performances are held with the participation of both Hindus and the Christian community, whereby characters are played by Hindus and musical support is provided by Christian artistes. Tiatr (Teatro) and its artists play a major role in keeping the Konkani language and music alive. Tiatrs are conducted solely in the Roman script of Konkani as it is primarily a Christian community-based act. They are played in scenes with music at regular intervals, the scenes are portrayals of daily life and are known to depict social and cultural scenarios. Tiatrs are regularly held especially on weekends mainly at Kala Academy, Panaji, Pai Tiatrist Hall at Ravindra Bhavan, Margao and most recent shows have also started at the new Ravindra Bhavan, Baina, Vasco. Western Musical Instruments such as Drums, Bass, Keyboards, and Trumpets are part of the show and most of them are played acoustically. It is one of Goa's few art forms that is renowned across the world with performances popular among Goans in the Middle-East, Americas and Europe.

Konkani cinema Konkani cinema is an Indian film industry, where films are made in the Konkani language, which is spoken mainly in the Indian states of Goa, Maharashtra and Karnataka and to a smaller extent in Kerala. Konkani films have been produced in Goa, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Kerala. The first full-length Konkani film was Mogacho Anvddo, released on 24 April 1950, and was produced and directed by A. L. Jerry Braganza, a native of Mapusa, under the banner of ETICA Pictures. Hence, 24 April is celebrated as Konkani Film Day. Since 2004, starting from the 35th edition, the International Film Festival of India moved its

permanent venue to Goa, it is annually held in the months of November and December. Konkani film Paltadcho manis has been included in the world's best films of 2009 list. Konkani films are eligible for the National Film Award for Best Feature Film in Konkani. The most commercially successful Konkani film, as of June 2011, is O Maria directed by Rajendra Talak. In 2012, the whole new change was adopted in Konkani Cinema by introducing Digital Theatrical Film The Victim directed by Milroy Goes. Some old Konkani films are Sukhachem Sapon, Amchem Noxib, Nirmonn, Mhoji Ghorkarn, Kortubanchi Sonvsar, Jivit Amchem Oxem, Mog ani Moipas, Bhuierantlo Munis, Suzanne, Boglantt, Padri and Bhogsonne. Ujwadu is a 2011 Konkani film directed by Kasargod Chinna and produced by KJ Dhananjaya and Anuradha Padiyar.

Food Rice with fish curry (xit koddli in Konkani) is the staple diet in Goa. Goan cuisine is famous for its rich variety of fish dishes cooked with elaborate recipes. Coconut and coconut oil are widely used in Goan cooking along with chili peppers, spices, and vinegar, used in the Catholic cuisine, giving the food a unique flavor. Goan cuisine is heavily influenced by Portuguese cuisine. Goan food may be divided into Goan Catholic and Goan Hindu cuisine with each showing very distinct tastes, characteristics, and cooking styles. Pork dishes such as Vindalho, Xacuti, chourio, and Sorpotel are cooked for major occasions among the Goan Catholics. A mixed vegetable stew, known as Khatkhate, is a very popular dish during the celebrations of festivals, Hindu and Christian alike. Khatkhate contains at least five vegetables, fresh coconut, and special Goan spices that add to the aroma. Sannas, Hitt, are local rice cakes and Polle, Amboli, and Kailoleo are rice pancakes; all are native to Goa. A rich egg-based, multi-layered baked sweet known as bebinca is traditional at Christmas. Stone chocolate is a type of handcrafted dark chocolate associated with Goan cuisine. It is made using traditional techniques and often incorporates local ingredients, including spices that reflect the region's culinary heritage. The chocolate is known for its smooth texture and rich flavor, influenced by Goa's tropical climate and unique cultural blend. The most popular alcoholic beverage in Goa is feni. Cashew feni is made from the double distillation of the fermented fruit juice of the cashew tree, while coconut feni is made from the double distillation of the fermented sap of toddy palms. Urrak is another local liquor prepared from the single distillation of the fermented cashew fruit juice. In fact the bar culture is one of the unique aspects of the Goan villages where a local bar serves as a meeting point for villagers to unwind. Goa also has a rich wine culture due to Portuguese rule.

Architecture The architecture of Goa is a combination of native Goan, Ottoman and Portuguese styles. Since the Portuguese ruled and governed for four centuries, many churches and houses bear a striking element of the Portuguese style of architecture. Goan Hindu houses do not show any Portuguese influence, though the modern temple architecture is an amalgam of original Goan temple style with Dravidian, Hemadpanti, Islamic, and Portuguese architecture. The original Goan temple architecture fell into disuse as the temples were demolished by the Portuguese and the Sthapati known as Thavayi in Konkani were converted to Christianity though the wooden work and the Kavi murals can still be seen.

Transportation Air Goa is served by two international Airports. Goa International Airport, is a civil enclave at INS Hansa, a Naval airfield located at Dabolim, near Vasco da Gama while the Manohar International Airport is located in the North at Mopa. Within five months of its inception, Mopa airport began handling 30 per cent of all air traffic of Goa. The airports cater to scheduled domestic and international air services, with the new airport having started international operations from March 2023. Goa has scheduled international connections to Doha, Dubai, Muscat, Sharjah and Kuwait in the Middle East by airlines like Air Arabia, Air India, GoAir, IndiGo, Oman Air, SpiceJet and Qatar Airways.

Road Goa's public transport largely consists of privately operated buses linking the major towns to rural areas. Government-run buses, maintained by the Kadamba Transport Corporation, link major routes (like the Panaji-Margao route) and some remote parts of the state. The Corporation owns 15 bus stands, 4 depots and one Central workshop at Porvorim and a Head Office at Porvorim. In large towns such as Panaji and Margao, intra-city buses operate. However, public transport in Goa is less developed, and residents depend heavily on their own transportation, usually motorised two-wheelers and small family cars.

Goa has four National Highways passing through it. NH-66 (ex NH-17) runs along India's west coast and links Goa to Mumbai in the north and Mangalore to the south. NH-4A running across the state connects the capital Panaji to Belgaum in east, linking Goa to cities in the Deccan. The NH-366 (ex NH-17A) connects NH-66 to Mormugao Port from Cortalim. The new NH-566 (ex NH-17B) is a four-lane highway connecting Mormugao Port to NH-66 at Verna via Dabolim Airport, primarily built to ease pressure on the NH-366 for traffic to Dabolim Airport and Vasco da Gama. NH-768 (ex NH-4A) links Panaji and Ponda to Belgaum and NH-4. Goa has a total of 224 km (139 mi) of national highways, 232 km (144 mi) of state highway and 815 kilometres (506 miles) of district highway. National Highways in Goa are among the narrowest in the country and will remain so for the foreseeable future, as the state government has received an exemption that allows narrow national highways. In Kerala, highways are 45 metres (148 feet) wide. In other states National Highways are grade separated highways 60 metres (200 feet) wide with a minimum of four lanes, as well as 6 or 8 lane access-controlled expressways. Hired forms of transport include unmetered taxis and, in urban areas, auto rickshaws. Another form of transportation in Goa is the motorcycle taxi, operated by drivers who are locally called "pilots". These vehicles transport a single pillion rider, at fares that are usually negotiated. Other than buses, "pilots" tend to be the cheapest mode of transport. River crossings in Goa are serviced by flat-bottomed ferry boats, operated by the river navigation department. Goa will get two new expressways in the coming years, which will connect the state and will enhance connectivity and commute with the rest of the country. They are as follows:

Nagpur-Goa Expressway: Proposed, to be completed by 2028/29. Konkan Expressway: Proposed.

Rail Goa has two rail lines - one run by the South Western Railway and the other by the Konkan Railway. The line run by the South Western Railway was built during the colonial era linking the port town of Vasco da Gama, Goa with Belgaum, Hubli, Karnataka via Margao. The Konkan Railway line, which was built during the 1990s, runs parallel to the coast connecting major cities on the western coast.

Metro In 2018, a metro rail was planned by the NITI Aayog, linking the capital city of Panaji. In the future, it would be extended from South Goa till the coastal city of Karwar in Karnataka, close to the Kanataka-Goa border.

Skybus Metro Indian scientist B. Rajaram started the ambitious Skybus Metro project under the Konkan Railway Corporation in partnership with Bharat Earth Movers Limited (BEML). Like the Wuppertal Schwebebahn in Germany, the scheme proposed an elevated, suspended railway layout where vehicles would swing from above lines. The objective was to minimise urban congestion by offering a quick and effective urban transportation alternative. Despite its promise, the project encountered some obstacles, like as safety issues after a 2004 test run disaster. The idea ultimately faced shelving despite its early promise and creative approach to urban transportation. Although the Skybus did not succeed, the idea demonstrated India's desire to investigate other forms of transportation, and Indian Railways was granted a patent for the system.

Sea The Mormugao Port Trust near the city of Vasco handles mineral ore, petroleum, coal, and international containers. Much of the shipments consist of minerals and ores from Goa's hinterland. Panaji, which is on the banks of the Mandovi, has a minor port, which used to handle passengers steamers between Goa and Mumbai till the late 1980s. There was also a short-lived catamaran service linking Mumbai and Panaji operated by Damania Shipping in the 1990s.

Education Goa had India's earliest educational institutions built with European support. The Portuguese set up seminaries for religious education and parish schools for elementary education. Founded c. 1542 by Saint Francis Xavier, Saint Paul's College, Goa was a Jesuit school in Old Goa, which later became a college. St Paul's was once the main Jesuit institution in Asia. It housed the first printing press in India and published the first books in 1556. Medical education began in 1801 with the offering of regular medical courses at the Royal and Military Hospital in the old City of Goa. Built-in 1842 as the Escola Mdico-Cirrgica de (Nova) Goa (Medical-Surgical School of Goa), Goa Medical College is one of Asia's oldest medical colleges and has one of the oldest medical libraries (since 1845). It houses the largest hospital in Goa and continues to provide medical training to this day. According to the 2011 census, Goa has a literacy rate of 87%, with 90% of males and 84% of females being literate. Each taluka is made up of villages, each having a school run by the government. Private schools are preferred over government-run schools. All schools come under the Goa Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education, whose syllabus is prescribed by the state education department. There are also a few schools that subscribe to the all-India ICSE syllabus or the NIOS syllabus. Most students in Goa complete their high school with English as the medium of instruction. Most primary schools, however, use Konkani and Marathi (in private, but government-aided schools). As is the case in most of India, enrolment for vernacular media has seen a fall in numbers in favour of English medium education. Per a report published in The Times of India, 84% of Goan primary schools were run without an administrative head. Some notable schools in Goa include Sharada Mandir School in Miramar, Loyola High School in Margao and The King's School in So Jos de Areal. After ten years of schooling, students join a Higher Secondary school, which offers courses in popular streams such as Science, Arts, Law, and Commerce. A student may also opt for a course in vocational studies. Additionally, they may join three-year diploma courses. Two years of college is followed by a professional degree programme. Goa University, the sole university in Goa, is located in Taleigo and most Goan colleges are affiliated with it. There are six engineering colleges in the state. Goa Engineering College and National Institute of Technology Goa are government-funded colleges whereas the private engineering colleges include Don Bosco College of Engineering at Fatorda, Shree Rayeshwar Institute of Engineering and Information Technology at Shiroda, Agnel Institute of Technology, and Design (AITD), Assagao, Bardez and Padre Conceicao College of Engineering at Verna. In 2004, BITS Pilani one of the premier institutes in India, inaugurated its second campus, the BITS Pilani Goa Campus, at Zuarinagar near Dabolim. The Indian Institute of Technology Goa (IIT Goa) began functioning from its temporary campus, located in Goa Engineering College since 2016. The site for permanent campus was finalised in Cotarli, Sanguem. There are colleges offering pharmacy, architecture and dentistry along with numerous private colleges offering law, arts, commerce and science. There are also two National Oceanographic Science related centres: the National Centre for Antarctic and Ocean Research in Vasco da Gama and the National Institute of Oceanography in Dona Paula. Goa Institute of Management located at Sanquelim, near Panaji is one of India's premier business schools. In addition to the engineering colleges, there are government polytechnic institutions in Panaji, Bicholim and Curchorem, and aided institutions like Father Agnel Polytechnic in Verna and the Institute of Shipbuilding Technology in Vasco da Gama which impart technical and vocational training. Other colleges in Goa include Shri Damodar College of Commerce and Economics, V.V.M's R.M. Salgaocar Higher Secondary School in Margao, G.V.M's S.N.J.A higher secondary school, Don Bosco College, D.M.'s College of Arts, Science and Commerce, St Xavier's College, Carmel College, The Parvatibai Chowgule College, Dhempe College, Damodar College, M. E. S. College of Arts & Commerce, S. S. Samiti's Higher Secondary School of Science

and Rosary College of Commerce & Arts. As the result of renewed interest in the Portuguese language and culture, Portuguese at all levels of instruction is offered in many schools in Goa, largely private ones. In some cases, Goan students do student exchange programs in Portugal

Media and communication Historically, the media in Goa grew in the late 1800s before being clamped down on during the rule of Antnio de Oliveira Salazar. The first printing press in Goa was founded in 1556. In 1886, Tipografia Rangel, one of the pioneers in widescale publishing was founded. Prior to this the only existing presses were those of the government and individual family presses existing to print the political newspapers such as O Ultramar. Tipografia Rangel was among the leaders in providing print media to a larger section of society in Goa.

Goa is served by almost all television channels available in India. Channels are received through cable in most parts of Goa. In the interior regions, channels are received via satellite dishes. Doordarshan, the national television broadcaster, has two free terrestrial channels on air. DTH (Direct To Home) TV services are available from Dish TV, Videocon D2H, Tata Sky and DD Direct Plus. The All India Radio is the only radio channel in the state that broadcasts on both FM and AM bands. Two AM channels are broadcast, the primary channel at 1287 kHz and the Vividh Bharati channel at 1539 kHz. AIR's FM channel is called FM Rainbow and is broadcast at 105.4 MHz. A number of private FM radio channels are available, Big FM at 92.7 and Radio Indigo at 91.9 MHz. There is also an educational radio channel, Gyan Vani, run by IGNOU broadcast from Panaji at 107.8 MHz. In 2006, St Xavier's College, Mapusa, became the first college in the state to launch a campus community radio station "Voice of Xavier's". Major cellular service operators include Bharti Airtel, Vodafone Essar, Idea Cellular (merged with Vodafone in 2018), Telenor, Reliance Infocomm, Tata DoCoMo, BSNL CellOne and Jio. Local publications include the English language O Heraldo (Goa's oldest, once a Portuguese language paper), The Gomantak Times and The Navhind Times. In addition to these, The Times of India and The Indian Express are also received from Mumbai and Bangalore in the urban areas. The Times of India has recently started publication from Goa itself, serving the local population news directly from the state capital. Among the list of officially accredited newspapers are O Heraldo, The Navhind Times and The Gomantak Times in English; Bhaangar Bhuin in Konkani (Devanagari script); and Tarun Bharat, Gomantak, Navprabha, Goa Times, Sanatan Prabhat, Govadoot and Lokmat (all in Marathi). All are dailies. Other publications in the state include Planet Goa (English, monthly), Goa Today (English, monthly), Goan Observer (English, weekly), Vauraddeancho Ixtt (Roman-script Konkani, weekly) Goa Messenger, Vasco Watch, Gulab (Konkani, monthly), Bimb (Devanagari-script Konkani). One electronic mailing list that is based in Goa is Goanet.

Sports Association football is the most popular sport in Goa and is embedded in Goan culture as a result of the Portuguese influence. Its origins in the state are traced back to 1883 when the visiting Irish priest Fr. William Robert Lyons established the sport as part of a "Christian education". On 22 December 1959, the Associao de Futebol de Goa was formed, which continues to administer the game in the state under the new name Goa Football Association. Goa, along with West Bengal, Kerala and Northeast India is the locus of football in India and is home to many football clubs in the national I-League. The state's football powerhouses include Salgaocar, Dempo, Churchill Brothers, Vasco, Sporting Clube de Goa and FC Goa. The first Unity World Cup was held in Goa in 2014. The state's main football stadium, Fatorda Stadium, is located at Margao and also hosts cricket matches. The state hosted few matches of the 2017 FIFA U-17 World Cup and several matches of the 2022 FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup in Fatorda Stadium. A number of Goans have represented India in football and six of them, namely Samir Naik, Climax Lawrence, Brahmanand Sankhwalkar, Bruno Coutinho, Mauricio Afonso and Roberto Fernandes have all captained the national team. Goa has its own state football team and league, the Goa Professional League. It is probably the only state in India where cricket is not

considered the most important of all sports. Goan's are avid football fans, particularly of the football teams from Portugal (Benfica, Sporting), and Brazil especially during major football events such as the European Cup and the World Cup championships. The Portuguese footballer Ronaldo and Brazilian Neymar, are revered superstar football players in Goa. Goa also has its own cricket team. Dilip Sardesai and Shikha Pandey remain the only Goans to date to play international cricket for India. Another Goan cricketer, Suyash Prabhudessai was selected by the Royal Challengers Bangalore for a base price of ₹20 lakh in IPL 2021 and for ₹30 lakh in IPL 2022. India (Goa) is a member of the Lusofonia games which are hosted every four years in one of the Portuguese CPLP member countries, with 733 athletes from 11 countries. Most of the countries competing are countries that are members of the CPLP (Community of Portuguese Language Countries), but some are countries with significant Portuguese communities or have a history with Portugal. This event is similar in concept to the Commonwealth Games (for members of the Commonwealth of Nations) and the Jeux de la Francophonie (for the Francophone community).

Notable people Organised crime See also Konkani LGBT rights in Goa Portuguese Goa and Daman

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Government Government of Goa Department of Tourism General information Geographic data related to Goa at OpenStreetMap

Gujarat

Gujarat (Gujarati: Gujarāt, pronounced [ɡudʒaʈ]) is a state along the western coast of India. Its coastline of about 2,340 km (1,450 mi) is the longest in the country, most of which lies on the Kathiawar peninsula. Gujarat is the fifth-largest Indian state by area, covering some 196,024 km² (75,685 sq mi); and the ninth-most populous state, with a population of 60.4 million in 2011. It is bordered by Rajasthan to the northeast, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu to the south, Maharashtra to the southeast, Madhya Pradesh to the east, and the Arabian Sea and the Pakistani province of Sindh to the west. Gujarat's capital city is Gandhinagar, while its largest city is Ahmedabad. The Gujaratis are indigenous to the state and their language, Gujarati, is the state's official language. The state encompasses 23 sites of the ancient Indus Valley civilisation (more than any other state). The most important sites are Lothal (the world's first dry dock), Dholavira (the fifth largest site), and Gola Dhoro (where five uncommon seals were found). Lothal is believed to have been one of the world's first seaports. Gujarat's coastal cities, chiefly Bharuch and Khambhat, served as ports and trading centres in the Maurya and Gupta empires and during the succession of royal Saka dynasties in the Western Satraps era. Along with Bihar, Mizoram and Nagaland, Gujarat is one of four Indian states to prohibit the sale of alcohol. The Gir Forest National Park in Gujarat is home to the only wild population of the Asiatic lion in the world. The economy of Gujarat is the fifth-largest in India, with a gross state domestic product (GSDP) of ₹16.55 trillion (equivalent to ₹19 trillion or US\$220 billion in 2023) and has the country's 10th-highest GSDP per capita of ₹215,000 (US\$2,500). Gujarat has the highest exports of all states, accounting for around one-third of national exports. It ranks 21st among Indian states and union territories in human development index. The world's largest data center will also be built in Jamnagar, Gujarat, by Reliance Industries. Gujarat is regarded as one of the most industrialised states and has a low unemployment rate. The state has one of the lowest crime rates in India, with Ahmedabad being crowned as one of the safest cities.

Etymology Gujarat is derived from the Gurjaras, who ruled Gujarat in the 8th and 9th centuries CE. Parts of modern Rajasthan and Gujarat were known as Gurjarat or Gurjarabhumi for centuries before the Mughal period.

History Ancient history Gujarat was one of the main central areas of the Indus Valley Civilisation, which was spread across modern-day northern India and Pakistan. It contains ancient metropolitan cities from the Indus Valley, such as Lothal, Dholavira and Gola Dhoro. The ancient city of Lothal was where India's first port was established. The ancient city of Dholavira is one of the largest and most prominent archaeological sites in India, belonging to the Indus Valley Civilisation. The most recent discovery was Gola Dhoro. Altogether, about fifty Indus Valley settlement ruins have been discovered in Gujarat.

The ancient history of Gujarat was enriched by the commercial activities of its inhabitants. There is clear historical evidence of trade and commerce ties with Egypt, Bahrain and Sumer in the Persian Gulf during the time period of 1000 to 750 BCE. There was a succession of various polities such as the Mauryan dynasty, Satavahana dynasty, Gupta Empire, Gurjara-Pratihara Empire, as well as regional ones such as the Western Satraps, the Kingdom of Valabhi, the Kingdom of Gujarat, the Sultanate of Gujarat and finally the Kingdom of Baroda. The early history of Gujarat includes the imperial grandeur of Chandragupta Maurya who conquered a number of earlier states in what is now Gujarat. Pushyagupta, a Vaishya, was appointed the governor of Saurashtra by the Mauryan regime. He ruled Girinagar (modern-day Junagadh) (322 BCE to 294 BCE) and built a dam on the Sudarshan lake. Emperor Ashoka the Great, the grandson of Chandragupta Maurya, not only

ordered his edicts engraved in the rock at Junagadh, but also asked Governor Tusherpha to cut canals from the lake where an earlier Indian governor had built a dam. Between the decline of Mauryan power and Saurashtra coming under the sway of the Samprati Mauryas of Ujjain, there was an Indo-Greek defeat in Gujarat of Demetrius. In 16th century manuscripts, there is an apocryphal story of a merchant of King Gondophares landing in Gujarat with Apostle Thomas. The incident of the cup-bearer torn apart by a lion might indicate that the port city described is in Gujarat. For nearly 300 years from the start of the 1st century CE, Saka rulers played a prominent part in Gujarat's history. The weather-beaten rock at Junagadh gives a glimpse of the ruler Rudradaman I (100 CE) of the Saka satraps known as Western Satraps, or Kshatrapas. Mahakshatrap Rudradaman I founded the Kardamaka dynasty which ruled from Anupa on the banks of the Narmada up to the Aparanta region bordering Punjab. In Gujarat, several battles were fought between the Indian dynasties such as the Satavahana dynasty and the Western Satraps. The greatest and the mightiest ruler of the Satavahana dynasty was Gautamiputra Satakarni who defeated the Western Satraps and conquered some parts of Gujarat in the 2nd century CE.

The Kshatrapa dynasty was replaced by the Gupta Empire with the conquest of Gujarat by Chandragupta Vikramaditya. Vikramaditya's successor Skandagupta left an inscription (450 CE) on a rock at Junagadh which gives details of the governor's repairs to the embankment surrounding Sudarshan lake after it was damaged by floods. The Anarta and Saurashtra regions were both parts of the Gupta empire. Towards the middle of the 5th century, the Gupta empire went into decline. Senapati Bhatarka, the general of the Guptas, took advantage of the situation and in 470 set up the Kingdom of Valabhi. He shifted his capital from Giringer to Valabhi, near Bhavnagar, on Saurashtra's east coast. The Maitrakas of Vallabhi became very powerful with their rule prevailing over large parts of Gujarat and adjoining Malwa. A university was set up by the Maitrakas, which came to be known far and wide for its scholastic pursuits and was compared with the noted Nalanda University. It was during the rule of Dhruvasena Maitrak that Chinese philosopher-traveler Xuanzang/ I Tsing visited in 640 along the Silk Road. Gujarat was known to the ancient Greeks and was familiar with other Western centres of civilisation through the end of the European Middle Ages. The oldest written record of Gujarat's 2,000-year maritime history is documented in a Greek book titled *The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea: Travel and Trade in the Indian Ocean* by a Merchant of the First Century.

Medieval history In the early 8th century, the Arabs of the Umayyad Caliphate established an empire in the name of the rising religion of Islam, which stretched from Spain in the west to Afghanistan and modern-day Pakistan in the east. Al-Junaid, the successor of Qasim, finally subdued the Hindu resistance within Sindh and established a secure base. The Arab rulers tried to expand their empire southeast, which culminated in the Caliphate campaigns in India fought in 730; they were defeated and expelled west of the Indus river, probably by a coalition of the Indian rulers Nagabhata I of the Gurjara-Pratihara dynasty, Vikramaditya II of the Chalukya dynasty and Bappa Rawal of the Guhila dynasty. After this victory, the Arab invaders were driven out of Gujarat. General Pulakeshin, a Chalukya prince of Lata, received the title *Avanijanashraya* (refuge of the people of the earth) and honorific of "Repeller of the unrepellable" by the Chalukya emperor Vikramaditya II for his victory at the battle at Navsari, where the Arab troops suffered a crushing defeat. In the late 8th century, the Kannauj Triangle period started. The three major Indian dynasties - the northwestern Indian Gurjara-Pratihara dynasty, the southern Indian Rashtrakuta dynasty and the eastern Indian Pala Empire - dominated India from the 8th to 10th centuries. During this period the northern part of Gujarat was ruled by the northern Indian Gurjara-Pratihara dynasty and the southern part of Gujarat was ruled by the southern Indian Rashtrakuta dynasty. However, the earliest epigraphical records of the Gurjars of Broach attest that the royal bloodline of the Gurjara-Pratihara dynasty of Dadda I, II and III (650-750) ruled south Gujarat. Southern Gujarat was ruled by the Indian Rashtrakuta dynasty until it was captured by the Indian ruler Tailapa II of the Western Chalukya Empire. Zoroastrians from Greater Iran migrated to the western borders of India (Gujarat and Sindh) during the

8th or 10th century, to avoid persecution by Muslim invaders who were in the process of conquering Iran. The descendants of those Zoroastrian refugees came to be known as the Parsi. Subsequently, L■a in southern Gujarat was ruled by the Rashtrakuta dynasty until it was captured by the Western Chalukya ruler Tailapa II. The Chalukya dynasty ruled the Kingdom of Gujarat from 960 to 1243. Gujarat was a major center of Indian Ocean trade, and their capital at Anhilwara (Patan) was one of the largest cities in India, with a population estimated at 100,000 in the year 1000. After 1243, the Solankis lost control of Gujarat to their feudatories, of whom the Vaghela chiefs of Dholka came to rule the Kingdom of Gujarat. In 1292, the Vaghelas became tributaries of the Yadava dynasty of Devagiri in the Deccan. Karandev of the Vaghela dynasty was the last Hindu ruler of Gujarat. He was defeated and overthrown by the superior forces of Alauddin Khalji from Delhi in 1297. With his defeat, Gujarat became part of the Delhi Sultanate, and the Rajput hold over Gujarat would never be restored. Fragments of printed cotton from Gujarat have been discovered in Egypt, providing evidence for medieval trade in the western Indian Ocean. These fragments represent the Indian cotton traded in Egypt during the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk periods, from the tenth to sixteenth centuries. Similar cotton was also traded as far east as Indonesia.

Muslim rule Islamic conquests (1197-1614) After the Ghori had assumed a position of Muslim supremacy over North India, Qutbuddin Aibak attempted to conquer Gujarat and annexe it to his empire in 1197, but failed in his ambitions. An independent Muslim community continued to flourish in Gujarat for the next hundred years, championed by Arab merchants settling along the western coast. From 1297 to 1300, Alauddin Khalji, the Turko-Afghan Sultan of Delhi, destroyed the Hindu metropolis of Anhilwara and incorporated Gujarat into the Delhi Sultanate. After Timur sacked Delhi at the end of the 14th century, weakening the Sultanate, Gujarat's Muslim Khatri governor Zafar Khan Muzaffar (Muzaffar Shah I) asserted his independence, and his son, Sultan Ahmed Shah (ruled 1411-1442), established Ahmedabad as the capital. Khambhat eclipsed Bharuch as Gujarat's most important trade port. Gujarat's relations with Egypt, which was then the premier Arab power in the Middle East, remained friendly over the next century and the Egyptian scholar, Badruddin-ad-Damamimi, spent several years in Gujarat in the shade of the Sultan before proceeding to the Bahmani Sultanate on the Deccan Plateau. Shah e Alam, a famous Sufi saint of the Chishti order who was the descendant of Makhdoom Jahaniyan Jahangasht from Bukhara, soon arrived in a group that included Arab theologian Ibn Suwaid, several Sayyid Sufi members of the Aydarus family of Tarim in Yemen, Iberian court interpreter Ali al-Andalusi from Granada, and the Arab jurist Bahraq from Hadramaut who was appointed a tutor of the prince. Among the illustrious names who arrived during the reign of Mahmud Begada was the philosopher Haibatullah Shah Mir from Shiraz, and the scholar intellectual Abu Fazl Ghazaruni from Persia who tutored and adopted Abu'l-Fazl ibn Mubarak, author of the Akbarnama. Later, a close alliance between the Ottoman Turks and Gujarati sultans to effectively safeguard Jeddah and the Red Sea trade from Portuguese imperialism, encouraged the existence of powerful Rumi elites within the kingdom who took the post of viziers in Gujarat keen to maintain ties with the Ottoman state. Humayun also briefly occupied the province in 1536, but fled due to the threat Bahadur Shah, the Gujarat king, imposed. The Sultanate of Gujarat remained independent until 1572, when the Mughal emperor Akbar conquered it and annexed it to the Mughal Empire. The Surat port (the only Indian port facing west) then became the principal port of India during Mughal rule, gaining widespread international repute. The city of Surat, famous for its exports of silk and diamonds, had reached a par with contemporary Venice and Beijing, great mercantile cities of Europe and Asia, and earned the distinguished title, Bab al-Makkah (Gate of Mecca). Drawn by the religious renaissance taking place under Akbar, Mohammed Ghaus moved to Gujarat and established spiritual centers for the Shattari Sufi order from Iran, founding the Ek Toda Mosque and producing such devotees as Wajihuddin Alvi of Ahmedabad whose many successors moved to Bijapur during the height of the Adil Shahi dynasty. At the same time, Zoroastrian high priest Azar Kayvan who was a native of Fars, immigrated to Gujarat founding the Zoroastrian school of illuminationists which attracted key Shi'ite Muslim admirers of the Safavid philosophical revival from Isfahan. Early 14th-century Maghrebi adventurer, Ibn

Batuta, who famously visited India with his entourage, recalls in his memoirs about Cambay, one of the great emporia of the Indian Ocean that indeed:

Cambay is one of the most beautiful cities as regards the artistic architecture of its houses and the construction of its mosques. The reason is that the majority of its inhabitants are foreign merchants, who continually build their beautiful houses and wonderful mosques - an achievement in which they endeavor to surpass each other.

Many of these "foreign merchants" were transient visitors, men of South Arabian and Persian Gulf ports, who migrated in and out of Cambay with the rhythm of the monsoons. But others were men with Arab or Persian patronyms whose families had settled in the town generations, even centuries earlier, intermarrying with Gujarati women, and assimilating everyday customs of the Hindu hinterland. The Age of Discovery heralded the dawn of pioneer Portuguese and Spanish long-distance travel in search of alternative trade routes to "the East Indies", moved by the trade of gold, silver and spices. In 1497, Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama is said to have discovered the Europe-to-India sea route which changed the course of history, thanks to Kutchi sailor Kanji Malam, who showed him the route from the East African coasts of Mozambique sailing onwards to Calicut off the Malabar coast in India. Later, the Gujarat Sultanate allied with the Ottomans and Egyptian Mamluks naval fleets led by governor-generals Malik Ayyaz and Amir Husain Al-Kurdi, vanquished the Portuguese in the 1508 Battle of Chaul resulting in the first Portuguese defeat at sea in the Indian Ocean. To 16th-century European observers, Gujarat was a fabulously wealthy country. The customs revenue of Gujarat alone in the early 1570s was nearly three times the total revenue of the whole Portuguese empire in Asia in 1586-87, when it was at its height. Indeed, when the British arrived on the coast of Gujarat, houses in Surat already had windows of Venetian glass imported from Constantinople through the Ottoman Empire. In 1514, the Portuguese explorer Duarte Barbosa described the cosmopolitan atmosphere of Rander known otherwise as City of Mosques in Surat province, which gained the fame and reputation of illustrious Islamic scholars, Sufi-saints, merchants and intellectuals from all over the world:

Ranel (Rander) is a good town of the Moors, built of very pretty houses and squares. It is a rich and agreeable place ... the Moors of the town trade with Malacca, Bengal, Tawasery (Tannasserim), Pegu, Martaban, and Sumatra in all sort of spices, drugs, silks, musk, benzoin and porcelain. They possess very large and fine ships and those who wish Chinese articles will find them there very completely. The Moors of this place are white and well dressed and very rich they have pretty wives, and in the furniture of these houses have china vases of many kinds, kept in glass cupboards well arranged. Their women are not secluded like other Moors, but go about the city in the day time, attending to their business with their faces uncovered as in other parts. The conquest of the Kingdom of Gujarat marked a significant event of Akbar's reign. Being the major trade gateway and departure harbour of pilgrim ships to Mecca, it gave the Mughal Empire free access to the Arabian sea and control over the rich commerce that passed through its ports. The territory and income of the empire were vastly increased.

The Sultanate of Gujarat and the merchants For the best part of two centuries, the independent Khatri Sultanate of Gujarat was the cynosure of its neighbours on account of its wealth and prosperity, which had long made the Gujarati merchant a familiar figure in the ports of the Indian Ocean. Gujaratis, including Hindus and Muslims as well as the enterprising Parsi class of Zoroastrians, had been specialising in the organisation of overseas trade for many centuries, and had moved into various branches of commerce such as commodity trade, brokerage, money-changing, money-lending and banking. By the 17th century, Chavuse and Baghdadi Jews had assimilated into the social world of the Surat province, later on their descendants would give rise to the Sassoons of Bombay and the Ezras of Calcutta, and other influential Indian-Jewish figures who went on to

play a philanthropical role in the commercial development of 19th-century British Crown Colony of Shanghai. Spearheaded by Khoja, Bohra, Bhatiya shahbandars and Moorish nakhudas who dominated sea navigation and shipping, Gujarat's transactions with the outside world had created the legacy of an international transoceanic empire which had a vast commercial network of permanent agents stationed at all the great port cities across the Indian Ocean. These networks extended to the Philippines in the east, East Africa in the west, and via maritime and the inland caravan route to Russia in the north. Tom Pires, a Portuguese official at Malacca, wrote of conditions during the reigns of Mahmud I and Mozaffar II:

"Cambay stretches out two arms; with her right arm she reaches toward Aden and with the other towards Malacca" He also described Gujarat's active trade with Goa, the Deccan Plateau and the Malabar. His contemporary, Duarte Barbosa, describing Gujarat's maritime trade, recorded the import of horses from the Middle East and elephants from Malabar, and lists exports which included muslins, chintzes and silks, carnelian, ginger and other spices, aromatics, opium, indigo and other substances for dyeing, cereals and legumes. Persia was the destination for many of these commodities, and they were partly paid for in horses and pearls taken from Hormuz. The latter item, in particular, led Sultan Sikandar Lodi of Delhi, according to Ali-Muhammad Khan, author of the *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, to complain that the

support of the throne of Delhi is wheat and barley but the foundation of the realm of Gujarat is coral and pearls. Hence, the sultans of Gujarat possessed ample means to sustain lavish patronage of religion and the arts, to build madrasas and ■■■naq■hs, and to provide douceurs for the literati, mainly poets and historians, whose presence and praise enhanced the fame of the dynasty.

Even at the time of Tom Pires' travel to the East Indies in the early 16th century, Gujarati merchants had earned an international reputation for their commercial acumen and this encouraged the visit of merchants from Cairo, Armenia, Abyssinia, Khorasan, Shiraz, Turkestan and Guilan from Aden and Hormuz. Pires noted in his *Suma Orientale*:

These [people] are [like] Italians in their knowledge of and dealings in merchandise ... they are men who understand merchandise; they are so properly steeped in the sound and harmony of it, that the Gujaratees say that any offence connected with merchandise is pardonable. There are Gujaratees settled everywhere. They work some for some and others for others. They are diligent, quick men in trade. They do their accounts with fingers like ours and with our very writings.

Gujarat in the Mughal Empire Gujarat was one of the twelve original subahs (imperial top-level provinces) established by Mughal Emperor (Badshah) Akbar, with a seat at Ahmedabad, bordering on Thatta (Sindh), Ajmer, Malwa and later Ahmadnagar subahs. Aurangzeb, the sixth Mughal Emperor, was born in Dahod, Gujarat. He was the third son and sixth child of Shah Jahan and Mumtaz Mahal. At the time of his birth, his father, Shah Jahan, was then the Subahdar (governor) of Gujarat, and his grandfather, Jehangir, was the Mughal Emperor. Before he became emperor, Aurangzeb was made Subahdar of Gujarat subah as part of his training and was stationed at Ahmedabad. Aurangzeb had great love for his place of birth. In 1704, he wrote a letter to his eldest son, Muhammad Azam Shah, asking him to be kind and considerate to the people of Dahod as it was his birthplace. Muhammad Azam was then the Subedar (governor) of Gujarat. In his letter, Aurangzeb wrote:

My son of exalted rank, the town of Dahod, one of the dependencies of Gujarat, is the birthplace of this sinner. Please consider a regard for the inhabitants of that town as incumbent on you.

Maratha Empire When the cracks had started to develop in the edifice of the Mughal Empire in the mid-17th century, the Marathas were consolidating their power in the west, Chatrapati Shivaji, the great Maratha ruler, attacked Surat in southern Gujarat twice first in 1664 and again in 1672. These attacks marked the entry of the Marathas into Gujarat. However, before the Maratha had made inroads into Gujarat, the Europeans had made their presence felt, led by the Portuguese, and followed by the Dutch and the English. The Peshwas had established sovereignty over parts of Gujarat and collected taxes and tributes through their representatives. Damaji Rao Gaekwad and Kadam Bande divided the Peshwa territory between them, with Damaji establishing the sway of Gaekwad over Gujarat and making Baroda (present day Vadodara in southern Gujarat) his capital. The ensuing internecine war among the Marathas was fully exploited by the British, who interfered in the affairs of both Gaekwads and the Peshwas. In Saurashtra, as elsewhere, the Marathas were met with resistance. The decline of the Mughal Empire helped form larger peripheral states in Saurashtra, including Junagadh, Jamnagar, Bhavnagar and a few others, which largely resisted the Maratha incursions.

European colonialism (1614-1947) In the 1600s, the Dutch, French, English and Portuguese all established bases along the western coast of the region. Portugal was the first European power to arrive in Gujarat, and after the Battle of Diu, acquired several enclaves along the Gujarati coast, including Daman and Diu as well as Dadra and Nagar Haveli. These enclaves were administered by Portuguese India under a single union territory for over 450 years, only to be later incorporated into the Republic of India on 19 December 1961 by military conquest. The British East India Company established a factory in Surat in 1614 following the commercial treaty made with Mughal Emperor Nuruddin Salim Jahangir, which formed their first base in India, but it was eclipsed by Bombay after the English received it from Portugal in 1668 as part of the marriage treaty of Charles II of England and Catherine of Braganza, daughter of King John IV of Portugal. The state was an early point of contact with the west, and the first British commercial outpost in India was in Gujarat. 17th-century French explorer Francois Pyrard de Laval, who is remembered for his 10-year sojourn in South Asia, bears witness in his account that the Gujaratis were always prepared to learn workmanship from the Portuguese, and in turn imparted skills to the Portuguese:

I have never seen men of wit so fine and polished as are these Indians: they have nothing barbarous or savage about them, as we are apt to suppose. They are unwilling indeed to adopt the manners and customs of the Portuguese; yet do they regularly learn their manufactures and workmanship, being all very curious and desirous of learning. In fact, the Portuguese take and learn more from them than they from the Portuguese. Later in the 17th century, Gujarat came under control of the Hindu Maratha Empire that arose, defeating the Muslim Mughals who had dominated the politics of India. Most notably, from 1705 to 1716, Senapati Khanderao Dabhade led the Maratha Empire forces in Baroda. Pilaji Gaekwad, first ruler of Gaekwad dynasty, established the control over Baroda and other parts of Gujarat. The British East India Company wrested control of much of Gujarat from the Marathas during the Second Anglo-Maratha War in 1802-1803. Many local rulers, notably the Maratha Gaekwad Maharajas of Baroda (Vadodara), made a separate peace with the British and acknowledged British sovereignty in return for retaining local self-rule. An epidemic in 1812 killed half the population of Gujarat. Gujarat was placed under the political authority of the Bombay Presidency, with the exception of Baroda State, which had a direct relationship with the Governor-General of India. From 1818 to 1947, most of present-day Gujarat, including Kathiawar, Kutch and northern and eastern Gujarat were divided into hundreds of princely states, but several districts in central and southern Gujarat, namely Ahmedabad, Broach (Bharuch), Kaira (Kheda), Panchmahal and Surat, were governed directly by British officials. In 1819,

Sahajanand Swami established the first Swaminarayan Mandir in Kalupur, Ahmedabad.

Post-independence (1947-present) Initially there was confusion over whether Junagadh would join India or Pakistan. This was resolved in 1947 with a plebiscite for full union with India following the next year. After Indian independence and the partition of India in 1947, the new Indian government grouped the former princely states of Gujarat into three larger units; Saurashtra, which included the former princely states on the Kathiawar peninsula, Kutch, and Bombay state, which included the former British districts of Bombay Presidency together with most of Baroda State and the other former princely states of eastern Gujarat. Bombay state was enlarged to include Kutch, Saurashtra (Kathiawar) and parts of Hyderabad state and Madhya Pradesh in central India. The new state had a mostly Gujarati-speaking north and a Marathi-speaking south. Agitation by Gujarati nationalists, the Mahagujarat Movement, and Marathi nationalists, the Samyukta Maharashtra, for their own states led to the split of Bombay state on linguistic lines; on 1 May 1960, it became the new states of Gujarat and Maharashtra. In 1969 riots, at least 660 died and properties worth millions were destroyed. The first capital of Gujarat was Ahmedabad. The capital of Gujarat was moved to Gandhinagar in 1970. Nav Nirman Andolan was a socio-political movement of 1974. It was a students' and middle class people's movement against economic crisis and corruption in public life. This was the first and last successful agitation after the Independence of India that ousted an elected government. Gujarat has emerged as an important industrial hub in India. In Western India Surat was among the strongest industrial clusters in the 1970s. Between 1971 and 1981 diamond cutting was established as industry in Surat. At the same time the production of artificial silk and a substantial petrochemical industry became a fixture in Surat. The Morvi dam failure, in 1979, resulted in the death of thousands of people and large economic loss. In the 1980s, a reservation policy was introduced in the country, which led to anti-reservation protests in 1981 and 1985. The protests witnessed violent clashes between people belonging to various castes. The 2001 Gujarat earthquake was located about 9 km south-southwest of the village of Chobari in the Bhachau taluka of Kutch District. This magnitude 7.7 shock killed around 20,000 people (including at least 18 in South-eastern Pakistan), injured another 167,000 and destroyed nearly 400,000 homes. In February 2002, the Godhra train burning led to statewide riots, resulting in the deaths of 1,044 people - 790 Muslims and 254 Hindus, and hundreds missing still unaccounted for. The Swaminarayan Akshardham in Gandhinagar was attacked by two terrorists in September 2002, killing 32 people and injuring more than 80 others. National Security Guards intervened to end the siege killing both terrorists. On 26 July 2008 a series of seventeen bomb blasts rocked Ahmedabad, killing and injuring several people.

Geography Gujarat borders the Tharparkar, Badin and Thatta districts of Pakistan's Sindh province to the northwest, is bounded by the Arabian Sea to the southwest, the state of Rajasthan to the northeast, Madhya Pradesh to the east, and by Maharashtra, the Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu to the south. Historically, the north was known as Anarta, the Kathiawar peninsula, "Saurashtra", and the south as "Lata". Gujarat was also known as Pratichya and Varuna. The Arabian Sea makes up the state's western coast. The capital, Gandhinagar is a planned city. Gujarat has an area of 75,686 sq mi (196,030 km²) with the longest coastline (24% of Indian sea coast) 1,600 km (990 mi), dotted with 41 ports: one major, 11 intermediate and 29 minor. The Narmada is the largest river in Gujarat followed by the Tapi. The Sabarmati has the longest course through the state. The Sardar Sarovar Project is built on Narmada, one of the major rivers of peninsular India where it is one of only three major rivers that run from east to west - the others being the Tapi and the Mahi. It is about 1,312 km (815 mi) long. Several riverfront embankments have been built on the Sabarmati River. The eastern borders have fringes of low mountains of India, the Aravalli, Sahyadri (Western Ghats), Vindhya and Saputara. Apart from this the Gir hills, Barda, Jessore and Chotila together make up a large minority of Gujarat. Girnar is the tallest peak and Saputara is the only hill-top (hilltop resort) in the state.

Rann of Kutch Rann (■■■) is Gujarati for desert. The Rann of Kutch is a seasonally marshy saline clay desert in the Thar Desert biogeographic region between the Pakistani province of Sindh and the rest of the state of Gujarat; it commences 8 km (5.0 mi) from the village of Kharaghoda, Surendranagar District.

Flora and fauna Prehistoric fauna In the early 1980s, palaeontologists found dinosaur egg hatcheries and fossils of at least 13 species in Balasinor. The most important find was that of a carnivorous abelisaurid dinosaur named *Rajasaurus narmadensis* which lived in the Late Cretaceous period. A notable discovery in the village of Dholi Dungri was that of *Sanajeh indicus*, a primitive madtsoiid snake that likely preyed on sauropod dinosaur hatchlings and embryos.

Extant species As of 2023, Gujarat has 15,016.64 km of forest cover, which is about 7.65% of its geographical area. The total recorded forest area in the state is 21,870.35 km (11.14%). Among the districts, The Dangs has the largest area under forest cover. Gujarat has four national parks and 21 sanctuaries. It is the only home of Asiatic lions and, outside Africa, is the only present natural habitat of lions. Gir Forest National Park in the southwest part of the state covers part of the lions' habitat. Apart from lions, Indian leopards are also found in the state. They are spread across the large plains of Saurashtra and the mountains of South Gujarat. Other National Parks include Vansda National Park, Blackbuck National Park, Velavadar and Narara Marine National Park, Gulf of Kutchh, Jamnagar. Wildlife sanctuaries include Wild Ass Wildlife Sanctuary, Nal Sarovar Bird Sanctuary, Porbandar Bird Sanctuary, Kutch Desert Wildlife Sanctuary, Kutch Bustard Sanctuary, Narayan Sarovar Sanctuary, Jessore Sloth Bear Sanctuary, Anjal, Balaram-Ambaji, Barda, Jambughoda, Khavda, Paniya, Purna, Rampura, Ratan Mahal, and Surpaneshwar. In February 2019, a Bengal tiger claimed to be from Ratapani in Madhya Pradesh was spotted in the area of Lunavada in Mahisagar district, in the eastern part of the state, before being found dead later that month, likely from starvation.

Demographics The population of Gujarat was 60,439,692 (31,491,260 males and 28,948,432 females) according to the 2011 census data. The population density is 308 persons per square kilometre (800 persons/sq mi), lower than other Indian states. As per the census of 2011, the state has a sex ratio of 918 females for every 1000 males, one of the lowest (ranked 24) among the 29 states in India. While Gujarati speakers constitute a majority of Gujarat's population, the metropolitan areas of Ahmedabad, Vadodara and Surat are cosmopolitan, with numerous other ethnic and language groups. Marwaris compose large minorities of economic migrants; smaller communities of people from the other states of India have also migrated to Gujarat for employment. Luso-Indians, Anglo-Indians, Jews and Parsis also live in the areas. Sindhi presence is traditionally important here following the Partition of India in 1947. The Koli forms the largest caste-cluster, comprising 24% of the total population of the state. Gujarat ranked fifth in the Fiscal Health Index (FHI) 2025, with a score of 50.5.

Religion According to 2011 census, the religious makeup in Gujarat was 88.57% Hindu, 9.67% Muslim, 0.96% Jain, 0.52% Christian, 0.10% Sikh, 0.05% Buddhist and 0.03% others. Around 0.1% did not state any religion. Hinduism is the majority religion, and is over 93% in rural areas. Muslims are the biggest minority in the state accounting for 9.7% of the population. Gujarat has the third-largest population of Jains in India, following Maharashtra and Rajasthan, almost all of whom live in urban areas like Vadodara, Ahmedabad and Surat.

Language Gujarati is the official language of the state of Gujarat. An Indo-Aryan language, it is spoken natively by 86% of the state's population, or 52 million people (as of 2011). Hindi is the second-most frequently spoken language in the state, being spoken by more than 6% of the population. Marathi also is spoken in urban areas.

People from the Kutch region of Gujarat also speak in the Kutchi mother tongue and, to a great extent, understand Sindhi as well. Memoni is the mother tongue of Kathiawar and Sindhi Memons, most whom are Muslims. Almost 88% of the Gujarati Muslims speak Gujarati as their mother tongue and the remaining 12% speak Urdu. A sizeable proportion of Gujarati Muslims are bilingual in the two languages. In rural areas among the tribals, various Bhil dialects are spoken by approximately 1.37% of the population. In the northeast part of the state Bhili is spoken, in the central part of the state Bhili, Bhilali, and Vasava are spoken, while in the southeast part of the state Dangri, Varli, Chodri, and Dhodia (which are related to Marathi) are spoken. Apart from this, English, Bengali, Kannada, Malayalam, Marwari, Odia, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu, and others are spoken by a considerable number of economic migrants from other states of India who are seeking employment. Under the three-language formula, the languages taught in schools are: First language: Gujarati/Hindi/English Second language: Gujarati/English Third language: Hindi

Divisions Governance and administration For administrative purposes, Gujarat is structurally divided into districts (Zilas), prants (subdivisions), talukas, and villages, primarily to facilitate land revenue administration. The state is divided into 34 districts, 122 prants, 265 talukas and 18,584 revenue villages. There are 17 municipal corporations, 152 municipalities, 33 district panchayats, 247 taluka panchayats, and 16,778 gram panchayats, for local governance.

Gujarat has 34 districts and 250 talukas.

Gujarat is governed by a Legislative Assembly of 182 members. Members of the Legislative Assembly are elected on the basis of adult suffrage from one of 182 constituencies, of which 13 are reserved for scheduled castes and 27 for scheduled tribes. The term of office for a member of the Legislative Assembly is five years. The Legislative Assembly elects a speaker who presides over the meetings of the legislature. A governor is appointed by the President of India, and is to address the state legislature after every general election and the commencement of each year's first session of the Legislative Assembly. The leader of the majority party or coalition in the legislature (Chief Minister) or his or her designee acts as the Leader of the Legislative Assembly. The administration of the state is led by the Chief Minister.

After the independence of India in 1947, the Indian National Congress (INC) ruled the Bombay State (which included present-day Gujarat and Maharashtra). Congress continued to govern Gujarat after the state's creation in 1960. During and after India's State of Emergency of 1975-1977, public support for the INC eroded, but it continued to hold government until 1995 with the brief rule of nine months by Janata Morcha. In the 1995 Assembly elections, the Congress lost to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) led by Keshubhai Patel who became the Chief Minister. His government lasted only two years. The fall of that government was provoked by a split in the BJP led by Shankersinh Vaghela. BJP again won election in 1998 with clear majority. In 2001, following the loss of two assembly seats in by-elections, Keshubhai Patel resigned and yielded power to Narendra Modi. BJP retained a majority in the 2002 election, and Narendra Modi remained as Chief Minister. On 1 June 2007, Narendra Modi became the longest serving Chief Minister of Gujarat. BJP retained the power in subsequent elections in 2007 and 2012 and Narendra Modi continued as the chief minister. After Narendra Modi became the prime minister of India in 2014, Anandiben Patel became the first female chief minister of the state. Vijay Rupani took over as chief minister and Nitin Patel as deputy chief minister on 7 August 2016 after Anandiben Patel resigned earlier on 3 August. Bhupendrabhai Patel became chief minister in September 2021 after the resignation of Vijay Rupani. The incumbent chief secretary of Gujarat is Raj Kumar and director general of police (DGP) is Vikas Sahay.

Economy Gujarat is the most industrialised state in India and has the highest industrial output when compared to other states in the country. It has the highest exports of any Indian state, accounting for 30.7% of all Indian exports in 2024-2025. It leads in diverse industrial sectors such as chemicals, petrochemicals, dairy, drugs and pharmaceuticals, cement and ceramics, gems and jewellery, textiles and engineering. It has the highest electricity production capacity and maritime port cargo volume among all states in India. Major agricultural produce of the state includes cotton, groundnuts (peanuts), dates, sugar cane, milk and milk products. Industrial products include cement and petrol. Gujarat is ranked number one in the pharmaceutical industry in India, with a 33% share in drug manufacturing and 28% share in drug exports. The state has 130 USFDA certified drug manufacturing facilities. Ahmedabad and Vadodara are considered as pharmaceutical hubs, as there are many big and small pharmaceutical companies established in these cities. Gujarat has the longest coastline in India (1600 km), and its ports (both private and public sector) handle around 40% of India's ocean cargo, with Mundra Port located in Gulf of Kutch being the largest port of India by cargo handled (144 million tons) due to its favourable location on the westernmost part of India and closeness to global shipping lanes. Gujarat also contributes around 20% share in India's industrial production and merchandise exports. According to a 2009 report on economic freedom by the Cato Institute, Gujarat is the most free state in India (the second one being Tamil Nadu). Reliance Industries operates the oil refinery at Jamnagar, which is the world's largest grass-roots refinery at a single location. The world's largest shipbreaking yard is in Gujarat near Bhavnagar at Alang. India's only Liquid Chemical Port Terminal at Dahej, developed by Gujarat Chemical Port Terminal Co Ltd. Gujarat has two of the three liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminals in the country (Dahej and Hazira). Two more LNG terminals are proposed, at Pipavav and Mundra.

According to most recent data, Gujarat is considered the fourth richest state in India. Gujarat has 85% village connectivity with all-weather roads. Nearly 100% of Gujarat's 18,000 villages have been connected to the electrical grid for 24-hour power to households and eight hours of power to farms, through the Jyotigram Yojana. As of 2015, Gujarat ranks first nationwide in gas-based thermal electricity generation with a national market share of over 8%, and second nationwide in nuclear electricity generation with national market share of over 1%. The state registered 12.8% agricultural growth in the last five years against the national average of 2%. Gujarat records highest decadal agricultural growth rate of 10.97%. Over 20% of the S&P CNX 500 conglomerates have corporate offices in Gujarat. As per RBI report, in year 2006-07, 26% of total bank finance in India was in Gujarat. According to a 2012 survey report of the Chandigarh Labour Bureau, Gujarat had the lowest unemployment rate of 1% against the national average of 3.8%. Legatum Institute's Global Prosperity Index 2012 recognised Gujarat as one of the two highest-scoring among all states of India on matters of social capital. The state ranks 15th alongside Germany in a list of 142 nations worldwide: higher than several developed nations.

Infrastructure The tallest tower in Gujarat, GIFT One was inaugurated on 10 January 2013. One other tower called GIFT Two has been finished and more towers are planned.

Industrial growth Gujarat's major cities include Ahmedabad, Surat, Vadodara, Rajkot, Jamnagar and Bhavnagar. In 2010, Forbes' list of the world's fastest growing cities included Ahmedabad at number 3 after Chengdu and Chongqing from China. The state is rich in calcite, gypsum, manganese, lignite, bauxite, limestone, agate, feldspar, and quartz sand, and successful mining of these minerals is done in their specified areas. Jamnagar is the hub for manufacturing brass parts. Gujarat produces about 98% of India's required amount of soda ash, and gives the country about 78% of the national requirement of salt. It is one of India's most prosperous states, having a per-capita GDP significantly above India's average. Mehsana, Kalol,

Khambhat, and Ankleshwar are today known for their oil and natural gas production. Dhuvaran has a thermal power station, which uses coal, oil, and gas. Also, on the Gulf of Khambhat, 50 km (31 mi) southeast of Bhavnagar, is the Alang Ship Recycling Yard (the world's largest). MG Motor India manufactures its cars at Halol near Vadodara. The world's least expensive car, the Tata Nano, was manufactured in Sanand near Ahmedabad. Surat, a city by the Gulf of Khambhat, is a hub of the global diamond trade. In 2003, 92% of the world's diamonds were cut and polished in Surat. The diamond industry employs 500,000 people in Gujarat. At an investor's summit entitled "Vibrant Gujarat Global Investor Summit", arranged between 11 and 13 January 2015, at Mahatma Mandir, Gandhinagar, the state government signed 21000 Memoranda of Understanding for Special Economic Zones worth a total of ■ 2.5 million crores (short scale). However, most of the investment was from domestic industry. In the fourth Vibrant Gujarat Global Investors' Summit held at Science City, Ahmedabad, in January 2009, there were 600 foreign delegates. In all, 8668 MOUs worth ■ 12500 billion were signed, estimated to create 2.5 million new job opportunities in the state. In 2011, Vibrant Gujarat Global Investors' Summit MOUs worth ■ 21 trillion (US\$ 463 billion) were signed. Gujarat is a state with surplus electricity. The Kakrapar Atomic Power Station is a nuclear power station run by NPCIL that lies in the proximity of the city of Surat. According to the official sources, against demand of 40,793 million units during the nine months since April 2010, Gujarat produced 43,848 million units. Gujarat sold surplus power to 12 states: Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Haryana, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, and West Bengal.

Energy As of May 2024, the peak power requirement of state is 25,088 MW. As of March 2024, total installed power generation capacity is 52,945.13 MW. Of this 23,643.41 MW belongs to thermal power generation capacity while 27,461.72 MW (51.87%) belongs to renewable energy generation capacity including 1990 MW Hydropower. The rest 1840 MW is nuclear power generation capacity. The renewable energy installed capacity includes 11,823 MW wind power and 14,182 MW solar power totalling 26,005 MW, as of June 2024. Total rooftop solar power installation capacity of state is 3455.90 MW, as of April 2024.

Agriculture The total geographical area of Gujarat is 19,602,400 hectares, of which crops take up 10,630,700 hectares. The three main sources of growth in Gujarat's agriculture are from cotton production, the rapid growth of high-value foods such as livestock, fruits and vegetables, and from wheat production, which saw an annual average growth rate of 28% between 2000 and 2008 (According to the International Food Policy Research Institute). Other major produce includes bajra, groundnut, cotton, rice, maize, wheat, mustard, sesame, pigeon pea, green gram, sugarcane, mango, banana, sapota, lime, guava, tomato, potato, onion, cumin, garlic, isabgul and fennel. Whilst, in recent times, Gujarat has seen a high average annual growth of 9% in the agricultural sector, the rest of India has an annual growth rate of around 3%. This success was lauded by former President of India, APJ Abdul Kalam. The strengths of Gujarat's agricultural success have been attributed to diversified crops and cropping patterns; climatic diversity (8 climatic zones for agriculture); the existence of 4 agricultural universities in the state, which promote research in agricultural efficiency and sustainability; co-operatives; adoption of hi-tech agriculture such as tissue culture, green houses and shed-net houses; agriculture export zones; strong marketing infrastructure, which includes cold storage, processing units, logistic hubs and consultancy facilities. Gujarat is the main producer of tobacco, cotton, and groundnuts in India. Other major food crops produced are rice, wheat, jowar, bajra, maize, tur, and gram. The state has an agricultural economy; the total crop area amounts to more than one-half of the total land area. Animal husbandry and dairying have played vital roles in the rural economy of Gujarat. Dairy farming, primarily concerned with milk production, functions on a co-operative basis and has more than a million members. Gujarat is the largest producer of milk in India. The Amul milk co-operative federation is well known all over India, and it is Asia's biggest dairy. Among the livestock raised are, buffaloes and other cattle, sheep, and goats. As per the results of livestock census 1997, there were 20.97 million head of livestock in Gujarat State. In the estimates of the survey of major

livestock products, during the year 2002-03, Gujarat produced 6.09 million tonnes of milk, 385 million eggs and 2.71 million kg of wool. Gujarat also contributes inputs to the textiles, oil, and soap industries. The adoption of cooperatives in Gujarat is widely attributed to much of the success in the agricultural sector, particularly sugar and dairy cooperatives. Cooperative farming has been a component of India's strategy for agricultural development since 1951. While the success of these was mixed throughout the country, their positive impact on the states of Maharashtra and Gujarat have been the most significant. In 1995 alone, the two states had more registered co-operatives than any other region in the country. Out of these, the agricultural cooperatives have received much attention. Many have focused on subsidies and credit to farmers and rather than collective gathering, they have focused on facilitating collective processing and marketing of produce. However, while they have led to increased productivity, their effect on equity in the region has been questioned, because membership in agricultural co-operatives has tended to favour landowners while limiting the entry of landless agricultural labourers. An example of co-operative success in Gujarat can be illustrated through dairy co-operatives, with the particular example of Amul (Anand Milk Union Limited).

Amul was formed as a dairy cooperative in 1946, in the city of Anand, Gujarat. The cooperative, Gujarat Co-operative Milk Marketing Federation Ltd. (GCMMF), is jointly owned by around 2.6 million milk producers in Gujarat. Amul has been seen as one of the best examples of cooperative achievement and success in a developing economy and the Amul pattern of growth has been taken as a model for rural development, particularly in the agricultural sector of developing economies. The company stirred the White Revolution of India (also known as Operation Flood), the world's biggest dairy development program, and made the milk-deficient nation of India the largest milk producer in the world, in 2010. The "Amul Model" aims to stop the exploitation by middlemen and encourage freedom of movement since the farmers are in control of procurement, processing and packaging of the milk and milk products. The company is worth 2.5 billion US dollars (as of 2012). 70% of Gujarat's area is classified as semi-arid to arid climatically, thus the demand on water from various economic activities puts a strain on the supply. Of the total gross irrigated area, 16-17% is irrigated by government-owned canals and 83-84% by privately owned tube wells and other wells extracting groundwater, which is the predominant source of irrigation and water supply to the agricultural areas. As a result, Gujarat has faced problems with groundwater depletion, especially after demand for water increased in the 1960s. As access to electricity in rural areas increased, submersible electric pumps became more popular in the 1980s and 1990s. However, the Gujarat Electricity Board switched to flat tariff rates linked to the horsepower of pumps, which increased tubewell irrigation again and decreased the use of electric pumps. By the 1990s, groundwater abstraction rates exceeded groundwater recharge rate in many districts, while only 37.5% of all districts has "safe" recharge rates. Groundwater maintenance and preventing unnecessary loss of the available water supplies is now an issue faced by the state. The Sardar Sarovar Project, a debated dam project in the Narmada valley consisting of a network of canals, has significantly increased irrigation in the region. However, its impact on communities who were displaced is still a contested issue. In 2012 Gujarat began an experiment to reduce water loss due to evaporation in canals and to increase sustainability in the area, by constructing solar panels over the canals. In a one megawatt (MW) solar power project set up at Chandrasan, Gujarat uses solar panels fixed over a 750-metre stretch of an irrigation canal. Unlike many solar power projects, this one does not take up large amounts of land since the panels are constructed over the canals, and not on additional land. This results in lower upfront costs since land does not need to be acquired, cleared or modified to set up the panels. The Chandrasan project is projected to save 9 million litres of water per year. The Government of Gujarat, to improve soil management and introduce farmers to new technology, started on a project which involved giving every farmer a Soil Health Card. This acts like a ration card, providing permanent identification for the status of cultivated land, as well as farmers' names, account numbers, survey numbers, soil fertility status and general fertiliser dose. Samples of land from each village are taken and analysed by the Gujarat Narmada Valley Fertiliser Corporation, State Fertiliser Corporation and Indian Farmers

Fertilisers Co-operative. 1,200,000 soil test data from the villages was collected as of 2008, from farmer's field villages have gone into a database. Assistance and advice for this project was given by local agricultural universities and crop and soil-specific data was added to the database. This allows the soil test data to be interpreted and recommendations or adjustments made in terms of fertiliser requirements, which are also added to the database.

Culture Literature The city of Patan was renowned for its collection of ancient Jain manuscripts and as a royal capital of Jain learning, which has drawn the admiration of many scholars. British Indologist and Sanskritist Peter Peterson described the collection as follows:

I know of no town in India and only a few in the world which can boast of so great a store documents of venerable antiquity. They would be the pride and jealously guarded treasure of any University Library in Europe. The history of Gujarati literature may be traced back to 1000 CE. Well-known laureates of Gujarati literature include Hemchandracharya, Narsinh Mehta, Mirabai, Akho, Premanand Bhatt, Shamal Bhatt, Dayaram, Dalpatram, Narmad, Govardhanram Tripathi, Mahatma Gandhi, K. M. Munshi, Umashankar Joshi, Suresh Joshi, Swaminarayan, Pannalal Patel and Rajendra Shah. Kavi Kant, Zaverchand Meghani and Kalapi are famous Gujarati poets.

Gujarat Vidhya Sabha, Gujarat Sahitya Sabha, and Gujarati Sahitya Parishad are Ahmedabad based literary institutions promoting the spread of Gujarati literature. Saraswatichandra is a landmark novel by Govardhanram Tripathi. Writers like Aanand Shankar Dhruv, Ashvini Bhatt, Balwantray Thakore, Bhaven Kachhi, Bhagwatikumar Sharma, Chandrakant Bakshi, Gunvant Shah, Harindra Dave, Harkisan Mehta, Jay Vasavada, Jyotindra Dave, Kanti Bhatt, Kavi Nanalal, Khabardar, Sundaram, Makarand Dave, Ramesh Parekh, Suresh Dalal, Tarak Mehta, Vinod Bhatt, Dhruv Bhatt and Varsha Adalja have influenced Gujarati thinkers.

A notable contribution to Gujarati literature came from the Swaminarayan paramhanso, like Brahmanand Swami, Premanand, with prose like Vachanamrut and poetry in the form of bhajans. Shrimad Rajchandra Vachnamrut and Shri Atma Siddhi Shashtra, written in 19th century by Jain philosopher and poet Shrimad Rajchandra (Mahatma Gandhi's guru) are very well known. Gujarati theatre owes a lot to Bhavai. Bhavai is a folk musical performance of stage plays. Ketan Mehta and Sanjay Leela Bhansali explored artistic use of bhavai in films such as Bhavni Bhavai, Oh Darling! Yeh Hai India and Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam. Dayro (gathering) involves singing and conversation reflecting on human nature.

Mumbai theatre veteran, Alyque Padamsee, best known in the English-speaking world for playing Muhammad Ali Jinnah in Sir Richard Attenborough's Gandhi, was from a traditional Gujarati-Kutchi family from Kathiawar.

Cuisine Gujarati food is primarily vegetarian. The typical Gujarati thali consists of rotli or bhakhari or thepala or rotlo, dal or kadhi, khichdi, Bhat and shak. Athanu (Indian pickle) and chhundo are used as condiments. The four major regions of Gujarat all bring their own styles to Gujarati food. Many Gujarati dishes are distinctively sweet, salty, and spicy at the same time. In the Saurashtra region, chhash (buttermilk) is believed to be a must-have in their daily food.

Cinema The Gujarati film industry dates back to 1932, when the first Gujarati film, Narsinh Mehta, was released. After flourishing through the 1960s to 1980s, the industry saw a decline. The industry is revived in

recent times. The film industry has produced more than one thousand films since its inception. The Government of Gujarat announced a 100% entertainment tax exemption for Gujarati films in 2005 and a policy of incentives in 2016.

Music Gujarati folk music, known as Sugam Sangeet, is a hereditary profession of the Barot community. Gadhvi and Charan communities have contributed heavily in modern times. The omnipresent instruments in Gujarati folk music include wind instruments, such as turi, bungal, and pava, string instruments, such as the ravan hattho, ektaro, and jantar and percussion instruments, such as the manjira and zanz pot drum.

Festivals The folk traditions of Gujarat include bhavai and raas-garba. Bhavai is a folk theatre; it is partly entertainment and partly ritual, and is dedicated to Amba. The raas-garba is a folk dance done as a celebration of Navratri by Gujarati people. The folk costume of this dance is chaniya choli for women and keddia for men. Different styles and steps of garba include dodhiyu, simple five, simple seven, popatiyu, trikoniya (hand movement which forms an imagery triangle), lehree, tran taali, butterfly, hudo, two claps and many more. Sheri garba is one of the oldest form of garba where all the women wear red patola sari and sing along while dancing. It is a very graceful form of garba. Makar Sankranti is a festival where people of Gujarat fly kites. In Gujarat, from December through to Makar Sankranti, people start enjoying kite flying. Undhiyu, a special dish made of various vegetables, is a must-have of Gujarati people on Makar Sankranti. Surat is especially well known for the strong string which is made by applying glass powder on the row thread to provide it a cutting edge. Apart from Navratri and Makar Sankranti (Uttarayana), Diwali, Holi, Janmashtami, Raksha Bandhan, Dusshera, Rama Navami, Mahavir Janma Kalyanak, Eid, Tazia, Paryushan, Bhavnath fair, and others are also celebrated.

Diffusion of culture Due to close proximity to the Arabian Sea, Gujarat has developed a mercantile ethos which maintained a cultural tradition of seafaring, long-distance trade, and overseas contacts with the outside world since ancient times, and the diffusion of culture through Gujarati diaspora was a logical outcome of such a tradition. During the pre-modern period, various European sources have observed that these merchants formed diaspora communities outside of Gujarat, and in many parts of the world, such as the Persian Gulf, Middle East, Horn of Africa, Hong Kong, Indonesia, and Philippines. long before the internal rise of the Maratha dynasty, and the British Raj colonial occupation. Early 1st-century Western historians such as Strabo and Dio Cassius are testament to Gujarati people's role in the spread of Buddhism in the Mediterranean, when it was recorded that the sramana monk Zarmanochegas (Ζαρμανοχηγης) of Barygaza met Nicholas of Damascus in Antioch while Augustus ruled the Roman Empire, and shortly thereafter proceeded to Athens where died by setting himself on fire to demonstrate his faith. A tomb to the sramana, was still visible in the time of Plutarch, which bore the mention "ΖΑΡΜΑΝΟΧΗΓΑΣ ΙΝΔΟΣ ΑΠΟ ΒΑΡΥΓΟΣΗΣ" ("The sramana master from Barygaza in India"). The progenitor of the Sinhala language is believed to have been Prince Vijaya, son of King Simhabahu, who ruled Simhapura (modern-day Sihor near Bhavnagar). Prince Vijaya was banished by his father for his lawlessness and set forth with a band of adventurers. This tradition was followed by other Gujaratis. For example, in the Ajanta frescoes, a Gujarati prince is shown entering Sri Lanka. Many Indians migrated to Indonesia and the Philippines, most of them Gujaratis. King Aji Saka, who is said to have come to Java in Indonesia in year 1 of the Saka calendar, is believed by some to have been a king of Gujarat. The first Indian settlements in the Philippines and Java Island of Indonesia are believed to have been established with the coming of Prince Dhruvavijaya of Gujarat, with 5000 traders. Some stories propose a Brahmin named Tritresta was the first to bring Gujarati migrants with him to Java, so some scholars equate him with Aji Saka. A Gujarati ship has been depicted in a sculpture at Borabudur, Java.

Tourism Gujarat's natural environment includes the Great Rann of Kutch and the hills of Saputara, and it is the sole home of pure Asiatic lions in the world. During the reigns of the sultans, Hindu craftsmanship blended with Islamic architecture, giving rise to the Indo-Saracenic style. Many structures in the state are built in this fashion. It is also the birthplace of Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, figures of India's Independence movement. Amitabh Bachchan is currently the brand ambassador of Gujarat Tourism.

Museums and memorials Gujarat has a variety of museums on different genres that are run by the state's Department of Museums located at the principal state museum, Baroda Museum & Picture Gallery in Vadodara, which is also the location of the Maharaja Fateh Singh Museum. The Kirti Mandir, Porbandar, Sabarmati Ashram, and Kaba Gandhi No Delo are museums related to Mahatma Gandhi, the former being the place of his birth and the latter two where he lived in his lifetime. Kaba Gandhi No Delo in Rajkot exhibits part of a rare collection of photographs relating to the life of Mahatma Gandhi. Sabarmati Ashram is the place where Gandhi initiated the Dandi March. On 12 March 1930 he vowed that he would not return to the Ashram until India won independence. The Maharaja Fateh Singh Museum is housed within Lakshmi Vilas Palace, the residence of the erstwhile Maharajas, located in Vadodara. The Calico Museum of Textiles is managed by the Sarabhai Foundation and is one of the most popular tourist spots in Ahmedabad. The Lakhota Museum at Jamnagar is a palace transformed into museum, which was residence of the Jadeja Rajputs. The collection of the museum includes artefacts spanning from 9th to 18th centuries, pottery from medieval villages nearby and the skeleton of a whale. Other well-known museums in the state include the Kutch Museum in Bhuj, which is the oldest museum in Gujarat founded in 1877, the Watson Museum of human history and culture in Rajkot, Gujarat Science City and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Memorial in Ahmedabad. In October 2018, the world's tallest statue commemorating the independence leader Sardar Patel was unveiled. At 182 metres tall the Statue of Unity is the newest tourist attraction with over 30,000 visitors every day.

Religious sites Religious sites play a major part in the tourism of Gujarat. Somnath is the first of the twelve Jyotirlingas, and is mentioned in the Rigveda. The Dwarkadhish Temple, Radha Damodar Temple, Junagadh and Dakor are holy pilgrimage sites with temples dedicated to Krishna. The Sun Temple, Modhera is a ticketed monument, handled by the Archaeological Survey of India. Other religious sites in state include Ambaji, Dakor, Shamlaji, Chotila, Becharaji, Mahudi, Shankheshwar etc. The Shatrunjaya Mahatirth of Jainism on Mount Shatrunjaya, Palitana are considered the holiest of all pilgrimage places by the Svetambara and Digambara Jain community. Palitana is the world's only mountain with more than 900 temples. Girnar Mahatirth is another major pilgrimage destination for Jains.

Fairs A five-day festival is held during Maha Shivaratri at the fort of Girnar, Junagadh, known as the Bhavanth Mahadev Fair (Gujarati: મહાદેવ મેળો). The Kutch Festival or Rann Festival (Gujarati: રાણ મેળો or રાણી મેળો) is a festival celebrated at Kutch during Mahashivratri. The Modhra Dance Festival is a festival for classical dance, arranged by the Government of Gujarat's Cultural Department, to promote tourism in state and to keep traditions and culture alive. The Ambaji Fair is held in the Hindu month of Bhadrapad (around August-September) at Ambaji, during a time which is particularly suitable for farmers, when the busy monsoon season is about to end. The Bhadrapad fair is held at Ambaji which is in the Danta Taluka of Banaskantha district, near the Gujarat-Rajasthan border. The walk from the bus station to the temple is less than one kilometre, under a roofed walkway. Direct buses are available from many places, including Mount Abu (45 km away), Palanpur (65 km away), Ahmedabad and Idar. The Bhadrapad fair is held in the centre of the Ambaji village just outside the temple premises. The village is visited by the largest number of sanghas (pilgrim groups) during the fair. Many of them go there on foot, which is particularly enriching as it happens immediately after the monsoon, when the landscape is rich with greenery, streams are full of sparkling water and the air is fresh.

About 1.5 million devotees are known to attend this fair each year from all over the world. Not only Hindus, but some devout Jains and Parsis also attend the functions, while some Muslims attend the fair for trade. The Tarnetar Fair is held during the first week of Bhadrapad, (September-October according to Gregorian calendar), and mostly serves as a place to find a suitable bride for tribal people from Gujarat. The region is believed to be the place where Arjuna took up the difficult task of piercing the eye of a fish, rotating at the end of a pole, by looking at its reflection in the pond water, to marry Draupadi. Other fairs in Gujarat include Dang Durbar, Shamlaji Fair, Chitra Vichitra Fair, Dhrang Fair and Vautha Fair. The Government of Gujarat has banned alcohol since 1960. In 2024, the Gujarat police seized around 82 lakh bottles of Indian-made foreign liquor, amounting to ₹144 crore. Gujarat government collected the Best State Award for 'Citizen Security' by IBN7 Diamond States on 24 December 2012.

Transport Air There are four international airports (Ahmedabad, Surat, Rajkot Int'l, Vadodara), eight domestic airports (Bhavnagar, Bhuj, Jamnagar, Kandla, Porbandar, Rajkot, Amreli, Keshod), two private airports (Mundra, Mithapur) and three military bases (Bhuj, Jamnagar, Naliya) in Gujarat. Three more airports (Dholera, Ankleshwar, Deesa) are under construction. There are two infrequently used airports situated at Mandvi and Mehsana; the latter serving as a flying school. Gujarat State Aviation Infrastructure Company Limited (GUJSAIL) has been established by the Government of Gujarat to foster development of aviation infrastructure in the state. These airports are operated and owned by either the Airports Authority of India, Indian Air Force, Government of Gujarat or private companies.

Rail Gujarat comes under the Western Railway Zone of the Indian Railways. Ahmedabad Junction Railway Station is the most important, centrally located and biggest railway station in Gujarat which connects to all important cities of Gujarat and India. Vadodara Junction Railway Station is the busiest railway station junction in Gujarat and the fifth busiest railway station in India. Surat Railway Station, Rajkot Junction Railway Station, and Sabarmati Junction Railway Station are the other busy and well connected railway stations in the state. Other important railway stations are Mahesana Junction, Palanpur Junction, Bhavnagar Terminus, Nadiad Junction, Valsad Railway Station, Bharuch Junction, Gandhidham Junction, Anand Junction, Godhra Junction Railway Station, etc. Indian Railways is planning a dedicated rail freight route Delhi-Mumbai passing through the state of Gujarat. India's first high speed rail line is set to run from Ahmedabad, the largest city in Gujarat to Mumbai, the financial hub of India, with a top speed of 320 km/h (200 mph). 60.06 km (37.32 mi) long tracks of Ahmedabad Metro, a metro rail system for Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar is currently operational. The construction started on 14 March 2015.

Sea Gujarat State has the longest sea coastline of 1214 km in India. Mundra Port is the largest port as well as the highest capacity port in India, and it is also the largest container port by volume in the country. It is India's first private port owned and operated by Adani Ports & SEZ. Kandla Port, owned by the central government and operated by Deendayal Port Authority, is one of the largest and busiest ports serving Western India. It has the third-highest cargo capacity in India. Other important ports in Gujarat are the Port of Navlakhi, Port of Magdalla, Port Pipavav, Bedi Port, Port of Porbandar, Port of Veraval and the privately. The state also has Dahej-Ghogha Sea Connect, a Ro-Ro ferry service.

Road Gujarat State Road Transport Corporation (GSRTC) is the primary body responsible for providing the bus services within the state of Gujarat and also with the neighbouring states. It is a public transport corporation providing bus services and public transit within Gujarat and to the other states in India. Apart from this, there are a number of services provided by GSRTC.

Mofussil Services - connects major cities, smaller towns and villages within Gujarat. Intercity Bus Services - connects major cities - Ahmedabad, Mehsana, Surat, Veraval, Vapi, Vadodara, Rajkot, Bharuch etc. Interstate Bus Services - connects various cities of Gujarat with the neighbouring states of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan. City Services - GSRTC provides city bus services at Surat, Vadodara, Vapi, Gandhinagar and Ahmedabad, within the state of Gujarat. Parcel Services - service used for transporting goods. Apart from this, the GSRTC provides special bus services for festivals, industrial zones, schools, colleges and pilgrim places also buses are given on contract basis to the public for certain special occasions.

There are also city buses in cities like Ahmedabad (AMTS and Ahmedabad BRTS), Surat (Surat BRTS), Bhavnagar (BMC CITY BUS), Vadodara (Vinayak Logistics), Gandhinagar (VTCOS), Mehsana (Mehsana Municipal Bus Service), Rajkot (RMTS and Rajkot BRTS), Anand (VTCOS), Bharuch (Gurukrupa) etc. Auto rickshaws are common mode of transport in Gujarat. The Government of Gujarat is promoting bicycles to reduce pollution by the way of initiative taken by free cycle rides for commuters.

Education and research The Gujarat Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board (GSHSEB) are in charge of the schools run by the Government of Gujarat. However, most of the private schools in Gujarat are affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) board. Gujarat has 30 state universities.

Universities The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara, is a premier university of Gujarat. It is one of the oldest universities of Gujarat and provides education in Faculty of Fine Arts, Engineering, Arts, Journalism, Education, Law, Social Work, Medicine, Science and Performing Arts. Originally known as the Baroda College of Science (established 1881), it became a university in 1949 after the independence of the country and later renamed after its benefactor Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III, the former ruler of Baroda State. Gujarat National Law University, founded in 2004, located in the capital city Gandhinagar, was ranked 3rd best law school in India. Institutes for Engineering and Research in the area include IIT Gandhinagar, Gujarat Technological University, Indian Institute of Information Technology Vadodara (IIITV), Institute of Infrastructure Technology Research and Management (IITRAM), Dhirubhai Ambani Institute of Information and Communication Technology (DA-IICT) also in Gandhinagar, Sardar Vallabhbhai National Institute of Technology (SVNIT) and P P Savani University in Surat, Pandit Deendayal Petroleum University (PDU) in Gandhinagar, Nirma University in Ahmedabad, M.S. University in Vadodara, Marwadi Education Foundation's Group of Institutions (MEFGI) in Rajkot and Birla Vishwakarma Mahavidyalaya (BVM) in Vallabh Vidyanagar (a suburb in Anand district). MICA, Mudra Institute of Communications Ahmedabad, is a residential institute dedicated to marketing and communication. Institute of Rural Management Anand (IRMA), a part of "Tribhuvan" Sahkari University, is one of the leading sectoral institution in rural management. IRMA is a unique institution in the sense that it provides professional education to train managers for rural management. The National Institute of Design (NID) in Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar is a multi-disciplinary institution in the field of design education and research. Centre for Environmental Planning & Technology University (CEPT) is a planning and architectural school providing various technical and professional courses. Gujarat University, Kadi Sarva Vishwavidyalaya, Sardar Patel University, Ahmedabad University, Saurashtra University, Veer Narmad South Gujarat University, Dharmsinh Desai University and Hemchandracharya North Gujarat University are also among reputed universities, affiliating many reputed colleges.

Research The Space Applications Centre (SAC) is an institution for space research and satellite communication in Ahmedabad, India, under the aegis of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). Vikram Sarabhai, a renowned scientist, industrialist, and visionary Gujarati, played an important role in it. He

also founded Physical Research Laboratory, a research institute encompasses Astrophysics, Solar System, and cosmic radiation. He also envisioned Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad, one of the internationally reputed management research institute that is located in Gujarat's commercial capital Ahmedabad and is the top ranked management institutes in the country. Central Salt and Marine Chemicals Research Institute has been established under Council of Scientific and Industrial Research Government of India at Bhavnagar. It was inaugurated by Late Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India on 10 April 1954, with a view to carry out research on marine salt, and salt from inland lakes and sub-soil brine. It is working on reverse osmosis, electro membrane process, salt and marine chemicals, analytical science, marine biotechnology, and other related fields. The Gujarat National Law University situated at Gandhinagar is the 5th Best Law School currently in India. Gujarat Science City, is a government initiative to draw more students towards education in science, which hosts India's first IMAX 3D theatre, an energy park, a hall of science, an amphitheatre, and dancing musical fountains among others. Institute of Management under Nirma University is constantly ranked among the top MBA colleges in India. International Institute of Management and Technical Studies affiliated with Gujarat Knowledge Society, European Association for Distance Learning, Association of Indian Management Schools and Ahmedabad Textile Industry's Research Association has performed globally for its higher education certification courses for working professionals. IIMT STUDIES also launched GET SET GO programme in 2013 in affiliation with Gujarat Technological University and Gujarat Knowledge Society, Department of Technical Education- Government of Gujarat. B.K. School of Business Management is ranked sixth in financial management. K. S. School of Business Management is also an MBA college in Gujarat University providing a five-year integrated MBA course. Shanti Business School in Ahmedabad is a business school offering a post-graduate diploma in management through a corporate citizenship initiative. The Institute of Seismological Research (ISR) was established by the Science and Technology Department, Government of Gujarat, in 2003 and is registered as a society. ISR campus is at Raisan, Gandhinagar, on the banks of Sabarmati river. Aims and objectives include assigning optimum seismic factors for buildings in different regions and long-term assessment of potential. The ISR is the only institute in India fully dedicated to seismological research and is planned to be developed into a premier international institute in few years time.

Notable people Gautam Adani, founder and chairman of Adani Group; from Ahmedabad, Gujarat Lal Krishna Advani, ex-president of BJP and Deputy Prime Minister of India (1999-2004) Dhirubhai Ambani, founder of Reliance Industries; from Chorvad, Gujarat Jasprit Bumrah, Indian bowler who plays for Indian National Cricket team (all formats), from Ahmedabad. Morarji Desai, 4th Prime Minister of India (1977-1979); from Valsad Urvashi Dholakia, Television & Bollywood actress Balkrishna Vithaldas Doshi, Architect, Pritzker Architecture Prize laureate Dadudan Gadhvi (Kavi DadBapu), poet, singer and lyricist of Gujarati Cinema, Padmashri title given in 2021 Mahatma Gandhi, spearheaded the Indian independence movement against British colonial rule; Gujarati Ravindra Jadeja, Indian all-rounder & part of the Indian U-19 cricket team, from Navagam Ghed Sanjeev Kumar a Versatility Bollywood actor, Born in Surat Shri Gopinathji Maharaj, family founder Narendra Modi, 14th and current Prime Minister of India; from Vadnagar, Gujarat Asha Parekh influential actress in Hindi cinema, she was born in Ahmedabad Urjit Patel, former Governor of Reserve Bank of India; from Kheda district, Gujarat Vallabhbhai Patel, Independent India's first Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister; from Karamsad Falguni Pathak, a female singer and performing artist born & brought up in Vadodara, who currently resides in Mumbai Azim Premji, software magnate and chairman of Wipro Limited; ethnically Gujarati Cheteshwar Pujara, Indian batter who plays for Indian National Cricket Test team, from Rajkot. Shrimad Rajchandra, poet, philosopher and reformer best known as the spiritual guru of Mahatma Gandhi Paresh Rawal, Indian film actor and politician of Gujarati origin born in Mumbai Vikram Sarabhai, "father of the Indian space programme"; from Ahmedabad Dayananda Saraswati is an Indian philosopher, social leader and founder of the Arya Samaj, Born in Tankara Amit Shah, 31st and Current Home Minister of India, former Minister of State, Government of Gujarat; born in Mumbai Jamsetji Tata, pioneer industrialist, founder of the Tata Group; from a Parsi family of

Navsari Shyamji Krishna Varma, an Indian revolutionary fighter, an Indian patriot, lawyer and journalist From Kutch

Sister states New Jersey, United States (September 2019) Delaware, United States (September 2019) California, United States Hyogo Prefecture, Japan (November 2019) Guangdong, China (2014) Astrakhan Oblast, Russia

See also Cuttanee Dharasana Satyagraha Navnirman Andolan Outline of Gujarat

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Haryana

Haryana (Hindi: Haryāna, pronounced [həˈɾjəˈnaː]) is a state located in the northwestern part of India. It was carved out after the linguistic reorganisation of Punjab on 1 November 1966. It is ranked 21st in terms of area, with less than 1.4% (44,212 km² or 17,070 sq mi) of India's land area. The state capital is Chandigarh, which it shares with the neighbouring state of Punjab; the most populous city is Faridabad, a part of the National Capital Region. The city of Gurgaon is among India's largest financial and technology hubs. Haryana has 6 administrative divisions, 22 districts, 72 sub-divisions, 93 revenue tehsils, 50 sub-tehsils, 140 community development blocks, 154 cities and towns, 7,356 villages, and 6,222 villages panchayats. Haryana contains 32 special economic zones (SEZs), mainly located within the industrial corridor projects connecting the National Capital Region. Gurgaon is considered one of the major information technology and automobile hubs of India. Haryana ranks 11th among Indian states in human development index. The economy of Haryana is the 13th largest in India, with a gross state domestic product (GSDP) of ₹7.65 trillion (US\$90 billion) and has the country's 5th-highest GSDP per capita of ₹240,000 (US\$2,800). The state is rich in history, monuments, heritage, flora and fauna and tourism, with a well-developed economy, national and state highways. It is bordered by Punjab and Himachal Pradesh to the north, by Rajasthan to the west and south, while river Yamuna forms its eastern border with Uttar Pradesh. Haryana surrounds the country's capital territory of Delhi on three sides (north, west and south), consequently, a large area of Haryana state is included in the economically important National Capital Region of India for the purposes of planning and development.

Etymology Some anthropologists believe that the name "Haryana" originated in the period following the Mahabharata, when the Bhīras are thought to have settled in the region. This community was known for developing advanced agricultural techniques. Historian Pran Nath Chopra suggests that the name evolved linguistically over time—from Bhiryana (derived from Bhira meaning "Abhira" and ayana meaning "path" or "way") to Ahiriyana, and eventually became Haryāna or Haryana.

History **Ancient period** The villages of Rakhigarhi in Hisar district and Bhīrana in Fatehabad district are home to ancient sites of the Indus Valley Civilization, which contain evidence of paved roads, a drainage system, a large-scale rainwater collection storage system, terracotta brick and statue production, and skilled metalworking (in both bronze and precious metals). During the Vedic era, Haryana was the site of the Kuru Kingdom, one of India's great Mahajanapadas. The south of Haryana is the claimed location of Manu's state of Brahmavarta. The area surrounding Dhosi Hill, and districts of Rewari and Mahendragarh had Ashrams of several Rishis who made valuable contributions to important Hindu scriptures like Vedas, Upanishads, Manusmriti, Brahmanas and Puranas. As per Manusmriti, Manu was the king of Brahmavarta, the flood time state 10,000 years ago surrounded by oldest route of Sarasvati and Drishadvati rivers on the banks of which Sanatan-Vedic or present-day Hindu ethos evolved and scriptures were composed.

Medieval period Ancient bronze and stone idols of Jain Tirthankara were found in archaeological expeditions in Badli, Bhiwani (Ranila, Charkhi Dadri and Badhra), Dadri, Gurgaon (Gurugram), Hansi, Hisar, Kasan, Nahad, Narnaul, Pehowa, Rewari, Rohad, Rohtak (Asthali Bohar) and Sonapat in Haryana.

Pushyabhuti dynasty ruled parts of northern India in the 7th century with its capital at Thanesar. Harsha was a prominent king of the dynasty. Tomara dynasty ruled the south Haryana region in the 10th century. Anangpal

Tomar was a prominent king among the Tomaras. After the sack of Bhatner fort during the Timurid conquests of India in 1398, Timur attacked and sacked the cities of Sirsa, Fatehabad, Sunam, Kaithal and Panipat.

Hem Chandra Vikramaditya, also called Hemu, claimed royal status and the throne of Delhi after defeating Akbar's Mughal forces on 7 October 1556 in the Battle of Delhi, and assumed the ancient title of Vikramaditya. The area that is now Haryana has been ruled by some of the major empires of India. Panipat is known for three seminal battles in the history of India. In the First Battle of Panipat (1526), Babur defeated the Lodis. In the Second Battle of Panipat (1556), Akbar defeated the local Haryanvi Hindu Emperor of Delhi, who belonged to Rewari. Hem Chandra Vikramaditya had earlier won 22 battles across India from 1553 to 1556 from Punjab to Bengal, defeating the Mughals and Afghans. Hemu had defeated Akbar's forces twice at Agra and the Battle of Delhi in 1556 to become the last Hindu Emperor of India with a formal coronation at Purana Quila in Delhi on 7 October 1556. In the Third Battle of Panipat (1761), the Afghan king Ahmad Shah Abdali defeated the Marathas.

The growth of trade centers like Bhiwani was supported by influential merchants such as Seth Nand Ram Ji Katla Wale, who promoted social development and commerce during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. He was one of the prominent leaders who devoted his life to establishing Bhiwani as a trade centre in the 18th century.

British Period The state was part of the British Punjab province. The Delhi division of Punjab province formed the bulk of Haryana. Among the princely states that were located in the state were Jind, Kalsia, Loharu, Dujana and Pataudi, as well as parts of the Patiala State.

Partition and aftermath During the Partition of India, the Punjab province was one of two British Indian provinces, alongside Bengal, to be partitioned between India and Pakistan. Haryana, along with other Hindu and Sikh-dominated areas of Punjab province, became part of India as East Punjab state. As a result, a significant number of Muslims left for the newly formed country of Pakistan. Similarly, a huge number of Hindu and Sikh refugees poured into the state from West Punjab. Gopi Chand Bhargava, who hailed from Sirsa in present-day Haryana, became the first Chief Minister of East Punjab.

Formation of Haryana Haryana as a state came into existence on 1 November 1966 the Punjab Reorganisation Act (1966). The Indian government set up the Shah Commission under the chairmanship of Justice JC Shah on 23 April 1966 to divide the existing state of Punjab and determine the boundaries of the new state of Haryana after consideration of the languages spoken by the people. It encompassed the predominantly Hindi-speaking southern part of former Punjab, while the state of Punjab was reduced to the area where Punjabi speakers formed the majority population. The commission delivered its report on 31 May 1966 whereby the then-districts of Hisar, Mahendragarh, Gurgaon, Rohtak and Karnal were to be a part of the new state of Haryana. Further, the tehsils of Jind and Narwana in the Sangrur district - along with Naraingarh, Ambala and Jagadhri - were to be included. The commission recommended that the tehsil of Kharar, which includes Chandigarh, the state capital of Punjab, should be a part of Haryana. However, Kharar was given to Punjab. The city of Chandigarh was made a union territory, serving as the capital of both Punjab and Haryana. Bhagwat Dayal Sharma became the first Chief Minister of Haryana. Chaudhary Devi Lal is credited to be the individual who pushed for the creation of this commission. He was an instrumental figure in the separation of the Haryana state from Punjab in 1966.

Punjabi Migration to Haryana in 1947 and 1980s The Punjabi migration to Haryana occurred in two major waves-first during the Partition of India in 1947, and later during the 1980s, influenced by the Khalistani movement in Punjab. The Partition of India led to one of the largest mass migrations in history, as millions of people were displaced due to the creation of Pakistan. Many Punjabi Hindus and Sikhs fled West Punjab (now in Pakistan) and settled in Haryana, bringing with them their agricultural skills, business expertise, and cultural traditions. Their arrival helped in the economic development of Haryana, particularly in agriculture and trade, as they introduced advanced farming techniques and expanded local businesses. The Khalistani movement, which emerged in Punjab during the 1980s, led to political instability and violent insurgency. The demand for a separate Sikh state (Khalistan) resulted in clashes between separatist groups and security forces, making the region unsafe for many civilians. This turmoil prompted Punjabi families, including both Hindus and Sikhs, to migrate to neighbouring Haryana, seeking security, stability, and economic opportunities. The urban centers of Haryana witnessed an influx of Punjabi migrants, who contributed to the state's business and industrial sectors. By the mid-1990s, the insurgency declined due to government interventions, weakening separatist factions, and changing political dynamics. These migrations have shaped Haryana's demographic, cultural, and economic landscape, making Punjabis an integral part of the state's growth and identity.

Demographics Castes, tribes and Ethnic groups As per 2019 estimates, the caste wise composition of Haryana is 25-30% Jats, 21% Scheduled Caste, 8% Khatri, 7.5% Brahmins, 5.1% Ahir/Yadav, 5% Vaish, 4% Jat Sikhs, 3.8% Meos and other Muslims, 3.4% Rajputs, 3.35% Gujar, 2.9% Saini, 2.7% Kumhars, 1.1% Ror and 0.7% Bishnois. According to a 2023 report, the Jats constitute 25% of the state's population, while Sainis are at 8%. The Punjabis ethnic group constitutes more than one-third of Haryana's population, making them a significant and influential community in the state.

Languages The official language of Haryana is Modern Standard Hindi and second official language is Punjabi. Several regional languages or dialects, often subsumed under the name "Hindi", are spoken in the state. Predominant among them is Haryanvi (also known as Bangru), whose territory encompasses the central and eastern portions of Haryana. Hindi and Punjabi is spoken in the northeast, Bagri in the west, Deshwali in the East and Ahirwati, Mewati and Braj Bhasha in the south. There are also significant numbers of speakers of Urdu and Punjabi, the latter of which was recognised as the second official language of Haryana for government and administrative purposes in 2010. After the state's formation, Telugu was made the state's "second language" - to be taught in schools - but it was not the "second official language" for official communication. Due to a lack of students, the language ultimately stopped being taught. Tamil was made the second language in 1969 by Bansi Lal to show the state's differences with Punjab although there were no Tamil speakers in Haryana at the time. In 2010, due to the lack of Tamil speakers, the language was removed from its status. There are also some speakers of several major regional languages of neighbouring states or other parts of the subcontinent, like Bengali, Bhojpuri, Marwari, Mewari, and Nepali, as well as smaller communities of speakers of languages that are dispersed across larger regions, like Bauria, Bazigar, Gujar, Gade Lohar, Oadki, and Sansi.

Religion According to the 2011 census, of the total population of 25,351,462 in Haryana, Hindus (87.46%) constitute the majority of the state's population with Muslims (7.03%) (mainly Meos) and Sikhs (4.91%) being the largest minorities. Muslims are mainly found in the districts of Nuh, Palwal, and Faridabad, along with the Sohna tehsil of Gurgaon district. Haryana has the second largest Sikh population in India after Punjab, and they mostly live in the districts adjoining Punjab, such as Sirsa, Jind, Fatehabad, Kaithal, Kurukshetra, Ambala and Panchkula.

Culture Music Haryana has its own unique traditional folk music, folk dances, saang (folk theatre), cinema, belief system such as Jathara (ancestral worship), and arts such as Phulkari and Shisha embroidery.

Folk dances Folk music and dances of Haryana are based on satisfying the cultural needs of primarily agrarian and martial natures of Haryanvi tribes. Haryanvi musical folk theatre's main types are Saang, Raslila and Ragini. The Saang and Ragini form of theatre was popularised by Lakhmi Chand. Haryanvi folk dances and music have fast energetic movements. Three popular categories of dance are festive-seasonal, devotional, and ceremonial-recreational. The festive-seasonal dances and songs are Gogaji/Gugga, Holi, Phaag, Sawan, Teej. The devotional dances and songs are Chaupaiya, Holi, Manjira, Ras Leela, Raginis). The ceremonial-recreational dances and songs are of following types: legendary bravery (Kissa and Ragini of male warriors and female Satis), love and romance (Been and its variant Nangin dance, and Ragini), ceremonial (Dhamal Dance, Ghoomar, Jhoomar (male), Khorla, Lora, and Ragini).

Folk music and songs Haryanvi folk music is based on day-to-day themes and injecting earthly humour enlivens the feel of the songs. Haryanvi music takes two main forms: "Classical folk music" and "Desi Folk music" (Country Music of Haryana), and sung in the form of ballads and love, valor and bravery, harvest, happiness and pangs of the parting of lovers.

Classical Haryanvi folk music Classical Haryanvi folk music is based on Indian classical music. Hindustani classical ragas, learnt in gharana parampara of guru-shishya tradition, are used to sing songs of heroic bravery (such as Alha-Khand (1163-1202 CE) about the bravery of Alha and Udal, Jaimal and Patta of Maharana Udai Singh II), Brahmas worship and festive seasonal songs (such as Teej, Holi and Phaag songs of Phalgun month near Holi). Bravery songs are sung in high pitch.

Desi Haryanvi folk music Desi Haryanvi folk music, is a form of Haryanvi music, based on Raag Bhairvi, Raag Bhairav, Raag Kafi, Raag Jaijivanti, Raag Jhinjhoti and Raag Pahadi and used for celebrating community bonhomie to sing seasonal songs, ballads, ceremonial songs (wedding, etc.) and related religious legendary tales such as Puran Bhagat. Relationship and songs celebrating love and life are sung in medium pitch. Ceremonial and religious songs are sung in low pitch. Young girls and women usually sing entertaining and fast seasonal, love, relationship and friendship-related songs such as Phagan (song for eponymous season/month), Katak (songs for the eponymous season/month), Samman (songs for the eponymous season/month), bande-bandi (male-female duet songs), sathne (songs of sharing heartfelt feelings among female friends). Older women usually sing devotional Mangal Geet (auspicious songs) and ceremonial songs such as Bhajan, Bhat (wedding gift to the mother of bride or groom by her brother), Sagai, Ban (Hindu wedding ritual where pre-wedding festivities starts), Kuan-Poojan (a custom that is performed to welcome the birth of a child by worshiping the well or source of drinking water), Sanjhi and Holi festival.

Socially normative-cohesive impact Music and dance for Haryanvi people is a way of lessening societal differences as folk singers are highly esteemed and they are sought after and invited for events, ceremonies and special occasions regardless of their caste or status. These inter-caste songs are fluid in nature, and never personalised for any specific caste, and they are sung collectively by women from different strata, castes, and dialects. These songs transform fluidly in dialect, style, words, etc. This adoptive style can be seen in the adoption of tunes of Bollywood movie songs into Haryanvi songs. Despite this continuous fluid transforming nature, Haryanvi songs have a distinct style of their own as explained above. With the coming up of a strongly socio-economic metropolitan culture in the emergence of urban Gurgaon Haryana is also witnessing community

participation in public arts and city beautification. Several landmarks across Gurgaon are decorated with public murals and graffiti with cultural cohesive ideologies and stand the testimony of a lived sentiment in Haryana folk.

Cuisine As per a survey, 13% of males and 7.8% of females of Haryana are non-vegetarian. The cuisine of Haryana, rooted in its predominantly agricultural society, has maintained a simple and uncomplicated essence. The regional cuisine features the staples of roti, saag, vegetarian sabzi and milk products such as ghee, milk, lassi and kheer. Haryana is often referred to as the 'Land of Rotis' due to its residents' fondness for various types of rotis. Wheat rotis are ubiquitous, along with the popular baajre ki roti. In the past, rotis were commonly made from a blend of wheat, gram, and barley flour, offering a nutritious and wholesome combination. Another notable variety is the gochini atta, crafted from wheat and gram flour. Haryana is renowned for its abundant livestock, including the famed Murrah buffalo and the Haryana cow. This cattle wealth ensures a plentiful supply of milk and dairy products in Haryanvi cuisine. Many households produce their own butter and ghee, which are generously incorporated into daily meals. Fresh homemade butter, known as "nooni" or "tindi ghee," is commonly churned on a daily basis. When a girl becomes a mother, it's customary for her family to present her with gifts of ghee, edible gum (gondh), laddus (sweetmeats made from gram flour), and dry fruits. Buttermilk, known as "chaaj," is a popular beverage and serves as an instant refresher during the summer months. Lassi, made from yogurt, is another beloved drink that can almost constitute a meal in itself. The Haryanvi fondness for lassi is evident in the fact that "thandai," a sweet milk-based drink, is referred to as "kachi lassi" in Haryana.

Punjabi Culture Punjabi culture has a significant presence in Haryana, particularly in regions bordering Punjab and the GT road belt. The influence is evident in language, cuisine, festivals, and traditions. Many people in Haryana speak Punjabi alongside Hindi and Haryanvi, and Punjabi music and dance forms like Bhangra and Giddha are popular. Additionally, Punjabi cuisine, including dishes like Makki di Roti and Sarson da Saag, is widely enjoyed. Efforts to preserve and promote Punjabi identity in Haryana have been ongoing, with linguistic and cultural initiatives aimed at strengthening the connection between the Punjabi-speaking population and their heritage.

Society Haryanvi people have a concept of inclusive society involving the "36 J■tis" or communities. Castes such as Jat, Rajput, Gurjar, Saini, Pasi, Ahirs, Ror, Meo, Charan, Bishnoi, Harijan, Aggarwal, Brahmin, Khatri and Tyagi are some of the notable of these 36 J■tis.

Geography Haryana is a landlocked state in northern India. It is between 27°39' to 30°35' N latitude and between 74°28' and 77°36' E longitude. The total geographical area of the state is 4.42 m ha, which is 1.4% of the geographical area of the country. The altitude of Haryana varies between 700 and 3600 ft (200 metres to 1200 metres) above sea level. Haryana has only 4% (compared with national 21.85%) area under forests. Karoh Peak, a 1,467-metre (4,813 ft) tall mountain peak in the Sivalik Hills range of the greater Himalayas range located near Morni Hills area of Panchkula district, is the highest point in Haryana. Most of the state sits atop the fertile Ghaggar Plain, a subsection of the Indo-Gangetic Plain. Haryana has 4 states and 2 union territories on its border - Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, and Chandigarh.

Plains and mountains Haryana has four main geographical features.

The Yamuna-Ghaggar plain forming the largest part of the state is also called Delhi doab consists of Sutlej-Ghaggar doab (between Sutlej in the north of Punjab and the Ghaggar river flowing through northern Haryana), Ghaggar-Hakra doab (between Ghaggar river and Hakra or Drishadvati river which is the paleochannel of the holy Saraswati River) and Hakra-Yamuna doab (between Hakra river and Yamuna). The Lower Shivalik Hills to the northeast in foothills of Himalaya The Bagar region semi-desert dry sandy plain in north west of Haryana, covering northwest districts of Sirsa, western Fatehabad and northwestern Hisar. The Aravali Range's northernmost low rise isolated non-continuous outcrops in the south, covering Nuh, Gurgaon, Faridabad, Rewari, and Mahendragarh.

Hydrography The Yamuna, a tributary of the Ganges, flows along the state's eastern boundary. Northern Haryana has several northeast to west flowing rivers originating from the Sivalik Hills of Himalayas, such as Ghaggar (palaeochannel of vedic Sarasvati river), Chautang (paleochannel of vedic Drishadvati river, tributary of the Ghaggar), Tangri river (tributary of the Ghaggar), Kaushalya river (tributary of the Ghaggar), Markanda River (tributary of Ghaggar), Sarsuti, Dangri, Somb river. Haryana's main seasonal river, the Ghaggar-Hakra, known as Ghaggar before the Ottu barrage and as the Hakra downstream of the barrage, rises in the outer Himalayas, between the Yamuna and the Satluj and enters the state near Pinjore in the Panchkula district, passes through Ambala and Sirsa, it reaches Bikaner in Rajasthan and runs for 460 km (290 mi) before disappearing into the deserts of Rajasthan. The seasonal Markanda River, known as the Aruna in ancient times, originates from the lower Shivalik Hills and enters Haryana west of Ambala, and swells into a raging torrent during monsoon is notorious for its devastating power, carries its surplus water on to the Sanisa Lake where the Markanda joins the Sarasuti and later the Ghaggar. Southern Haryana has several south-west to east flowing seasonal rivulets originating from the Aravalli Range in and around the hills in Mewat region, including Sahibi River (called Najafgarh drain in Delhi), Dohan river (tributary of Sahibi, originates at Mandoli village near Neem Ka Thana in Jhunjhunu district of Rajasthan and then disappears in Mahendragarh district), Krishnavati river (former tributary of Sahibi river, originates near Dariba and disappears in Mahendragarh district much before reaching Sahibi river) and Indori river (longest tributary of Sahibi River, originates in Sikar district of Rajasthan and flows to Rewari district of Haryana), these once were tributaries of the Drishadvati/Saraswati river.

Major canals are Western Yamuna Canal, Sutlej Yamuna link canal (from Sutlej river tributary of Indus), and Indira Gandhi Canal. Major dams are Kaushalya Dam in Panchkula district, Hathnikund Barrage and Tajewala Barrage on Yamuna in Yamunanagar district, Pathrala barrage on Somb river in Yamunanagar district, ancient Anagpur Dam near Surajkund in Faridabad district, and Ottu barrage on Ghaggar-Hakra River in Sirsa district. Major lakes are Dighal Wetland, Badkhal Lake in Faridabad,, Basai Wetland, Sultanpur National Park, and Damdama Lake in Gurgaon, Bhindawas Lake in Jhajjar, holy Brahma Sarovar and Sannihit Sarovar in Kurukshetra, Blue Bird Lake in Hisar, Hathni Kund in Yamunanagar district, Karna Lake at Karnal, ancient Surajkund in Faridabad, and Tilyar Lake in Rohtak. The Haryana State Waterbody Management Board is responsible for the rejuvenation of 14,000 johads of Haryana and up to 60 lakes in National Capital Region falling within the Haryana state. The only hot spring in Haryana is the Sohna Sulphur Hot Spring at Sohna in Gurgaon district. Tosham Hill range has several sacred sulphur ponds of religious significance that are revered for the healing impact of sulphur, such as Pandu Teerth Kund, Surya Kund, Kukkar Kund, Gyarasia Kund or Vyas Kund. Seasonal waterfalls include Tikkar Taal twin lakes at Morni hills, Dhosi Hill in Mahendragarh district, Pali village on the outskirts of Faridabad, and Ghamroj Waterfall near Gurgaon.

Climate Haryana is hot in summer with maximum temperatures hovering around 40 C (104 F) and cool in winter with minimum temperatures around 6 C (43 F). The hottest months are May and June and the coldest are

December and January. The climate is semi-arid to subhumid with an average rainfall of 592.93 mm. Around 29% of rainfall is received during the months from July to September as a result of the monsoon, and the remaining rainfall is received during the period from December to February as a result of the western disturbance.

Flora and fauna Forests Forest cover in the state in 2013 was 3.59% (1586 km²) and the tree cover in the state was 2.90% (1282 km²), giving a total forest and tree cover of 6.49%. In 2016 and 2017, 18,412 hectares were brought under tree cover by planting 14.1 million seedlings. Thorny, dry, deciduous forest and thorny shrubs can be found all over the state. During the monsoon, a carpet of grass covers the hills. Dhok, khejri, chir pine, babul, salai and palash are found here. The species of fauna found in the state of Haryana include black buck, nilgai, panther, fox, mongoose, jackal and wild dog. More than 450 species of birds are found here.

Wildlife Haryana has two national parks, eight wildlife sanctuaries, two wildlife conservation areas, four animal and bird breeding centers, one deer park and three zoos, all of which are managed by the Haryana Forest Department of the Government of Haryana. Sultanpur National Park is a notable park in Gurgaon District.

Environmental and ecological issues Haryana Environment Protection Council is the advisory committee and the Department of Environment, Haryana is the department responsible for the administration of the environment. Areas of Haryana surrounding Delhi NCR are the most polluted. During the smog of November 2017, the air quality index of Gurgaon and Faridabad showed that the density of fine particulates (2.5 µm diameter) was an average a score of 400 and the monthly average of Haryana was 60. Other sources of pollution are exhaust gases from old vehicles, stone crushers and brick kilns. Haryana has 7.5 million vehicles, of which 40% are old, more polluting vehicles, and 500,000 new vehicles are added every year. Other majorly polluted cities are Bhiwani, Bahadurgarh, Dharuhera, Hisar and Yamunanagar.

Administration Divisions The state is divided into 6 revenue divisions, 5 Police Ranges and 4 Police Commissionerates (c. January 2017). Six revenue divisions are: Ambala, Rohtak, Gurgaon, Hisar, Karnal and Faridabad. Haryana has 11 municipal corporations (Gurgaon, Faridabad, Ambala, Panchkula, Yamunanagar, Rohtak, Hisar, Panipat, Karnal, Sonapat, and Manesar), 18 municipal councils and 52 municipalities. Within these, there are 22 districts, 72 sub-divisions, 93 tehsils, 50 sub-tehsils, 140 blocks, 154 cities and towns, 6,848 villages, 6,226 villages panchayats and numerous smaller dhanis.

Districts Haryana consists of six divisions comprising 22 districts. Each district is headed by a Deputy Commissioner (DC), an IAS officer who also functions as the District Magistrate (DM) for maintaining law and order and the District Collector for land revenue administration. The districts are further divided into sub-divisions and tehsils for land revenue administration, and into blocks for development administration. The subdivisions and tehsils are headed by Sub-Divisional Magistrates (SDMs) and Tehsildars, respectively.

Law and order The Haryana Police force is the law enforcement agency of Haryana. Five Police Ranges are Ambala, Hissar, Karnal, Rewari and Rohtak. Four Police Commissionerates are Faridabad, Gurgaon, Panchkula and Sonapat. Cybercrime investigation cell is based in Gurgaon's Sector 51. The highest judicial authority in the state is the Punjab and Haryana High Court, with the next higher right of appeal being to the Supreme Court of India. Haryana uses an e-filing facility.

Governance and e-governance The Common Service Centres (CSCs) have been upgraded in all districts to offer hundreds of e-services to citizens, including applications for new water and sanitation connections, electricity bill collection, ration card member registration, the result of HBSE, admit cards for board examinations, online admission forms for government colleges, long route booking of buses, admission forms for Kurukshetra University and HUDA plots status inquiry. Haryana has become the first state to implement Aadhaar-enabled birth registration in all the districts. Thousands of all traditional offline state and central government services are also available 24/7 online through single unified UMANG app and portal as part of Digital India initiative.

Economy Haryana's 14th placed 12.96% 2012-17 CAGR estimated a 2017-18 GSDP of US\$95 billion split into 52% services, 30% industries and 18% agriculture. The services sector is split across 45% in real estate and financial and professional services, 26% trade and hospitality, 15% state and central government employees, and 14% transport and logistics & warehousing. In IT services, Gurgaon ranks first in India in growth rate and existing technology infrastructure, and second in startup ecosystem, innovation and livability (Nov 2016). The industrial sector is split across 69% manufacturing, 28% construction, 2% utilities and 1% mining. In industrial manufacturing, Haryana produces 67% of passenger cars, 60% of motorcycles, 50% of tractors and 50% of the refrigerators in India. The service and industrial sectors are boosted by 7 operational SEZs and an additional 23 formally approved SEZs (20 already notified and 3 approved in-principle) that are mostly spread along the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor, Amritsar Delhi Kolkata Industrial Corridor and Western Peripheral Expressway. The agricultural sector is split across 93% crops and livestock, 4% commercial forestry and logging, and 2% fisheries. Although Haryana has less than 1.4% of the total area of India, it contributes 15% of food grains to the central food security public distribution system, and makes up 7% of total national agricultural exports, including 60% of total national basmati rice exports.

Agriculture Crops Haryana is traditionally an agrarian society of zamindars (owner-cultivator farmers). About 70% of Haryana's residents are engaged in agriculture. The Green Revolution in Haryana of the 1960s combined with the completion of Bhakra Dam in 1963 and Western Yamuna Command Network canal system in 1970s resulted in the significantly increased food grain production. This movement lead to large-scale investments towards improving irrigation systems, enhancing the quality of fertilizers, and investing in superior seeds. As a result, Haryana is self sufficient in food production and the second largest contributor to India's central pool of food grains In 2015-2016, Haryana produced the following principal crops: 13,352,000 tonnes of wheat, 4,145,000 tonnes of rice, 7,169,000 tonnes of sugarcane, 993,000 tonnes of cotton and 855,000 tonnes of oilseeds (mustard seed, sunflower, etc.). In the northeastern area, dairy cattle, buffaloes, and bullocks play a prominent role, being utilised both for agricultural ploughing and as draft animals.

Fruits, vegetables and spices Vegetable production was: potato 853,806 tonnes, onion 705,795 tonnes, tomato 675,384 tonnes, cauliflower 578,953 tonnes, leafy vegetables 370,646 tonnes, brinjal 331,169 tonnes, guard 307,793 tonnes, peas 111,081 tonnes and others 269,993 tonnes. Fruits production was: citrus 301,764 tonnes, guava 152,184 tonnes, mango 89,965 tonnes, chikoo 16,022 tonnes, aonla 12,056 tonnes and other fruits 25,848 tonnes. Spices production was: garlic 40,497 tonnes, fenugreek 9,348 tonnes, ginger 4,304 tonnes and others 840 tonnes.

Flowers and medicinal plants Cut flowers production was: marigold 61,830 tonnes, gladiolus 2,448,620 million, rose 1,861,160 million and other 691,300 million. Medicinal plants production was: aloe vera 1403 tonnes and stevia 13 tonnes.

Livestock Haryana is well known for its high-yield Murrah buffalo. Other breeds of cattle native to Haryana are Haryanvi, Mewati, Sahiwal and Nili-Ravi.

Research To support its agrarian economy, both the central government (Central Institute for Research on Buffaloes, Central Sheep Breeding Farm, National Research Centre on Equines, Central Institute of Fisheries, National Dairy Research Institute, Regional Centre for Biotechnology, Indian Institute of Wheat and Barley Research and National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources) and the state government (CCS HAU, LUVAS, Government Livestock Farm, Regional Fodder Station and Northern Region Farm Machinery Training and Testing Institute) have opened several institutes for research and education.

Industrial sector Manufacturing Faridabad is one of the biggest industrial cities of Haryana as well as North India. The city is home to large-scale MNC companies like India Yamaha Motor Pvt. Ltd., Havells India Limited, JCB India Limited, Escorts Group, Indian Oil (R&D), and Larsen & Toubro (L&T). Eyewear e-tailer Lenskart and healthcare startup Lybrate have their headquarters in Faridabad. Hissar, an NCR Counter Magnet city known as a steel and cotton spinning hub as well as an upcoming integrated industrial aerocity and aero MRO hub at Hisar Airport, is a fast-developing city and the hometown of Navin Jindal and Subhash Chandra of Zee TV fame. Savitri Jindal, Navin Jindal's mother, has been listed by Forbes as the third richest woman in the world. Panipat has heavy industry, including a refinery operated by the Indian Oil Corporation, a urea manufacturing plant operated by National Fertilizers Limited and a National Thermal Power Corporation power plant. It is known for its woven modhas or round stools. Sonipat: IMT Kundli, Nathupur, Rai and Barhi are industrial areas with several small and medium-sized enterprises, and also large ones such as Atlas cycles, E.C.E., Birla factory, and OSRAM Gurgaon: IMT Manesar, Dundaheera and Sohna are industrial and logistics hubs, and also has the National Security Guards, the Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs, the National Brain Research Centre and the National Bomb Data Centre.

Utilities Haryana State has always given high priority to the expansion of electricity infrastructure, as it is one of the most important drivers of development for the state. Haryana was the first state in the country to achieve 100% rural electrification in 1970 as well as the first in the country to link all villages with all-weather roads and provide safe drinking water facilities throughout the state. Sources of power in the state include:

Renewable and non-polluting sources Hydroelectricity Bhakra-Nangal Dam Hydroelectric Power Plant WYC Hydro Electric Station, 62.4 MW, Yamunanagar Solar power stations Faridabad Solar Power Plant: being set up by HPGCL Faridabad (c.2016). Nuclear power stations Gorakhpur Nuclear Power Plant, 2800MW, Fatehabad, Phase-I 1400MW by 2021 Coal-fired thermal power stations Deenbandhu Chhotu Ram Thermal Power Station, 600MW, Yamunanagar Indira Gandhi Super Thermal Power Project, 1500MW, Jhajjar Jhajjar Power Station, 1500MW Panipat Thermal Power Station I, 440MW Panipat Thermal Power Station II, 920MW Rajiv Gandhi Thermal Power Station, 1200MW, Hisar

Services sector Transport Aviation Roads and highways Haryana has a total road length of 26,062 kilometres (16,194 mi), including 2,482 kilometres (1,542 mi) comprising 29 national highways, 1,801 kilometres (1,119 mi) of state highways, 1,395 kilometres (867 mi) of Major District Roads (MDR) and 20,344 kilometres (12,641 mi) of Other District Roads (ODR) (c. December 2017). A fleet of 3,864 Haryana Roadways buses covers a distance of 1.15 million km per day, and it was the first state in the country to introduce luxury video coaches. Ancient Delhi Multan Road and Grand Trunk Road, South Asia's oldest and longest major roads, pass through Haryana. GT Road passes through the districts of Sonipat, Panipat, Karnal, Kurukshetra and Ambala in north

Haryana where it enters Delhi and subsequently the industrial town of Faridabad on its way. The 135.6 kilometres (84.3 mi) Kundli-Manesar-Palwal Expressway (KMP) will provide a high-speed link to northern Haryana with its southern districts such as Sonipat, Gurgaon, and Faridabad. The Delhi-Agra Expressway (NH-2) that passes through Faridabad is being widened to six lanes from the current four lanes. It will further boost Faridabad's connectivity with Delhi.

Railway The rail network in Haryana is covered by five rail divisions under three rail zones. Diamond Quadrilateral High-speed rail network, Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor (72 km) and Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (177 km) pass through Haryana. Bikaner railway division of the North Western Railway zone manages the rail network in western and southern Haryana covering Bhatinda-Dabwali-Hanumangarh line, Rewari-Bhiwani-Hisar-Bathinda line, Hisar-Sadulpur line and Rewari-Loharu-Sadulpur line. Jaipur railway division of North Western Railway zone manages the rail network in south-west Haryana covering Rewari-Reengas-Jaipur line, Delhi-Alwar-Jaipur line and Loharu-Sikar line. The Delhi railway division of the Northern Railway zone manages the rail network in north and east-central Haryana, covering Delhi-Panipat-Ambala line, Delhi-Rohtak-Tohana line, Rewari-Rohtak line, Jind-Sonepat line and Delhi-Rewari line. Agra railway division of North Central Railway zone manages another very small part of the network in southeast Haryana covering only the Palwal-Mathura line. Ambala railway division of Northern Railway zone manages a small part of the rail network in north-east Haryana covering Ambala-Yamunanagar line, Ambala-Kurukshetra line and UNESCO World Heritage Kalka-Shimla Railway.

Metro Delhi Metro connects the national capital Delhi with the NCR cities of Faridabad, Gurgaon and Bahadurgarh. Faridabad has the longest metro network in the NCR Region consisting of 11 stations and a track length of 17 km.

Sky Way The Haryana and Delhi governments have constructed the 4.5-kilometre (2.8 mi) international standard Delhi Faridabad Skyway, the first of its kind in North India, to connect Delhi and Faridabad.

Communication and media Haryana has a statewide network of telecommunication facilities. Haryana Government has its own statewide area network by which all government offices of 22 districts and 126 blocks across the state are connected with each other, thus making it the first SWAN of the country. Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited and most of the leading private sector players (such as Reliance Infocom, Tata Teleservices, Bharti Telecom, Idea Vodafone Essar, Aircel, Uninor and Videocon) have operations in the state. The two biggest cities of Haryana, Faridabad and Gurgaon, which are part of the National Capital Region, come under the local Delhi Mobile Telecommunication System. The rest of the cities of Haryana come under Haryana Telecommunication System. Electronic media channels include MTV, 9XM, Star Group, SET Max, News Time, NDTV 24x7 and Zee Group. The radio stations include All India Radio and other FM stations. Panipat, Hisar, Ambala and Rohtak are the cities in which the leading newspapers of Haryana are printed and circulated throughout Haryana, in which Dainik Bhaskar, Dainik Jagran, Punjab Kesari, The Tribune, Aaj Samaj, Hari Bhoomi and Amar Ujala are prominent.

Healthcare The total fertility rate of Haryana is 2.3. The infant mortality rate is 41 (SRS 2012) and the maternal mortality ratio is 146 (SRS 2010-2012). The state of Haryana has various Medical Colleges including Pandit Bhagwat Dayal Sharma Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences Rohtak, Bhagat Phool Singh Medical College in District Sonipat, ESIC Medical College, Faridabad along with notable private medical institutes like Medanta, Max Hospital, Fortis Healthcare

Education Literacy The literacy rate in Haryana has seen an upward trend and is 76.64 per cent as per the 2011 population census. Male literacy stands at 85.38%, while female literacy is at 66.67%. In 2001, the literacy rate in Haryana stood at 67.91%, of which males and females were 78.49% and 55.73% literate respectively. As of 2013, Gurgaon city had the highest literacy rate in Haryana at 86.30% followed by Panchkula at 81.9% and Ambala at 81.7%. In terms of districts, as of 2012, Rewari had the highest literacy rate in Haryana at 74%, higher than the national average of 59.5%; male literacy was 79% and female literacy was 67%. In 2011, Haryana's urban literacy rate stood at 84.98%, marking a notable rise from 79.92% in 2001. Similarly, the rural literacy rate in the state experienced an improvement, reaching 68.91% in 2011 compared to 58.74% in 2001.

Schools Haryana Board of School Education, established in September 1969 and shifted to Bhiwani in 1981, conducts public examinations at middle, matriculation, and senior secondary levels twice a year. Over 700,000 candidates attend annual examinations in February and March; 150,000 attend supplementary examinations each November. The Board also conducts examinations for Haryana Open School at senior and senior secondary levels twice a year. The Haryana government provides free education to women up to the bachelor's degree level. In 2015-2016, there were nearly 20,000 schools, including 10,100 state government schools (36 Aarohi Schools, 11 Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas, 21 Model Sanskriti Schools, 8,744 government primary school, 3386 government middle school, 1,284 government high school and 1,967 government senior secondary schools), 7,635 private schools (200 aided, 6,612 recognised unaided, and 821 unrecognised unaided private schools) and several hundred other central government and private schools such as Kendriya Vidyalaya, Indian Army Public Schools, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya and DAV schools affiliated to central government's CBSE and ICSE school boards.

Universities and higher education Haryana has 48 universities and 1,038 colleges, including 115 government colleges, 88 government-aided colleges and 96 self-finance colleges. Hisar has three universities: Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University - Asia's largest agricultural university, Guru Jambheshwar University of Science and Technology, Lala Lajpat Rai University of Veterinary & Animal Sciences); several national agricultural and veterinary research centres (National Research Centre on Equines), Central Sheep Breeding Farm, National Institute on Pig Breeding and Research, Northern Region Farm Machinery Training and Testing Institute and Central Institute for Research on Buffaloes (CIRB); and more than 20 colleges including Maharaja Agrasen Medical College, Agroha. Demographically, Haryana has 471,000 women and 457,000 men pursuing post-secondary school higher education. There are more than 18,616 female teachers and 17,061 male teachers in higher education. Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad announced on 27 February 2016 that the National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIELIT) would be set up in Kurukshetra to provide computer training to youth and a Software Technology Park of India (STPI) would be set up in Panchkula's existing HSIIDC IT Park in Sector 23. Hindi and English are compulsory languages in schools whereas Punjabi, Sanskrit and Urdu are chosen as optional languages.

Sports In the 2010 Commonwealth Games at Delhi, 22 out of 38 gold medals that India won came from Haryana. During the 33rd National Games held in Assam in 2007, Haryana stood first in the nation with a medal tally of 80, including 30 gold, 22 silver and 28 bronze medals. The 1983 World Cup winning captain Kapil Dev made his domestic-cricket debut playing for Haryana. Nahar Singh Stadium was built in Faridabad in the year 1981 for international cricket. This ground has the capacity to hold around 25,000 people as spectators. Tejli Sports Complex is an ultra-modern sports complex in Yamuna Nagar. Tau Devi Lal Stadium in Gurgaon is a multi-sport complex. Chief Minister of Haryana, Manohar Lal Khattar announced the "Haryana Sports and Physical Fitness Policy", a policy to support 26 Olympic sports, on 12 January 2015 with the words "We will

develop Haryana as the sports hub of the country." Haryana is home to Haryana Gold, one of India's eight professional basketball teams that compete in the country's UBA Pro Basketball League. At the 2016 Summer Olympics, Sakshi Malik won the bronze medal in the 58 kg category, becoming the first Indian female wrestler to win a medal at the Olympics and the fourth female Olympic medalist from the country. Notable badminton player Saina Nehwal is from Hisar in Haryana. Notable athlete Neeraj Chopra, who competes in Javelin Throw and won the first track and field gold medal in 2020 Tokyo Olympics for India, was born and raised in Panipat, Haryana. Wrestling is also very prominent in Haryana, as 2 medals won in wrestling at 2020 Tokyo Olympics were from Haryana. Notable athlete Ravi Dahiya, who was born in Nahri village of Sonapat District, won silver medal in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics for India. Ravi Kumar is an Indian freestyle wrestler who won a silver medal at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics in the 57 kg category. Dahiya is also a bronze medalist from 2019 World Wrestling Championships and a two-time Asian champion.

Notable people See also List of Monuments of National Importance in Haryana List of State Protected Monuments in Haryana Outline of Haryana Politics of Haryana Tourism in Haryana Haryanvi cinema List of earthquakes in Haryana

Notes References Sources External links Government The Official Site of the Government of Haryana Archived 3 March 2016 at the Wayback Machine Official Tourism Site of Haryana, India Archived 13 August 2013 at the Wayback Machine Haryana Community website Archived 3 July 2022 at the Wayback Machine General information Haryana web resources provided by GovPubs at the University of Colorado Boulder Libraries Haryana at the Encyclopdia Britannica Wikimedia Atlas of Haryana Geographic data related to Haryana at OpenStreetMap

Himachal Pradesh

Himachal Pradesh (Hindi: हिमाचल प्रदेश, pronounced [hɪmaˈtʃəl pɾəd̪eʃ]; Sanskrit: हिमाचल प्रदेश; lit. "Snow-laden Mountain Province") is a state in the northern part of India. Situated in the Western Himalayas, it is one of the 13 mountain states and is characterised by an extreme landscape featuring several peaks and extensive river systems. Himachal Pradesh is the northernmost state of India and shares borders with the union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh to the north, and the states of Punjab to the west, Haryana to the southwest, Uttarakhand to the southeast and a very narrow border with Uttar Pradesh to the south. The state also shares an international border to the east with the Tibet Autonomous Region in China. Himachal Pradesh is also known as Dev Bhoomi, meaning 'Land of Gods' and Veer Bhoomi which means 'Land of the Brave'. The predominantly mountainous region comprising the present-day Himachal Pradesh has been inhabited since pre-historic times, having witnessed multiple waves of human migrations from other areas. Through its history, the region was mostly ruled by local kingdoms, some of which accepted the suzerainty of larger empires. Prior to India's independence from the British, Himachal comprised the hilly regions of the Punjab Province of British India. After independence, many of the hilly territories were organised as the Chief Commissioner's province of Himachal Pradesh, which later became a Union Territory. In 1966, hilly areas of the neighbouring Punjab state were merged into Himachal and it was ultimately granted full statehood in 1971. Himachal Pradesh is spread across valleys with many perennial rivers flowing through them. Agriculture, horticulture, hydropower, and tourism are important constituents of the state's economy. The hilly state is almost universally electrified, with 99.5% of households having electricity as of 2016. The state was declared India's second open-defecation-free state in 2016. According to a survey of CMS-India Corruption Study in 2017, Himachal Pradesh is India's least corrupt state. Himachal Pradesh is divided into 12 districts.

Etymology The name of the state is a reference to its setting: Himachal means "snowy slopes" (Sanskrit: hima, meaning "snow"; acala/achala meaning "slopes", or "land", or "abode"). Himachal Pradesh (हिमाचल प्रदेश; literally "snow-laden province"). Himachal refers to being in the "aanchal" of the Himalayas hence, sheltered by the Himalayas or by the snow. It means "the land in the lap of snowy Himalayas". Pradesh means "state". Himachal was referenced by Diwakar Datt Sharma, a Sanskrit scholar, after independence, when "Jan Gan Man" was revealed publicly by Pt. Nehru from Gurudev Tagore's diary. The word was added in the national anthem of India "Jan Gan Man" by Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore when he was writing and composing it. Later after independence of India, Punjab province was divided and the name was given officially to the mountain state as Himachal Pradesh.

History **Early history** Tribes such as the Koli, Hali, Dagi, Dhaugri, Dasa, Khasa, Kanaura, and Kirata inhabited the region from the prehistoric era. The foothills of the modern state of Himachal Pradesh were inhabited by people from the Indus valley civilisation, which flourished between 2250 and 1750 BCE. The Kols and Mundas are believed to be the original inhabitants to the hills of present-day Himachal Pradesh, followed by the Bhotas and Kiratas. During the Vedic period, several small republics known as Janapada existed which were later conquered by the Gupta Empire. After a brief period of supremacy by King Harshavardhana, the region was divided into several local powers headed by chieftains, including some Rajput principalities. These kingdoms enjoyed a large degree of independence and were invaded by Delhi Sultanate several times. Mahmud Ghaznavi conquered Kangra at the beginning of the 11th century. Timur and Sikander Lodi also marched through the lower hills of the state, captured several forts, and fought many battles. Several hill states acknowledged Mughal suzerainty and paid regular tribute to the Mughals.

The Kingdom of Gorkha conquered many kingdoms and came to power in Nepal in 1768. They consolidated their military power and began to expand their territory. Gradually, the Kingdom of Nepal annexed Sirmour and Shimla. Under the leadership of Amar Singh Thapa, the Nepali army laid siege to Kangra. They managed to defeat Sansar Chand Katoch, the ruler of Kangra, in 1806 with the help of many provincial chiefs. However, the Nepali army could not capture Kangra fort which came under Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1809. After the defeat, they expanded towards the south of the state. However, Raja Ram Singh, Raja of Siba State, captured the fort of Siba from the remnants of Lahore Darbar in Samvat 1846, during the First Anglo-Sikh War. They came into direct conflict with the British along the tarai belt, after which the British expelled them from the provinces of the Satluj. The British gradually emerged as the paramount power in the region. In the revolt of 1857, or first Indian war of independence, arising from several grievances against the British, the people of the hill states were not as politically active as were those in other parts of the country. They and their rulers, except Bushahr, remained more or less inactive. Some, including the rulers of Chamba, Bilaspur, Bhagal and Dhamsi, rendered help to the British government during the revolt. The British territories came under the British Crown after Queen Victoria's proclamation of 1858. The states of Chamba, Mandi and Bilaspur made good progress in many fields during the British rule. During World War I, virtually all rulers of the hill states remained loyal and contributed to the British war effort, both in the form of men and materials. Among these were the states of Kangra, Jaswan, Datarpur, Guler, Rajgarh, Nurpur, Chamba, Suket, Mandi, and Bilaspur.

Partition and post-independence After independence, the Chief Commissioner's Province of Himachal Pradesh was organised on 15 April 1948 as a result of the integration of 30 petty princely states (including feudal princes and zaildars) in the promontories of the western Himalayas. These were known as the Simla Hills States and four Punjab southern hill states under the Himachal Pradesh (Administration) Order, 1948 under Sections 3 and 4 of the Extra-Provincial Jurisdiction Act, 1947 (later renamed as the Foreign Jurisdiction Act, 1947 vide A.O. of 1950). The State of Bilaspur was merged into Himachal Pradesh on 1 July 1954 by the Himachal Pradesh and Bilaspur (New State) Act, 1954. Himachal became a Part 'C' state on 26 January 1950 when the Constitution of India came into effect and the Lieutenant Governor was appointed. The Legislative Assembly was elected in 1952. In July 1954, following the passage of The Himachal Pradesh and Bilaspur (New State) Act, 1954 by an act of Parliament, Bilaspur State was dissolved and incorporated into the State of Himachal Pradesh as Bilaspur district. Himachal Pradesh became a union territory on 1 November 1956. Some areas of the Punjab State, namely, Simla, Kangra, Kullu and Lahul and Spiti Districts, Lohara, Amb and Una Kanungo circles, some areas of Santokhgarh Kanungo circle and some other specified area of Una Tehsil of Hoshiarpur District, as well as Kandaghat and Nalagarh Tehsils of erstwhile PEPSU State, besides some parts of Dhar Kalan Kanungo circle of Pathankot District-were merged with Himachal Pradesh on 1 November 1966 on the enactment by Parliament of the Punjab Reorganisation Act, 1966. On 18 December 1970, the State of Himachal Pradesh Act was passed by Parliament, and the new state came into being on 25 January 1971. Himachal became the 18th state of the Indian Union with Dr. Yashwant Singh Parmar as its first chief minister.

Geography Himachal is in the western Himalayas situated between 3022'N and 3312'N latitude and 7547'E and 7904'E longitude. Covering an area of 55,673 square kilometres (21,495 sq mi), it is a mountainous state. The Zaskar range runs in the northeastern part of the state and the great Himalayan range run through the eastern and northern parts, while the Dhauladhar and the Pir Panjal ranges of the lesser Himalayas, and their valleys, form much of the core regions. The outer Himalayas, or the Shiwalik range, form southern and western Himachal Pradesh. At 6,816 m, Reo Purgil is the highest mountain peak in the state of Himachal Pradesh. The drainage system of Himachal is composed of both rivers and glaciers. Himalayan rivers criss-cross the entire mountain chain. Himachal Pradesh provides water to both the Indus and Ganges basins. The drainage systems of the region are the Chandra Bhaga or the Chenab, the Ravi, the Beas, the Sutlej, and the Yamuna. These

rivers are perennial and are fed by snow and rainfall. They are protected by an extensive cover of natural vegetation. Four of the five Punjab rivers flow through Himachal Pradesh, three of them originating in the state. These rivers run through a maze of valleys separated by the mountain ranges of the state. The Satluj Valley is formed by the Satluj river entering the state near Shipki La, while the Spiti and Baspa Valleys are formed by the river's two major tributaries in the state. The Beas river flows through the Kullu and the Kangra Valleys, with tributary Parvati forming the Parvati Valley. The Chenab river, formed by the confluence of the Chandra and Bhaga, forms much of the northern regions of Lahaul and Pangi, and the Ravi river flows principally through Chamba. The Pabbar and Giri rivers in the southeast are part of the Yamuna basin. Due to extreme variation in elevation, great variation occurs in the climatic conditions of Himachal Pradesh. The climate varies from hot and humid subtropical in the southern tracts to, with more elevation, cold, alpine, and glacial in the northern and eastern mountain ranges. The state's winter capital, Dharamsala receives very heavy rainfall, while areas like Lahaul and Spiti are cold and almost rainless. Broadly, Himachal experiences three seasons: summer, winter, and rainy season. Summer lasts from mid-April until the end of June and most parts become very hot (except in the alpine zone which experiences a mild summer) with the average temperature ranging from 28 to 32 C (82 to 90 F). Winter lasts from late November until mid-March. Snowfall is common in alpine tracts. Pollution is affecting the climate of almost all the states of India. Due to steps taken by governments to prevent pollution, Himachal Pradesh has become the first smoke-free state in India which means cooking in the entire state is free of traditional chulhas.

In a statement on 29 March 2025, Town and Country Planning Minister, Rajesh Dharmani, highlighted the state government's policy of sustainable development, citing the "Green Himachal vision" and ongoing efforts to meet sustainable development goals.

Flora and fauna Himachal Pradesh is one of the states that lies in the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR), one of the richest reservoirs of biological diversity in the world. As of 2002, the IHR is undergoing large scale irrational extraction of wild, medicinal herbs, thus endangering many of its high-value gene stock. To address this, a workshop on 'Endangered Medicinal Plant Species in Himachal Pradesh' was held in 2002 and the conference was attended by forty experts from diverse disciplines. According to 2003 Forest Survey of India report, legally defined forest areas constitute 66.52% of the area of Himachal Pradesh. Vegetation in the state is dictated by elevation and precipitation. The state is endowed with a high diversity of medicinal and aromatic plants. Lahaul-Spiti region of the state, being a cold desert, supports unique plants of medicinal value including *Ferula jaeschkeana*, *Hyoscyamus niger*, *Lancea tibetica*, and *Saussurea bracteata*. Himachal is also said to be the fruit bowl of the country, with widespread orchards. Meadows and pastures are also seen clinging to steep slopes. After the winter season, the hillsides and orchards bloom with wild flowers, white gladiolas, carnations, marigolds, roses, chrysanthemums, tulips and lilies are carefully cultivated. Himachal Pradesh Horticultural Produce Marketing and Processing Corporation Ltd. (HPMC) is a state body that markets fresh and processed fruits. Himachal Pradesh has around 463 birds, and Tragopan melanocephalus is the state bird of Himachal Pradesh 77 mammalian, 44 reptile and 80 fish species. Himachal Pradesh has currently five National Parks. Great Himalayan National Park, which is the oldest and largest National park in the state, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Pin Valley National Park, Inderkilla, Khirganga and Simbalbara are the other national Parks located in the state. The state also has 30 wildlife sanctuaries and 3 conservation reserves. The state bird of Himachal Pradesh is the Western tragopan, locally known as the jujurana. It is one of the rarest living pheasants in the world. The state animal is the snow leopard, which is even rarer to find than the jujurana.

Government The Legislative Assembly of Himachal Pradesh has no pre-constitution history. The State itself is a post-independence creation. It came into being as a centrally administered territory on 15 April 1948 from the

integration of thirty erstwhile princely states. Himachal Pradesh is governed through a parliamentary system of representative democracy, a feature the state shares with other Indian states. Universal suffrage is granted to residents. The legislature consists of elected members and special office bearers such as the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker who are elected by the members. Assembly meetings are presided over by the Speaker or the Deputy Speaker in the Speaker's absence. The judiciary is composed of the Himachal Pradesh High Court and a system of lower courts. Executive authority is vested in the Council of Ministers headed by the Chief Minister, although the titular head of government is the Governor. The governor is the head of state appointed by the President of India. The leader of the party or coalition with a majority in the Legislative Assembly is appointed as the Chief Minister by the governor, and the Council of Ministers are appointed by the governor on the advice of the Chief Minister. The Council of Ministers reports to the Legislative Assembly. The Assembly is unicameral with 68 Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLA). Terms of office run for five years, unless the Assembly is dissolved prior to the completion of the term. Auxiliary authorities known as panchayats, for which local body elections are regularly held, govern local affairs. In the assembly elections held in November 2022, the Indian National Congress secured an absolute majority, winning 40 of the 68 seats while the BJP won only 25 of the 68 seats. Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu was sworn in as Himachal Pradesh's 15th Chief Minister in Shimla on 11 December 2022. Mukesh Agnihotri was sworn in as his deputy the same day.

Administrative divisions The state of Himachal Pradesh is divided into 12 districts which are grouped into three divisions, Shimla, Kangra and Mandi. The districts are further divided into 73 subdivisions, 78 blocks and 172 Tehsils.

Economy Planning in Himachal Pradesh started in 1951 along with the rest of India with the implementation of the first five-year plan. The First Plan allocated ₹52.7 million to Himachal Pradesh. More than 50% of this expenditure was incurred on transport and communication; while the power sector got a share of just 4.6%, though it had steadily increased to 7% by the Third Plan. Expenditure on agriculture and allied activities increased from 14.4% in the First Plan to 32% in the Third Plan, showing a progressive decline afterwards from 24% in the Fourth Plan to less than 10% in the Tenth Plan. Expenditure on energy sector was 24.2% of the total in the Tenth Plan.

The total GDP for 2005-06 was estimated at ₹254 billion as against ₹230 billion in the year 2004-05, showing an increase of 10.5%. The GDP for fiscal 2015-16 was estimated at ₹1.110 trillion, which increased to ₹1.247 trillion in 2016-17, recording growth of 6.8%. The per capita income increased from ₹130,067 in 2015-16 to ₹147,277 in 2016-17. The state government's advance estimates for fiscal 2017-18 stated the total GDP and per capita income as ₹1.359 trillion and ₹158,462, respectively. As of 2018, Himachal is the 22nd-largest state economy in India with ₹1.52 lakh crore (US\$18 billion) in gross domestic product and has the 13th-highest per capita income (₹160,000 (US\$1,900)) among the states and union territories of India. Himachal Pradesh also ranks as the second-best performing state in the country on human development indicators after Kerala. One of the Indian government's key initiatives to tackle unemployment is the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA). The participation of women in the NREGA has been observed to vary across different regions of the nation. As of the year 2009-2010, Himachal Pradesh joined the category of high female participation, recording a 46% share of NREGS (National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme) workdays for women. This was a drastic increase from the 13% that was recorded in 2006-2007.

Agriculture Agriculture accounts for 9.4% of the net state domestic product. It is the main source of income and employment in Himachal. About 90% of the population in Himachal depends directly upon agriculture, which provides direct employment to 62% of total workers of state. The main cereals grown include wheat, maize, rice

and barley with major cropping systems being maize-wheat, rice-wheat and maize-potato-wheat. Pulses, fruits, vegetables and oilseeds are among the other crops grown in the state. Centuries-old traditional Kuhl irrigation system is prevalent in the Kangra valley, though in recent years these Kuhls have come under threat from hydroprojects on small streams in the valley. Land husbandry initiatives such as the Mid-Himalayan Watershed Development Project, which includes the Himachal Pradesh Reforestation Project (HPRP), the world's largest clean development mechanism (CDM) undertaking, have improved agricultural yields and productivity, and raised rural household incomes.

Apple is the principal cash crop of the state grown principally in the districts of Shimla, Kinnaur, Kullu, Mandi, Chamba and some parts of Sirmaur and Lahaul-Spiti with an average annual production of five lakh tonnes and per hectare production of 8 to 10 tonnes. The apple cultivation constitute 49 per cent of the total area under fruit crops and 85% of total fruit production in the state with an estimated economy of ₹3500 crore. Apples from Himachal are exported to other Indian states and even other countries. In 2011-12, the total area under apple cultivation was 104,000 hectares, increased from 90,347 hectares in 2000-01. According to the provisional estimates of Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, the annual apple production in Himachal for fiscal 2015-16 stood at 753,000 tonnes, making it India's second-largest apple-producing state after Jammu and Kashmir. The state is also among the leading producers of other fruits such as apricots, cherries, peaches, pears, plums and strawberries in India.

Kangra tea is grown in the Kangra valley. Tea plantation began in 1849, and production peaked in the late 19th century with the tea becoming popular across the globe. Production dipped sharply after the 1905 Kangra earthquake and continues to decline. The tea received geographical indication status in 2005.

Industry Pharma hub Himachal Pradesh is renowned as Asia's pharmaceutical hub, housing a total of 652 pharmaceutical units. The state hosts a thriving ₹40,000 crore drug manufacturing industry.

Energy Hydropower is one of the major sources of income generation for the state. The state has an abundance of hydropower resources because of the presence of various perennial rivers. Many high-capacity hydropower plants have been constructed which produce surplus electricity that is sold to other states, such as Delhi, Punjab and West Bengal. The income generated from exporting the electricity to other states is being provided as subsidy to the consumers in the state. The rich hydropower resources of Himachal have resulted in the state becoming almost universally electrified with around 94.8% houses receiving electricity as of 2001, as compared to the national average of 55.9%. Himachal's hydro-electric power production is, however, yet to be fully utilised. The identified hydroelectric potential for the state is 27,436 MW in five river basins while the hydroelectric capacity in 2016 was 10,351 MW.

Tourism Tourism in Himachal Pradesh is a major contributor to the state's economy and growth. The Himalayas attracts tourists from all over the world. Hill stations like Shimla, Manali, Dharamshala, Dalhousie, Chamba, Khajjiar, Kullu and Kasauli are popular destinations for both domestic and foreign tourists. The state has 5 Shakti Peeths - Chintpurni, Jwalamukhi Temple, Bajreshwari Mata Temple, Shri Chamunda Devi Mandir and Naina Devi Temple. The state also has many important Hindu pilgrimage sites with prominent temples like Baijnath Temple, Bhimakali Temple, Bijli Mahadev and Jakhoo Temple. Manimahesh Lake situated in the Bharmour region of Chamba district is the venue of an annual Hindu pilgrimage trek held in the month of August which attracts lakhs of devotees. The state is also referred to as "Dev Bhoomi" (literally meaning Abode of Gods) due to its mention as such in ancient Hindu texts and occurrence of a large number of historical temples

in the state. Himachal is also known for its adventure tourism activities like ice skating in Shimla, paragliding in Bir, Himachal Pradesh and Solang Valley, rafting in Kullu, skiing in Manali, boating in Bilaspur, fishing in Tirthan Valley, trekking and horse riding in different parts of the state. Shimla, the state's capital, is home to Asia's only natural ice-skating rink. The state has some of the highest mountain passes in the world - Rohtang Pass, Baralacha La, Kunzum La, Borasu Pass and Hamta Pass. Spiti Valley in Lahaul and Spiti District situated at an altitude of over 3000 metres with its picturesque landscapes is popular destination for adventure seekers. The region also has some of the oldest Buddhist monasteries in the world. Himachal hosted the first Paragliding World Cup in India from 24 to 31 October in 2015. Bir Billing, the venue for the paragliding world cup, is known as the launching site of paragliding. It is 70 km from the tourist town of McLeod Ganj and is located in the heart of Himachal in Kangra district. Bir Billing is the centre for aero sports in Himachal and considered as best for paragliding. While Bir, the paragliding capital of India, is the landing site for paragliding. It is also known for its tourist attractions including Buddhist monasteries, trekking to tribal villages and mountain biking. The village also hosts prominent cultural musical events like Bir Music Festival, aiming to primarily promote the tourism of Bir. There are a variety of festivals celebrated by the locals of Himachal Pradesh who worship gods and goddesses. There are over 2000 villages in Himachal Pradesh which celebrate festivals such as Kullu Dussehra, Chamba's Minjar, Renuka ji Fair, Lohri, Halda, Phagli, Losar and Mandi Shivratri. There are approximately 6000 temples in Himachal Pradesh with a known one being Bijli Mahadev. The temple is seen as a 20-meter structure built in stone which, according to locals, is known to attract lightning. They say that this is a way the Gods show their blessings. The Great Himalayan National Park is found in the Kullu districts of Himachal Pradesh. It has an area of 620 km² and ranging from an altitude of 1500 meters to 4500 meters and was created in 1984. There are various forest types found here such as Deodar, Himalayan Fir, Spruce, Oak and Alpine pastures. In the Great Himalayan National Park, there are a variety of animals found such as Snow leopard, Yak, Himalayan black bear, Western tragopan, Monal and Musk deer. This National Park is a trail to many hikers and trekkers too. Moreover, there are sanctuaries which are tourist spots such as Naina Devi and Gobind Sagar Sanctuary in the Una and Bilaspur districts with an area of 220 km². There are animals such as Indian porcupine and giant flying squirrel found here. The Gobind Sagar Lake has fish species such as Mrigal, Silver carp, Katla, Mahaseer and Rohu are found here. Narkanda located in at an altitude of around 8850 feet is known for its apple orchards. It is located between the river valleys of Giri and Sutlej.

Transport Air Himachal has three domestic airports in Kangra, Kullu and Shimla districts, respectively. The air routes connect the state with New Delhi and Chandigarh.

Kullu-Manali Airport is in Kullu district, around 10 kilometres (6 mi) from district headquarters Kullu. Kangra Airport is in Kangra district, around 15 kilometres (9 mi) from district headquarters at Dharamshala, which is around 10 kilometres (6 mi) from Kangra Shimla Airport is around 22 kilometres (14 mi) west of the Shimla city.

Railways Broad-gauge lines The only broad-gauge railway line in the whole state connects Amb Andaura-Una Himachal railway station to Nangal Dam in Punjab and runs all the way to Daulatpur, Himachal Pradesh. It is an electrified track since 1999. While a tiny portion of line adjacent to Kandrori(KNDI) station on either side on Pathankot-Jalandhar Section, under Ferozepur Division of Northern Railway also crosses into Himachal Pradesh, before venturing out to Punjab again. Future constructions:

Una Himachal-Hamirpur rail project via Dhundla Bhanupali (Punjab)-Bilaspur, Himachal Pradesh Chandigarh-Baddi

Narrow-gauge lines Himachal is known for its narrow-gauge railways. One is the Kalka-Shimla Railway, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and another is the Kangra Valley Railway. The total length of these two tracks is 259 kilometres (161 mi). The Kalka-Shimla Railway passes through many tunnels and bridges, while the Pathankot-Jogindernagar one meanders through a maze of hills and valleys. The total route length of the operational railway network in the state is 296.26 kilometres (184.09 mi).

Roads Roads are the major mode of transport in Himachal Pradesh due to its hilly terrain. The state has road network of 28,208 kilometres (17,528 mi), including eight National Highways (NH) that constitute 1,234 kilometres (767 mi) and 19 State Highways with a total length of 1,625 kilometres (1,010 mi). Hamirpur district has the highest road density in the country. Some roads are closed during winter and monsoon seasons due to snow and landslides. The state-owned Himachal Road Transport Corporation with a fleet of over 3,100, operates bus services connecting important cities and towns with villages within the state and also on various interstate routes. In addition, around 5,000 private buses ply in the state.

Demographics **Population** Himachal Pradesh has a total population of 6,864,602 including 3,481,873 males and 3,382,729 females according to the Census of India 2011. It has only 0.57 per cent of India's total population, recording a growth of 12.81 per cent. The child sex ratio increased from 896 in 2001 to 909 in 2011. The total fertility rate (TFR) per woman in 2015 stood at 1.7, one of the lowest in India. The scheduled castes and scheduled tribes account for 25.19 per cent and 5.71 per cent of the population, respectively. The sex ratio stood at 972 females per 1,000 males, recording a marginal increase from 968 in 2001. The main caste groups in Himachal Pradesh are Brahmins, Rajputs, Kanets, Kulindas, Girths, Gurjars, Raos, Kolis, Hollis, Chamars, Drains, Rehars, Chanals, Lohars, Baris, Julahas, Dhakhis, Turis, and Batwals

In the census, the state is placed 21st on the population chart, followed by Tripura at 22nd place. Kangra District was top-ranked with a population strength of 1,507,223 (21.98%), Mandi District 999,518 (14.58%), Shimla District 813,384 (11.86%), Solan District 576,670 (8.41%), Sirmaur District 530,164 (7.73%), Una District 521,057 (7.60%), Chamba District 518,844 (7.57%), Hamirpur district 454,293 (6.63%), Kullu District 437,474 (6.38%), Bilaspur district 382,056 (5.57%), Kinnaur District 84,298 (1.23%) and Lahaul Spiti 31,528 (0.46%). The life expectancy at birth in Himachal Pradesh increased significantly from 52.6 years in the period from 1970 to 1975 (above the national average of 49.7 years) to 72.0 years for the period 2011-15 (above the national average of 68.3 years). The infant mortality rate stood at 40 in 2010, and the crude birth rate has declined from 37.3 in 1971 to 16.9 in 2010, below the national average of 26.5 in 1998. The crude death rate was 6.9 in 2010. Himachal Pradesh's literacy rate has almost doubled between 1981 and 2011 (see table to right). The state is one of the most literate states of India with a literacy rate of 83.78% as of 2011.

Languages Hindi is the de jure official language of Himachal Pradesh and is spoken by the majority of the population as a lingua franca. Sanskrit is the additional official language of the state. Although mostly encountered in academic and symbolic contexts, the government of Himachal Pradesh is encouraging its wider study and use. Most of the population, however, speaks natively one or another of the Western Pahari languages (locally also known as Himachali or just Pahari), a subgroup of the Indo-Aryan languages that includes Bhattiyali, Bilaspuri, Chambeali, Churah, Gaddi, Hinduri, Kangri, Kullu, Mahasu Pahari, Mandeali, Pahari Kinnauri, Pangwali, and Sirmauri. Additional Indo-Aryan languages spoken include Punjabi (native to 4.4% of the population), Nepali (1.3%), Chinali, Lahul Lohar, and others. In parts of the state there are speakers of Tibeto-Burman languages like Kinnauri (1.2%), Tibetan (0.3%), Lahuli-Spiti languages (0.16%), Pattani (0.12%), Bhoti Kinnauri, Chitkuli Kinnauri, Bunan (or Gahri), Jangshung, Kanashi, Shumcho, Spiti Bhoti, Sunam, Tinani, and Tukpa.

Religion Hinduism is the major religion in Himachal Pradesh. More than 95% of the total population adheres to the Hindu faith and majorly follows Shaivism and Shaktism traditions, the distribution of which is evenly spread throughout the state. Himachal Pradesh has the highest proportion of Hindu population among all the states and union territories in India. Other religions that form a smaller percentage are Islam, Sikhism and Buddhism. Muslims are mainly concentrated in Sirmour, Chamba, Una and Solan districts where they form 2.5-6.3% of the population. Sikhs mostly live in towns and cities and constitute 1.16% of the state population. The Buddhists, who constitute 1.15%, are mainly natives and tribals from Lahaul and Spiti, where they form a majority of 62%, and Kinnaur, where they form 21.5%.

Culture Himachal Pradesh was one of the few states that had remained largely untouched by external customs, largely due to its difficult terrain. With remarkable economic and social advancements, the state has changed rapidly. Himachal Pradesh is a multilingual state like other Indian states. Western Pahari languages also known as Himachali languages are widely spoken in the state. Some of the most commonly spoken Pahadi lects are Kangri, Mandyali, Kullvi, Chambeali, Bharmauri and Kinnauri.

Himachal is well known for its handicrafts. The carpets, leather works, Kullu shawls, Kangra paintings, Chamba Rumals, stoles, embroidered grass footwear (Pullan chappal), silver jewellery, metal ware, knitted woolen socks, Pattoo, basketry of cane and bamboo (Wicker and Rattan) and woodwork are among the notable ones. Of late, the demand for these handicrafts has increased within and outside the country. Himachali caps of various colour bands are also well-known local art work, and are often treated as a symbol of the Himachali identity. The colour of the Himachali caps has been an indicator of political loyalties in the hill state for a long period of time with Congress party leaders like Virbhadra Singh donning caps with green band and the rival BJP leader Prem Kumar Dhumal wearing a cap with maroon band. The former has served six terms as the Chief Minister of the state while the latter is a two-time Chief Minister. Local music and dance also reflect the cultural identity of the state. Through their dance and music, the Himachali people entreat their gods during local festivals and other special occasions.

There are national and regional fairs and festivals, including temple fairs in nearly every region. The Kullu Dussehra, Minjar mela and Mahashivratri Mandi festival is nationally known. The day-to-day cuisine of Himachalis is similar to the rest of northern India with Punjabi and Tibetan influences. Lentils (Dhal), rice (chawal or bhut), vegetables (sabzi) and chapati (wheat flatbread) form the staple food of the local population. Non-vegetarian food is more widely accepted in Himachal Pradesh than elsewhere in India, partly due to the scarcity of fresh vegetables on the hilly terrain of the state. Himachali specialities include Siddu, Babru, Khatta, Mhanee, Channa Madra, Patrode, Mah ki dal, Chamba-style fried fish, Kullu trout, Chha Gosht, Pahadi Chicken, Sepu Badi, Auriya Kaddu, Aloo palda, Pateer, Makki di roti, Sarson ka saag, Chamba Chukh (Chouck), Bhagjery, Chutney of Til, etc.

Notable people Education At the time of Independence, Himachal Pradesh had a literacy rate of 8% - one of the lowest in the country. By 2011, the literacy rate surged to 82.8%, making Himachal one of the most-literate states in the country. There are over 10,000 primary schools, 1,000 secondary schools and more than 1,300 high schools in the state. In meeting the constitutional obligation to make primary education compulsory, Himachal became the first state in India to make elementary education accessible to every child. Himachal Pradesh is an exception to the nationwide gender bias in education levels. The state has a female literacy rate of around 76%. In addition, school enrolment and participation rates for girls are almost universal at the primary level. While higher levels of education do reflect a gender-based disparity, Himachal is still significantly ahead

of other states at bridging the gap. The Hamirpur District in particular stands out for high literacy rates across all metrics of measurement. The state government has played an instrumental role in the rise of literacy in the state by spending a significant proportion of the state's GDP on education. During the first six five-year plans, most of the development expenditure in the education sector was utilised in quantitative expansion, but after the seventh five-year-plan the state government switched emphasis on qualitative improvement and modernisation of education. To raise the number of the teaching staff at primary schools they appointed over 1000 teacher aids through the Vidya Upasak Yojna in 2001. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is another HP government initiative that not only aims for universal elementary education but also encourages communities to engage in the management of schools. The Rashtriya Madhayamic Shiksha Abhiyan launched in 2009, is a similar scheme but focuses on improving access to quality secondary education.

The standard of education in the state has reached a considerably high level as compared to other states in India with several reputed educational institutes for higher studies. The Baddi University of Emerging Sciences and Technologies, Indian Institute of Technology Mandi, Indian Institute of Management Sirmour, Himachal Pradesh University in Shimla, Central University of Himachal Pradesh, Dharamsala, National Institute of Technology, Hamirpur, Indian Institute of Information Technology Una, Alakh Prakash Goyal University, Maharaja Agrasen University, Himachal Pradesh National Law University are some of the notable universities in the state. Indira Gandhi Medical College and Hospital in Shimla, Dr. Rajendra Prasad Government Medical College in Kangra, Rajiv Gandhi Government Post Graduate Ayurvedic College in Paprola and Homoeopathic Medical College & Hospital in Kumarhatti are the prominent medical institutes in the state. Besides these, there is a Government Dental College in Shimla which is the state's first recognised dental institute. The state government has also decided to start three major nursing colleges to develop the healthcare system of the state. CSK Himachal Pradesh Krishi Vishwavidyalya Palampur is one of the most renowned hill agriculture institutes in the world. Dr. Yashwant Singh Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry has earned a unique distinction in India for imparting teaching, research and extension education in horticulture, forestry and allied disciplines. Further, state-run Jawaharlal Nehru Government Engineering College was inaugurated in 2006 at Sundernagar. Himachal Pradesh also hosts a campus of the fashion college, National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) in Kangra.

State profile Source: Department of Information and Public Relations.

See also Outline of Himachal Pradesh

Notes References Further reading External links

Government The official site of Himachal Pradesh The official tourism site of Himachal Pradesh, India General information Himachal Pradesh at the Encyclopdia Britannica Geographic data related to Himachal Pradesh at OpenStreetMap

Jharkhand

Jharkhand (Hindi: Jharkha, pronounced [dʱaːrkaː]; lit. 'the land of forests') is a state in eastern India. The state shares its border with the states of West Bengal to the east, Chhattisgarh to the west, Uttar Pradesh to the northwest, Bihar to the north and Odisha to the south. It is the 15th largest state by area, and the 14th largest by population. Hindi is the official language of the state. The city of Ranchi is its capital and Dumka its sub-capital. The state is known for its waterfalls, hills and holy places; Baidyanath Dham, Parasnath, Dewri and Rajrappa are major religious sites. Jharkhand is primarily rural, with about 24% of its population living in cities as of 2011. Jharkhand suffers from what is sometimes termed a resource curse: it accounts for more than 40% of India's mineral production but 39.1% of its population is below the poverty line and 19.6% of children under five years of age are malnourished.

Etymology The word "Jhar" means 'forest' and "Khand" means 'land' in various Indo-Aryan languages. Thus "Jharkhand" means forest land. In the ancient period, in the Mahabharata, the region was referred as Kark Khand due to location near Kark Rekha, that is, Tropic of Cancer. It was also known as Ark Khand. During the Medieval period, the region was known as Jharkhand. According to Bhavishya Purana (1200 CE), Jharkhand was one of the seven Pundra desa. The name is first found on a 13th-century copper plate in Kendrapada, Odisha region from the reign of Narasimha Deva II of Eastern Ganga dynasty. Forest land from Baidhnath dham to Puri was known as Jharkhand. In Akbarnama, from Panchet in the east to Ratanpur to west, Rohtasgarh to the north and the frontier of Odisha to the south was known as Jharkhand.

History Ancient period The region has been inhabited since the Mesolithic-Chalcolithic period, as shown by several ancient cave paintings. Stone tools have been discovered from Chota Nagpur Plateau region which are from the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods. There are ancient cave paintings in Isko, Hazaribagh district which are from Meso-chalcolithic period (9000-5000 BCE). During 2nd millennium BCE the use of Copper tools spread in Chota Nagpur Plateau and these find complexes are known as the Copper Hoard Culture. In the Kabra-Kala mound at the confluence of the Son and North Koel rivers in Palamu district various antiquities and art objects have been found which are from the Neolithic to the medieval period and pot-sherds of Redware, black and red ware, black ware, black slipped ware and NBP ware are from Chalcolithic to the late medieval period. Several iron slags, microliths, and potsherds have been discovered from Singhbhum district that are from 1400 BCE according to carbon dating age. The region was ruled by many empires and dynasties including Nanda, Maurya and Gupta during ancient period. In the Mahabharata, the region was referred as Kark Khand due to its location near Tropic of Cancer. During the age of Mahajanpadas around 500 BCE, Jharkhand state was a part of Magadha and Anga. In the Mauryan period, this region was ruled by a number of states, which were collectively known as the Atavika (forest) states. These states were subdued and were forced to accept the hegemony of the Maurya empire during Ashoka's reign (c. 232 BCE). In the ancient site of Saridkel, burnt brick houses, red ware pottery, copper tools, coins and iron tools have been found which belong to the early centuries CE. Brahmi inscriptions have been found in Khunti district which are from the 3rd century BCE. Samudragupta, while marching through the present-day Chotanagpur region (North and South), directed the first attack against the kingdom of Dakshina Kosala in the Mahanadi valley.

Medieval period In the 7th century, the Chinese traveller Xuanzang passed through the region. He described the kingdom as Karnasuvarna, with Shashanka as its ruler. To the north of Karn-Suberna was Magadha, Champa was in the east, Mahendra in the west, and Orissa in the south. During the medieval period, the region

was governed by Nagvanshi, Pala, Khayaravala, Ramgarh Raj and Chero rulers. A Buddhist monastery has been found in Hazaribagh which was built during the Pala period in the 10th century. Bhim Karn was a Nagvanshi king during medieval period. He defeated the Raksel dynasty of Surguja when they invaded the region with cavalry.

Modern period Mughal influence reached Palamu during the reign of Emperor Akbar when it was conquered by Rajput Raja Mansingh in 1574. Several invasions took place during Mughal rule. During the reign of the Nagvanshi King Madhu Singh, Akbar's general invaded Khukhra. Also there was an invasion during the reign of Durjan Shah.

King Ram Shah ruled Navratangarh from 1640 to 1663. He built the Kapilnath Temple in 1643. He was succeeded by his son Raghunath Shah. Thakur Ani Nath Shahdeo built the Jagannath temple of Ranchi in 1691. The King Medini Ray ruled from 1658 to 1674 in Palamu. His rule extended to areas in South Gaya and Hazaribagh. He attacked Navratangarh and defeated the Nagvanshi Maharaja of Chhotanagpur. Chero rule in the Palamu region lasted until the 19th century until internal conflict between various factions weakened the Cheros and they were defeated by the East India Company. Later Palamu estates were sold by the British.

During the 18th century, regions under the Kings of the Chero dynasty, Nagvanshi dynasty, Ramgarh and Kharagdiha became parts of territories of East India Company. Ramgarh Raj along with estates of other chiefs in the regions were permanently settled as Zamindari estates. The Kharagdiha Rajas were settled as Rajas of Raj Dhanwar in 1809, and the Kharagdiha gadis were separately settled as zamindari estates. Some of the notable Kharagdiha Zamindari estates were Koderma, Gadi Palganj and Ledo Gadi. The princely states in the Chota Nagpur Plateau came within the sphere of influence of the Maratha Empire, but they became tributary states of British East India Company as a result of the Anglo-Maratha Wars and became known as Chota Nagpur Tributary States. Subjugation, colonisation and imposition of taxes by the British East India Company resulted in spontaneous resistance from the local people. Chuar Rebellion, the first revolt against the British East India Company led by Jagannath Singh Patar in 1767 with the Bhumij tribals. The Bhumijes again revolted in 1769-71, led by their Sardar Ghatwals in Dhalbhum. In 1769, Raghunath Mahato also revolted against the British East India Company (EIC). In 1771, the revolt against the landlords and the British government was led by Tilka Majhi, a Paharia leader in Rajmahal Hills. Soon after in 1779, the Bhumij tribes again rose in arms against the British rule in Manbhum, called the Chuar Rebellion. In 1807, the Oraons in Barway murdered their landlord from Srinagar. The Munda tribe rose in revolt in 1811 and 1813. Bakhtar Say and Mundal Singh, two landowners, fought against the British East India Company in 1812. The Hos in Singhbhum revolted in 1820 and a Kol revolt occurred in 1832. Also in 1832 the Bhumijes revolted again against the British, this time under the leadership of Ganga Narayan Singh, known as the Bhumij Rebellion. During the 19th century, large numbers of santals from Manbhum, Hazaribagh, Midnapore were settled by British in Damin-i-koh to cultivate the land and generate revenue. But the Santal revolted against tax imposition. The Santhal rebellion broke out in 1855 under the leadership of two brothers Sidhu and Kanhu. Later the British renamed it as Santal Pargana.

Thakur Vishwanath Shahdeo and Pandey Ganpat Rai rebelled against the British East India Company in the 1857 rebellion. In the Battle of Chatra, conflict took place between the rebels and the East India company. Tikait Umrao Singh, Sheikh Bhikhari, Nadir Ali and Jai Mangal Singh played pivotal role in the Indian Rebellion of 1857. The brothers Nilambar and Pitambar were chiefs of Bhogta clan of the Kharwar tribe who held ancestral jagirs with many Chero Jagirdars and led revolt against the British East India company. After the Indian Rebellion of 1857, the rule of the British East India Company was transferred to the Crown in the person of Queen Victoria, who, in 1876, was proclaimed Empress of India. The Cheros and Kharwars again rebelled

against the British in 1882 but the attack was repulsed. Then Birsa Munda revolt, broke out in 1895 and lasted until 1900. The revolt though mainly concentrated in the Munda belt of Khunti, Tamar, Sarwada and Bandgaon. In October 1905, the exercise of British influence over the predominantly Hindi-speaking states of Chang Bhakar, Jashpur, Koriya, Surguja, and Udaipur was transferred from the Bengal government to that of the Central Provinces, while the two Oriya-speaking states of Gangpur and Bonai were attached to the Orissa Tributary States, leaving only Kharsawan and Saraikela answerable to the Bengal governor. In 1936, all nine states were transferred to the Eastern States Agency, the officials of which came under the direct authority of the Governor-General of India, rather than under that of any provinces. In March 1940, the INC 53rd Session occurred under the presidency of Maulana Azad at Jhanda Chowk, Ramgarh, which is now Ramgarh Cantonment. Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Sarojini Naidu, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Acharya J.B. Kripalani, Industrialist Jamnalal Bajaj and other great leaders of the Indian freedom movement attended the Ramgarh Session. Mahatma Gandhi also opened the Khadi and Village Industries Exhibition at Ramgarh. At that time, under the leadership of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose a conference against Samjhauta was also completed. In Ramgarh, Subhas Chandra Bose was seen as president of the All India Forward Block and M. N. Roy was seen as leader of the Radical democratic party.

Post Independence After Indian independence in 1947, the rulers of many states chose to accede to the Dominion of India. Changbhakar, Jashpur, Koriya, Surguja and Udaipur after that became part of the state of Madhya Pradesh, but Gangpur and Bonai became part of the state of Orissa and Kharsawan and Saraikela became part of the state of Bihar. In 1928, a separate state was demanded by Unnati Samaj, the political wing of the Christian Tribals Association, which submitted a memorandum to the Simon Commission to constitute a tribal state in eastern India. Prominent leaders like Jaipal Singh Munda and Ram Narayan Singh also demanded a separate state. In 1955, the Jharkhand Party, led by Jaipal Singh Munda, submitted a memorandum to the States Reorganization Commission for a separate Jharkhand state comprising the tribal area of South Bihar, but it was rejected because there were many languages, no link language in the region, tribals were in the minority, Hindustani was the majority language, and it risked adverse effect on the economy of Bihar. Later the Sadan people, the native various caste/non-tribal groups, also joined the movement for a separate state. In 1972, Binod Bihari Mahato, Shibu Soren and A. K. Roy founded Jharkhand Mukti Morcha. Nirmal Mahto founded the All Jharkhand Students Union. They led the movement for a separate state of Jharkhand. The Jharkhand coordination committee (JCC), consisting of Ram Dayal Munda, B. P. Keshri, Binod Bihari Mahato, Santosh Rana and Suraj Singh Besra started a new initiative and tried to coordinate between different parties. Keshri sent a memorandum to form Jharkhand state in 1988. The Jharkhand co-ordination committee was then led by Congress General Secretary Ram Ratan Ram, who urged Rajiv Gandhi to pay attention to the issue at hand. In July 1988, the Bharatiya Janata party led by Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Lal Krishna Advani, and Murli Manohar Joshi decided to demand a separate state, Vanachal, comprising the forest region of South Bihar in Jamshedpur. Inder Singh Namdhari, Samresh Singh, and Rudra Pratap Sarangi were the leaders of the Vanachal movement. They organised several rallies to form a separate state. The central government formed a committee on the Jharkhand matter in 1989. It stressed the need for greater allocation of development funds for the area. There was a provision for limited internal autonomy in the hill area of Assam. Other tribal areas were covered by the fifth schedule of the constitution. Chotanagpur and Santal Pargana development boards were constituted under the chairmanship of the then chief minister of Bihar under the provision of the fifth schedule in 1972. This failed to achieve the desired result. Jharkhand Mukti Morcha wanted more representation and the All Jharkhand Students Union was against it. Due to differences these parties broke away from each other. The All Jharkhand Students Union introduced elements of violence in the movement and called for a boycott of election while Jharkhand Mukti Morcha opposed this. The Jharkhand Area Autonomous Council bill passed in Bihar's legislative assembly in December 1994. The Jharkhand Area Autonomous Council were given responsibility for forty areas including agriculture, rural health, public work,

public health and minerals. The council has power to recommend legislation to the Assembly through the state government and to frame bylaws and regulations. In 1998, when the separate state movement was falling apart, Justice Lal Pingley Nath Shahdeo was leading the movement. In 1998, the Union government decided to send the bill concerning the formation of the state of Jharkhand to the Bihar Legislative Assembly to which Lalu Prasad Yadav had said that the state would be divided over his dead body. A total of 16 political parties including the Bharatiya Janata Party, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, the All Jharkhand Students Union, and the Congress came in one platform and formed the 'All Party Separate State Formation Committee' to start the movement. Shahdeo was elected as the convener of the committee. Voting on the Jharkhand Act was to be done on 21 September 1998 in the Bihar legislature. On that day the committee, under the leadership of Shahdeo called for Jharkhand Bandh and organised a protest march. Thousands of supporters of a separate state took to the streets led by Shahdeo. He was arrested and detained in a police station for hours along with many supporters. In 1999 the Bharatiya Janata party promised to form a separate Vanachal state if they won the state election with a majority of votes. After the last Assembly election in the state resulted in a hung assembly, RJD's dependence on the Congress extended support on the precondition that RJD would not pose a hurdle to the passage of the Bihar reorganisation Bill. Finally, with the support from both RJD and Congress, the ruling coalition at the Centre led by the Bharatiya Janata Party which had made statehood its main poll plank in the region in successive polls earlier, cleared the Bihar reorganisation Bill in the monsoon session of the Parliament on 2 and 11 August in Loksabha and Rajyasabha. This paved the way for the creation of a separate Vanachal state comprising the Chota Nagpur Division and Santhal Pargana Division of South Bihar. NDA formed the government with Babulal Marandi as chief minister. Later the name of the state was changed from Vanachal to Jharkhand. Babulal Marandi took the oath of chief minister on 15 November 2000 on the anniversary of the birth of tribal leader Birsa Munda.

Jharkhand statehood The dynamics of resources and the politics of development still influence the socio-economic structures in Jharkhand, which was carved out of the relatively underdeveloped southern part of Bihar. According to the 1991 census, the state has a population of over 20 million out of which 28% is tribal while 12% of the people belong to scheduled castes. Jharkhand has 24 districts, 260 blocks, and 32,620 villages out of which only 45% have access to electricity while only 8,484 are connected by roads. Jharkhand is the leading producer of mineral wealth in the country after Chhattisgarh state, endowed as it is with a vast variety of minerals like iron ore, coal, copper ore, mica, bauxite, graphite, limestone, and uranium. Jharkhand is also known for its vast forest resources.

Naxal insurgency Jharkhand has been at the centre of the Naxalite-Maoist insurgency. Since the uprising of the Naxalites in 1967, 6,000 people have been killed in fighting between the Naxalites and counter-insurgency operations by the police, and its paramilitary groups such as the Salwa Judum. Despite having a presence in almost 7.80% of India's geographical area (home to 5.50% of India's population), the state of Jharkhand is part of the "Red Corridor" comprising 92,000 square kilometres, where the highest concentration of the groups estimated 20,000 combatants fight. Part of this is due to the fact that the state harbours an abundance of natural resources, while its people live in abject poverty and destitution. The impoverished state provides ample recruits for communist insurgents, who argue that they are fighting on behalf of the landless poor and tribals that see few benefits from the resource extractions. As the federal government holds a monopoly on sub-surface resources in the state, the tribal population is prevented from staking any claim on the resources extracted from their land. In response, the insurgents have recently begun a campaign of targeting infrastructure related to the extraction of resources vital for Indian energy needs, such as coal. On 5 March 2007, Sunil Mahato, a member of the national parliament, was shot dead by Naxalite rebels near Kishanpur while watching a football match on the Hindu festival of Holi. His widow, Suman Mahato, the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha candidate, won the Jamshedpur Lok Sabha by-election in September 2007 and served in parliament

until 2009.

Geography Jharkhand is located in the eastern part of India and is enclosed by West Bengal to the eastern side, Chhattisgarh and Uttar Pradesh to the western side, Bihar to the northern part and Odisha to the southern part. Jharkhand envelops a geographical area of 79,716 square kilometres (30,779 sq mi). Much of Jharkhand lies on the Chota Nagpur Plateau. Many rivers pass through the Chota Nagpur plateau. They are: Damodar, North Koel, Barakar, South Koel, Sankh and Subarnarekha rivers. The higher watersheds of these rivers stretch out within the Jharkhand state. Much of the Jharkhand state is still enclosed by forest. Forests sustain the population of elephants and tigers.

Climate Climate of Jharkhand varies from Humid subtropical in the north to tropical wet and dry in the south-east. The main seasons are summer, rainy, autumn, winter and spring. The summer lasts from mid-April to mid-June. May, the hottest month, characterised by daily high temperatures around 37 C (99 F) and low temperatures around 25 C (77 F). The southwest monsoon, from mid-June to October, brings nearly all the state's annual rainfall, which ranges from about 1,000 mm (40 in) in the west-central part of the state to more than 1,500 mm (60 in) in the southwest. Nearly half of the annual precipitation falls in July and August. The winter season lasts from November to February. The temperatures in Ranchi in December usually vary from 10-24 C (50-75 F). Spring season lasts from mid-February to mid-April.

Hills and mountain ranges Parasnath: Parasnath Hill is also called as Sri Sammed Sikharji by Jains and Marang Buru by Santal tribes. The Parasnath Hill is situated in Giridih district of Jharkhand. It is a chief Jain pilgrimage site and the holy place for Jains. Additionally, for Santal tribes, their supreme deity Marang Buru is prayed and Jug Jaher is the holy enshrine in its valley where Jaher Ayo being worshiped. It is believed in the Jain culture that 20 of the 24 Tirthankaras attained Moksha from this place. The height of the hill is 1,365 meters. Netarhat: Netarhat is a town in Latehar district. Referred to as the "Queen of Chotanagpur", it is a hill station. Netarhat Residential School is located here. Netarhat Dam is also located in this area. Rajmahal Hills: These hills are located in Sahibganj and Godda districts of Eastern part of Jharkhand. The Rajmahal hills belong to the Jurassic era. These hills like others also have many waterfalls, lakes and greenery. Trikut: Trikut Hill is located ten kilometres away from Deoghar and lies on the way to Dumka in Jharkhand. Trikut hill is also called Trikutchal because there are 3 major peaks on the hill. The height of Trikut hill is 2470 feet. Tagore Hill: The Tagore Hill is also recognised as the Morabadi Hill. The Tagore hill is located in Morabadi, Ranchi. The brother of Rabindranath Tagore, Jyotirindranath Tagore had made a tour at Ranchi in the year 1908.

Main Rivers Ganga River: The holy river Ganga passes through the north-eastern district of Sahebganj. Cities on the banks of Ganga river in Jharkhand: Sahebganj, Rajmahal Son River: Origin of Son River: Amarkantak, Cities on the Shore of Son River: Sidhi Subarnarekha River: Origin of Subarnarekha River: (Nagdi Ranchi) Chota Nagpur Plateau, Cities on the Shore of Subarnarekha River: Ranchi, Chandil, Jamshedpur, Ghatshila, Gopiballavpur Kharkai River: Origin of Kharkai River: Mayurbhanj District, Odisha; Cities on the Shore of Kharkai River: Rairangpur, Adityapur, and enters the Subarnarekha river in north-western Jamshedpur. Damodar River: Origin of Damodar River: Chota Nagpur Plateau (Tori latehar), Cities on the Shore of Damodar River: latehar, Iohardaga, Ramgarh, Gridih, Dhanbad, Bokaro, Asansol, Raniganj, Durgapur, Bardhaman North Koel River: Origin of North Koel River: Chota Nagpur plateau, Cities on Shore of North Koel River: Daltonganj South Koel River: Origin of South Koyal River: Chota Nagpur Plateau (Nagdi Ranchi), Cities on the Shore of South Koyal River: Manoharpur, Rourkela Lilajan River: Also known as Falgu river. Origin of Lilajan River: Northern Chota Nagpur Plateau, City on the Shore: Gaya Ajay River: Origin of Ajay River: Munger, Cities on the Shore of Ajay River: Purulia, Chittaranjan, Ilambazar, Jaydev Kenduli Mayurakshi River: Origin of Mayurakshi

River: Trikut hill, City on the Shore of Mayurakshi River: Suri Barakar River: Origin: Padma in Hazaribagh, Barakar Nadi flows through the districts of Koderma, Giridih, Hazaribagh, etc. For the list of dams built across these rivers refer to

Flora and Fauna Jharkhand has a rich variety of flora and fauna. The wildlife sanctuaries, national parks and zoological gardens in the state present a panorama of this variety. There are several wildlife sanctuaries and national park in the state, including Hazaribag Wildlife Sanctuary, Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary, Koderma Wildlife Sanctuary, Lawalong Wildlife Sanctuary, Palkot Wildlife Sanctuary, Mahuadanr Wolf Sanctuary, Palamu Tiger Reserve and Betla National Park. Palamu Tiger Reserve reserve is abode to hundreds of species of flora and fauna, as indicated within brackets: mammals (39), snakes (8), lizards (4), fish (6), insects (21), birds (170), seed bearing plants and trees (97), shrubs and herbs (46), climbers, parasites and semi-parasites (25), and grasses and bamboos (17).

Demographics According to the 2011 Indian Census, Jharkhand has a population of 32.96 million, consisting of 16.93 million males and 16.03 million females. The sex ratio is 947 females to 1,000 males. In 2017 The literacy rate of the state was 73.40% with Ranchi district being most educated at 83.13% compared to rural Pakur district being least at 50.17%. In social demographics, Jharkhand's Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes populations are 3,985,644 (12.08%) and 8,646,189 (26.21%), respectively. Nationally, they rank 14th and 6th, comprising 1.98% and 8.29% of the total population within these social groups. They are predominantly concentrated in south-western district Simdega (78.23%), Khunti (77.77%), Gumla (72.11%), Paschim Singhbhum (71.1%), Latehar (66.85%), and in Lohardaga district (60.21%).

Languages Jharkhand is linguistically diverse, with speakers of Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, and Austroasiatic languages. Hindi is the official language and is spoken as the link language by the people of the state, although different regional languages exist. Some of which, including Nagpuri, Khortha, Kurmali, Magahi and Bhojpuri are categorised as 'Hindi languages' in the Indian census 2011. Jharkhand has accorded additional official language status to Angika, Bengali, Bhojpuri, Bhumij, Ho, Kharia, Kurukh, Khortha, Kurmali, Magahi, Maithili, Mundari, Nagpuri, Odia, Santali and Urdu.

Religion As per the 2011 Census of India, Hinduism is the largest religion in the state, with 67.8% of the population, followed by Islam (14.5%), Christianity (4.3%), Sikhism (0.2%), Jainism (0.05%), and Buddhism (0.03%). Ethnic religions are also practised by a substantial proportion of the population, the largest being Sarnaism (12.5% or 4,131,282 persons), followed by Addi Bassi (0.1% or 42,422) and Bidin (0.1% or 29,187). Other smaller ethnic faiths include Adi (9,135), Gond/Gondi (2,419), Birsa (2,392), Tana Bhagat (1,107), Santal (1,034), Ho (830), Oraon (797), Sarnam (792), Munda (754), Paharia (537), Kharwar (429), Nature Religion (315), Saranath (304), Parsi/Zoroastrian (188), Krupa (133), and Dupub (122). Hindus form the majority in 19 out of the 24 districts of the Jharkhand. Christianity forms majority in Simdega district (51.04%). Sarna forms majority in Lohardaga (51.01%), West Singhbhum (62.29%) and plurality in Gumla (44.62%) and Khunti (45.37%). Muslims have the highest presence in Pakur district and Sahebganj district of Jharkhand forming 35% and 34% of the population, respectively.

Government and administration The constitutional head of the government of Jharkhand is the governor, who is appointed by the president of India. The real executive power rests with the chief minister and the cabinet. The political party or the coalition of political parties having a majority in the Legislative Assembly forms the government. The head of the bureaucracy of the state is the chief secretary. Under this position, is a hierarchy

of officials drawn from the Indian Administrative Service, Indian Police Service, Indian Forest Service and different wings of the state civil services. The judiciary is headed by the chief justice. Jharkhand has a High Court which has been functioning since 2000. All the branches of the government are located in the state capital, Ranchi.

Administrative districts The state was formed with 18 districts that were formerly part of south Bihar. Some of these districts were reorganised to form 6 new districts, namely, Latehar, Saraikela Kharsawan, Jamtara, Pakur, Khunti and Ramgarh. At present, the state has 5 Divisions and 24 Districts. One interesting thing about Jharkhand is that all its districts, except Lohardaga and Khunti, share a border with a neighbouring state. Each district is administered by a Deputy Commissioner (who also functions as District Collector/District Magistrate), an IAS officer appointed by the government. For land revenue administration, each district is divided into subdivisions, headed by a Sub Divisional Officer (SDO), and each subdivision again divided into circles/anchals, headed by Circle Officers (CO). For development administration, each district is divided into blocks (also known as C.D Blocks), headed by Block Development Officers (BDO). A block consists several rural subdivisions (panchayats).

Divisions and districts Major cities Largest Cities in Jharkhand(2011 Census of India estimate)

Economy The gross domestic product of Jharkhand is estimated at ₹5.56 lakh crore (US\$66 billion) in 2025-26. The per capita GDP of Jharkhand in 2024-25 was ₹115,960 (US\$1,400).

Jharkhand has several towns and innumerable villages with civic amenities. Urbanization ratio is 24.1%. Jharkhand also has immense mineral resources: minerals ranging from (ranking in the country within bracket) from iron ore (4th), coal (3rd), copper ore (1st), mica (1st), bauxite (3rd), manganese, limestone, china clay, fire clay, graphite (8th), kainite (1st), chromite (2nd), asbestos (1st), thorium (3rd), sillimanite, uranium (Jaduguda mines, Narwa Pahar) (1st) and even gold (Rakha Mines) (6th) and silver and several other minerals. Large deposits of coal and iron ore support concentration of industry, in centres like Jamshedpur, Dhanbad, Bokaro and Ranchi. Tata Steel, a NSE NIFTY 500 conglomerate has its corporate office and main plant in Tatanagar, Jharkhand. It reported a gross income of ₹204,910 million for 2005. NTPC will start coal production from its captive mine in state in 2011-12, for which the company will be investing about Rs 18 billion. In February 2006, the government of Jharkhand established the Jharkhand Silk Textile and Handicraft Development Corporation (Jharcraft), which promotes local sericulture and weaving and the wider marketing of these products. Agriculture is another major economic sector. Farmers in Jharkhand produce several crops such as rice, wheat, maize, pulses, potatoes, and vegetables such as tomato, carrots, cabbage, brinjal, pumpkin, and papaya. Other important industries include the cottage industry and IT.

Culture Cuisine Staple foods of Jharkhand are rice, dal, roti, vegetables, and tubers. Spices are sparingly used in cuisine. Famous dishes include Chhilka Roti, Malpua, Pitha, Dhooska, Arsa roti, Dudhauri, and Panipuri (Gupchup). Rugra and Putoo is a type of edible mushroom that is grown extensively in Jharkhand and harvested during the rainy months. It has a hardened, white, edible shell and a softer dark coloured centre. Bamboo shoot are a versatile ingredient used in many culinary traditions, particularly in Jharkhand cuisine. They can be boiled, steamed, stir-fried, or pickled, making them a popular addition to dishes such as soups, curries, and salads. Bamboo shoots are known for their ability to absorb the flavours of the ingredients they are cooked with, enhancing the overall taste of the dishes. The leaves of Munga (*Moringa oleifera*) and Koinar (*Bauhinia variegata*) trees are used as a leafy vegetable or Saag. Local alcoholic drinks include rice beer,

originally known as Handi or Handia, named after the vessel, handi (earthen pot), used to make it. Handia is culturally associated with natives, i.e., Sadans and Tribals; this drink is consumed by both men and women on social occasions like marriage and festivals. Another common liquor is called Mahua daru, made from flowers of the Mahua tree (*Madhuca longifolia*).

Folk music and dance There are several folk dances in Jharkhand such as: Jhumair, Mardani Jhumar, Janani Jhumar, Domkach, Vinsariya, Jhumta, Fagua, Angnai, Paiki, Chhau, Firkal, Mundari, and Santali dance.

Festivals Major festivals of Jharkhand are Sarhul, Baha Parab, Karam Parab, Mage Parab, Sohrai, Bandna, Tusu festival, Makar Sankranti, Nawakhani, Durga Puja, Jitiya, Manasa Puja, Rath Yatra, Saraswati Puja, Diwali, Holi, Phagua and the Sendra festival.

Paintings Sohrai and Khovar painting is a mural art form practised by women. Sohrai painting is traditionally done at the Sohrai harvest festival, while Khovar painting is done at weddings.

Tattoo The tattoo making tradition of Godna is an essential part of local tradition.

Cinema Jharkhand produces many films in regional and Tribal languages including Nagpuri, Khortha, Santali, Ho, and Kurukh. The film industry in the state of Jharkhand is known as Jollywood.

Media There are some television channels, newspapers, and radio stations which operate in Jharkhand. DD Jharkhand is an important channel in Jharkhand. All India Radio operates from Ranchi. Hindustan, Dainik Jagran, Sokal Sokal, Prabhat Khabar, and Ranchi Express are some of the Hindi newspapers and The Hindu, The Times of India, Hindustan Times, Navbharat Times, The Pioneer, and The Telegraph are some English newspapers in Jharkhand.

Transport Airways Birsa Munda Airport is the largest domestic airport in the state with air connectivity to major Indian cities of Delhi, Kolkata, Bangalore, Mumbai, Hyderabad among others. Deoghar Airport is the second busiest airport located in the state of Jharkhand, India. It is the second operational airport in state of Jharkhand after Ranchi. Sonari Airport at Jamshedpur is the third operational airport in the state and it has daily flight to Bhubaneswar and Kolkata. Bokaro Airport is under Steel Authority of India Limited and 4th operational airport of the state. It is being developed under UDAN scheme. Other airports present in the state are Chakulia Airport, Dumka Airport, Giridih Airport, Dhalbhumgarh Airport and Dhanbad Airport which mostly run private and charter flights.

Roadways Jharkhand has extensive network of National Highways and State Highways. There is 2,661.83 km (1,653 mi 1,733 yd) of paved National Highways in the state as of 2016. The National highways present in the state are numbered 18, 19, 20, 22, 33, 39, 43, 114A, 118, 133, 133A, 133B, 139, 143, 143A, 143AG, 143D, 143H, 218, 220, 320, 320D, 320G, 333, 333A, 343, 419 and 522. The Golden Quadrilateral network of Delhi - Kolkata route runs through Jharkhand notably at Dhanbad.

Ports Jharkhand is landlocked state but has numerous rivers and waterways. A multi-modal port has been planned at Sahebganj where river Ganges flows. The project is estimated to cost ₹65,000 million and phase-1

is estimated to be completed by 2019.

Railways Jharkhand is very well connected by railways. The state has numerous railway stations and railway junctions. Dhanbad Junction is the largest railway station in the state which is connected to almost all big cities of India. Hilly regions of state are equipped with tunnels that form essential organ of railways.

Education As per the 2011 census conducted by Government of India the official literacy rate for the state was 66.41% (male: 76.84%; female: 55.42%) with nine districts above the average literacy rate:

Ranchi: 76.06% (male: 84.26%; female: 67.44%)

East Singhbhum: 75.49% (male: 83.75%; female: 66.81%) Dhanbad: 74.52% (male: 83.81%; Female: 64.29%)

Ramgarh: 73.17% (male: 82.44%; female: 63.09%) Bokaro: 72.01% (male: 82.51%; female: 60.63%) Hazaribagh: 69.75% (male: 80.01%; female: 58.95%) Simdega: 67.99% (male: 76.08%; female: 59.92%) Saraikela Khasawan: 67.70% (male: 79.03%; female: 55.88%) Lohardaga: 67.61% (male: 77.21%; female: 57.69%) Koderma: 66.84% (male: 79.78%; female: 53.23%) Since the formation of the new state, the Jharkhand Education Project Council (JEPC) has been implementing four projects to spread elementary education: DPEP, SSA, NPEGEL, and KGBV. The state has been moving towards the goal of universal elementary education but the target of 100% enrolment and retention of children in schools has not yet been attained. Jharkhand has made primary education so accessible that 95% of children of ages 6-11 are enrolled in school, as opposed to 56% in 1993-94; this will likely improve literacy a great deal.

Schools The medium of instruction in schools is Hindi/English with English/Hindi/Sanskrit/Bengali/Odia as second language. After 10 years of schooling, students can join two years of Intermediate course (or +2 courses) in Arts, Science and Commerce. This is followed by three years of degree courses (graduation) or four years of Engineering/Agriculture/Medicine degree. The school system comprises various private and public schools. The government schools are abundant. Few notable schools are: St. Thomas School, Ranchi, Sainik School Tilaiya, Loyola School, Jamshedpur, Delhi Public School, Bokaro, Delhi Public School, Ranchi, Bishop Westcott Boys' School, Ramakrishna Mission Vidyapith, Deoghar, De Nobili School and St. Xavier's School, Hazaribagh. In 2009 Franz Gastler established Yuwa School a NGO in Hutup village in Ranchi district with helps of friends to use football as a platform to combat child marriage, illiteracy and human trafficking in rural India. In 2019, It won the Laureus Sport for Good Award.

Universities and colleges AISECT University, Jharkhand, Hazaribagh Arka Jain University, Jamshedpur Binod Bihari Mahto Koyalanchal University, Dhanbad Birsa Agricultural University, Kanke, Ranchi Central University of Jharkhand, Brambe, Ranchi Jharkhand Rai University, Ranchi Jharkhand Raksha Shakti University, Ranchi Kolhan University, Chaibasa National University of Study and Research in Law, Ranchi Nilamber-Pitamber University, Medininagar Radha Govind University, Ramgarh Ranchi University, Ranchi Sarala Birla University, Ranchi Sido Kanhu Murmu University, Dumka Vinoba Bhave University, Hazaribagh Usha Martin University, Ranchi

Autonomous Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee University, formerly Ranchi college Indian Institute of Information Technology, Ranchi Indian Institute of Management Ranchi Indian Institute of Technology (Indian School of Mines), Dhanbad National Institute of Foundry and Forge Technology (NIFFT), Ranchi National University of Study and Research in Law National Institute of Technology, Jamshedpur St. Xavier's College, Ranchi Xavier Institute of Social Service (XISS), Ranchi Xavier Labour Relations Institute (XLRI), Jamshedpur

Agriculture Indian Institute of Agricultural Biotechnology, Ranchi

Engineering Birla Institute of Technology, Mesra, Ranchi Birsa Institute of Technology Sindri, Dhanbad DAV Institute of Engineering & Technology, Daltonganj Indian Institute of Technology (Indian School of Mines), Dhanbad, Dhanbad National Institute of Foundry and Forge Technology (NIFFT), Ranchi National Institute of Technology, Jamshedpur

Management Indian Institute of Management Ranchi IIM-Ranchi XLRI - Xavier School of Management, Jamshedpur NSIBM - Netaji Subhas Institute of Hotel & Business Management, Jamshedpur

Medical colleges All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Deoghar Hazaribag College of Dental Sciences and Hospital, Hazaribagh Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Medical College (MGM), Jamshedpur Medini Rai Medical College and Hospital, Palamu, Palamu Phulo Jhano Murmu Medical College and Hospital, Dumka Rajendra Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS), Ranchi Shaheed Nirmal Mahto Medical College, Dhanbad, Dhanbad Shaheed Sheikh Bhikhari Medical College and Hospital, Hazaribagh

Psychiatry Central Institute of Psychiatry, Ranchi

Public health Because of its mild climate, Jharkhand, particularly its capital Ranchi, has been a health resort. As far back as 1918, facilities were set up for treatment of mentally challenged. European Mental Hospital was established along with Indian Mental Hospital. Today they are called Central Institute of Psychiatry and Ranchi Institute of Neuro-psychiatry and Allied Sciences respectively. In certain areas of Jharkhand, poverty and consequent malnutrition have given rise to diseases like tuberculosis (TB). In fact, TB has assumed epidemic proportions in certain areas of the state. For management and treatment of such TB, Itki TB Sanatorium, Ranchi, established in 1928 has been doing work as a premier institute for clinical and programmatic management of TB. The Itki TB Sanatorium is well equipped and accredited by the Indian government for quality assurance and Culture and Drug Sensitivity Testing for M.TB. It provides free of cost treatment for TB as well as drug-resistant TB. Likewise, in the field of treatment of cancer, Tata Main Hospital, Jamshedpur, is rendering pioneering work. In the same way, Bokaro General Hospital equipped with modern facilities for the treatment of cancer and heart-related problems with the capacity of 1100 beds one of the largest in eastern India. Although several public and private health facilities are available in the state, overall infrastructure for dispensing health related services require improvements. An exception is the Tata Motors Hospital which is an example of an ISO 14001 and 18001 certified hospital with DNB teaching facilities. Ranchi, the capital, has witnessed a sharp growth in the number of hospitals. Fluoride in groundwater presents a public health problem in Jharkhand. A recent survey led by the Birla Institute of Technology, Mesra, Ranchi in collaboration with UNICEF in the northwest districts of Palamau and Garhwa found fluoride levels above the drinking WHO drinking water guidelines. Excessive amounts of fluoride in drinking water can lead to dental fluorosis, prevalent

bone fractures, and skeletal fluorosis, an irreversible disabling condition. Some work has focused on combating fluorosis through increased calcium intake by consuming local plants. Researchers at Princeton University and the Birla Institute of Technology, Mesra, Ranchi are currently investigating defluoridation options, while performing an epidemiological survey to assess the extent of fluoride linked health problems and the impact of future interventions. Almost 80% of Jharkhand's people are farmers, although it contains 40% of India's mineral reserves it has some of India's poorest people, in Summer 2009 the state was threatened by drought, with people criticising the government for not providing food aid or assistance.

Sports JRD TATA Sports Complex, Jamshedpur hosts football matches of Indian Super League and is the home of ISL based football club Jamshedpur FC. Cricket, hockey, and football are common games in Jharkhand. Players like Jaipal Singh, a former Indian hockey captain and Olympian, and Manohar Topno currently play for the Indian hockey team. Jaipal Singh was the captain of the hockey team that won the first gold medal for India in the 1928 Summer Olympics in Amsterdam. Mahendra Singh Dhoni, a former captain of Indian cricket team who led the Indian cricket team to ICC Cricket World Cup glory on 2 April 2011, 28 years after former Indian captain Kapil Dev won the World Cup in 1983 at Lord's, England, is from here. Other notable cricketers from Jharkhand are Varun Aaron, Shahbaz Nadeem, and Saurabh Tiwary. He was one of the key batsmen in the Indian team that won the 2008 U/19 Cricket World Cup in Malaysia. Other sportspeople include Deepika Kumari, a young archer who won gold medal in the 2010 Commonwealth games in the women's individual recurve event. Nikki Pradhan currently a member of the national hockey team. Pradhan was the first female hockey player from Jharkhand to represent India in the Olympics. An International Cricket stadium with an indoor stadium and a practice ground has been constructed. This international stadium has hosted an International match between India and England on 19 January 2013. Apart from that, this stadium has hosted two IPL 6 matches for KKR and qualifier 2 of IPL 8 between CSK and RCB and Celebrity Cricket League Matches for Bhojpuri Dabanggs. A tennis academy, which was inaugurated by Sania Mirza and Shoaib Malik, also runs besides the cricket stadium. Ranchi is among six cities in Hockey India League to be played in January 2013. Ranchi franchise was bought by Patel-Uniexcel Group and the team named Ranchi Rhinos which is now being co-hosted by Mahendra Singh Dhoni and named as Ranchi Rays.

Tourism Jharkhand is known for its waterfalls, hills and holy places. Parasnath, Baidyanath Dham, Maa Dewri Temple and Chhinnamasta Temple are major religious places. Tattapani Hot Water Spring is located 8 km from Latehar. The hot spring water come out from different places on the Sukari River bed. Rich in sulphur, the hot spring is believed to have medicinal properties and good for skin. Itkhori is a holy place for Hindus, Buddhists and Jains. It is believed to be the place from where Gautama Buddha started his journey for Bodh Gaya. Many sculptures of Hindu, Jain and Buddhist art styles were found in 2018. Rankini Temple of Jadugora is famous in Jharkhand, as well as in Odisha, West Bengal and Bihar. There are several waterfalls in the state including Jonha Falls, Hundru Falls, Dassam Falls, Perwaghagh Falls and Panchghagh Falls. Netarhat is a hill station in the state. There are several wildlife sanctuaries and national park in Jharkhand including Betla National Park and Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary, which are major attraction for tourists. State Museum Hotwar and Tribal Research Institute and Museum showcase various cultural heritage and tribal culture of Jharkhand.

See also List of museums in Jharkhand List of people from Jharkhand Political families of Jharkhand JSCA International Stadium Complex

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External links Government

Government of Jharkhand, India Archived 22 April 2016 at the Wayback Machine General information

Geographic data related to Jharkhand at OpenStreetMap

Karnataka

Karnataka is a state in the southwestern region of India. It was formed as Mysore State on 1 November 1956, with the passage of the States Reorganisation Act, and renamed Karnataka in 1973. The state is bordered by the Lakshadweep Sea to the west, Goa to the northwest, Maharashtra to the north, Telangana to the northeast, Andhra Pradesh to the east, Tamil Nadu to the southeast, and Kerala to the southwest. With 61,130,704 inhabitants at the 2011 census, Karnataka is the eighth-largest state by population, comprising 31 districts. With 15,257,000 residents, the state capital Bengaluru is the largest city of Karnataka. The economy of Karnataka is among the most productive in the country with a gross state domestic product (GSDP) of ₹25.01 trillion (US\$300 billion) and a per capita GSDP of ₹332,926 (US\$3,900) for the financial year 2023-24. The state experienced a GSDP growth of 10.2% for the same fiscal year. After Bengaluru Urban, Dakshina Kannada, Hubli-Dharwad, and Belagavi districts contribute the highest revenue to the state respectively. The capital of the state, Bengaluru, is known as the Silicon Valley of India, for its immense contributions to the country's information technology sector. A total of 1,973 companies in the state were found to have been involved in the IT sector as of 2007. Karnataka is the only southern state to have land borders with all of the other four southern Indian sister states. The state covers an area of 191,791 km² (74,051 sq mi), or 5.83 per cent of the total geographical area of India. It is the sixth-largest Indian state by area. Kannada, one of the classical languages of India, is the most widely spoken and official language of the state. Other minority languages spoken include Urdu, Konkani, Marathi, Tulu, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kodava and Beary. Karnataka also contains some of the only villages in India where Sanskrit is primarily spoken. Though several etymologies have been suggested for the name Karnataka, the generally accepted one is that Karnataka is derived from the Kannada words *karu* and *nadu*, meaning "elevated land". *Karu Nadu* may also be read as *karu*, meaning "black" and *nadu*, meaning "region", as a reference to the black cotton soil found in the Bayalu Seeme region of the state. The British used the word Carnatic, sometimes Karnatak, to describe both sides of peninsular India, south of the Krishna. With an antiquity that dates to the Paleolithic, Karnataka has been home to some of the most powerful empires of ancient and medieval India. The philosophers and musical bards patronised by these empires launched socio-religious and literary movements which have endured to the present day. Karnataka has contributed significantly to both forms of Indian classical music, the Carnatic and Hindustani traditions.

Etymology History Karnataka's pre-history goes back to a Paleolithic hand-axe culture evidenced by discoveries of, among other things, hand axes and cleavers in the region. Evidence of Neolithic and megalithic cultures have also been found in the state. Gold discovered in Harappa was found to be imported from mines in Karnataka, prompting scholars to hypothesise about contacts between ancient Karnataka and the Indus Valley Civilisation c. 3300 BCE. Prior to the third century BCE, most of Karnataka formed part of the Mauryan Empire of Emperor Ashoka. Four centuries of Satavahana rule followed, allowing them to control large areas of Karnataka. The decline of Satavahana power led to the rise of the earliest native kingdoms, the Kadambas and the Western Gangas, marking the region's emergence as an independent political entity. The Kadamba Dynasty, founded by Mayurasharma, had its capital at Banavasi; the Western Ganga Dynasty was formed with Talakad as its capital. These were also the first kingdoms to use Kannada in administration, as evidenced by the Halmidi inscription and a fifth-century copper coin discovered at Banavasi. These dynasties were followed by imperial Kannada empires such as the Badami Chalukyas, the Rashtrakuta Empire and the Western Chalukya Empire, which ruled over large parts of the Deccan and had their capitals in what is now Karnataka. The Western Chalukyas patronised a unique style of architecture and Kannada literature which became a precursor to the Hoysala art of the 12th century. Parts of modern-day Southern Karnataka (Gangavadi) were occupied by the Chola Empire at the turn of the 11th century. The Cholas and the Hoysalas fought over the

region in the early 12th century before it eventually came under Hoysala rule. At the turn of the first millennium, the Hoysalas gained power in the region. Literature flourished during this time, which led to the emergence of distinctive Kannada literary metres, and the construction of temples and sculptures adhering to the Vesara style of architecture. The expansion of the Hoysala Empire brought minor parts of modern Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu under its rule. In the early 14th century, Harihara and Bukka Raya established the Vijayanagara empire with its capital, Hosapattana (later named Vijayanagara), on the banks of the Tungabhadra River in the modern Bellary district. Under the rule of Krishnadevaraya, a distinct form of literature and architecture evolved. The empire rose as a bulwark against Muslim advances into South India, which it completely controlled for over two centuries. In 1537, Kempe Gowda I, a chieftain of the Vijayanagara Empire, widely held as the founder of modern Bengaluru, built a fort and established the area around it as Bengaluru Pete. In 1565, Karnataka and the rest of South India experienced a major geopolitical shift when the Vijayanagara empire fell to a confederation of Islamic sultanates in the Battle of Talikota. The Bijapur Sultanate, which had risen after the demise of the Bahmani Sultanate of Bidar, soon took control of much of the Deccan; it was defeated by the Mughals in the late 17th century. The Bahmani and Bijapur rulers encouraged Urdu and Persian literature and Indo-Saracenic architecture, the Gol Gumbaz being one of the high points of this style. During the sixteenth century, Konkani Hindus migrated to Karnataka, mostly from Salcette, Goa, while during the seventeenth and eighteenth century, Goan Catholics migrated to North Canara and South Canara, especially from Bardes, Goa, as a result of food shortages, epidemics and heavy taxation imposed by the Portuguese. In the period that followed, parts of northern Karnataka were ruled by the Nizam of Hyderabad, the Maratha Empire, the British, and other powers. In the south, the Mysore Kingdom, a former vassal of the Vijayanagara Empire, was briefly independent. With the death of Krishnaraja Wodeyar II, Haidar Ali, the commander-in-chief of the Mysore army, gained control of the region. After his death, the kingdom was inherited by his son Tipu Sultan. To contain European expansion in South India, Hyder Ali and later Tipu Sultan fought four significant Anglo-Mysore Wars, the last of which resulted in Tipu Sultan's death and the incorporation of Mysore into British India in 1799. Mysore was restored to the Wodeyars, and the Kingdom of Mysore became a princely state outside but in a subsidiary alliance with British India.

As the "doctrine of lapse" gave way to dissent and resistance from princely states across the country, Kittur Chennamma, Queen of Kittur, her military leader Sangolli Rayanna, and others, spearheaded rebellions in part of what is now Karnataka in 1830, nearly three decades before the Indian Rebellion of 1857. However, Kitturu was taken over by the British East India Company even before the doctrine was officially articulated by Lord Dalhousie in 1848. Other uprisings followed, such as the ones at Supa, Bagalkot, Shorapur, Nargund and Dandeli. These rebellions-which coincided with the Indian Rebellion of 1857-were led by Mundargi Bhimarao, Bhaskar Rao Bhawe, the Halagali Bedas, Raja Venkatappa Nayaka and others. By the late 19th century, the independence movement had gained momentum; Karnad Sadashiva Rao, Aluru Venkata Raya, S. Nijalingappa, Kengal Hanumanthaiah, Nittoor Srinivasa Rau and others carried on the struggle into the early 20th century. After the independence of British India, the Maharaja, Jayachamarajendra Wodeyar, signed an instrument of accession to accede his state to the new India. In 1950, Mysore became an Indian state of the same name; the former Maharaja served as its Rajpramukh (head of state) until 1975. Following the long-standing demand of the Ekikarana Movement, Kodagu- and Kannada-speaking regions from the adjoining states of Madras, Hyderabad and Bombay were incorporated into the Mysore state, under the States Reorganisation Act of 1956. The thus expanded state was renamed Karnataka, seventeen years later, on 1 November 1973. In the early 1900s through the post-independence era, industrial visionaries such as Sir Mokshagundam Visvesvarayya, played an important role in the development of Karnataka's strong manufacturing and industrial base.

Geography The state has three principal geographical zones: The coastal region of Karavali and Tulu Nadu The hilly Malenadu region comprising the Western Ghats The Bayaluseeme region comprising the plains of the Deccan Plateau The bulk of the state is in the Bayaluseeme region, the northern part of which is the second-largest arid region in India. The highest point in Karnataka is the Mullayanagiri hills in Chikmagalur district which has an altitude of 1,925 m (6,316 ft). The two main river systems of the state are the Krishna and its tributaries, the Bhima, Ghataprabha, Vedavathi, Malaprabha and Tungabhadra in North Karnataka, and the Kaveri and its tributaries, the Hemavati, Shimsha, Arkavati, Lakshmana Thirtha and Kabini, in South Karnataka. Most of these rivers flow out of Karnataka eastward, reaching the sea at the Bay of Bengal. Other prominent rivers such as the Sharavati in Shimoga and Netravati in Dakshina Kannada flow westward to the Lakshadweep Sea. A large number of dams and reservoirs are constructed across these rivers which richly add to the irrigation and hydroelectricity power generation capacities of the state. Karnataka consists of four main types of geological formations - the Archean complex made up of Dharwad schists and granitic gneisses, the Proterozoic non-fossiliferous sedimentary formations of the Kaladgi and Bhima series, the Deccan trappean and intertrappean deposits and the tertiary and recent laterites and alluvial deposits. Laterite cappings that are found in many districts over the Deccan Traps were formed after the cessation of volcanic activity in the early tertiary period. Eleven groups of soil orders are found in Karnataka, viz. Entisols, Inceptisols, Mollisols, Spodosols, Alfisols, Ultisols, Oxisols, Aridisols, Vertisols, Andisols and Histosols. Depending on the agricultural capability of the soil, the soil types are divided into six types, viz. red, lateritic, black, alluvio-colluvial, forest and coastal soils. About 38,284 km² (14,782 sq mi) of Karnataka (i.e. 16% of the state's geographic area) is covered by forests. The forests are classified as reserved, protected, unclosed, village and private forests. The percentage of forested area is slightly less than the all-India average of about 23%, and significantly less than the 33% prescribed in the National Forest Policy.

Climate Karnataka experiences four seasons. The winter in January and February is followed by summer between March and May, the monsoon season between June and September and the post-monsoon season from October till December. Meteorologically, Karnataka is divided into three zones - coastal, north interior and south interior. Of these, the coastal zone receives the heaviest rainfall with an average rainfall of about 3,638.5 mm (143 in) per annum, far in excess of the state average of 1,139 mm (45 in). Amagaon in Khanapura taluka of Belgaum district received 10,068 mm (396 in) of rainfall in 2010. In 2014 Kokalli in Sirsi taluka of Uttara Kannada district received 8,746 mm (344 in) of rainfall. Agumbe in Thirthahalli taluka and Hulikal of Hosanagara taluka in Shimoga district were the rainiest cities in Karnataka, situated in one of the wettest regions in the world. The state is projected to warm about 2.0 C (4 F) by 2030. The monsoon is set to provide less rainfall. Agriculture in Karnataka is mostly rainfed as opposed to irrigated, making it highly vulnerable to expected changes in the monsoon. The highest recorded temperature was 45.6 C (114 F) in Raichuru district. The lowest recorded temperature was 2.8 C (37 F) at Bidar district.

Flora and fauna Karnataka is home to a variety of wildlife. It has a recorded forest area of 38,720 km² (14,950 sq mi) which constitutes 12.3% of the total geographical area of the state. These forests support 25% of the Indian elephant and 10% of the tiger population of India. Many regions of Karnataka are as yet unexplored, so new species of flora and fauna are found periodically. The Western Ghats, a biodiversity hotspot, includes the western region of Karnataka. Bandipur and Nagarhole National Parks were included in the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve in 1986, a UNESCO designation. The Indian roller and the Indian elephant are recognised as the state bird and animal while sandalwood and the lotus are recognised as the state tree and flower respectively. Karnataka has five national parks: Anshi, Bandipur, Bannerghatta, Kudremukh and Nagarhole. It also has 27 wildlife sanctuaries of which seven are bird sanctuaries. Wild animals in Karnataka include the Indian elephant, tiger, leopard, gaur, sambar deer, chital, Indian muntjac, bonnet macaque, slender loris, Asian palm civet, small Indian civet, sloth bear, dhole, striped hyena, Bengal fox and golden jackal. Some of the birds present include

the great hornbill, Malabar pied hornbill, Ceylon frogmouth, herons, ducks, kites, eagles, falcons, quails, partridges, lapwings, sandpipers, pigeons, doves, parakeets, cuckoos, owls, nightjars, swifts, kingfishers, bee-eaters and munias. Some species of trees are *Calophyllum tomentosum*, *Calophyllum apetalum*, *Garcinia cambogia*, *Garcinia morella*, *Alstonia scholaris*, *Flacourtia montana*, *Artocarpus hirsutus*, *Artocarpus lacucha*, *Cinnamomum zeylanicum*, *Grewia tiliifolia*, *Santalum album*, *Shorea talura*, *Emblica officinalis*, *Vitex altissima* and *Wrightia tinctoria*. Wildlife in Karnataka is threatened by poaching, habitat destruction, human-wildlife conflict and pollution.

Sub-divisions There are 31 districts in Karnataka. Each district (zila) is administered by a Deputy Commissioner (also known as the District Collector), who is typically an officer of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS). The districts are further divided into revenue sub-divisions, which are administered by assistant commissioners. These sub-divisions are further divided into taluks (or talukas), which are administered by Tahsildars. Taluks comprise hoblis (clusters of adjoining villages), which include revenue villages. Karnataka has around 6,022 Gram Panchayats, 226 Taluk Panchayats, and 31 Zilla Panchayats in rural areas. In urban areas, there are 318 urban local bodies, including 1 BBMP, 13 Municipal Corporations, 60 City Municipal Councils, 126 Town Municipal Councils, 114 Town Panchayats and 4 notified area committees.

Demographics According to the 2011 census of India, the total population of Karnataka was 61,095,297 of which 30,966,657 (50.7%) were male and 30,128,640 (49.3%) were female, or 1000 males for every 973 females. This represents a 15.60% increase over the population in 2001. The population density was 319 per km² and 38.67% of the people lived in urban areas. The literacy rate was 75.36% with 82.47% of males and 68.08% of females being literate. In 2007 the state had a birth rate of 2.2%, a death rate of 0.7%, an infant mortality rate of 5.5% and a maternal mortality rate of 0.2%. The total fertility rate was 2.2. Karnataka's private sector speciality health care competes with the best in the world. Karnataka has also established a modicum of public health services having a better record of health care and child care than most other states of India. In spite of these advances, some parts of the state still suffer from the lack of primary health care. Karnataka ranked tenth in the Fiscal Health Index (FHI) 2025, with a score of 40.8.

Religion Adi Shankara (788-820 CE) chose Sringeri in Karnataka to establish the first of his four mathas (monastery). Madhvacharya (1238-1317) was the chief proponent of Tattvavada (philosophy of reality), popularly known as Dvaita or Dualistic school of Hindu philosophy - one of the three most influential Vedanta philosophies. Madhvacharya was one of the important philosophers during the Bhakti movement. He was a pioneer in many ways, going against standard conventions and norms. According to tradition, Madhvacharya is believed to be the third incarnation of Vayu (Mukhyaprana), after Hanuman and Bhima. The Haridasa devotional movement is considered one of the turning points in the cultural history of India. Over a span of nearly six centuries, several saints and mystics helped shape the culture, philosophy, and art of South India and Karnataka in particular by exerting considerable spiritual influence over the masses and kingdoms that ruled South India. This movement was ushered in by the Haridasas (literally "servants of Hari") and took shape in the 13th century - 14th century CE, period, prior to and during the early rule of the Vijayanagara empire. The main objective of this movement was to propagate the Dvaita philosophy of Madhvacharya (Madhva Siddhanta) to the masses through a literary medium known as Dasa Sahitya. Purandara dasa is widely recognised as the "Pithamaha" of Carnatic Music for his immense contribution. Ramanuja, the leading expounder of Vishishtadvaita, spent many years in Melkote. He came to Karnataka in 1098 CE and lived here until 1122 CE. He first lived in Tondanur and then moved to Melkote where the Cheluvanarayana Swamy Temple and a well-organised matha were built. He was patronised by the Hoysala king, Vishnuvardhana. In the twelfth century, Lingayatism emerged in northern Karnataka as a protest against the rigidity of the prevailing social and

caste system. Leading figures of this movement were Basava, Akka Mahadevi and Allama Prabhu, who established the Anubhava Mantapa which was the centre of all religious and philosophical thoughts and discussions pertaining to Lingayats. These three social reformers did so by the literary means of "Vachana Sahitya" which is very famous for its simple, straight forward and easily understandable Kannada language. Lingayatism preached women equality by letting women wear Ishtalinga i.e. Symbol of god around their neck. Basava shunned the sharp hierarchical divisions that existed and sought to remove all distinctions between the hierarchically superior master class and the subordinate, servile class. He also supported inter-caste marriages and Kaay Ta tTatva of Basavanna. This was the basis of the Lingayat faith which today counts millions among its followers. The Jain philosophy and literature have contributed immensely to the religious and cultural landscape of Karnataka. Islam, which had an early presence on the west coast of India as early as the tenth century, gained a foothold in Karnataka with the rise of the Bahamani and Bijapur sultanates that ruled parts of Karnataka. Christianity reached Karnataka in the sixteenth century with the arrival of the Portuguese and St. Francis Xavier in 1545. Buddhism was popular in Karnataka during the first millennium in places such as Gulbarga and Banavasi. A chance discovery of edicts and several Mauryan relics at Sannati in Kalaburagi district in 1986 has proven that the Krishna River basin was once home to both Mahayana and Hinayana Buddhism. There are Tibetan refugee camps in Karnataka.

Festivals Mysore Dasara is celebrated as the Nada habba (state festival) and this is marked by major festivities at Mysore. Bengaluru Karaga, celebrated in the heart of Bengaluru, is the second most important festival celebrated in Karnataka. Ugadi (Kannada New Year), Makara Sankranti (the harvest festival), Ganesh Chaturthi, Gowri Habba, Ram Navami, Nagapanchami, Basava Jayanthi, Deepavali, and Balipadyami are the other major festivals of Karnataka.

Language Kannada is the official language of the state of Karnataka, as the native language of 66.46% of its population as of 2011 and is one of the classical languages of India. Urdu is the second largest language, spoken by 10.83% of the population, and is the language of Muslims outside the coastal region. Telugu (5.84%) is a major language in areas bordering Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka as well as Bengaluru, while Tamil (3.45%) is a major language of Bengaluru and in the Kolar district. Marathi (3.29%) is concentrated in areas of Uttara Kannada, Belgaum and Bidar districts bordering Maharashtra. Lambadi is spoken by the Lambadis scattered throughout North Karnataka, while Hindi is spoken in Bengaluru. Tulu (2.61%), Konkani (1.29%), and Malayalam (1.27%) are all found in linguistically diverse Coastal Karnataka, where a number of mixed and distinct dialects such as Are Bhashe, Beary Bhashe, and Nawayathi are found. Kodava Takk is the language of Kodagu. Kannada played a crucial role in the creation of Karnataka: linguistic demographics played a major role in defining the new state in 1956. Tulu, Konkani and Kodava are other minor native languages that share a long history in the state. Urdu is spoken widely by the Muslim population. Less widely spoken languages include Beary bashe and certain languages such as Sankethi. Some of the regional languages in Karnataka are Tulu, Kodava, Konkani and Beary. Kannada features a rich and ancient body of literature including religious and secular genre, covering topics as diverse as Jainism (such as Puranas), Lingayatism (such as Vachanas), Vaishnavism (such as Haridasa Sahitya) and modern literature. Evidence from edicts during the time of Ashoka (reigned 274-232 BCE) suggest that Buddhist literature influenced the Kannada script and its literature. The Halmidi inscription, the earliest attested full-length inscription in the Kannada language and script, dates from 450 CE, while the earliest available literary work, the Kavirajamarga, has been dated to 850 CE. References made in the Kavirajamarga, however, prove that Kannada literature flourished in the native composition metres such as Chattana, Beddande and Melvadu during earlier centuries. The classic refers to several earlier greats (purvacharyar) of Kannada poetry and prose. Kuvempu, the renowned Kannada poet and writer who wrote Jaya Bharata Jananiya Tanujate, the state anthem of Karnataka was the first recipient of the Karnataka Ratna, the highest civilian award bestowed by the Government of Karnataka. Contemporary Kannada literature has

received considerable acknowledgement in the arena of Indian literature, with eight Kannada writers winning India's highest literary honour, the Jnanpith award. Tulu is the majority language in the coastal district of Dakshina Kannada and is the second most spoken in the Udupi district. This region is also known as Tulu Nadu. Tulu Mahabharato, written by Arunabja in the Tegalari script, is the oldest surviving Tulu text. Tegalari script was used by Brahmins to write Sanskrit language. The use of the Kannada script for writing Tulu and non-availability of print in Tegalari script contributed to the marginalisation of Tegalari script. In Karnataka Konkani is mostly spoken in the Uttara Kannada and Dakshina Kannada districts and in parts of Udupi, Konkani use the Devanagari Script (which is official)/Kannada script (Optional) for writing as identified by government of Karnataka. The Kodavas who mainly reside in the Kodagu district, speak Kodava Takk. Kodagu was a separate State with its own Chief Minister and Council of Ministers till 1956. Two regional variations of the language exist, the northern Mendale Takka and the southern Kiggaati Takka. Kodava Takk has its own script, Karnataka Kodava Sahitya Academy has accepted I. M. Muthanna's script which was developed in 1970 as the official script of Kodava Thakk. English is the medium of education in many schools and widely used for business communication in most private companies. All of the state's languages are patronised and promoted by governmental and quasi-governmental bodies. The Kannada Sahitya Parishat and the Kannada Sahitya Akademi are responsible for the promotion of Kannada while the Karnataka Konkani Sahitya Akademi, the Tulu Sahitya Akademi and the Kodava Sahitya Akademi promote their respective languages.

Government and administration Karnataka has a parliamentary system of government with two democratically elected houses, the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council. The Legislative Assembly consists of 224 members who are elected for five-year terms. The Legislative Council is a permanent body of 75 members with one-third (25 members) retiring every two years.

The government of Karnataka is headed by the Chief Minister who is chosen by the ruling party members of the Legislative Assembly. The Chief Minister, along with the council of ministers, executes the legislative agenda and exercises most of the executive powers. However, the constitutional and formal head of the state is the Governor who is appointed for a five-year term by the President of India on the advice of the Union government. The people of Karnataka also elect 28 members to the Lok Sabha, the lower house of the Indian Parliament. The members of the state Legislative Assembly elect 12 members to the Rajya Sabha, the upper house of the Indian Parliament. For administrative purposes, Karnataka has been divided into four revenue divisions, 49 sub-divisions, 31 districts, 175 taluks and 745 hoblies / revenue circles. The administration in each district is headed by a Deputy Commissioner who belongs to the Indian Administrative Service and is assisted by a number of officers belonging to Karnataka state services. The Superintendent of Police, an officer belonging to the Indian Police Service and assisted by the officers of the Karnataka Police Service, is entrusted with the responsibility of maintaining law and order and related issues in each district. The Deputy Conservator of Forests, an officer belonging to the Indian Forest Service, is entrusted with the responsibility of managing forests, environment and wildlife of the district, he will be assisted by the officers belonging to Karnataka Forest Service and officers belonging to Karnataka Forest Subordinate Service. Sectoral development in the districts is looked after by the district head of each development department such as Public Works Department, Health, Education, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, etc. The judiciary in the state consists of the Karnataka High Court (Attara Kacheri) in Bengaluru, Hubli-Dharwad, and Kalaburagi, district and session courts in each district and lower courts and judges at the taluk level. Politics in Karnataka has been dominated by three political parties, the Indian National Congress, the Janata Dal (Secular) and the Bharatiya Janata Party. Politicians from Karnataka have played prominent roles in federal government of India with some of them having held the high positions of Prime Minister and Vice-President. Border disputes involving Karnataka's claim on the Kasaragod and Solapur districts and Maharashtra's claim on Belagavi are ongoing since the states reorganisation. The official emblem of Karnataka has a Ganda Berunda in the centre. Surmounting this are four lions facing the four

directions, taken from the Lion Capital of Ashoka at Sarnath. The emblem also carries two Sharabhas with the head of an elephant and the body of a lion.

Economy Karnataka had an estimated GSDP (Gross State Domestic Product) of about US\$115.86 billion in the 2014-15 fiscal year. The state registered a GSDP growth rate of 7% for the year 2014-2015. Karnataka's contribution to India's GDP in the year 2014-15 was 7.54%. With GDP growth of 17.59% and per capita GDP growth of 16.04%, Karnataka is on the 6th position among all states and union territories. In an employment survey conducted for the year 2013-2014, the unemployment rate in Karnataka was 1.8% compared to the national rate of 4.9%. In 2011-2012, Karnataka had an estimated poverty ratio of 20.91% compared to the national ratio of 21.92%. In 2024, Karnataka had a multi-dimensional poverty rate of 5.67%, compared to the all India average of 11.28%. Nearly 56% of the workforce in Karnataka is engaged in agriculture and related activities. A total of 12.31 million hectares of land, or 64.6% of the state's total area, is cultivated. Much of the agricultural output is dependent on the southwest monsoon as only 26.5% of the sown area is irrigated. According to most recent data, Karnataka is considered the third richest state in India. Karnataka is the manufacturing hub for some of the largest public sector industries in India, including Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, National Aerospace Laboratories, Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited, Bharat Earth Movers Limited and HMT (formerly Hindustan Machine Tools), which are based in Bengaluru. Many of India's premier science and technology research centres, such as Indian Space Research Organisation, Central Power Research Institute, Bharat Electronics Limited and the Central Food Technological Research Institute, are also headquartered in Karnataka. Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited is an oil refinery, located in Mangalore. The state has also begun to invest heavily in solar power centered on the Pavagada Solar Park. As of December 2017, the state has installed an estimated 2.2 gigawatts of block solar panelling and in January 2018 announced a tender to generate a further 1.2 gigawatts in the coming years: Karnataka Renewable Energy Development suggests that this will be based on 24 separate systems (or 'blocks') generating 50 megawatts each. Since the 1980s, Karnataka has emerged as the pan-Indian leader in the field of IT (information technology). In 2007, there were nearly 2,000 firms operating in Karnataka. Many of them, including two of India's biggest software firms, Infosys and Wipro, are also headquartered in the state. Exports from these firms exceeded ₹500 billion (equivalent to ₹1.6 trillion or US\$19 billion in 2023) in 2006-07, accounting for nearly 38% of all IT exports from India. The Nandi Hills area in the outskirts of Devanahalli is the site of the upcoming \$22 billion, 50 km² BIAL IT Investment Region, one of the largest infrastructure projects in the history of Karnataka. All this has earned the state capital, Bengaluru, the sobriquet Silicon Valley of India. Karnataka also leads the nation in biotechnology. It is home to India's largest biocluster, with 60% of the country's biotechnology firms being based here. The state has 18,000 hectares of land under flower cultivation, an upcoming industry which supplies flowers and ornamental plants worldwide. Seven of India's banks, Canara Bank, Syndicate Bank, Corporation Bank, Vijaya Bank, Karnataka Bank, ING Vysya Bank and the State Bank of Mysore originated in this state. The coastal districts of Udupi and Dakshina Kannada have a branch for every 500 persons-the best distribution of banks in India. In March 2002, Karnataka had 4767 branches of different banks with each branch serving 11,000 persons, which is lower than the national average of 16,000. A majority of the silk industry in India is headquartered in Karnataka, much of it in Doddaballapura in Bengaluru Rural district and the state government intends to invest ₹700 million (equivalent to ₹1.4 billion or US\$17 million in 2023) in a "Silk City" at Muddenahalli in Chikkaballapura district. Karnataka also produces silver. The silver production of the state in 2018-19 was 214 kg whereas in 2019-20 it was 187 kg and in 2020-21 the silver production was 120 kg. Karnataka has the only village in the country which produces authentic Indian national flags according to manufacturing process and specifications for the flag are laid out by the Bureau of Indian Standards at Hubli.

Transport Air transport in Karnataka, as in the rest of the country, is still a fledgling but fast expanding sector. Karnataka has airports at Bengaluru, Mangalore, Belgaum, Hubli, Hampi, Bellary, Gulbarga, and Mysore with

international operations from Bengaluru and Mangalore airports. Shimoga and Bijapur airports are being built under the UDAN Scheme.

Karnataka has a railway network with a total length of approximately 3,089 km (1,919 mi). Until the creation of the South-Western Railway Zone headquartered at Hubli in 2003, the railway network in the state was in the Southern Railway zone, South-Central Railway Zone and Western Railway zone. Several parts of the state now come under the South Western Railway zone with 3 Railway Divisions at Bengaluru, Mysore, Hubli, with the remainder under the Southern Railway zone and Konkan Railway Zone, which is considered one of India's biggest railway projects of the century due to the difficult terrain. Bengaluru and other cities in the state are well-connected with intrastate and inter-state destinations.

Karnataka has 11 ports, including the New Mangalore Port, a major port and ten minor ports, of which three were operational in 2012. The New Mangalore port was incorporated as the ninth major port in India on 4 May 1974. This port handled 32.04 million tonnes of traffic in the fiscal year 2006-07 with 17.92 million tonnes of imports and 14.12 million tonnes of exports. The port also handled 1015 vessels including 18 cruise vessels during the year 2006-07. Foreigners can enter Mangalore through the New Mangalore Port with the help of Electronic visa (e-visa). Cruise ships from Europe, North America and UAE arrive at New Mangalore Port to visit the tourist places across Coastal Karnataka. The port of Mangalore is among the 4 major ports of India that receive over 25 international cruise ships every year. The total lengths of National Highways and State Highways in Karnataka are 3,973 and 9,829 km (2,469 and 6,107 mi), respectively. The state transport corporations, transports an average of 2.2 million passengers daily and employs about 25,000 people. The Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) and The Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) headquartered in Bengaluru, The Kalyana Karnataka Road Transport Corporation (KKRTC) headquartered in Gulbarga, and The North Western Karnataka Road Transport Corporation (NWKRTC) headquartered in Hubli are the 4 state-owned transport corporations.

Culture The diverse linguistic and religious ethnicities that are native to Karnataka, combined with their long histories, have contributed immensely to the varied cultural heritage of the state. Apart from Kannadigas, Karnataka is home to Tuluvas, Kodavas and Konkanis. Minor populations of Tibetan Buddhists and tribes like the Soligas, Yeravas, Todas and Siddhis also live in Karnataka. The traditional folk arts cover the entire gamut of music, dance, drama, storytelling by itinerant troupes, etc. Yakshagana of Tulu Nadu, Uttara Kannada, and Malnad regions Karnataka, a classical dance drama, is one of the major theatrical forms of Karnataka. Contemporary theatre culture in Karnataka remains vibrant with organisations like Ninasam, Ranga Shankara, Rangayana and Prabhat Kalavidaru continuing to build on the foundations laid by Gubbi Veeranna, T. P. Kailasam, B. V. Karanth, K V Subbanna, Prasanna and others. Veeragase, Kamsale, Kolata and Dollu Kunitha are popular dance forms. The Mysore style of Bharatanatya, nurtured and popularised by the likes of the legendary Jatti Tayamma, continues to hold sway in Karnataka, and Bengaluru also enjoys an eminent place as one of the foremost centres of Bharatanatya.

Karnataka also has a special place in the world of Indian classical music, with both Karnataka (Carnatic) and Hindustani styles finding place in the state, and Karnataka has produced a number of stalwarts in both styles. The Haridasa movement of the sixteenth century contributed significantly to the development of Karnataka (Carnatic) music as a performing art form. Purandara Dasa, one of the most revered Haridasas, is known as the Karnataka Sangeeta Pitamaha ('Father of Karnataka a.k.a. Carnatic music'). Celebrated Hindustani musicians like Gangubai Hangal, Mallikarjun Mansur, Bhimsen Joshi, Basavaraja Rajaguru, Sawai Gandharva and several others hail from Karnataka, and some of them have been recipients of the Kalidas Samman, Padma

Bhushan and Padma Vibhushan awards. Noted Carnatic musicians include Violin T. Chowdiah, Veena Sheshanna, Mysore Vasudevachar, Doreswamy Iyengar and Thitte Krishna Iyengar. Gamaka is another classical music genre based on Carnatic music that is practised in Karnataka. Kannada Bhavageete is a genre of popular music that draws inspiration from the expressionist poetry of modern poets. The Mysore school of painting has produced painters like Sundarayya, Tanjavur Kondayya, B. Venkatappa and Keshavayya. Chitrakala Parishat is an organisation in Karnataka dedicated to promoting painting, mainly in the Mysore painting style. Saree is the traditional dress of women in Karnataka. Women in Kodagu have a distinct style of wearing the saree, different from the rest of Karnataka. Dhoti, known as Panche in Karnataka, is the traditional attire of men. Shirt, Trousers and Salwar kameez are widely worn in Urban areas. Mysore Peta is the traditional headgear of southern Karnataka, while the pagadi or pataga (similar to the Rajasthani turban) is preferred in the northern areas of the state. Rice and Ragi form the staple food in South Karnataka, whereas Jolada rotti, Sorghum is staple to North Karnataka. Bisi bele bath, Jolada rotti, Ragi mudde, Uppittu, Benne Dose, Masala Dose and Maddur Vade are some of the popular food items in Karnataka. Among sweets, Mysore Pak, Karadantu of Gokak and Amingad, Belgaavi Kunda and Dharwad pedha are popular. Apart from this, coastal Karnataka and Kodagu have distinctive cuisines of their own. Udupi cuisine of coastal Karnataka is popular all over India.

Education As per the 2011 census, Karnataka had a literacy rate of 75.60%, with 82.85% of males and 68.13% of females in the state being literate. The Indian Institute of Science and Manipal Academy of Higher Education were ranked within the top 10 universities of India by NIRF 2020. The state is home to some of the premier educational and research institutions of India such as the Indian Institute of Management - Bengaluru, the Indian Institute of Technology - Dharwad the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences - Bengaluru, the National Institute of Technology Karnataka - Surathkal and the National Law School of India University - Bengaluru. In March 2006, Karnataka had 54,529 primary schools with 252,875 teachers and 8.495 million students, and 9498 secondary schools with 92,287 teachers and 1.384 million students. There are three kinds of schools in the state, viz., government-run, private aided (financial aid is provided by the government) and private unaided (no financial aid is provided). The primary languages of instruction in most schools are Kannada and English.

The syllabus taught in the schools is either of KSEEB (SSLC) and Pre-University Course (PUC) of the State Syllabus, the CBSE of the Central Syllabus, CISCE, IGCSE, IB, NIOS, etc., are all defined by the Department of Public Instruction of the Government of Karnataka. The state has two Sainik Schools - Kodagu Sainik School in Kodagu and Bijapur Sainik School in Bijapur. To maximise attendance in schools, the Karnataka Government has launched a mid-day meal scheme in government and aided schools in which free lunch is provided to the students. Statewide board examinations are conducted at the end of secondary education. Students who qualify are allowed to pursue a two-year pre-university course, after which they become eligible to pursue under-graduate degrees. There are 481-degree colleges affiliated with one of the universities in the state, viz. Bengaluru University, Rani Channamma University, Belagavi, Gulbarga University, Karnatak University, Kuvempu University, Mangalore University and Mysore University. In 1998, the engineering colleges in the state were brought under the newly formed Visvesvaraya Technological University headquartered in Belgaum, whereas the medical colleges are run under the jurisdiction of the Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences headquartered in Bengaluru. Some of these baccalaureate colleges are accredited with the status of a deemed university. There are 186 engineering, 39 medical and 41 dental colleges in the state. Udupi, Sringeri, Gokarna and Melkote are well-known places of Sanskrit and Vedic learning. In 2015 the Central Government decided to establish the first Indian Institute of Technology in Karnataka at Dharwad. Tulu and Konkani languages are taught as an optional subject in the twin districts of Dakshina Kannada and Udupi. Christ University, Jain University, CMR University, Dayananda Sagar University, PES University and REVA University are notable

private universities in Karnataka. On 9 February 2022, Karnataka shut its schools for three days after the regional administration-backed schools imposed a hijab ban, leading to widespread protests and violence. Other universities in the state began enforcing prohibitions after Hindu students, supported by right-wing Hindu groups, argued that if hijabs were allowed in classrooms, they should wear saffron shawls. On 5 February 2022, the Karnataka state government advised colleges to guarantee that "clothes which disturb equality, integrity, and public law and order should not be worn" in apparent support of schools' ability to enforce a ban.

Media The era of Kannada newspapers started in the year 1843 when Hermann Melling, a missionary from Basel Mission, published the first Kannada newspaper called Mangaluru Samachara in Mangalore. The first Kannada periodical, Mysuru Vrittanta Bodhini was started by Bhashyam Bhashyacharya in Mysore. Shortly after Indian independence in 1948, K. N. Guruswamy founded The Printers (Mysuru) Private Limited and began publishing two newspapers, Deccan Herald and Prajavani. Presently The Times of India and Vijaya Karnataka are the largest-selling English and Kannada newspapers respectively. A vast number of weekly, biweekly and monthly magazines are under publication in both Kannada and English. Vijay Karnataka, Vijayvani, Prajavani, Udaywani, Kannada Prabha are some popular dailies published from Karnataka. Doordarshan is the broadcaster of the Government of India and its channel DD Chandana is dedicated to Kannada. Prominent Kannada channels include Colors Kannada, Zee Kannada, Star Suvarna and Udaya TV. Karnataka occupies a special place in the history of Indian radio. In 1935, Aakashvani, the first private radio station in India, was started by Prof. M.V. Gopalaswamy in Mysore. The popular radio station was taken over by the local municipality and later by All India Radio (AIR) and moved to Bengaluru in 1955. Later in 1957, AIR adopted the original name of the radio station, Aakashvani as its own. Some of the popular programs aired by AIR Bengaluru included Nisarga Sampada and Sasya Sanjeevini which were programs that taught science through songs, plays, and stories. These two programs became so popular that they were translated and broadcast in 18 different languages and the entire series was recorded on cassettes by the Government of Karnataka and distributed to thousands of schools across the state. Karnataka has witnessed a growth in FM radio channels, mainly in the cities of Bengaluru, Mangalore and Mysore, which has become hugely popular.

Sports Karnataka's smallest district, Kodagu, is a major contributor to Indian field hockey, producing numerous players who have represented India at the international level. The annual Kodava Hockey Festival is the largest hockey tournament in the world. Bengaluru has hosted a WTA tennis event and, in 1997, it hosted the fourth National Games of India. The Sports Authority of India, the premier sports institute in the country, and the Nike Tennis Academy are also situated in Bengaluru. Karnataka has been referred to as the cradle of Indian swimming because of its high standards in comparison to other states.

One of the most popular sports in Karnataka is cricket. The state cricket team has won the Ranji Trophy seven times, second only to Mumbai in terms of success. Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru regularly hosts international Cricket matches and is also the home of the National Cricket Academy, which was opened in 2000 to nurture potential international players. Many cricketers have represented India and in one international match held in the 1990s; players from Karnataka composed the majority of the national team. The Royal Challengers Bengaluru, an Indian Premier League franchise, the Bengaluru Football Club, an Indian Super League franchise, the Bengaluru Yodhas, a Pro Wrestling League franchise, the Bengaluru Blasters, a Premier Badminton League franchise and the Bengaluru Bulls, a Pro Kabaddi League franchise are based in Bengaluru. The Karnataka Premier League is an inter-regional Twenty20 cricket tournament played in the state for eight seasons till 2019. After 2019, it was replaced by Maharaja Trophy KSCA T20 tournament. Notable sportsmen from Karnataka include B.S. Chandrasekhar, Roger Binny, E. A. S. Prasanna, Anil Kumble, Javagal Srinath, Rahul Dravid, Venkatesh Prasad, Robin Uthappa, Vinay Kumar, Gundappa Vishwanath, Syed Kirmani, Stuart

Binny, K. L. Rahul, Mayank Agarwal, Manish Pandey, Karun Nair, Ashwini Ponnappa, Mahesh Bhupathi, Rohan Bopanna, Prakash Padukone who won the All England Badminton Championships in 1980 and Pankaj Advani who has won three world titles in cue sports by the age of 20 including the amateur World Snooker Championship in 2003 and the World Billiards Championship in 2005. Bijapur district has produced some of the best-known road cyclists in the national circuit. Premalata Sureban was part of the Indian contingent at the Perlis Open '99 in Malaysia. In recognition of the talent of cyclists in the district, the state government laid down a cycling track at the B.R. Ambedkar Stadium at a cost of ■4 million (US\$47,000).

Tourism By virtue of its varied geography and long history, Karnataka hosts numerous spots of interest for tourists. There is an array of ancient sculptured temples, modern cities, scenic hill ranges, forests and beaches. Karnataka has been ranked as the fourth most popular destination for tourism among the states of India. Karnataka has the second highest number of nationally protected monuments in India, second only to Uttar Pradesh, in addition to 752 monuments protected by the State Directorate of Archaeology and Museums. Another 25,000 monuments are yet to receive protection. The districts of the Western Ghats and the southern districts of the state have popular eco-tourism locations including Kudremukh, Madikeri and Agumbe. Karnataka has 25 wildlife sanctuaries and five national parks. Popular among them are Bandipur National Park, Bannerghatta National Park and Nagarhole National Park. The ruins of the Vijayanagara Empire at Hampi and the monuments of Pattadakal are on the list of UNESCO's World Heritage Sites. The cave temples at Badami and the rock-cut temples at Aihole representing the Badami Chalukyan style of architecture are also popular tourist destinations. The Hoysala temples at Beluru and Halebidu, which were built with Chloritic schist (soapstone) are proposed UNESCO World Heritage sites. The Gol Gumbaz and Ibrahim Rauza are famous examples of the Deccan Sultanate style of architecture. The monolith of Gomateshwara Bahubali at Shravanabelagola is the tallest sculpted monolith in the world, attracting tens of thousands of pilgrims during the Mahamastakabhisheka festival.

The waterfalls of Karnataka and Kudremukh are considered by some to be among the "1001 Natural Wonders of the World". Jog Falls is India's tallest single-tiered waterfall with Gokak Falls, Unchalli Falls, Magod Falls, Abbey Falls and Shivanasamudra Falls among other popular waterfalls. Several popular beaches dot the coastline, including Murudeshwara, Gokarna, Malpe and Karwar. In addition, Karnataka is home to several places of religious importance. Several Hindu temples including the famous Udupi Sri Krishna Matha, the Marikamba Temple at Sirsi, the Kollur Mookambika Temple, the Sri Manjunatha Temple at Dharmasthala, Kukke Subramanya Temple, Janardhana and Mahakali Temple at Ambalpadi, Sharadamba Temple at Shringeri attract pilgrims from all over India. Most of the holy sites of Lingayatism, like Kudalasangama and Basavana Bagewadi, are found in northern parts of the state. Shravanabelagola, Mudabidri and Karkala are famous for Jain history and monuments. Jainism had a stronghold in Karnataka in the early medieval period with Shravanabelagola as its most important centre. The Shettihalli Rosary Church near Shettihalli, an example of French colonial Gothic architecture, is a rare example of a Christian ruin, is a popular tourist site. Karnataka has become a center of health care tourism and has the highest number of approved health systems and alternative therapies in India. Along with some ISO certified government-owned hospitals, private institutions which provide international-quality services, Hospitals in Karnataka treat around 8,000 health tourists every year.

Notes See also Outline of Karnataka LGBTQ rights in Karnataka Media in Karnataka List of governors of Karnataka List of districts of Karnataka List of people from Karnataka List of butterflies of Karnataka List of airports in Karnataka

References General sources External links Government Official website Official tourism site Archived 25 January 2022 at the Wayback Machine General information Karnataka web resources provided by GovPubs at the University of Colorado Boulder Libraries Karnataka at the Encyclopdia Britannica Wikimedia Atlas of Karnataka Geographic data related to Karnataka at OpenStreetMap

Kerala

Kerala is a state on the Malabar Coast of India. It was formed on 1 November 1956 under the States Reorganisation Act, which unified the country's Malayalam-speaking regions into a single state. Covering 38,863 km² (15,005 sq mi), it is bordered by Karnataka to the north and northeast, Tamil Nadu to the east and south, and the Laccadive Sea to the west. With 33 million inhabitants according to the 2011 census, Kerala is the 13th-most populous state in India. It is divided into 14 districts, with Thiruvananthapuram as the capital. Malayalam is the most widely spoken language and, along with English, serves as an official language of the state. Kerala has been a prominent exporter of spices since 3000 BCE. The Chera dynasty, the first major kingdom in the region, rose to prominence through maritime commerce but often faced invasions from the neighbouring Chola and Pandya dynasties. In the 15th century, the spice trade attracted Portuguese traders to Kerala, initiating European colonisation in India. After Indian independence in 1947, Travancore and Cochin acceded to the newly formed republic and were merged in 1949 to form the state of Travancore-Cochin. In 1956, the modern state of Kerala was formed by merging the Malabar district, Travancore-Cochin (excluding four southern taluks), and the Kasargod taluk of South Kanara. Kerala has the highest Human Development Index, at 0.784 in 2018; the highest literacy rate, 96.2% in 2018; the highest life expectancy, at 77.3 years; and the highest sex ratio, with 1,084 women per 1,000 men and the lowest positive population growth rate in India (3.44%); . It is the least impoverished and the second-most urbanised state in the country. The state has witnessed significant emigration, particularly to the Arab states of the Persian Gulf during the Gulf Boom of the 1970s and early 1980s, and its economy relies heavily on remittances from a large Malayali expatriate population. Hinduism is practised by more than 54% of the population, followed by Islam and Christianity. The culture is a synthesis of Aryan and Dravidian traditions, shaped over millennia by influences from across India and abroad. The production of black pepper and natural rubber contributes significantly to the national output. In the agricultural sector, coconut, tea, coffee, cashew, and spices are important crops. The state has a coastline of 595 kilometres (370 mi), and 1.1 million people depend on the fishing industry, which accounts for around 3% of the state's income. The economy is largely service sector oriented, while the primary sector contributes a comparatively smaller share. Kerala has the highest media exposure in India, with newspapers published in nine languages, primarily Malayalam and English. Named as one of the ten paradises of the world by National Geographic Traveler, Kerala is one of the prominent tourist destinations of India, with coconut-lined sandy beaches, backwaters, hill stations, Ayurvedic tourism and tropical greenery as its major attractions. Kerala has a pride of place in the history of mathematics with the mathematicians from the Kerala school of astronomy and mathematics having played a pioneering role in the invention of Calculus.

Etymology The word Kerala is first recorded as Keralaputo ('son of Chera [s]') in a 3rd-century-BCE rock inscription left by the Maurya emperor Ashoka (274-237 BCE), one of his edicts pertaining to welfare. At that time, one of three states in the region was called Cheralam in Classical Tamil: Chera and Kera are variants of the same word. The word Cheral refers to the oldest known dynasty of Kerala kings and is derived from the Old Tamil word for 'lake'. Keralam may stem from the Classical Tamil cherive-alam 'declivity of a hill or a mountain slope' or chera alam 'land of the Cheras'. One folk etymology derives Kerala from the Malayalam word kera 'coconut tree' and alam 'land'; thus, 'land of coconuts', which is a nickname for the state used by locals due to the abundance of coconut trees. Kerala was alternatively called Malabar in the foreign trade circles. From the time of Cosmas Indicopleustes (6th century CE) itself, the Arab sailors used to call Kerala Male.

History Legend In stories of the Dashavatara from Hindu mythology, the lands of Kerala were recovered from the sea by the axe-wielding warrior sage Parashurama, the sixth avatar (incarnation) of Vishnu. As a result, Kerala is traditionally referred to as Parashurama Kshetram ("The Land of Parashurama"). According to legend, Parashurama threw his axe across the sea, and the water receded to the point where it landed. This land that emerged extended from Gokarna to Kanyakumari. The land that emerged was saline and uninhabitable, so Parashurama invoked the snake king Vasuki, who spat holy poison to purify the soil, transforming it into fertile land. Out of respect, Vasuki and all snakes were appointed as guardians of the land. The legend was expanded and codified in the 17th or 18th century text Keralolpathi. It links the origin of early Kerala institutions-such as land tenure and administration-to Parashurama's story. In medieval times, the Chera king Chenkuttuvan may have emulated the Parashurama tradition by throwing his spear into the sea to symbolise his lordship over it. A prominent Puranic figure associated with Kerala is Mahabali, an asura and archetypal just king who is said to have ruled the earth from Kerala. He defeated the devas in battle, driving them into exile. In response, the devas appealed to Vishnu, who assumed his fifth avatar as Vamana and, to restore order, pushed Mahabali down to Patala (the netherworld). According to popular belief, Mahabali returns to Kerala once a year, which is commemorated as the Onam festival. The Matsya Purana, one of the oldest among the 18 Puranas, situates the story of Matsya-the first avatar of Vishnu-and king Manu, the first man and ruler of the region-in the Malaya Mountains of Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

Pre-history A substantial portion of present-day Kerala is believed to have been submerged under the sea in ancient times. The discovery of marine fossils near Changanassery supports this hypothesis. Prehistoric archaeological discoveries in Kerala include Neolithic-era dolmens in the Marayur region of the Idukki district, locally known as muniyara-from muni (hermit or sage) and ara (dolmen). Rock engravings in the Edakkal caves in Wayanad date back to the Neolithic period, around 6000 BCE. Archaeological studies have identified Mesolithic, Neolithic and Megalithic sites throughout the region. These findings indicate that the development of early Kerala society and culture began in the Paleolithic Age and progressed through the Mesolithic, Neolithic and Megalithic periods. Foreign cultural interactions also played a role in shaping this development; some historians suggest possible connections with the Indus Valley Civilisation during the late Bronze Age and early Iron Age.

Ancient history Kerala has been a major spice exporter since at least 3000 BCE, according to Sumerian records, and it is continues to be referred to as the "Garden of Spices" or as the "Spice Garden of India". The region's spices attracted ancient Babylonians, Assyrians, and Egyptians to the Malabar Coast during the 3rd and 2nd millennia BCE. Arabs and Phoenicians also established trade links with Kerala during this period. The land of Keralaputra was one of four independent kingdoms in southern India during the time of Emperor Ashoka, alongside the Chola, Pandya, and Satiyaputra kingdoms. Scholars generally identify Keralaputra as another name for the Cheras, the earliest major dynasty based in Kerala. These southern territories once shared a common language and cultural framework, within a region historically known as Tamilakam. While the Cheras governed most of what is now Kerala, the southern tip of the region fell under the control of the Pandyas, whose trading port is sometimes identified in ancient Western sources as Nelcynda (or Neacyndi). Later, control of the region alternated among the Pandyas, Cheras, and Cholas. The Ays and Mushikas were two other dynasties of ancient Kerala, located to the south and north of the Chera territory, respectively. By the last centuries BCE, the coast had become an important hub for Greek and Roman trade, particularly in black pepper. The Cheras maintained commercial links with Ancient China, West Asia, Egypt, Greece, and the Roman Empire. In foreign trade records, the region was referred to as Male or Malabar. Principal ports of the time included Muziris, Berkarai, and Nelcynda. The value of Rome's annual trade with Kerala has been estimated at around 50 million sesterces. Contemporary Sangam literature describes Roman ships arriving at Muziris, laden with gold in exchange for pepper. One of the earliest Western traders to navigate the monsoon

winds to reach Kerala was Eudoxus of Cyzicus, who made the voyage around 118 or 166 BCE under the patronage of Ptolemy VIII, king of the Hellenistic Ptolemaic dynasty in Egypt. Roman establishments in the region's port cities-including a temple of Augustus and barracks for garrisoned Roman soldiers-are recorded in the Tabula Peutingeriana, the only surviving map of the Roman *cursus publicus*. Merchants from West Asia and Southern Europe established coastal posts and settlements in Kerala. The Jewish connection with Kerala is believed to date back to 573 BCE. Arab traders had links with Kerala from at least the 4th century BCE; Herodotus (484-413 BCE) noted that goods brought by Arabs from Kerala were sold to Jews in Eden. These Arab traders intermarried with local communities, leading to the formation of the Muslim Mappila community. In the 4th century CE, some Christians migrated from Persia and joined the early Syrian Christian community, which traces its origins to the evangelistic activities of Thomas the Apostle in the 1st century CE. The term Mappila-originally an honorific applied to esteemed foreign visitors-later became associated with the descendants of Jewish, Syrian Christian, and Muslim immigrants, leading to the terms Juda Mappilas, Nasrani Mappilas, and Muslim Mappilas, respectively. According to the traditions of these communities, some of the earliest religious establishments in India were built in Kerala. These include the Saint Thomas Christian churches, the Cheraman Juma Masjid (established in 629 CE), India's first mosque, and the Paradesi Synagogue (built in 1568 CE), the oldest active synagogue in the Commonwealth of Nations.

Medieval period A second Chera kingdom (c. 800-1102), also known as the Kulasekhara dynasty of Mahodayapuram, was founded by Kulasekhara Varman and governed over a territory comprising most of present-day Kerala and parts of modern Tamil Nadu. During the early phase of the Kulasekhara period, the southern region-from Nagerkovil to Thiruvalla-was controlled by the Ay dynasty. By the 10th century, however, the Ays had lost their power, and the region was incorporated into the Kulasekhara realm. Under Kulasekhara rule, Kerala experienced a flourishing period marked by developments in art, literature, trade, and the Bhakti movement within Hinduism. It was during this time that a distinct Keralite identity began to emerge, separate from Tamil culture, particularly through linguistic differentiation. For administrative purposes, the kingdom was divided into provinces governed by local chieftains called Naduvazhis. Each province was further subdivided into desams, which were overseen by Desavazhis. A series of Chera-Chola conflicts in the 11th century disrupted foreign trade through Kerala's ports. During this period, Buddhism and Jainism, which had previously coexisted with Hinduism, declined and eventually disappeared from the region. Social structures became increasingly rigid, and caste divisions deepened. The Kulasekhara dynasty ultimately fell in 1102 CE following a combined assault by the Later Pandyas and Later Cholas. In the 14th century, Ravi Varma Kulasekhara (r. 1299-1314) of the southern Venad kingdom briefly established a short-lived supremacy over much of southern India. Following his death, and in the absence of a strong central authority, the region fragmented into thirty small, frequently warring principalities. Among the most powerful were the kingdom of Samuthiri (Zamorin) in the north, Venad in the south and Kochi in the central region. In the 18th century, King Anizham Thirunal Marthanda Varma of Travancore launched a series of military campaigns and annexed territories up to northern Kerala, establishing Travancore as the dominant power in the region. The Kochi ruler sued for peace, and the Malabar region eventually came under direct British rule until Indian independence in 1947.

Colonial rule During the High and Late Middle Ages, Arab traders held a maritime monopoly over the spice trade in the Indian Ocean. This dominance was challenged during the European Age of Discovery when the spice trade-particularly in black pepper-became a major focus of European commercial activity. By the 15th century, the Portuguese had begun asserting control over eastern maritime routes, culminating in Vasco Da Gama's arrival at Kappad, near Kozhikode (Calicut), in 1498. The Zamorin of Kozhikode granted the Portuguese permission to trade with his subjects, leading to the establishment of a prosperous Portuguese factory and fort. However, tensions arose when the Portuguese attacked Arab traders operating under the Zamorin's protection, causing a breakdown in relations. Seizing the opportunity presented by rivalry between

the Zamorin and the King of Kochi, the Portuguese allied with Kochi. When Francisco de Almeida was appointed Viceroy of Portuguese India in 1505, he established his headquarters at Fort Kochi (Fort Emmanuel), rather than in Kozhikode. Under his administration, the Portuguese consolidated their influence by building several fortifications along the Malabar Coast. Despite these advances, the Portuguese faced significant resistance from the Zamorin's naval forces, particularly under the command of the Kunjali Marakkars-admirals of Kozhikode-who launched effective maritime campaigns. This resistance eventually forced the Portuguese to seek a treaty. In 1571, the Zamorin's forces defeated the Portuguese in the Battle of Chaliyam Fort, marking a major setback for Portuguese ambitions in the region. The Portuguese were eventually supplanted by the Dutch East India Company, which capitalised on ongoing conflicts between the Kozhikode and Kochi to gain control over trade in the region. However, the Dutch too faced military resistance, most notably from Marthanda Varma of the Travancore royal family. After a decisive Dutch defeat at the Battle of Colachel in 1741, the Treaty of Mavelikkara was signed in 1753, forcing the Dutch to withdraw from regional political affairs and confining their role to trade. Marthanda Varma continued his military campaigns, establishing Travancore as the preeminent power in Kerala. In 1766, Hyder Ali, ruler of Mysore, invaded northern Kerala, and his son and successor, Tipu Sultan, launched military campaigns against the expanding British East India Company. These confrontations contributed to two of the four Anglo-Mysore Wars. By the early 1790s, Tipu Sultan was forced to cede the Malabar district and South Kanara to the British, and these regions were annexed into the Madras Presidency of British India in 1792. The British East India Company also secured tributary alliances with Kochi in 1791 and Travancore in 1795. By the end of 18th century, the entirety of Kerala was either directly administered by the British or under their suzerainty. In the 20th century, Kerala was the site of several major uprisings during the Indian independence movement. Among the most notable was the 1921 Malabar Rebellion, in which Mappila Muslims of the Malabar region rioted against Hindu zamindars (landlords) and British colonial authorities. Social reform movements also gained momentum during this period, particularly those challenging caste-based discrimination. A major milestone was the Temple Entry Proclamation of 1936 in Travancore, which granted lower-caste Hindus the right to enter temples previously restricted to upper castes.

State of India After the Partition of India in 1947 into the independent dominions of India and Pakistan, the princely states of Travancore and Kochi acceded to the Union of India. On 1 July 1949, the two states were merged to form Travancore-Cochin. On 1 November 1956, the taluk of Kasargod from the South Kanara district of Madras, the Malabar district of Madras State (excluding Gudalur taluk of Nilgiris district, Lakshadweep, Topslip, and the Attappadi forest east of Anakatti), and the state of Travancore-Cochin-excluding four southern taluks (Kanyakumari district and Shenkottai taluks), which were transferred to Tamil Nadu-were merged to form the state of Kerala under the States Reorganisation Act. A Communist-led government under E. M. S. Namboodiripad was formed following the first elections for the new Kerala Legislative Assembly in 1957. It was among the earliest democratically elected Communist governments in the world, following Communist electoral success in the Republic of San Marino in 1945.

Geography The state is wedged between the Laccadive Sea and the Western Ghats. Lying between northern latitudes 8°18' and 12°48' and eastern longitudes 74°52' and 77°22', Kerala experiences humid tropical rainforest climate with some cyclones. The state has a coast of 590 km (370 mi) and the width of the state varies between 11 and 121 kilometres (7 and 75 mi). Geographically, Kerala can be divided into three climatically distinct regions: the eastern highlands; rugged and cool mountainous terrain, the central mid-lands; rolling hills, and the western lowlands; coastal plains. Pre-Cambrian and Pleistocene geological formations compose the bulk of Kerala's terrain. A catastrophic flood in Kerala in 1341 CE drastically modified its terrain and consequently affected its history; it also created a natural harbour for spice transport. The eastern region of Kerala consists of high mountains, gorges and deep-cut valleys immediately west of the Western Ghats' rain shadow. 41 of Kerala's west-flowing rivers, and 3 of its east-flowing ones originate in this region. The Western Ghats form a

wall of mountains interrupted only near Palakkad; hence also known Palghat, where the Palakkad Gap breaks. The Western Ghats rise on average to 1,500 metres (4,900 feet) above sea level, while the highest peaks reach around 2,500 metres (8,200 feet). Anamudi in the Idukki district is the highest peak in south India, is at an elevation of 2,695 m (8,842 ft). The Western Ghats mountain chain is recognised as one of the world's eight "hottest hotspots" of biological diversity and is listed among UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The chain's forests are considered to be older than the Himalaya mountains. The Athirappilly Falls, which is situated on the background of Western Ghat mountain ranges, is also known as The Niagara of India. It is located in the Chalakudy River and is the largest waterfall in the state. Wayanad is the sole Plateau in Kerala. The eastern regions in the districts of Wayanad, Malappuram (Chaliyar valley at Nilambur), and Palakkad (Attappadi Valley), which together form parts of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve and a continuation of the Mysore Plateau, are known for natural Gold fields, along with the adjoining districts of Karnataka. Minerals including Ilmenite, Monazite, Thorium, and Titanium, are found in the coastal belt of Kerala. Kerala's coastal belt of Karunagappally is known for high background radiation from thorium-containing monazite sand. In some coastal panchayats, median outdoor radiation levels are more than 4 mGy/yr and, in certain locations on the coast, it is as high as 70 mGy/yr. Kerala's western coastal belt is relatively flat compared to the eastern region, and is criss-crossed by a network of interconnected brackish canals, lakes, estuaries, and rivers known as the Kerala Backwaters. Kuttanad, also known as The Rice Bowl of Kerala, has the lowest altitude in India, and is also one of the few places in world where cultivation takes place below sea level. The country's longest lake Vembanad, dominates the backwaters; it lies between Alappuzha and Kochi and is about 200 km² (77 sq mi) in area. Around eight percent of India's waterways are found in Kerala. Kerala's 44 rivers include the Periyar; 244 kilometres (152 mi), Bharathapuzha; 209 kilometres (130 mi), Pamba; 176 kilometres (109 mi), Chaliyar; 169 kilometres (105 mi), Kadalundipuzha; 130 kilometres (81 mi), Chalakudipuzha; 130 kilometres (81 mi), Valappattanam; 129 kilometres (80 mi) and the Achankovil River; 128 kilometres (80 mi). The average length of the rivers is 64 kilometres (40 mi). Many of the rivers are small and entirely fed by monsoon rain. As Kerala's rivers are small and lacking in delta, they are more prone to environmental effects. The rivers face problems such as sand mining and pollution. The state experiences several natural hazards like landslides, floods and droughts. The state was also affected by the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, and in 2018 received the worst flooding in nearly a century. In 2024, Kerala experienced its worst landslides in history.

Climate With around 120-140 rainy days per year, Kerala has a wet and maritime tropical climate influenced by the seasonal heavy rains of the southwest summer monsoon and northeast winter monsoon. Around 65% of the rainfall occurs from June to August corresponding to the Southwest monsoon, and the rest from September to December corresponding to Northeast monsoon. The moisture-laden winds of the Southwest monsoon, on reaching the southernmost point of the Indian Peninsula, because of its topography, divides into two branches; the "Arabian Sea Branch" and the "Bay of Bengal Branch". The "Arabian Sea Branch" of the Southwest monsoon first hits the Western Ghats, making Kerala the first state in India to receive rain from the Southwest monsoon. The distribution of pressure patterns is reversed in the Northeast monsoon, during this season the cold winds from North India pick up moisture from the Bay of Bengal and precipitate it on the east coast of peninsular India. In Kerala, the influence of the Northeast monsoon is seen in southern districts only. Kerala's rainfall averages 2,923 mm (115 in) annually. Some of Kerala's drier lowland regions average only 1,250 mm (49 in); the mountains of the eastern Idukki district receive more than 5,000 mm (197 in) of orographic precipitation: the highest in the state. In eastern Kerala, a drier tropical wet and dry climate prevails. During the summer, the state is prone to gale-force winds, storm surges, cyclone-related torrential downpours, occasional droughts, and rises in sea level. The mean daily temperature ranges from 19.8 C to 36.7 C. Mean annual temperatures range from 25.0 to 27.5 C in the coastal lowlands to 20.0-22.5 C in the eastern highlands.

Flora and fauna Most of the biodiversity is concentrated and protected in the Western Ghats. Three-quarters of the land area of Kerala was under thick forest up to the 18th century. As of 2004, over 25% of India's 15,000 plant species are in Kerala. Out of the 4,000 flowering plant species; 1,272 of which are endemic to Kerala, 900 are medicinal, and 159 are threatened. Its 9,400 km² of forests include tropical wet evergreen and semi-evergreen forests (lower and middle elevations-3,470 km²), tropical moist and dry deciduous forests (mid-elevations-4,100 km² and 100 km², respectively), and montane subtropical and temperate (shola) forests (highest elevations-100 km²). Altogether, 24% of Kerala is forested. Four of the world's Ramsar Convention listed wetlands-Lake Sasthamkotta, Ashtamudi Lake, Thrissur-Ponnani Kole Wetlands, and the Vembanad-Kol wetlands-are in Kerala, as well as 1455.4 km² of the vast Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve and 1828 km² of the Agasthyamala Biosphere Reserve. Subjected to extensive clearing for cultivation in the 20th century, much of the remaining forest cover is now protected from clearfelling. Eastern Kerala's windward mountains shelter tropical moist forests and tropical dry forests, which are common in the Western Ghats. The world's oldest teak plantation 'Conolly's Plot' is in Nilambur. Kerala's fauna are notable for their diversity and high rates of endemism: it includes 118 species of mammals (1 endemic), 500 species of birds, 189 species of freshwater fish, 173 species of reptiles (10 of them endemic), and 151 species of amphibians (36 endemic). These are threatened by extensive habitat destruction, including soil erosion, landslides, salinisation, and resource extraction. In the forests, sonokeling, *Dalbergia latifolia*, anjili, mullumurikku, *Erythrina*, and *Cassia* number among the more than 1,000 species of trees in Kerala. Other plants include bamboo, wild black pepper, wild cardamom, the calamus rattan palm, and aromatic vetiver grass, *Vetiveria zizanioides*. Indian elephant, Bengal tiger, Indian leopard, Nilgiri tahr, common palm civet, and grizzled giant squirrels are also found in the forests. Reptiles include the king cobra, viper, python, and mugger crocodile. Kerala's birds include the Malabar trogon, the great hornbill, Kerala laughingthrush, darter and southern hill myna. In the lakes, wetlands, and waterways, fish such as Kadu, Red Line Torpedo Barb and choottachi; orange chromide-*Etroplus maculatus* are found. Recently, a newly described tardigrade (water bears) species collected from Vadakara coast of Kerala named after Kerala State; *Stygarcus keralensis*.

Divisions, districts and cities The state's 14 districts are distributed among six regions: North Malabar (far-north Kerala), South Malabar (north-central Kerala), Kochi (central Kerala), Northern Travancore (south-central Kerala), Central Travancore (southern Kerala) and Southern Travancore (far-south Kerala). The districts that serve as administrative regions for taxation and land revenue purposes are further subdivided into 27 revenue subdivisions and 77 taluks, which have fiscal and administrative powers over settlements within their borders, including maintenance of local land records. Kerala's taluks are further subdivided into 1,674 revenue villages. Since the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments, local self-government institutions in Kerala function as the third tier of government, comprising 14 District Panchayats, 152 Block Panchayats, and 941 Grama Panchayats for rural governance, and 87 Municipalities, six Municipal Corporations, and one Township for urban governance. Mah, a part of the Indian union territory of Puducherry, though 647 kilometres (402 mi) away from it, is a coastal exclave surrounded by Kerala on all of its landward approaches. The Kannur District surrounds Mah on three sides with the Kozhikode District on the fourth. In 1664, the municipality of Fort Kochi was established by Dutch Malabar, making it the first municipality in the Indian subcontinent, which was dissolved when the Dutch authority got weaker in the 18th century. The municipalities of Kozhikode, Palakkad, Fort Kochi, Kannur, and Thalassery, were founded on 1 November 1866 of the British Indian Empire, making them the first modern municipalities in the state of Kerala. The Municipality of Thiruvananthapuram came into existence in 1920. After two decades, during the reign of Sree Chithira Thirunal, Thiruvananthapuram Municipality was converted into Corporation on 30 October 1940, making it the oldest Municipal Corporation of Kerala. The first Municipal Corporation founded after the independence of India as well as the second-oldest Municipal Corporation of the state is at Kozhikode in the year 1962. There are six Municipal corporations in Kerala that govern Thiruvananthapuram, Kozhikode, Kochi, Kollam, Thrissur, and Kannur. The Thiruvananthapuram

Municipal Corporation is the largest corporation in Kerala while Kochi metropolitan area named Kochi UA is the largest urban agglomeration. According to a survey by economics research firm Indicus Analytics in 2007, Thiruvananthapuram, Kozhikode, Kochi, Kollam, Thrissur are among the "best cities in India to live"; the survey used parameters such as health, education, environment, safety, public facilities and entertainment to rank the cities.

Government and administration The state is governed by a parliamentary system of representative democracy. Kerala has a unicameral legislature. The Kerala Legislative Assembly also known as Niyamasabha, consists of 140 members who are elected for five-year terms. The state elects 20 members to the Lok Sabha, the lower house of the Indian Parliament, and 9 members to the Rajya Sabha, the upper house. The Government of Kerala is a democratically elected body in India with the governor as its constitutional head and is appointed by the president of India for a five-year term. The leader of the party or coalition with a majority in the Legislative Assembly is appointed as the chief minister by the governor, and the council of ministers is appointed by the governor on the advice of the chief minister. The governor remains a ceremonial head of the state, while the chief minister and his council are responsible for day-to-day government functions. The council of ministers consists of Cabinet Ministers and Ministers of State (MoS). The Secretariat headed by the Chief Secretary assists the council of ministers. The Chief Secretary is also the administrative head of the government. Each government department is headed by a minister, who is assisted by an Additional Chief Secretary or a Principal Secretary, who is usually an officer of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS). The Additional Chief Secretaries/Principal Secretaries serve as the administrative heads of the department to which they are assigned. Each department also has officers of the rank of Secretary, Special Secretary, Joint Secretary, and other supporting officials, who assist the Minister and the Additional Chief Secretary or Principal Secretary in carrying out departmental functions and ensuring effective coordination. Each Secretariat department is in charge of a number of executive departments. The executive departments or agencies (known as directorates, commissionerates, and similar entities) are responsible for implementing government policies and carrying out work at the field level. These entities are headed by a Director, Commissioner, Chief, or Director General, who functions as the Head of Department. Each of these departments has its own administrative subdivisions. The state is divided into fourteen districts, each headed by a District Collector appointed by the government. The District Collector is responsible for land revenue administration, disaster management, elections, maintenance of law and order, and coordination of various government departments within the district. For administrative convenience, each district is further divided into revenue divisions, taluks, and revenue villages, primarily for the purpose of land revenue administration. Auxiliary authorities, known as panchayats and municipalities, manage local affairs. These bodies are regularly constituted through local body elections. The judiciary consists of the Kerala High Court and a system of lower courts. The High Court, located in Kochi, has a Chief Justice along with 35 permanent and twelve additional pro tempore justices as of 2021. The high court also hears cases from the Union Territory of Lakshadweep. The state's subordinate judiciary consists of District Courts in each of the 14 districts, headed by District Judges, along with civil courts (Munsiff and Senior Civil Judges) and criminal courts (Judicial Magistrates, Chief Judicial Magistrates, and Sessions Courts) handling cases according to their jurisdiction.

Local government In Kerala, local government bodies such as Panchayats, Municipalities, and Corporations have existed since 1959. However, a significant decentralization initiative began in 1993, aligning with constitutional amendments by the union government. The Kerala Panchayati Raj Act and the Kerala Municipality Act were enacted in 1994, establishing a three-tier system for rural governance and a single-tier system for urban governance. The rural governance structure consists of Gram Panchayats, Block Panchayats, and District Panchayats. The Acts define clear powers for these institutions. For urban areas, the Kerala Municipality Act provides a single-tier system, comprising Municipalities and Municipal Corporations, which are

responsible for local governance and civic administration. These bodies receive substantial administrative, legal, and financial powers to ensure effective decentralization. Currently, the state government allocates around 40% of the state plan outlay to local governments. Kerala has 1,200 local bodies, including 941 Gram Panchayats, 152 Block Panchayats, 14 District Panchayats, 87 Municipalities, and 6 Municipal Corporations. Kerala was declared the first digital state of India in 2016 and, according to the India Corruption Survey 2019 by Transparency International, is considered the least corrupt state in India. The Public Affairs Index-2020 designated Kerala as the best-governed state in India.

Politics Kerala hosts two major political alliances: the United Democratic Front (UDF), led by the Indian National Congress; and the Left Democratic Front (LDF), led by the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI(M)). As of 2021 Kerala Legislative Assembly election, the LDF is the ruling coalition; Pinarayi Vijayan of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) is the Chief Minister, while V. D. Satheesan of the Indian National Congress is the Leader of the Opposition. According to the Constitution of India, Kerala has a parliamentary system of representative democracy; universal suffrage is granted to residents.

Economy After independence, the state was managed as a social democratic welfare economy. The "Kerala phenomenon" or "Kerala model of development" of very high human development and in comparison low economic development has resulted from a strong service sector. In 2019-20, the economy of Kerala was the 8th-largest in India with **■**8.55 trillion (US\$100 billion) in gross state domestic product (GSDP) and a per capita net state domestic product of **■**222,000 (US\$2,600). In 2019-20, the tertiary sector contributed around 63% of the state's GSVA, compared to 28% by secondary sector, and 8% by primary sector. In the period between 1960 and 2020, Kerala's economy was gradually shifting from an agrarian economy into a service-based one.

The state's service sector which accounts for around 63% of its revenue is mainly based upon hospitality industry, tourism, Ayurveda and medical services, pilgrimage, information technology, transportation, financial sector, and education. Major initiatives under the industrial sector include Cochin Shipyard, shipbuilding, oil refinery, software industry, coastal mineral industries, food processing, marine products processing, and Rubber based products. The primary sector of the state is mainly based upon cash crops. Kerala produces a significant amount of the national output of cash crops such as coconut, tea, coffee, pepper, natural rubber, cardamom, and cashew in India. The cultivation of food crops began to reduce since the 1950s. Kerala's economy depends significantly on emigrants working in foreign countries, mainly in the Arab states of the Persian Gulf, and the remittances annually contribute more than a fifth of GSDP. The state witnessed significant emigration during the Gulf Boom of the 1970s and early 1980s. In 2012, Kerala still received the highest remittances of all states: US\$11.3 billion, which was nearly 16% of the US\$71 billion remittances to the country. In 2015, NRI deposits in Kerala have soared to over **■**1 lakh crore (US\$12 billion), amounting to one-sixth of all the money deposited in NRI accounts, which comes to about **■**7 lakh crore (US\$83 billion). Malappuram district has the highest proportion of emigrant households in state. A study commissioned by the Kerala State Planning Board, suggested that the state look for other reliable sources of income, instead of relying on remittances to finance its expenditure. As of March 2002, Kerala's banking sector comprised 3341 local branches: each branch served 10,000 people, lower than the national average of 16,000; the state has the third-highest bank penetration among Indian states. On 1 October 2011, Kerala became the first state in the country to have at least one banking facility in every village. Unemployment in 2007 was estimated at 9.4%; chronic issues are underemployment, low employability of youth, and a low female labour participation rate of only 13.5%, as was the practice of Nokku kooli, "wages for looking on". By 1999-2000, the rural and urban poverty rates dropped to 10.0% and 9.6%, respectively. The state's budget of 2020-2021 was **■**1.15 lakh crore (US\$14 billion). The state government's tax revenues (excluding the shares from Union tax pool) amounted to **■**674 billion (US\$8.0

billion) in 2020-21; up from ■557 billion (US\$6.6 billion) in 2019-20. Its non-tax revenues (excluding the shares from Union tax pool) of the Government of Kerala reached ■146 billion (US\$1.7 billion) in 2020-2021. However, Kerala's high ratio of taxation to GSDP has not alleviated chronic budget deficits and unsustainable levels of government debt, which have impacted social services. A record total of 223 hartals were observed in 2006, resulting in a revenue loss of over ■20 billion (US\$240 million). Kerala's 10% rise in GDP is 3% more than the national GDP. In 2013, capital expenditure rose 30% compared to the national average of 5%, owners of two-wheelers rose by 35% compared to the national rate of 15%, and the teacher-pupil ratio rose 50% from 2:100 to 4:100. The Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Board is a government-owned financial institution in the state to mobilise funds for infrastructure development from outside the state revenue, aiming at overall infrastructure development of the state. In November 2015, the Ministry of Urban Development selected seven cities of Kerala for a comprehensive development program known as the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT). A package of ■2.5 million (US\$30,000) was declared for each of the cities to develop service level improvement plan (SLIP), a plan for better functioning of the local urban bodies in the cities of Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Alappuzha, Kochi, Thrissur, Kozhikode, and Palakkad. The Grand Kerala Shopping Festival (GKSF) was started in 2007, covering more than 3000 outlets across the nine cities of Kerala with huge tax discounts, VAT refunds and huge array of prizes. Lulu International Mall at Thiruvananthapuram is the largest shopping mall in India. Despite many achievements, Kerala faces many challenges like high levels of unemployment that disproportionately impact educated women, a high degree of global exposure and a very fragile environment.

Industries Traditional industries manufacturing items; coir, handlooms, and handicrafts employ around one million people. Kerala supplies 60% of the total global produce of white coir fibre. India's first coir factory was set up in Alleppey in 1859-60. The Central Coir Research Institute was established there in 1959. As per the 2006-2007 census by SIDBI, there are 1,468,104 micro, small and medium enterprises in Kerala employing 3,031,272 people. The KSIDC has promoted more than 650 medium and large manufacturing firms in Kerala, creating employment for 72,500 people. A mining sector of 0.3% of GSDP involves extraction of ilmenite, kaolin, bauxite, silica, quartz, rutile, zircon, and sillimanite. Other major sectors are tourism, medical sector, educational sector, banking, ship building, oil refinery, infrastructure, manufacturing, home gardens, animal husbandry and business process outsourcing.

Agriculture The major change in agriculture in Kerala occurred in the 1970s when production of rice fell due to increased availability of rice all over India and decreased availability of labour. Consequently, investment in rice production decreased and a major portion of the land shifted to the cultivation of perennial tree crops and seasonal crops. Profitability of crops fell due to a shortage of farm labour, the high price of land, and the uneconomic size of operational holdings. Only 27.3% of the families in Kerala depend upon agriculture for their livelihood, which is also the least corresponding rate in India. Kerala produces 97% of the national output of black pepper and accounts for 85% of the natural rubber in the country. Coconut, tea, coffee, cashew, and spices-including cardamom, vanilla, cinnamon, and nutmeg are the main agricultural products. Around 80% of India's export quality cashew kernels are prepared in Kollam. The key cash crop is coconut and Kerala ranks first in the area of coconut cultivation in India. Around 90% of the total Cardamom produced in India is from Kerala. India is the second-largest producer of Cardamom in world. About 20% of the total Coffee produced in India are from Kerala. The key agricultural staple is rice, with varieties grown in extensive paddy fields. Home gardens made up a significant portion of the agricultural sector.

Fisheries With 590 kilometres (370 miles) of coastal belt, 400,000 hectares of inland water resources and approximately 220,000 active fishermen, Kerala is one of the leading producers of fish in India. According to

2003-04 reports, about 11 lakh (1.1 million) people earn their livelihood from fishing and allied activities such as drying, processing, packaging, exporting and transporting fisheries. The annual yield of the sector was estimated as 6,08,000 tons in 2003-04. This contributes to about 3% of the total economy of the state. In 2006, around 22% of the total Indian marine fishery yield was from Kerala. During the southwest monsoon, a suspended mud bank develops along the shore, which in turn leads to calm ocean water, peaking the output of the fishing industry. This phenomenon is locally called *chakara*. The waters provide a large variety of fish: pelagic species; 59%, demersal species; 23%, crustaceans, molluscs and others for 18%. Around 1050,000 (1.050 million) fishermen haul an annual catch of 668,000 tonnes as of a 1999-2000 estimate; 222 fishing villages are strung along the 590-kilometre (370-mile) coast. Another 113 fishing villages dot the hinterland.

Transportation Roads Kerala has 331,904 kilometres (206,236 mi) of roads, which accounts for 5.6% of India's total. This translates to about 9.94 kilometres (6.18 mi) of road per thousand people, compared to an average of 4.87 kilometres (3.03 mi) in the country. Roads in Kerala include 1,812 kilometres (1,126 mi) of national highway; 1.6% of the nation's total, 4,342 kilometres (2,698 mi) of state highway; 2.5% of the nation's total, 27,470 kilometres (17,070 mi) of district roads; 4.7% of the nation's total, 33,201 kilometres (20,630 mi) of urban (municipal) roads; 6.3% of the nation's total, and 158,775 kilometres (98,658 mi) of rural roads; 3.8% of the nation's total. Kottayam has the maximum length of roads among the districts of Kerala, while Wayanad accounts for minimum. Most of Kerala's west coast is accessible through the NH 66 (previously NH 17 and 47); and the eastern side is accessible through state highways. New projects for hill and coastal highways were recently announced under KIIFB. National Highway 66, with the longest stretch of road (1,622 kilometres (1,008 mi)) connects Kanyakumari to Mumbai; it enters Kerala via Talapady in Kasargod and passes through Kannur, Kozhikode, Malappuram, Guruvayur, Kochi, Alappuzha, Kollam, Thiruvananthapuram before entering Tamil Nadu. Palakkad district is generally referred to as the Gateway of Kerala, due to the presence of the Palakkad Gap in the Western Ghats, through which the northern (Malabar) and southern (Travancore) parts of Kerala are connected to the rest of India via road and rail. The state's largest checkpoint, Walayar, is on NH 544, in the border town between Kerala and Tamil Nadu, through which a large amount of public and commercial transportation reaches the northern and central districts of Kerala. The Department of Public Works is responsible for maintaining and expanding the state highways system and major district roads. The Kerala State Transport Project (KSTP), which includes the GIS-based Road Information and Management Project (RIMS), is responsible for maintaining and expanding the state highways in Kerala. It also oversees a few major district roads. Traffic in Kerala has been growing at a rate of 10-11% every year, resulting in high traffic and pressure on the roads. Traffic density is nearly four times the national average, reflecting the state's high population. Kerala's annual total of road accidents is among the nation's highest. The accidents are mainly the result of the narrow roads and irresponsible driving. National Highways in Kerala are among the narrowest in the country and will remain so for the foreseeable future, as the state government has received an exemption that allows narrow national highways. In Kerala, highways are 45 metres (148 feet) wide. In other states, national highways are grade separated, 60 metres (200 feet) wide with a minimum of four lanes, as well as 6 or 8-lane access-controlled expressways. The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has threatened the Kerala state government that it will give higher priority to other states in highway development since political commitment to better highways in Kerala has been lacking. As of 2013, Kerala had the highest road accident rate in the country, with most fatal accidents taking place along the state's national highways.

Railways Southern Railway zone of Indian Railways operates all railway lines in the state connecting most major towns and cities except those in the highland districts of Idukki and Wayanad. The railway network in the state is controlled by two out of six divisions of the Southern Railway; Thiruvananthapuram Railway division headquartered at Thiruvananthapuram and Palakkad Railway Division headquartered at Palakkad. Thiruvananthapuram Central (TVC) is the busiest railway station in the state. Kerala's major railway stations

are:

Airports Kerala has four international airports: Kollam Airport, established under the Madras Presidency, but since closed, was the first airport in Kerala. Kannur had an airstrip used for commercial aviation as early as 1935 when Tata airlines operated weekly flights between Mumbai and Thiruvananthapuram - stopping at Goa and Kannur. Trivandrum International Airport, managed by the Airport Authority of India, is among the oldest existing airports in South India. Calicut International Airport, which was opened in 1988, is the second-oldest existing airport in Kerala and the oldest in the Malabar region. Cochin International Airport is the busiest in the state and the seventh busiest in the country. It is also the first airport in the world to be fully powered by solar energy and has won the coveted Champion of the Earth award, the highest environmental honour instituted by the United Nations. Cochin International Airport is also the first Indian airport to be incorporated as a public limited company; it was funded by nearly 10,000 non-resident Indians from 30 countries. Other than civilian airports, Kochi has a naval airport named INS Garuda. Thiruvananthapuram International Airport shares civilian facilities with the Southern Air Command of the Indian Air Force. These facilities are used mostly by central government VIPs visiting Kerala.

Water transport Kerala has two major ports, four intermediate ports, and 13 minor ports, 4 of which have immigration checkpoint facilities. The major port in the state is at Kochi, which has an area of 8.27 km². The Vizhinjam International Seaport Thiruvananthapuram, which is currently classified as a major port, only completed Phase I as others are under construction. Other intermediate ports include Beypore, Kollam, and Azheekal. The remaining ports are classified as minor which include Manjeshwaram, Kasaragod, Nileschwaram, Kannur, Thalassery, Vadakara, Ponnani, Munambam, Manakodam, Alappuzha, Kayamkulam, Neendakara, and Valiyathura. The Kerala Maritime Institute is headquartered at Neendakara, which has an additional subcentre at Kodungallur too. The state has numerous backwaters, which are used for commercial inland navigation. Transport services are mainly provided by country craft and passenger vessels. There are 67 navigable rivers in the state while the total length of inland waterways is 1,687 kilometres (1,048 mi). The main constraints to the expansion of inland navigation are; lack of depth in waterways caused by silting, lack of maintenance of navigation systems and bank protection, accelerated growth of the water hyacinth, lack of modern inland craft terminals, and lack of a cargo handling system. Kerala also have India's first water metro , called 'Kochi water metro'. The Kochi water metro project identified 15 routes, connecting 10 islands along a network of routes that span 78 km with a fleet of 78 fast, and fully electrically propelled hybrid ferries . The 616 kilometres (383 mi) long West-Coast Canal is the longest waterway in state connecting Kasaragod to Poovar. It is divided into five sections: 41 kilometres (25 mi) long Kasaragod-Nileschwaram reach, 188 kilometres (117 mi) long Nileschwaram-Kozhikode reach, 160 kilometres (99 mi) Kozhikode-Kottapuram reach, 168 kilometres (104 mi) long National Waterway 3 (Kottapuram-Kollam reach), and 74 kilometres (46 mi) long Kollam-Vizhinjam reach. The Conolly Canal, which is a part of the West-Coast Canal, connects the city of Kozhikode with Kochi through Ponnani, passing through the districts of Malappuram and Thrissur. It begins at Vadakara. It was constructed in the year 1848 under the orders of then District collector of Malabar, H. V. Conolly, initially to facilitate movement of goods to Kallayi Port from the hinterlands of Malabar through Kuttiady and Korapuzha river systems. It was the main waterway for the cargo movement between Kozhikode and Kochi through Ponnani, for more than a century. Other important waterways in Kerala include the Alappuzha-Changanassery Canal, Alappuzha-Kottayam-Athirampuzha Canal, and Kottayam-Vaikom Canal.

Demographics Kerala is home to 2.8% of India's population; with a density of 859 persons per km², its land is nearly three times as densely settled as the national average of 370 persons per km². As of 2011, Thiruvananthapuram is the most populous city in Kerala. In the state, the rate of population growth is India's

lowest, and the decadal growth of 4.9% in 2011 is less than one-third of the all-India average of 17.6%. Kerala's population more than doubled between 1951 and 1991 by adding 15.6 million people to reach 29.1 million residents in 1991; the population stood at 33.3 million by 2011. Kerala's coastal regions are the most densely settled with population of 2022 persons per km², 2.5 times the overall population density of the state, 859 persons per km², leaving the eastern hills and mountains comparatively sparsely populated. Kerala is the second-most urbanised major state in the country with 47.7% urban population according to the 2011 Census of India. Around 31.8 million Keralites are predominantly Malayali. The state's 321,000 indigenous tribal Adivasis, 1.1% of the population, are concentrated in the east.

Gender There is a tradition of matrilineal inheritance in Kerala, where the mother is the head of the household. As a result, women in Kerala have had a much higher standing and influence in the society. This was common among certain influential castes and is a factor in the value placed on daughters. Christian missionaries also influenced Malayali women in that they started schools for girls from poor families. Opportunities for women such as education and gainful employment often translate into a lower birth rate, which in turn, make education and employment more likely to be accessible and more beneficial for women. This creates an upward spiral for both the women and children of the community that is passed on to future generations. According to the Human Development Report of 1996, Kerala's Gender Development Index was 597; higher than any other state of India. Factors, such as high rates of female literacy, education, work participation and life expectancy, along with favourable sex ratio, contributed to it. Kerala's sex ratio of 1.084 (females to males) is higher than that of the rest of India; it is the only state where women outnumber men. While having the opportunities that education affords them, such as political participation, keeping up to date with current events, reading religious texts, etc., these tools have still not translated into full, equal rights for the women of Kerala. There is a general attitude that women must be restricted for their own benefit. In the state, despite the social progress, gender still influences social mobility.

LGBT rights Kerala has been at the forefront of LGBT issues in India. Kerala is one of the first states in India to form a welfare policy for the transgender community. In 2016, the Kerala government introduced free sex reassignment surgery through government hospitals. Queerala is one of the major LGBT organisations in Kerala. It campaigns for increased awareness of LGBT people and sensitisation concerning healthcare services, workplace policies and educational curriculum. Since 2010, Kerala Queer Pride has been held annually across various cities in Kerala. In June 2019, the Kerala government passed a new order that members of the transgender community should not be referred to as the "third gender" or "other gender" in government communications. Instead, the term "transgender" should be used. Previously, the gender preferences provided in government forms and documents included male, female, and other/third gender.

Human Development Index Under a democratic communist local government, Kerala has achieved a record of social development much more advanced than the Indian average. As of 2015, Kerala has a Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.770, which is in the "high" category, ranking it first in the country. It was 0.790 in 2007-08 and it had a consumption-based HDI of 0.920, which is better than that of many developed countries. Comparatively higher spending by the government on primary level education, health care and the elimination of poverty from the 19th century onwards has helped the state maintain an exceptionally high HDI; the report was prepared by the central government's Institute of Applied Manpower Research. However, the Human Development Report 2005, prepared by Centre for Development Studies envisages a virtuous phase of inclusive development for the state since the advancement in human development had already started aiding the economic development of the state. Kerala is also widely regarded as the cleanest and healthiest state in India. According to the 2011 census, Kerala has the highest literacy rate (94%) among Indian states. In 2018,

the literacy rate was calculated to be 96.2% in the 2018 literacy survey conducted by the National Statistical Office, India. In the Kottayam district, the literacy rate was 97%. The life expectancy in Kerala is 74 years, among the highest in India as of 2011. Kerala's rural poverty rate fell from 59% (1973-1974) to 12% (1999-2010); the overall (urban and rural) rate fell 47% between the 1970s and 2000s against the 29% fall in overall poverty rate in India. By 1999-2000, the rural and urban poverty rates dropped to 10.0% and 9.6%, respectively. The 2013 Tendulkar Committee Report on poverty estimated that the percentages of the population living below the poverty line in rural and urban Kerala are 9.1% and 5.0%, respectively. These changes stem largely from efforts begun in the late 19th century by the kingdoms of Cochin and Travancore to boost social welfare. This focus was maintained by Kerala's post-independence government. Kerala is the least impoverished state in India according to NITI Aayog's Sustainable Development Goals dashboard and Reserve Bank of India's Handbook of Statistics on Indian Economy. Kerala has undergone a "demographic transition" characteristic of such developed nations as Canada, Japan, and Norway. In 2005, 11.2% of people were over the age of 60. In 2023, the BBC reported on the problems and benefits which have arisen from migration away from Kerala, focussing on the village of Kumbanad. In 2004, the birthrate was low at 18 per 1,000. According to the 2011 census, Kerala had a total fertility rate (TFR) of 1.6. All districts except Malappuram district had fertility rates below 2. Fertility rate is highest in Malappuram district (2.2) and lowest in Pathanamthitta district (1.3). In 2001, Muslims had the TFR of 2.6 as against 1.5 for Hindus and 1.7 for Christians. The state also is regarded as the "least corrupt Indian state" according to the surveys conducted by CMS Indian Corruption Study (CMS-ICS) Transparency International (2005) and India Today (1997). Kerala has the lowest homicide rate among Indian states, with 1.1 per 100,000 in 2011. In respect of female empowerment, some negative factors such as higher suicide rate, lower share of earned income, child marriage, complaints of sexual harassment and limited freedom are reported. The child marriage is lower in Kerala. The Malappuram district has the highest number of child marriages and the number of such cases is increasing in Malappuram. Child marriages are particularly higher among the Muslim community. In 2019, Kerala recorded the highest child sex abuse complaints in India. In 2015, Kerala had the highest conviction rate of any state, over 77%. Kerala has the lowest proportion of homeless people in rural India, <0.1%, and the state is attempting to reach the goal of becoming the first "Zero Homeless State", in addition to its acclaimed "Zero landless project", with private organisations and the expatriate Malayali community funding projects for building homes for the homeless. The state was also among the lowest in the India State Hunger Index next only to Punjab. In 2015 Kerala became the first "complete digital state" by implementing e-governance initiatives.

Healthcare Kerala is a pioneer in implementing the universal health care program. The sub-replacement fertility level and infant mortality rate are lower compared to those of other states, estimated from 12 to 14 deaths per 1,000 live births; as per the National Family Health Survey 2015-16, it has dropped to 6. According to a study commissioned by Lien Foundation, a Singapore-based philanthropic organisation, Kerala is considered to be the best place to die in India based on the state's provision of palliative care for patients with serious illnesses. However, Kerala's morbidity rate is higher than that of any other Indian state-118 (rural) and 88 (urban) per 1,000 people. The corresponding figures for all India were 55 and 54 per 1,000, respectively as of 2005. Kerala's 13.3% prevalence of low birth weight is higher than that of many first world nations. Outbreaks of water-borne diseases such as diarrhoea, dysentery, hepatitis, and typhoid among the more than 50% of people who rely on 3 million water wells is an issue worsened by the lack of sewers. As of 2017, the state has the highest number of diabetes patients and also the highest prevalence rate of the disease in India. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization designated Kerala the world's first "baby-friendly state" because of its effective promotion of breastfeeding over formulas. Over 95% of Keralite births are hospital-delivered and the state also has the lowest infant mortality rate in the country. The third National Family Health Survey ranks Kerala first in "Institutional Delivery" with 100% of births being in medical facilities. Ayurveda, siddha, and endangered and endemic modes of traditional medicine, including kalari,

marmachikitsa and vishavaidyam, are practised. Some occupational communities such as Kaniyar were known as native medicine men in relation to the practice of such streams of medical systems, apart from their traditional vocation. These propagate via gurukula discipleship, and comprise a fusion of both medicinal and alternative treatments. The Arya Vaidya Sala established by Vaidyaratnam P. S. Warrier at Kottakkal (about 10 km from Malappuram) in 1902, is the largest Ayurvedic medicinal network and health centre in the state. It is also one of the largest Ayurvedic medicinal brands in the world. In 2014, Kerala became the first state in India to offer free cancer treatment to the poor, via a program called Sukrutham. People in Kerala experience elevated incidence of cancers, liver and kidney diseases. In April 2016, the Economic Times reported that 250,000 residents undergo treatment for cancer. It also reported that approximately 150 to 200 liver transplants are conducted in the region's hospitals annually. Approximately 42,000 cancer cases are reported in the region annually. This is believed to be an underestimate as private hospitals may not be reporting their figures. Long waiting lists for kidney donations have stimulated illegal trade in human kidneys, and prompted the establishment of the Kidney Federation of India which aims to support financially disadvantaged patients. As of 2017-18, there are 6,691 modern medicine institutions under the Department of Health Services, of which the total bed strength is 37,843; 15,780 in rural areas and 22,063 in urban.

Language Malayalam is the official language of Kerala and one of the Classical languages of India. There is a significant Tamil population throughout Kerala mainly in Idukki district and Palakkad district in which it accounts for 17.48% and 4.8% respectively of the two districts' populations. Tulu and Kannada are spoken mainly in the northern parts of Kasaragod district, each of which account for 8.77% and 4.23% of total population in the district, respectively.

Religion Kerala is very religiously diverse with Hindus, Muslims and Christians having a significant population throughout the state. Kerala is often regarded as one of the most diverse states in all of India. Hinduism is the most widely professed faith in Kerala, with significant numbers of adherents to Islam and Christianity. In comparison with the rest of India, Kerala experiences relatively little sectarianism. According to 2011 Census of India figures, 54.7% of Kerala's residents are Hindus, 26.6% are Muslims, 18.4% are Christians, and the remaining 0.3% follow another religion or have no religious affiliation. Hindus represent the biggest religious group in all districts except Malappuram, where they are outnumbered by Muslims. Kerala has the largest population of Christians in India. As of 2016, Hindus, Muslims, Christians and others account for 41.9%, 42.6%, 15.4% and 0.2% of the total childbirths in the state, respectively. Islam arrived in Kerala, a part of the larger Indian Ocean rim, via spice and silk traders from the Middle East. Historians do not rule out the possibility of Islam being introduced to Kerala as early as the seventh century CE. Notable has been the occurrence of Cheraman Perumal Tajuddin, the mythical Hindu king who moved to Arabia to meet Muhammad and converted to Islam. Kerala Muslims are generally referred to as the Mappilas. Mappilas are but one among the many communities that form the Muslim population of Kerala. According to the Legend of Cheraman Perumals, the first Indian mosque was built in 624 CE at Kodungallur with the mandate of the last the ruler (the Cheraman Perumal) of Chera dynasty, who converted to Islam during the lifetime of Muhammad (c. 570-632). Ancient Christian tradition says that Christianity reached the shores of Kerala in 52 CE with the arrival of Thomas the Apostle, one of the Twelve Apostles of Jesus Christ. Saint Thomas Christians include Syro-Malabar Catholic, Syro-Malankara Catholic, Jacobite Syrian Christian Church, Mar Thoma Syrian Church, Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church, the Syrian Anglicans of the CSI and Pentecostal Saint Thomas Christians. The origin of the Latin Catholic Christians in Kerala is the result of the missionary endeavours of the Portuguese Padroado in the 16th century. As a consequence of centuries of mixing with colonial immigrants, beginning with the Portuguese, Dutch, French, British and other Europeans, there is a community of Anglo-Indians in Kerala of mixed European and Indian parentage or ancestry. Kerala has the highest population of Christians among all the states of India. Judaism reached Kerala in the 10th century BCE during the time of King Solomon. They are called Cochin

Jews or Malabar Jews and are the oldest group of Jews in India. There was a significant Jewish community which existed in Kerala until the 20th century, when most of them migrated to Israel. The Paradesi Synagogue at Kochi is the oldest synagogue in the Commonwealth. Jainism has a considerable following in the Wayanad district.

Education The Kerala school of astronomy and mathematics flourished between the 14th and 16th centuries. In attempting to solve astronomical problems, the Kerala school independently created a number of important mathematics concepts, including series expansion for trigonometric functions. In the early decades of the 19th century, the modern educational transformation of Kerala was triggered by the efforts of the Church Mission Society missionaries to promote mass education. Following the recommendations of the Wood's despatch of 1854, the princely states of Travancore and Cochin launched mass education drives mainly based on castes and communities, and introduced a system of grant-in-aid to attract more private initiatives. Catholic institutions such as St Thomas College Thrissur and SB College Changanassery were established under the leadership of the Catholic Church. The efforts by leaders such as Fr. Kuriakose Elias Chavara, Mar Charles Lavigne SJ, Vaikunda Swami, Narayana Guru and Ayyankali in aiding the socially discriminated castes in the state-with the help of community-based organisations like Nair Service Society, SNDP, Muslim Educational Society, Muslim Mahajana Sabha, Yoga Kshema Sabha (of Nambudiris) and congregations of Christian churches-led to the further development of mass education in Kerala. In 1991, Kerala became the first state in India to be recognised as completely literate, although the effective literacy rate at that time was only 90%. In 2006-2007, the state topped the Education Development Index (EDI) of the 21 major states in India. As of 2007, enrolment in elementary education was almost 100%; and, unlike other states in India, educational opportunity was almost equally distributed among sexes, social groups, and regions. According to the 2011 census, Kerala has a 93.9% literacy, compared to the national literacy rate of 74.0%. In January 2016, Kerala became the first Indian state to achieve 100% primary education through its Athulyam literacy programme. The educational system prevailing in the state's schools specifies an initial 10-year course of study, which is divided into three stages: lower primary, upper primary, and secondary school-known as 4+3+3, which signifies the number of years for each stage. After the first 10 years of schooling, students typically enroll in Higher Secondary Schooling in one of the three major streams-liberal arts, commerce, or science. The majority of public schools are affiliated with the Kerala Board of Public Examination. Other educational boards are the Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE), the Central Board for Secondary Education (CBSE), and the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS).

Culture The culture of Kerala is composite and cosmopolitan in nature and it is an integral part of Indian culture. It is a synthesis of Aryan, Dravidian, Arab, and European cultures, developed over millennia, under influences from other parts of India and abroad. It is defined by its antiquity and the organic continuity sustained by the Malayali people. It was elaborated through centuries of contact with neighbouring and overseas cultures. However, the geographical insularity of Kerala from the rest of the country has resulted in the development of a distinctive lifestyle, art, architecture, language, literature and social institutions. Over 10,000 festivals are celebrated in the state every year. The Malayalam calendar, a solar sidereal calendar started from 825 CE in Kerala, finds common usage in planning agricultural and religious activities. Malayalam, one of the classical languages in India, is Kerala's official language. Over a dozen other scheduled and unscheduled languages are also spoken. Kerala has the greatest consumption of alcohol in India.

Festivals Many of the temples in Kerala hold festivals on specific days of the year. A common characteristic of these festivals is the hoisting of a holy flag which is brought down on the final day of the festival after immersing the deity. Some festivals include Poorams, the best known of these being the Thrissur Pooram. "Elephants,

firework displays and huge crowds" are the major attractions of Thrissur Pooram. Other known festivals are Makaravilakku, Chinakkathoor Pooram, Attukal Pongala and Nenmara Vallangi Vela. Other than these, festivals locally known as utsavams are conducted by many temples mostly on annual basis. Temples that can afford it will usually involve at least one richly caparisoned elephant as part of the festivities. The idol in the temple is taken out on a procession around the countryside atop this elephant. When the procession visits homes around the temple, people will usually present rice, coconuts, and other offerings to it. Processions often include traditional music such as Panchari melam or Panchavadyam. Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha are celebrated by the Muslim community of the state while the festivals like Christmas and Easter are observed by the Christians. Onam is a harvest festival celebrated by the people of Kerala and is reminiscent of the state's agrarian past. It is a local festival of Kerala consisting of a four-day public holidays; from Onam Eve (Uthradam) to the fourth Onam Day. Onam falls in the Malayalam month of Chingam (August-September) and marks the commemoration of the homecoming of King Mahabali. The total duration of Onam is 10 days and it is celebrated all across Kerala. It is one of the festivals celebrated with cultural elements such as Vallam Kali, Pulikali, Pookkalam, Thumbi Thullal and Onavillu.

Music and dance Kerala is home to a number of performance arts. These include five classical dance forms: Kathakali, Mohiniyattam, Koodiyattom, Thullal and Krishnanattam, which originated and developed in the temple theatres during the classical period under the patronage of royal houses. Kerala natanam, Thirayattam, Kaliyattam, Theyyam, Koothu and Padayani are other dance forms associated with the temple culture of the region. Some traditional dance forms such as Oppana and Duffmuttu were popular among the Muslims of the state, while Margamkali and Parichamuttukali are popular among the Syrian Christians and Chavittu nadakom is popular among the Latin Christians. The development of classical music in Kerala is attributed to the contributions it received from the traditional performance arts associated with the temple culture of Kerala. The development of the indigenous classical music form, Sopana Sangeetham, illustrates the rich contribution that temple culture has made to the arts of Kerala. Carnatic music dominates Keralite traditional music. This was the result of Swathi Thirunal Rama Varma's popularisation of the genre in the 19th century. Raga-based renditions known as sopanam accompany kathakali performances. Melam, including the paandi and panchari variants, is a more percussive style of music; it is performed at Kshetram-centered festivals using the chenda. Panchavadyam is a form of percussion ensemble, in which artists use five types of percussion instruments. Kerala's visual arts range from traditional murals to the works of Raja Ravi Varma, the state's most renowned painter. Most of the castes and communities in Kerala have rich collections of folk songs and ballads associated with a variety of themes; Vadakkan Pattukal (Northern Ballads), Thekkan pattukal (Southern Ballads), Vanchi pattukal (Boat Songs), Mappila Pattukal (Muslim songs) and Pallipattukal (Church songs) are a few of them.

Cinema Malayalam films carved a niche for themselves in the Indian film industry with the presentation of social themes. Directors from Kerala, like Adoor Gopalakrishnan, Mankada Ravi Varma, G. Aravindan, Bharathan, P. Padmarajan, M.T. Vasudevan Nair, K.G. George, Priyadarshan, John Abraham, Ramu Karyat, K S Sethumadhavan, A. Vincent and Shaji N Karun have made a considerable contribution to the Indian parallel cinema. Kerala has also given birth to numerous actors, such as Mohanlal, Mammooty, Satyan, Prem Nazir, Madhu, Sheela, Sharada, Miss Kumari, Jayan, Adoor Bhasi, Seema, Bharath Gopi, Thilakan, Vijaya Raghavan, Kalabhavan Mani, Indrans, Shobana, Nivin Pauly, Sreenivasan, Urvashi, Manju Warrier, Suresh Gopi, Jayaram, Murali, Shankaradi, Kavya Madhavan, Bhavana Menon, Prithviraj, Parvathy, Jayasurya, Dulquer Salmaan, Oduvil Unnikrishnan, Jagathy Sreekumar, Nedumudi Venu, KPAC Lalitha, Innocent and Fahadh Faasil. Late Malayalam actor Prem Nazir holds the world record for having acted as the protagonist of over 720 movies. Since the 1980s, actors Mohanlal and Mammooty have dominated the movie industry; Mohanlal has won five National Film Awards (four for acting), while Mammooty has three National Film Awards for acting. Malayalam Cinema has produced a few more notable personalities such as K. J. Yesudas, K.S. Chitra, M.G.

Sreekumar, Vayalar Rama Varma, V. Madhusoodanan Nair, M.T. Vasudevan Nair and O.N.V. Kurup, the last two mentioned being recipients of Jnanpith award, the highest literary award in India. Resul Pookutty, who is from Kerala, is the only Indian to win an Academy Award for Best Sound Mixing, for the breakthrough film *Slumdog Millionaire*. As of 2018, Malayalam cinema has got 14 awards for the best actor, 6 for the best actress, 11 for the best film, and 13 for the best film director in the National Film Awards, India.

Literature The Sangam literature can be considered as the ancient predecessor of Malayalam. Malayalam literature starts from the Old Malayalam period (9th-13th century CE) and includes such notable writers as the 14th-century Niranam poets (Madhava Panikkar, Sankara Panikkar and Rama Panikkar), and the 16th-century poet Thunchaththu Ezhuthachan, whose works mark the dawn of both the modern Malayalam language and its poetry. For the first 600 years of Malayalam calendar, the literature mainly consisted of the oral Ballads such as Vadakkan Pattukal in North Malabar and Thekkan Pattukal in Southern Travancore. Designated a "Classical Language in India" in 2013, it developed into the current form mainly by the influence of the poets Cherusseri Namboothiri, Thunchaththu Ezhuthachan, and Poonthanam Nambudiri, in the 15th and the 16th centuries of Common Era. Unnayi Variyar, a probable poet of the 17th/18th century CE, and Kunchan Nambiar, a poet of the 18th century CE, have also influenced a lot in the growth of modern Malayalam literature in its pre-mature form. The Bharathappuzha river, also known as River Ponnani, and its tributaries, have played a major role in the development of modern Malayalam Literature. Paremmakkal Thoma Kathanar and Kerala Varma Valiakoi Thampuran are noted for their contribution to Malayalam prose. The "triumvirate of poets" (Kavithrayam): Kumaran Asan, Vallathol Narayana Menon, and Ulloor S. Parameswara Iyer, are recognised for moving Keralite poetry away from archaic sophistry and metaphysics, and towards a more lyrical mode. The poets like Moyinkutty Vaidyar and Pulikkottil Hyder have made notable contributions to the Mappila songs, which is a genre of the Arabi Malayalam literature. The first travelogue in any Indian language is the Malayalam Varthamanappusthakam, written by Paremmakkal Thoma Kathanar in 1785. The prose literature, Malayalam journalism, and criticism began after the latter-half of the 18th century. Contemporary Malayalam literature deals with social, political, and economic life context. The tendency of the modern literature is often towards political radicalism. Malayalam literature has been presented with 6 Jnanapith awards, the second-most for any Dravidian language and the third-highest for any Indian language. In the second half of the 20th century, Jnanpith winning poets and writers like G. Sankara Kurup, S. K. Pottekkatt, Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai, M. T. Vasudevan Nair, O. N. V. Kurup, and Akkitham Achuthan Namboothiri, had made valuable contributions to the modern Malayalam literature. Later, writers like O. V. Vijayan, Kamaladas, M. Mukundan, Arundhati Roy, Vaikom Muhammed Basheer, have gained international recognition.

Cuisine Kerala cuisine includes a wide variety of vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes prepared using fish, poultry, and meat. Culinary spices have been cultivated in Kerala for millennia and they are characteristic of its cuisine. Rice is a dominant staple that is eaten at all times of day. A majority of the breakfast foods in Kerala are made out of rice, in one form or the other (idli, dosa, puttu, pathiri, appam, or idiyappam), tapioca preparations, or pulse-based vada. These may be accompanied by chutney, kadala, payasam, payar pappadam, appam, chicken curry, beef fry, egg masala and fish curry. Porotta and Biryani are also often found in restaurants in Kerala. Thalassery biryani is popular as an ethnic brand. Lunch dishes include rice and curry along with rasam, pulisherry and sambar. Sadhya is a vegetarian meal, which is served on a banana leaf and followed with a cup of payasam. Popular snacks include banana chips, yam crisps, tapioca chips, Achappam, Unni appam and kuzhalappam. Seafood specialties include karimeen, prawns, shrimp and other crustacean dishes. Thalassery Cuisine is varied and is a blend of many influences.

Media The media, telecommunications, broadcasting and cable services are regulated by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI). The National Family Health Survey - 4, conducted in 2015-16, ranked Kerala as the state with the highest media exposure in India. Dozens of newspapers are published in Kerala, in nine major languages, but principally Malayalam and English. Kerala has the highest media exposure in India. The most widely circulated Malayalam-language newspapers are Malayala Manorama, Mathrubhumi, Deshabhimani, Madhyamam, Kerala Kaumudi, Mangalam, Chandrika, Deepika, Janayugam, Janmabhumi, Siraj Daily and Suprabhaatham. Major Malayalam periodicals include Mathrubhumi Azhchappathippu, Vanitha, India Today Malayalam, Madhyamam Weekly, Grihalakshmi, Dhanam, Chithrabhumi and Bhashaposhini.

DD Malayalam is a state-owned television broadcaster. Multiple-system operators provide a mix of Malayalam, English, other Indian languages, and international channels. Some of the popular Malayalam television channels are Asianet, Asianet News, Asianet Plus, Asianet Movies, Surya TV, Surya Movies, Mazhavil Manorama, Manorama News, Kairali TV, Kairali News, Flowers, Media One TV, Mathrubhumi News, Kappa TV, Amrita TV, Reporter TV, Jaihind, Janam TV, Jeevan TV, Kaumudy TV and Shalom TV. With the second-highest internet penetration rate in India, Digital media including social media and OTT services are a main source of information and entertainment in the state. A sizeable people's science movement has taken root in the state, and activities like writer's cooperatives are becoming increasingly common. BSNL, Airtel, Vodafone Idea Limited, Jio are the major cell phone service providers. Broadband Internet services are widely available throughout the state; some of the major ISPs are BSNL, Asianet Satellite Communications, Airtel, Vodafone Idea Limited, RailWire, and Tata Communications.

Sports By the 21st century, almost all of the native sports and games from Kerala had either disappeared or become just an art form performed during local festivals; including Poorakkali, Padayani, Thalappandukali, Onathallu, Parichamuttukali, Velakali, and Kilithattukali. However, Kalaripayattu, regarded as "the mother of all martial arts in the world", is an exception and is practised as the indigenous martial sport. Another traditional sport of Kerala is the boat race, especially the race of Snake boats. Cricket and football became popular in the state; both were introduced in Malabar during the British colonial period in the 19th century. Cricketers, like Tinu Yohannan, Abey Kuruvilla, Chundangapoyil Rizwan, Sreesanth, Sanju Samson and Basil Thampi found places in the national cricket team. A cricket franchise from Kerala, the Kochi Tuskers, played in the Indian Premier League's fourth season. However, this team was disbanded after the season because of conflicts of interest among its franchises. Kerala has only performed well recently in the Ranji Trophy cricket competition, in 2017-18 reaching the quarterfinals for the first time in history. Football is one of the most widely played and watched sports with huge in this state support for club and district level matches. Kochi hosts Kerala Blasters FC in the Indian Super League. The Blasters are one of the most widely supported clubs in the country as well as the fifth most-followed football club from Asia in social media. Also, Kozhikode hosts Gokulam Kerala FC in the I-League as well as the Sait Nagjee Football Tournament. Kerala is one of the major footballing states in India along with West Bengal and Goa and has produced national players like I. M. Vijayan, C. V. Pappachan, V. P. Sathyan, U. Sharaf Ali, Jo Paul Ancheri, Ashique Kuruniyan, Muhammad Rafi, Jiju Jacob, Mashoor Shereef, Pappachen Pradeep, C.K. Vineeth, Anas Edathodika, Sahal Abdul Samad, and Rino Anto. The Kerala state football team has won the Santhosh Trophy seven times; in 1973, 1992, 1993, 2001, 2004, 2018, and 2022. They were also the runners-up eight times. Among the prominent athletes hailing from the state are P. T. Usha, Shiny Wilson and M.D. Valsamma, all three of whom are recipients of the Padma Shri as well as Arjuna Award, while K. M. Beenamol and Anju Bobby George are Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna and Arjuna Award winners. T. C. Yohannan, Suresh Babu, Sinimol Paulose, Angel Mary Joseph, Mercy Kuttan, K. Saramma, K. C. Rosakutty, Padmini Selvan and Tintu Luka are the other Arjuna Award winners from Kerala. Volleyball is another popular sport and is often played on makeshift courts on sandy beaches along the coast. Jimmy George was a notable Indian volleyball player, rated in his prime as among the world's ten best players. Other

popular sports include badminton, basketball and kabaddi. The Indian Hockey team captain P. R. Shreejesh, ace goalkeeper hails from Kerala. International Walkers from the state include K. T. Irfan. For the 2017 FIFA U-17 World Cup in India, the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium (Kochi), was chosen as one of the six venues where the game would be hosted in India. Greenfield International Stadium at located at Kariavattom in Thiruvananthapuram city, is India's first DBOT (design, build, operate and transfer) model outdoor stadium and it has hosted international cricket matches and international football matches including 2015 SAFF Championship.

Tourism Kerala's culture and traditions, coupled with its varied demographics, have made the state one of the most popular tourist destinations in India. In 2012, National Geographic's Traveller magazine named Kerala as one of the "ten paradises of the world" and "50 must see destinations of a lifetime". Travel and Leisure also described Kerala as "One of the 100 great trips for the 21st century". In 2012, it overtook the Taj Mahal to be the number one travel destination in Google's search trends for India. CNN Travel listed Kerala among its '19 best places to visit in 2019'. Kerala was named by TIME magazine in 2022 among the 50 extraordinary destinations to explore in its list of the World's Greatest Places. Kerala's beaches, backwaters, lakes, mountain ranges, waterfalls, ancient ports, palaces, religious institutions and wildlife sanctuaries are major attractions for both domestic and international tourists. The city of Kochi ranks first in the total number of international and domestic tourists in Kerala. Until the early 1980s, Kerala was a relatively unknown destination compared to other states in the country. In 1986 the government of Kerala declared tourism an important industry and it was the first state in India to do so. Marketing campaigns launched by the Kerala Tourism Development Corporation, the government agency that oversees the tourism prospects of the state, resulted in the growth of the tourism industry. Many advertisements branded Kerala with the tagline Kerala, God's Own Country. Kerala tourism is a global brand and regarded as one of the destinations with highest recall. In 2006, Kerala attracted 8.5 million tourists, an increase of 23.7% over the previous year, making the state one of the fastest-growing popular destinations in the world. In 2011, tourist inflow to Kerala crossed the 10-million mark. Ayurvedic tourism has become very popular since the 1990s, and private agencies have played a notable role in tandem with the initiatives of the Tourism Department. Kerala is known for its ecotourism initiatives which include mountaineering, trekking and bird-watching programmes in the Western Ghats as the major activities. The state's tourism industry is a major contributor to the state's economy, growing at the rate of 13.3%. The revenue from tourism increased five-fold between 2001 and 2011 and crossed the ₹ 190 billion mark in 2011. According to the Economic Times Kerala netted a record revenue of INR 365280.1 million from the tourism sector in 2018, clocking an increase of Rs 28743.3 million from the previous year. Over 16.7 million tourists visited Kerala in 2018 as against 15.76 million the previous year, recording an increase of 5.9%. The industry provides employment to approximately 1.2 million people. The state's only drive-in beach, Muzhappilangad Beach in Kannur, which stretches across 5 kilometres (3.1 mi) of sand, was chosen by the BBC as one of the top six drive-in beaches in the world in 2016. Idukki Dam, the world's second arch dam, and Asia's first is at Idukki. The major beaches are at Kovalam, Varkala, Kozhikode, Fort Kochi, Cherai, Alappuzha, Ponnani, Kadalundi, Tanur, Chaliyam, Payyambalam, Kappad, Muzhappilangad and Bekal. Popular hill stations are at Ponmudi, Wayanad, Vagamon, Munnar, Peermade, Ramakkalmedu, Arimbra, Paithalmala of Kannur district, Kodikuthimala, and Nelliampathi. Munnar is 4,500 feet above sea level and is known for tea plantations, and a variety of flora and fauna. Kerala's ecotourism destinations include 12 wildlife sanctuaries and two national parks: Periyar Tiger Reserve, Parambikulam Wildlife Sanctuary, Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary, Thattekad Bird Sanctuary, Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary, Kadalundi Bird Sanctuary, Karimpuzha Wildlife Sanctuary, Muthanga Wildlife Sanctuary, Aralam Wildlife Sanctuary, Eravikulam National Park, and Silent Valley National Park are the most popular among them. The Kerala backwaters are an extensive network of interlocking rivers (41 west-flowing rivers), lakes, and canals that centre around Alleppey, Kumarakom, Ponnani, Nileschwaram, and Punnamada (where the annual Nehru Trophy Boat Race is held in August), Pathiramanal a small island in Muhamma.

Padmanabhapuram Palace and the Mattancherry Palace are two nearby heritage sites.

See also Outline of Kerala South India Dravidian peoples List of municipal corporations in Kerala List of taluks of Kerala List of urban local bodies in Kerala List of districts of Kerala List of revenue divisions of Kerala Kerala school of astronomy and mathematics

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Madhya Pradesh

Madhya Pradesh (; Hindi: [मध्य प्रदेश] ; lit. 'Central Province') is a state in central India. Its capital is Bhopal. Other major cities includes Indore, Gwalior, Ujjain, Jabalpur and Sagar. Madhya Pradesh is the second largest Indian state by area and the fifth largest state by population with over 72 million residents. It borders the states of Rajasthan to the northwest, Uttar Pradesh to the northeast, Chhattisgarh to the east, Maharashtra to the south, Gujarat to the west. The area covered by the present-day Madhya Pradesh includes the area of the ancient Avanti Mahajanapada, whose capital Ujjain (also known as Avantika) arose as a major city during the second wave of Indian urbanisation in the sixth century BCE. Subsequently, the region was ruled by the major dynasties of India. The Maratha Empire dominated the majority of the 18th century. After the Third Anglo-Maratha War in the 19th century, the region was divided into several princely states under the British and incorporated into Central Provinces and Berar and the Central India Agency. After India's independence, the Central Provinces and Berar was renamed as Madhya Pradesh with Nagpur as its capital, this state included the southern parts of the present-day Madhya Pradesh and northeastern portion of today's Maharashtra while Central India Agency was renamed as Madhya Bharat which includes parts of present day north western Madhya Pradesh became a separate state with Gwalior as its capital and Jiwajirao Scindia as Rajpramukh (Governor). In 1956, these states were reorganised and its parts were combined with the states of Vindhya Pradesh and Bhopal to form the new Madhya Pradesh state, the Marathi-speaking Vidarbha region was removed and merged with the Bombay State. This state was the largest in India by area until 2000, when its southeastern Chhattisgarh region was designated a separate state. Madhya Pradesh's economy is the 10th-largest in India, with a gross state domestic product (GSDP) of ₹9.17 trillion (US\$110 billion) and has the country's 26th highest per-capita income of ₹109,372 (US\$1272). Madhya Pradesh ranks 23rd among Indian states in human development index. Rich in mineral resources, Madhya Pradesh has the largest reserves of diamond and copper in India. 25.14% of its area is under forest cover. Madhya Pradesh has posted country's highest agricultural growth rate which had averaged above 20 per cent over last four years. The state leads the country in production of pulses, oilseeds, soya bean, gram, pea, garlic, guava, and medicinal and aromatic herbs. Horticulture is being promoted in a big way. Its tourism industry has seen considerable growth, with the state topping the National Tourism Awards in 2010-11. In recent years, the state's GDP growth has been above the national average. In 2019-20, state's GSDP was recorded at 9.07%.

Etymology Madhya Pradesh name comes from the sanskrit words madhya (middle, central) and pradeś (state, province). It literally means "central province".

History Isolated remains of Homo erectus found in Hathnora in the Narmada Valley indicates that Madhya Pradesh might have been inhabited in the Middle Pleistocene era. Painted pottery dated to the later mesolithic period has been found in the Bhimbetka rock shelters. Chalcolithic sites belonging to Kayatha culture (2100-1800 BC) and Malwa culture (1700-1500 BCE) have been discovered in the western part of the state. Madhya Pradesh is also the world's ninth-most populous subnational entity. The city of Ujjain arose as a major centre in the region, during the second wave of Indian urbanisation in the sixth century BCE. It has served as the capital of the Avanti kingdom. Other kingdoms mentioned in ancient epics - Malava, Karusha, Dasarna and Nishada - have also been identified with parts of Madhya Pradesh. Chandragupta Maurya conquered northern India around 320 BCE, establishing the Mauryan Empire, which included all of modern-day Madhya Pradesh. Ashoka the greatest of Mauryan rulers, conquered it, bringing the region under firmer control. After the decline of the Maurya empire, the region was contested among the Sakas, the Kushanas, the Satavahanas, and

several local dynasties during the 1st to 3rd centuries CE. Heliodorus, the Greek Ambassador to the court of the Shunga King Bhagabhadra erected the Heliodorus pillar near Vidisha. Ujjain emerged as the predominant commercial centre of western India from the first century CE, located on the trade routes between the Ganges plain and India's Arabian Sea ports. The Satavahana dynasty of the northern Deccan and the Saka dynasty of the Western Satraps fought for the control of Madhya Pradesh during the 1st to 3rd centuries CE. The Satavahana King Gautamiputra Satakarni inflicted a crushing defeat upon the Saka rulers and conquered parts of Malwa and Gujarat in the 2nd century CE. Subsequently, the region was conquered by the Gupta empire in the 4th and 5th centuries, and their southern neighbours, the Vakatakas. The rock-cut temples at Bagh Caves in the Kukshi tehsil of the Dhar District show the presence of the Gupta dynasty in the region, supported by the testimony of a Badwani inscription dated to the year of 487 CE. The attacks and the subsequent seize of Gwalior by the Hephthalites or White Huns brought about the collapse of the Gupta empire, which broke up into smaller states. The King Yasodharman of Malwa defeated the Huns in 528, ending their expansion. Later, Harsha (c. 590-647) ruled the northern parts of the state. Malwa was ruled by the south Indian Rashtrakuta Dynasty from the late 8th century to the 10th century. When the south Indian Emperor Govinda III of the Rashtrakuta dynasty annexed Malwa, he set up the family of one of his subordinates there, who took the name of Paramara. The Medieval period saw the rise of the Rajput clans, including the Paramaras of Malwa and the Chandelas of Bundelkhand along with the Lodhis. The Chandellas built the majestic Hindu-Jain temples at Khajuraho, which represent the culmination of Hindu temple architecture in Central India. The Gurjara-Pratihara dynasty also held sway in Gwalior and western Madhya Pradesh at this time. It also left some monuments of architectural value in Gwalior. Southern parts of Madhya Pradesh like Malwa were several times invaded by the south Indian Western Chalukya Empire which imposed its rule on the Paramara kingdom of Malwa. The Paramara King Bhoja (c. 1010-1060) was claimed to be a renowned polymath. The small Gond kingdoms emerged in the Gondwana and Mahakoshal regions of the state. In early 10th century Gwalior and northern Madhya Pradesh came under the rule of Kachchhapaghata dynasty, they belongs to the rajput clan. Gwalior was attacked and conquered by the Turkic Delhi Sultanate in the 12th century. Around 1500 Kachchhapaghata women along with the ladies of royal family committed jauhar at Gwalior Fort. The Kachchhapaghata later shifted to Amer (Jaipur). After the collapse of the Delhi Sultanate at the end of the 14th century, independent regional kingdoms re-emerged, including the Tomara kingdom of Gwalior and the Muslim Sultanate of Malwa, with its capital at Mandu. The Malwa Sultanate was conquered by the Sultanate of Gujarat in 1531. In the 1540s, most parts of the state fell to Sher Shah Suri, and subsequently to the Hindu king Hemu. Hemu, who had earlier served as the General of the Islamic Suri dynasty, operated from the Gwalior Fort during 1553-56 and became the ruler of Delhi as a Vikramaditya king winning 22 battles continuously from Bengal to Gujarat and defeating Akbar's forces in the Battle of Delhi on 7 October 1556. However, he chose Delhi as his capital after his formal Coronation in Gwalior. After Hemu's defeat by Akbar at the Second Battle of Panipat in 1556, Akbar seized Gwalior along with this most of Madhya Pradesh came under the Mughal rule. Gondwana and Mahakoshal remained under the control of Gond kings, who acknowledged Mughal suzerainty but enjoyed virtual autonomy. The Mughal control weakened considerably after the death of Emperor Aurangzeb in 1707. Gwalior came under the rule of Jats and Bhim Singh Rana become ruler. However, he was defeated by the Scindias in 1735. Between 1720 and 1760, the Marathas conquered most of Madhya Pradesh, resulting in the establishment of semi-autonomous states under the nominal control of the Peshwa of Pune: the Holkars of Indore ruled much of Malwa, Pawars ruled Dewas and Dhar, the Bhonsles of Nagpur dominated Mahakoshal-Gondwana area, while the Scindias of Gwalior controlled the vast northern parts of the state along with Ajmer and Agra. Later Mughals accepted the surzenity of the Scindia dynasty. The most notable Maratha rulers of the region were Mahadji Scindia, Daulat Rao Scindia, Ahilyabai Holkar and Yashwantrao Holkar. Besides these, there were several other small states, including Bhopal, Orchha, and Rewa. The Bhopal state, which paid tribute to both the Marathas and the Nizam of Hyderabad, was founded by Dost Mohammed Khan, a former General in the Mughal army. After the Third Anglo-Maratha War, the British conquered the entire region. All the sovereign states in the region became princely states of British India, governed by the Central India

Agency. The Mahakoshal region became a British province: the Saugor and Nerbudda Territories. In 1861, the British merged the Nagpur Province with the Saugor and Nerbudda Territories to form the Central Provinces. During the 1857 uprising, rebellions happened in the northern parts of the state, led by leaders like Tatya Tope, Rani Avantibai Lodhi. However, these were crushed by the British and the princes loyal to them. The state witnessed a number of anti-British activities and protests during the Indian independence movement. Several notable leaders such as Chandra Shekhar Azad, B. R. Ambedkar, Shankar Dayal Sharma, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Rajmata Vijaya Raje Scindia, Arjun Singh and Madhavrao Scindia were born in what is now Madhya Pradesh.

After the independence of India, Madhya Pradesh was created in 1950 from the former British Central Provinces and Berar and the princely states of Makrai and Chhattisgarh, with Nagpur as the capital of the state. The new states of Madhya Bharat, Vindhya Pradesh, and Bhopal were formed out of the Central India Agency. In 1956, the states of Madhya Bharat, Vindhya Pradesh, and Bhopal were merged into Madhya Pradesh, and the Marathi-speaking southern region Vidarbha, which included Nagpur, was ceded to Bombay state. Jabalpur was chosen to be the capital of the state but at the last moment, due to political interference Jabalpur sacrificed his place of Capital but then Bhopal was made the state capital. In November 2000, as part of the Madhya Pradesh Reorganization Act, the southeastern portion of the state split off to form the new state of Chhattisgarh.

Geography Location in India Madhya Pradesh literally means "Central Province", and is located in the geographic heart of India in between the latitude of 21.6N-26.30N and longitude of 74°9'E-82°48'E. The state straddles the Narmada River, which runs east and west between the Vindhya and Satpura ranges; these ranges and the Narmada are the traditional boundaries between the north and south of India. The highest point in Madhya Pradesh is Dhupgarh, with an elevation of 1,350 m (4,429 ft). The state is bordered on the west by Gujarat, on the northwest by Rajasthan, on the northeast by Uttar Pradesh, on the east by Chhattisgarh, and on the south by Maharashtra.

Climate Madhya Pradesh also has three major seasons - Summer, Monsoon, and Winter. During summer (March-June), the temperature in the entire state ranges above 34.6 it has increased as it is all-time high in Madhya Pradesh. In general, the eastern parts of Madhya Pradesh are hotter than the western parts. The regions like Gwalior, Morena and Datia record temperatures of over 42 C in May. The humidity is relatively very low and the region usually experiences frequent mild dust storms. The southwest Monsoon usually breaks out in mid-June and the entire state receives a major share of its rainfall between June and September. The south and south-east regions tend to experience a higher rainfall whereas the parts of the north-west receive less. Jabalpur, Mandla, Balaghat, Sidhi, and other extreme eastern parts receive more than 150 cm of rainfall. The districts of western Madhya Pradesh receive less than 80 cm of rainfall. The winter season starts in November. The temperature remains low in the northern parts of the state in comparison to the southern parts. The daily maximum temperature in most of the northern part of January remains between 15 and 18 C. The climate is generally dry and pleasant with a clear sky. The average rainfall is about 1,194 mm (47.0 in). The southeastern districts have the heaviest rainfall, some places receiving as much as 2,150 mm (84.6 in), while the western and northwestern districts receive 1,000 mm (39.4 in) or less.

Ecology According to the 2011 figures, the recorded forest area of the state is 94,689 km² (36,560 sq mi) constituting 30.7% of the geographical area of the state. It constitutes 12.3% of the forest area of India. Legally this area has been classified into "Reserved Forest" (65.3%), "Protected Forest" (32.8%) and "Unclassified Forest" (0.2%). Per capita forest area is 2,400 m² (0.59 acres) as against the national average of 700 m² (0.17 acres). The forest cover is less dense in the northern and western parts of the state, which contain the major

urban centres. Variability in climatic and edaphic conditions brings about significant difference in the forest types of the state. In January 2019 1.5 million volunteers in the state planted 66 million trees in 12 hours along the Narmada river. The major types of soils found in the state are:

Black soil, most predominantly in the Malwa region, Mahakoshal and in southern Bundelkhand Red and yellow soil, in the Baghelkhand region Alluvial soil, in Northern Madhya Pradesh Laterite soil, in highland areas Mixed soil, in parts of the Gwalior Chambal region.

Flora and fauna Madhya Pradesh is home to eleven National Parks; Bandhavgarh National Park, Kanha National Park, Satpura National Park, Sanjay National Park, Madhav National Park, Van Vihar National Park, Mandla Plant Fossils National Park, Panna National Park, Pench National Park and Dinosaur National Park, Dhar. There are also a number of nature reserves, including Amarkantak, Bagh Caves, Balaghat, Bori Natural Reserve, Ken Gharial, Ghatigaon, Kuno Palpur, Narwar, Chambal, Kukdeswar, Chidi Kho, Nauradehi, Pachmarhi, Panpatha, Shikarganj, Patalkot, and Tamia. Pachmarhi Biosphere Reserve in Satpura Range, Amarkantak biosphere reserve and Panna National Park are three of the 18 biosphere reserves in India. Most of them are located in eastern Madhya Pradesh near Jabalpur.

Kanha, Bandhavgarh, Pench, Panna, and Satpura National Parks are managed as Project Tiger areas. The National Chambal Sanctuary is managed for conservation of gharial and mugger, river dolphin, smooth-coated otter and a number of turtle species. Ken-gharial and Son-gharial sanctuaries are managed for conservation of gharial and mugger. The barasingha is the state animal and the dudhraj is the state bird of Madhya Pradesh. Based on composition, the teak and sal forests are the important forest formations in the state. Bamboo-bearing areas are widely distributed.

State symbols of Madhya Pradesh Rivers The Narmada is the longest river in Madhya Pradesh. It flows westward through a rift valley, with the Vindhya ranges sprawling along its northern bank and the Satpura range of mountains along the southern. Its tributaries include the Banjar, the Tawa, the Machna, the Shakkar, the Denwa and the Sonbhadra rivers. The Tapti River runs parallel to Narmada, and also flows through a rift valley. The Narmada-Tapti systems carry an enormous volume of water and provide drainage for almost a quarter of the land area of Madhya Pradesh. The Narmada river is considered very sacred and is worshipped throughout the region. It is the main source of water and acts as a lifeline to the state. The Vindhyas form the southern boundary of the Ganges basin, with the western part of the Ganges basin draining into the Yamuna and the eastern part directly into the Ganges itself. All the rivers, which drain into the Ganges, flow from south to north, with the Chambal, Shipra, Kali Sindh, Parbati, Kuno, Sind, Betwa, Dhasan, Ken and Sunarri rivers being the main tributaries of the Yamuna. Shipra River is one of the most sacred rivers of Hinduism. It is the site of the Simhastha Kumbh Mela, which is held every 12 years. Shipra is stretched across Indore, Ujjain and Dewas. The land drained by these rivers is agriculturally rich, with the natural vegetation largely consisting of grass and dry deciduous forest types, largely thorny. The eastern part of the Ganges basin consists of the Son, the Tons and the Rihand Rivers. Son, which arises in the Maikal hills around Amarkantak, is the largest tributary that goes into the Ganges on the south bank and that does not arise from the Himalayas. Son and its tributaries contribute the bulk of the monsoon flow into the Ganges, because the north bank tributaries are all snow fed. The forests in their basins are much richer than the thorn forests of the northwestern part of Madhya Pradesh. After the formation of Chhattisgarh State, the major portion of Mahanadi basin now lies in Chhattisgarh. Presently, only 154 km² basin area of Hasdeo River in Anuppur District lies in Madhya Pradesh. The Satpuras, in the Gawilgarh and Mahadeo Hills, also contain a watershed, which is south facing. The Wainganga, the Wardha, the Pench, the Kanhan rivers, discharge an enormous volume of water into the Godavari river system.

The Godavari basin consists of sub-tropical, semi-moist forests, mainly in the valley of the Indrawati. There are many important multi-state irrigation projects in development, including the Godavari River Basin Irrigation Projects.

Regions Madhya Pradesh is divided into the following agro-climatic zones:

Administration Madhya Pradesh is divided into 55 districts for administrative purposes. The district is the main unit of administration. These districts are arranged in 10 divisions, listed below:

Cities Demographics Population The population of Madhya Pradesh consists of a number of ethnic groups and tribes, castes and communities. The scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes constitute a significant portion of the population of the State 15.6% and 21.1% respectively. The main tribal groups in Madhya Pradesh are Gond, Bhil, Baiga, Korku, Bhadia (or Bhariya), Halba, Kaul, Mariya, Malto and Sahariya. Mandla, Dhar, Dindori, Barwani, Jhabua and Alirajpur districts have more than 50% tribal population, with Jhabua and Alirajpur having nearly 90% tribal population. In Khargone, Khandwa, Burhanpur, Betul, Chhindwara, Seoni, Anuppur, Umaria, Shahdol and Singrauli districts 30-50% of the population is tribal. According to the 2011 census, the tribal population in Madhya Pradesh was 15.34 million, constituting 21.1% of the total population. There were 46 recognised Scheduled Tribes and three of them have been identified as "Special Primitive Tribal Groups" in the State. Madhya Pradesh ranks 33rd on the Human Development Index with a value of 0.606 (2018). The state's per-capita gross state domestic product (nominal GDP) is the 26th highest in the country (2018-19). According to the SDG India Index 2020-21 compiled by the NITI Aayog, Madhya Pradesh ranks 21st on sustainable development goals, 9th on gender equality, and 10th on clean water and sanitation. Madhya Pradesh ranked ninth in the Fiscal Health Index (FHI) 2025, with a score of 42.2.

Languages The official language of the state is Hindi, which is spoken by over two-thirds of the population and is used for all government business. In urban areas Standard Hindi is the main language, while Urdu is spoken by Muslims. In rural areas, however, most speak varieties counted as dialects of Hindi in the census, although most are quite distinct. In the west are Malvi and Nimadi in the Malwa and Nimar regions, which are more closely related to the Rajasthani languages. In Bundelkhand in the north and Baghelkhand in the east are spoken Bundeli and Bagheli which are eastern varieties of the Hindi languages, similar to Awadhi or Chhattisgarhi. In the southeast is spoken Chhattisgarhi and Powari is the language of the far south, both Eastern Hindi languages. Most speakers of these languages consider them to be dialects of Hindi and so report their language as 'Hindi' on the census. Marathi is another significant language. Due to Maratha rule over much of what is now Madhya Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh is home to the largest number of Marathis outside Maharashtra. Although large numbers of Marathis can be found in urban centres like Indore, the highest concentrations are in the southern areas of the state adjoining Maharashtra. Marathi is the most-spoken language in Burhanpur district, while it is a major minority language in the southern parts of Mahakoshal especially Betul, Chhindwara and Balaghat districts. There are several languages spoken by the Adivasis. The various Bhil languages are Indo-Aryan languages spoken by 50 lakh Bhils of western Madhya Pradesh. Although many, especially in the eastern parts of their range, have adopted the regional languages as mother tongue, the languages are still strong in the far-western hills especially Barwani, Jhabua and Alirajpur districts where they are in the majority. Bhili, the Bareli languages and Bhilali are the major varieties spoken in the state. Gondi is the second-largest Adivasi language, spoken by 11 lakh Gonds in the state. A Dravidian language related to Telugu, it is mainly spoken in the southern Satpura highlands of Mahakoshal, where it is spoken with

the regional languages. Some in the more remote valleys of the Satpuras speak a poorly-described Dravidian dialect called Bharia. Smaller minorities of Gondi speakers can be found in Khandwa and Dewas districts in the west as well as Anuppur, Sidhi and Singrauli districts in the east. Elsewhere in the state, the Gonds have almost totally abandoned their original language. Korku, a Munda language, has over 400,000 speakers in the central highlands of the state. In the far-southeast of Burhanpur can be found some speakers of the language isolate Nihali who live among the Korku. All speakers of tribal languages face significant pressure to switch to the dominant regional languages while their own tongues are considered 'backward' and 'rural'. The following languages are taught in schools in Madhya Pradesh under the Three Language Formula: First language: Any Scheduled Language Second language: Hindi, Urdu or English Third language: Another Scheduled Language, Arabic, Persian, French, Russian

Religion According to the census of 2011, 90.9% of residents followed Hinduism, while minorities are Muslim (6.6%), Jain (0.8%), Buddhists (0.3%), Christians (0.3%), and Sikhs (0.2%). Madhya Pradesh is home to several pilgrimage sites including Amarkantak at the source of the Narmada and the Ghats of Omkareshwar, also on the Narmada. Temples can be found throughout the state. Buddhism and Jainism were once prominent religions in the state, especially in the central plateau near Raisen and Bhopal. Malwa is still home to a significant Jain minority. Jains are particularly concentrated in the urban centres of the Malwa region. Islam arrived with Muslim rule in the 14th century, although its influence was and is limited to major urban centres. Islam is a major religion in Bhopal and Burhanpur, and Bhopal is home to many prominent Islamic shrines. Buddhism in modern times is mainly practised by Marathis in the south. Most respondents who answered 'Other' self-identified as following Adivasi religions such as Koya Punem of the Gonds.

Culture Three sites in Madhya Pradesh have been declared World Heritage Sites by UNESCO: the Khajuraho Group of Monuments (1986) including Devi Jagadambi temple, Khajuraho, Buddhist Monuments at Sanchi (1989) and the Rock Shelters of Bhimbetka (2003). Other architecturally significant or scenic sites include Ajaigarh, Amarkantak, Asirgarh, Bandhavgarh, Bawangaja, Bhopal, Vidisha, Chanderi, Chitrakuta, Dewas, Dhar, Gwalior, Indore, Nemavar, Jabalpur, Burhanpur, Maheshwar, Mandleshwar, Mandu, Omkareshwar, Orchha, Pachmarhi, Shivpuri, Sonagiri, Mandla and Ujjain. Madhya Pradesh is noted for its classical and folk music. In 2023, UNSECO declared Gwalior as the City of Music. Some of the noted Hindustani classical music gharanas in Madhya Pradesh include the Gwalior gharana, the Maihar gharana and Senia gharana. Gwalior is also known as the capital of Hindustani classical Music. Many of the medieval India's most noted sufi and mustic singers like Muhammed Ghaus Gwaliori, Tansen and Baiju Bawra, were born in Gwalior. Noted Dhrupad exponents Aminuddin Dagar (Indore), Gundecha Brothers (Ujjain) and Uday Bhawalkar (Ujjain) were also born in present-day Madhya Pradesh. Renowned classical singer Kumar Gandharva spent his life at Dewas. The birthplaces of noted playback singers Kishore Kumar (Khandwa) and Lata Mangeshkar (Indore) and singer and composer Aadesh Shrivastava (Jabalpur) are also located in MP. The local styles of folk singing are Faga, Bhartahari, Sanja geet, Bhopa, Kalbelia, Bhat, Bhand, Vasdeva, Videsia, Kalgi Turra, Nirgunia, Alha, Pandwani Gayan and Garba Garbi Govalan. Annual Tansen Music Festival is organized by the MP Tourism Board in Gwalior. The major folk dances of MP are Rai, Karma, Saila, Matki, Gangaur, Badhai, Baredi, Naurata, Ahiri and Bhagoria.

Economy Madhya Pradesh's gross state domestic product (nominal GDP) for 2013-14 was ■ 4,509 billion (approximately US\$ 72,726,000,000). The per-capita figure was US\$ 871.45 in 2013-14, the sixth-lowest in the country. Between 1999 and 2008, the annualised growth rate of the state was very low: 3.5%. Subsequently, the state's GDP growth rate has improved significantly, rising to 8% during 2010-11 and 12% during 2011-12. Madhya Pradesh is also famous for honey production in district Morena. The state has an agrarian economy.

The major crops of Madhya Pradesh are wheat, soybean, gram, sugarcane, rice, maize, cotton, rapeseed, mustard and arhar. Minor Forest Produce (MFP), such as tendu leaves used to roll beedi, sal seed, teak seed, and lak also contribute to state's rural economy.

Madhya Pradesh has 5 Special Economic Zones (SEZs): 3 IT/ITeS (Indore, Gwalior), 1 mineral-based (Jabalpur) and 1 agro-based (Jabalpur). In October 2011, approval was given to 14 proposed SEZs, out of which 10 were IT/ITeS-based. Indore is the major commercial centre of the state. Because of the state's central location, a number of consumer goods companies have established manufacturing bases in MP. The Industrial Belts of Indore-Dewas-Pithampur and Mandideep (Bhopal) are the prominent Industrial Hubs of Madhya Pradesh. Numerous industrial units and factories are present there such as Mechanical and Industrial Parts (gears, cables), Chemical Production Units, Pharmaceutical Units, Food Processing & FMCG Industries, Textile Production, Food Grain Processing Units, Leather Industry and Sanitary Products etc. Madhya Pradesh has natural white stone production in Gwalior, which is exported worldwide. The state has the largest reserves of diamond and copper in India. Other major mineral reserves include those of coal, coalbed methane, manganese and dolomite. Madhya Pradesh has six Ordnance Factories, four of which are located at Jabalpur (Vehicle Factory, Grey Iron Foundry, Gun Carriage Factory, Ordnance Factory Khamaria) and one each at Katni and Itarsi. The factories are run by the Ordnance Factories Board, and manufacture a variety of products for the Indian Armed Forces. There are two major Security Press Units of Security Printing and Minting Corporation of India Limited presently operating in the state. The first unit is situated in Dewas. Also known as Bank Note Press (BNP). It is an industrial unit of SPMCIL, established in the year 1974 is wholly owned by Government of India, Ministry of Finance and Department of Economic Affairs. BNP Dewas prints Indian Currency Notes (known as Indian Rupee or INR; Symbol: '₹') of denominations ₹50, ₹100, ₹500 and ₹2000 and is capable of printing Bank Notes of any denomination. There is also a specialised Security Ink Factory at BNP Dewas which supplies specialised inks for currency and other government approved documents. The second unit is a Security Paper Mill was established in 1968 at Hoshangabad. It produces papers for banknotes and non-judicial stamps and further prints with new enhanced unit. Madhya Pradesh won the 10th National Award for excellent work in Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005. The state's tourism industry is growing, fuelled by wildlife tourism and a number of places of historical and religious significance. Gwalior, Sanchi and Khajuraho are frequented by external tourists. Alongwith cities like Bhedaghat, Jabalpur, Bhimbetka, Bhojpur, Maheshwar, Mandu, Orchha, Pachmarhi, Kanha, Amarkantak and Ujjain, Tumen Vindhya Vasini temple ancient temple. This south facing Ashok Nagar district located in Tuman (Tumvn).

Infrastructure Energy The state has a total installed power generation capacity of 27108.55 MW as of 31 March 2024. The Madhya Pradesh Electric Board is located at Jabalpur. The Rewa Ultra Mega Solar project is a photovoltaic solar park spread over an area of 1,590 acres (6.4 km²) in the Gurh tehsil of Rewa District of Madhya Pradesh. The project was commissioned with 750 MW capacity. 97% households have electricity access in the state. The Singrauli region on the eastern end of Madhya Pradesh is a major energy producer enclave for the country. The region has vast reserves of coal mines, which are excavated by Northern Coalfields Limited, a subsidiary of Coal India Limited, which is in turn used in local power plants of NTPC, Sasan Power and Hindalco. The area has more than 10,000 MW installed capacity for energy production. The region of Malwa were selected to establish Wind Energy Production units by State Government. Constant wind flows in the region are suitable for harvesting wind energy. There are more than 100 wind mills on a series of hills 13 km (8.1 mi) from Dewas, generating more than 30 megawatts of power. These were financed by a few private companies which sought a reliable power supply.

Transport Bus and train services cover most of Madhya Pradesh. The 99,043-kilometre-long (61,542 mi) road network of the state includes 20 national highways. A 4,948-kilometre-long (3,075 mi) rail network criss-crosses the state, with Jabalpur serving as headquarters for the West Central Railway Zone of the Indian Railways. The Central Railway and the Western Railway also cover parts of the state. Most of the western Madhya Pradesh comes under Ratlam Rail Division of Western Railways, including cities like Indore, Ujjain, Dewas, Mandsaur, Khandwa, Neemuch and Bairagarh in Bhopal. The state has a total of 20 major railway junctions. More than 455 trains transit through Madhya Pradesh daily. 220 trains transit through the State's capital Bhopal alone. North-South & East-West corridors cut across Madhya Pradesh, including the New Delhi-Chennai main line. The inter-state bus terminals are located in Bhopal, Gwalior, Indore and Jabalpur. More than 2,000 buses are conducted daily from these four cities. The intra-city transit systems mostly consist of buses, private autos and taxis. There is convenient access to major ports such as Kandla port and Jawaharlal Nehru port in the state. The state does not have a coastline, but is home to 5 functional ICD's (Inland/Dry Ports) which provide facilities to clear and load cargoes directly for dispatch within the state, they are located in Bhopal, Indore and Gwalior. Most of the sea trade happens through the Kandla and Jawaharlal Nehru Port (Nhava Sheva) in the neighbouring states, which are well-connected to MP by road and rail networks. Devi Ahilyabai Holkar Airport in Indore is the busiest airport in Madhya Pradesh, followed by Raja Bhoj International Airport in the state capital of Bhopal. Rajmata Vijayaraje Scindia Airport, Gwalior is the largest airport of Madhya Pradesh having two take off runways. Dumna Airport in Jabalpur and Khajuraho Airport also have scheduled commercial passenger services. Rewa Airport is under construction with operations expected to start by 2025. Besides these, minor airstrips are located at Chhindwara, Sagar, Neemuch, Ratlam, Mandsaur, Ujjain, Khandwa, Guna and Satna.

Other The state has 55 districts hospitals, 333 community health centres, 1,155 primary health centres and 8,860 sub-centres. The urban infrastructure has improved considerably in the past decade. 22 projects costing above \$500 million have been sanctioned under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission for the development of Bhopal, Indore, Jabalpur and Ujjain. Seven Cities of Madhya Pradesh Bhopal, Indore, Gwalior, Jabalpur, Satna, Ujjain, and Sagar have been selected under Smart cities mission. Indore has been part of the Swachh Survekshan Cleanliness Program initiated by Government of India. It has been ranked as India's cleanest city seven years in a row as per the Swachh Survekshan for the years 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023. Gwalior has been globally recognised by the UNESCO as the City of Music of India. This is considered as a remarkable and significant milestone putting Madhya Pradesh as music tourism hub worldwide.

Media Dainik Bhaskar, Dainik Jagran, The Indian Observer, Nava Bharat, Deshbandhu, Nai Duniya, Rajasthan Patrika, Raj Express and Dainik Dabang Dunia are the leading Hindi newspapers. Other local newspapers are published in the cities. In English Times of India, Hindustan Times, The Hitavada, Central Chronicle and Free Press have editions from Bhopal with The Hitavada also being in Jabalpur. A Sindhi daily, i.e., Challenge (Now also in Hindi) is published from Bhopal is the only Sindhi newspaper in state.

Government and politics Madhya Pradesh has a 230-seat state legislative assembly. The state also sends 40 members to the Parliament of India: 29 are elected to the Lok Sabha (Lower House) and 11 to the Rajya Sabha (Upper House). The constitutional head of the state is the Governor, appointed by the President of India. The executive powers lie with the Chief Minister, who is the elected leader of the state legislature. The current governor is Mangubhai C. Patel, and the current chief minister is Mohan Yadav of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The political scenario of Madhya Pradesh can be defined as below: Post-Independence (1950s-1970s): The Indian National Congress (INC) held power for a significant period, with leaders like Ravishankar Shukla and Kailash Nath Katju as Chief Ministers. However, parties like Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) - the precursor to

BJP - started gaining ground in the 1960s. Shifting Tides (1980s-1990s): This era saw a rise in regional parties and national alternatives. Janata Party (JP), Janata Dal (JD), and Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) challenged the INC's dominance for a while. Bi-polar Politics (2000s-present): Since the early 2000s, a two-party system has emerged. BJP and INC have become the main contenders, with occasional forays by smaller parties. The dominant political parties in the state are the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Indian National Congress (INC).

Administration Madhya Pradesh state is made up of 55 Districts, which are grouped into 10 divisions. As of 2023, the state has 55 jila (district) panchayats, 376 tehsil, 313 janpad panchayats/blocks, and 23043 gram (village) panchayats. The municipalities in the state include 18 Nagar Nigams, 100 Nagar Palikas and 264 Nagar Panchayats.

Villages Dhekal Badi

Education According to the 2011 census, Madhya Pradesh had a literacy rate of 69.32%. According to the 2009-10 figures, the state had 105,592 primary schools, 6,352 high schools, and 5,161 higher secondary schools. The state has 208 engineering and architecture colleges, 208 management institutes, and 12 medical colleges. The state is home to some of the premier scientific educational and research institutions of India including IIT Indore, IIM Indore, AIIMS Bhopal, NIT Bhopal, IISER Bhopal, SPA Bhopal, IIIT Jabalpur, IIIT Gwalior. Other premier institutes include Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management (IITTM Gwalior), Indian Institute of Forest Management (IIFM) Bhopal, Institute of Hotel Management (IHM) Gwalior, National Law Institute University (NLIU) Bhopal, Lakshmi Bai National Institute of Physical Education, (LNIPE) Gwalior, Jabalpur Engineering College, Dharmashastra National Law University, Jabalpur, VIT University Bhopal and Rustamji Institute of Technology, Gwalior The state has two central universities namely Dr. Hari Singh Gour University (Sagar) and Indira Gandhi National Tribal University (Amarkantak, Anuppur), while former being the first university of Madhya Pradesh. There are 500 degree colleges, which are affiliated with one of the universities in the state. The specialised universities include Rajiv Gandhi Technical University, Madhya Pradesh Medical Science University, Jawaharlal Nehru Agriculture University and Nanaji Deshmukh Veterinary Science University. The general universities are Awadhesh Pratap Singh University (Rewa), Barkatullah University (Bhopal), Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya (Indore), Rani Durgavati University (Jabalpur), Vikram University (Ujjain), Masarovar Global University, Jiwaji University (Gwalior), Dr. Hari Singh Gour University (Sagar), Indira Gandhi National Tribal University (Amarkantak, Anuppur), Makhanlal Chaturvedi National University of Journalism and Communication (Bhopal). Madhya Pradesh is home to India's most expensive, finest and elite schools known as the Scindia School (the all boys private residential school) and the Scindia Kanya Vidyalaya (the all girls private boarding school) situated in Gwalior. The Professional Examination Board was initialised as Pre Medical Test Board by Government of Madhya Pradesh in the year 1970. After some year in 1981, Pre Engineering Board was constituted. Then after, in the year 1982 both these boards were amalgamated and named as Madhya Pradesh Professional Examination Board (MPPEB).

Tourism Madhya Pradesh Tourism promotes the central Indian state known as the "Heart of India" for its rich cultural heritage, wildlife, and natural beauty. It offers diverse attractions including UNESCO World Heritage Sites like Khajuraho, Bhimbetka and Sanchi, tiger reserves, historic forts like the Gwalior Fort, stunning Saas Bahu temples, Gwalior, and vibrant festivals, making it a major travel destination.

Notable people Sports In 2013, state govt declared Mallakhamba as the state sport. Cricket, kabaddi, hockey, football, basketball, volleyball, cycling, swimming, badminton, and table tennis are the popular sports in the state. Traditional games like kho kho, gilli danda, sitoliya, kanche, and langdi are popular in the rural areas. Snooker, a cue sport, generally regarded as having been invented in Jabalpur by British Army officers, is popular in many of the English-speaking and Commonwealth countries, with top professional players attaining multimillion-pound career earnings from the game.

Cricket is the most popular sport in Madhya Pradesh. There are three international cricket stadiums in the state - Nehru Stadium (Indore), Captain Roop Singh Stadium (Gwalior), Holkar Cricket Stadium (Indore) and Madhavrao Scindia Cricket Stadium (Gwalior). Madhya Pradesh cricket team's best performances in Ranji Trophy was in 1998-99, when the Chandrakant Pandit-led team ended as the runner-up. Its predecessor, the Indore-based Holkar cricket team, had won the Ranji Trophy four times. In year 2022, Chandrakant Pandit coached Madhya Pradesh cricket team defeated 41-time champion Mumbai Cricket Team in Ranji Trophy 2021-22 season. It is Madhya Pradesh's maiden title at M. Chinnaswamy Stadium. Aishbagh Stadium in Bhopal is the home ground for World Series Hockey team Bhopal Badshahs. The state also has a football team that participates in the Santosh Trophy. MP United FC is an Indian football that played in the 2nd Division I-League. On 6 December 2017, the Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan announced that players from the state would be given government jobs on winning medals in international events. Madhu Yadav, the former Captain of the India women's national field hockey team, a 1982 Asian Games gold medallist and an Arjuna Award recipient, is from Jabalpur.

See also Outline of Madhya Pradesh Directorate Sports and Youth Welfare Districts of Madhya Pradesh List of forts in Madhya Pradesh List of people from Madhya Pradesh

References Further reading External links

Government Official website General information Madhya Pradesh web resources provided by GovPubs at the University of Colorado Boulder Libraries Madhya Pradesh at the Encyclopdia Britannica Wikimedia Atlas of Madhya Pradesh Geographic data related to Madhya Pradesh at OpenStreetMap

Maharashtra

Maharashtra is a state in the western peninsular region of India occupying a substantial portion of the Deccan Plateau. It is bordered by the Arabian Sea to the west, the Indian states of Karnataka and Goa to the south, Telangana to the southeast and Chhattisgarh to the east, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh to the north, and the Indian union territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu to the northwest. Maharashtra is the second-most populous state in India, the third most populous country subdivision in South Asia and the fourth-most populous in the world. The region that encompasses the modern state has a history going back many millennia. Notable dynasties that ruled the region include the Asmakas, the Mauryas, the Satavahanas, the Western Satraps, the Abhiras, the Vakatakas, the Chalukyas, the Rashtrakutas, the Western Chalukyas, the Seuna Yadavas, the Khaljis, the Tughlaqs, the Bahamanis and the Mughals. In the early nineteenth century, the region was divided between the Dominions of the Peshwa in the Maratha Confederacy and the Nizamate of Hyderabad. After two wars and the proclamation of the Indian Empire, the region became a part of the Bombay Province, the Berar Province and the Central Provinces of India under direct British rule and the Deccan States Agency under Crown suzerainty. Between 1950 and 1956, the Bombay Province became the Bombay State in the Indian Union, and Berar, the Deccan states and the Gujarat states were merged into the Bombay State. Aspirations of a separate state for Marathi-speaking peoples were pursued by the United Maharashtra Movement; their advocacy eventually bore fruit on 1 May 1960, when the State of Bombay was bifurcated into the modern states of Maharashtra and Gujarat. The state is divided into 6 divisions and 36 districts. Mumbai is the capital of Maharashtra due to its historical significance as a major trading port and its status as India's financial hub, housing key institutions and a diverse economy. Mumbai's well-developed infrastructure and cultural diversity make it a suitable administrative center for the state, and the most populous urban area in India, with Nagpur serving as the winter capital. The Godavari and Krishna are the state's two major rivers, and forests cover 16.47% of the state's geographical area. The economy of Maharashtra is the largest in India, with a gross state domestic product (GSDP) of ₹42.5 trillion (US\$500 billion) and GSDP per capita of ₹335,247 (US\$4,000); it is the single-largest contributor to India's economy, being accountable for 14% of all-India nominal GDP. The service sector dominates the state's economy, accounting for 69.3% of the value of the output of the country. Although agriculture accounts for 12% of the state GDP, it employs nearly half the population of the state. Maharashtra is one of the most industrialised states in India. The state's capital, Mumbai, is India's financial and commercial capital. The Bombay Stock Exchange, India's largest stock exchange and the oldest in Asia, is located in the city, as is the National Stock Exchange, which is the second-largest stock exchange in India and one of world's largest derivatives exchanges. The state has played a significant role in the country's social and political life and is widely considered a leader in terms of agricultural and industrial production, trade and transport, and education. Maharashtra is the ninth-highest ranking among Indian states in the human development index. The state is home to seven UNESCO World Heritage Sites: Ajanta Caves, Ellora Caves, Elephanta Caves, Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (formerly Victoria Terminus), the Victorian Gothic and Art Deco Ensembles of Mumbai, the Maratha Military Landscapes of India (shared with Tamil Nadu) and the Western Ghats, a heritage site made up of 39 individual properties of which four are in Maharashtra.

Etymology Pre-independence era writers state that the term "Maharashtra" was derived from "the country of Mahars". Irawati Karve also noted that Mahars were found in all regions of Maharashtra. The modern Marathi language evolved from Maharashtri Prakrit, and the word Marhatta (later used for the Marathas) is found in the Jain Maharashtrian literature. The term Maharashtra along with Maharashtrian, Marathi, and Maratha may have derived from the same root. However, their exact etymology is uncertain. Another theory among the linguistic

scholars is that the words Maratha and Maharashtra ultimately derived from a combination of Mahā and Rāshṭrikā, the name of a tribe or dynasty of chiefs ruling in the Deccan region. An alternate theory states that the term is derived from mahā ("great") and ratha/rathi ("chariot"/"charioteer"), which refers to a skilful northern fighting force that migrated southward into the area. In the Harivamsa, the Yadava kingdom called Anaratta is described as mostly inhabited by the Abhiras (Abhira-praya-manusyam). The Anaratta country and its inhabitants were called Surastra and the Saurastras, probably after the Rattas (Rastras) akin to the Rastrikas of Asoka's rock Edicts, now known as Maharastra and the Marattas. An alternative theory states that the term derives from the word mahā ("great") and rāshṭra ("nation/dominion"). However, this theory is somewhat controversial among modern scholars who believe it to be the Sanskritised interpretation of later writers.

History Numerous Late Harappan or Chalcolithic sites belonging to the Jorwe culture (c. 1300-700 BCE) have been discovered throughout the state. The largest settlement discovered of the culture is at Daimabad, which had a mud fortification during this period, as well as an elliptical temple with fire pits. In the Late Harappan period there was a large migration of people from Gujarat to northern Maharashtra. Maharashtra was ruled by Maurya Empire in the fourth and third centuries BCE. Around 230 BCE, Maharashtra came under the rule of the Satavahana dynasty which ruled it for the next 400 years. The rule of Satavahanas was followed by that of Western Satraps, Gupta Empire, Gurjara-Pratihara, Vakataka, Kadambas, Chalukya Empire, Rashtrakuta Dynasty, and Western Chalukya and the Yadava Dynasty. The Buddhist Ajanta Caves in present-day Aurangabad display influences from the Satavahana and Vakataka styles. The caves were possibly excavated during this period. The Chalukya dynasty ruled the region from the sixth to the eighth centuries CE, and the two prominent rulers were Pulakeshin II, who defeated the north Indian Emperor Harsha, and Vikramaditya II, who defeated the Arab invaders in the eighth century. The Rashtrakuta dynasty ruled Maharashtra from the eighth to the tenth century. The Arab traveller Sulaiman al Mahri described the ruler of the Rashtrakuta dynasty Amoghavarsha as "one of the four great kings of the world". Shilahara dynasty began as vassals of the Rashtrakuta dynasty which ruled the Deccan plateau between the eighth and tenth centuries. From the early 11th century to the 12th century, the Deccan Plateau, which includes a significant part of Maharashtra, was dominated by the Western Chalukya Empire and the Chola dynasty. Several battles were fought between the Western Chalukya Empire and the Chola dynasty in the Deccan Plateau during the reigns of Raja Raja Chola I, Rajendra Chola I, Jayasimha II, Someshvara I, and Vikramaditya VI. In the early 14th century, the Yadava dynasty, which ruled most of present-day Maharashtra, was overthrown by the Delhi Sultanate ruler Alauddin Khalji. Later, Muhammad bin Tughluq conquered parts of the Deccan, and temporarily shifted his capital from Delhi to Daulatabad in Maharashtra. After the collapse of the Tughluqs in 1347, the local Bahmani Sultanate of Gulbarga took over, governing the region for the next 150 years. After the break-up of the Bahmani sultanate in 1518, Maharashtra split into five Deccan Sultanates: Nizamshah of Ahmednagar, Adilshah of Bijapur, Qutubshah of Golkonda, Bidarshah of Bidar and Imadshah of Elichpur. These kingdoms often fought with each other. United, they decisively defeated the Vijayanagara Empire of the south in 1565. The present area of Mumbai was ruled by the Sultanate of Gujarat before its capture by Portugal in 1535 and the Faruqi dynasty ruled the Khandesh region between 1382 and 1601 before finally getting annexed in the Mughal Empire. Malik Ambar, the regent of the Nizamshahi dynasty of Ahmednagar from 1607 to 1626, increased the strength and power of Murtaza Nizam Shah II and raised a large army. Ambar is said to have introduced the concept of guerrilla warfare in the Deccan region. Malik Ambar assisted Mughal emperor Shah Jahan in Delhi against his stepmother, Nur Jahan, who wanted to enthrone her son-in-law. Both Shivaji's grandfather, Maloji and father Shahaji served under Ambar. In the early 17th century, Shahaji Bhosale, an ambitious local general who had served the Ahmadnagar Sultanate, the Mughals and Adil Shah of Bijapur at different periods throughout his career, attempted to establish his independent rule. This attempt was unsuccessful, but his son Shivaji succeeded in establishing the Maratha Empire. Shortly after Shivaji's death in 1680, the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb launched a campaign to conquer Maratha territories as well as the Adilshahi and Golkonda

kingdoms. This campaign, better known as Mughal-Maratha Wars, was a strategic defeat for Mughals. Aurangzeb failed to fully conquer Maratha territories, and this campaign had a ruinous effect on Mughal Treasury and Army. Shortly after Aurangzeb's death in 1707, Marathas under Peshwa Bajirao I and the generals that he had promoted such as Ranoji Shinde and Malharrao Holkar started conquering Mughal Territories in the north and western India, and by 1750s they or their successors had confined the Mughals to city of Delhi. After their defeat at the hand of Ahmad Shah Abdali's Afghan forces in the Third Battle of Panipat in 1761, the Maratha suffered a setback. However, they soon reclaimed the lost territories and ruled central and north India including Delhi until the end of the eighteenth century. The Marathas also developed a potent Navy circa in the 1660s, which at its peak under the command of Kanhoji Angre, dominated the territorial waters of the western coast of India from Mumbai to Savantwadi. It resisted the British, Portuguese, Dutch, and Siddi naval ships and kept a check on their naval ambitions. Charles Metcalfe, British Civil servant and later Acting Governor-General, said in 1806:

India contains no more than two great powers, British and Maratha, and every other state acknowledges the influence of one or the other. Every inch that we recede will be occupied by them. The British East India Company slowly expanded areas under its rule during the 18th century. The Third Anglo-Maratha War (1817-1818) led to the end of the Maratha Empire and the East India Company took over the empire. The Maratha Navy dominated till around the 1730s, was in a state of decline by the 1770s and ceased to exist by 1818. The British governed western Maharashtra as part of the Bombay Presidency, which spanned an area from Karachi in Pakistan to northern Deccan. A number of the Maratha states persisted as princely states, retaining autonomy in return for acknowledging British suzerainty. The largest princely states in the territory were Nagpur, Satara and Kolhapur State; Satara was annexed to the Bombay Presidency in 1848, and Nagpur was annexed in 1853 to become Nagpur Province, later part of the Central Provinces. Berar, which had been part of the Nizam of Hyderabad's kingdom, was occupied by the British in 1853 and annexed to the Central Provinces in 1903. However, a large region called Marathwada remained part of the Nizam's Hyderabad State throughout the British period. The British ruled Maharashtra region from 1818 to 1947 and influenced every aspect of life for the people of the region. They brought several changes to the legal system, built modern means of transport including roads and Railways, took various steps to provide mass education, including that for previously marginalised classes and women, established universities based on western system and imparting education in science, technology, and western medicine, standardised the Marathi language, and introduced mass media by utilising modern printing technologies. The 1857 war of independence had many Marathi leaders, though the battles mainly took place in northern India. The modern struggle for independence started taking shape in the late 1800s with leaders such as Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Justice Mahadev Govind Ranade, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Pherozeshah Mehta and Dadabhai Naoroji evaluating the company rule and its consequences. Jyotirao Phule was the pioneer of social reform in the Maharashtra region in the second half of the 19th century. His social work was continued by Shahu, Raja of Kolhapur and later by B. R. Ambedkar. After the partial autonomy given to the states by the Government of India Act 1935, B. G. Kher became the first chief minister of the Congress party-led government of tri-lingual Bombay Presidency. The ultimatum to the British during the Quit India Movement was given in Mumbai and culminated in the transfer of power and independence in 1947. After Indian independence, princely states and Jagirs of the Deccan States Agency were merged into Bombay State, which was created from the former Bombay Presidency in 1950. In 1956, the States Reorganisation Act reorganised the Indian states along linguistic lines, and Bombay Presidency State was enlarged by the addition of the predominantly Marathi-speaking regions of Marathwada (Aurangabad Division) from erstwhile Hyderabad state and Vidarbha region from the Central Provinces and Berar. The southernmost part of Bombay State was ceded to Mysore. In the 1950s, Marathi people strongly protested against bilingual Bombay state under the banner of Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti. The notable leaders of the samiti included Keshavrao Jedhe, S.M. Joshi, Shripad Amrit Dange, Pralhad Keshav Atre and Gopalrao

Khedkar. The key demand of the samiti called for a Marathi speaking state with Mumbai as its capital. In the Gujarati speaking areas of the state, a similar Mahagujarat Movement demanded a separate Gujarat state comprising majority Gujarati areas. After many years of protests, which saw 106 deaths among the protestors, and electoral success of the samiti in 1957 elections, the central government led by Prime minister Nehru split Bombay State into two new states of Maharashtra and Gujarat on 1 May 1960. The state continues to have a dispute with Karnataka regarding the region of Belgaum and Karwar. The Government of Maharashtra was unhappy with the border demarcation of 1957 and filed a petition to the Ministry of Home affairs of India. Maharashtra claimed 814 villages, and 3 urban settlements of Belagon, Karwar and Nippani, all part of then Bombay Presidency before freedom of the country. A petition by Maharashtra in the Supreme Court of India, staking a claim over Belagon, is currently pending.

Geography Maharashtra with a total area of 307,713 km² (118,809 sq mi), is the third-largest state by area in terms of land area and constitutes 9.36% of India's total geographical area. The State lies between 1535' N to 2202' N latitude and 7236' E to 8054' E longitude. It occupies the western and central part of the country and has a coastline stretching 840 kilometres (520 mi) along the Arabian Sea. The dominant physical feature of the state is its plateau character, which is separated from the Konkan coastline by the mountain range of the Western Ghats, which runs parallel to the coast from north to south. The Western Ghats, also known as the Sahyadri Range, has an average elevation of 1,200 metres (3,900 ft); its slopes gently descending towards the east and southeast. The Western Ghats (or the Sahyadri Mountain range) provide a physical barrier to the state on the west, while the Satpura Hills along the north and Bhamragad-Chiroli-Gaikhuri ranges on the east serve as its natural borders. This state's expansion from North to South is 720 km (450 mi) and East to West is 800 km (500 mi). To the west of these hills lie the Konkan coastal plains, 50-80 km (31-50 mi) in width. To the east of the Ghats lies the flat Deccan Plateau. The main rivers of the state are the Krishna, and its tributary, Bhima, the Godavari, and its main tributaries, Manjara, and Wardha-Wainganga and the Tapi, and its tributary Purna. Maharashtra is divided into five geographic regions. Konkan is the western coastal region, between the Western Ghats and the sea. Khandesh is the north region lying in the valley of the Tapti, Purna river. Nashik, Malegaon Jalgaon, Dhule and Bhusawal are the major cities of this region. Desh is in the centre of the state. Marathwada, which was a part of the princely state of Hyderabad until 1956, is located in the southeastern part of the state. Aurangabad and Nanded are the main cities of the region. Vidarbha is the easternmost region of the state, formerly part of the Central Provinces and Berar. The state has limited area under irrigation, low natural fertility of soils, and large areas prone to recurrent drought. Due to this the agricultural productivity of Maharashtra is generally low as compared to the national averages of various crops. Maharashtra has been divided in to nine agro-climatic zones on the basis of annual rainfall soil types, vegetation and cropping pattern.

Climate Maharashtra experiences a tropical wet and dry climate with hot, rainy, and cold weather seasons. Some areas more inland experience a hot semi arid climate, due to a rain shadow effect caused by the Western Ghats. The month of March marks the beginning of the summer and the temperature rises steadily until June. In the central plains, summer temperatures rise to between 40 C or 104.0 F and 45 C or 113.0 F. May is usually the warmest and January the coldest month of the year. The winter season lasts until February with lower temperatures occurring in December and January. On the Deccan plateau that lies on eastern side of the Sahyadri mountains, the climate is drier, however, dew and hail often occur, depending on seasonal weather. The rainfall patterns in the state vary by the topography of different regions. The state can be divided into four meteorological regions, namely coastal Konkan, Western Maharashtra, Marathwada, and Vidarbha. The southwest monsoon usually arrives in the last week of June and lasts till mid-September. Pre-monsoon showers begin towards the middle of June and post-monsoon rains occasionally occur in October. The highest average monthly rainfall is during July and August. In the winter season, there may be a little rainfall associated with western winds over the region. The Konkan coastal area, west of the Sahyadri Mountains receives very

heavy monsoon rains with an annual average of more than 3,000 millimetres (120 in). However, just 150 km (93 mi) to the east, in the rain shadow of the mountain range, only 500-700 mm/year will fall, and long dry spells leading to drought are a common occurrence. Maharashtra has many of the 99 Indian districts identified by the Indian Central water commission as prone to drought. The average annual rainfall in the state is 1,181 mm (46.5 in) and 75% of it is received during the southwest monsoon from June to September. However, under the influence of the Bay of Bengal, eastern Vidarbha receives good rainfall in July, August, and September. Thane, Raigad, Ratnagiri, and Sindhudurg districts receive heavy rains of an average of 2,000 to 2,500 mm or 80 to 100 in and the hill stations of Matheran and Mahabaleshwar over 5,000 mm (200 in). Contrariwise, the rain shadow districts of Nashik, Pune, Ahmednagar, Dhule, Jalgaon, Satara, Sangli, Solapur, and parts of Kolhapur receive less than 1,000 mm (39 in) annually. In winter, a cool dry spell occurs, with clear skies, gentle air breeze, and pleasant weather that prevails from October to February, although the eastern Vidarbha region receives rainfall from the north-east monsoon.

Flora and fauna The state has three crucial biogeographic zones, namely Western Ghats, Deccan Plateau, and the West coast. The Ghats nurture endemic species, Deccan Plateau provides for vast mountain ranges and grasslands while the coast is home to littoral and swamp forests. Flora of Maharashtra is heterogeneous in composition. In 2012 the recorded thick forest area in the state was 61,939 km² (23,915 sq mi) which was about 20.13% of the state's geographical area. There are three main Public Forestry Institutions (PFIs) in the Maharashtra state: the Maharashtra Forest Department (MFD), the Forest Development Corporation of Maharashtra (FDCM) and the Directorate of Social Forestry (SFD). The Maharashtra State Biodiversity Board, constituted by the Government of Maharashtra in January 2012 under the Biological Diversity Act, 2002, is the nodal body for the conservation of biodiversity within and outside forest areas in the State. Maharashtra is ranked second among the Indian states in terms of the recorded forest area. Recorded Forest Area (RFA) in the state is 61,579 sq mi (159,489 km²), of which 49,546 sq mi (128,324 km²) is reserved forests, 6,733 sq mi (17,438 km²) is protected forest and 5,300 sq mi (13,727 km²) is unclassified forests. Based on the interpretation of IRS Resourcesat-2 LISS III satellite data of the period Oct 2017 to Jan 2018, the State has 8,720.53 sq mi (22,586 km²) under Very Dense Forest (VDF), 20,572.35 sq mi (53,282 km²) under Moderately Dense Forest (MDF) and 21,484.68 sq mi (55,645 km²) under Open Forest (OF). According to the Champion and Seth classification, Maharashtra has five types of forests:

Southern Tropical Semi-Evergreen forests: These are found in the western ghats at a height of 400-1,000 m (1,300-3,300 ft). Anjani, Hirda, Kinjal, and Mango are predominant tree species found here. **Southern Tropical Moist Deciduous forests:** These are a mix of Moist Teak bearing forests (Melghat) and Moist Mixed deciduous forests (Vidarbha and Thane district). Commercially important Teak, Shishum, and bamboo are found here. In addition to evergreen Teak, some of the other tree species found in this type of forest include Jambul, Ain, and Shisam. **Southern Tropical Dry Deciduous forests:** these occupy a major part of the state. **Southern Tropical Thorn forests** are found in the low rainfall regions of Marathwada, Vidarbha, Khandesh, and Western Maharashtra. At present, these forests are heavily degraded. Babul, Bor, and Palas are some of the tree species found here. **Littoral and Swamp forests** are mainly found in the Creeks of Sindhudurg and Thane districts of the coastal Konkan region. The state harbours significant mangrove, coastal and marine biodiversity, with 304 km² (117 sq mi) of the area under mangrove cover as per the India State of Forest Report (ISFR) of the Forest survey India in the coastal districts of the state. The most common animal species present in the state are monkeys, wild pigs, tiger, leopard, gaur, sloth bear, sambar, four-horned antelope, chital, barking deer, mouse deer, small Indian civet, golden jackal, jungle cat, and hare. Other animals found in this state include reptiles such as lizards, scorpions and snake species such as cobras and kraits. The state provides legal protection to its tiger population through six dedicated tiger reserves under the precincts of the National Tiger Conservation Authority. The state's 720 km (450 mi) of sea coastline of the Arabian Sea marks the

presence of various types of fish and marine animals. The Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) found 1527 marine animal species, including molluscs with 581 species, many crustacean species including crabs, shrimps, and lobsters, 289 fish species, and 141 species types of annelids (sea worms).

Regions, divisions and districts Maharashtra has following geographical regions:

North Maharashtra Konkan Marathwada Vidarbha

Desh or Western Maharashtra It consists of six administrative divisions:

Amravati Aurangabad Konkan Nagpur Nashik Pune The state's six divisions are divided into 36 districts, 109 sub-divisions, 358 talukas, and 44778 revenue villages. The following map shows the 36 districts of Maharashtra.

Each district is administered by a district collector & district magistrate, appointed by the government either from the cadre of Indian Administrative Service or the Maharashtra Civil Service. The Collector is assisted by additional collectors and deputy collectors. Districts are subdivided into sub-divisions (upavibhag) administered by sub-divisional magistrates (sub divisional officers), and again into talukas. Each taluka (tehsil) is headed by a tahsildar. Each taluka comprises a group of villages, placed under a Circle Officer, and is divided into individual villages under Talathis, who are responsible for land revenue-related matters. The above district-subdivision-tehsil-circle-village divisions are primarily intended for land revenue administration. The local governance structure is such that a block consists of panchayats (village councils). Panchayat Samitis are intermediate level panchayat between the Zilla Parishad (district councils) at the district level and gram panchayat (village councils) at the lower level. Of Maharashtra's population, 45.22% of people live in urban regions. 50.8 million people live in urban areas. There are 29 Municipal Corporations, 247 Municipal Councils, and 147 Nagar panchayats in Maharashtra for urban governance.

Demographics According to the provisional results of the 2011 national census, Maharashtra was at that time the richest state in India and the second-most populous state in India with a population of 112,374,333. Contributing to 9.28% of India's population, males and females are 58,243,056 and 54,131,277, respectively. The total population growth in 2011 was 15.99%, while in the previous decade it was 22.57%. Since independence, the decadal growth rate of population has remained higher (except in the year 1971) than the national average. However, in the year 2011, it was found to be lower than the national average. The 2011 census for the state found 55% of the population to be rural with 45% being urban-based. Although, India hasn't conducted a caste-wise census since Independence, based on the British era census of 1931, it is estimated that the Maratha and the Maratha-kunbi numerically form the largest caste cluster with around 32% of the population. Maharashtra has a large Other Backward Class population constituting 41% of the population. The scheduled tribes include Adivasis such as Thakar, Warli, Konkana and Halba. The 2011 census found scheduled castes and scheduled tribes to account for 11.8% and 8.9% of the population, respectively. The state also includes a substantial number of migrants from other states of India. Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, and Karnataka account for the largest percentage of migrants to the Mumbai metropolitan area. The 2011 census reported the human sex ratio is 929 females per 1000 males, which were below the national average of 943. The density of Maharashtra was 365 inhabitants per km² which was lower than the national average of 382 per

km². Since 1921, the populations of Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg shrank by –4.96% and –2.30%, respectively, while the population of Thane grew by 35.9%, followed by Pune at 30.3%. The literacy rate is 83.2%, higher than the national rate at 74.04%. Of this, male literacy stood at 89.82% and female literacy 75.48%.

Religion According to the 2011 census, Hinduism was the principal religion in the state at 79.8% of the total population. Muslims constituted 11.5% of the total population. Maharashtra has the highest number of followers of Buddhism in India, accounting for 5.8% of Maharashtra's total population with 6,531,200 followers. Marathi Buddhists account for 77.36% of all Buddhists in India. Sikhs, Christians, and Jains constituted 0.2%, 1%, and 1.2% of the Maharashtra population respectively. Maharashtra, and particularly the city of Mumbai, is home to two tiny religious communities. This includes 5000 Jews, mainly belonging to the Bene Israel, and Baghdadi Jewish communities. Parsi is the other community who follow Zoroastrianism. The 2011 census recorded around 44,000 parsis in Maharashtra.

Language Marathi is the official language although different regions have their own dialects. Most people speak regional languages classified as dialects of Marathi in the census. Powari, Lodhi, and Varhadi are spoken in the Vidarbha region, Dangi is spoken near the Maharashtra-Gujarat border, Bhil languages are spoken throughout the northwest part of the state, Khandeshi (locally known as Ahirani) is spoken in Khandesh region. In the Desh and Marathwada regions, Dakhini Urdu is widely spoken, although Dakhini speakers are usually bilingual in Marathi. Konkani, and its dialect Malvani, is spoken along the southern Konkan coast. Telugu and Kannada are spoken along the border areas of Telangana and Karnataka, respectively. At the junction of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Chhattisgarh a variety of Hindi dialects are spoken such as Lodhi and Powari. Lambadi is spoken through a wide area of eastern Marathwada and western Vidarbha. Gondi is spoken by diminishing minorities throughout Vidarbha but is most concentrated in the forests of Gadchiroli and the Telangana border. Marathi is the first language of a majority or plurality of the people in all districts of Maharashtra except Nandurbar, where Bhili is spoken by 45% of its population. The highest percentage of Khandeshi speakers are Dhule district (29%) and the highest percentage of Gondi speakers are in Gadchiroli district (24%). The highest percentages of first language Hindi speakers are in urban areas, especially Mumbai and its suburbs, where it is the mother tongue to over a quarter of the population. Other urban centers like Pune, Nagpur, and Aurangabad also have a high number of Hindi-speakers. Combined with Urdu, the persianized register of Hindustani, speakers of Hindi-Urdu form nearly 20% of the Maharashtrian population. Urdu and another Hindustani dialect, Dakhni, are spoken primarily by the Muslim population of the state. The Mumbai metropolitan area is home to migrants from all over India. In Mumbai, a wide range of languages are spoken, including Gujarati, Telugu, Tamil, Konkani, Kannada, Sindhi, Punjabi, Bengali, Tulu, and many more.

Governance and administration The state is governed through a parliamentary system of representative democracy, a feature the state shares with other Indian states. Maharashtra is one of the six states in India where the state legislature is bicameral, comprising the Vidhan Sabha (Legislative Assembly) and the Vidhan Parishad (Legislative Council). The legislature, the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly, consists of elected members and special office bearers such as the Speaker and Deputy Speaker, who are elected by the members. The Legislative Assembly consists of 288 members who are elected for five-year terms unless the Assembly is dissolved before to the completion of the term. The Legislative Council is a permanent body of 78 members with one-third (33 members) retiring every two years. Maharashtra is the second most important state in terms of political representation in the Lok Sabha, or the lower chamber of the Indian Parliament with 48 seats which is next only to Uttar Pradesh which has the highest number of seats than any other Indian state with 80 seats. Maharashtra also has 19 seats in the Rajya Sabha, or the upper chamber of the Indian Parliament. The government of Maharashtra is a democratically elected body in India with the Governor as its

constitutional head who is appointed by the President of India for a five-year term. The leader of the party or coalition with a majority in the Legislative Assembly is appointed as the chief minister by the governor, and the Council of Ministers are appointed by the governor on the advice of the chief minister. The governor remains a ceremonial head of the state, while the chief minister and his council are responsible for day-to-day government functions. The council of ministers consists of Cabinet Ministers and Ministers of State (MoS). The Secretariat headed by the Chief Secretary assists the council of ministers. The Chief Secretary is also the administrative head of the government. Each government department is headed by a Minister, who is assisted by an Additional Chief Secretary or a Principal Secretary, who is usually an officer of the Indian Administrative Service, the Additional Chief Secretary/Principal Secretary serves as the administrative head of the department they are assigned to. Each department also has officers of the rank of Secretary, Special Secretary, Joint Secretary, etc. assisting the Minister and the Additional Chief Secretary/Principal Secretary. For purpose of administration, the state is divided into 6 divisions and 36 districts. Divisional Commissioner, an IAS officer is the head of administration at the divisional level. The administration in each district is headed by a Collector & District Magistrate, who is an IAS officer and is assisted by several officers belonging to state services. Urban areas in the state are governed by Municipal Corporations, Municipal Councils, Nagar Panchayats, and seven Cantonment Boards. Rural areas are governed by Panchayati Raj institutions: Zilla Parishads at the district level, Panchayat Samitis at the block level, and Gram Panchayats at the village level. The Maharashtra Police is headed by an IPS officer of the rank of Director general of police (DGP). A Superintendent of Police (SP), an IPS officer assisted by the officers of the Maharashtra Police Service, is entrusted with the responsibility of police administration, maintaining law and order, crime prevention, crime investigation and related issues in each district. In urban areas, a Commissioner of Police (CP) heads the police force. The Divisional Forest Officer (DFO), an officer belonging to the Indian Forest Service, manages the forests, environment, and wildlife of the district, assisted by the officers of Maharashtra Forest Service and Maharashtra Forest Subordinate Service. For revenue administration, each district is divided into subdivisions, headed by a Sub-Divisional Officer (SDO). A subdivision comprises several tehsils (taluks), each headed by a Tehsildar. A tehsil is further divided into revenue circles under Circle Officers, and each circle consists of multiple revenue villages under Village Revenue Officers, who are responsible for land revenue-related matters. Other development departments of the state government, such as Rural Development, Education, Health, Public Works, Transport are responsible for discharging their respective functions within each district. Each headed by their respective district heads.

The judiciary in the state consists of the Maharashtra High Court (The High Court of Bombay), district and session courts in each district and lower courts and judges at the taluka level. The High Court has regional branches at Nagpur and Aurangabad in Maharashtra and Panaji which is the capital of Goa. The state cabinet on 13 May 2015 passed a resolution favouring the setting up of one more bench of the Bombay high court in Kolhapur, covering the region. The President of India appoints the chief justice of the High Court of the Maharashtra judiciary on the advice of the chief justice of the Supreme Court of India as well as the Governor of Maharashtra. Other judges are appointed by the chief justice of the high court of the judiciary on the advice of the Chief Justice. Subordinate Judicial Service is another vital part of the judiciary of Maharashtra. The subordinate judiciary or the district courts are categorised into two divisions: the Maharashtra civil judicial services and higher judicial service. While the Maharashtra civil judicial services comprises the Civil Judges (Junior Division)/Judicial Magistrates and civil judges (Senior Division)/Chief Judicial Magistrate, the higher judicial service comprises civil and sessions judges. The Subordinate judicial service of the judiciary is controlled by the District Judge.

Politics The politics of the state in the first decades after its formation in 1960 was dominated by the Indian National Congress party or its offshoots such as the Nationalist Congress Party. At present, it has been

dominated by four political parties, the Bharatiya Janata Party, the Nationalist Congress Party, the Indian National Congress and Shinde's Shiv Sena. The politics of the state in the last five years has seen long-term alliances breaking up like that of undivided Shiv Sena and BJP, new ones being formed between Congress, NCP, and the Shiv Sena, regional parties like the Shiv Sena and NCP splitting up, and majority of their legislators joining a new alliance government with the BJP. Just like in other states in India, dynastic politics is fairly common also among political parties in Maharashtra. The dynastic phenomenon is seen from the national level down to the district level and even village level. The three-tier structure of Panchayati Raj created in the state in the 1960s also helped to create and consolidate this phenomenon in rural areas. Apart from controlling the government, political families also control cooperative institutions, mainly cooperative sugar factories and district cooperative banks in the state. The Bharatiya Janata Party also features several senior leaders who are dynasts. In Maharashtra, the NCP has a particularly high level of dynasticism. In the early years, the politics of Maharashtra was dominated by Congress party figures such as Yashwantrao Chavan, Vasantdada Patil, Vasantrao Naik, and Shankarrao Chavan. Sharad Pawar, who started his political career in the Congress party, has been a towering personality in state and national politics for over forty years. During his career, he has split the Congress twice with significant consequences for the state politics. The Congress party enjoyed a near unchallenged dominance of the political landscape until 1995 when the Shiv Sena and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) secured an overwhelming majority in the state to form a coalition government. After his second parting from the Congress party in 1999, Sharad Pawar founded the NCP but then formed a coalition with the Congress to keep out the BJP-Shiv Sena combine out of the Maharashtra state government for fifteen years until September 2014. Prithviraj Chavan of the Congress party was the last Chief Minister of Maharashtra under the Congress-NCP alliance. For the 2014 assembly polls, the two alliances between NCP and Congress and that between BJP and Shiv Sena respectively broke down over seat allocations. In the election, the largest number of seats went to the Bharatiya Janata Party, with 122 seats. The BJP initially formed a minority government under Devendra Fadnavis. The Shiv Sena entered the Government after two months and provided a comfortable majority for the alliance in the Maharashtra Vidhansabha for the duration of the assembly. In the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, the BJP-Shiv Sena alliance secured 41 seats out of 48 from the state. Later in 2019, the BJP and Shiv Sena alliance fought the assembly elections together but the alliance broke down after the election over the post of the chief minister. Uddhav Thackeray of Shiv Sena then formed an alternative governing coalition under his leadership with his erstwhile opponents from NCP, INC, and several independent members of the legislative assembly. Thackeray served as the 19th Chief minister of Maharashtra of the Maha Vikas Aghadi coalition until June 2022. In late June 2022, Eknath Shinde, a senior Shiv Sena leader, and the majority of MLAs from Shiv Sena joined hands with the BJP. Governor Bhagat Singh Koshiyari called for a trust vote, an action that would later on be described as a "sad spectacle" by Supreme Court of India, and draw criticism from Political Observers. Uddhav Thackeray resigned from the post as chief minister well as a MLC member ahead of no-confidence motion on 29 June 2022. Shinde subsequently formed a new coalition with the BJP, and was sworn in as the Chief Minister on 30 June 2022. BJP leader, Devendra Fadnavis was given the post of Deputy Chief Minister in the new government. Uddhav Thackeray filed a lawsuit in Supreme Court of India claiming that Eknath Shinde and his group's actions meant that they were disqualified under Anti-defection law, with Eknath Shinde claiming that he has not defected, but rather represents the true Shiv Sena party. The Supreme court delivered its verdict in May 2023. In its verdict the five-judge constitution bench of the Supreme court ruled that the Maharashtra governor and assembly speaker did not act as per the law. However, the court said that it cannot order the restoration of the Uddhav Thackeray government as Thackeray resigned without facing a floor test. Supreme Court also asked the Assembly Speaker to decide on the matter of disqualification of 16 MLAs including Chief Minister Eknath Shinde. The case for decision on which faction has rights to use Shiv Sena Name and Symbol is currently being heard by Supreme Court. In July 2023, NCP leader Ajit Pawar, and a number of NCP state assembly members joined the Shiv Sena- BJP government led by Eknath Shinde. Sharad Pawar, the founder of NCP, condemned the move and expelled the rebels. Ajit Pawar received support from majority of party legislators and office holders of the party. His faction was declared the

official NCP and received the right to use the NCP election symbol of clock by the Election Commission of India. In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the INDIA grouping which includes the Mahavikas aghadi won a resounding victory with the majority of the state Lok Sabha seats, however in the Vidhan Sabha elections held November 2024 had the opposite result with the Mahayuti coalition of BJP, Shivsena (Shinde), and NCP (Ajit Pawar) winning 80% of the Vidhan Sabha seats. In December 2024, Devendra Phadnavis became the chief minister of the mahayuti government with Eknath Shinde, and Ajit Pawar being appointed as deputy chief ministers. Election analysts have credited the Ladki Bahin Yojana that made cash transfers to women before the election as attracting a larger number of female voters to opt for the Mahayuti. Other factors cited by analysts including greater participation by the RSS in ground level campaigning, continued popularity of Narendra Modi, and dog-whistle call for Hindu Unity using slogans such as Ek Hai To Safe Hai (If We're United, We are Strong and Safe against All Threats). Meanwhile this Slogan also appealed to the Muslims and a significant Amount of Muslim Votes also returned to MahaYuti in Vidhan Sabha Elections providing them a Super strong Mandate.

Economy The economy of Maharashtra is driven by manufacturing, international trade, Mass Media (television, motion pictures, video games, recorded music), aerospace, technology, petroleum, fashion, apparel, and tourism. Maharashtra is the most industrialised state and has maintained the leading position in the industrial sector in India. The State is a pioneer in small scale industries. Mumbai, the capital of the state and the financial capital of India, houses the headquarters of most of the major corporate and financial institutions. India's main stock exchanges and capital market and commodity exchanges are located in Mumbai. The state continues to attract industrial investments from domestic as well as foreign institutions. Maharashtra has the largest proportion of taxpayers in India and its share markets transact almost 70% of the country's stocks. According to most recent data, Maharashtra is considered the richest state in India. As of 2024, Maharashtra is the richest state in India, with a projected GSDP of ₹42.67 lakh crore for the 2024-25 fiscal year. The service sector dominates the economy of Maharashtra, accounting for 61.4% of the value addition and 69.3% of the value of output in the state. The state's per-capita income in 2014 was 40% higher than the all-India average in the same year. The gross state domestic product (GSDP) at current prices for 2021-22 is estimated at \$420 billion and contributes about 14.2% of the GDP. The agriculture and allied activities sector contributes 13.2% to the state's income. In 2012, Maharashtra reported a revenue surplus of ₹1524.9 million (US\$24 million), with total revenue of ₹1,367,117 million (US\$22 billion) and spending of ₹1,365,592.1 million (US\$22 billion). Maharashtra is the largest FDI destination of India. FDI inflows in the State since April 2000 to September 2021 totalled ₹9,59,746 crore, which was 28.2% of total FDI inflows at the all-India level. With 11,308 startups, Maharashtra has the highest number of recognised startups in India.

Maharashtra contributes 25% of India's industrial output and is the most indebted state in the country. Industrial activity in state is concentrated in Seven districts: Mumbai City, Mumbai Suburban, Thane, Aurangabad, Pune, Nagpur, and Nashik. Mumbai has the largest share in GSDP (19.5%), both Thane and Pune districts contribute about same in the Industry sector, Pune district contributes more in the agriculture and allied activities sector, whereas Thane district contributes more in the Services sector. Nashik district shares highest in the agricultural and allied activities sector, but is behind in the Industry and Services sectors as compared to Thane and Pune districts. Industries in Maharashtra include chemical and chemical products (17.6%), food and food products (16.1%), refined petroleum products (12.9%), machinery and equipment (8%), textiles (6.9%), basic metals (5.8%), motor vehicles (4.7%) and furniture (4.3%). Maharashtra is the manufacturing hub for some of the largest public sector industries in India, including Hindustan Petroleum Corporation, Tata Petrodyne and Oil India Ltd. Maharashtra is the leading Indian state for many Creative industries including advertising, architecture, art, crafts, design, fashion, film, music, performing arts, publishing, R&D, software, toys and games, TV and radio, and video games. Maharashtra has an above-average knowledge industry in India, with Pune Metropolitan Region being the leading IT hub in the state. Approximately 25% of the top 500 companies

in the IT sector are based in Maharashtra. The state accounts for 28% of the software exports of India. Maharashtra and particularly Mumbai is a prominent location for the Indian entertainment industry, with many films, television series, books, and other media being set there. Mumbai is the largest centre for film and television production and a third of all Indian films are produced in the state. Multimillion-dollar Bollywood productions, with the most expensive costing up to ₹1.5 billion (US\$18 million), are filmed there. Marathi films used to be previously made primarily in Kolhapur, but now are produced in Mumbai. The state houses important financial institutions such as the Reserve Bank of India, the Bombay Stock Exchange, the National Stock Exchange of India, the SEBI and the corporate headquarters of numerous Indian companies and multinational corporations. It is also home to some of India's premier scientific and nuclear institutes like BARC, NPCL, IREL, TIFR, AERB, AECL, and the Department of Atomic Energy.

With more than half the population being rural, agriculture and allied industries play an important role in the state's economy and source of income for the rural population. The agriculture and allied activities sector contributes 12.9% to the state's income. Staples such as rice and millet are the main monsoon crops. Important cash crops include sugarcane, cotton, oilseeds, tobacco, fruit, vegetables, and spices such as turmeric. Animal husbandry is an important agriculture-related activity. The State's share in the livestock and poultry population in India is about 7% and 10%, respectively. Maharashtra was a pioneer in the development of Agricultural Cooperative Societies after independence. It was an integral part of the then Governing Congress party's vision of 'rural development with local initiative'. A 'special' status was accorded to the sugar cooperatives and the government assumed the role of a mentor by acting as a stakeholder, guarantor, and regulator. Apart from sugar, cooperatives play a crucial role in dairy, cotton, and fertiliser industries. The banking sector comprises scheduled and non-scheduled banks. Scheduled banks are of two types, commercial and cooperative. Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs) in India are classified into five types: State Bank of India and its associates, nationalised banks, private sector banks, Regional Rural Banks, and others (foreign banks). In 2012, there were 9,053 banking offices in the state, of which about 26% were in rural and 54% were in urban areas. Maharashtra has a microfinance system, which refers to small-scale financial services extended to the poor in both rural and urban areas. It covers a variety of financial instruments, such as lending, savings, life insurance, and crop insurance. The three largest urban cooperative banks in India are all based in Maharashtra.

Transport The state has a large, multi-modal transportation system with the largest road network in India. In 2011, the total length of surface road in Maharashtra was 267,452 km (166,187 mi); national highways accounted for 4,176 km (2,595 mi), and state highways 3,700 km (2,300 mi). The Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC) provides economical and reliable passenger road transport service in the public sector. These buses, popularly called ST (State Transport), are the preferred mode of transport for much of the populace. Hired forms of transport include metered taxis and auto-rickshaws, which often ply specific routes in cities. Other district roads and village roads provide villages, accessibility to meet their social needs as well as the means to transport agricultural produce from villages to nearby markets. Major district roads provide a secondary function of linking between main roads and rural roads. Approximately 98% of villages are connected either via the highways or modern roads in Maharashtra. Average speed on state highways varies between 50-60 km/h (31-37 mph) due to the heavy presence of vehicles; in villages and towns, speeds are as low as 25-30 km/h (16-19 mph). In April 1853, the first passenger train in India ran from Mumbai to Thane. Rail transportation is run by the Central Railway, Western Railway, South Central Railway, Konkan Railway and South East Central Railway zones of the Indian Railways with the first two zones being headquartered in Mumbai, at Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (CSMT) and Churchgate respectively. The Konkan Railway Corporation is headquartered in Navi Mumbai. The Mumbai Rajdhani Express, the fastest Rajdhani train, connects the Indian capital of New Delhi to Mumbai. Thane and CSMT are among the busiest railway stations

in India, the latter serving as a terminal for both long-distance trains and commuter trains of the Mumbai Suburban Railway. The two principal seaports, Mumbai Port and Jawaharlal Nehru Port, which is also in the Mumbai region, are under the control and supervision of the government of India. There are around 48 minor ports in Maharashtra. Most of these handle passenger traffic and have a limited capacity. None of the major rivers in Maharashtra are navigable, and thus river transport does not exist in the state. Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (formerly Bombay International Airport), is the state's largest airport. The four other international airports are Pune International Airport, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar International Airport at Nagpur, Nashik Airport and Shirdi Airport. Aurangabad Airport, Kolhapur Airport, Jalgaon Airport, and Nanded Airport are domestic airports in the state. Most of the State's airfields are operated by the Airports Authority of India (AAI). Reliance Airport Developers (RADPL), operates five non-metro airports at Latur, Nanded, Baramati, Osmanabad and Yavatmal on a 95-year lease. The Maharashtra Airport Development Company (MADC) was set up in 2002 to take up development of airports in the state that are not under the AAI or the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC). MADC is playing the lead role in the planning and implementation of the Multi-modal International Cargo Hub and Airport at Nagpur (MIHAN) project. Additional smaller airports include Akola, Amravati, Chandrapur, Ratnagiri, and Solapur. Maharashtra Metro Rail Corporation Limited (Maha Metro), which is a joint Venture establishment of Government of India & Government of Maharashtra, is headquartered at Nagpur, India. Maha Metro is responsible for the implementation of all Maharashtra state metro projects, except the Mumbai Metropolitan Region. Mumbai Metro has been operational since 8 June 2014.

Education The 2011 census showed that state literacy rates for males and females were around 88.38% and 75.87% respectively. Regions that comprise the present day state of Maharashtra have been known for their pioneering role in the development of the modern education system in India. Scottish missionary John Wilson, American Marathi mission, Indian nationalists such as Vasudev Balwant Phadke and Bal Gangadhar Tilak, social reformers such as Jyotirao Phule, Dhondo Keshav Karve and Bhaurao Patil played a leading role in the setting up of modern schools and colleges during the British colonial era. The forerunner of Deccan College Post-Graduate and Research Institute was established in 1821. The Shreemati Nathibai Damodar Thackersey Women's University, the oldest women's liberal arts college in South Asia, started its journey in 1916. College of Engineering Pune, established in 1854, is the third oldest college in Asia. Government Polytechnic Nagpur, established in 1914, is one of the oldest polytechnics in India. Most of the private colleges including religious and special-purpose institutions were set up in the last thirty years after the State Government of Vasantdada Patil liberalised the Education Sector in 1982.

Primary and secondary level education Schools in the state are either managed by the government or by private trusts, including religious institutions. The medium of instruction in most of the schools is mainly Marathi, English, or Hindi, though Urdu is also used. The secondary schools are affiliated with the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE), the Central Board for Secondary Education (CBSE), the National Institute of Open School (NIOS), and the Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education. Under the 10+2+3 plan, after completing secondary school, students typically enroll for two years in a junior college, also known as pre-university, or in schools with a higher secondary facility affiliated with the Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education or any central board. Students choose from one of three streams, namely liberal arts, commerce, or science. Upon completing the required coursework, students may enrol in general or professional degree programs.

Tertiary education Maharashtra has 24 universities with a turnout of 160,000 Graduates every year. Established during the rule of East India company in 1857 as Bombay University, The University of Mumbai, is the largest

university in the world in terms of the number of graduates. It has 141 affiliated colleges. According to a report published by The Times Education magazine, 5 to 7 Maharashtra colleges and universities are ranked among the top 20 in India. Maharashtra is also home to notable autonomous institutes as Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, Indian Institute of Information Technology Pune, College of Engineering Pune (CoEP), Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Technological University, Institute of Chemical Technology, Homi Bhabha National Institute, Walchand College of Engineering, Sangli, and Veermata Jijabai Technological Institute (VJTI), Sardar Patel College of Engineering (SPCE). Most of these autonomous institutes are ranked the highest in India and have very competitive entry requirements. The University of Pune (now Savitribai Phule Pune University), the National Defence Academy, Film and Television Institute of India, Armed Forces Medical College, and National Chemical Laboratory were established in Pune soon after the Indian independence in 1947. Mumbai has an IIT, an IIM and also National Institute of Industrial Engineering and Nagpur has IIM and AIIMS. Other notable institutes in the state are: Maharashtra National Law University, Nagpur (MNLUN), Maharashtra National Law University, Mumbai (MNLUM), Maharashtra National Law University, Aurangabad (MNLUA), Government Law College, Mumbai (GLC), ILS Law College, and Symbiosis Law School (SLS)

Agricultural universities include Vasantrao Naik Marathwada Agricultural University, Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth, Dr. Panjabrao Deshmukh Krishi Vidyapeeth, and Dr. Balasaheb Sawant Konkan Krishi Vidyapeeth, Regional universities viz. Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, North Maharashtra University, Shivaji University, Solapur University, Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, and Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University are established to cover the educational needs at the district levels of the state. deemed universities are established in Maharashtra, including Symbiosis International University, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, and Tilak Maharashtra University. Vocational training in different trades such as construction, plumbing, welding, automobile mechanics is offered by post-secondary school Industrial Training Institute (ITIs). Local community colleges also exist with generally more open admission policies, shorter academic programs, and lower tuition.

Infrastructure Healthcare Health indicators of Maharashtra show that they have attained relatively high growth against a background of high per capita income (PCI). In 2011, the health care system in Maharashtra consisted of 363 rural government hospitals, 23 district hospitals (with 7,561 beds), 4 general hospitals (with 714 beds) mostly under the Maharashtra Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, and 380 private medical establishments; these establishments provide the state with more than 30,000 hospital beds. It is the first state in India to have nine women's hospitals serving 1,365 beds. The state also has a significant number of medical practitioners who hold the Bachelor of Ayurveda, Medicine and Surgery qualifications. These practitioners primarily use the traditional Indian therapy of Ayurveda, nevertheless, modern western medicine is used as well. In Maharashtra and the rest of India, Primary Health Centre (PHC) is part of the government-funded public health system and is the most basic unit of the healthcare system. They are essentially single-physician clinics usually with facilities for minor surgeries, too. Maharashtra has a life expectancy at birth of 67.2 years in 2011, ranking it third among 29 Indian states. The total fertility rate of the state is 1.9. The Infant mortality rate is 28 and the maternal mortality ratio is 104 (2012-2013), which are lower than the national averages. Public health services are governed by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), through various departments. The Ministry is divided into two departments: the Public Health Department, which includes family welfare and medical relief, and the Department of Medical Education and Drugs. Health insurance includes any program that helps pay for medical expenses, through privately purchased insurance, social insurance, or a social welfare program funded by the government. In a more technical sense, the term is used to describe any form of insurance that protects against the costs of medical services. This usage includes private insurance and social insurance programs such as National Health Mission, which pools resources and spreads the financial risk associated with major medical expenses across the entire population to protect everyone, as well as social

welfare programs such as National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) and the Health Insurance Program, which assist people who cannot afford health coverage. Maharashtra was ranked fifth in the Fiscal Health Index (FHI) 2025, with a score of 50.3.

Energy Its population makes Maharashtra one of India's largest energy users. Conservation mandates, mild weather in the largest population centres, and strong environmental movements have kept its per capita energy use to one of the smallest of any Indian state. The high electricity demand of the state constitutes 13% of the total installed electricity generation capacity in India, which is derived mainly from fossil fuels such as coal and natural gas. Mahavitaran is responsible for the distribution of electricity throughout the state by buying power from Mahanirmiti, captive power plants, other state electricity boards, and private sector power generation companies. As of 2012, Maharashtra was the largest power generating state in India, with an installed electricity generation capacity of 26,838 MW. The state forms a major constituent of the western grid of India, which now comes under the North, East, West and North Eastern (NEWNE) grids of India. Maharashtra Power Generation Company (MAHAGENCO) operates thermal power plants. In addition to the state government-owned power generation plants, there are privately owned power generation plants that transmit power through the Maharashtra State Electricity Transmission Company, which is responsible for the transmission of electricity in the state.

Environmental protection and sustainability Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB) is established and responsible for implementing various environmental legislations in the state principally including the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974, Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981, Water (Cess) Act, 1977 and some of the provisions under Environmental (Protection) Act, 1986 and the rules framed there under it including, Biomedical Waste (M&H) Rules, 1998, Hazardous Waste (M&H) Rules, 2000, and Municipal Solid Waste Rules, 2000. MPCB is functioning under the administrative control of the Environment Department of the Government of Maharashtra. The Maharashtra Plastic and Thermocol Products ban became effective as law on 23 June 2018, subjecting plastic users to fines and potential imprisonment for repeat offenders.

Culture Cuisine Maharashtrian cuisine includes a variety of dishes ranging from mild to very spicy ones. Wheat, rice, jowar, bajri, vegetables, lentils and fruit form staple food of the Maharashtrian diet. Some of the popular traditional dishes include puran poli, ukdiche modak, Thalipeeth. Street food items like Batata wada, Misal Pav, Pav Bhaji and Vada pav are very popular among the locals and are usually sold on stalls and in small hotels. Meals (mainly lunch and dinner) are served on a plate called thali. Each food item served on the thali is arranged in a specific way. All non-vegetarian and vegetarian dishes are eaten with boiled rice, chapatis or with bhakris, made of jowar, bajra or rice flours. A typical vegetarian thali is made of chapati or bhakri (Indian flat bread), dal, rice (varan bhaat), amti, bhaji or usal, chutney, koshimbir (salad) and buttermilk or Sol kadhi. A bhaji is a vegetable dish made of a particular vegetable or combination of vegetables. Aamti is variant of the curry, typically consisting of a lentil (tur) stock, flavoured with goda masala and sometimes with tamarind or amshul, and jaggery (gul). Varan is nothing but plain dal, a common Indian lentil stew. More or less, most of the dishes use coconut, onion, garlic, ginger, red chili powder, green chilies, and mustard though some section of the population traditionally avoid onion and garlicks. Maharashtrian cuisine varies with the regions. Traditional Malvani (Konkani), Kolhapuri, and Varhadhi dishes are examples of well known regional cuisines. Kolhapur is famous for Tambda Pandhra rassa, a dish made of either chicken or mutton. Rice and seafood are the staple foods of the coastal Konkani people. Among seafood, the most popular is a fish variety called the Bombay duck (also known as bombil in Marathi).

Attire Traditionally, Marathi women commonly wore the sari, often distinctly designed according to local cultural customs. Most middle-aged and young women in urban Maharashtra dress in western outfits such as skirts and trousers or shalwar kameez with the traditionally nauvari or nine-yard lungi, disappearing from the markets due to a lack of demand. Older women wear the five-yard sari. In urban areas, the five-yard sari, especially the Paithani, is worn by younger women for special occasions such as marriages and religious ceremonies. Among men, western dressing has greater acceptance. Men also wear traditional costumes such as the dhoti, and pheta on cultural occasions. The Gandhi cap is the popular headgear among older men in rural Maharashtra. Women wear traditional jewellery derived from Maratha and Peshwa dynasties. Kolhapuri saaj, a special type of necklace, is also worn by Marathi women. In urban areas, western attire is dominant among women and men.

Music Maharashtra and Maharashtrian artists have been influential in preserving and developing Hindustani classical music for more than a century. Notable practitioners of Kirana or Gwalior style called Maharashtra their home. The Sawai Gandharva Bhimsen Festival in Pune started by Bhimsen Joshi in the 1950s is considered the most prestigious Hindustani music festival in India, if not one of the largest. Cities like Kolhapur and Pune have been playing a major role in the preservation of music like Bhavageet and Natya Sangeet, which are inherited from Indian classical music. The biggest form of Indian popular music is songs from films produced in Mumbai. Film music, in 2009 made up 72% of the music sales in India. Many the influential music composers and singers have called Mumbai their home. In recent decades, the music scene in Maharashtra, and particularly in Mumbai has seen a growth of newer music forms such as rap. The city also holds festivals in western music genres such as blues. In 2006, the Symphony Orchestra of India was founded, housed at the NCPA in Mumbai. It is today the only professional symphony orchestra in India and presents two concert seasons per year, with world-renowned conductors and soloists. Maharashtra has a long and rich tradition of folk music. Some of the most common forms of folk music in practice are Bhajan, Bharud, Kirtan, Gondhal, and Koli Geet.

Dance Marathi dance forms draw from folk traditions. Lavani is popular form of dance in the state. The Bhajan, Kirtan and Abhangas of the Warkari sect (Vaishnav Devotees) have a long history and are part of their daily rituals. Koli dance (called 'Koligeete') is among the most popular dances of Maharashtra. As the name suggests, it is related to the fisher folk of Maharashtra, who are called Koli. Popular for their unique identity and liveliness, their dances represent their occupation. This type of dance is represented by both men and women. While dancing, they are divided into groups of two. These fishermen display the movements of waves and casting of the nets during their koli dance performances.

Theatre Modern Theatre in Maharashtra can trace its origins to the British colonial era in the middle of the 19th century. It is modelled mainly after the western tradition but also includes forms like Sangeet Natak (musical drama). In recent decades, Marathi Tamasha has also been incorporated in some experimental plays. The repertoire of Marathi theatre ranges from humorous social plays, farces, historical plays, and musical, to experimental plays and serious drama. Marathi Playwrights such as Vijay Tendulkar, Purushottam Laxman Deshpande, Mahesh Elkunchwar, Ratnakar Matkari, and Satish Alekar have influenced theatre throughout India. Besides Marathi theatre, Maharashtra and particularly, Mumbai, has had a long tradition of theatre in other languages such as Gujarati, Hindi, and English. The National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCP) is a multi-venue, multi-purpose cultural centre in Mumbai which hosts events in music, dance, theatre, film, literature, and photography from India as well other places. It also presents new and innovative work in the performing arts field.

Literature Maharashtra's regional literature is about the lives and circumstances of Marathi people in specific parts of the state. The Marathi language, which boasts a rich literary heritage, is written in the Devanagari script. The earliest instance of Marathi literature is Dnyaneshwari, a commentary on the Bhagavad Gita by 13th-century Bhakti Saint Dnyaneshwar and devotional poems called abhangs by his contemporaries such as Namdev, and Gora Kumbhar. Devotional literature from the Early modern period includes compositions in praise of the God Pandurang by Bhakti saints such as Tukaram, Eknath, and Rama by Ramdas respectively. 19th century Marathi literature includes mainly Polemic works of social and political activists such as Balshastri Jambhekar, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Gopal Hari Deshmukh, Mahadev Govind Ranade, Jyotirao Phule, and Vishnushastri Krushnashastri Chiplunkar. Keshavasuta was a pioneer in modern Marathi poetry. The Hindutva proponent, Vinayak Damodar Savarkar was a prolific writer. His work in English and Marathi consists of many essays, two novels, poetry, and plays. Four Marathi writers have been honoured with the Jnanpith Award, India's highest literary award. They include novelists, Vishnu Saktharam Khandekar, and Bhalchandra Nemade, Vishnu Vaman Shirwadkar (Kusumagraj) and Vinda Karandikar. The last two were known for their poetry as well. Other notable writers from the early and mid 20th century include playwright Ram Ganesh Gadkari, novelist Hari Narayan Apte, poet, and novelist B. S. Mardhekar, Pandurang Sadashiv Sane, Vyankatesh Madgulkar, Pralhad Keshav Atre, Chintamani Tryambak Khanolkar, and Lakshman Shastri Joshi. Vishwas Patil, Ranjit Desai, and Shivaji Sawant are known for novels based on Maratha history. P. L. Deshpande gained popularity in the period after independence for depicting the urban middle class society. His work includes humour, travelogues, plays, and biographies. Narayan Gangaram Surve, Shanta Shelke, Durga Bhagwat, Suresh Bhat, and Narendra Jadhav are some of the more recent authors. Dalit literature originally emerged in the Marathi language as a literary response to the everyday oppressions of caste in mid-twentieth-century independent India, critiquing caste practices by experimenting with various literary forms. In 1958, the term "Dalit literature" was used for the first conference of Maharashtra Dalit Sahitya Sangha (Maharashtra Dalit Literature Society) in Mumbai. Maharashtra, and particularly the cities in the state such as Mumbai and Pune are diverse with different languages being spoken. Mumbai is called home by writers in English such as Rohinton Mistry, Shobha De, and Salman Rushdie. Their novels are set with Mumbai as the backdrop. Many eminent Urdu poets such as Kaifi Azmi, Jan Nisar Akhtar, Gulzar, and Javed Akhtar have been residents of Mumbai.

Cinema Maharashtra is a prominent location for the Indian entertainment industry, with enormous films, television series, books, and other media production companies being set there. Mumbai has numerous film production studios and facilities to produce films. Mainstream Hindi films are popular in Maharashtra, especially in urban areas. Mumbai is the largest centre for film and television production and a third of all Indian films are produced in the state. Multimillion-dollar Bollywood productions, with the most expensive costing up to ₹1.5 billion (US\$18 million), are filmed there. The first Indian feature-length film, Raja Harishchandra, was made in Maharashtra by Dadasaheb Phalke in 1913. Phalke is widely considered the father of Indian cinema. The Dadasaheb Phalke Award is India's highest award in cinema, given annually by the Government of India for lifetime contribution to Indian cinema. The Marathi film industry, initially located in Kolhapur, has spread throughout Mumbai. Well known for its art films, the early Marathi film industry included acclaimed directors such as Dadasaheb Phalke, V. Shantaram, Raja Thakur, Bhalji Pendharkar, Pralhad Keshav Atre, Baburao Painter, and Dada Kondke. Some of the directors who made acclaimed films in Marathi are Jabbar Patel, Mahesh Manjrekar, Amol Palekar, and Sanjay Surkar. Durga Khote was one of the first women from respectable families to enter the film industry, thus breaking a social taboo. Lalita Pawar, Sulabha Deshpande, and Usha Kiran featured in Hindi and Marathi movies. In 70s and 80s, Smita Patil, Ranjana Deshmukh, Reema Lagoo featured in both art and mainstream movies in Hindi and Marathi. Rohini Hattangadi starred in a number of acclaimed movies, and is the only Indian actress to win the BAFTA Award for Best Actress in a Supporting Role for her performance as Kasturba Gandhi in Gandhi (1982). Bhanu Athaiya was the first Indian to win an

Oscar in Best Costume Design category for Gandhi (1982). In 90s and 2000s, Urmila Matondkar and Madhuri Dixit starred in critically acclaimed and high grossing films in Hindi and Marathi. In earliest days of Marathi cinema, Suryakant Mandhare was a leading star. In later years, Shriram Lagoo, Nilu Phule, Vikram Gokhale, Dilip Prabhavalkar played character roles in theatre, and Hindi and Marathi films. Ramesh Deo and Mohan Joshi played leading men in Mainstream Marathi movies. In 70s and 80s, Sachin Pilgaonkar, Ashok Saraf, Laxmikant Berde and Mahesh Kothare created a "comedy film wave" in Marathi Cinema.

Media The state is home to more than 200 newspapers and 350 consumer magazines. The publishing industry employs more than 250,000 people. There are number of Marathi news channels in the state viz News18 Lokmat, ABP Majha. As of December 2016, Sakal, published in Pune and other major cities, is the largest circulated Marathi Newspaper in Maharashtra. Other major Marathi newspapers include Maharashtra Times, Loksatta, Nava Kaal, Pudhari, Lokmat and Sakal Saptahik Sakal, Grihashobhika, Lokrajya, Lokprabha, and Chitralekha are some of the prominent Marathi magazines. English language newspapers are confined to urban areas. Some popular among these are Daily News & Analysis, The Times of India, Hindustan Times, The Indian Express, Mumbai Mirror, Asian Age, MiD-DAY and The Free Press Journal. Some prominent financial dailies like The Economic Times, Mint, Business Standard, and The Financial Express are widely circulated. Many newspapers in other Indian languages such as Nava Bharat in Hindi, Udayavani in Kannada, Mumbai Samachar in Gujarati, and The Inquilab in Urdu have Mumbai editions. The television industry in Maharashtra has been contributing significantly in the state's economy. Doordarshan, a state-owned television broadcaster runs a channel named DD Sahyadri. Numerous Indian and international television channels can be watched in Maharashtra through one of the Pay TV companies or the local cable television provider. The four major Indian broadcast networks are all headquartered in Maharashtra: The Times, Disney Star, CNN-News18 and ZEEL. Multi-system operators provide a range of Marathi, Bengali, Nepali, Hindi, English, and international channels via cable. There are number of entertainment channels that exclusively streams content in Marathi including Zee Marathi, Zee Yuva, Colors Marathi, Star Pravah, Sony Marathi, and Fakt Marathi. All India Radio airs its content through multiple channels including Air Marathi, FM Gold, and FM Rainbow. Air India's commercially successful air channel Vividh Bharti is headquartered in Mumbai. Private radio stations like Big 92.7 FM, Radio Mirchi, Red FM, Vasundhara Vahini, Radio Dhamaal 24, and My FM air in all major cities. Airtel, BSNL, Jio, and VI networks provide cellular services and have covered most of the Maharashtra. Broadband internet is available in most of the towns, villages, and cities, provided by the state-run MTNL and BSNL and by other private companies.

Sports Cricket is the most popular spectator sport in Maharashtra. It is played as an exercise and recreational activity. Maharashtra is represented by three teams in Domestic Cricket namely Maharashtra, Mumbai and Vidarbha. These teams are governed by Maharashtra cricket association, Mumbai Cricket Association, and Vidarbha Cricket Association, respectively. Governing body of Cricket in India, BCCI, has its headquarters in Churchgate, Mumbai. The state also has Indian Premier League (IPL) franchise Mumbai Indians based in Mumbai which plays its home matches at Wankhede Stadium. Brabourne Stadium, Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai and New VCA Stadium, Nagpur are international cricket stadiums, which are the venues for international cricket. At 2023 National games, Maharashtra won highest number of medals among the states and was first in the total medals tally behind Services. Maharashtra won 228 total medals, of which are 80 gold medals. Kabaddi, Kho kho, Kushti, and Mallakhamba are some of the traditional games that are played in the state. Kusti and bullock cart races are popular in rural areas of South-west Maharashtra, are organised by villagers during the annual fairs. Amateur wrestling tournaments Hind Kesari, Maharashtra Kesari are held annually. Badminton, Volleyball, Tennis are played as a recreational activity in urban areas. The beaches of Konkan coast, mountains of the Western Ghats, and the lakes formed by numerous dams in the state facilitate adventure sports such as paragliding, rock climbing, trekking, mountaineering, water sports, and scuba diving

and are popular among visitors. India's only world class Tennis championship Maharashtra Open tennis championship are annually organised in Pune by governing body of tennis in the state, 'Maharashtra Lawn Tennis Association' (MLTA). The tournament is part of ATP Tour 250. Mumbai and Pune hold derby races at the Mahalaxmi Racecourse and Pune Race Course respectively. Various domestic level leagues for field hockey, chess, tennis, and badminton are organised throughout the state. The Maharashtra football team represents the state in the Santosh Trophy, football tournament. Many national-level football club are based in this state, such as Mumbai Tigers FC, Kenkre FC, Bengal Mumbai FC, and Air India FC. Two clubs from the state participate in Elite Football League of India. Mumbai Gladiators and Pune Marathas are teams based in Mumbai and Pune respectively. Puneri Paltan, U Mumba, Pro Kabbadi, league teams are based in Pune and Mumbai respectively.

Tourism Maharashtra has a number of places that attracts national and international tourists. The most popular or well known are Mumbai city, Ajanta, Ellora caves and the Nature reserves in the state. Ajanta-Ellora are the UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Mumbai, being the biggest and the most cosmopolitan city in India, attracts tourists from all over the world for its many attractions including colonial architecture, beaches, Bollywood, shopping, and an active nightlife. The city attracts three million foreign and forty million domestic tourists annually. The state wants to increase the numbers by allowing retailers and entertainment venues to be open 24-hours a day, seven days a week. Pune city, along with MTDC, organises many cultural events during Pune festival which coincides with the Hindu Ganeshotsav festival. Hill stations built during the British rule are popular tourist destinations, especially during the summer months. These include Mahabaleshwar, Lonavala, and Matheran in Western Maharashtra, and Chikhaldara in the Vidarbha region. The mountainous districts of Western Maharashtra are dotted with the ruins of hundreds of mountain forts from the Deccan Sultanate and the Maratha empire eras. These forts and the surrounding hills are popular among people interested in trekking, hiking, and heritage tourism related to Shivaji. Notable forts popular with tourists include Shivaneri, Rajgad, Sinhagad, Raigad, and Pratapgad. A group of 11 such forts in Maharashtra along with one fort in Tamil Nadu, officially called the Maratha Military Landscapes of India, were recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in the year 2025. A number of temples such as Trimbakeshwar, Bhavani of Tuljapur, Shani Shingnapur, Jyotiba Temple, Ashtavinayaka Ganapati temples, Lord Pandurang temple at Pandharpur attract a huge number of Hindu devotees every year. Khandoba temple of God Khandoba at Jejuri in the Pune district attract pilgrims from all over the Maharashtra where worshippers shower each other with Bhandar (turmeric powder). Saibaba temple at Shirdi is visited by an average of 25,000 pilgrims a day and during religious festivals, this number can reach up to 300,000. The places associated with the Warkari sect such as Pandharpur, Dehu, and Alandi remain popular throughout the year, and attract huge number of people from all over the state during religious observations. Situated in Nanded, Sikh Gurudwara of Hazur Sahib, also known as Takht Sachkhand Sri Hazur Abchalnagar Sahib, is one of the five takhts in Sikhism. The area around the city of Aurangabad has many ancient and medieval sites including the UNESCO World Heritage Sites of Ajanta and Ellora caves, the Daulatabad Fort, and the Bibi Ka Maqbara. The Vidarbha region of Maharashtra has numerous nature reserve parks. These include Melghat Tiger Reserve in Amravati district, Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve in Chandrapur district, Umred Karhandla Wildlife Sanctuary in Nagpur district, the Nagzira wildlife sanctuary, and Navegaon National Park (bird sanctuary) of Gondia District. According to a survey by the government of Maharashtra, in 2009-10, domestic tourists accounted for 98% of the total number of visitors to Maharashtra and the remaining were foreign. Visitors from the US, UK, Germany, and UAE each form a significant percentage of the foreign tourists. The state government has established the Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) for the systematic development and promotion of tourism in the state. MTDC owns and maintains resorts at all key tourist centres.

See also [List of Maratha dynasties and states](#) [List of people from Maharashtra](#) [List of districts of Maharashtra](#) [List of villages of Maharashtra](#) [List of synagogues in Maharashtra](#) [List of cities in Maharashtra by population](#) [Make in Maharashtra](#) [Religion in Maharashtra](#)

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Manipur

Manipur () is a state in northeastern India with Imphal as its capital. It borders the Indian states of Assam to the west, Mizoram to the south, and Nagaland to the north and shares the international border with Myanmar, specifically the Sagaing Region to the east and Chin State to the southeast. Covering an area of 22,330 square kilometers (8,621 mi), the state consists mostly of hilly terrain with the 1813-square-kilometre (700 mi) Imphal Valley inhabited by the Meitei (Manipuri) community, historically a kingdom. Surrounding hills are home to Naga and Kuki-Zo communities, who speak Tibeto-Burman languages. The official language and lingua franca, Meitei (Manipuri), also belongs to the Tibeto-Burman family. During the days of the British Raj, Manipur was one of the princely states. Prior to the British departure in 1947, Manipur acceded to the Dominion of India, along with roughly 550 other princely states. In September 1949, the ruler of Manipur signed a merger agreement with India, giving up his kingdom and obtaining a privy purse in return. Many Meitei people feel that their self-determination was violated by the agreement since the legislature elected under the constitution was not consulted. Ethnic and separatist concerns have resulted in a long-running insurgency against Indian rule. From 2009 through 2018, the conflict was responsible for the violent deaths of over 1000 people. The Meitei people represent around 53% of the population of Manipur state, followed by various Naga tribes at 20% and Kuki-Zo tribes at 16%. Manipur's ethnic groups practice a variety of religions. According to 2011 census, Hinduism and Christianity are the major religions of the state. Manipur has primarily an agrarian economy, with significant hydroelectric power generation potential. It is connected to other areas by daily flights through Imphal Airport, the second largest in northeastern India. Manipur is home to many sports and the origin of Manipuri dance, and is credited with introducing polo to Europeans.

Name The name Manipur (Sanskrit: मणिपुर, romanized: maṇipura, lit. "city of jewels") was chosen by Gharib Nawaz in the eighteenth century. It is named after a kingdom of the same name mentioned in the Mahabharata Hindu epic. Previously, it had been known as Kangleipak (Meitei: ꯀꯪꯂꯩꯄꯝꯔ, romanized: Kangleipak) or Meiteileipak (Meitei: ꯀꯪꯂꯩꯄꯝꯔꯩꯔ, Meiteileipak, transl: land of the Meiteis). Later, the work Dharani Samhita (1825-34) popularised the Sanskrit legends of the origin of Manipur's name. Other names include Sanaleibak (Meitei: ꯀꯪꯂꯩꯄꯝꯔꯩꯔꯩꯔ, transl: the land of gold, golden land), not given because Manipur has a lot of the gold mines, but because of its happiness and prosperity. This name was mentioned in the 11th-12th century constitution, the Loiyumba Shinyen.¹⁰ and is still heard in the official song of Manipur, "Sana Leibak Manipur".

History Antiquity The history of Manipur Meiteis is chronicled in Puyas or Puwaris (stories about the forefathers), namely, the Ningthou Kangbalon, Cheitharol Kumbaba, Ningthourol Lambuba, Poireiton Khunthokpa, Panthoibi Khongkul, and so forth in the Meitei script, which is comparable to the Thai script. The historical accounts presented here were recordings from the eyes and the judgment of Meitei kings and Maichou (Meitei scholars).

The Kingdoms of Mng Kawng and Mng Mao According to the Tai chronicles, Manipur (Kahse) is one of the territories conquered by Sam Lng Hpa (1150-1201), the first Chao Pha of Mng Kawng. A 14th-century inscription from Pagan, Myanmar, mentions Kasan (Manipur) as one of the 21 states under the Mong Mao ruler Thonganbwa (1413-1445/6); he later was captured by the Governor of Taungdwingyi.

Medieval Vassal State of the Toungoo empire Bayinnaung, the ruler of Toungoo dynasty ordered the invasion of Manipur in 1559. He had recalled Binnya Dala from Chiang Mai to lead the invasion. The three armies mostly made up of army from Kale, Mohnyin, Mogaung, Momeik and Sanda led the invasion, the King of Manipur surrendered without any resistance and Manipur became a vassal state of the Toungoo empire.

Vassal state of Konbaung dynasty In the 18th century, Bodawpaya, the king of Burma acquired the Manipur (1814) along with the western kingdoms of Arakan (1784), Assam (1817). By the medieval period, marriage alliances between the royal families of Manipur, Ahom kingdom and Burma had become common. Medieval era manuscripts discovered in the 20th century, particularly the Puya, provide evidence that Hindus from the Indian subcontinent had married Manipur royalty by at least the 14th century. In centuries thereafter, royal spouses came also from what is now Assam, Bengal, and Uttar Pradesh and from other South Indian kingdoms as well. Another manuscript suggests that Muslims arrived in Manipur in the 17th century, from what is now Bangladesh, during the reign of Meidingu Khagemba. The socio-political turmoil and wars, particularly the persistent and devastating Anglo-Burmese wars, affected the cultural and religious demography of Manipur.

British colonial period In 1824, the ruler of Manipur entered into a subsidiary alliance with the British Empire in the Indian subcontinent, which became responsible for Manipur's external defence. The British recognised that the state remained internally self-governing, as a princely state. During World War II, Manipur was the scene of many fierce battles between Japanese invaders and British Indian forces. The Japanese were beaten back before they could enter Imphal, which was one of the turning points of the overall war in South Asia. The Battle of Imphal, known to the Manipuris as Japan Laan, are among the lesser-known battles of the Second World War. Yet the Allied Victory in this battle was a turning point against the Japanese in East Asia.

Post-colonial history After the war, the Maharaja took the advice of the British Cabinet Mission and the Chamber of Princes to introduce democratic reforms in the state. The Manipur State Constitution Act of 1947 was promulgated in July 1947 to give the state an elected legislative assembly and an appointed prime minister. Elections to the assembly were held only in the following year. Following the decision to partition British India, all the princely states were advised to "accede" to one of the new dominions. The Maharaja acceded to India on 11 August 1947 and signed a standstill agreement to continue all the pre-existing arrangements it had with British India. Some Meitei people argue that the king was in no legal position to sign the instrument of accession at the time. Over the next two years, the multitude of princely states of India were extensively reorganised as India moved towards becoming a constitutional republic. Proposals for reorganisation were also made for Manipur but discarded as being unsuitable. Eventually Manipur was turned into a centrally administered province (called a 'Part C' state, later renamed union territory) by asking the Maharaja to sign a merger agreement. He is believed to have signed it under duress. Later, on 21 September 1949, he signed a Merger Agreement, disputed as having been done without consultation of the popular ministry under Manipur State Constitution Act 1947 and denial of the king's request to return to Manipur to discuss the same with his people. Under 'duress' and 'coercion' Bodhachandra Singh signed the merger agreement merging the kingdom into India, which led to its becoming a Part C State. The legislative assembly was dissolved and a centrally appointed Chief Commissioner handled the state's administration, as per the Constitution of India. An advisory council with nominated members was provided to advise the Chief Commissioner. In 1956, the advisory council was replaced by a territorial council with mostly elected members. In 1963, Manipur was provided a legislative assembly, with a council of ministers headed by a chief minister. It was made a fully-fledged state in 1972 by the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act, 1971.

Manipur has a long record of insurgency and inter-ethnic violence. Its first armed opposition group, the United National Liberation Front (UNLF), was founded in 1964 aiming to achieve independence from India and establish Manipur as a new country. Over time, many more groups formed, each with different goals, and deriving support from diverse ethnic groups in Manipur. The People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK) was formed in 1977, and the People's Liberation Army (PLA) in 1978, suspected by Human Rights Watch of receiving arms and training from China. In 1980, the Kangleipak Communist Party (KCP) was formed. These groups began a spree of bank robberies and attacks on police officers and government buildings. The state government appealed to the central government in New Delhi for support in combating this violence.

"Disturbed area" designation From 1980 to 2004, the Indian government referred to Manipur as a disturbed area. This term (designated by the Ministry of Home Affairs or a state governor) refers to a territory where extraordinary laws under the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act can be used. The laws allow the military to treat private and public spaces in the same manner, detain individuals for up to 24 hours with unlimited renewals, perform warrantless searches, and to shoot and kill individuals who break laws, carry weapons, or gather in groups larger than four. Legal immunity applies to the military. Since 1980, the application of the AFSPA has been at the heart of concerns about human rights violations in the region, such as arbitrary killings, torture, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, and forced disappearances. Its continued application has led to numerous protests, notably the longstanding hunger strike by Irom Sharmila Chanu. In 2004, the government lifted the disturbed status after a violent attack on a local woman. The rape of a Manipuri woman, Thangjam Manorama Devi, by members of the Assam Rifles paramilitary had led to wide protests including a nude protest by the Meira Paibi women's association.

2023 ethnic violence In May 2023, an ethnic clash between Meitei people and Kuki people led to extensive violence and arson, resulting in the displacement of 60,000 people from their homes and hundreds more dead and hospitalised. According to data released by Manipur Police, as on September 15, 2023; 175 people were killed; 1,118 people were injured, and 33 people were missing. 96 bodies remained unclaimed. 5,172 cases of arson including destruction of 4,786 houses and 386 religious places, out of which there were 254 churches and 132 temples, were reported since May. Out of 5,668 arms lost; 1,329 arms, 15,050 ammunition and 400 bombs were recovered. Indian army troops were deployed to control the situation. International outrage resulted from a report that two Kuki women had been paraded naked and allegedly gang-raped by a mob of Meitei men.

Geography The state lies at a latitude of 23°38'N - 25°58'N and a longitude of 93°03'E - 94°48'E. The total area covered by the state is 22,327 km² (8,621 sq mi). The capital lies in an oval-shaped valley of approximately 700 sq mi (2,000 km²), surrounded by blue mountains, at an elevation of 790 m (2,590 ft) above sea level. The slope of the valley is from north to south. The mountain ranges create a moderate climate, preventing the cold winds from the north from reaching the valley and barring cyclonic storms. The state is bordered by the Indian states of Nagaland to its north, Mizoram to its south, Assam to its west, and shares an international border with Myanmar to its east.

The state has four major river basins: the Barak River Basin (Barak Valley) to the west, the Manipur River Basin in central Manipur, the Yu River Basin in the east, and a portion of the Lanye River Basin in the north. The water resources of Barak and Manipur river basins are about 1.8487 Mham (million hectare metres). The overall water balance of the state amounts to 0.7236 Mham in the annual water budget. (By comparison, India receives 400 Mham of rain annually.) The Barak River, the largest of Manipur, originates in the Manipur Hills and is joined by tributaries, such as the Irang, Maku, and Tuivai. After its junction with the Tuivai, the Barak

River turns north, forms the border with Assam State, and then enters the Cachar Assam just above Lakhimpur. The Manipur river basin has eight major rivers: the Manipur, Imphal, Iril, Nambul, Sekmai, Chakpi, Thoubal and Khuga. All these rivers originate from the surrounding hills.

Almost all the rivers in the valley area are in the mature stage and therefore deposit their sediment load in the Loktak Lake. The rivers draining the Manipur Hills are comparatively young, due to the hilly terrain through which they flow. These rivers are corrosive and become turbulent in the rainy season. Important rivers draining the western area include the Maku, Barak, Jiri, Irang, and Leimatak. Rivers draining the eastern part of the state, the Yu River Basin, include the Chamu, Khunou and other short streams. Manipur may be characterised as two distinct physical regions: an outlying area of rugged hills and narrow valleys, and the inner area of flat plain, with all associated landforms. These two areas are distinct in physical features and are conspicuous in flora and fauna. The valley region has hills and mounds rising above the flat surface. The Loktak Lake is an important feature of the central plain. The total area occupied by all the lakes is about 600 km². The altitude ranges from 40 m at Jiribam to 2,994 m at Mount Temp peak along the border with Nagaland. The soil cover can be divided into two broad types, viz. the red ferruginous soil in the hill area and the alluvium in the valley. The valley soils generally contain loam, small rock fragments, sand, and sandy clay, and are varied. On the plains, especially flood plains and deltas, the soil is quite thick. The topsoil on the steep slopes is very thin. Soil on the steep hill slopes is subject to high erosion, resulting in gullies and barren rock slopes. The normal pH value ranges from 5.4 to 6.8.

Flora Natural vegetation occupies an area of about 17,418 km² (6,725 sq mi), or 77.2% of the total geographical area of the state, and consists of short and tall grasses, reeds and bamboos, and trees. About a third of Manipur's forests are protected: 8.42% of the forested land is categorized under Reserved Forests, and 23.95% under Protected Forests. There are six major types of forests in Manipur, and 10 subtypes. The six major forest types, according to the state's Forest Department, include Tropical Wet Evergreen Forest, Tropical Moist Deciduous Forests, Sub-Tropical Pine Forest, Tropical Dry Deciduous Forest, Montane Wet Temperate Forest and Sub-alpine Forest. There are forests of teak, pine, oak, uningthou, leihao, bamboo, and cane. Rubber, tea, coffee, orange, and cardamom are grown in hill areas. Rice is a staple food for Manipuris.

Climate Manipur's climate is largely influenced by the topography of the region. Lying 790 metres above sea level, Manipur is wedged among hills on all sides. This northeastern corner of India enjoys a generally amiable climate, though the winters can be cool. The maximum temperature in the summer months is 32 C (90 F). The coolest conditions are in January, and the warmest month is July. The state receives an average annual rainfall of 1,467.5 mm (57.78 in) between April and mid-October. Precipitation ranges from light rain or mizzle to heavy downpours. The capital city Imphal receives an annual average of 933 mm (36.7 in). Rainfall in this region is caused by The South Westerly Monsoon picking up moisture from the Bay of Bengal and heading towards the Eastern Himalaya ranges. This normal rainfall pattern of Manipur enriches the soil and much of the agrarian activities are dependent on it as well. Manipur is already experiencing climate change, especially changes in weather, with both increased variability in rain as well as increasingly severe changes in temperature.

Demographics Population Manipur had a population of 2,855,794 at the 2011 census. Of this total, 57.2% lived in the valley districts and the remaining 42.8% in the hill districts. The valley (plain) is mainly inhabited by the Meitei speaking population (native Manipuri speakers). The hills are inhabited mainly by several ethno-linguistically diverse tribes belonging to the Nagas, the Kukis and smaller tribal groupings. Naga and Kuki settlements are also found in the valley region, though less in numbers. There are also sizable populations of Nepalis, Bengalis, Tamils and Marwaris living in Manipur. The distribution of area, population and density, and

literacy rate as per the 2001 Census provisional figures are as below:

People The Meiteis (synonymous to the Manipuris) constitute the majority of the state's population. They inhabit the Imphal Valley. Nagas and Kuki-Zo are the major tribe conglomerates of tribes inhabiting the surrounding hills. The Kuki-Zos consist of several tribes including Gangte, Hmar, Paite, Simte, Sukte, Thadou, Vaiphei, Zou, and some smaller tribes. They speak Kuki-Chin languages and predominate the southern hill districts of Manipur. The prominent Naga tribes are Angami, Kabui, Kacha Naga, Mao, Maram, Poumai, Sema and Tangkhul, each speaking its own language. They predominate the northern hill districts of Manipur. In addition, several smaller tribes that were classified as "Old Kuki" by the British administrators populate Chandel and neighbouring districts. Some of them now classify themselves as Nagas while others retain the Kuki classification.

Languages The official language of the state is Meitei (also known as Manipuri). It is a scheduled language in the Republic of India, and serves as the lingua franca in Manipur. Other than Meitei language, in Manipur, there is considerable linguistic diversity, as is the case in most of the Northeast India. Almost all of the languages are Sino-Tibetan, with many different subgroups represented. There are multiple Kuki-Chin languages, the largest being Thadou and is spoken in all the hill districts. Another major language family is the Naga languages, like Tangkhul, Poula, Rongmei and Mao. Less than 5% speak Indo-European languages, mostly Nepali and Bengali, which is the major language of Jiribam district. The Directorate of Language Planning and Implementation (AKA Department of Language Planning and Implementation) of the Government of Manipur works for the development and the promotion of Meitei language and other local vernaculars of Manipur.

Linguistic events Meitei language day (Manipuri language day) Meitei poetry day (Manipuri poetry day) Meitei language movements Meitei classical language movement (ongoing) Meitei linguistic purism movement (ongoing) Meitei scheduled language movement (successful)

Administrative divisions Districts

Religion Hinduism and Christianity are the major religions practised in Manipur. Between the 1961 and 2011 censuses of India, the share of Hindus in the state declined from 62% to 41%, while the share of Christians rose from 19% to 41%. The religious groups of the Meitei-speaking people include Hindus, Sanamahists, Meitei Christians and Meitei Pangals. Besides these, tribal communities other than the Meitei-speaking population are mostly Christians.

Hinduism The Meitei ethnicity (aka Manipuri people) is the majority group following Hinduism in Manipur, beside other minor immigrants from other parts of India following the same faith. Among the indigenous communities of Manipur, Meiteis are the only Hindus as no other indigenous ethnic groups follow this faith. According to the 2011 Census of India, about 41.39% of the Manipuri people practise Hinduism. The Hindu population is heavily concentrated in the Meitei dominant areas of the Manipur Valley (Imphal Valley), among the Meitei people. The districts of Bishnupur, Thoubal, Imphal East, and Imphal West all have Hindu majorities, averaging 67.62% (range 62.27-74.81%) according to the 2011 census data. Vaishnavite Hinduism was the state religion of the Kingdom of Manipur. In 1704, Meitei King Charairongba accepted Vaishnavism and changed his traditional Meitei name into Hindu name, Pitambar Singh. However, the first Hindu temples were constructed much earlier. A copper plate excavated from Phayeng dating back to 763 CE (believed to be of the reign of Meitei King

Khongtekcha) was found to contain inscriptions about the Hindu deities in Sanskrit words. During the 13th century, Meitei King Khumomba constructed a Lord Hanuman temple. The Vishnu temple at Lamangdong was constructed during 1474 CE (during the reign of Meitei King Kiyamba), by Brahmins immigrating from the neighborhood Shan State. As per the legends, the temple was constructed to house the Vishnu emblem given to King Kiyamba by King Khekhomba of Shan. Phurailatpam Shubhi Narayan was the first Brahmin priest of this temple.

Christianity Christianity is the religion of 41% of the people in the state, but is the majority in rural areas with 53%, and is predominant in the hills. It was brought by Protestant missionaries to Manipur in the 19th century. In the 20th century, a few Christian schools were established, which introduced Western-type education. Christianity is the predominant religion among tribals of Manipur and tribal Christians make up the vast majority (over 96%) of the Christian population in Manipur.

Islam The Meitei Pangals (Meitei: ꯏꯝꯐꯥꯟ ꯏꯝꯐꯥꯟ), also known as Meitei Muslims or Manipuri Muslims, are the third largest religious majority group in the state, comprising about 8.3% of the state population. They belong to the Sunni group of the Hanafi school of Islamic thought and are descendants of foreign migrants. (See History of Manipuri Muslims)

Sanamahism Sanamahism is the indigenous, polytheistic and animistic ethnic religion of the Meitei people. Sanamahist worship concentrates on the household deity Lainingthou Sanamahi. The ancient Meiteis worshiped a Supreme deity, Salailen, and followed their ancestors. Their ancestor worship and animism was based on Umang Lai - ethnic governing deities worshiped in the sacred groves. Some of the traditional Meitei deities, or Lais are Atiya Sidaba, Pakhangba, Sanamahi, and Panthoibi. Out of the 233,767 people who opted for the "Other religion" option, 222,315 were Sanamahists.

Other religions The various other religions were mostly followers of tribal folk religions, 6,444 were Heraka, 2,032 were Jewish and 1,180 were from other tribal religions such as Tingkao Ragwang Chapriak.

Government The government of Manipur is a collective assembly of 60 elected members, of which 19 are reserved for Scheduled Tribes and 1 for Scheduled Castes. The state sends two representatives to the Lok Sabha of the Parliament of India. The state sends one representative to the Rajya Sabha. The legislature of the state is Unicameral. Representatives are elected for a five-year term to the state assembly and the Indian parliament through voting, a process overseen by the offices of the Election Commission of India. The state has one autonomous council.

Civil unrest Social movements There were many public movements in Manipur against the government:

Meitei classical language movement Meitei scheduled language movement Meitei linguistic purism movement

Security and insurgency The violence in Manipur extends beyond the conflict between Indian security forces and insurgent armed groups. There is violence between the Meitei ethnicity, various Naga tribes, various Kuki tribes, and other tribal groups. Splinter groups have arisen within some of the armed groups, and disagreement between them is rife. Other than the UNLF, PLA, and PREPAK, Manipuri insurgent groups include the Revolutionary Peoples Front (RPF), Manipur Liberation Front Army (MLFA), Kanglei Yawol Kanba Lup (KYKL),

Revolutionary Joint Committee (RJC), Kangleipak Communist Party (KCP), Peoples United Liberation Front (PULF), Manipur Naga People Front (MNPf), National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN-K), National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN-IM), United Kuki Liberation Front (UKLF), Kuki National Front (KNF), Kuki National Army (KNA), Kuki Defence Force (KDF), Kuki Democratic Movement (KDM), Kuki National Organisation (KNO), Kuki Security Force (KSF), Chin Kuki Revolutionary Front (CKRF), Kom Rem Peoples Convention (KRPC), Zomi Revolutionary Volunteers (ZRV), Zomi Revolutionary Army (ZRA), Zomi Reunification Organisation (ZRO), and Hmar Peoples Convention (HPC). The Meitei insurgent groups seek independence from India. The Kuki insurgent groups want a separate state for the Kukis to be carved out from the present state of Manipur. The Kuki insurgent groups are under two umbrella organisations: the Kuki National Organisation (KNO) and United Peoples Forum. The Nagas wish to annex part of Manipur and merge with a greater Nagaland or Nagalim, which is in conflict with Meitei insurgent demands for the integrity of their vision of an independent state. There have been many tensions between the tribes and numerous clashes between Naga and Kukis, Meiteis and Muslims. According to SATP in 2014, there had been a dramatic decline in fatalities in Manipur since 2009. In 2009, 77 civilians died (about 3 per 100,000 people). From 2010 onward, about 25 civilians have died in militant-related violence (about 1 per 100,000 people), dropping further to 21 civilian deaths in 2013 (or 0.8 per 100,000 people). However, there were 76 explosions in 2013 compared to 107 in 2012. Different groups have claimed responsibility for the explosions, some claiming they were targeting competing militant groups, others claiming their targets were state and central government officials. As a point of comparison, the average annual global rate of violent death between 2004 and 2009 was 7.9 per 100,000 people.

Economy The 2012-2013 gross state domestic product of Manipur at market prices was about ₹10,188 crore (US\$1.2 billion). Its economy is primarily agriculture, forestry, cottage and trade driven. Manipur acts as India's "Gateway to the East" through Moreh and Tamu towns, the land route for trade between India and Burma and other countries in Southeast Asia, East Asia, Siberia, the Arctic, Micronesia and Polynesia. Manipur has the highest number of handicraft units and the highest number of craftspeople in the northeastern region of India.

Electricity Manipur produced about 0.1 GWh (0.36 TJ) of electricity in 2010 with its infrastructure. The state has hydroelectric power generation potential, estimated to be over 2 GWh (7.2 TJ). As of 2010, if half of this potential is realised, it is estimated that this would supply 24/7 electricity to all residents, with a surplus for sale, as well as supplying the Burma power grid.

Agriculture Manipur's climate and soil conditions make it ideally suited for horticultural crops. Growing there are rare and exotic medicinal and aromatic plants. Some cash crops suited for Manipur include lychees, cashews, walnuts, oranges, lemons, pineapples, papayas, passion fruit, peaches, pears, and plums. The state is covered with over 3,000 km² (1,200 sq mi) of bamboo forests, making it a major contributor to India's bamboo industry. Agriculture in Manipur includes a number of smallholding farms, many of whom are owned by women. Climate change, especially changes in temperature and weather are hurting small farmers in the state. Like rural women in other parts of the world, women in agriculture in Manipur are harmed more by the changes in weather, because of less access to support from local governments.

Transportation infrastructure Tulihal Airport, Changangbei, Imphal, the only airport of Manipur, connects directly with Delhi, Kolkata, Guwahati, and Agartala. It has been upgraded to an international airport. As India's second largest airport in the northeast, it serves as a key logistical centre for northeastern states. The Tulihal Airport has been renamed Bir Tikendrajit Airport. National Highway NH-39 links Manipur with the rest of the country through the railway stations at Dimapur in Nagaland at a distance of 215 km (134 mi) from Imphal. National

Highway 53 (India) connects Manipur with another railway station at Silchar in Assam, which is 269 km (167 mi) away from Imphal. The road network of Manipur, with a length of 7,170 km (4,460 mi) connects all the important towns and distant villages. However, the road condition throughout the state is often deplorable. In 2010, Indian government announced that it is considering an Asian infrastructure network from Manipur to Vietnam. The proposed Trans-Asian Railway (TAR), if constructed, will pass through Manipur, connecting India to Burma, Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore.

Tourism The tourist season is from October to February when it is often sunny without being hot and humid. The culture features martial arts, dance, theatre and sculpture. Greenery accompanies a moderate climate. The seasonal Shirui Lily plant at Ukhrul (district), Dzoko Valley at Senapati, Sangai (Brow antlered deer) and the floating islands at Loktak Lake are among the rarities of the area. Polo, which can be called a royal game, originated in Manipur.

UNESCO list The Keibul Lamjao National Park (KLNP), which is the world's only floating national park, located in the Loktak lake, is under the tentative lists of the UNESCO World Heritage Sites, under the title "Keibul Lamjao Conservation Area (KLCA)", additionally covering the buffer of Loktak Lake (140 sq km) and Pumlen Pat (43 sq. km), besides the 40 sq km of the KLNP. The Kangla (officially called the Kangla Fort), which was the historic seat of administration of the Meitei rulers of Manipur Kingdom, is also moved in the Indian Parliament, to be included in the UNESCO World Heritage Site list.

Imphal (capital) The city is inhabited by the Meitei people and other communities. The city contains the Tulihal Airport. The district is divided into East and West. The Khuman Lampak Sports Complex was built for the 1997 National Games. The stadium is used for a sports venue. It also contains a cyclists' velodrome. Most of the imported goods are sold at Paona Bazaar, Gambhir Singh Shopping Complex and Leima Plaza. Kangla Fort, Marjing Polo Statue, Sanamahi Kiyong, Ima Market, Samban-Lei Sekpil, Shree Govindajee Temple, Andro village, and Manipur State Museum are in the city.

Lakes and islands 48 km (30 mi) from Imphal, lies the largest fresh water lake in northeast India, the Loktak Lake, a miniature inland sea. There is a tourist bungalow atop Sendra Island. Life on the lake includes small islands that are floating weed on which live the lake people, the blue waters of the lake, and colourful water plants. There is a Sendra tourist home with an attached cafeteria in the middle of the lake. Floating islands are made out of the tangle of watery weeds and other plants. The wetland is swampy and is favourable for a number of species. It is in the district of Bishnupur. The etymology of Loktak is "lok = stream / tak = the end" (End of the Streams). Sendra park and resort is opening on the top of Sendra hills and attracting the tourist.

Hills and valleys Kaina is a hillock about 921 m (3,022 ft) above sea level. It is a sacred place for Manipuri Hindus. The legend is that, Shri Govindajee appeared in the dream of his devotee, Shri Jai Singh Maharaja, and asked the saintly king to install in a temple, an image of Shri Govindajee. It was to be carved out of a jack fruit tree, which was then growing at Kaina. It is 29 km (18 mi) from Imphal. The Dzoko Valley is in Senapati district bordering with Kohima. There are seasonal flowers and number of flora and fauna. It is at an altitude of 2,438 m (7,999 ft) above sea level, behind Mount Japf in Nagaland. The rare Dzoko lily is found only in this valley.

Eco tourism Keibul Lamjao National Park, 48 km (30 mi) away from Imphal is an abode of the rare and endangered species of brow antlered deer. This ecosystem contains 17 rare species of mammals. It is the only

floating national park of the world. Six km (3.7 mi) to the west of Imphal, at the foot of the pine growing hillocks at Iroisemba on the Imphal-Kangchup Road are the Zoological Gardens. Some brow antlered deer (Sangai) are housed there.

Waterfalls Sadu Chiru waterfall is near Ichum Keirap village 27 km (17 mi) from Imphal, in the Sadar hill area, Senapati district. This consists of three falls with the first fall about 30 m (98 ft) high. Agape Park is in the vicinity.

Natural caves Thalon Cave (around 910 m (2,990 ft) above sea level) is one of the historical sites of Manipur under Tamenglong district. It is around 185 km (115 mi) from the state capital and around 30 km (19 mi) from Tamenglong district headquarters in north side. From Thalon village, this cave is 4-5 km (2.5-3.1 mi). Khangkhui Cave is a natural limestone cave in Ukhrul district. The big hall in the cave is the darbar hall of the Devil King living deep inside while the northern hall is the royal bedroom, according to local folklore. During World War II, villagers sought shelter here. This cave is an hour's trek from Khangkui village.

Education Manipur schools are run by the state and central government or by private organisation. Instruction is mainly in English. Under the 10+2+3 plan, students may enroll in general or professional degree programs after passing the Higher Secondary Examination (the grade 12 examination). The main universities are Manipur University, Central Agricultural University, National Institute of Technology, Manipur, Indian Institute of Information Technology, Manipur, Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Medical Sciences, Regional Institute of Medical Sciences and Indira Gandhi National Tribal University. Manipur is home to India's first floating elementary school: Loktak Elementary Floating School in Loktak Lake.

Transportation Air Bir Tikendrajit International Airport is situated in the capital Imphal which connects direct flights from Imphal to Kolkata, Guwahati, New Delhi, Bangalore and Agartala.

Roadways Manipur is connected to all its neighbouring states with National Highways.

Rail Manipur has one operational railway station, Jiribam. Imphal railway station, is an under-construction railway station in Imphal, the capital of Manipur.

Art and culture Secular theatre is mostly confined to themes that are not religious; it is performed in the secular or profane spheres. In these are Shumang lila and Phampak lila (stage drama). Shumang lila is very popular. Etymologically Shumang lila is the combination of "Shumang" (courtyard) and "Lila" (play or performance). It is performed in an area of 1313 ft in the centre of any open space, in a very simple style without a raised stage, set design, or heavy props such as curtains, background scenery, and visual effects. It uses one table and two chairs, kept on one side of the performance space. Its claim as the "theatre of the masses" is underlined by the way it is performed in the middle of an audience that surrounds it, leaving one passage as entrance and exit. The world of Phampak lila (stage drama) performed in the proscenium theatre is similar, in form, to the Western theatrical model and Indian Natyasastra model though its contents are indigenous. The so-called modern theatre descended on Manipur theatre culture with the performance of Pravas Milan (1902) under the enthusiastic patronage of Sir Churchand Maharaj (1891-1941). The pace of theatrical movement was geared up with the institution of groups such as Manipur Dramatic Union (MDU) (1930), Arian Theatre (1935), Chitragada Natya Mandir (1936), Society Theatre (1937), Rupmahal (1942), Cosmopolitan Dramatic Union

(1968), and the Chorus Repertory Theatre of Ratan Thiyam (1976). These groups started experimenting with types of plays apart from historical and Puranic ones. Today Manipur theatre is well respected because of excellent productions shown in India and abroad. Manipur plays, both Shumang lila and stage lila, have been a regular feature in the annual festival of the National School of Drama, New Delhi. Iskcon led by Bhaktisvarupa Damodara Swami started a network of schools in Northeastern India, where more than 4,000 students receive education centred on Vaishnava spiritual values. In 1989 he founded "Ranganiketan Manipuri Cultural Arts Troupe", which has approximately 600 performances at over 300 venues in over 15 countries. Ranganiketan (literally "House of Colorful Arts") is a group of more than 20 dancers, musicians, singers, martial artists, choreographers, and craft artisans. Some of them have received international acclaim.

Manipur dance (Ras Lila) Manipuri dance also known as Jagoi, is one of the major Indian classical dance forms, named after the state of Manipur. It is particularly known for its Hindu Vaishnavism themes, and exquisite performances of love-inspired dance drama of Radha-Krishna called Raslila. However, the dance is also performed to themes related to Shaivism, Shaktism and regional deities such as Umang Lai during Lai Haraoba. The roots of Manipur dance, as with all classical Indian dances, is the ancient Hindu Sanskrit text Natya Shastra, but with influences from the culture fusion between India and Southeast Asia, East Asia, Siberia, Micronesia and Polynesia.

Chorus Repertory Theatre The auditorium of the theatre is on the outskirts of Imphal and the campus stretches for about 2 acres (8,100 m²). It has housing and working quarters to accommodate self-sufficiency of life. The theatre association has churned out internationally acclaimed plays like Chakravyuha and Uttarpriyadashi. Its 25 years of existence in theatre had disciplined its performers to a world of excellence. Chakravyuha taken from the Mahabharat epic had won Fringe Firsts Award, 1987 at the Edinburgh International Theater Festival. Chakravyuha deals with the story of Abhimanyu (son of Arjun) of his last battle and approaching death, whereas Uttarpriyadashi is an 80-minute exposition of Emperor Ashoka's redemption.

Sports Mukna is a popular form of wrestling. Mukna Kangjei, or Khong Kangjei, is a game which combines the arts of mukna (wrestling hockey) and Kangjei (Cane Stick) to play the ball made of seasoned bamboo roots. Yubi lakpi is a traditional full contact game played in Manipur, India, using a coconut, which has some notable similarities to rugby. Yubi lakpi literally means "coconut snatching". The coconut is greased to make it slippery. There are rules of the game, as with all Manipur sports. The coconut serves the purpose of a ball and is offered to the king, the chief guest or the judges before the game begins. The aim is to run while carrying the greased coconut and physically cross over the goal line, while the other team tackles and blocks any such attempt as well as tries to grab the coconut and score on its own. In Manipur's long history, Yubi lakpi was the annual official game, attended by the king, over the Hindu festival of Shree Govindajee. It is like the game of rugby, or American football. Oolaobi (Woo-Laobi) is an outdoor game mainly played by females. Meitei mythology believes that UmangLai Heloi-Taret (seven deities-seven fairies) played this game on the Courtyard of the temple of Umang Lai Lairembi. The number of participants is not fixed but are divided into two groups (size as per agreement). Players are divided as into Raiders (Attackers) or Defenders (Avoiders). Hiyang Tannaba, also called Hi Yangba Tanaba, is a traditional boat rowing race and festivity of the Panas.

Polo The origin of modern polo can be traced to Manipur where the world's oldest polo ground lies, Imphal Polo Ground. Captain Robert Stewart and Lieutenant Joseph Sherer of the British colonial era first watched locals play a rules-based pulu or sagolkangjei (literally, horse and stick) game in 1859. They adopted its rules, calling the game polo, and playing it on their horses. The game spread among the British in Calcutta and then to England. Apart from these games, some outdoor children's games are fading in popularity. Some games such

as Khutlokpi, Phibul Thomba, and Chaphu Thugaibi remain very popular elsewhere, such as in Cambodia. They are played especially during the Khmer New Year. First of its kind in India, National Sports University will be constructed in Manipur.

Festivals The festivals of Manipur are Lui-ngai-ni Ningol Chakouba, Shirui Lily festival, Yaoshang, Gan-ngai, Chumpha, Cheiraoba, Kang and Heikru Hidongba, as well as the broader religious festivals Eid-UI-Fitr, Eid-UI-Adha and Christmas. Most of these festivals are celebrated on the basis of the lunar calendar. Almost every festival celebrated in other states of India is observed. On 21 November 2017, the Sangai Festival 2017 was inaugurated by President Ram Nath Kovind in Manipur. Held for 10 days, the festival is named after Manipur's state animal, the brow-antlered Sangai deer. The Sangai Festival showcases the tourism potential of Manipur in the field of arts and culture, handloom, handicrafts, indigenous sports, cuisine, music and adventure sports.

Sangai festival Ningol Chakouba Held on 9 November, this is a social festival of the Meitei people of Manipur where married women (Ningol) are invited (Chakouba, literally calling to a meal; for dinner or lunch) to a feast at their parental house accompanied by their children. Besides the feast, gifts are given to the women/invitees and to their children. It is the festival that binds and revives the family relations between the women married away and the parental family. Nowadays, other communities have started celebrating this kind of a family-bonding festival.

Kut Held after the Harvest festival in November, this festival predominantly celebrated by Kuki-Chin-Mizo tribes in Manipur has become one of the leading festivals of the state. Kut is not restricted to a community or tribe - the whole state populace participates in merriment. On 1 November of every year, the state declared holiday for Kut celebration.

Yaosang Held in February or March, Yaosang is considered to be one of the biggest festivals of Manipur. It is the Holi festival (festival of colour) but Yaosang is the regional name given by the people of Manipur.

Khuado Pawi Khuado Pawi is the harvest festival of the Tedim people who were recognised as Sukte and Zomi in India and Myanmar respectively. The word Pawi means festival in Tedim Zomi language. It is celebrated every year in the month of September-October after harvesting.

Cheiraoba Also known as Sajibugi Nongma Panba and held in March or April, Cheiraoba is the new year of Manipur. It is observed on the first lunar day of the lunar month Sajibu (March/April) and so it is also popularly known as Sajibu Cheiraoba. People of Manipur immaculate and decorate their houses and make a sumptuous variety of dishes to feast upon after offering food to the deity on this day. After the feast, as a part of the ritual, people climb hilltops; in the belief that it would excel them to greater heights in their worldly life.

Notable people Mary Kom

Geographical indication Chak-Hao (Black rice) Chak-Hao was awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) status tag from the Geographical Indications Registry, under the Union Government of India, on 20 April 2020 and is valid until 25 December 2027. Consortium of Producers of Chak-Hao (Black Rice) from Imphal, proposed the GI

registration of Chak-Hao. After filing the application in December 2017, the rice was granted the GI tag in 2020 by the Geographical Indication Registry in Chennai, making the name "Chak-Hao" exclusive to the rice grown in the region. It thus became the first rice variety from Manipur and Nagaland. It also is the 5th type of goods from Manipur and 4th from Nagaland to earn the GI tag respectively. The GI tag protects the rice from illegal selling and marketing, and gives it legal protection and a unique identity.

See also Human rights abuses in Manipur Outline of Manipur Tourist Attractions in Manipur

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Official website Official Tourism Site of Manipur General information

Geographic data related to Manipur at OpenStreetMap

Meghalaya

Meghalaya (; lit. "the abode of clouds") is a state in northeast India. Its capital is Shillong. Meghalaya was formed on 21 January 1972 by carving out two districts from the state of Assam: the united Khasi Hills and Jaintia Hills, and the Garo Hills. The estimated population of Meghalaya in 2014 was 3,211,474. Meghalaya covers an area of approximately 22,429 square kilometres, with a length-to-breadth ratio of about 3:1. The state is bound to the south by the Bangladeshi divisions of Mymensingh and Sylhet, to the west by the Bangladeshi division of Rangpur, and to the north and east by India's State of Assam. During the British rule of India, the British authorities nicknamed it the "Scotland of the East". English is the official language of Meghalaya. Unlike many Indian states, Meghalaya has historically followed a matrilineal system where the lineage and inheritance are traced through women; the youngest daughter inherits all wealth and she also takes care of her parents. The state is the wettest region of India, with the wettest areas in the southern Khasi Hills recording an average of 12,000 mm (470 in) of rain a year. About 70 per cent of the state is forested. The Meghalaya subtropical forests ecoregion encompasses the state; its mountain forests are distinct from the lowland tropical forests to the north and south. The forests are notable for their biodiversity of mammals, birds and plants. Meghalaya has a predominantly agrarian economy with a significant commercial forestry industry. The important crops are potatoes, rice, maize, pineapples, bananas, papayas and spices. The service sector is made up of real estate and insurance companies. Meghalaya's gross state domestic product for 2012 was estimated at ₹16,173 crore (US\$1.9 billion) in current prices. The state is geologically rich in minerals, but it has no significant industries. The state has about 1,170 km (730 mi) of national highways. It is also a major logistical centre for trade with Bangladesh. In July 2018, the International Commission on Stratigraphy divided the Holocene epoch into three, with the late Holocene epoch being called the Meghalayan stage/age, since a speleothem in Mawmluh cave indicating a dramatic worldwide climate event around 2250 BCE had been chosen as the boundary stratotype. One of the biggest Central Institutes, the North Eastern Council Secretariat, is also situated in Shillong.

Etymology The word Meghalaya means "the abode of clouds"; the name derives from a compound of the Sanskrit words megha ("cloud", मेघ) and alaya ("abode", आलय)

History Meghalaya, alongside the neighbouring Indian states, has been of archaeological interest. People have lived in Meghalaya since the Neolithic period. Neolithic sites discovered so far are located in areas of high elevation in Khasi Hills, Garo Hills and in neighbouring states, where Neolithic style jhum or shifting cultivation is practised even today. The highland plateaus fed by abundant rains provided safety from floods and a rich soil. The importance of Meghalaya is its possible role in human history via domestication of rice. A theory for the origin of rice is by Ian Glover while states, "India is the center of greatest diversity of domesticated rice with over 20,000 identified species and Northeast India is the most favorable single area of the origin of domesticated rice." The limited archaeology done in the hills of Meghalaya suggest human settlement since ancient times. After the Conquest of Taraf in 1304, Shah Arifin Rafiuddin, a disciple of Shah Jalal, migrated and settled in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills where he preached Islamic monotheism to the local people. His khanqah remains in Sarping / Laurergarh on the Bangladeshi border but the part containing his mazar is in Meghalaya on top of Laur Hill. Bhaitbari is an archaeological site first discovered and excavated by A. K. Sharma in 1993, a fortification of burnt brick with mud core was discovered at Meghalaya - Assam border and is dated to 4th-8th century AD, the city has been speculated to have been one of the capital cities of Kamarupa. The British discovered *Camellia sinensis* (tea shrub) in 1834 in Assam and later companies started renting land from 1839 onwards. The Khasi, Garo, and Jaintia tribes had their own kingdoms until they came under British

administration in the 19th century. Later, the British incorporated Meghalaya into Assam in 1835. The region enjoyed semi-independent status by virtue of a treaty relationship with the British Crown. When Bengal was partitioned on 16 October 1905 by Lord Curzon, Meghalaya became a part of the new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam. When the partition was reversed in 1912, Meghalaya became a part of the province of Assam. On 3 January 1921 in pursuance of Section 52A of the Government of India Act of 1919, the governor-general-in-council declared the areas now in Meghalaya, other than the Khasi states, as "backward tracts." Subsequently, the British administration enacted the Government of India Act 1935, which regrouped the backward tracts into two categories: "excluded" and "partially excluded" areas. At the time of Indian independence in 1947, present-day Meghalaya constituted two districts of Assam and enjoyed limited autonomy within the state of Assam. A movement for a separate hill state began in 1960. On 11 September 1968, the Government of India announced a scheme for constituting an autonomous state within the state of Assam comprising certain areas specified in Part A of the table appended to paragraph 20 of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution. Accordingly, the Assam Reorganisation (Meghalaya) Act of 1969 was enacted for the formation of an autonomous state. Meghalaya was formed by carving out two districts from the state of Assam: the United Khasi Hills and Jaintia Hills, and the Garo Hills. The name 'Meghalaya' coined by geographer S.P. Chatterjee in 1936 was proposed and accepted for the new state. The Act came into effect on 2 April 1970, with the autonomous state having a 37-member legislature in accordance with the Sixth Schedule to the Indian constitution. In 1971, the Parliament passed the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act, 1971, which conferred full statehood on the autonomous state of Meghalaya. Meghalaya attained statehood on 21 January 1972, with a Legislative Assembly of its own.

Geography Meghalaya is one of the Seven Sister States of northeast India. The state of Meghalaya is mountainous, with stretches of valley and highland plateaus, and it is geologically rich. It consists mainly of Archean rock formations. These rock formations contain rich deposits of valuable minerals like coal, limestone, uranium and sillimanite. The name Meghalaya was given by Shiba P. Chatterjee, a geography professor at the University of Calcutta.

Meghalaya has many rivers. Most of these are rainfed and seasonal. The important rivers in the Garo Hills region are Ganol, Daring, Sanda, Bandra, Bugai, Dareng, Simsang, Nitai and the Bhupai. In the central and eastern sections of the plateau, the important rivers are Khri, Umtrew, Digaru, Umiam or Barapani, Kynshi (Jadukata), Umngi, Mawpa, Umiam Khwan, Umngot, Umkhen, Myntdu and Myntang. In the southern Khasi Hills region, these rivers have created deep gorges and several waterfalls.

The elevation of the plateau ranges between 150 m (490 ft) to 1,961 m (6,434 ft). The central part of the plateau comprising the Khasi Hills has the highest elevations, followed by the eastern section comprising the Jaintia Hills region. The highest point in Meghalaya is Shillong Peak, which is a prominent IAF station in the Khasi Hills overlooking the city of Shillong. It has an altitude of 1961 m. The Garo Hills region in the western section of the plateau is nearly plain. The highest point in the Garo Hills is Nokrek Peak with an altitude of 1515 m.

Climate With the average annual rainfall as high as 12,000 mm (470 in) in some areas, Meghalaya is the wettest place on Earth. The western part of the plateau, comprising the Garo Hills region with lower elevations, experiences high temperatures for most of the year. The Shillong area, with the highest elevations, experiences generally low temperatures. The maximum temperature in this region rarely goes beyond 28 C (82 F), whereas sub-zero winter temperatures are common.

The town of Cherrapunji in the Khasi Hills south of capital Shillong holds the world record for most rain in a calendar month, while the village of Mawsynram, near Cherrapunji, holds the record for the most rain in a year.

Flora and fauna About 70% of the state is forested, of which 9,496 km² (3,666 sq mi) is dense primary subtropical forest. The Meghalayan forests are considered to be among the richest botanical habitats of Asia. These forests receive abundant rainfall and support a vast variety of floral and faunal biodiversity. A small portion of the forest area in Meghalaya is under what are known as "sacred groves" (see Sacred groves of India). These are small pockets of an ancient forest that have been preserved by the communities for hundreds of years due to religious and cultural beliefs. These forests are reserved for religious rituals and generally remain protected from any exploitation. These sacred groves harbour many rare plant and animal species. The Nokrek Biosphere Reserve in the West Garo Hills and the Balpakram National Park in the South Garo Hills are considered to be the most biodiversity-rich sites in Meghalaya. In addition, Meghalaya has three wildlife sanctuaries. These are the Nongkhylliem Wildlife Sanctuary, the Siju Sanctuary, and the Baghmara Sanctuary, which is also the home of the insect-eating pitcher plant *Nepenthes khasiana* also called "Me'mang Koksi" in the Garo language. Due to diverse climatic and topographic conditions, Meghalaya forests support a vast floral diversity, including a large variety of parasites, epiphytes, succulent plants and shrubs. Two of the most important tree varieties are *Shorea robusta* (sal tree) and *Tectona grandis* (teak). Meghalaya is also the home to a large variety of fruits, vegetables, spices, and medicinal plants. Meghalaya is also famous for its large variety of orchids - nearly 325 of them. Of these, the largest variety is found in the Mawsmat, Mawmluh and Sohrarim forests in the Khasi hills.

Meghalaya also has a large variety of mammals, birds, reptiles and insects. The important mammal species include elephants, bear, red pandas, small Indian civets, mongooses, weasels, rodents, gaur, wild buffalo, deer, wild boar and a number of primates. Meghalaya also has a large variety of bats. The limestone caves in Meghalaya such as the Siju Cave are home to some of the nation's rarest bat species. The hoolock gibbon is found in all districts of Meghalaya. Common reptiles in Meghalaya are lizards, crocodiles and tortoises. Meghalaya also has a number of snakes including the python, copperhead, green tree racer, Indian cobra, king cobra, coral snake and vipers. Meghalaya's forests host 660 species of birds, many of which are endemic to Himalayan foothills, Tibet and Southeast Asia. Of the birds found in Meghalaya forests, 34 are on worldwide threatened species list and 9 are on the critically endangered list. Prominent birds spotted in Meghalaya include those from the families of Phasianidae, Anatidae, Podicipedidae, Ciconiidae, Threskiornithidae, Ardeidae, Pelecanidae, Phalacrocoracidae, Anhingidae, Falconidae, Accipitridae, Otidae, Rallidae, Heliornithidae, Gruidae, Turnicidae, Burhinidae, Charadriidae, Glareolidae, Scolopacidae, Jacanidae, Columbidae, Psittacidae, Cuculidae, Strigidae, Caprimulgidae, Apodidae, Alcedinidae, Bucerotidae, Ramphastidae, Picidae, Campephagidae, Dicuridae, Corvidae, Hirundinidae, Cisticolidae, Pycnonotidae, Sylviidae, Timaliidae, Sittidae, Sturnidae, Turdidae, Nectariniidae and Muscicapidae. Each of these families have many species. The great Indian hornbill is the largest bird in Meghalaya. Other regional birds found include the grey peacock pheasant, the large Indian parakeet and the common green pigeon. Meghalaya is also home to over 250 species of butterflies, nearly a quarter of all butterfly species found in India. In 2020, scientists have discovered the largest known subterranean fish in Meghalaya's Jaintia Hills. Byrnihat has been ranked 38th best "National Clean Air City" under (Category 3 population under 3 lakhs cities) in India. In 2025, The World Air Quality Report 2024 by Swiss air quality technology company IQAir ranked Byrnihat as the most polluted city in the world.

Demographics Population Tribal people make up the majority of Meghalaya's population. The Khasis are the largest group, followed by the Garos then the Jaintias. These were among those known to the British as "hill tribes." Other groups include the Bengali, Hajongs, the Biates, the Koches and related Rajbongshis, the Boros,

Dimasas, Kuki, Lakhar, Tiwa (Lalung), Karbi, Rabha and Nepali. Meghalaya recorded the highest decennial population growth of 27.82% among all the seven north-eastern states, as per the provisional report of census 2011. The population of Meghalaya as of 2011 has been estimated at 2,964,007 of which females constitute 1,492,668 and males 1,471,339. As per the census of India 2011, the sex ratio in the state was 986 females per 1,000 males which was far higher than the national average of 940. The urban female sex ratio of 985 was higher than the rural sex ratio of 972.

Religion Meghalaya is one of three states in India to have a Christian majority. About 75% of the population practices Christianity, with Catholics, Presbyterians, Baptists, and Church of God the more common denominations. The religion of the people in Meghalaya is closely related to their ethnicity. Close to 90% of the Garo and nearly 80% of the Khasi are Christian, while more than 97% of the Hajong, 98.53% of the Koch, and 94.60% of the Rabha tribes are Hindus. A minority of Garo and Khasi are also Hindus mainly because of the influence of Hindu populations in Hindu majority villages. Hindus are the largest religious minority in Meghalaya with 11.52% of the total state's population as of 2011 census. Hindus are concentrated mainly in West Garo Hills, East Khasi Hills and Ri-Bhoi with 19.11 per cent, 17.55 per cent and 11.96 per cent respectively. The Nartiang Durga Temple is a major Hindu temple in Meghalaya and it is one of the 51 Shakta pithas on Earth. Indigenous Faiths is followed by 8.7% of population. The indigenous faiths of Meghalaya are Niamtre, followed by Jaintia people, Niam Khasi and Niam Tynrai, followed by Khasi tribe and Songsarek followed by the Garo people. Muslims constitute 4.39% of the population and are concentrated mainly in West Garo Hills, where they make up 16.60% of the population. Conversion from indigenous to Christianity began in the 19th century during the British colonial era. In the 1830s, American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society had become active in Northeast India to convert indigenous tribes to Christianity. Later, they were offered to expand and reach into Cherrapunji Meghalaya, but they declined out of the lack of resources. Taking up the offer, the Welsh Presbyterian Mission began work at the Cherrapunji mission field. By the early 1900s, other Protestant denominations of Christianity were active in Meghalaya. The outbreak of World Wars forced the preachers to return home to Europe and America. It is during this period that Catholicism took root in Meghalaya and neighbouring regions. In the 20th century, Union Christian College started operations at Umiam, Shillong. Currently, Presbyterians and Catholics are two most common Christian denominations found in Meghalaya.

Languages English is the official language of the state. The most spoken languages in Meghalaya are Khasi (33.82%) and Garo (31.60%) followed by Pnar (10.69%), Bengali (6.44%), Nepali (1.85%), War (1.73%), Hindi (1.62%), Hajong (1.40%) and Assamese (1.34%). Khasi (also spelled Khasia, Khassee, Cossyah, and Kyi) is a branch of the Mon-Khmer family of the Austroasiatic stock and according to 2001 census, Khasi is spoken by about 1,128,575 people residing in Meghalaya. Many words in the Khasi language have been borrowed from Indo-Aryan languages such as Assamese, Bengali and Nepali. Moreover, the Khasi language originally had no script of its own. The Khasi language is one of the very few surviving Mon-Khmer languages in India today. The Garo language has a close affinity with the Bodo languages, a small family of Tibeto-Burman languages. Garo, spoken by the majority of the population, is spoken in many dialects such as Abeng or Ambeng, Atong, Akawe (or Awe), Matchi Dual, Chibok, Chisak Megam or Lyngngam, Ruga, Gara-Ganching and Matabeng. Pnar is spoken by many people of both the West and East Jaintia Hills. The language is related to the Khasi language. Apart from the main languages, various local dialect are being spoken by the War Jaintia (West Jaintia Hills), Maram and Lyngngam (West Khasi Hills), War Pynursla (East Khasi Hills), Tiwa language by Tiwa peoples of Ri-Bhoi district. Another example is the Biate language spoken by many people inhabiting the south-eastern part of Meghalaya bordering Assam. Indo-Aryan languages like Assamese, Bengali, Hajong, Hindi and Nepali are spoken by many people residing mostly in the East Khasi Hills district and the West Garo Hills district. English is spoken as a common language across the diverse ethnic and demographic groups. In urban centres most of the people can speak English; rural residents vary in their ability.

Districts Meghalaya currently has 12 districts. Jaintia Hills Division:

West Jaintia Hills (Jowai) East Jaintia Hills (Khliehriat) Khasi Hills Division:

East Khasi Hills (Shillong) West Khasi Hills (Nongstoin) South West Khasi Hills (Mawkyrwat) Ri-Bhoi (Nongpoh) Eastern West Khasi Hills (Mairang) Garo Hills Division:

North Garo Hills (Resubelpara) East Garo Hills (Williamnagar) South Garo Hills (Baghmara) West Garo Hills (Tura) South West Garo Hills (Ampati) The Jaintia Hills district was created on 22 February 1972. It has a total geographical area of 3,819 square kilometres (1,475 sq mi) and a population of 295,692 as per the 2001 census. The district headquarters is in Jowai. Jaintia Hills district is the largest producer of coal in the state. Coal mines can be seen all over the district. Limestone production in the state is increasing, as there is high demand from cement industries. Recently, the one big district was divided into two: West Jaintia Hills and East Jaintia Hills. The East Khasi Hills district was carved out of the Khasi Hills on 28 October 1976. The district has covered an area of 2,748 square kilometres (1,061 sq mi) and has a population of 660,923 as per the 2001 census. The headquarters of East Khasi Hills is located in Shillong. The Ri-Bhoi district was formed by the further division of East Khasi Hills district on 4 June 1992. It has an area of 2,448 square kilometres (945 sq mi). The total population of the district was 192,795 in the 2001 census. The district headquarters is at Nongpoh. It has a hilly terrain, and a large part of the area is covered with forests. The Ri-Bhoi district is known for its pineapples and is the largest producer of pineapples in the state. The West Khasi Hills district is the largest district in the state with a geographical area of 5,247 square kilometres (2,026 sq mi). The district was carved out of Khasi Hills District on 28 October 1976. The district headquarters are located at Nongstoin. The East Garo Hills district was formed in 1976 and has a population of 247,555 as per the 2001 census. It covers an area of 2,603 square kilometres (1,005 sq mi). The District Headquarters are at Williamnagar, earlier known as Simsangiri. Nongalbibra, a town in this district, has many coal mines. The coal is transported to Goalpara and Jogighopa via NH62. The West Garo Hills district lies in the western part of the state and covers a geographical area of 3,714 square kilometres (1,434 sq mi). The population of the district is 515,813 as per the 2001 census. The district headquarters are located at Tura. The South Garo Hills district came into existence on 18 June 1992 after the division of the West Garo Hills district. The total geographical area of the district is 1,850 square kilometres (710 sq mi). As per the 2001 census the district has a population of 99,100. The district headquarters are at Baghmara. In 2012, there were 11 districts, 16 towns and an estimated 6,026 villages in Meghalaya. A 12th district, Eastern West Khasi Hills, was created in 2021. The table below shows the human development index of various districts of Meghalaya, as of 2021.

Education Meghalaya schools are run by the state government or by private organisations, including religious institutions. Instruction is only in English. Other Indian languages like Assamese, Bengali, Garo, Hindi, Khasi, Mizo, Nepali and Urdu are taught as optional subjects. The secondary schools are affiliated with the council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE), the Central Board for Secondary Education (CBSE), the National Institute of Open School (NIOS) or the Meghalaya Board of School Education. Under the 10+2+3 plan, after completing secondary school, students typically enroll for two years in a junior college, also known as pre-university, or in schools with a higher secondary facility affiliated with the Meghalaya Board of School Education or any central board. Students choose from one of three streams: liberal arts, commerce or science. Upon completing the required coursework, students may enroll in general or professional degree programs.

Colleges Universities Government and politics Meghalaya's Governor is C. H. Vijayashankar since July 2024.

State government The Meghalaya Legislative Assembly has 60 members at present. Meghalaya has two representatives in the Lok Sabha, one each from Shillong and Tura. It also has one representative in the Rajya Sabha. Since the creation of the state the Gauhati High Court has jurisdiction in Meghalaya. A Circuit Bench of the Guwahati High Court has been functioning at Shillong since 1974. In March 2013, the Meghalaya High Court was separated from the Gauhati High Court and now the state has its own High Court.

Local self-government To provide local self-governance machinery to the rural population of the country, provisions were made in the Constitution of India; accordingly, the Panchayati Raj institutions were set up. Because of distinct customs and traditions prevalent in the northeast region, it was felt necessary to have a separate political and administrative structure in the region. Some of the tribal communities in the region had their own traditional political systems, and it was felt that Panchayati Raj institutions may come into conflict with these traditional systems. The Sixth Schedule was appended to the Constitution on the recommendations of a subcommittee formed under the leadership of Gopinath Bordoloi, and the constitution of Autonomous District Councils is provided in certain rural areas of the northeast including areas in Meghalaya. The ADCs in Meghalaya are the following:

Garo Hills Autonomous District Council Khasi Hills Autonomous District Council Jaintia Hills Autonomous District Council

Economy Meghalaya is predominantly an agrarian economy. Agriculture and allied activities engage nearly two-thirds of the total workforce in Meghalaya. This sector's contribution to the state's NSDP is about one-third. Agriculture in the state is characterised by low productivity and unsustainable farm practices. Despite the large percentage of the population engaged in agriculture, the state imports food from other Indian states. Infrastructural constraints have also prevented the economy of the state from creating high-income jobs at a pace commensurate with that of the rest of India. Meghalaya's gross state domestic product for 2012 was estimated at ₹16,173 crore (US\$1.9 billion) in current prices. As of 2012, according to the Reserve Bank of India, about 12% of total state population is below the poverty line, with 12.5% of the rural Meghalaya population is below the poverty line; while in urban areas, 9.3% are below the poverty line.

Agriculture Meghalaya is basically an agricultural state with about 80% of its population depending entirely on agriculture for their livelihood. Nearly 10% of the geographical area of Meghalaya is under cultivation. Agriculture in the state is characterised by limited use of modern techniques, low yields, and low productivity. As a result, despite the vast majority of the population being engaged in agriculture, the contribution of agricultural production to the state's GDP is low, and most of the population engaged in agriculture remain poor. A portion of the cultivated area is under the traditional shifting agriculture known locally as jhum. Meghalaya produced 230,000 tonnes of food grains in 2001. Rice is the dominant food grain crop accounting for over 80% of the food grain production in the state. Other important food grain crops are maize, wheat, and a few other cereals and pulses. Besides these, potato, ginger, turmeric, black pepper, areca nut, Bay leaf (Cinnamomum tamala), betel, short-staple cotton, jute, mesta, mustard and rapeseed etc. are some of the important cash crops. Besides the major food crops of rice and maize, the state is renowned for its horticultural crops like orange, lemon, pineapple, guava, litchi, banana, jack fruits and fruits such as plum, pear, and peach.

Grains and staples production covers about 60% of the land area dedicated to crops. With the introduction of different crops of high yielding varieties in the mid-1970s, a remarkable increase in food grain production has been made. A major breakthrough was achieved when high yielding varieties of paddy such as Masuri, Pankaj IR 8, RCPL and other improved varieties series - especially IR 36 which is suitable for Rabi season - allowing three crops to be grown every year. Another milestone was reached when Megha I and Megha II, which are cold tolerant rice varieties developed by the ICAR North East Region at Umroi near Shillong, was released in 1991-92 for the higher altitude regions where there was no high yielding rice varieties earlier. Today the state can claim that about 42% area under paddy has been covered with high yielding varieties with the average productivity of 2,300 kg/ha (2,100 lb/acre). As is the case with maize and wheat where the productivity has increased tremendously with the introduction of HYV from 534 kg/ha (476 lb/acre) during 1971-72 to 1,218 kg/ha (1,087 lb/acre) of maize and from 611 kg/ha (545 lb/acre) to 1,490 kg/ha (1,330 lb/acre) of wheat. Oilseeds such as rapeseed, mustard, linseed, soybean, castor, and sesame are grown on nearly 100 km² (39 sq mi). Rape and mustard are the most important oilseeds accounting for well over two-thirds of the oilseed production of nearly 6.5 thousand tonnes. Fiber crops such as cotton, jute, and mesta are among the only cash crops in Meghalaya, grown in Garo Hills. These have been losing popularity in recent years as indicated by their declining yield and area under cultivation. Climatic conditions in Meghalaya permit a large variety of horticulture crops including fruits, vegetables, flowers, spices, mushrooms, and medicinal plants. These are considered to be higher value crops, but home food security concerns have prevented farmers at large from embracing them. The important fruits grown include citrus fruits, pineapples, papayas, and bananas. In addition to this, a large variety of vegetables are grown in the state, including cauliflower, cabbages, and radishes. Areca nut plantations can be seen all over the state, especially around the road from Guwahati to Shillong. Other plantation crops like tea, coffee and cashews have been introduced lately and are becoming common. A large variety of spices, flowers, medicinal plants and mushrooms are grown in the state.

Industry Meghalaya has a rich base of natural resources. These include minerals such as coal, limestone, sillimanite, Kaolin and granite among others. Meghalaya has a large forest cover, rich biodiversity, and numerous water bodies. The low level of industrialisation and the relatively poor infrastructure base acts as an impediment to the exploitation of these natural resources in the interest of the state's economy. In recent years two large cement manufacturing plants with production capacity more than 900 MTD have come up in Jaintia Hills district and several more are in pipeline to use the rich deposit of very high-quality limestone available in this district.

Electricity infrastructure Meghalaya, with its high mountains, deep gorges, and abundant rains has a large, unused hydroelectric potential. The assessed generation capacity exceeds 3000 MW. The current installed capacity in the state is 185 MW, but the state itself consumes 610 MW. In other words, it imports electricity. The economic growth of the state suggests rising demand for electricity. The state has the potential to export net hydroelectric-generated electricity and earn income for its internal development plans. The state also has large deposits of coal, thus being a candidate for thermal power plants. Several projects are under works. The proposed Garo Hills thermal project at Nangalibira is expected to generate an additional 751 MW of power. There is a proposal for setting up a 250 MW thermal power plant in West Khasi Hills. The State Government aims to increase its power generation output by about 2000-2500 MW, of which 700-980 MW will be thermal based while 1400-1520 MW will be hydroelectricity. The State Government has outlined a cost-shared public-private partnership model to accelerate private sector investments in its power sector. The generation transmission, transformation and distribution of electricity is entrusted to the Meghalaya Energy Corporation Limited which was constituted under the Electricity Supply Act, 1948. At present, there are five hydel power stations and one mini hydel including Umiyam Hydel Project, Umtrew Hydel Project, Myntdu-Leshka-I Hydel Project, and the Sunapani Micro Hydel (SESU) Project. For the 12th five-year plan of India, there is a proposal

to set up more hydel power projects in the state: Kynshi (450 MW), Umngi –1 (54 MW), Umiam-Umtru -V (36 MW), Ganol (25 MW), Mawphu (120 MW), Nongkolait (120 MW), Nongnaw (50 MW), Rangmaw (65 MW), Umngot (260 MW), Umduna (57 MW), Myntdu-Leshka-II (60 MW), Selim (170 MW) and Mawblei (140 MW). Of these, Jaypee Group has committed itself to building the Kynshi and Umngot projects in Khasi hills.

Education infrastructure Meghalaya had a literacy rate of 62.56 as per the 2001 census and is the 27th most literate state in India. This increased to 75.5 in 2011. As of 2006, the state had 5851 primary schools, 1759 middle schools, and 655 higher secondary schools respectively. In 2008, 518,000 students were enrolled in its primary schools, and 232,000 in upper primary schools. The state monitors its school for quality, access, infrastructure and teachers training. Institution for higher studies like Indian Institute of Management, the University of Technology and Management (USTM) which is in Shillong is the first Indian university to introduce cloud computing engineering as a field of study, in collaboration with IBM and the University of Petroleum and Energy Studies. IIM Shillong is one of the top ranked management institutes in the country.

Health infrastructure The state has 13 state government dispensaries, 22 community health centres, 93 primary health centres, 408 sub-centres. There were 378 doctors, 81 pharmacists, 337 staff nurses and 77 lab technicians as of 2012. A special program has been launched by the state government for the treatment of tuberculosis, leprosy, cancer and mental diseases. Though there has been a steady decline in the death rate, improvement in life expectancy and an increase in health infrastructure, about 42.3% of the state's population is still uncovered by health care, according to the status paper prepared by the Health Department. There are numerous hospitals being set up, both private and government, some of them are Civil Hospital, Ganesh Das Hospital, K.J.P. Synod Hospital, NEIGRIHMS, North Eastern Institute of Ayurveda & Homoeopathy (NEIAH), R P Chest Hospital, Wood Land Hospital, Nazareth Hospital, Christian Hospital etc.

Urban areas Municipalities: Shillong, Tura, Jowai Municipal boards: Williamnagar, Resubelpara, Baghmara Cantonment board: Shillong Cantonment (Umroi) Town committees: Nongstoin, Nongpoh, Mairang Census towns: Mawlai, Madanrtng, Nongthymmai, Nongmynsong, Pynthorumkhrah, Cherrapunji, Pynursla Minor towns: Khliehriat, Mawkyrwat, Ampati Areas under Shillong Urban Agglomeration: Shillong, Shillong Cantonment/Umroi, Mawlai, Madanrtng, Nongthymmai, Nongmynsong, Pynthorumkhrah

New proposal for urban areas Municipal corporations: Shillong (including Shillong Cantonment/Umroi, Mawlai, Madanrtng, Nongthymmai, Nongmynsong, Pynthorumkhrah) Municipalities: Tura, Jowai, Williamnagar Municipal boards: Resubelpara, Baghmara, Nongstoin, Nongpoh, Mairang, Khliehriat, Mawkyrwat, Ampati, Cherrapunji Town committees: Pynursla

Culture and society The main tribes in Meghalaya are the Khasis, the Garos, and the Jaintias. Each tribe has its own culture, traditions, dress and language.

Social institutions The majority of the population and the major tribal groups in Meghalaya follow a matrilineal system where lineage and inheritance are traced through women. The youngest daughter inherits all the property and she is the caretaker of aged parents and any unmarried siblings. In some cases, such as when there is no daughter in the family or other reasons, the parents may nominate another girl such as a daughter in law as the heir of the house and all other property they may own. The Khasi and Jaintia tribesmen follow the traditional matrilineal norm, wherein the Khun Khatduh (or the youngest daughter) inherits all the property and responsibilities for the family. The male line, particularly the mother's brother, may indirectly control the

ancestral property since he may be involved in important decisions relating to property including its sale and disposal. In case a family has no daughters, the Khasi and Jaintia (also called Syntengs) have the custom of *ia rap iing*, where the family adopts a girl from another family, perform religious ceremonies with the community, and she then becomes *ka trai iing* (head of the house). In the Garo lineage system, the youngest daughter inherits the family property by default, unless another daughter is so named by the parents. She then becomes designated as *nokna* meaning 'for the house or home'. If there are no daughters, a chosen daughter-in-law (*bohari*) or an adopted child (*deragata*) comes to stay in the house and inherit the property. This adopted girl child is then the head of the house. Meghalaya has one of the world's last surviving matrilineal cultures.

Civil society Meghalaya's civil society considers the people of the state as a collective community that exists through civil society organisations (CSOs), and serves the general interests of the public. These organisations include a wide spectrum of non-government organisations (NGOs), other community associations, and foundations. The current status of Meghalaya's civil society and the effectiveness of the many programs is debated by scholars. There are currently over 181 NGOs within Meghalaya that vary from charities to volunteer services and social empowerment groups. Most civil society organisations are also ethnically affiliated as the interests of different groups are championed between each organisation. This in turn causes them to become representatives of ethnic communities around the state since the same individuals from such communities also participate in corresponding organisations that protect their ethnic interests. Three student organisations that represent the major ethnic groups of Meghalaya: Khasi Students' Union (KSU), Jaintia Students' Union (JSU), and Garo Students' Union (GSU) embody this example into their overall functions as CSOs by applying pressure to local government in order to ensure that certain rights are being met. There also exists many forms of community associations that revolve around the idea of community building. This includes examples such as sports, religious, educational, and other clubs that aim to establish individuals into different social circles based on their interests. Philanthropic foundations in Meghalaya's civil society strive for the overall well-being of its citizens. The Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI) has recently partnered with the government of Meghalaya to improve public health in many rural parts of the state by first strengthening the abilities of non-government organisations to perform such services. Scholars are divided on the effectiveness Meghalaya's civil society. Some argue for its important role in state development through CSOs, while others point out that their impact is not only limited from above by the central government and its military, but also from below by insurgent groups. Concerns over national security, such as the unification of neighbouring hostile countries and local insurgent groups for a possible attack on the Indian state, has served as the longstanding point of emphasis on how the Indian Central Government operates in the Northeast. Different administrative programs have been created to establish peace and stability in this region through economic development. The Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) that was passed in 1958 by the Indian Government granted the Indian Army exclusive powers to maintain order in this area. Many insurgent organisations were also developed alongside cultural and political movements, making it very difficult to distinguish them from what constitutes a civil society. These two factors have combined to enable CSOs to be easily deemed as insurgencies and grouped with other insurgent organisations that were banned by the government, thus restricting Meghalaya's civil society as a whole.

Traditional political institutions All the three major ethnic tribal groups, namely, the Khasis, Jaintias and the Garos also have their own traditional political institutions that have existed for hundreds of years. These political institutions were fairly well developed and functioned at various tiers, such as the village level, clan level, and state level. In the traditional political system of the Khasis, each clan has its own council known as the *Dorbar Kur* which is presided over by the clan headman. The council or the *Dorbar* managed the internal affairs of the clan. Similarly, every village has a local assembly known as the *Dorbar Shnong*, i.e. village *Durbar* or council, which is presided over by the village headman. The inter-village issues were dealt with through a political unit

comprising adjacent Khasi Villages. The local political units are known as the raids, under by the supreme political authority is known as the Syiemship. The Syiemship is the congregation of several raids and is headed an elected chief known as the Syiem or Siem (the king). The Siem rules the Khasi state through an elected State Assembly, known as the Durbar Hima. The Siem also has his mantris (ministers) whose counsel he would use in exercising executive responsibilities. Taxes were called pynsuk, and tolls were called khrong, the latter being the primary source of state income. In the early 20th century, Raja Dakhor Singh was the Siem of Khyimir.

The Jaintias also have a three-tier political system somewhat similar to the Khasis, including the Raids and the Syiem. The raids are headed by Dolois, who are responsible for performing the executive and ceremonial functions at the Raid level. At the lowest level are the village headmen. Each administrative tier has its own elected councils or durbars. In the traditional political system of the Garos, a group of Garo villages form the Aking. The Aking functions under the supervision of the Nokmas, which is perhaps the only political and administrative authority in the political institution of the Garos. The Nokma performs both judicial and legislative functions. The Nokmas also congregates to address inter-Aking issues. There are no well-organised councils or durbars among the Garos.

Festivals Christmas Being a Christian majority state, Christmas is one of the biggest festivals of Meghalaya, celebrated in almost all of the parts of the state-villages, towns with great fervour and enthusiasm by native Christian Tribes. The entire state comes alive with Christmas trees, carols and lights during 25 December. Shillong and Cherrapunji are best destination for tourists who want to see and celebrate Christmas.

Khasis Dance is central to the culture of Khasi life, and a part of the rites of passage. Dances are performed in Shnong (village), a Raid (group of villages), and a Hima (conglomeration of Raids). Some festivals includes Ka Shad Suk Mynsiem, Ka Pom-Blang Nongkrem, Ka-Shad Shyngwiang-Thangiap, Ka-Shad-Kynjoh Khaskain, Ka Bam Khana Shnong, Umsan Nongkharai, Shad Beh Sier.

Jaintias Festivals of the Jaintia Hills, like others, is integral to the culture of people of Jaintia Hills. It celebrates nature, balance and solidarity among its people. Festivals of Jaintias includes Behdienkhlam, Laho Dance, Sowing Ritual Ceremony.

Garos For Garos, festivals sustain their cultural heritage. They were often dedicated to religious events, nature and seasons as well as community events such as stages of jhum cultivation. The main festivals of Garos are Den Bilsia, Wangala, Rongchu gala, Mi Amua, Mangona, Grengdik BaA, Jamang Sia, Ja Megapa, Sa Sat Ra Chaka, Ajeaor Ahaoea, Dore Rata Dance, Chambil Mesara, Do'KruSua, Saram Cha'A, A Se Mania or Tata.

Hajongs Hajongs celebrate traditional festivals and Hindu festivals. The entire plain belt of Garo Hills is inhabited by the Hajongs, they are an agrarian tribe. Major traditional festivals include Pusne', Biswe', Kati Gasa, Bastu Puje' and Chor Maga.

Biates The Biates had many kinds of festivals, including Nlding Kt, Pamchar Kt, Lebang Kt and Favang Kt, for different occasions. They no longer practise or observe most, except Nlding Kt ("renewal of life") every January, with singing, dancing and traditional games. A priest (thiampu) prays to Chung Pathian to bless Biates in every sphere of life.

Spirituality In southern Meghalaya, located in Mawsynram, is the Mawjymbuin cave. Here a massive stalagmite has been shaped by nature into a Shivalinga. According to legend, from the 13th century, this Shivalinga (called Hatakeswarat) has existed in the Jaintia Hills under the reign of Ranee Singa. Tens of thousands of the Jaintia tribe members participate over the Hindu festival of Shivratri (Night of Lord Shiva) every year.

Living root bridges The practice of creating living root bridges can be found in Meghalaya. Here, functional, living, architecture is created by slowly training the aerial roots of the *Ficus elastica* (rubber tree). Examples of these structures can be found as far west as the valley east of Mawsynram, and as far east as the East Jaintia Hills District, meaning that they are made by both Khasis and Jaintias. Large numbers of these man-made living structures exist in the mountainous terrain along the southern border of the Shillong Plateau, though as a cultural practice they are fading, with many individual examples having disappeared recently, either falling in landslides or floods or being replaced with more standard steel bridges.

Transport The partition of the country in 1947 created severe infrastructural constraints for the Northeastern region, with merely 2% of the perimeter of the region adjoining the rest of the country. A narrow strip of land often called the Siliguri Corridor or the Chicken's Neck, connects the region with the state of West Bengal. Meghalaya is a landlocked state with many small settlements in remote areas. The road is the only means of transport. While the capital Shillong is relatively well connected, road connectivity in most other parts is relatively poor. A significant portion of the roads in the state is still unpaved. Most of the arrivals into the Meghalaya take place through Guwahati in neighbouring Assam, which is nearly 103 km away. Assam has a major railhead as well as an airport with regular train and air services to the rest of the country. When Meghalaya was carved out of Assam as an autonomous state in 1972, it inherited a total road length of 2786.68 km including 174 km of National Highways with road density of 12.42 km per 100 square kilometre. By 2004, total road length has reached up to 9,350 km out of which 5,857 km were surfaced. The road density had increased to 41.69 km per 100 square kilometre by March 2011. Meghalaya is far below the national average of 75 km per 100 km². To provide better services to the people of the state, the Meghalaya Public Works Department is taking steps for improvement and up-gradation of the existing roads and bridges in phased manner.

Road network Meghalaya has a road network of around 7,633 km, out of which 3,691 km is black-topped and the remaining 3942 km is gravelled. Meghalaya is also connected to Silchar in Assam, Aizawl in Mizoram, and Agartala in Tripura through national highways. Many private buses and taxi operators carry passengers from Guwahati to Shillong. The journey takes from 3 to 4 hours. Day and night bus services are available from Shillong to all major towns of Meghalaya and also other capitals and important towns of Assam and the northeastern states.

Railway Meghalaya has a railhead at Mendipathar and regular train service connecting Mendipathar in Meghalaya and Guwahati in Assam, has started on 30 November 2014. The Cherra Companyganj State Railways was a former mountain railway through the state. Guwahati (103 kilometres (64 mi) from Shillong) is the nearest major railway station connecting the north-east region with the rest of the country through a broad gauge track network. There is a plan for extending the rail link from Guwahati to Byrnihat (20 kilometres (12 mi) from Guwahati) within Meghalaya and further extending it up to state capital Shillong.

Aviation State capital Shillong has an airport at Umroi 30 kilometres (19 mi) from Shillong on the Guwahati-Shillong highway. A new terminal building was built at a cost of ₹30 crore (US\$3.5 million) and

inaugurated in June 2011. Air India Regional operates flights to Kolkata from this airport. There is also a helicopter service connecting Shillong to Guwahati and Tura. Baljek Airport near Tura became operational in 2008. The Airports Authority of India (AAI) is developing the airport for operation of ATR 42/ATR 72 type of aircraft. Other nearby airports are in Assam, with Borjhar, Guwahati airport (IATA: GAU), about 124 kilometres (77 mi) from Shillong.

Tourism Until 1955, foreign tourists required special permits to enter the areas that now constitute the state of Meghalaya, which is sometimes compared to Scotland for its highlands, fog and scenery. Meghalaya has some of the thickest primary forests in the country and therefore constitutes one of the most important ecotourism circuits in India. The Meghalaya subtropical forests support a vast variety of flora and fauna. The state has two national parks and three wildlife sanctuaries. Meghalaya also offers many adventure tourism opportunities in the form of mountaineering, rock climbing, trekking, and hiking, caving (spelunking) and water sports. The state offers several trekking routes, some of which also afford an opportunity to encounter rare animals. The Umiam Lake has a water sports complex with facilities such as rowboats, paddleboats, sailing boats, cruise-boats, water-scooters, and speedboats. Cherrapunji is a tourist destination in north-east India. It lies to the south of the capital Shillong. A rather scenic 50-kilometre long road connects Cherrapunji with Shillong. Living root bridges are also a tourist draw, with many examples located near Cherrapunji. The Double-Decker root bridge, along with several others, is found in the village of Nongriat, which is tourist friendly. Many other root bridges can be found nearby, in the villages of Nongthymmai, Mynteng, and Tynrong. Other areas with root bridges include Riwai village, near the tourist village of Mawlynnong, Pynursla, especially the villages of Rangthyllaing and Mawkyrnot, and the area around Dawki, in the West Jaintia Hills district, where there are many living root bridges scattered throughout the nearby villages.

Waterfalls and rivers

The most visited waterfalls in the state include the Elephant Falls, Shadthum Falls, Weinia Falls, Bishop Falls, Nohkalikai Falls, Langshiang Falls and Sweet Falls. The hot springs at Jakrem near Mawsynram are believed to have curative and medicinal properties. Nongkhnun Island located in the West Khasi Hills district is the biggest river island in Meghalaya and the second biggest in Asia. It is 14 kilometres from Nongstoin. The island is formed by the bifurcation of Kynshi River into the Phanliang River and the Namliang River. Adjacent to the sandy beach the Phanliang River forms a lake. The river then moves along and before reaching a deep gorge, forms a waterfall about 60 meters high called Shadthum Fall.

Sacred groves Meghalaya is also known for its "sacred groves". They are small or large areas of forests or natural vegetation that are usually dedicated to local folk deities or tree spirits or some religious symbolism over many generations, often since ancient times. These spaces are found all over India, are protected by local communities, and in some cases, the locals would neither touch leaves or fruits or in other ways damage the forest, flora or fauna taking refuge in them. This guardianship creates a sacred area where nature and wildlife thrive. The Mawphlang sacred forest, also known as "Law Lyngdoh," is one of the most famous sacred forests in Meghalaya. It's located about 25 kilometres from Shillong. It's a scenic nature destination, and one can find the sacred Rudraksha tree here.

Rural areas Meghalaya rural life and villages offer a glimpse in northeast mountain life. The Mawlynnong village located near the India-Bangladesh border is one such village. It has been featured by travel magazine Discover India. The village is geared for tourism and has a Living Root Bridges, hiking trails and rock formations.

Lakes Meghalaya also has many natural and manmade lakes. The Uiam Lake (popularly known as Bara Pani meaning Big water) on the Guwahati-Shillong road is a major tourism attraction for tourist. Meghalaya has several parks; Thangkharang Park, the Eco-park, the Botanical Garden and Lady Hydari Park to name a few. Dawki, which is located at about 96 Kilometres from Shillong is the gateway to Bangladesh and affords a scenic view of some of the tallest mountain ranges in Meghalaya and the Bangladesh borderlands. Thadlaskein Lake also Pung Sajar Nangli is the only historical Lake of Meghalaya. It is located besides National Highway 6 by the side of a small village called Mukhla village which falls under West Jaintia Hills district Jowai. It is about 35 mile from the city of Shillong Balpakram National Park with its pristine habitat and scenery is a major attraction. The Nokrek National Park, also in Garo Hills has its own charm with a lot of wildlife.

Caves Meghalaya has an estimated 500 natural limestone and sandstone caves spread over the entire state including most of the longest and deepest caves in the sub-continent. Krem Liat Prah is the longest cave, and Synrang Pamiang is the deepest cave. Both are located in the Jaintia Hills. Cavers from the United Kingdom, Germany, Austria, Ireland, and the United States have been visiting Meghalaya for over a decade exploring these caves. Few have been developed or promoted adequately as major tourist destinations.

Living root bridges Meghalaya is famous for its living root bridges, a kind of suspension bridge made over rivers using intertwined roots of *Ficus elastica* trees planted on opposite banks of the river or hill slopes. These bridges can be seen around Cherrapunji, Nongtalang, Kudeng Rim and Kudeng Thymmai villages (War Jaintia). A double-decker bridge exists in Nongriat village.

Other important places of tourism interest Meghalaya include:

Jakrem: 64 km from Shillong, a potential health resort having gushing hot-spring of sulphur water, believed to have curative medicinal properties. Ranikor: 140 km from Shillong, is one of Meghalaya's most popular spots for angling, with an abundance of carp and other freshwater fish. Dawki: 96 km from Shillong, is a border town, where one can have a glimpse of the neighbouring country of Bangladesh. The colourful annual boat race during spring at the Umngot river is an added attraction. Kshaid Dain Thlen Falls: Located near Cherrapunji, meaning the falls where the mythical monster of Khasi legend was finally butchered. The axe-marks made on the rocks where Thlen was butchered are still intact and visible. Diengiei Peak: Located to the west of the Shillong plateau, Diengiei Peak is just 200 feet lower than Shillong peak. On the top of Diengiei, there is a huge hollow, shaped like a cup, believed to be the crater of an extinct pre-historic volcano. Dwarksuid: A scenic pool with wide, rocky sandbanks located on a stream alongside the Umroi-Bhoilymbong Road is known as Dwarksuid or Devil's doorway. Kyllang Rock: Located about 11 kilometres off Mairang, is a several million years old steep dome of red granite rising to an elevation of about 5400 feet above sea level. Sacred Forest Mawphlang: One of the most celebrated sacred-groves of the State is the grove at Mawphlang about 25 kilometres off Shillong. Preserved since time immemorial, these sacred groves have wide range of flora, thick cushion of humus on the grounds accumulated over the centuries, and trees heavily loaded with epiphytic growth of aroids, pipers, ferns, fern-allies and orchids.

Major issues The significant issues in the state include illegal migrants from Bangladesh, incidences of violence, political instability and deforestation from traditional cut-and-burn shift farming practices. There are several clashes between Khasi people and Bangladeshi in Meghalaya.

Illegal immigration Illegal immigration has become a major issue in Indian states that surround Bangladesh - West Bengal to the west, Meghalaya and Assam to the north, and Tripura, Mizoram, and Manipur to the east. Dozens of political and civic groups have demanded that this migration be stopped or controlled to manageable levels. The border between Meghalaya and Bangladesh is about 440 kilometres long, of which some 350 is fenced; but the border is not continuously patrolled and is porous. Efforts are underway to fence it completely and introduce means to issue ID cards. Chief Minister Mukul Sangma, in August 2012, called upon Government of India to take corrective measures to stop the illegal immigration of Bangladeshis into the northeast of the country before the situation goes out of hand.

Violence Between 2006 and 2013, between 0 and 28 civilians have died per year in Meghalaya (or about 0 to 1 per 100,000 people), which the state authorities have classified as terror-related intentional violence. The world's average annual death rate from intentional violence, in recent years, has been 7.9 per 100,000 people. The terror-related deaths are from conflicts primarily between different tribal groups and against migrants from Bangladesh. Along with political resolution and dialogue, various Christian organisations have taken the initiative to prevent violence and help the process of discussion between groups. There have been repeated clashes with Assam e.g. Mukroh.

Political instability The state has had 23 state governments since its inception in 1972, with a median life span of less than 18 months. Only three governments have survived more than three years. Political instability has affected the state's economy in the past. Over recent years, there has been increasing political stability. The last state assembly elections were held in 2013, after a five-year government that was elected in 2008.

Jhum farming Jhum farming, or cut-and-burn shift cultivation, is an ancient practice in Meghalaya. It is culturally engrained through folklores. One legend states the god of wind with the god of hail and storm shook off seeds from the celestial tree, which were picked up and sown by a bird known as do' amik. These were the seeds of rice. The god gave the human beings some of those celestial seeds, provided instruction on shift agriculture and proper rice cultivation practice, with the demand that at every harvest a portion of the first harvest must be dedicated to him. Another folktale is from the Garo Hills of Meghalaya where a man named Bone-Neripa-Jane-Nitepa harvested rice and millet from a patch of land he cleared and cultivated near the rock named misi-Kokdok. He then shared this knowledge with others, and named the different months of the year, each of which is a stage of shifting cultivation. In modern times, shift cultivation is a significant threat to the biodiversity of Meghalaya. A 2001 satellite imaging study showed that shift cultivation practice continues and patches of primary dense forests are lost even from areas protected as biosphere. Jhum farming is a threat not only for natural biodiversity, it is also a low yield unproductive method of agriculture. It is a significant issue in Meghalaya, given majority of its people rely on agriculture to make a living. Shift farming is a practice that is not unique to northeastern Indian states such as Meghalaya, but the issue is found throughout southeast Asia.

Media Some major media outlets in the state are:

Meghalaya Times: Meghalaya Times is one of the new entrants in the market and the fastest growing English newspaper in the state. In a short period of time, it has already established large readership across the state. **Salantini Janera:** Salantini Janera is the first Garo language Daily of the state **Shillong Samay:** Shillong Samay is the first Hindi Daily of the State. **Shillong Times:** Shillong Times is one of the oldest English newspapers of the region. **The Meghalaya Guardian:** The Meghalaya Guardian is one of the oldest newspapers of the state. Over the years there have been several weeklies and Dailies that have come up. To name a few:

The Tura Times: The Tura Times is the first English Daily which is published out from Tura. Salantini Ku'rang: Salantini Ku'rang is the Garo edition of The Tura Times, Pringprangni Aski being the most recent Garo language newspaper to circulate. U Nongsai Hima: U Nongsai Hima is the oldest circulating Khasi newspaper in Meghalaya. Established in December 1960, it is now the highest circulated Khasi daily (ABC July - December 2013). 'Mawphor': It is one of the daily newspaper circulating in Jowai, Meghalaya. Weekly Employment Newsletter which is distributed throughout the state:

Shillong Weekly Express: Weekly Newsletter that was started in 2010. Eclectic northeast

References Bibliography External links

Official website Geographic data related to Meghalaya at OpenStreetMap

Mizoram

Mizoram is a state in northeastern India, with Aizawl as its capital and largest city. It shares 722-kilometres (449 miles) of international borders with Bangladesh to the west, and Myanmar to the east and south, with domestic borders with the Indian states of Assam, Manipur, and Tripura. It covers an area of 21,081 square kilometres (8,139 sq mi). Via satellite data forests cover 84.53% of Mizoram's area, making it the fourth most heavily forested state in India. With an estimated population of 1.26 million in 2023, it is the second least populated state in India. With an urbanisation rate of 51.5% it is the most urbanised state in northeast India, ranking fifth in urbanisation nationwide. One of the two official languages and most widely spoken tongue is Mizo, which serves as a lingua franca among various ethnic communities who speak a variety of other Tibeto-Burman or Indo-Aryan languages. Mizoram is home to the highest percentage of scheduled tribes in India, with the Mizo people forming the majority. Early civilisations in Mizoram are believed to have thrived since around 600 BC, with significant archaeological evidence uncovered in the Vangchhia region. Following this, Tibeto-Burman-speaking peoples gradually migrated from the Chin Hills in present-day Myanmar. These groups formed organised chiefdoms and adopted jhum agricultural practices. By the 18th century, various clans in the region united to form the Mizo identity, becoming the dominant inhabitants of the area, introducing the Mizo language, culture, and the Sakhua religion. In the mid-19th century, the British conducted a series of military expeditions to assert control over the region, Mizoram was annexed by the British in 1895 and incorporated into the Assam Province. Under British rule, the introduction of administrative reforms and the spread of Christianity significantly impacted Mizo society. After India gained independence in 1947, Mizoram remained part of Assam as the Lushai Hills District. After the Assamese Government's negligence of the Mizos during the famine, insurgency was led by the Mizo National Front in the 1960s which culminated in the signing of the Mizoram Peace Accord in 1986. On 20 February 1987, Mizoram was granted full statehood, becoming the 23rd state of India. Mizoram is predominantly Christian, with about 87% of the population practising Christianity, mainly Protestant denominations such as Presbyterian and Baptist. It is one of the three states of India with a Christian majority (87%). Other religions such as Buddhism (8.51%), Hinduism (2.75%), and Islam (1.35%) are also practised in the state. Mizoram's population is predominantly made up of Mizo or Zo tribes, comprising about 83.4% of the state's population, with other significant communities including the Chakma (8.5%) and Tripuri (3%). Due to the prolonged civil conflict in Myanmar, Mizoram has also seen an influx of Burmese communities, especially from the Chin ethnic group, which has sought refuge in the region. Mizoram is a highly literate agrarian economy. Slash-and-burn farming, also known as jhum, is the most common form of farming in the state. In recent years, the jhum farming practices have been steadily replaced with a significant horticulture and bamboo products industry. Mizoram's estimated gross state domestic product for 2025 was estimated at ₹36,089 crore (US\$4.3 billion). About 20% of Mizoram's population lives below the poverty line, with 35% rural poverty as of 2014. The state has about 871 kilometres of national highways, with NH-54 and NH-150 connecting it to Assam and Manipur respectively. It is also a growing transit point for trade with Myanmar and Bangladesh.

Etymology and names The name Mizoram is derived from two Mizo words: Mizo and ram. Mizo refers to the native inhabitants of the region, with Mi meaning "human" or "civilian" and Zo holding varied interpretations. Some suggest Zo signifies "highland" or "remote," drawing parallels to Willem van Schendel's concept of Zomia. Others associate it with the feeling of "cool" or "crisp," evoking the climate of the high-altitude region. The term Mizo has evolved into a broad ethnic classification, encompassing various subgroups and clans inhabiting the area, historically known as the Lushai Hills. Many speakers of Central Kuki-Chin languages have also adopted the Mizo identity while others have not. The second component, ram, means "land" or "forest". Together,

Mizoram translates to "land of the Mizos" or simply "Mizo land." The Lushais were known as the Ka Lin Kaw or the Kalinko (Burmese: ကလိန့်ကော) by the pre-modern Burmans, though detailed etymological studies specific to this name are limited. According to Lalthangliana, the term Mizo is believed to have originated from an early settlement in present-day Mizoram. When Chief Lallula established the Chiefdom of Zopui ('big town of the Zo') in the 1750s, he gained a formidable reputation through successful raids against the Chins and the consolidation of his power. It is suggested that the term Mizo emerged as a way for the inhabitants of Zopui to distinguish themselves as descendants of this settlement under Chief Lallula. The widespread adoption of Mizo gained momentum by the 1961 census, with over 96% of the population identifying under the term. This surge in popularity is attributed to political developments, particularly the efforts of the Mizo Union. Founded to unify various tribes of the Lushai Hills, the Mizo Union played a pivotal role in redefining regional identity. In 1954, the organisation successfully advocated for renaming the Lushai Hills District as the Mizo District, further solidifying the term Mizo as a collective identity. Before gaining statehood in 1987, the region was historically had been known as the Lushai Hills District from British colonial rule and for the first 40 years of Indian independence. The term Lushai is an anglicised form of Lusei, one of the prominent clans among the Mizo people. Then, the new state government of Mizoram replaced the old name with Mizoram to reflect the broader identity of the Mizo community.

History Prehistory (600 BC) The prehistory and early history of Mizoram are marked by the presence of ancient human settlements, with evidence suggesting that people inhabited the region as early as 2,000 to 3,000 years ago. The archaeological evidence from the Vangchhia site has provided insights into the region's ancient past, with human remains, ornaments, pottery, and burial practices dating back to 600 BC and extending up to AD 1750. Excavations at Vangchhia revealed a sophisticated culture with distinct socio-political structures of the Indo-Lushai cultural genus. This necropolis is considered one of the largest in the world. Similar megalithic stones have been discovered in nearby villages like Farkawn, Lianpui, Khankawn, Khawbung, and Vaphai, suggesting a widespread culture. In addition, remnants of small, man-made cave dwellings, topped with towering menhirs, were found at the hilltop village of Dungtlang. These large stones, taller than an average grown man, raise intriguing questions about their purpose, the people who erected them, and how these massive boulders were transported up steep mountain slopes from the valley below, possibly the region's only apparent stone quarry. A unique discovery at Vangchhia is the Pipute Lamlian (lit. 'grandparents' big path'), or "Ancestors' Pathway," which is a footpath that traverses the site and branches out in three directions-north, south, and east. The path is lined with rocks engraved with images of bison heads, flowers, and human figures, reminiscent of carvings found at Kawtchhuah Ropui. This suggests that the region's ancient societies developed their own unique cultural practices, separate from other civilisations, with trade connections extending across the region, including Bangladesh, Mainland India, and Myanmar. Among the most significant findings is a 200-metre long water pavilion, a stone structure resembling those found in Mughal cities. This water pavilion, likely used as a recreational arena, is surrounded by an elevated platform, suggesting its role in entertainment and social gatherings. The discovery of such a feature points to the possibility of a much larger, lost civilisation, and further excavation is essential to draw definitive conclusions about the site's full historical significance.

Arrival of the Mizos (1500s) The Mizos, part of the Tibeto-Burman linguistic group, are believed to have embarked on this southward journey between the 16th and 18th centuries, originating from areas in present-day China and Myanmar. The Chhinlung legend, cherished in Mizo folklore, speaks of an ancestral homeland, often associated with a location near the Yalong River in China. Linguistic and anthropological evidence suggests that the Mizos passed migrated from the Chindwin and Irrawaddy River regions before the 8th century AD through the Shan State of Myanmar, the Kabaw Valley, settled in the Chin Hills, then the Lusei tribe first crossed the ■iau river to settle in the Lushai Hills by the 1500s. Following the Luseis, the Hmar,

Thado, Pawi, Sukte, Mara, and other subgroups occupied different regions of Mizoram by the 1700s.

The people living in the Lushai Hills were generally referred to as the Cucis or Kukis by their neighbouring ethnic groups which was also a term adopted by the British writers. The claim that 'The Kukis are the earliest known residents of the Mizo hills area,' must be read in this light.

Chieftainship (1500s-1954) Historically, Mizo chiefdoms were primarily subsistence-based, practising slash-and-burn, locally called jhum cultivation, but they also engaged in trade due to their proximity to ancient trade routes linking Yunnan to the Bay of Bengal. Chiefs often demanded tributes from neighbouring kingdoms in the plains and established a barter system within their chiefdoms. Larger transactions relied on the mithun (tame bison) as a unit of wealth and compensation, while elephant tusks served as an alternative currency. Mizo chiefs also employed karbari or "men of business", who acted as intermediaries between the chiefs and foreign traders. Skilled in jungle navigation and multiple languages, such as Bengali, the karbari facilitated trade, particularly in South Lushai Hills. The forests of Mizoram provided valuable resources such as elephant hides and bones, which were highly sought after by merchants from Sylhet during the Mughal Empire. Elephant hides were used for shields in local infantry and cavalry, while the bones were crafted into luxury items and sword parts. Chiefs maintained a rudimentary system for measuring and sorting goods like rice, using specially shaped buckets. The first Mizo chief was Zahmuaka in the 16th century. The Zawlbuk system was established during the chieftainship era as a cornerstone of Mizo society, blending governance, defence, and cultural education. Originating as a dormitory for young men, it was situated at the village entrance to serve as both a sentinel hub and a training ground. Chiefs and elders implemented the Zawlbuk to prepare the youth for communal responsibilities, teaching them skills in warfare, agriculture, and social customs. This system fostered unity, discipline, and loyalty, ensuring that the village thrived under the collective effort and vigilance of its people.

Selesih Confederation (1700s) The migration of the Lusei tribe from the neighbouring region, prompted by conflicts with the Chins (or "Poi" in Mizo), led to the establishment of this significant site. Around 1720, the tribe, under the leadership of chief Sailova's sons, Chungnunga and Lianlula, created a refuge in Selesih, forming a confederation of seven chiefs to defend their land. This confederation brought together a diverse range of tribes from the region, including the five major tribes and twelve minor tribes, creating a peaceful coexistence among them. The settlement, with a population estimated to be between 50,000 and 100,000, housed approximately 7,000 homes, making it one of the most prosperous and populous settlements in ancient Mizoram. The Selesih Confederation began to decline in the late 18th century, mainly due to socio-political and environmental factors. One of the primary reasons for its fall was the unsustainable agricultural practices, particularly shifting cultivation (ghum), which required regular migration to maintain fertile land. It is now located between South Khawbung and Zawlsei villages in Champhai district.

Rise of Lallula and the Sailo clan (1750s) Lallula inherited the Confederation of Selesih. By the early 1750s, Selesih was home to multiple subtribes that had banded together to withstand the Zahau and Hakha, the ruling tribes of the Chins who regularly demanded tribute from the Lusei. Determined to free his people from this burden, Lallula devised a plan to end Zahau domination. He invited their chief, Thanchhuma, along with three hundred Zahau warriors, elders, and youth, under the pretense of a great feast. For three days, Lallula provided his guests with rice, zu (local rice beer), and meat, ensuring they felt welcome and unsuspecting. On the third night, while the Zahau slept, Lallula and his warriors ambushed them in a massacre known as "Thlanrawn Rawt". Thanchhuma and another leader, Cherkuanga, were captured, while their champion fighter, Thanghlianga, barely escaped to report the disaster. The victory was decisive-Lallula had broken the Zahau's

hold over the Lusei, freeing them from the annual tribute system and establishing himself as the dominant power in the region. Since his rule, the Lusei have used the Duhlian dialect as a common language and is the lingua franca of all Mizoram ethnicities till today.

Lal Sawi Following the conclusion of the East-West War in the late 1880s the nature of chieftainship became unpopular among the Mizo populace. In the Eastern Lushai Hills, the village of Chief Lalkhuma plotted an uprising. The villagers pledged unity in their pursuit of ending their oppression. The villagers bloodlessly rounded up their chief and his councillors and made them under duress take a burnt piece of firewood to submerge into a basin of water and declare their chieftainship to be extinguished. The uprising spread throughout the Lushai Hills. The sons of Chief Vuta were affected first, followed by the southern Haulong chiefs under the influence of Bengkhuaia and the western chiefs who were sons of Suakpuilala. Some villages succeeded in abolishing chieftainship completely, while others forced their leaders to reform their regime or equity towards their subjects. However, the movement began to decline as villages without chiefs could not remain unified in the diverse tribes that were cohabiting together. Disputes over tribal legitimacy for leadership led to a dilemma, which encouraged the deposed chief to be reinstated. Chief Lianphunga with Lalhluma was tasked with putting down the rebellion in the village of Hmawngkawn. When threatened to keep away from the barricade, Lalhluma declared his name and lineage of Lallula and stepped inside. Two shots were fired which both missed him. As a result the village surrendered and the chief was reinstated. The news of Hmawngkawn further encouraged the return of the chiefs. The chiefs sought to punish the ringleaders but were unable to succeed on account of the beginning of the Chin-Lushai Expedition by the British to annex the Lushai Hills.

British Lushai Hills (1898-1947) Following the conclusion of the First Anglo-Burmese War, the British solidified their presence in Assam and Bengal, bringing them closer to the Lushai Hills. The first Anglo-Lushai skirmishes occurred after the Lushai Expedition in 1870-71 prompted by the Lushai kidnapping of a British tea owner's daughter, Mary Winchester during a major raid in Alexandrapur. Various Lushai chiefs invaded Chittagong, Cachar, Tripura, Sylhet, and Manipur between the end of 1870 and the beginning of 1871. These were attributed to Vanhnuaiana, Lalbura, Bengkhuaia and Savunga. After the British retaliated, the region remained peaceful until 1888 when chiefs resumed raiding British enterprises and settlements, which saw the Chin-Lushai Expedition of 1889-90. British historical records on the Mizo Hills state that similar inter-ethnic tribal raids continued for decades after the First British Invasion. Such raids would be to seek out loot, slaves, or retaliation for earlier lost battles. The southern region of the Lushai Hills was occupied first in 1889 and was part of the Bengal Presidency. Its capitals were Fort Treagor (1889-1892) and Lung Leh (1892-1898). Then, North Lushai Hills was occupied in 1891 and was part of the Assam Province. In 1898, both regions merged into the Lushai Hills of Assam Province, with Aijal as the capital. At the time of the British conquest, there were around 60 chiefs.

The annexation of the Lushai Hills saw resistance from the chiefs across separate periods between 1890-1895. A western Lushai Rising was led by Khalkam in 1890. An Eastern Lushai Rising was led by Lalbura in 1892. The southern chiefs such as Ropuiliani and Zakapa were also subdued. The Zahau chief Nikuala was also captured and imprisoned by the British. Other chiefs opted for cooperation such as chieftainess Darbilhi who helped set up Fort Tregear.

World War I During World War I, few Lushais initially enlisted, but social pressures and benefits like tax exemptions and travel opportunities boosted recruitment. By April 1917, 2100 Lushai men joined the 27th Indian Labour Corps, serving in France, Mesopotamia, and other regions. They faced challenges such as disease and casualties, with 71 deaths recorded. Exposure to foreign cultures influenced modernisation,

introducing European styles and French culinary elements. Returning veterans joined Indian military units, and a memorial was built in Aijal to honour those who served.

First political movements Organised political movements in the Lushai Hills began in 1925 under Telela Ralte, seeking representation in the Assam administration. Supported by Chawngbawia, a schoolteacher, and Khasi leader J.J.M. Nichols Roy, the group advocated for administrative change but faced suppression, with arrests by the superintendent N.E. Parry halting progress until after World War II. Concurrently, the Inner Line Regulation was amended to restrict external influence, preserving cultural and land integrity while ensuring British dominion boundaries. During Superintendent Anthony Gilchrist McCall's administration (1933-1943), significant initiatives such as Ten Point Code promoted cultural preservation and modernisation, while the Village Welfare System addressed public health and living conditions, managed by Red Cross committees. McCall also supported Lushai Hills Cottage Industries privately and established the Chief's Durbar to coordinate chiefs to prepare the Lushai Hills for self-governance and align them with British administrative policies. Later, the rise of education and inspiration from the Young Men's Buddhist Association in Burma led to the formation of the Young Lushai Association (YLA) in 1935, a cultural organisation initially composed of chiefs' sons but eventually dominated by commoners. The YLA opposed Lushai chieftainship, shaping the ideology of future political leaders like Vanlawma. McCall's progressive policies complemented the YLA's cultural influence, which transitioned to political activism with the founding of the Mizo Union.

World War II In April 1942, during the Japanese occupation of Burma, Superintendent Anthony Gilchrist McCall of the Lushai Hills implemented the Total Defence Scheme (TDS) to counter the threat of Japanese invasion. He secured the loyalty of 300 tribal chiefs to the British Crown and prepared for asymmetrical warfare, including guerrilla tactics, scorched earth measures, and strategic ambushes. Despite McCall's recall in 1943, the TDS, aided by Australian trainers like Colonel Parsons, successfully defended the region, contributing to the Japanese retreat from India's borderlands by late 1944.

Pre-independence The Mizo Union, while largely supporting union with India, faced internal divisions as a right-wing faction emerged, favouring alternatives like Prof. Coupland's Crown Colony Scheme, which proposed a unified British colony for Zo-Kuki-Chin areas. This faction later formed the United Mizo Freedom Organization (UMFO) under Burmese Mizo influence, led by Burmese ex-military officer Lalbiakthanga and Lalmawia Khiangte. Known as Zalen Pawl ("Party of the Privileged"), the UMFO struggled to gain significant support, failing to counteract the Mizo Union's push for integration with India.

Post-independence On 15 August 1947, India celebrated its Independence Day, but in the Lushai Hills District, no Indian flags were hoisted. This was due to strong opposition from rival factions of the Mizo Union (MU), which resisted recognising Mizoram's accession to the Indian Union. Later, the Mizo Union (MU) and United Mizo Freedom Organisation (UMFO) emerged as political rivals, with the UMFO losing support after Mizoram joined India. The MU opposed chieftainship, while Superintendent L.L. Peters supported the chiefs, leading to a civil disobedience movement in 1948. Protests intensified, with the Mizo Union demanding Peters' removal, resulting in mass arrests and crackdowns until Assam's government mediated and replaced Peters in 1949 with Satyen Barkataki. Barkataki would be the first Indian superintendent of the district and would establish the Aizawl-Lungleh road via voluntary labour which would be covered widely in Indian newspapers. The Lushai Hills District gained autonomy in 1951, and by 1954, the institution of chieftainship was abolished, ending the chiefs' customary rights in exchange for compensation. On the same year, the district was renamed as the Mizo District. The 1959 Mautam famine devastated the region, killing over a hundred people, which led to the formation of the Mizo National Famine Front, later evolving into the Mizo National Front (MNF), which

spearheaded Mizoram's separatist movement.

1966 uprising On 1 March 1966, the Mizo National Front (MNF), led by Laldenga, declared independence from India, marking the beginning of the Mizo Uprising. The movement had been brewing for years, fuelled by grievances such as the 1959 Mautam famine and perceived neglect by the Assam government. Mizo leaders, having gained external support and arms from East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), meticulously planned a coordinated attack on government installations across the Mizo District. The MNF launched Operation Jericho, a surprise offensive targeting Assam Rifles posts, the Aizawl treasury, and key administrative buildings. By dawn, MNF forces had seized control of Aizawl, Lunglei, Champhai, and other towns, effectively cutting off Indian government authority. In their declaration of independence, they appealed to the United Nations for recognition and sought support from neighbouring countries, such as China, United States, Japan, France, Indonesia and the United Kingdom. However, none of the countries the MNF appealed via their embassies and consuls helped them.

The Indian government, caught off guard, responded with unprecedented military force, including the first and only aerial bombing of its own territory, targeting Aizawl on 5 March 1966. The Indian Air Force used Toofani and Hunter fighter jets to strafe and bomb rebel positions, forcing thousands of Mizos to flee into forests. The overwhelming military retaliation quickly regained control of Aizawl, and MNF forces retreated into the hills, continuing a guerrilla insurgency for the next two decades. The rebellion resulted in widespread displacement, with the government implementing village regrouping policies to weaken MNF influence. Despite the failure of the initial uprising, the MNF remained active, operating from bases in East Pakistan and Burma, eventually leading to peace negotiations in the 1980s.

Union Territory (1972-1987) Following years of unrest and insurgency, Mizoram was granted Union Territory status on 21 January 1972, separating it from Assam. This move was part of a larger reorganisation in India's Northeast, which also saw the creation of Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh. Although this provided Mizos with greater autonomy, it fell short of full statehood, and the Mizo National Front (MNF) continued its armed struggle for complete independence. However, in 1973, the Indian central government expelled foreign missionaries, which unintentionally led to a revival of indigenous Mizo culture. One of the most notable revivals was Chapchar Kut, a traditional Mizo new harvest year festival that had faded under Christian influence. In 1973, the first Chief Minister C. Chhunga, wearing traditional Mizo attire, officially inaugurated the festival's return. While Chapchar Kut was revived, it underwent Christianization, with zu (rice beer) omitted and new elements like dance formations inspired by David's Star introduced. After years of diplomatic efforts, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and MNF leader Laldenga signed the Mizoram Peace Accord on 30 June 1986. This historic agreement ended two decades of insurgency, with MNF leaders agreeing to disarm and join mainstream politics. As part of the accord, Mizoram was granted full statehood on 20 February 1987, becoming India's 23rd state. Laldenga became the first Chief Minister of the State of Mizoram, and the state was given two seats in the Parliament, one each in the Lok Sabha and in the Rajya Sabha, marking the beginning of a peaceful and democratic era.

Geography Mizoram is a landlocked state in North East India whose southern part shares 722 kilometres long international borders with Myanmar and Bangladesh, and northern part share domestic borders with Manipur, Assam and Tripura. It is the fifth smallest state of India with 21,087 km² (8,142 sq mi). It extends from 2156'N to 2431'N latitudes, and 9216'E to 9326'E longitudes. The tropic of cancer runs through the state nearly at its middle. The maximum north-south distance is 285 km, while maximum east-west stretch is 115 km. Mizoram is a land of rolling hills, valleys, rivers and lakes. As many as 21 major hill ranges or peaks of different heights run

through the length and breadth of the state, with plains scattered here and there. The average height of the hills to the west of the state is about 1,000 metres (3,300 ft). Phawngpui Tlang also known as the Blue Mountain, situated in the southeastern part of the state, is the highest peak in Mizoram at 2,210 metres (7,250 ft). The state is hilly and mountainous with various slope percentages. Low slopes are used for wet rice cultivation, slightly higher slopes in the 8-20% range function for terraced cultivation. Medium slopes from 20-50% are used for horticulture, and high-end slopes above 50% are used for forestry. The largest valley in the state is located in Champhai with 1,356.5 hectares (3,352 acres) and an elevation of 1,300 metres (4,300 ft). About 76% of the state is covered by forests, 8% is fallows land, 3% is barren and considered uncultivable area, while cultivable and sown area constitutes the rest. Slash-and-burn or jhum cultivation, though discouraged, remains in practice in Mizoram and affects its topography. A report by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change in 2021 states that Mizoram has the highest forest cover as a percentage of its geographical area of any Indian state, being 84.53% forest.

Mizoram terrain is, according to the Geological Survey of India, an immature topography, and the physiographic expression consists of several almost north-south longitudinal valleys containing series of small and flat hummocks, mostly anticlinal, parallel to sub-parallel hill ranges and narrow adjoining synclinal valleys with series of topographic highs. The general geology of western Mizoram consists of repetitive succession of Neogene sedimentary rocks of the Surma Group and Tipam Formation such as sandstone, siltstone, mudstone and rare pockets of shell limestone. The eastern part is the Barail Group. Mizoram lies in seismic zone V, according to the India Meteorological Department; as with other northeastern states of India, this means the state has the highest risk of earthquakes relative to other parts of India. The risk of the seismic zone combined with diversity in geology, geomorphology, rapid urban growth and monsoon seasons has also made it significantly at risk of landslides. The Mizoram government classified 5 landslide hazard zones as a result. Aizawl is ranked first in landslide frequency followed by Lunglei. The biggest river by water volume in Mizoram is the Chhimtuipui (Kaladan) river. It originates in Chin state near Vanum village in Burma at an altitude of 2,325 metres (7,628 ft). It enters Mizoram via Sabawngte village (Saiha) and flows north to the Lawngtlai in the southern tip of Mizoram and forms the international boundary before merging back to the Tiau river flowing opposite it. Although many more rivers and streams drain the hill ranges, the most important and useful rivers are the Tlawng, Tut, Tuirial and Tuivawl which flow through the northern territory and eventually join the Barak River in Cachar District. The rivers have a gentle drainage gradient, particularly in the south.

Climate Mizoram has a humid, subtropical climate with temperate to warm summers ranging from 20 to 30 C (68 to 86 F). Winters experience a cool and arid ambiance in a temperature range of 10 to 20 C (50 to 68 F). The region is influenced by monsoons, raining heavily from June to September which sustains high humidity and lush forestry. The climate pattern is moist tropical to moist sub-tropical, with average state rainfall 254 centimetres (100 in) per annum. In the capital Aizawl, rainfall is about 215 centimetres (85 in) and in Lunglei, another major centre, about 350 centimetres (140 in). The state is in a region where cyclones and landslides can cause weather-related emergencies. The rainy season is the longest and lasts for six months, starting with violent storms beginning in the Bay of Bengal which accompany hailstorms, thunderstorms and cyclones.

Soil The soil of Mizoram is young and consists of sedimentary formations. Generally, soils consist of properties of being loamy, deep, well-drained and acidic in reaction. Across the districts of Mizoram the soil is free of rocks with the exception of in the Southernmost areas. The consistency is considered satisfactory. Clay-like soil with poor drainage is typically found restricted to few valleys while loam is common on hills. Nutrition-wise, the soils are deficient due to high levels of forest cover, high rainfall and dense vegetation, leading to high organic carbon and nitrogen content. Phosphorus is also lacking up to as high as 40% of all soil due to the strong

acidity and presence of exchangeable aluminium. Nitrogen deficiency is restricted to the western and southern borders of the state while potassium is lacking in the western areas of the state.

Biodiversity Mizoram has the fourth highest total forest cover with 17,820 square kilometres (6,880 sq mi), with a percentage area of 84.53% of forest cover in the 2021 forestry report. Tropical semi-evergreen, tropical moist deciduous, subtropical broadleaved hill and subtropical pine forests are the most common vegetation types found in Mizoram. Bamboo is common in the state, typically intermixed with other forest vegetation; about 9,245 km² (44%) of the state's area is bamboo bearing. The state and central governments of India have cooperated to reserve and protect 67% of the land covered by forests, and additional 15% by management. Only 17% of the land is non-forested area for cultivation, industry, mining, housing and other commercial human activity. Satellite data suggests 91% of state's geographical area is covered by forests. Historically, Mizoram participated in jhum cultivation (shifting cultivation). During the 1970s and 80s, jhum cultivation decreased from 58,000 hectares (140,000 acres) to 40,000 hectares (99,000 acres) despite a population increase. In 1986, 70% of the total population participated in jhumming. In 1984, to deal with deforestation, the Mizoram government passed the New Land Use Policy (NULP). The act provided that all lands other than towns and land allotted for permanent cultivation would be classified as a natural and protected forest. Commercial felling became prohibited with exceptions for home consumption. Lands were leased to rural families to practice jhumming.

Mizoram is host to numerous species of birds, wildlife and flora. About 640 species of birds have been identified in the state, many of which are endemic to the Himalayan foothills and southeast Asia. Of the birds found in Mizoram forests, 27 are on the worldwide threatened species lists and eight are on the critically endangered list. Prominent birds spotted in Mizoram include those from the families of Phasianidae, Anatidae, Ciconiidae, Threskiornithidae, Ardeidae, Pelecanidae, Phalacrocoracidae, Falconidae, Accipitridae, Otididae, Rallidae, Heliornithidae, Turnicidae, Burhinidae, Charadriidae, Scolopacidae, Jacanidae, Laridae, Columbidae, Psittacidae, Cuculidae, Strigidae, Caprimulgidae, Apodidae, Alcedinidae, Meropidae, Bucerotidae, Ramphastidae, Picidae, Pittidae, Laniidae, Campephagidae, Dicruridae, Corvidae, Paridae, Hirundinidae, Cisticolidae, Pycnonotidae, Sylviidae, Timaliidae, Sittidae, Sturnidae, Turdidae, Dicaeidae, Chloropseidae, Ploceidae, Motacillidae, Fringillidae, Nectariniidae and Muscicapidae. The state is also host to a variety of fauna, just like its sister northeastern Indian states. Mammal species observed in the Mizoram forests include slow loris (*Nycticebus coucang*), red serow (*Capricornis rubidus*), which is the state animal, goral (*Nemorhaedus goral*), tiger (*Panthera tigris*), leopard (*Panthera pardus*), clouded leopard ("*Neofelis nebulosi*"), leopard cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*), Bengal fox (*Vulpes bengalensis*), and Asiatic black bear (*Ursus thibetanus*). Primates seen include stump-tailed macaque (*Macaca arctoides*), hoolock gibbon (*Hylobates hoolock*), Phayre's leaf monkey (*Trachypithecus phayrei*) and capped langur (*Trachypithecus pileatus*). The state is also home to many reptiles, amphibians, fish and invertebrates. The state has two national parks and six wildlife sanctuaries - Blue Mountain (Phawngpui) National Park, Dampa Tiger Reserve (largest), Lengtung Wildlife Sanctuary, Murlen National Park, Ngengpui Wildlife Sanctuary, Tawi Wildlife Sanctuary, Khawnglung Wildlife Sanctuary, and Thorangtlang Wildlife Sanctuary.

Demographics Mizoram has a population of 1,091,014 with 552,339 males and 538,675 females. This reflects a 22.8% growth since 2001 census; still, Mizoram is second least populated state of India. The sex ratio of the state is 976 females per thousand males, higher than the national ratio 940. The density of population is 52 persons per square kilometre. The literacy rate of Mizoram in 2011 was 91.58 per cent, higher than the national average 74.04 per cent, and second best among all the states of India. About 52% of Mizoram population lives in urban areas, much higher than India's average. Over one third of the population of Mizoram lives in Aizawl

district, which hosts the capital.

Largest cities or towns Ethnic groups The great majority of Mizoram's population consists of several ethnic tribes who are either culturally or linguistically linked. These ethnic groups are collectively known as Mizos (Mi means People, Zo meaning the name of a progenitor; Mizo thus is People of Zo origin). Sometime in the 16th century, the first batch of Mizo crossed Tiau River and settled in Mizoram and they were called as Kukis by Bengalis. The term Kuki mean the inhabitants of the interior and inaccessible mountain tracts. Sometimes grouped as Kuki-Chin tribes, The First batch were called Old Kukis, which are the Biate, Ranglong and the Hrangkhoh, and the second batch that followed include Lushei (or Lusei), Paite, Lai, Mara, Ralte, Hmar, Thadou, Shendus, and several other. The Bru (Reang), Chakma, Tanchangya are some non-Kuki tribes of Mizoram, with some suggestion that some of these are Indo-Aryan in their origins. The Bnei Menashe tribe claim Jewish descent. The diversity of tribal groups reflects the historical immigration patterns. Different tribes and sub-tribes arrived in the present Mizoram, in successive waves and settled down in different parts of the state. Further, as they arrived, there were raids, fear of raids and intertribal feuds. The resulting isolation and separation created numerous tribes and sub-tribes. Other than tribal groups, other ethnic groups inhabit Mizoram including Bengalis and Nepalis. Nepali Gorkhas, for example, were encouraged to settle in Aizawl area and other parts of Mizoram during the British colonial times. Thousands of their descendants are now residents of Mizoram.

Protected demographic category According to 2011 census, Mizoram had 1,036,115 people (nearly 95% of total) classified as Scheduled Tribe, the highest concentration of protected tribal people in all states of India. This demographic classification, given to Mizoram tribes since the 1950s, has provided reservations and extra resources in education and government job opportunities, a preferential treatment as a means to accelerate their integration with mainstream society.

Languages Mizo and English are the official languages of the state.

Religion The majority (87%) of Mizos are Christians in various denominations, predominantly Presbyterian. Mizoram has a significant Theravada Buddhist population of 8.5%, who are mainly Chakma people, making them the largest religious minority in the region, followed by Hindus at 2.7% according to the 2011 census. There are several thousand people, mostly ethnic Mizo, who have converted to Judaism claiming to be one of the lost Judaic tribe group Bnei Menashe, with descent from the biblical Manasseh.

Christianity The major Christian denomination is the Mizoram Presbyterian Church, which was established by the Welsh missionary David Evan Jones starting in 1894. By the time India gained independence from British Empire, some 80% of Lushei tribe people had converted to Christianity. The Mizoram Presbyterian Church is one of the constituted bodies of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of India at Shillong in Meghalaya; it became the dominant Christian group in north Mizoram hills. In the southern hills of Mizoram, the Baptist Church had the dominant following.

Buddhism According to 2011 census report, there are 93,411 people (8.51%) who follow Buddhism in Mizoram. The Chakmas and Tanchangya have been Buddhist for many centuries

Hinduism According to the 2011 census, there were 30,136 Hindus in Mizoram or about 2.75% of the population.

Others There are also a few Mizos who practice Judaism (866 according to the 2001 census) and a modernised traditional Mizo religion called Hnam sakhua, which places a special emphasis on Mizo culture and seeks to revive traditional Mizo values while opposing the influence of Christianity on Mizo people. A total of 1,367 people practised the Mizo religion according to the 2001 census. This number included, in addition to the original Mizo religion (755 people), adherents of other tribal religions such as Lalchhungkua (279), Lalhnam (122), and Nunna Lalchhungkua (211).

Politics Originally village land, locally called ram, was the property of the tribal chief. The institution of chieftainship began in the 16th century. Each village behaved like a small state, and the chief was called Lal. The rule was hereditary, and there were no written laws (the first script for Mizo language was developed by Christian Missionaries Lorraine and Savidge about 1895). After annexation by the British in the 1890s, the northern part of Mizoram was administered as the Lushai Hills district of Assam, while southern Mizoram was part of Bengal. In 1898, the southern part was transferred from Bengal to Assam. The colonial power retained the chiefs and Mizo customs, including the socially stratified hereditary transfer of political power. In 1937, under Section 6 of the Scheduled District Act, the British administration consolidated executive and legislative political power to the Deputy Commissioner and District magistrates, with village chiefs in advisory role. The political and judiciary powers of chiefs were neither final nor exclusive, thereafter. Rulings could be appealed to courts staffed with British officials. After India gained independence from the colonial rule, the region was granted autonomous status in 1952, where Mizo people formulated their own laws and delivered judicial decisions. The region was renamed as Mizo District within Assam State in April 1954 and in that year, the institution of hereditary chieftainship was abolished, and instead village courts/council were set up. The representatives of the Lushai Hills Autonomous District Council and the Mizo Union pleaded with the States Reorganisation Commission (SRC) to integrate the Mizo-dominated areas of Tripura and Manipur with the District Council in Assam. The tribal leaders in the northeast were unhappy with the final SRC recommendations and met in Aizawl in 1955 to form a new political party, Eastern India Tribal Union (EITU).

In the 1950s, the fears of Assamese hegemony and perceived lack of government concern led to growing discontent among the Mizos. The Mizos were particularly dissatisfied with the government's inadequate response to the 1959-60 mautam famine. The Mizo National Famine Front, a body formed for famine relief in 1959, later developed into a new political organisation, the Mizo National Front (MNF) in 1961. The Front sought sovereign independence for the Mizo territory, staging an armed insurrection with the 28 February 1966 uprising against the government. The revolt was suppressed by the government of India, which carried out airstrikes in Aizawl and surrounding areas. Assam state was split, re-organised into multiple political regions, Mizo hills area was declared Mizoram after the insurgency, and it received status as a Union Territory in 1972. A Peace Accord was signed between central government and insurgent groups of Mizoram on 30 June 1986. Per the accord, insurgents surrendered their arms and Mizoram became the 23rd state of India in 1986, formalised the following year. The first election of Mizoram Legislative Assembly was held on 16 February 1987. Elections have been held at 5-year intervals since then. Elections were held for 40 seats of legislative assembly on 28 November 2018. The voter turnout was 80%. The Mizo National Front led by Zoramthanga was elected to power. V. K. Singh is the governor of Mizoram since December 2024.

Administration The Mizoram State Legislative Assembly has 40 seats and the Village Councils are the grassroots of democracy and leadership in Mizoram. The state has a chief minister, council of ministers with a portfolio of ministries responsible for different priorities and role of the government. There are eleven districts in Mizoram. A district of Mizoram is headed by a Deputy Commissioner who is in charge of the administration in

that particular district. The Deputy Commissioner is the executive head of the district, responsible for implementing government regulations, the law and order situation in the district, as well as being responsible for tax collection for the government. A Superintendent of Police is responsible for the police administration of each district. The Capital city of Aizawl is managed by Aizawl Municipal Corporation and the Lunglei town is managed by Lunglei Municipal Council. The state has 3 autonomous district councils for ethnic minorities- Chakma Autonomous District Council, Lai Autonomous District Council and Mara Autonomous District Council. Additionally, the local body Sinlung Hills Council was formed for Hmar minority.

Economy Mizoram gross state domestic product (GSDP) in 2011-2012 was about ■69.91 billion (US\$830 million). The state's gross state domestic product (GSDP) growth rate was nearly 10% annually over 2001-2013 period. As of 2019, the states's provisional GSDP was expected to be ■251.4857 billion (US\$3.0 billion). With international borders with Bangladesh and Myanmar, it is an important trade state for southeast Asian imports to India, as well as exports from India. The biggest contributors to state's GSDP growth are agriculture, public administration, and construction work. Tertiary sector of service sector continued to have the contribution to the GSDP with its share hovering between 58% and 60% during the past decade. As of 2013, according to the Reserve Bank of India, 20.4% of the state population is below poverty line, about the same as the 21.9% average for India. Rural poverty is significantly higher in Mizoram, with 35.4% below the poverty line compared to India's rural poverty average of 25.7; while in urban areas of Mizoram, 6.4% are below the poverty line. Mizoram has a highly literate work force, with literacy rate of nearly 90% and widespread use of English. The state has a total of 4,300 kilometres of roads of which 927 kilometres are high quality national highways and 700 kilometres of state highways. The state is developing its Kolodyne River (Chhimtuipui lui) for navigation and international trade. Mizoram's airport is at the capital city of Aizawl. The state is a power deficit state, with plans to develop its hydroelectric potential. After agriculture, the major employer of its people include handloom and horticulture industries. Tourism is a growth industry. In 2008, the state had nearly 7,000 registered companies. The state government has been implementing special economic zones (SEZs) to encourage economic growth.

Agriculture Between 55% and 60% of the working population of the state is annually deployed on agriculture. The sector's contribution to the gross state domestic product was 30% in 1994, just 14% in 2009 due to economic growth of other sectors. Agriculture has traditionally been a subsistence profession in Mizoram. It is seen as a means for generate food for one's family, ignoring its potential for commerce, growth and prosperity. Rice remains the largest crop grown in Mizoram by gross value of output. Fruits have grown to become the second largest category, followed by condiments and spices.

Before 1947, agriculture in Mizoram predominantly used to be slash-and-burn driven Jhum cultivation. This was discouraged by the state government, and the practice has been slowly declining. A 2012 report estimates the proportion of shifting cultivation area in Mizoram to be about 30% - predominant part of which was for rice production (56% to 63% depending on the year). Despite dedicating largest amount of labour, jhum cultivated and non-jhum crop area to rice, the yields are low; Mizoram average rice yields per acre is about 70% of India's average rice yield per acre and 32% of India's best yield. Mizoram produces about 26% of rice it consumes every year, and it buys the deficit from other states of India. The crop area used for jhum cultivation rotates in Mizoram; that is, the area slashed and burnt for a crop is abandoned for a few years and then jhumias return to slash and burn the same plot after a few years of non-use. The primary reasons for cyclical jhum cultivation includes, according to Goswami et al.

In horticulture and floriculture, Mizoram is a significant producer and global exporter of Anthurium (over 7 million a year) and roses. It is also a significant producer and domestic supplier of banana, ginger, turmeric, passion

fruit, orange and chowchow. Mizoram has accomplished this horticulture success and exports in 2009, with just 6% of its cultivated land dedicated to horticulture and floriculture, indicating a large potential for further growth and economic integration with other Indian states as well export driven economy. In 2013, the area dedicated to horticulture and floriculture increased to 9.4% of 1.2 million hectares potential. The agricultural productivity is very low in Mizoram. The state gets a lot of rain, but its soil is porous and irrigation infrastructure very inadequate; this has affected its crop yield and reliability. The yield issue that can be addressed by building irrigation infrastructure and adoption of better crop technologies. The state also has very low consumption of fertiliser and pesticides, which scholars suggest offers an opportunity for organic farming particularly of vegetables and fruits.

Forestry, fisheries and sericulture Mizoram is one of the leading producers of bamboo in India, has 27 species of bamboo, and supplies 14% of India's commercial bamboo. Forest products contribute about 5% to the state's gross product. The state produces about 5,200 metric tonnes of fish a year, about 12% of potential that can be sustainably achieved. Sericulture is an important handicraft industry engaged by nearly 8,000 families in over 300 Mizo villages.

Industry Mizoram has two industrial estates at Zuangtui and Kolasib. Another software technology park is being established in Mizoram University campus. The state government has acquired 127 acres of land in Khawnuam for development of the Indo-Myanmar border trade township.

Energy infrastructure Mizoram is not self-sufficient in power. In 2012, the state had a demand for 107 MW of power, but had an effective installed capacity of only 29.35 MW. To bridge the gap, it purchased electricity from the national grid. The hydroelectric power potential of Mizoram was assessed to be about 3600 MW in 2010, and about 4500 MW in 2012. If even half of this is realised, the state could supply all its citizens and industry with 24/7 electricity, as well as earn income by selling surplus power to the national grid. The topography of Mizoram hydroelectric resources is ideal for power projects. The following rivers are suited for hydel projects with minimal impact on its biosphere - Tuivai, Tuivawl, Tlawng, Tut, Serlui, Tuirial, Kolodyne, Tuichang, Tuipui, Tiau and Mat. Beyond the major rivers, Mizoram has many small but perennial streams and rivulets with ideal condition for developing micro/mini and small hydroelectric projects. The state has proposed projects to attract private investments on Build, Own, Operate and Transfer (BOOT) basis with financial assistance in rehabilitating its citizens were they to be affected by the project. The largest proposed project is expected to be on Kolodyne (460 MW), and there are dozens of small to micro projects that have been identified. The main energy infrastructures in Mizoram are:

Tuirial Dam 60 MW. Serlui B Dam 12 MW. Vankal Solar Park 20 MW.

Transport infrastructure Road network: In 2012, Mizoram had a road network of around 8,500 kilometres (5,300 mi) including unsurfaced village roads to surfaced national highways; and there were 106,000 registered motor vehicles. The village roads are primarily single lane or unmetalled tracks that are typically lightly trafficked. Mizoram had 871 kilometres of national highways, 1,663 kilometres of state highways and 2,320 kilometres of surfaced district roads. All of Mizoram's 23 urban centres and 59% of its 764 villages are connected by all weather roads. However, landslide and weather damage to these roads is significant in parts.

Airport: Mizoram has an airport, Lengpui Airport (IATA: AJL), near Aizawl and its runway is 3,130 feet long at an elevation of 1,000 feet. **Helicopter:** A Helicopter service by Pawan Hans has been started which connects the Aizawl with Lunglei, Lawngtlai, Saiha, Chawngte, Serchhip, Champhai, Kolasib, Khawzawl, Mamit and Hnahthial. **Water ways:** Mizoram is in the process of developing water ways with the port of Akyab Sittwe in Burma along its biggest river, Chhimtuipui. It drains into Burma's Rakhine state, and finally enters the Bay of Bengal at Akyab, which is a popular port in Sittwe, Burma. The Indian government considers it a priority to set up inland water ways along this river to trade with Burma. The project is known as the Kaladan Multi-modal Transit Transport Project. India is investing \$103 million to develop the Sittwe port on Burma's northern coast, about 160 kilometres (99 mi) from Mizoram. State Peace and Development Council of Burma has committed \$10 million for the venture. The project is expected to be complete in 2015, and consists of two parts. First, river Kaladan (or Kolodyne, Chhimtuipui) is being dredged and widened from the port at Sittwe to Paletwa, in Chin province, adjacent to Mizoram. This 160 km inland waterway will enable cargo ships to enter, upload and offload freight in Paletwa, Myanmar; this is expected to be complete in 2014. As second part of the project, being constructed in parallel, includes a 62 km two-lane highway from Paletwa (also known as Kaletwa or Setpyitpyin) to Lomasu, Mizoram. Additionally, an all weather multilane 100 km road from Lomasu to Lawngtlai in Mizoram is being built to connect it with the Indian National Highway 54. This part of the project is slated to be complete by 2015. Once complete, this project is expected to economically benefit trade and horticulture exports of Mizoram, as well as improve economic access to 60 million people of landlocked northeast India and Myanmar.

Education The first primary school was set up in 1898 at Aijal by Christian missionaries. The state has long enjoyed higher literacy rates than average literacy rates for India. In 1961, the literacy was 51%. By 2011 census, it had reached 92%, compared to 74% average for India. Mizoram is second only to Kerala. There were 3,894 schools in Mizoram as of 2012. Of these, 42% are publicly owned and managed by Central/State governments, 28% are private without government subsidies, 21% are private with government subsidies, and the rest are primary and middle schools that are government-financed by run by three Autonomous District Councils of Mizoram. The teacher-pupil ratio is about 1:20 for primary, 1:9 for middle School, 1:13 for high, and 1:15 for higher secondary schools. There are several educational establishments under the umbrella of the Ministry of Education, including universities, colleges, and other institutions. Within Mizoram University, there are 29 undergraduate departments including two professional institutions affiliated with the university. The state had 22 other colleges, and the total college enrolment was approximately 10,600 students in 2012. Other well known institutes are National Institute of Technology Mizoram, ICAI University, Mizoram, College of Veterinary Sciences & Animal Husbandry, Selesih, Aizawl, Mizoram and Regional Institute of Paramedical and Nursing Aizawl.

Culture The growth of Christianity, scholars state, was shaped from a foundation of cultural, religious and socio-political structure. A consequence of Hnatlang was the culture of Tlwmngaihna, which does not have a direct English translation. Tlwmngaihna as cultural concept incorporates behaviour that is self-sacrificing, self-denying, doing what an occasion demands unselfishly and without concern for inconvenience caused, persevering, stoical, stout-hearted, plucky, brave, firm, independent, loath to lose one's good reputation. Several other cultural elements of ancient Mizo tribes, some of which became less prevalent after arrival of Christianity, included:

Zawlbuk: a place near the chief's home, which served as defence camp in times of war, as well as "bachelor house" where the youth gathered and centre of village life. **Pathian:** the term for god, to whom prayers and hymns were recited. The evil spirits were called ramhuai. **Nula-rim:** the method of courtship in ancient culture.

Courtship, pre-marital sex and polygamy were accepted. The man and the woman could have many partners. If the woman got pregnant, the man was required either marry or pay a substantial sum called sawnman. If the woman's parents discover the relationship, they had a right to demand a payment called khumpuikaiman. While pre-marital sex was accepted, a woman who was virgin at marriage was more highly esteemed than one who was not. Pathlawi: a divorced man. Ramri lehkha: a boundary drawing that identified a chief's tenured land called ram. Only the chief owned the land, and this ownership was hereditary. The tribe and village worked and harvested the land.

Traditional festivals Traditional festivals in Mizoram often revolved around stages of jhum cultivation or the seasons. Community festivals were called kut in the local language, and there were major and minor kuts such as Chapchar Kut, Thalfavang Kut, Mim Kut and Pawl Kut. Chapchar Kut was the festival of spring (February/March), just before jhum started and land was cut-and-burnt for a new crop. Chapchar Kut was most anticipated by youth, a major festival and involved dancing and feasts. Thalfavang Kut celebrated completion of weeding of the jhum crop fields. Chapchar Kut was reintroduced and revived in 1973 by Mizo people to celebrate their heritage. Before Christianity arrived in Mizoram, home-brewed alcohol and many meat delicacies were part of the Chapchar celebrations. Now, with Mizoram's state law as a dry state, the youth busy themselves with music and community dancing. Along with reviving traditional festivals, the community has been reviving the traditional dances at these festivals, for example, dances such as Cheraw, Khuallam, Chheihlam and Chai.

Performing arts Mizoram has many traditional dances, such as:

Cheraw - a dance that involves men holding bamboo close to the floor. They tap the sticks open and close with the rhythm of the music. Women in colourful dresses dance on top, stepping in between and out of the bamboo with the music. It requires coordination and skill. Khual Lam - a mixed-gender dance that traditionally celebrated successfully hunting with swaying cloth with singing and music.

Chheih Lam - typically performed over cool evenings with rice beer, people sit in a circle with two or more dancers in the centre; they sing with impromptu often humorous compositions about recent events or guests between them with music and dancers keeping up. The song was called Chheih Hla. Mizo people have tried to introduce the Chheih Lam during church sermons with controversy. Chai Lam - an important dance at the Chapchar Kut, this places the musicians in the centre while men and women in colourful dresses alternate and form a circle; the women held the men at their waist, while men held the women at their shoulders; they step forward to move in circles while swaying left and right with the music. A song may be sung which is also called Chai.

Sports Mizoram's first football league debuted in October 2012. The Mizoram Premiere League had eight teams during the 2012-2013 season and is the highest level league in Mizoram. The eight clubs include Aizawl, Chanmari, Dinthar, FC Kulikawn, Luangmual, Mizoram, RS Annexe, and Reitlang. The season starts each year in October and wraps up with the finals in March. Aizawl FC is an Indian professional football club that competes in the I-League, the second tier of Indian football league system.

Tourism Domestic tourists The state requires Indian citizens to have an Inner Line Permit. This is available from the Liaison officer, government of Mizoram in Kolkata, Silchar, Shillong, Guwahati and New Delhi. Those

arriving by air can obtain a 15-day visit pass at Lengpui airport, Aizawl by submitting photographs and paying the fee of ₹120 (US\$1.40).

International tourists Almost all foreign nationals can get the required Protected Area Permit on arrival, and face the same requirements as domestic tourists. However, they additionally have to register themselves with state police within 24 hours of arrival, a formality that most resorts can provide. Citizens of Afghanistan, China and Pakistan and foreign nationals having their origin in these countries are required to get the pass through the Indian consulate or from the Ministry of Home Affairs in New Delhi, before they arrive in Mizoram.

Attractions Mizoram is a place with flora and fauna rich landscape and pleasant climate. The state is a bird watcher's destination. For Mrs. Hume's pheasant (*Syrnaticus humiae*), Mizoram is a stronghold. Wild water buffalo, Sumatran rhinoceros, elephants and other mammals have been spotted in the past.

Issues **Chakmaland** Having an estimated population of more than 100,000 per 2011 Indian census, the Chakmas have been demanding to convert the existing Chakma Autonomous District Council in Mizoram into a Union territory.

Alcohol prohibition In 1996, the government of Mizoram banned liquor. The church leaders (Mizoram Kohhran Hruaitute Committee) argue that state government should keep the ban and not seek to amend the law, while others argue prohibition should be lifted. However, it has been difficult to enforce the ban due to the high demand for alcohol. In 2008, the Mizoram Excise and Narcotics (Wine) Rules amended the ban of 1996 to allow the manufacture, export, sale, possession and consumption of wine in Mizoram made from grapes and guava which would help the economy of the state, reduce fruit waste from farms, and encourage large scale commercialisation. In 2011 the bill was amended to include apple, ginger, passion fruit, peach and pear wine. In 2013, the state assembly unanimously passed a resolution to study the impact of liquor prohibition. In 2014, the state's narcotics minister noted that the liquor ban had produced some serious problems in Mizo society due to the drinking of spurious and unhealthy (locally made) liquor, known as zu. The government suggested it would introduce an amended liquor bill allowing retail shops to operate in Aizawl and other district headquarters to sell liquor - but not in bars. Furthermore, they would not consult the powerful church on the issue. The Mizoram Liquor Prohibition and Control bill of 2014 was repealed on 20 March 2019 with the Mizoram Liquor Prohibition Bill 2019, it was a legislation promised by the Mizo National Front.

Rat problems Every 50 years, the Mautam bamboo blooms and its high-protein seeds lead to an explosion in the black rat population in the jungle, also referred to as the rat flood, which has historically destroyed entire villages' food supplies after rats move on to farm fields and devour crops. The 1958-59 plague provoked a rural uprising during which the indigenous Mizo people launched a violent 20-year rebellion against the central government. The dispute only saw final resolution in 1986. The 48-year rat problem recurred in Mizoram in 2006-08. The crops suffered massive damage, with yields at 30-year lows; the crop yields recovered sharply to pre-mautam levels in 2009 after the mautam flowering.

Media and communication See also Newspapers in Mizoram. Mizoram's media is growing quickly. Internet access is average, and private television cable channels are popular. Doordarshan, the national television service of India provides terrestrial broadcasting services and All India Radio broadcast programmes related to the indigenous culture and local news. Broadband access is available. In addition to these, there are several websites in local dialects. Print journalism remains a popular news medium in Mizoram; local newspapers

include Vanglaini and Zalen. The Mizoram Post, an English-language daily newspaper published from Silchar (Assam) was the most circulated newspaper in Mizoram, in 2007.

Notable people C. Rokhuma - Mizo scientist and founder of the Anti-Famine Campaign Organisation. Chuau■huama - Mizo Presbyterian minister, biblical scholar and theologian. Darchhawna - Mizo author of Hindi literature. James Dokhuma - Mizo academic, writer, and former insurgent. Jeje Lalpekhlu - Mizo footballer. Player at the Indian Super League (ISL) and Hero I-League. Former Captain of the India national football team. Jeremy Lalrinnunga - Mizo weightlifter who win Gold in International Weightlifting event. Jerry Mawihmingthanga - Mizo footballer who plays as a midfielder or winger for Odisha in the Indian Super League. Laldenga (d.1990) - Mizo separatist, former party leader of the Mizo National Front (MNF) and 4th Chief Minister of Mizoram. Lalduhoma - politician and party leader of the Zoram People's Movement (ZPM). Former Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) for Mizoram. 6th and current Chief Minister of Mizoram. Also served as secret service for Indira Gandhi and Indian Police Service[IPS]. Lallianzuala Chhangte - Mizo footballer who plays as a midfielder or winger for Mumbai in the Indian Super League. Lalremsiami - hockey player representing India in several International Hockey Events. Lalrindika Ralte - Mizo Footballer. Player at the Indian Super League (ISL) and Hero I-League. Currently the captain of East Bengal F.C. Lalsangzuali Sailo (d.2006)- a singer, songwriter, poet, All India Radio "A" grade artist and a recipient of Padma Shree Award. Lalsawma - Indian social worker, missionary and peace negotiator during the Mizo unrest. Lal Thanhawla - former Chief Minister of Mizoram and leader of the Mizoram Congress Party. Nuchhungi Renthlei (d.2002) - founder of Girls' Auxiliary, a poet, a singer and a school teacher, the first Mizo woman to receive the Padma Shri award Robert Lalhlamuala - Mizo footballer. Player at the Indian Super League (ISL) and Hero I-League. Sangthankima - Mizo social worker and humanitarian. Founder of Thutak Nunpuitu Team. Shylo Malsawmtluanga - Mizo footballer. Former player at the Hero I-League. Current player of the Mizoram Premier League (MPL). Ziona (d.2021) - a polygamous man with 38 wives and numerous children and grandchildren. His family holds the record for the World's Largest Family. Zoramthanga - former Chief Minister of Mizoram and current party leader of the Mizo National Front (MNF).*

Chiefs Lallula (d.1807) - Established the Sailo dynasty in the Lushai Hills. Lalsavunga - Founded the original site of Aizawl. Khalkam (d.1891) - Son of Sukpilal, organiser of the Western Lushai Rising. Lalbura (1843-1933) - Son of Vanhnuaailiana, organiser of the Eastern Lushai Rising Mngpawrha - Son of Lallula, consolidated Sailo rule in the western Lushai Hills. Pwibwia (1852-1892) - Anti-British chief during Lushai Expedition and Lushai Rising. Sibuta - Infamous chief and patron of the Sibuta Lung. Suakpuilala (d.1881) - First and only chief to sign a sunnad with the British under Sir John Ware Edgar. Ropuiliani (d.1895) - Mizo chieftainess who fiercely resisted British colonial rule. Rothangpuia - Friendly chief and ally of Thomas Herbert Lewin who participated in the Lushai Expedition together. Vanhnuaailiana (d.1871) - Famous Eastern Mizo chief. Laltheri - Mizo princess and poet, known as a figure of a love tragedy. Zakapa (d.1914) - Organiser of the Southern Lushai Rising, his actions and legacy led to the creation of the Zakapa award for women's achievements.

Pasal■ha (warriors) Khuangchera (d.1890) - Mizo Pasal■ha and (declared) Indian freedom fighter. Taitesena (d.1904) - Mizo Pasal■ha known for volunteering and hunting. Saizahawla (b.1858) - Mizo Pasal■ha known for wrestling and athleticism. Chawngbawla - Mizo Pasal■ha known for fighting in the North-South War of the Lushai Hills Zampuimanga - Mizo Pasal■ha known for serving Lalsavunga and hunting tigers. Vana Pa - Mizo Pasal■ha known as a tactician and counsellor. Vanapa Hall has been named in his honour.

See also Outline of India Bibliography of India Mizo Hlakungpui Mual Mizo music Insurgency in Northeast India 1997 ethnic violence and displacement of Bru-Reang

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Official website Official Tourism Site of Mizoram Archived 30 December 2017 at the Wayback Machine General information

Geographic data related to Mizoram at OpenStreetMap

Nagaland

Nagaland () is a state in the north-eastern region of India. It is bordered by the Indian states of Arunachal Pradesh to the north, Assam to the west, Manipur to the south, and the Naga Self-Administered Zone of the Sagaing Region of Myanmar (Burma) to the east. Its capital city is Kohima and its largest city is the twin Chmoukedima-Dimapur. The state has an area of 16,579 square kilometres (6,401 sq mi) with a population of 1,980,602 as per the 2011 Census of India, making it one of the least populated states in India. Nagaland consists of 17 administrative districts, inhabited by 17 major tribes along with other sub-tribes. Each tribe is distinct in character from the other in terms of customs, language and dress. It is a land of folklore passed down the generations through word of mouth. The earliest recorded history of the Nagas of the present-day Nagaland dates back to the 13th century. In the 19th century, the British India forces began expanding their influence in Northeast India, including the Naga Hills. After India's independence in 1947, the question of the Naga Hills' political status emerged. Nagaland was a district in the State of Assam until 1957, known to others as "The Naga Hills". The Naga National Council, led by Zapu Phizo, demanded an independent Naga state and launched an armed insurgency. The Indian Government, however, maintained that Nagaland was an integral part of the Indian Union. The conflict between the Naga National Council and the Indian Government resulted in a protracted insurgency. The State of Nagaland was formally inaugurated on 1 December 1963, as the 16th state of the Indian Union, and a democratically elected government took office in 1964. Nagaland is home to a rich variety of natural, cultural, and environmental resources. It is a mountainous state and lies between the parallels of 95 and 94 eastern longitude and 25.2 and 27.0 latitude north. The high-profile Dzoko Valley is at Viswema, in the southern region of the state. The state has significant resources of natural minerals, petroleum, and hydropower, with the primary sector which is mostly agriculture still accounting for 24.6% of its economy. Other significant activities include forestry, tourism, insurance, real estate, horticulture, and miscellaneous cottage industries.

Etymology The origin of the word 'Naga' is unclear. The present day Naga people have historically been referred to by many names, like "Noga" or "Naka" by the inhabitants of the Ahom kingdom in what is now considered as Assam which means "naked", "Hao" by Meitei people of Imphal Valley and "Nakas" or 'Naga' by Burmese of what is now considered as Myanmar meaning "people with earrings", while others suggest it means pierced noses. Eventually, Nakanchi or Naganchi came to be an endonym for the region. In recent years, some cultural activists have called for the state to be renamed Naganchi. Before the arrival of European colonialism in South Asia, there had been many wars, persecution and raids from Burma on the Nagas, Meiteis and others in India's northeast. The invaders came for "head hunting" and to seek wealth and captives from these tribes and ethnic groups. When the British inquired with Burmese guides about the people living in the northern Himalayas, they were told 'Naka'. This was recorded as 'Naga' and has been in use thereafter.

History The ancient history of the Nagas is unclear. Ethnic groups migrated at different times, each settling in the northeastern part of present India and establishing their respective sovereign mountain terrains and village states. There are no records of whether they came from the northern Mongolian region, southeast Asia, or southwest China, except that their origins are from the east of India, and historical records show the present-day Naga people settled before the arrival of the Ahoms in 1228 CE.

Kingdom of Ava In Yan-aung-myin Pagoda inscription found in Pinya of Myanmar mentions that the Kingdom of Ava under Minkhaung I (1400-1421) in the early 1400s extended till the territories of the Nagas.

British administration With the arrival of the British East India Company in the early 19th century, followed by the British Raj, Britain expanded its domain over the whole of South Asia, including the Naga Hills. The first Europeans to enter the hills were Captain Francis Jenkins and Lieutenant Robert Pemberton in 1832. The early contact with the Naga ethnic groups was characterised by suspicion and conflict. The colonial interests in Assam, such as managers of tea estates and other trading posts led defensive action against raids from the ethnic groups who were known for their bravery and "head hunting" practices. To put an end to these raids, the British troops recorded 10 military expeditions between 1839 and 1850. In February 1851, at the bloody Battle of Kikrma, people died on both the British side and the Kikrma (Naga) side; in the days after the battle, inter-ethnic warfare followed that led to more bloodshed. After that war, the British adopted a policy of caution and non-interference with Naga ethnic groups.

Despite this, colonists continued to move into Naga peoples' territory. Between 1851 and 1865, Naga ethnic groups continued to raid the British in Assam. The British India Government took over the holdings of the East Indian Company following the Indian Rebellion of 1857. The failings and atrocities of the East Indian Company led the British Crown to review its governance structure throughout South Asia including its northeastern region. In 1866, the British India administration established a post at Samaguting with the explicit goal of ending intertribal warfare and tribal raids on property and personnel. In 1869, Captain Butler was appointed to lead and consolidate the British presence in the Nagaland Hills. In 1878, the headquarters were transferred to Kohima - creating a city that remains an important center of administration, commerce, and culture for Nagaland. On 4 October 1879, British political agent G. H. Damant went to Khonoma with troops, where he was shot dead with 35 of his team. Kohima was subsequently attacked and the stockade looted. This violence led to a determined effort by the British Raj to return and respond. The subsequent defeat of Khonoma marked the end of serious and persistent ultimatums in the Naga Hills. Between 1880 and 1922, the British administration consolidated their position over a large area of the Naga Hills and integrated it into its Assam operations. The British administration enforced the rupee as the currency for economic activity and a system of structured ethnic government that was very different from historic social governance practices. In parallel, since the mid-19th century, Christian missionaries from the United States and Europe, stationed in India, reached into Nagaland and neighbouring states, converting Nagaland's Naga ethnic groups from animism to Christianity.

World War II In 1944, during World War II, the Japanese Army, with the help of the Indian National Army led by Netaji Subhashchandra Bose, invaded through Burma and attempted to take India through Kohima. The population was evacuated. British India soldiers defended the area of Kohima and having lost many of their original force were relieved by British in June 1944. Together the British and Indian troops successfully repelled the Japanese troops. The battle was fought from 4 April to 22 June 1944 from the town of Kohima, coordinated with action at Imphal, Manipur. The Indian National Army lost half their numbers, many through starvation, and were forced to withdraw through Burma. There is the World War II Cemetery, and the War Museum, in honour of those who died during World War II during the fighting between the British Empire and Japanese troops. Nearly 4,000 British Empire troops died, along with 3,000 Japanese. Many of those who died were Naga people, particularly the Angami Nagas. Near the memorial is the Kohima Cathedral, on Aradura Hill, built with funds from the families and friends of deceased Japanese soldiers. Prayers are held in Kohima for peace and in memory of the fallen of both sides of the battle.

Naga national awakening In 1929, a memorandum was submitted to the Simon Statutory Commission, requesting that the Nagas be exempt from reforms and new taxes proposed in British India, and should be left alone to determine their own future. The Naga Memorandum submitted by the Naga Club (which later became

the Naga National Council) to the Simon Commission explicitly stated, 'to leave us alone to determine ourselves as in ancient times.'

Post-independence history After the independence of India in 1947, the area remained a part of the province of Assam. Nationalist activities arose among a section of the Nagas. Phizo-led Naga National Council demanded a political union of their ancestral and native groups. The movement led to a series of violent incidents, that damaged government and civil infrastructure, attacked government officials and civilians. The central government sent the Indian Army in 1955, to restore order. In 1957, an agreement was reached between Naga leaders and the Indian government, creating a single separate region of the Naga Hills. The Tuensang frontier was united with this single political region, Naga Hills Tuensang Area (NHTA), and it became an autonomous area under Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India. It was to be "administered by the Governor as the agent of the President but will be distinct from the North East Frontier Administration". This was not satisfactory to the Nagas, however, and agitation with violence increased across the state - including attacks on army and government institutions, banks, as well as non-payment of taxes. In July 1960, following discussion between Prime Minister Nehru and the leaders of the Naga People Convention (NPC), a 16-point agreement was arrived at whereby the Government of India recognised the formation of Nagaland as a full-fledged state within the Union of India.

Nagaland statehood and late 20th century Accordingly, the territory was placed under the Nagaland Transitional Provisions Regulation, 1961 which provided for an Interim body consisting of 45 members to be elected by tribes according to the customs, traditions and usage of the respective tribes. Subsequently, Nagaland attained statehood with the enactment of the state of Nagaland Act in 1962 by the Parliament. The interim body was dissolved on 30 November 1963 and the state of Nagaland was formally inaugurated on 1 December 1963 and Kohima was declared as the state capital. After elections in January 1964, the first democratically elected Nagaland Legislative Assembly was constituted on 11 February 1964. The rebel activity continued in many Naga inhabited areas both in India and Burma. Ceasefires were announced and negotiations continued, but this did little to stop the violence. In March 1975, a direct presidential rule was imposed by the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on the state. In November 1975, some leaders of the largest rebel groups agreed to lay down their arms and accept the Indian constitution, a small group did not agree and continued their insurgent activity. The Nagaland Baptist Church Council played an important role by initiating peace efforts in the 1960s.

21st century In 2004, two powerful bombs were set off on the same day and struck the Dimapur Railway Station and the Hong Kong Market, resulting in 30 deaths and wounding over 100 others in the deadliest terrorist attack in Nagaland to date. Over the 5-year period of 2009 to 2013, between 0 and 11 civilians died per year in Nagaland from rebellion related activity (or less than 1 death per 100,000 people), and between 3 and 55 militants died per year in inter-factional killings (or between 0 and 3 deaths per 100,000 people). In early 2017, Nagaland went into a state of civil unrest and protests in response to the announcement to implement 33% women's reservation in the Civic Elections. On 4 December 2021, a unit of the 21st Para Special Forces of the Indian Army killed six civilian labourers near Oting Village in the Mon District of Nagaland. Eight more civilians and a soldier were killed in subsequent violence. The incident was widely condemned, with many calling out to repeal and revoke the Armed Forces Special Powers Act. The most recent Nagaland Legislative Assembly election took place on 27 February 2023 to elect the Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) in the 60 Assembly Constituencies in the state. A voter turnout of 87% was observed in the election. The election created history by electing two women candidates for the first time in Nagaland - Hekani Jakhalu Kense and Salhoutuonuo Kruse. Both candidates were from the ruling Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP).

Salhoutuonuo Kruse later became the first woman minister of the Nagaland Legislative Assembly.

Geography Twenty per cent of the total land area of the state is covered with wooded forest, a haven for flora and fauna. The evergreen tropical and subtropical forests are found in strategic pockets in the state.

Climate Nagaland has a largely monsoon climate with high humidity levels. Annual rainfall averages around 1,800-2,500 millimetres (70-100 in), concentrated in the months of May to September. Temperatures range from 21 to 40 C (70 to 104 F). In winter, temperatures do not generally drop below 4 C (39 F), but frost is common at high elevations. Summer is the shortest season in the state, lasting only a few months. The temperature during the summer season remains between 16 and 31 C (61 and 88 F). Winter often arrives early, with bitter cold and dry weather striking certain regions of the state. The maximum average temperature recorded in the winter season is 24 C (75 F). Strong northwest winds blow across the state during the months of February and March.

Flora and fauna About one-sixth of Nagaland is covered by tropical and sub-tropical evergreen forests-including palms, bamboo, rattan as well as timber and mahogany forests. While some forest areas have been cleared for jhum cultivation, many scrub forests, rainforests, tall grassland, and reed-grass marshes remain. Ntangki National Park, Pulie Badze Wildlife Sanctuary, Fakim Wildlife Sanctuary and Rangapahar Reserve Forest are some natural reserves in Nagaland. Some noteworthy mammals found in Nagaland include the slow loris, Assamese macaque, pig-tailed macaque, stump-tailed macaque, rhesus macaque, capped langur, hoolock gibbon, Himalayan black bear, few sun bear, dhole, occasional Bengal tiger, Indian leopard, clouded leopard, marbled cat, golden cat, Indian elephants, Indian rhinoceros, gaur, red serow, common and leaf muntjac, eastern hog deer, sambar, Chinese pangolin, Malayan porcupine, Asiatic brush-tailed porcupine, and Hoary bamboo rats. Nagaland has a rich birdlife with more than 490 species. The great Indian hornbill has a place in Naga culture. Blyth's tragopan, a vulnerable species of galliform, is the state bird of Nagaland. It is sighted in Mount Japf and Dzoko Valley of Kohima District, Satoi range in Zheiboto District and Pftsero in Phek District. The state is also known as the "falcon capital of the world" thanks to the hundreds of thousands of Amur falcons that stop at Doyang Reservoir to feast on flying termites on their way from China and Siberia to Africa each year. Mithun (a semi-domesticated gaur) is the state animal of Nagaland and has been adopted as the official seal of the Government of Nagaland. It is ritually the most valued species in the state. To conserve and protect this animal in the northeast, the National Research Centre on Mithun (NRCM) was established by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) in 1988.

Nagaland is home to 396 species of orchids, belonging to 92 genera of which 54 having horticultural and medicinal economic importance.

Geology Several preliminary studies indicate significant recoverable reserves of petroleum and natural gas. Limestone, marble and other decorative stone reserves are plentiful, and other as yet unexploited minerals include iron, nickel, chromium, and cobalt.

Urbanisation The Nagaland population is largely rural with 71.14% living in rural regions in 2011. Census reports up to 1951 listed just one settlement in Nagaland as a town, the capital Kohima. The next two settlements, Dimapur and Mokokchung were listed as towns from 1961. Four more towns appeared in 1981: Tuensang, Wokha, Mon and Zheiboto. The relatively slow rate of urbanisation in Nagaland was described in the 1980s as being an effect of (a) the largely administrative roles of the towns, except for Dimapur which had a

more diversified economy, and (b) a low level of mobility among the tribes of Nagaland, scheduled tribes constituting nearly 90% of the population.

Demographics Population The population of Nagaland consists of almost 2.2 million people, consisting of 1.04 million males and 0.95 million females. Among its districts, Kohima has the largest population (270,063) followed by Dimapur (170,000). The least populated district is Longleng (50,593). 75% of the population lives in the rural areas. As of 2013, about 10% of rural population is below the poverty line; among the people living in urban areas 4.3% of them are below the poverty line. The state showed a population drop between the 2001 census and the 2011 census, the only state to show a population drop in the census. This has been attributed, by scholars, to incorrect counting in past censuses; the 2011 census in Nagaland is considered most reliable so far. The largest urban agglomerations are centred upon Dimapur (122,834) and Kohima (115,283). Other major towns (and 2011 census populations) are Tuensang (36,774), Mokokchung (35,913), Wokha (35,004), Mon (26,328), Chmoukedima (25,885), Zheheto (22,633), Kiphire (16,487), Kuda (16,108), Kohima Village (15,734), Phek (14,204), Pftsero (10,371) and Diphupar 'A' (10,246). The life expectancy of Nagaland stands at 75.4 years, 79.9 years for females and 71.5 years for males (2019-21) while the infant mortality rate amounts to 3 per 1,000 births (2019), on par with the most developed countries. Both health indicators are the best among Indian states. The fertility rate of 1.7 children per woman (2019-21) lies below the population replacement level.

Ethnic groups The state is home to 15 major native Naga ethnic groups - Angami, Ao, Chakhesang, Chang, Khiamniungan, Konyak, Lotha, Phom, Pochury, Rengma, Sangtam, Smi, Tikhir, Yimkhiong, Zeme-Liangmai (Zeliang) and two other ethnic groups namely Kuki and Kachari with decent number of community. Some other recent minor tribes or subtribes that can found in the state are Garo, Karbi, Chirri, Makury, and Rongmei. There are also sizeable populations of non-native communities like Bengalis, Marwaris, Nepalis, Punjabis and others living mostly around Dimapur City.

Languages Naga people form the majority of the population. According to the 2011 census there are 2 million people living in Nagaland. The Naga people number around 1.8 million in the state, constituting over 90% of the population. These belong mostly to the Sino-Tibetan language family. Shafer came up with his own classification system for languages found in and around Nagaland. In 1967, the Nagaland Assembly proclaimed Indian English as the official language of Nagaland and it is the medium for education in Nagaland. Other than English, Nagamese, a creole language based on Assamese, is widely spoken. The major languages spoken as per the 2011 census are Konyak (244,135), Ao (231,084), Lotha (177,488), Angami (151,883), Chokri (91,010), Sangtam (75,841), Bengali (74,753), Zeme (71,954; covering Zeliang, 60,399 and Zemi, 11,165), Yimkhiong (74,156), Chang (65,632), Khiamniungan (61,906), Rengma (61,537), Phom (53,674), Nepali (43,481), Kuzhami (34,218), Pochury (21,446), Kuki (18,391), Chakhesang (17,919), Assamese (17,201), Bodo (12,243; covering Bodo 7,372 and Dimasa 4,871), Manipuri (9,511), Sema (8,268), etc.

Religion Christianity The state's population is 1.978 million, out of which 88% are Christians. Nagaland is known as "the only predominantly Baptist State in the World" and "the most Baptist State in the World." Christianity arrived in Nagaland in the early 19th century. The American Baptist Naga mission grew out of the Assam mission in 1836. Miles Bronson, Nathan Brown and other Christian missionaries working out of Jaipur to bring Christianity to the Indian subcontinent, saw the opportunity for gaining converts since many parts of India's northeast was principally animist and folk religion-driven. Along with other tribal regions of the northeast, the people of Nagaland converted to Christianity.

Hinduism Hinduism is the second largest religion in Nagaland. Hindus are concentrated mainly in the erstwhile Dimapur District (as per the 2011 Census of India, comprising the present districts of Dimapur, Niuland, and Chmoukedima) (28.75%) and Kohima District (9.51%). Dimapur Kalibari is a famous temple in Nagaland.

Islam Islam is the third practised religion and shares are ~2.5 per cent of the Nagaland population. The highest concentration of Muslims in Dimapur District, while other districts have less than 2%.

Other religions There are also folk religions practised by some Nagas, specially among the Zeliangrongs (Zemes, Liangmais and Rongmeis) but few among other Naga ethnic groups.

Government The governor is the constitutional head of state, representative of the President of India. He possesses largely ceremonial responsibilities apart from law and order responsibilities.

Elections The Democratic Alliance of Nagaland (DAN) is a state level coalition of political parties. It headed the government with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Janata Dal (United) (JDU). It was formed in 2003 after the Nagaland Legislative Assembly election, with the Naga People's Front (NPF), and the BJP. The alliance was in power in Nagaland from 2003 to 2018. The NDPP-BJP-NPF alliance led UDA government has won the majority in 2018 Nagaland Legislative Assembly election and has been in power since then.

Administrative districts Districts The sixteen districts of Nagaland, and their headquarters, 2011 census populations, areas and elevations (of the seat) are:

Economy The Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) of Nagaland was about ■12,065 crore (US\$1.4 billion) in 2011-12. Nagaland's GSDP grew at 9.9% compounded annually for a decade, thus more than doubling the per capita income. Nagaland has a literacy rate of 80.1 per cent. The majority of the population in the state speaks English, which is the official language of the state. The state offers technical and medical education. Nevertheless, agriculture and forestry contribute a majority of Nagaland's Gross Domestic Product. The state is rich in mineral resources such as coal, limestone, iron, nickel, cobalt, chromium, and marble.

Plantation crops such as premium coffee, cardamom, and tea are grown in hilly areas in small quantities with large growth potential. Most people cultivate rice as it is the main staple diet of the people. About 80% of the cropped area is dedicated to rice. Oilseeds is another, higher income crop gaining ground in Nagaland. The farm productivity for all crops is low, compared to other Indian states, suggesting a significant opportunity for farmer income increase. Currently, the Jhum to Terraced cultivation ratio is 4:3; where Jhum is the local name for cut-and-burn shift farming. Jhum farming is ancient, causes a lot of pollution and soil damage, yet accounts for the majority of the farmed area. The state does not produce enough food and depends on the trade of food from other states of India. Tourism has a lot of potentials but was largely limited due to insurgency and concern of terrorist violence over the last five decades. More recently, a number of Small Medium Enterprises and private sector companies have actively promoted Nagaland tourism, helping initiate a growing tourism market. Tourism experts contend that the state's uniqueness and strategic location in northeast India give Nagaland an advantage in tapping into the tourism sector for economic growth. The state generates 87.98 MU compared to a demand for 242.88 MU. This deficit requires Nagaland to buy power. The state has significant hydroelectric potential, which if realised could make the state a power surplus state. In terms of power distribution, every village and town, and almost every household has an electricity connection; but, this infrastructure is not

effective given the power shortage in the state.

Natural resources After a gap of almost 20 years, Nagaland state Chief Minister, T. R. Zeliang launched the resumption of oil exploration in Changpang and Tsori areas, under Wokha District in July 2014. The exploration will be carried out by the Metropolitan Oil & Gas Pvt. Ltd. Zeliang has alleged failures and disputed payments made to the statement made by the previous explorer, the state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC).

Transportation Nagaland's rugged and mountainous landscape presents a major challenge to the infrastructural development of transport. Roads are the backbone of Nagaland's transportation network. The state has over 15,000 km of surfaced roads, but these are not satisfactorily maintained given the weather damage. Yet, in terms of population served for each kilometre of surfaced road, Nagaland is the second best state in the region after Arunachal Pradesh.

Roadways International highways passing through Nagaland Asian Highway 1 Asian Highway 2

National highways in Nagaland NH 2 : Dibrugarh-Tuli-Changtongya-Mokokchung-Wokha-Tseminy-Kohima-Viswema-Imphal NH 29 : Dabaka-Dimapur-Chmoukedima-Kohima-Kigwema-Chizami-Jessami NH 129 : Dimapur-Numaligarh NH 129A : Dimapur-Rzaphema-Pimla-Jalukie-Peren-Maram NH 202 : Mokokchung-Tuensang-Meluri-Jessami-Imphal NH 702 : Changtongya-Longleng-Mon-Tizit-Sapekhati NH 702B : Longleng-Tuensang

Airways Dimapur Airport is the sole airport in Nagaland, with scheduled commercial services to Kolkata, Guwahati, Imphal, and Dibrugarh. It is located 7 kilometres (4.3 mi) from Dimapur, and 70 kilometres (43 mi) from Kohima. The airport's asphalt runway is 2290 metre long, at an elevation of 487 feet.

Culture Festivals Nagaland is known in India as the Land of Festivals. The diversity of people and ethnic groups, each with their own culture and heritage, creates a year-long atmosphere of celebrations. In addition, the state celebrates all Christian festivities. Traditional ethnic-related festivals revolve round agriculture, as a vast majority of the population of Nagaland is directly dependent on agriculture. Some of the significant festivals for each major ethnic groups are:

Hornbill Festival The Hornbill Festival was launched by the Government of Nagaland in December 2000 to encourage inter-ethnic interaction and to promote cultural heritage of the state. It is held at the Kisama Heritage Village which is about 12 km south of Kohima. All the ethnic groups of Nagaland take part in this festival. The aim of the festival is to revive and protect the rich culture of Nagaland and display its history, culture and traditions.

The festival is named after the hornbill bird, which is displayed in folklores in most of the state's ethnic groups. The week-long festival unites Nagaland and people enjoy the colourful performances, crafts, sports, food fairs, games, and ceremonies. Traditional arts which include paintings, wood carvings, and sculptures are on display. Festival highlights include traditional Naga Morungs exhibition and sale of arts and crafts, food stalls, herbal medicine stalls, shows and sales, cultural medley - songs and dances, fashion shows, beauty contest, traditional archery, naga wrestling, indigenous games, and musical concerts. Additional attractions include the

Konyak fire eating demonstration, pork-fat eating competitions, the Hornbill Literature Festival (including the Hutton Lectures), Hornbill Global Film Fest, Hornbill Ball, Choral Panorama, North East India Drum Ensemble, Naga King Chilli eating competition, Hornbill National Rock Contest, Hornbill International Motor Rally and WW-II Vintage Car Rally.

Sports Kene Kene or Naga wrestling is a folk wrestling style and traditional sport of the Nagas.

Aki Kiti Aki Kiti or Smi kick fighting is a traditional combat sport originating from and was practised by the Smi Nagas. It is characterised by kicking and blocking solely using the soles of the feet. The sporting event served the purpose of righting wrongs, restoring honour, or "settling scores" between tribes and tribesmen without resorting to violence. It was practised during tribal ceremonies.

Cricket Football Cuisine Historical rituals Feasts of Merit In Naga society, individuals were expected to find their place in the social hierarchy, and prestige was the key to maintaining or increasing social status. To achieve these goals a man, whatever his ascendancy, had to be a headhunter or great warrior, have many sexual conquests among women, or complete a series of merit feasts. The Feasts of Merit reflected the splendor and celebration of Naga life. Only married men could give such Feasts, and his wife took a prominent and honoured place during the ritual which emphasised male-female co-operation and interdependence. His wife brewed the beer which he offered to the guests. The event displayed ceremonies and festivities organised by the sponsor. The Feast given by a wealthier community person would be more extravagant. He would typically invite everyone from the ethnic group. This event bestowed honour to the couple from the community. After the Feast, the tribe would give the couple rights to ornaments equally.

Education Nagaland's schools are run by the state and central government or by a private organisation. Instruction is mainly in English - the official language of Nagaland. Under the 10+2+3 plan, after passing the Higher Secondary Examination (the grade 12 examination), students may enroll in general or professional degree programs. Nagaland has three autonomous colleges:

St. Joseph's College, Jakhama Kohima Science College, Jotsoma Patkai Christian College, Chmoukedima Along with one central university-Nagaland University, one engineering college-National Institute of Technology, one medical college- Nagaland Institute of Medical Science and Research, one College of Veterinary Science and Animal Husbandry in Jalukie and three private Universities-St. Joseph University, Northeast Christian University (NECU) and Institute of Chartered Financial Analysts of India University (ICFAI University).

Tourism Tourism experts contend that the state's uniqueness and strategic location in northeast India give Nagaland an advantage in tapping into the tourism sector for economic growth. The state has been extremely successful in promoting the great Hornbill Festival, which attracts Indian and foreign tourists alike. The key thrusts of Nagaland's tourism are its rich culture, showcasing of history and wildlife. Tourism infrastructure is rapidly improving. Local initiatives and tourism pioneers are now beginning to promote a socially responsible tourism model involving the participation of the councils, village elders, the church and the youth.

Notability The Naga Mircha is a variety of chilli mainly grown in this state. They are one of the world's hottest chillies and an indigenous treasure of Nagaland, deeply rooted in the region's lifestyle since ancient times. For

generations, farmers in Nagaland's chilli-growing areas have cultivated it relying on it as a primary source of income and livelihood. This iconic chilli is an integral part of Nagaland's culinary identity, inseparably linked to the local community as a staple ingredient.

Geographical indication It was awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) status tag from the Geographical Indications Registry under the Union Government of India on 2 December 2008 (valid until 21 August 2027). The Secretary, Department of Horticulture & Agriculture, Government of Nagaland, from Kohima, proposed the GI registration of Naga Mircha. After filing the application in August 2007, the chilli was granted the GI tag in 2008 by the Geographical Indication Registry in Chennai, making the name "Naga Mircha" exclusive to the chillies grown in the region. It thus became the first chilli variety from Nagaland and the first type of goods from Nagaland to earn the GI tag.

See also Naga Self-Administered Zone in Myanmar Outline of Nagaland Index of Nagaland-related articles Kohima

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Further reading External links

Official website Official tourism site of Nagaland Department of Power Nagaland Archived 19 January 2023 at the Wayback Machine General information

Nagaland Encyclopdia Britannica entry Geographic data related to Nagaland at OpenStreetMap

Odisha

Odisha (Odia: ଓଡ଼ିଶା, pronounced [oɔ̃ʃɪsa]), formerly Orissa (the official name until 2011), is a state located in Eastern India. It is the eighth-largest state by area, and the eleventh-largest by population, with over 41 million inhabitants. The state also has the third-largest population of Scheduled Tribes in India. It neighbours the states of Jharkhand and West Bengal to the north, Chhattisgarh to the west, and Andhra Pradesh to the south. Odisha has a coastline of 485 kilometres (301 mi) along the Bay of Bengal in the Indian Ocean. The region is also known as Utkala and is mentioned by this name in India's national anthem, Jana Gana Mana. The ancient kingdom of Kalinga, which was invaded by the Mauryan Emperor Ashoka in 261 BCE resulting in the Kalinga War, coincides with the borders of modern-day Odisha. The modern boundaries of Odisha were demarcated by the British Indian government, the Orissa Province was established on 1 April 1936, consisting of the Odia-speaking districts of Bihar and Orissa Province, Madras Presidency and Central Provinces. Utkala Divas (lit. 'Odisha Day') is celebrated on 1 April. Cuttack was made the capital of the region by Anantavarman Chodaganga in c. 1135, after which the city was used as the capital by many rulers, through the British era until 1948. Thereafter, Bhubaneswar became the capital of Odisha.

Etymology The terms Odisha and Orissa (Odia: ଓଡ଼ିଶା, ଓରିସା) derive from the ancient Prakrit word "Odda Visaya" (also "Udra Bibhasha" or "Odra Bibhasha") as in the Tirumalai inscription of Rajendra Chola I, which is dated to 1025. Sarala Das, who translated the Mahabharata into the Odia language in the 15th century, calls the region 'Odra Rashtra' as Odisha. The inscriptions of Kapilendra Deva of the Gajapati Kingdom (1435-67) on the walls of temples in Puri call the region Odisha or Odisha Rajya. In 2011, the English rendering of ଓଡ଼ିଶା was changed from "Orissa" to "Odisha", and the name of its language from "Oriya" to "Odia", by the passage of the Orissa (Alteration of Name) Bill, 2010 and the Constitution (113th Amendment) Bill, 2010 in the Parliament. The Hindi rendering ଓଡ଼ିଶା (uṛiṣa) was also modified to ଓଡ଼ିଶା (oṛiṣa). After a brief debate, the lower house, Lok Sabha, passed the bill and amendment on 9 November 2010. On 24 March 2011, Rajya Sabha, the upper house of Parliament, also passed the bill and the amendment. The changes in spelling were made with the intention of having the English and Hindi renditions conform to the Odia transliteration. However, the underlying Odia texts were nevertheless transliterated incorrectly as per the Hunterian system, the official national transliteration standard, in which the transliterations would be Orisha and Oria instead.

History Prehistoric Acheulian tools dating to Lower Paleolithic era have been discovered in various places in the region, implying an early settlement by humans. Kalinga has been mentioned in ancient texts like Mahabharata, Vayu Purana and Mahagovinda Suttanta. According to political scientist Sudama Misra, the Kalinga janapada originally comprised the area covered by the Puri and Ganjam districts. The Sabar people of Odisha have also been mentioned in the Mahabharata. Baudhayana mentions Kalinga as not yet being influenced by Vedic traditions, implying it followed mostly tribal traditions.

Ashoka of the Mauryan dynasty conquered Kalinga in the bloody Kalinga War in 261 BCE, which was the eighth year of his reign. According to his own edicts, in that war about 100,000 people were killed, 150,000 were captured and more were affected. The resulting bloodshed and suffering of the war is said to have deeply affected Ashoka. He turned into a pacifist and converted to Buddhism. By c. 150 BCE, Emperor Kharavela, who was possibly a contemporary of Demetrius I of Bactria, conquered a major part of the Indian sub-continent. Kharavela was a Jain ruler. He also built the monastery atop the Udayagiri hill. Subsequently, the region was ruled by monarchs, such as Samudragupta and Shashanka. It was also a part of Harsha's empire. The city of

Brahmapur in Odisha is also known to have been the capital of the Pauravas during the closing years of 4th century CE. Nothing was heard from the Pauravas from about the 3rd century CE, because they were annexed by the Yaudheya Republic, who in turn submitted to the Mauryans. It was only at the end of 4th century CE, that they established royalty at Brahmapur, after about 700 years. Later, the kings of the Somavamsi dynasty began to unite the region. By the reign of Yayati II, c. 1025 CE, they had integrated the region into a single kingdom. Yayati II is supposed to have built the Lingaraj temple at Bhubaneswar. They were replaced by the Eastern Ganga dynasty. Notable rulers of the dynasty were Anantavarman Chodaganga, who began reconstruction on the present-day Shri Jagannath Temple in Puri (c. 1135), and Narasimhadeva I, who constructed the Konark temple (c. 1250). The Eastern Ganga Dynasty was followed by the Gajapati Kingdom. The region resisted integration into the Mughal empire until 1568, when it was conquered by Sultanate of Bengal. Mukunda Deva, who is considered the last independent king of Kalinga, was defeated and was killed in battle by a rebel Ramachandra Bhanja. Ramachandra Bhanja himself was killed by Bayazid Khan Karrani. In 1591, Man Singh I, then governor of Bihar, led an army to take Odisha from the Karranis of Bengal. They agreed to treaty because their leader Qutlu Khan Lohani had recently died. But they then broke the treaty by attacking the temple town of Puri. Man Singh returned in 1592 and pacified the region. In 1751, the Nawab of Bengal Alivardi Khan ceded the region to the Maratha Empire. The British had occupied the Northern Circars, comprising the southern coast of Odisha, as a result of the Second Carnatic War by 1760, and incorporated them into the Madras Presidency gradually. In 1803, the British ousted the Marathas from the Puri-Cuttack region of Odisha during the Second Anglo-Maratha War. The northern and western districts of Odisha were incorporated into the Bengal Presidency. The Orissa famine of 1866 caused an estimated 1 million deaths. Following this, large-scale irrigation projects were undertaken. In 1903, the Utkal Sammilani organisation was founded to demand the unification of Odia-speaking regions into one state. On 1 April 1912, the Bihar and Orissa Province was formed. On 1 April 1936, Bihar and Orissa were split into separate provinces. The new province of Orissa came into existence on a linguistic basis during the British rule in India, with Sir John Austen Hubback as the first governor. Following India's independence, on 15 August 1947, 27 princely states signed the document to join Orissa. Most of the Orissa Tributary States, a group of princely states, acceded to Orissa in 1948, after the collapse of the Eastern States Union.

Geography Odisha lies between the latitudes 17.780N and 22.730N, and between longitudes 81.37E and 87.53E. The state has an area of 155,707 km², which is 4.87% of total area of India, and a coastline of 450 km. In the eastern part of the state lies the coastal plain. It extends from the Subarnarekha River in the north to the Rushikulya River in the south. The lake Chilika is part of the coastal plains. The plains are rich in fertile silt deposited by the six major rivers flowing into the Bay of Bengal: Subarnarekha, Budhabalanga, Baitarani, Brahmani, Mahanadi, and Rushikulya. The National Rice Research Institute (NRRI), a Food and Agriculture Organization-recognised rice gene bank and research institute, is situated on the banks of Mahanadi in Cuttack. The stretch between Puri and Bhadrak in Odisha juts out a little into the sea, making it vulnerable to any cyclonic activity.

Three-quarters of the state is covered in mountain ranges. Deep and broad valleys have been made in them by rivers. These valleys have fertile soil and are densely populated. Odisha also has plateaus and rolling uplands, which have lower elevation than the plateaus. The highest point in the state is Deomali at 1,672 metres in Koraput district. Some other high peaks are: Sinkaram (1,620 m), Golikoda (1,617 m), and Yendrika (1,582 metres).

Climate The state experiences four meteorological seasons: winter (January to February), pre-monsoon season (March to May), south-west monsoon season (June to September) and north east monsoon season

(October-December). However, locally the year is divided into six traditional seasons (or rutus): Grishma (summer), Barsha (rainy season), Sharata (autumn), Hemanta (dewy), Sheeta (winter season) and Basanta (spring).

Biodiversity According to a Forest Survey of India report released in 2012, Odisha has 48,903 km² of wild forest, covering 31.41% of the state's total area. The forests are classified into areas of dense forest (7,060 km²), medium dense forest (21,366 km²), open forest (forest without closed canopy; 20,477 km²) and scrub forest or scrubland (4,734 km²). The state also has bamboo forests (10,518 km²) and tidal areas of mangrove swamp (221 km²). The state is gradually losing its wilderness areas to timber smuggling, deforestation, destructive mining, and general urban industrialisation, as well as livestock grazing. There have been attempts at conservation and reforestation. Due to the climate and good rainfall, Odisha's evergreen and moist forests are uniquely suitable habitats for wild orchids. Around 130 species have been reported from the state. Around 97 of them are found in Mayurbhanj district alone. The Orchid House of the Nandankanan Zoological Park maintains some of these species. Simlipal National Park is a protected wildlife area and Bengal tiger reserve spread over 2,750 km² of the northern part of Mayurbhanj district. The park has around 1,078 species of plants, including 94 of the aforementioned orchids. The sal is the primary tree species. For fauna, the park is home to around 55 species of mammal, including the Bengal tiger, chital, chousingha, common langur, gaur, Indian elephant, Indian giant squirrel, jungle cat, leopard, muntjac, sambar, small Indian civet and wild boar. There are over 300 species of birds in the park, such as the common hill myna, as well as grey, Indian pied and Malabar pied hornbills. There are also some 60 species of reptiles and amphibians, including the famed king cobra, plus banded krait and tricarinate hill turtle. There is also a mugger crocodile breeding programme in nearby Ramtirtha. The Chandaka Elephant Sanctuary is a 190 km² protected area near the capital city, Bhubaneswar. However, urban expansion and over-grazing have reduced the forests, driving the herds of elephants to migrate away, as well as increasing human-elephant conflicts-which sometimes results in injury and death (on both sides). Some elephants have died in conflicts with villagers, while some have died during migration after being accidentally electrocuted by power lines or even hit by trains. Outside the protected area, they are killed by ivory poachers. In 2002, there were about 80 elephants, but by 2012, their numbers had been reduced to 20. Many of the animals have migrated toward the Barbara Reserve forest, Chilika, Nayagarh district, and Athagad. Besides elephants, the sanctuary also has leopards, jungle cats and herds of chital. The Bhitarkanika National Park in Kendrapara district covers 650 km², of which 150 km² are mangroves. Gahirmatha Beach, in Bhitarkanika, is the world's largest nesting site for olive ridley sea turtles. In 2013, the Indian Coast Guard initiated Operation Oliver to protect the endangered sea turtle population of the region. Other major nesting grounds for the turtle in the state are Rushikulya, in Ganjam district, and the mouth of the Devi river. The Bhitarkanika sanctuary is also noted for its large population of saltwater crocodiles and Asian water monitors, the second-largest lizard species on earth, in addition to axis deer and rhesus macaques. The coastal mangrove environments are home to several types of mudskippers, including the barred, Boddart's blue-spotted and great blue-spotted mudskippers. In winter, Bhitarkanika is also visited by migratory birds. Among the many species, both resident and migratory, are kingfishers (including black-capped, collared and common kingfishers), herons (such as black-crowned night, grey, purple and striated herons), Indian cormorants, openbill storks, Oriental white ibis, pheasant-tailed jacana, sarus cranes, spotted owlets and white-bellied sea-eagles. The possibly endangered horseshoe crab is also found in this region. Chilika Lake is a brackish water lagoon on the east coast of Odisha with an area of 1,105 km². It is connected to the Bay of Bengal by a 35-km-long narrow channel and is a part of the Mahanadi delta. In the dry season, the tides bring in salt water. In the rainy season, the rivers falling into the lagoon decrease its salinity. Birds from places as far as the Caspian Sea, Lake Baikal (and other parts of Russia), Central Asia, Southeast Asia, Ladakh and the Himalayas migrate to the lagoon in winter. Among the waterfowl and wading birds spotted there are Eurasian wigeon, pintail, bar-headed goose, greylag goose, greater flamingo, common mallard and Goliath heron. The

lagoon also has a small population of the endangered Irrawaddy dolphins. The state's coastal region has also had sightings of the rare finless porpoise, as well as the more common bottlenose dolphin, humpback dolphin and spinner dolphins in its waters. Satapada is situated close to the northeast cape of Chilika Lake and Bay of Bengal. It is famous for dolphin watching in their natural habitat. There is a tiny island en route for watching dolphins, where tourists often take a short stop. Apart from that, this island is also home for tiny red crabs. According to a census conducted in 2016, there are around 2000 elephants in the state.

Government and politics All states in India are governed by a parliamentary system of government based on universal adult franchise. The main parties active in the politics of Odisha are the Biju Janata Dal, the Indian National Congress and Bharatiya Janata Party. Currently, BJP , who won for the first time, formed the government after winning the majority in 2024 Odisha Legislative Assembly election. Mohan Charan Majhi is the 17th Chief Minister of Odisha.

Legislative assembly The Odisha state has a unicameral legislature. The Odisha Legislative Assembly consists of 147 elected members, and special office bearers such as the Speaker and Deputy Speaker, who are elected by the members. Assembly meetings are presided over by the Speaker, or by the Deputy Speaker in the Speaker's absence. Executive authority is vested in the Council of Ministers headed by the Chief Minister, although the titular head of government is the Governor of Odisha. The governor is appointed by the President of India. The leader of the party or coalition with a majority in the Legislative Assembly is appointed as the Chief Minister by the governor, and the Council of Ministers are appointed by the governor on the advice of the Chief Minister. The Council of Ministers reports to the Legislative Assembly. The 147 elected representatives are called Members of the Legislative Assembly, or MLAs. One MLA may be nominated from the Anglo-Indian community by the governor. The term of the office is for five years, unless the Assembly is dissolved prior to the completion of the term. The judiciary is composed of the Odisha High Court, located at Cuttack, and a system of lower courts.

Subdivisions Odisha has been divided into 30 districts. These 30 districts have been placed under three different revenue divisions to streamline their governance. The divisions are North, Central and South, with their headquarters at Sambalpur, Cuttack and Berhampur respectively. Each division consists of ten districts and has as its administrative head a Revenue Divisional Commissioner (RDC). The position of the RDC in the administrative hierarchy is that between that of the district administration and the state secretariat. The RDCs report to the Board of Revenue, which is headed by a senior officer of the Indian Administrative Service.

Each district is administered by a Collector and district magistrate, who is appointed from the Indian Administrative Service or a very senior officer from Odisha Administrative Service. The collector and district magistrate is responsible for collecting the revenue and maintaining law and order in the district. Each district is separated into sub-divisions, each governed by a sub-collector and sub-divisional magistrate. The sub-divisions are further divided into tahasils. The tahasils are headed by tahasildar. Odisha has 58 sub-divisions, 317 tahasils and 314 blocks. Blocks consists of Panchayats (village councils) and town municipalities. The capital of the state is Bhubaneswar and the largest city is Cuttack, which also functions as the deputy capital of the state . The other major cities are, Rourkela, Berhampur and Sambalpur. Municipal Corporations in Odisha include Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Berhampur, Puri, Sambalpur and Rourkela. Other municipalities of Odisha include Angul, Asika, Balangir, Balasore, Barbil, Bargarh, Baripada, Basudevpur, Belpahar, Bhadrak, Bhanjanagar, Bhawanipatna, Biramitrapur, Boudh, Brajarajnagar, Byasanagar, Chhatrapur, Deogarh, Dhamra,Dhenkanal, Gopalpur, Gunupur, Hinjilicut, Jagatsinghpur, Jajpur, Jeypore, Jharsuguda, Joda, Kendrapara, Kendujhar, Khordha, Konark, Koraput, Malkangiri, Nabarangpur, Nayagarh, Nuapada, Paradeep, Paralakhemundi,

Phulbani, Rajgangpur, Rayagada, Sonepur, Sundargarh, Talcher, Titilagarh, Karanjia, Chatrapur, Asika, Kantabanji, Nimapada, Baudhgarh, and Umerkote.

Auxiliary authorities known as panchayats, for which local body elections are regularly held, govern local affairs in rural areas.

Economy Macro-economic trend Odisha is experiencing a rapid economic growth post-Covid. The impressive growth in gross domestic product of the state has been reported by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation. Odisha's growth rate is above the national average. The central Government's Urban Development Ministry has recently announced the names of 20 cities selected to be developed as smart cities. The state capital Bhubaneswar is the first city in the list of smart Cities released in January 2016, a pet project of the Indian Government. The announcement also marked with sanction of Rs 508.02 billion over the five years for development.

Industrial development Odisha has abundant natural resources and a large coastline. Odisha has emerged as the most preferred destination for overseas investors with investment proposals. It contains a fifth of India's coal, a quarter of its iron ore, a third of its bauxite reserves and most of the chromite. Rourkela Steel Plant was the first integrated steel plant in the public sector in India, built with collaboration of Germany. Arcelor-Mittal has also announced plans to invest in another mega steel project amounting to \$10 billion. Russian major Magnitogorsk Iron and Steel Company (MMK) plans to set up a 10 MT steel plant in Odisha, too. Nippon Steel Corporation has recently announced to set up their own plants, one of which will be the world's largest and most advanced steel plant in Odisha, with a production capacity of 30 MT annually. Bandhabahal is a major area of open cast coal mines in Odisha. The state is attracting an unprecedented amount of investment in aluminium, coal-based power plants, petrochemicals, and information technology as well. In power generation, Reliance Power (Anil Ambani Group) is putting up the world's largest power plant with an investment of US\$13 billion at Hirma in Jharsuguda district. In 2009 Odisha was the second top domestic investment destination with Gujarat first and Andhra Pradesh in third place according to an analysis of ASSOCHAM Investment Meter (AIM) study on corporate investments. Odisha's share was 12.6 per cent in total investment in the country. It received an investment proposal worth ■2.01 trillion (equivalent to ■4.5 trillion or US\$53 billion in 2023) in 2010. Steel and power were among the sectors which attracted maximum investments in the state. The recently concluded Make in Odisha Conclave 2022 saw the state generate investment proposals worth ■10.5 trillion with an employment potential for 10,37,701 people. Out of the total investment proposals received, the metals, ancillary and downstream sectors fetched ■5.50 lakhs crore (trillion), power, green energy, and renewable energy sector fetched ■2.38 trillion, and chemicals-petrochemicals and logistics-infrastructure sector attracted ■76,000 crores and ■1.20 trillion, respectively. Odisha has the potential to become a trillion-dollar economy by 2030.

Transportation Odisha has a network of roads, railways, airports and seaports. Bhubaneswar is well connected by air, rail and road with the rest of India. Some highways are getting expanded to four lanes. Odisha Government Plans Mega Metro Rail Project to Connect Puri and Bhubaneswar The metro rail proposal was given to connect trains between Puri- Bhubaneswar - Cuttack. The Odisha government has planned a new Expressway that will connect Biju Patnaik International Airport at Bhubaneswar with the proposed Shri Jagannath International Airport at Puri.

Air Odisha has a total of three operational airports, 16 airstrips and 16 helipads. The airport at Jharsuguda was upgraded to a full-fledged domestic airport in May 2018. Rourkela Airport became operational in December

2022. The Dhamra Port Company Limited plans to build Dhamra Airport 20 km from Dhamra Port.

Bhubaneswar - Biju Patnaik International Airport Jeypore - Jeypore Airport Jharsuguda - Veer Surendra Sai Airport Rourkela - Rourkela Airport Berhampur - Rangeilunda Airport Bhawanipatna - Utkela Airport

Seaports Odisha has a coastline of 485 kilometres (301 mi). It has one major port at Paradip and few minor ports. some of them are:

Port of Dhamara Port of Gopalpur Port of Paradip Port of Subarnarekha

Railways Major cities of Odisha are well connected to all the major cities of India by direct daily trains and weekly trains. Most of the railway network in Odisha lies under the jurisdiction of the East Coast Railway (ECoR) with headquarters at Bhubaneswar and some parts under South Eastern Railway and South East Central Railway.

Demographics Population According to the 2011 Census of India, Odisha accounted for approximately 3% of India's total population. The state had a population of 41,974,218, with 21,212,136 males (50.54%) and 20,762,082 females (49.46%), resulting in a sex ratio of 978 females per 1,000 males. This marked a growth rate of 13.97% during the 2001-2011 period, a decline from 16.25% in the previous decade (1991-2001). The population density stood at 269 people per square kilometre, with Ganjam district having the highest population among all districts in Odisha. In contrast, Debagarh district has the lowest population. The population in the age group of 0-6 years comprised 12% of the total population, with a child sex ratio of 934 females for every 1,000 males in this age group. Additionally, Scheduled Castes (SC) constituted a population of 7.2 million, making up 16.5% of the total population, while Scheduled Tribes (ST) accounted for 9.6 million, representing 22.1% of the population.

Literacy and Socioeconomic Indicators According to the 2011 Census, Odisha's overall literacy rate is 72.87%. Male literacy stands at 81.59%, while female literacy is recorded at 64.01%. Odisha's literacy rate is slightly below the national average of 74.04%. Literacy rates vary within the state, with Khordha district having the highest literacy rate at 86.88%, while Nabarangpur has the lowest at 46.43%. In rural areas, the average literacy rate is 70.22%, compared to 85.57% in urban areas. Among the Scheduled Tribe population, the literacy rate is 52.24%. In terms of poverty, Odisha had a poverty rate of 57.15% in 2004-2005, nearly double the national average of 26.10% at the time. However, since 2005, the state has made significant progress, reducing the poverty rate by 24.6 percentage points, with the current estimate at 32.6%.

Health and Vital Statistics Data from 1996-2001 indicated that the state's life expectancy was 61.64 years, slightly above the national average. Odisha also records a birth rate of 23.2 per 1,000 people annually, a death rate of 9.1 per 1,000, an infant mortality rate of 65 per 1,000 live births. In 2011-2013, Odisha recorded a maternal mortality ratio (MMR) of 222 per 100,000 live births, according to a report by NITI Aayog. As of 2018, Odisha's Human Development Index (HDI) stands at 0.606. The Total Fertility Rate (TFR) in Odisha declined from 2.1 in 2015-16 to 1.8 in 2020-21, paralleling the national trend, which saw a decrease from 2.2 to 2.0 during the same period. With a cumulative score of 67.8, Odisha tops the ranking in fiscal health index 2025.

Religion Based on the 2011 Census, Odisha has a predominantly Hindu population, with 93.63% adhering to Hinduism. The state is home to several prominent Hindu pilgrimage sites, including Jagannath Puri, known for the Jagannath Temple, and the Lingaraj Temple in Bhubaneswar, which attract devotees from across India and beyond. Christianity is the second-largest religion at 2.77%, followed by Islam at 2.17%. Smaller communities include Sikhs (0.05%), Jains (0.02%), and Buddhists (0.03%). Additionally, 1.14% of the population practices other religions, with Sarna being one of the prominent indigenous faiths, particularly among tribal communities. A small segment, 0.18%, did not state their religious affiliation.

Decadal variations among religious groups Languages Odia is the official language of Odisha and is spoken by 82.70% of the population according to the 2011 census of India. It is also one of the classical languages of India. English is the official language of correspondence between state and the union of India. Spoken Odia is not homogeneous as one can find different dialects spoken across the state. Some of the major dialects found inside the state are Sambalpuri, Cuttacki, Sundargarhi, Baleswari, Ganjami, Desiya, Kalahandia and Phulbani. The standard language is based on the Cuttacki dialect. In addition to Odia, significant populations of people speaking other major Indian languages like Hindi, Telugu, Urdu and Bengali are also found in the state, mainly in cities. The different tribal (Adivasi) communities who mostly reside in western and southern Odisha have their own languages belonging to Munda and Dravidian family of languages. Some of these major tribal languages are Santali, Kui, Mundari and Ho. Due to increasing contact with outsiders, migration and socioeconomic reasons many of these indigenous languages are slowly getting extinct or are on the verge of getting extinct. The Odisha Sahitya Academy Award was established in 1957 to actively develop Odia language and literature. The Odisha government launched a portal in 2018 to promote Odia language and literature.

Education Entry to various institutes of higher education especially into engineering degrees is through a centralised Odisha Joint Entrance Examination, conducted by the Biju Patnaik University of Technology (BPUT), Rourkela, since 2003, where seats are provided according to order of merit. Few of the engineering institutes enroll students by through Joint Entrance Examination. For medical courses, there is a corresponding National Eligibility Cum Entrance Test.

Culture Odisha is home to several Hindu figures. Sant Bhima Bhoi was a leader of the Mahima sect. Sarala Das, a Hindu Khandayat, was the translator of the epic Mahabharata into Odia. Chaitanya Das was a Buddhistic-Vaishnava and writer of the Nirguna Mahatmya. Jayadeva was the author of the Gita Govinda. The Odisha Temple Authorisation Act of 1948 empowered the government of Odisha to open temples for all Hindus, including Dalits. Perhaps the oldest scripture of Odisha is the Madala Panji from the Puri Temple believed from 1042 AD. Famous Hindu Odia scripture includes the 16th-century Bhagabata of Jagannatha Dasa. In the modern times Madhusudan Rao was a major Odia writer, who was a Brahmo Samajist and shaped modern Odia literature at the start of the 20th century.

Cuisine Odisha has a culinary tradition spanning centuries. The kitchen of the Shri Jagannath Temple, Puri is reputed to be the largest in the world, with 1,000 chefs, working around 752 wood-burning clay hearths called chulas, to feed over 10,000 people each day. The syrupy dessert Pahala rasagola made in Odisha is known throughout the world. Chhenapoda is another major Odisha sweet cuisine, which originated in Nayagarh. Dalma (a mix of dal and selected vegetables) is widely known cuisine, better served with ghee.

The "Odisha Rasagola" was awarded a geographical indication (GI) tag in 2019 after a long battle about the origin of the famous sweet with West Bengal. This decision involved a broader interpretation of the law

established under the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999. Section 2(e) of the Act stipulates that a geographical indication can be provided to a product if its quality, characteristics, or reputation are attributable to its geographical origin and are unique. The uniqueness of Odisha's Rasagola lies in its color, texture, and taste, distinguishing it from the West Bengal variant. Historical references in Odisha's texts support the geographical origin of the dish.

Dance Odissi dance and music are classical art forms. Odissi is the oldest surviving dance form in India on the basis of archaeological evidence. Odissi has a long, unbroken tradition of 2,000 years, and finds mention in the Natyashastra of Bharatamuni, possibly written c. 200 BC. However, the dance form nearly became extinct during the British period, only to be revived after India's independence by a few gurus. The variety of dances includes Ghumura dance, Chhau dance, Jhumair, Mahari dance, Dalkhai, Dhamsa and Gotipua. Odissi is not only a dance form but also a spiritual expression deeply rooted in Odisha's temple traditions. Characterized by graceful movements, intricate footwork, and sculptural poses, it draws inspiration from the carvings of the Konark Sun Temple and other ancient shrines of the region. The dance is traditionally performed as an act of devotion to Lord Jagannath and often depicts stories from Hindu epics such as the Ramayana, Mahabharata, and Geeta Govinda. The unique tribhangi posture, which divides the body into three bends (head, torso, and hips), and the fluid chauka stance, give Odissi its distinctive identity among classical dances of India. Over centuries, Odissi has evolved from being a temple ritual to a respected performing art practiced worldwide. It blends lyrical music with expressive gestures (mudras) that communicate emotions and narratives with precision. Gurus like Kelucharan Mohapatra, Pankaj Charan Das, and others played a pivotal role in reviving and popularizing the form in the 20th century, ensuring its survival and global recognition. Today, Odissi is celebrated on prestigious stages across the world, symbolizing Odisha's cultural heritage and artistic excellence. The traditional performance of Odissi usually begins with Mangalacharan, an invocation to the deities, followed by Batu Nritya that highlights pure dance techniques. Pallavi showcases the dancer's mastery through elaborate rhythmic patterns, while Abhinaya brings mythological stories to life through expressive storytelling. The recital often concludes with Moksha, symbolizing spiritual liberation, where the dancer blends technical skill with a deep sense of devotion. This structured presentation makes Odissi both aesthetically rich and spiritually profound. Costumes and music also play an important role in Odissi. Dancers typically wear brightly colored saris made of Sambalpuri or Bomkai silk, adorned with silver jewelry crafted in Odisha's traditional style. The music is based on Odissi classical ragas and talas, blending elements of both Hindustani and Carnatic traditions, and is performed with instruments like the mardala (a traditional percussion instrument), flute, sitar, and violin. Together, the visual elegance and the melodic accompaniment create an atmosphere that connects performers and audiences to the deep cultural and devotional roots of Odisha.

Sports The state of Odisha has hosted several international sporting events, including the 2018 Men's Hockey World Cup, 2022 FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup and 2023 Men's Hockey World Cup. Sports stadiums in Odisha include:

Kalinga Stadium Barabati Stadium Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium East Coast Railway Stadium Biju Patnaik Hockey Stadium KIIT Stadium Veer Surendra Sai Stadium Birsu Munda International Hockey Stadium There are some High Performance Centres in the state as well which have been set up at Kalinga Stadium for the development of respective sports in Odisha. Some of the HPCs are as follows:

Abhinav Bindra Targeting Performance (ABTP) Dalmia Bharat Gopichand Badminton Academy JSW Swimming HPC Khelo India State Centre of Excellence (KISCE) for Athletics, Hockey, and Weightlifting KJS Ahluwalia and Tenvic Sports HPC for Weightlifting Odisha Naval Tata Hockey High Performance Centre (ONTHHPC)

Tourism The Lingaraja Temple at Bhubaneswar has a 150-foot (46 m) high deula while the Jagannath Temple, Puri is about 200 feet (61 m) high and dominates the skyline. Only a portion of the Konark Sun Temple at Konark in Puri district, the largest of the temples of the "Holy Golden Triangle" exists today, and it is still staggering in size. It stands out as a masterpiece in Odisha architecture. Sarala Temple, regarded as one of the most spiritually elevated expressions of Shaktism is in Jagatsinghpur district. It is also one of the holiest places in Odisha and a major tourist attraction. Maa Tarini Temple situated in Kendujhar district is also a famous pilgrimage destination. Every day thousands of coconuts are given to Maa Tarini by devotees for fulfilling their wishes. Odisha's varying topography - from the wooded Eastern Ghats to the fertile river basin - has proven ideal for evolution of compact and unique ecosystems. This creates treasure troves of flora and fauna that are inviting to many migratory species of birds and reptiles. Bhitarkanika National Park in Kendrapada district is famous for its second largest mangrove ecosystem. The bird sanctuary in Chilika Lake (Asia's largest brackish water lake). The tiger reserve and waterfalls in Simlipal National Park, Mayurbhanj district are integral parts of eco-tourism in Odisha, arranged by Odisha Tourism. Daringbadi is a hill station in the Kandhamal district. It is known as "Kashmir of Odisha", for its climatic similarity. Chandipur, in Baleswar district is a calm and serene site, is mostly unexplored by tourists. The unique speciality of this beach is the ebb tides that recede up to 4 km and tend to disappear rhythmically. In the western part of Odisha, Hirakud Dam in Sambalpur district is the longest earthen dam in the World. It also forms the biggest artificial lake in Asia. The Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary is situated near Hirakud Dam. Samaleswari Temple is a Hindu temple in Sambalpur city, dedicated to the goddess known as 'Samaleswari', the presiding deity of Sambalpur, is a strong religious force in western part of Odisha and Chhattisgarh state. The Leaning Temple of Huma is located near Sambalpur. The temple is dedicated to the Hindu god Lord Bimaleswar. Sri Sri Harishankar Devasthan, is a temple on the slopes of Gandhamardhan hills, Balangir district. It is popular for its scenes of nature and connection to two Hindu lords, Vishnu and Shiva. On the opposite side of the Gandhamardhan hills is the temple of Sri Nrusinghanath, is situated at the foothills of Gandhamardhan Hill near Paikmal, Bargarh district. In the southern part of Odisha, The Taratarini Temple on the Kumari hills at the bank of the Rushikulya River near Berhampur city in Ganjam district. Here worshiped as the Breast Shrine (Sthana Peetha) and manifestations of Adi Shakti. The Tara Tarini Shakti Peetha is one of the oldest pilgrimage centers of the Mother Goddess and is one of four major ancient Tantra Peetha and Shakti Peethas in India. Deomali is a mountain peak of the Eastern Ghats. It is located in Koraput district. This peak with an elevation of about 1,672 m, is the highest peak in Odisha. The share of foreign tourists' arrival in the state is below one per cent of total foreign tourist arrivals at all India level.

See also Outline of Odisha East India Odia people

References External links

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Punjab

Punjab (pun-JAHB; Punjabi: Panjāb, pronounced [pənˈdʌb]) is a geographical, ethnolinguistic, and historical region in South Asia, located in its northwestern part, comprising areas of modern-day Pakistan and northwestern India. It is primarily inhabited by the Punjabi people. Lahore is its largest city and historic capital, with other major cities including Faisalabad, Rawalpindi, Gujranwala, Multan, Sialkot, Sargodha, and Bahawalpur in Pakistan; alongside Ludhiana, Amritsar, Chandigarh, Jalandhar, Patiala, Mohali, Bathinda, Firozpur, and Fazilka in India. Punjab grew out of the settlements along the five rivers, which served as an important route to the Near East as early as the ancient Indus Valley civilization, dating back to 3000 BC, followed by migrations of the Indo-Aryan peoples. Agriculture has been the chief economic feature of the Punjab and formed the foundation of Punjabi culture. The Punjab emerged as an important agricultural region, especially following the Green Revolution during the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s, and has been described as the "breadbasket of both India and Pakistan." Punjab's history is a tapestry of conflict, marked by the rise of indigenous dynasties and empires. Following Alexander the Great's invasion in the 4th century BCE, Chandragupta Maurya allied with Punjabi republics to establish the Maurya Empire. Successive reigns of the Indo-Greek Kingdom, Kushan Empire, and Indo-Scythians followed, but were ultimately defeated by Eastern Punjab Janapadas such as the Yaudheya, Trigarta Kingdom, Audumbaras, Arjunayanas, and Kuninda Kingdom. In the 5th and 6th centuries CE, Punjab faced devastating Hunnic invasions, yet the Vardhana dynasty emerged triumphant, ruling over Northern India. The 8th century CE witnessed the Hindu Shahis rise, known for defeating the Persianate Saffarid dynasty and the Samanid Empire. Concurrently, the Tomara dynasty and Katoch Dynasty controlled eastern Punjab, resisting Ghaznavid invasions. Islam took hold in Western Punjab under Ghaznavid rule. The Delhi Sultanate then succeeded the Ghaznavids in which the Tughlaq dynasty and Sayyid dynasty Sultans are described as Punjabi origin. The 15th century saw the emergence of the Langah Sultanate in south Punjab, acclaimed for its victory over the Lodi dynasty. After the Mughal Empire's decline in the 18th century, Punjab experienced a period of anarchy. 12 Sikh Misls along with Muslim Chattha, Sial, Tarar, Chisti and Gakhar States fought for political acedency. In 1799 CE, the Sikh Empire established its rule, undertaking conquests into the Kashmir- and Durrani Empire-held territories, shaping the diverse and complex history of Punjab. The boundaries of the region are ill-defined and focus on historical accounts and thus the geographical definition of the term "Punjab" has changed over time. In the 16th century Mughal Empire the Punjab region was divided into three, with the Lahore Subah in the west, the Delhi Subah in the east and the Multan Subah in the south. Under the British Raj until the Partition of India in 1947, the Punjab Province encompassed the present Indian states and union territories of Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, and Delhi, and the Pakistani regions of Punjab, and Islamabad Capital Territory. The predominant ethnolinguistic group of the Punjab region are the Punjabi people, who speak the Indo-Aryan Punjabi language. Punjabi Muslims are the majority in West Punjab (Pakistan), while Punjabi Sikhs are the majority in East Punjab (India). Other religious groups include Hinduism, Christianity, Jainism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, and Ravidassia.

Etymology The name Punjab is of Persian origin, with its two parts (پنج, panj, 'five' and آب, āb, 'water') being cognates of the Sanskrit words पञ्च, paca, 'five' and प, p, 'water', of the same meaning. The word panjāb is thus calque of Indo-Aryan "paca-p" and means "The Land of Five Waters", referring to the rivers Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Sutlej, and Beas. All are tributaries of the Indus River, the Sutlej being the largest. References to a land of five rivers may be found in the Mahabharata, in which one of the regions is named as Panchanada (Sanskrit: पञ्चनदा, romanized: paca-nada, lit. 'five rivers'). Earlier, the Punjab was known as Sapta Sindhu in the Rigveda or Hapta Hendu in Avesta, translating into "The Land of Seven Rivers", with the

other two being Indus and Kabul. The ancient Greeks referred to the region as Pentapotama (Greek: Πενταποταμία), which has the same meaning as that of Punjab.

History Ancient period The Punjab region is noted as the site of one of the earliest urban societies, the Indus Valley Civilization which flourished from about 3000 BC and declined rapidly 1,000 years later, following the Indo-Aryan migrations that overran the region in waves between 1500 BC and 500 BC. Frequent intertribal wars stimulated the growth of larger groupings ruled by chieftains and kings, who ruled local kingdoms known as Mahajanapadas. The rise of kingdoms and dynasties in the Punjab is chronicled in the ancient Hindu epics, particularly the Mahabharata. The epic battles described in the Mahabharata are chronicled as being fought in what is now the state of Haryana and historic Punjab. The Gandharas, Kambojas, Trigartas, Andhra, Pauravas, Bahlikas (Bactrian settlers of the Punjab), Yaudheyas, and others sided with the Kauravas in the great battle fought at Kurukshetra. According to Fauja Singh and L. M. Joshi: "There is no doubt that the Kambojas, Daradas, Kaikayas, Andhra, Pauravas, Yaudheyas, Malavas, Saindhavas, and Kurus had jointly contributed to the heroic tradition and composite culture of ancient Punjab."

Invasions of Alexander the Great (c. 4th century BCE) The earliest known notable local king of this region was known as King Porus, who fought the famous Battle of the Hydaspes against Alexander the Great. His kingdom spanned between rivers Hydaspes (Jhelum) and Acesines (Chenab); Strabo had held the territory to contain almost 300 cities. He (alongside Abisares) had a hostile relationship with the Kingdom of Taxila which was ruled by his extended family. When the armies of Alexander crossed the Indus in its eastward migration, probably in Udabhandapura, he was greeted by the ruler of Taxila, Omphis. Omphis had hoped to force both Porus and Abisares into submission leveraging the might of Alexander's forces and diplomatic missions were mounted, but while Abisares accepted the submission, Porus refused. This led Alexander to seek for a face-off with Porus. Thus began the Battle of the Hydaspes in 326 BCE; the exact site remains unknown. The battle is thought to be resulted in a decisive Greek victory; however, A. B. Bosworth warns against an uncritical reading of Greek sources that were exaggerated. Alexander later founded two cities-Nicaea at the site of victory and Bucephalous at the battle-ground, in memory of his horse, who died soon after the battle. Later, tetradrachms would be minted depicting Alexander on horseback, armed with a sarissa and attacking a pair of Indians on an elephant. Porus refused to surrender and wandered about atop an elephant, until he was wounded and his force routed. When asked by Alexander how he wished to be treated, Porus replied "Treat me as a king would treat another king". Despite the apparently one-sided results, Alexander was impressed by Porus and chose to not depose him. Not only was his territory reinstated but also expanded with Alexander's forces annexing the territories of Glausaes, who ruled to the northeast of Porus' kingdom. After Alexander's death in 323 BC, Perdiccas became the regent of his empire, and after Perdiccas's murder in 321 BC, Antipater became the new regent. According to Diodorus, Antipater recognized Porus's authority over the territories along the Indus River. However, Eudemus, who had served as Alexander's satrap in the Punjab region, treacherously killed Porus.

Mauryan Empire (c. 320-180 BCE) Chandragupta Maurya, with the aid of Kautilya, had established his empire around 320 BC. The early life of Chandragupta Maurya is not clear. Kautilya enrolled the young Chandragupta in the university at Taxila to educate him in the arts, sciences, logic, mathematics, warfare, and administration. Megasthenes' account, as it has survived in Greek texts that quote him, states that Alexander the Great and Chandragupta met, which if true would mean his rule started earlier than 321 BC. As Alexander never crossed the Beas River, so his territory probably lay in the Punjab region. With the help of the small Janapadas of Punjab, he had gone on to conquer much of the North West Indian subcontinent. He then defeated the Nanda rulers in Pataliputra to capture the throne. Chandragupta Maurya fought Alexander's successor in the east, Seleucus when the latter invaded. In a peace treaty, Seleucus ceded all territories west of the Indus and offered

a marriage, including a portion of Bactria, while Chandragupta granted Seleucus 500 elephants. The chief of the Mauryan military was also always a Yaudheyian warrior according to the Bijaygadh Pillar inscription, which states that the Yaudheyas elected their own chief who also served as the general for the Mauryans. The Mauryan military was also made up vastly of men from the Punjab Janapadas. Chandragupta's rule was very well organised. The Mauryans had an autocratic and centralised administration system, aided by a council of ministers, and also a well-established espionage system. Much of Chandragupta's success is attributed to Chanakya, the author of the Arthashastra. Much of the Mauryan rule had a strong bureaucracy that had regulated tax collection, trade and commerce, industrial activities, mining, statistics and data, maintenance of public places, and upkeep of temples.

Medieval period Hindu Shahis (c. 820-1022 CE) In the 9th century, the Hindu Shahi dynasty originating from the region of Oddiyana, replaced the Taank kingdom, ruling Western Punjab along with eastern Afghanistan. The tribe of the Gakhars/Khokhars, formed a large part of the Hindu Shahi army according to the Persian historian Firishta. The most notable rulers of the empire were Lalliya, Bhimadeva and Jayapala who were accredited for military victories. Lalliya had reclaimed the territory at and around Kabul between 879 and 901 CE after it had been lost under his predecessor to the Saffarid dynasty. He was described as a fearsome Shahi. Two of his ministers reconstructed by Rahman as Toramana and Asata are said to have taken advantage of Amr al-Layth's preoccupation with rebellions in Khorasan, by successfully raiding Ghazna around 900 CE. After a defeat in Eastern Afghanistan suffered on the Shahi ally Lawik, Bhimadeva mounted a combined attack around 963 CE. Abu Ishaq Ibrahim was expelled from Ghazna and Shahi-Lawik strongholds were restored in Kabul and adjacent areas. This victory appears to have been commemorated in the Hund Slab Inscription (HSI).

Turkic rule (c. 1030-1320 CE) The Turkic Ghaznavids in the tenth century overthrew the Hindu Shahis and consequently ruled for 157 years in Western Punjab, gradually declining as a power until the Ghurid conquest of Lahore by Muhammad of Ghor in 1186, deposing the last Ghaznavid ruler Khusrau Malik. Following the death of Muhammad of Ghor in 1206 by Punjabi assassins near the Jhelum river, the Ghurid state fragmented and was replaced in northern India by the Delhi Sultanate.

Tughlaq dynasty (c. 1320-1410 CE) The Tughlaq dynasty's reign formally started in 1320 in Delhi when Ghazi Malik assumed the throne under the title of Ghiyath al-Din Tughluq after defeating Khusrau Khan at the Battle of Lahrawat. During Ghazi Malik's reign, in 1321 he sent his eldest son Jauna Khan, later known as Muhammad bin Tughlaq, to Deogir to plunder the Hindu kingdoms of Arangal and Tilang (now part of Telangana). His first attempt was a failure. Four months later, Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq sent large army reinforcements for his son asking him to attempt plundering Arangal and Tilang again. This time Jauna Khan succeeded and Arangal fell, it was renamed to Sultanpur, and all plundered wealth, state treasury and captives were transferred from the captured kingdom to the Delhi Sultanate. The Muslim aristocracy in Lakhnauti (Bengal) invited Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq to extend his coup and expand eastwards into Bengal by attacking Shamsuddin Firoz Shah, which he did over 1324-1325 CE, after placing Delhi under control of his son Ulugh Khan, and then leading his army to Lakhnauti. Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq succeeded in this campaign. After his father's death in 1325 CE, Muhammad bin Tughlaq assumed power and his rule saw the empire expand to most of the Indian subcontinent, its peak in terms of geographical reach. He attacked and plundered Malwa, Gujarat, Lakhnauti, Chittagong, Mithila and many other regions in India. His distant campaigns were expensive, although each raid and attack on non-Muslim kingdoms brought new looted wealth and ransom payments from captured people. The extended empire was difficult to retain, and rebellions became commonplace all over the Indian subcontinent. Muhammad bin Tughlaq died in March 1351 while trying to chase and punish people for rebellion and their refusal to pay taxes in Sindh and Gujarat. After Muhammad bin Tughlaq's death, the Tughlaq empire was in a

state of disarray with many regions assuming independence; it was at this point that Firuz Shah Tughlaq, Ghazi Malik's nephew, took reign. His father's name was Rajab (the younger brother of Ghazi Malik) who had the title Sipahsalar. His mother Naila was a Punjabi Bhatti princess (daughter of Rana Mal) from Dipalpur and Abohar according to the historian William Crooke. The southern states had drifted away from the Sultanate and there were rebellions in Gujarat and Sindh, while "Bengal asserted its independence." He led expeditions against Bengal in 1353 and 1358. He captured Cuttack, desecrated the Jagannath Temple, Puri, and forced Raja Gajpati of Jainagar in Orissa to pay tribute. He also laid siege to the Kangra Fort and forced Nagarkot to pay tribute. During this time, Tatar Khan of Greater Khorasan attacked Punjab, but he was defeated and his face slashed by the sword given by Feroz Shah Tughlaq to Raja Kailas Pal who ruled the Nagarkot region in Punjab.

Sayyid dynasty (c. 1410-1450 CE) Khizr Khan established the Sayyid dynasty, the fourth dynasty of the Delhi Sultanate after the fall of the Tughlaqs. Following Timur's 1398 sack of Delhi, he appointed Khizr Khan as deputy of Multan (Punjab). He held Lahore, Dipalpur, Multan and Upper Sindh. Khizr Khan captured Delhi on 28 May 1414 thereby establishing the Sayyid dynasty. Khizr Khan did not take up the title of sultan, but continued the fiction of his allegiance to Timur as Rayat-i-Ala(vassal) of the Timurids - initially that of Timur, and later his son Shah Rukh. After the accession of Khizr Khan, the Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Sindh were reunited under the Delhi Sultanate, where he spent his time subduing rebellions. Punjab was the powerbase of Khizr Khan and his successors as the bulk of the Delhi army during their reigns came from Multan and Dipalpur. Khizr Khan was succeeded by his son Mubarak Shah after his death on 20 May 1421. Mubarak Shah referred to himself as Muizz-ud-Din Mubarak Shah on his coins, removing the Timurid name with the name of the Caliph, and declared himself a Shah. He defeated the advancing Hoshang Shah Ghori, ruler of Malwa Sultanate and forced him to pay heavy tribute early in his reign. Mubarak Shah also put down the rebellion of Jasrath Khokhar and managed to fend off multiple invasions by the Timurids of Kabul. The last ruler of the Sayyids, Ala-ud-Din, voluntarily abdicated the throne of the Delhi Sultanate in favour of Bahlul Khan Lodi on 19 April 1451, and left for Badaun, where he died in 1478.

Langah Sultanate (c. 1450-1540 CE) In 1445, Sultan Qutbudin, chief of Langah (a Jat Zamindar tribe), established the Langah Sultanate in Multan after the fall of the Sayyid dynasty. Husseyn Langah I (reigned 1456-1502) was the second ruler of Langah Sultanate. He undertook military campaigns in Punjab and captured Chiniot and Shorkot from the Lodis. Shah Husayn successfully repulsed attempted invasion by the Lodis led by Tatar Khan and Barbak Shah, as well as his daughter Zeerak Rumman.

Modern period Mughal Empire (c. 1526-1761 CE) The Mughals came to power in the early 16th century and gradually expanded to control all of the Punjab from their capital at Lahore. During the Mughal era, Saadullah Khan, born into a family of Punjabi agriculturalists belonging to the Thaheem tribe from Chiniot remained grand vizier (or Prime Minister) of the Mughal Empire in the period 1645-1656. Other prominent Muslims from Punjab who rose to nobility during the Mughal Era include Wazir Khan, Adina Beg Arain, and Shahbaz Khan Kamboh. The Mughal Empire ruled the region until it was severely weakened in the eighteenth century. As Mughal power weakened, Afghan rulers took control of the region. Contested by the Marathas and Afghans, the region was the center of the growing influence of the misls, who expanded and established the Sikh Confederacy as the Mughals and Afghans weakened, ultimately ruling the Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and territories north into the Himalayas.

18th Century Punjabi Muslim states Pakpattan state (1692-1810 CE) Following the disintegration of the Mughal Empire, the shrine's D■w■n was able to forge a political independent state centered on Pakpattan. In 1757, D■w■n 'Abd as-Sub■n gathered an army of his Jat mur■ds, attacked the Raja of Bikaner, and thereby

expanded the shrine's territorial holdings for the first time east of the Sutlej. Around 1776, the Durrani, supported mainly by his Wattu murshids, successfully repelled an attack by the Sikh Nakai Misl, resulting in the death of the Nakai leader, Heera Singh Sandhu.

Sial State (1723 - 1816) Sial state was established by the 13 Sial Chief Nawab Walidad Khan Sial in 1723. He gradually gained control of the lower Rachna doab, including the cities of Chiniot, Pindi Bhattian, Jhang and Mankera. Next chief, Inayatullah Khan (r. 1747- 1787) was a successful general who won 22 battles against Bhangi Misl and the Multan chiefs. Sikh Empire invaded Jhang multiple times from 1801 to 1816. Sial state was annexed by Sikh Empire and Ahmad Khan Sial was awarded a Jagir by Ranjit Singh.

Sikh Empire (c. 1799-1849 CE) In the 19th century, Maharajah Ranjit Singh established the Sikh Empire based in the Punjab. The empire existed from 1799, when Ranjit Singh captured Lahore, to 1849, when it was defeated and conquered in the Second Anglo-Sikh War. It was forged on the foundations of the Khalsa from a collection of autonomous Sikh misls. At its peak in the 19th century, the Empire extended from the Khyber Pass in the west to western Tibet in the east, and from Mithankot in the south to Kashmir in the north. It was divided into four provinces: Lahore, in Punjab, which became the Sikh capital; Multan, also in Punjab; Peshawar; and Kashmir from 1799 to 1849. Religiously diverse, with an estimated population of 3.5 million in 1831 (making it the 19th most populous country at the time), it was the last major region of the Indian subcontinent to be annexed by the British Empire.

British Punjab (c. 1849-1947 CE) The Sikh Empire ruled the Punjab until the British annexed it in 1849 following the First and Second Anglo-Sikh Wars. Most of the Punjabi homeland formed a province of British India, though a number of small princely states retained local rulers who recognized British authority. The Punjab with its rich farmlands became one of the most important colonial assets. Lahore was a noted center of learning and culture, and Rawalpindi became an important military installation. Most Punjabis supported the British during World War I, providing men and resources to the war effort even though the Punjab remained a source of anti colonial activities. Disturbances in the region increased as the war continued. At the end of the war, high casualty rates, heavy taxation, inflation, and a widespread influenza epidemic disrupted Punjabi society. In 1919, Colonel Reginald Dyer ordered troops under command to fire on a crowd of demonstrators, mostly Sikhs in Amritsar. The Jallianwala massacre fueled the Indian independence movement. Nationalists declared the independence of India from Lahore in 1930 but were quickly suppressed. When the Second World War broke out, nationalism in British India had already divided into religious movements. Many Sikhs and other minorities supported the Hindus, who promised a secular multicultural and multireligious society, and Muslim leaders in Lahore passed a resolution to work for a Muslim Pakistan, making the Punjab region a center of growing conflict between Indian and Pakistani nationalists. At the end of the war, the British granted separate independence to India and Pakistan, setting off massive communal violence as Muslims fled to Pakistan and Hindu and Sikh Punjabis fled east to India. The British Raj had major political, cultural, philosophical, and literary consequences in the Punjab, including the establishment of a new system of education. During the independence movement, many Punjabis played a significant role, including Madan Lal Dhillon, Sukhdev Thapar, Ajit Singh Sandhu, Bhagat Singh, Udham Singh, Kartar Singh Sarabha, Bhai Parmanand, Choudhry Rahmat Ali, and Lala Lajpat Rai. At the time of partition in 1947, the province was split into East and West Punjab. East Punjab (48%) became part of India, while West Punjab (52%) became part of Pakistan. The Punjab bore the brunt of the civil unrest following partition, with casualties estimated to be in the millions. Another major consequence of partition was the sudden shift towards religious homogeneity occurred in all districts across Punjab owing to the new international border that cut through the province. This rapid demographic shift was primarily due to wide scale migration but also caused by large-scale religious cleansing

riots which were witnessed across the region at the time. According to historical demographer Tim Dyson, in the eastern regions of Punjab that ultimately became Indian Punjab following independence, districts that were 66% Hindu in 1941 became 80% Hindu in 1951; those that were 20% Sikh became 50% Sikh in 1951. Conversely, in the western regions of Punjab that ultimately became Pakistani Punjab, all districts became almost exclusively Muslim by 1951.

Geography The geographical definition of the term "Punjab" has changed over time. In the 16th century Mughal Empire it referred to a relatively smaller area between the Indus and the Sutlej rivers.

Sikh Empire At its height in the first half of the 19th century, the Sikh Empire spanned a total of over 200,000 sq mi (520,000 km²). The Punjab was a region straddling India and the Afghan Durrani Empire. The following modern-day political divisions made up the historical Punjab region during the Sikh Empire:

Punjab region, to Mithankot in the south Punjab, Pakistan, excluding Bahawalpur State Punjab, India, south to areas just across the Sutlej river Himachal Pradesh, India, south to areas just across the Sutlej river Jammu Division, Jammu and Kashmir, India and Pakistan (1808-1846) Kashmir region, Pakistan/China Kashmir Valley, India (1819-1846) Gilgit, Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan (1842-1846) Ladakh, India (1834-1846) Khyber Pass, Pakistan/Afghanistan Peshawar, Pakistan (taken in 1818, retaken in 1834) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, Pakistan (documented from Hazara, taken in 1818, again in 1836 to Bannu) Parts of Western Tibet, China (briefly in 1841, to Taklakot) After Ranjit Singh's death in 1839, the empire was severely weakened by internal divisions and political mismanagement. This opportunity was used by the East India Company to launch the First and Second Anglo-Sikh Wars. The country was finally annexed and dissolved at the end of the Second Anglo-Sikh War in 1849 into separate princely states and the province of Punjab. Eventually, a Lieutenant Governorship was formed in Lahore as a direct representative of the Crown.

Punjab (British India) In British India, until the Partition of India in 1947, the Punjab Province was geographically a triangular tract of country of which the Indus River and its tributary the Sutlej formed the two sides up to their confluence, the base of the triangle in the north being the Lower Himalayan Range between those two rivers. Moreover, the province as constituted under British rule also included a large tract outside these boundaries. Along the northern border, Himalayan ranges divided it from Kashmir and Tibet. On the west it was separated from the North-West Frontier Province by the Indus, until it reached the border of Dera Ghazi Khan District, which was divided from Baluchistan by the Sulaiman Range. To the south lay Sindh and Rajputana, while on the east the rivers Jumna and Tons separated it from the United Provinces. In total Punjab had an area of approximately 357 000 km square about the same size as modern day Germany, being one of the largest provinces of the British Raj.

It encompassed the present day Indian states of Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, and some parts of Himachal Pradesh which were merged with Punjab by the British for administrative purposes (but excluding the former princely states which were later combined into the Patiala and East Punjab States Union) and the Pakistani regions of the Punjab, Islamabad Capital Territory and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In 1901 the frontier districts beyond the Indus were separated from Punjab and made into a new province: the North-West Frontier Province. Subsequently, Punjab was divided into four natural geographical divisions by colonial officials on the decadal census data:

Indo-Gangetic Plain West geographical division (including Hisar district, Loharu State, Rohtak district, Dujana State, Gurgaon district, Pataudi State, Delhi, Karnal district, Jalandhar district, Kapurthala State, Ludhiana district, Malerkotla State, Firozpur district, Faridkot State, Patiala State, Jind State, Nabha State, Lahore District, Amritsar district, Gujranwala District, and Sheikhupura district); Himalayan geographical division (including Nahan State, Simla District, Simla Hill States, Kangra district, Mandi State, Suket State, and Chamba State); Sub-Himalayan geographical division (including Ambala district, Kalsia State, Hoshiarpur district, Gurdaspur District, Sialkot District, Gujrat District, Jhelum District, Rawalpindi District, and Attock District; North-West Dry Area geographical division (including Montgomery District, Shahpur District, Mianwali District, Lyallpur District, Jhang District, Multan District, Bahawalpur State, Muzaffargarh District, and Dera Ghazi Khan District).

Partition of British Punjab The struggle for Indian independence witnessed competing and conflicting interests in the Punjab. The landed elites of the Muslim, Hindu and Sikh communities had loyally collaborated with the British since annexation, supported the Unionist Party and were hostile to the Congress party-led independence movement. Amongst the peasantry and urban middle classes, the Hindus were the most active National Congress supporters, the Sikhs flocked to the Akali movement whilst the Muslims eventually supported the Muslim League. Since the partition of the sub-continent had been decided, special meetings of the Western and Eastern Section of the Legislative Assembly were held on 23 June 1947 to decide whether or not the Province of the Punjab be partitioned. After voting on both sides, partition was decided and the existing Punjab Legislative Assembly was also divided into West Punjab Legislative Assembly and the East Punjab Legislative Assembly. This last Assembly before independence, held its last sitting on 4 July 1947.

Major cities Historically, Lahore has been the capital of the Punjab region and continues to be the most populous city in the region, with a population of 11 million for the city proper. Faisalabad is the 2nd most populous city and largest industrial hub in this region. Other major cities are Rawalpindi, Gujranwala, Multan, Ludhiana, Amritsar, Jalandhar, and Chandigarh are the other cities in Punjab with a city-proper population of over a million.

Climate The climate has significant impact on the economy of Punjab, particularly for agriculture in the region. Climate is not uniform over the whole region, as the areas adjacent to the Himalayas generally receive heavier rainfall than those at a distance. There are three main seasons and two transitional periods. During the hot season, from mid-April to the end of June, the temperature may reach 49 C (120 F). The monsoon season, from July to September, is a period of heavy rainfall, providing water for crops in addition to the supply from canals and irrigation systems. The transitional period after the monsoon season is cool and mild, leading to the winter season, when the temperature in January falls to 5 C (41 F) at night and 12 C (54 F) by day. During the transitional period from winter to the hot season, sudden hailstorms and heavy showers may occur, causing damage to crops.

Western Punjab Central Punjab Eastern Punjab Demographics Languages The major language is Punjabi, which is written in India with the Gurmukhi script, and in Pakistan using the Shahmukhi script. The Punjabi language has official status and is widely used in education and administration in Indian Punjab, whereas in Pakistani Punjab these roles are instead fulfilled by the Urdu language and Punjabi is seen as a vernacular language. Several languages closely related to Punjabi are spoken in the various parts of the region. Dogri, Kangri, and other western Pahari dialects are spoken in the north-central and northeastern parts of the region, while Bagri is spoken in south-central and southeastern sections. Meanwhile, Saraiki is generally spoken across a wide belt covering the southwest, while in the northwest there are large pockets containing speakers

of Hindko and Pahari-Pothwari.

Religions Background The Punjab is predominantly Muslim though Hinduism is the oldest of the religions practised by Punjabi people, however, the term Hindu was also applied over a vast territory with much regional diversity. The historical Vedic religion constituted the religious ideas and practices in the Punjab during the Vedic period (1500-500 BC), centered primarily in the worship of Indra. The bulk of the Rigveda was composed in the Punjab region between circa 1500 and 1200 BCE, while later Vedic scriptures were composed more eastwards, between the Yamuna and Ganges rivers. An ancient Indian law book called the Manusmriti, developed by Brahmin Hindu priests, shaped Punjabi religious life from 200 BCE onward. Later, the spread of Buddhism and Jainism in the Indian subcontinent saw the growth of Buddhism and Jainism in the Punjab. Islam was introduced via southern Punjab in the 8th century, becoming the majority by the 16th century, via local conversion. There was a small Jain community left in Punjab by the 16th century, while the Buddhist community had largely disappeared by the turn of the 10th century. The region became predominantly Muslim due to missionary Sufi saints whose dargahs dot the landscape of the Punjab region. The rise of Sikhism in the 1700s saw some Punjabis, both Hindu and Muslim, accepting the new Sikh faith. A number of Punjabis during the colonial period of India became Christians, with all of these religions characterizing the religious diversity now found in the Punjab region.

Colonial era A number of Punjabis during the colonial period of India became Christians, with all of these religions characterizing the religious diversity now found in the Punjab region. Additionally during the colonial era, the practice of religious syncretism among Punjabi Muslims and Punjabi Hindus was noted and documented by officials in census reports:

"In other parts of the Province, too, traces of Hindu festivals are noticeable among the Muhammadans. In the western Punjab, Baisakhi, the new year's day of the Hindus, is celebrated as an agricultural festival, by all Muhammadans, by racing bullocks yoked to the well gear, with the beat of tom-toms, and large crowds gather to witness the show, The race is called Baisakhi and is a favourite pastime in the well-irrigated tracts. Then the processions of Tazias, in Muharram, with the accompaniment of tom-toms, fencing parties and bands playing on flutes and other musical instruments (which is disapproved by the orthodox Muhammadans) and the establishment of Sabils (shelters where water and sharbat are served out) are clearly influenced by similar practices at Hindu festivals, while the illuminations on occasions like the Chiraghan fair of Shalamar (Lahore) are no doubt practices answering to the holiday-making instinct of the converted Hindus." "Besides actual conversion, Islam has had a considerable influence on the Hindu religion. The sects of reformers based on a revolt from the orthodoxy of Varnashrama Dharma were obviously the outcome of the knowledge that a different religion could produce equally pious and right thinking men. Laxity in social restrictions also appeared simultaneously in various degrees and certain customs were assimilated to those of the Muhammadans. On the other hand the miraculous powers of Muhammadan saints were enough to attract the saint worshipping Hindus, to allegiance, if not to a total change of faith... The Shamsis are believers in Shah Shamas Tabrez of Multan, and follow the Imam, for the time being, of the Ismailia sect of Shias... they belong mostly to the Sunar caste and their connection with the sect is kept a secret, like Freemasonry. They pass as ordinary Hindus, but their devotion to the Imam is very strong."

The Indo-Gangetic Plain West geographical division included Hisar district, Loharu State, Rohtak district, Dujana State, Gurgaon district, Pataudi State, Delhi, Karnal district, Jalandhar district, Kapurthala State, Ludhiana district, Malerkotla State, Firozpur district, Faridkot State, Patiala State, Jind State, Nabha State, Lahore District, Amritsar district, Gujranwala District, and Sheikhupura District.

The Himalayan geographical division included Sirmoor State, Simla District, Simla Hill States, Bilaspur State, Kangra district, Mandi State, Suket State, and Chamba State.

The Sub-Himalayan geographical division included Ambala district, Kalsia State, Hoshiarpur district, Gurdaspur district, Sialkot District, Gujrat District, Jhelum District, Rawalpindi District, and Attock District.

The North-West Dry Area geographical division included Montgomery District, Shahpur District, Mianwali District, Lyallpur District, Jhang District, Multan District, Bahawalpur State, Muzaffargarh District, Dera Ghazi Khan District, and the Baloch Trans-Frontier Tract.

Post-partition In the present-day, the vast majority of Pakistani Punjabis are Sunni Muslim by faith, but also include significant minority faiths, such as Shia Muslims, Ahmadi Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs and Christians. Sikhism, founded by Guru Nanak is the main religion practised in the post-1966 Indian Punjab state. About 57.7% of the population of Punjab state is Sikh, 38.5% is Hindu, with the remaining population including Muslims, Christians, and Jains. Punjab state contains the holy Sikh cities of Amritsar, Anandpur Sahib, Tarn Taran Sahib, Fatehgarh Sahib and Chamkaur Sahib. The Punjab was home to several Sufi saints, and Sufism is well established in the region. Also, Kirpal Singh revered the Sikh Gurus as saints.

Tribes The Punjab region is diverse. Historic census reports taken in the colonial era details the main castes are represented, alongside numerous subcastes and tribes (also known as Jāti or Baradar), formed parts of the various ethnic groups in the region, contemporarily known as Punjabis, Haryanvis, Hindkowans, Saraikis, Dogras, Paharis, and more.

Economy The historical region of Punjab produces a relatively high proportion of the food output from India and Pakistan. The region has been used for extensive wheat farming. In addition, rice, cotton, sugarcane, fruit, and vegetables are also grown. The agricultural output of the Punjab region in Pakistan contributes significantly to Pakistan's GDP. Both Indian and Pakistani Punjab is considered to have the best infrastructure of their respective countries. The Indian state of Punjab is currently the 16th richest state or the eighth richest large state of India. Pakistani Punjab produces 68% of Pakistan's foodgrain production. Its share of Pakistan's GDP has historically ranged from 51.8% to 54.7%. and has the highest per capita of any province. Called "The Granary of India" or "The Bread Basket of India", Indian Punjab produces 1% of the world's rice, 2% of its wheat, and 2% of its cotton. In 2001, it was recorded that farmers made up 39% of Indian Punjab's workforce. In the Punjab region of Pakistan, 42.3% of the labour force is engaged in the agriculture sector. Alternatively, Punjab is also adding to the economy with the increase in employment of Punjab youth in the private sector. Government schemes such as 'Ghar Ghar Rozgar and Karobar Mission' have brought enhanced employability in the private sector. As of October 2019, more than 32,000 youths have been placed in different jobs and 12,000 have been skill-trained.

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Further reading External links

Official website of Punjab, India Official website of Punjab, Pakistan

Rajasthan

Rajasthan (Hindi: राजस्थान, pronounced [ˈɾads̪ˈθaːn] ; lit. 'Land of Kings') is a state in northwestern India. It is the largest Indian state by area and the seventh largest by population. It covers 342,239 square kilometres (132,139 sq mi) or 10.4 per cent of India's total geographical area. It is on India's northwestern side, where it comprises most of the wide and inhospitable Thar Desert (also known as the Great Indian Desert) and shares a border with the Pakistani provinces of Punjab to the northwest and Sindh to the west, along the Sutlej-Indus River valley. It is bordered by five other Indian states: Punjab to the north; Haryana and Uttar Pradesh to the northeast; Madhya Pradesh to the southeast; and Gujarat to the southwest. Its geographical location is 23°3' to 30°12' North latitude and 69°30' to 78°17' East longitude, with the Tropic of Cancer passing through its southernmost tip. Its major features include the ruins of the Indus Valley civilisation at Kalibangan and Balathal, the Dilwara Temples, a Jain pilgrimage site at Rajasthan's only hill station, Mount Abu, in the ancient Aravalli mountain range and eastern Rajasthan, the Keoladeo National Park of Bharatpur, a World Heritage Site known for its bird life. Rajasthan is also home to five national tiger reserves, the Ranthambore National Park in Sawai Madhopur, Sariska Tiger Reserve in Alwar, the Mukundra Hills Tiger Reserve in Kota, Ramgarh Vishdhari Tiger reserve and Karauli Dholpur tiger reserve. The State of Rajasthan was formed on 30 March 1949 when the states of the Rajputana Agency of the erstwhile British Empire in India were merged into the new Indian Union. Its capital and largest city is Jaipur. Other important cities are Jodhpur, Kota, Bikaner, Ajmer, Bhilwara, Sawai Madhopur, Bharatpur and Udaipur. The economy of Rajasthan is the seventh-largest state economy in India with ₹10.20 lakh crore (US\$120 billion) in gross domestic product and a per capita GDP of ₹118,000 (US\$1,400). Rajasthan ranks 22nd among Indian states in human development index.

Etymology Rajasthan means "Land of Kings" and is a portmanteau of Sanskrit "राज" ('King') and Sanskrit "स्थान" ('Land') or Persian "St(h)ān", with the same meaning. The oldest reference to Rajasthan is found in a stone inscription dated back to 625. The first printed mention of the name Rajasthan appears in the 1829 publication *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan or the Central and Western Rajpoot States of India*, while the earliest known record of Rajputana as a name for the region is in George Thomas's 1800 memoir *Military Memories*. John Keay, in his book *India: A History*, stated that Rajputana was coined by the British in 1829, John Briggs, translating Ferishta's history of early Islamic India, used the phrase "Rajpoot (Rajput) princes" rather than "Indian princes".

History Ancient times Parts of what is now Rajasthan were partly part of the Vedic Civilisation and the Indus Valley civilisation. Kalibangan, in Hanumangarh district, was a major provincial capital of the Indus Valley Civilisation. Topsfield writes that the Rajputs first entered India from the north west in the first millennium A.D. They established kingdoms in western India in the region that is now known as Rajasthan. An archaeological excavation at the Balathal site in Udaipur district shows a settlement contemporary with the Harappan civilisation dating back to 3000-1500 BCE. Stone Age tools dating from 5,000 to 200,000 years were found in Bundi and Bhilwara districts of the state.

The Matsya kingdom of the Vedic civilisation of India is said to roughly corresponded to the former state of Jaipur in Rajasthan and included the whole of Alwar with portions of Bharatpur. The capital of Matsya was at Viratanagar (modern Bairat), which is said to have been named after its founder King Virata. Bhargava identifies the two districts of Jhunjhunu and Sikar and parts of Jaipur district along with Haryana districts of

Mahendragarh and Rewari as part of Vedic state of Brahmavarta. Bhargava also locates the present day Sahibi River as the Vedic Drishadwati River, which along with Saraswati River formed the borders of the Vedic state of Brahmavarta. Manu and Bhrigu narrated the Manusmriti to a congregation of seers in this area. The ashrams of Vedic seers Bhrigu and his son Chayvan Rishi, for whom Chyawanprash was formulated, were near Dhosi Hill, part of which lies in Dhosi village of Jhunjhunu district of Rajasthan and part of which lies in Mahendragarh district of Haryana. The Western Kshatrapas (405-35 BCE), the Saka rulers of the western part of India, were successors to the Indo-Scythians and were contemporaneous with the Kushans, who ruled the northern part of the Indian subcontinent. The Indo-Scythians invaded the area of Ujjain and established the Saka era (with their calendar), marking the beginning of the long-lived Saka Western Satraps state. The Allahabad Pillar Inscription (also known as the Prayaga Pillar Inscription) of Samudragupta, AD 360, records that the Abhiras were a powerful tribe who ruled over the whole of Rajasthan.

Classical era Gurjara-Pratihara The Pratiharas ruled for many dynasties in this part of the country; the region was known as Gurjaratra. Up to the 10th century, almost all of North India acknowledged the supremacy of the Imperial Pratiharas, with their seat of power at Kannauj. The Gurjara Pratihara Empire acted as a barrier for Arab invaders from the 8th to the 11th century. The chief accomplishment of the Gurjara-Pratihara Empire lies in its successful resistance to foreign invasions from the west, starting in the days of Junaid. Historian R. C. Majumdar says that this was openly acknowledged by the Arab writers. He further notes that historians of India have wondered at the slow progress of Muslim invaders in India, as compared with their rapid advance in other parts of the world. Now there seems little doubt that it was the power of the Pratihara army that effectively barred the progress of the Arabs beyond the confines of Sindh, their only conquest for nearly 300 years.

Medieval and early modern eras The Ghurids had made an attempt to invade India through southern Rajasthan, however they were defeated in the Battle of Kasahrada on 1178 by a confederacy of Rajputs under Mularaja II of the Kingdom of Gujarat. Prithviraj Chauhan led a confederacy of Rajput clans and defeated the invading Ghurids under Muhammad Ghori in the First Battle of Tarain in 1191. In 1192, Muhammad Ghori decisively defeated Prithviraj at the Second Battle of Tarain. After the defeat of Chauhan in the same year, a part of Rajasthan came under Muslim rulers. The principal centres of their powers were Nagaur and Ajmer. Ranthambhore was also under their suzerainty. At the beginning of the 13th century, the most prominent and powerful state of Rajasthan was Mewar. Since the invasion of the Muslim Turks from the 13th century onwards, the Rajputs resisted the Muslim incursions into India, and preserved Hindu culture at their courts. The Rajputs put up resistance to the Islamic invasions with their warfare and chivalry for centuries. The Ranas of Mewar led other kingdoms in their resistance to outside rule. Rana Hammir Singh defeated the Tughlaq dynasty and recovered a large portion of Rajasthan. The indomitable Rana Kumbha defeated the Sultans of Malwa, Nagaur and Gujarat and made Mewar the most powerful Rajput Kingdom in India. The ambitious Rana Sanga united the various Rajput clans, including the Muslim Khanzadas of Mewar under Raja Hasan Khan Mewati, and fought against the foreign powers in India. Rana Sanga defeated the Afghan Lodi Empire of Delhi and crushed the Turkic Sultanates of Malwa and Gujarat. Rana Sanga then tried to create an Indian empire but was defeated by the first Mughal Emperor Babur at Khanwa. The defeat was due to betrayal by the Tomar King Silhadi of Raisen. After Rana Sanga's death, Marwar rose as a power centre in Rajasthan under Rao Maldeo Rathore. He conquered Jaisalmer, parts of Gujarat, Jalore, Nagaur, Ajmer, Santhore, Bhinmal, Radhanpur, Bayana, Tonk, Toda and Nabhara. He expanded the territories of Marwar up to Sindh-Cholisthan in west and his northern boundary was just fifty kilometres from Delhi. After defeating Humayun, Sher Shah came towards Rajputana. He defeated Chiefs of Rathore army by trickery in Battle of Sammel and captured some territory of Marwar but it was recovered by Rathores in 1545. Hem Chandra Vikramaditya, the Hindu emperor, was born in the village of Machheri in Alwar District in 1501. He won 22 battles against Afghans, from Punjab to Bengal including the states of Ajmer and Alwar in Rajasthan, and defeated Akbar's forces twice, first at Agra and then

at Delhi in 1556 at Battle of Delhi before acceding to the throne of Delhi and establishing the "Hindu Raj" in North India, albeit for a short duration, from Purana Qila in Delhi. Hem Chandra was killed in the battlefield at Second Battle of Panipat fighting against Mughals on 5 November 1556.

During Akbar's reign most of the Rajput kings accepted Mughal suzerainty, but the rulers of Mewar (Rana Udai Singh II) and Marwar (Rao Chandrasen Rathore) refused to have any form of alliance with the Mughals. To teach the Rajputs a lesson Akbar attacked Udai Singh and killed Rajput commander Jaimal of Chitor and the citizens of Mewar in large numbers. Akbar killed 20,000-25,000 unarmed citizens in Chittor on the grounds that they had actively helped in the resistance. Maharana Pratap took an oath to avenge the citizens of Chittor; he fought the Mughal empire till his death and liberated most of Mewar apart from Chittor itself. Maharana Pratap soon became the most celebrated warrior of Rajasthan and became famous all over India for his sporadic warfare and noble actions. According to Satish Chandra, "Rana Pratap's defiance of the mighty Mughal empire, almost alone and unaided by the other Rajput states, constitutes a glorious saga of Rajput valor and the spirit of self-sacrifice for cherished principles. Rana Pratap's methods of sporadic warfare were later elaborated further by Malik Ambar, the Deccani general, and by Shivaji". Rana Amar Singh I continued his ancestor's war against the Mughals under Jehangir, he repelled the Mughal armies at Dewar. Later an expedition was again sent under the leadership of Prince Khurram, which caused much damage to life and property of Mewar. Many temples were destroyed, several villages were put on fire and women and children were captured and tortured to make Amar Singh accept surrender. During Aurangzeb's rule Rana Raj Singh I, Veer Durgadas Rathore and Patshah Akheraj Singh Rajpurohit were chief among those who defied the intolerant emperor of Delhi. They took advantage of the Aravalli hills and caused heavy damage to the Mughal armies that were trying to occupy Rajasthan. After Aurangzeb's death Bahadur Shah I tried to subjugate Rajasthan like his ancestors but his plan backfired when the three Rajput Rajas of Amber, Udaipur, and Jodhpur made a joint resistance to the Mughals. The Rajputs first expelled the commandants of Jodhpur and Bayana and recovered Amer by a night attack. They next killed Sayyid Hussain Khan Barha, the commandant of Mewar and many other Mughal officers. Bahadur Shah I, then in the Deccan was forced to patch up a truce with the Rajput Rajas. The Jats, under Suraj Mal, overran the Mughal garrison at Agra and plundered the city taking with them the two great silver doors of the entrance of the famous Taj Mahal which were then melted down by Suraj Mal in 1763. Over the years, the Mughals began to have internal disputes which greatly distracted them at times. The Mughal Empire continued to weaken, and with the decline of the Mughal Empire in the late 18th century, Rajputana came under the influence of the Marathas. The Maratha Empire, which had replaced the Mughal Empire as the overlord of the subcontinent, was finally replaced by the British Empire in 1818. In the 19th century, the Rajput kingdoms were exhausted financially and in manpower after continuous wars and due to heavy tributes exacted by the Maratha Empire. To save their kingdoms from instability, rebellions and banditry the Rajput kings concluded treaties with the British in the early 19th century, accepting British suzerainty and control over their external affairs in return for internal autonomy.

Modern era The State of Rajasthan was formed on 30 March 1949 when the states of the Rajputana Agency of the erstwhile British Empire in India were merged into the new Indian Union. Modern Rajasthan includes most of Rajputana, which comprises the erstwhile nineteen princely states, three chiefships, and the British district of Ajmer-Merwara. Jaisalmer, Marwar (Jodhpur), Bikaner, Mewar (Chittorgarh), Alwar and Dhundhar (Jaipur) were some of the main Rajput princely states. Bharatpur and Dholpur were Jat princely states whereas Tonk was a princely state under Pathans. The three chiefships were Lawa, Neemrana and Kushalgarh.

Geography The geographic features of Rajasthan are the Thar Desert and the Aravalli Range, which runs through the state from southwest to northeast, almost from one end to the other, for more than 850 kilometres

(530 mi). Mount Abu lies at the southwestern end of the range, separated from the main ranges by the West Banas River. Although a series of broken ridges continues into Haryana in the direction of Delhi where it can be seen as outcrops in the form of the Raisina Hill and the ridges farther north. About three-fifths of Rajasthan lies northwest of the Aravallis, leaving two-fifths on the east and south direction.

The Aravalli Range runs across the state from the southwest peak Guru Shikhar (Mount Abu), which is 1,722 metres (5,650 ft) in height, to Khetri in the northeast. This range divides the state into 60% in the northwest of the range and 40% in the southeast. The northwest tract is sandy and unproductive with little water but improves gradually from desert land in the far west and northwest to comparatively fertile and habitable land towards the east. The south-eastern area, higher in elevation (100 to 350 m above sea level) and more fertile, has a very diversified topography. In the south lies the hilly tract of Mewar. In the southeast, a large area within the districts of Kota and Bundi forms a tableland. To the northeast of these districts is a rugged region (badlands) following the line of the Chambal River. Farther north the country levels out; the flat plains of the northeastern Bharatpur district are part of an alluvial basin. Merta City lies in the geographical centre of Rajasthan. The Aravalli Range and the lands to the east and southeast of the range are generally more fertile and better watered. This region is home to the Khathiar-Gir dry deciduous forests ecoregion, with tropical dry broadleaf forests that include teak, Acacia, and other trees. The hilly Vagad region, home to the cities of Dungarpur, Pratapgarh, and Banswara lies in southernmost Rajasthan, on the border with Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. With the exception of Mount Abu, Vagad is the wettest region in Rajasthan, and the most heavily forested. North of Vagad lies the Mewar region, home to the cities of Udaipur and Chittaurgarh. The Hadoti region lies to the southeast, on the border with Madhya Pradesh. North of Hadoti and Mewar lies the Dhundhar region, home to the state capital of Jaipur. Mewar, the easternmost region of Rajasthan, borders Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. Eastern and southeastern Rajasthan is drained by the Banas and Chambal rivers, tributaries of the Ganges. The northwestern portion of Rajasthan is generally sandy and dry. Most of this region is covered by the Thar Desert which extends into adjoining portions of Pakistan. The Aravalli Range does not intercept the moisture-giving southwest monsoon winds off the Arabian Sea, as it lies in a direction parallel to that of the coming monsoon winds, leaving the northwestern region in a rain shadow. The Thar Desert is thinly populated; the City of Jodhpur is the largest city in the desert and a major metropolitan area of India which is known as the gateway of the Thar desert. The desert has some major districts like Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Barmer, Bikaner, and Nagaur. This area is also important from a defence point of view. Jodhpur airbase is one of the largest airbases in India, BSF and Military bases are also situated here. Currently four civil airports are located here: Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Bikaner and Nagaur, of which Jodhpur is the major civil airport, being the 44th busiest airport in India and one of the oldest air strips of India, being built in the 1920s. The Northwestern thorn scrub forests lie in a band around the Thar Desert, between the desert and the Aravallis. This region receives less than 400 mm of rain annually. Temperatures can sometimes exceed 45 C in the summer months and drop below freezing point in the winter. The Godwar, Marwar, and Shekhawati regions lie in the thorn scrub forest zone, along with the city of Jodhpur. The Luni River and its tributaries are the major river system of Godwar and Marwar regions, draining the western slopes of the Aravallis and emptying southwest into the great Rann of Kutch wetland in neighbouring Gujarat. This river is saline in the lower reaches and remains potable only up to Balotara in Barmer district. The Ghaggar River, which originates in Haryana, is an intermittent stream that disappears into the sands of the Thar Desert in the northern corner of the state and is seen as a remnant of the primitive Sarasvati river.

Flora and fauna The Desert National Park in Jaisalmer, spread over an area of 3,162 square kilometres (1,221 sq mi), is an excellent example of the ecosystem of the Thar Desert and its diverse fauna. Seashells and massive fossilised tree trunks in this park record the geological history of the desert. The region is a haven for migratory and resident birds of the desert. One can see many eagles, harriers, falcons, buzzards, kestrels and

vultures. Short-toed snake eagles (*Circaetus gallicus*), tawny eagles (*Aquila rapax*), spotted eagles (*Aquila clanga*), laggar falcons (*Falco jugger*) and kestrels are some of the raptor species seen in Desert National Park. Road traffic inside the Park is, however, a threat to several wild species of the park with several species of amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals reported to have died as roadkill. The Ranthambore National Park located in Sawai Madhopur, one of the well known tiger reserves in the country, became a part of Project Tiger in 1973. Tal Chhapar Sanctuary is a very small sanctuary in Sujangarh, Churu District, 210 kilometres (130 mi) from Jaipur in the Shekhawati region. This sanctuary is home to a large population of blackbuck. Desert foxes and the caracal, an apex predator, also known as the desert lynx, can also be spotted, along with birds such as the partridge, harriers, eastern imperial eagle, pale harrier, marsh harrier, short-toed eagle, tawny eagle, sparrow hawk, crested lark, demoiselle crane, skylarks, green bee-eater, brown dove, black ibis, and sand grouse. The great Indian bustard, known locally as the godavan, and which is a state bird, has been classed as critically endangered since 2011.

Wildlife protection Rajasthan is also noted for its national parks and wildlife sanctuaries. There are four national parks and wildlife sanctuaries: Keoladeo National Park of Bharatpur, Sariska Tiger Reserve of Alwar, Ranthambore National Park of Sawai Madhopur, and Desert National Park of Jaisalmer. A national-level institute, Arid Forest Research Institute (AFRI) an autonomous institute of the ministry of forestry is situated in Jodhpur and continuously works on desert flora and their conservation. Ranthambore National Park is 7 km from Sawai Madhopur Railway Station. It is known worldwide for its tiger population and is considered by both wilderness lovers and photographers as one of the best places in India to spot tigers. At one point, due to poaching and negligence, tigers became extinct at Sariska, but five tigers have been relocated there. Prominent among the wildlife sanctuaries are Mount Abu Sanctuary, Bhensrod Garh Sanctuary, Darrah Sanctuary, Jaisamand Sanctuary, Kumbhalgarh Wildlife Sanctuary, Jawahar Sagar Sanctuary, and Sita Mata Wildlife Sanctuary.

Governance and administration The state is governed by a parliamentary system of representative democracy. The governor serves as the state's constitutional leader, whereas the chief minister assumes the role of both the head of the government and the head of the council of ministers. The Legislative Assembly consists of 200 members who are elected for five-year terms. The state contributes 25 seats to Lok Sabha, the lower house of the Indian Parliament, and 10 seats to Rajya Sabha, the upper house. The Government of Rajasthan is a democratically elected body in India with the governor as its constitutional head. Governor is appointed by the President of India for a five-year term. The leader of the party or coalition with a majority in the Legislative Assembly is appointed as the chief minister by the governor, and the council of ministers are appointed by the governor on the advice of the chief minister. The governor remains a ceremonial head of the state, while the chief minister and his council are responsible for day-to-day government functions. The council of ministers consists of Cabinet Ministers, Ministers of State (MoS) and Deputy Ministers. The Secretariat headed by the Chief Secretary assists the council of ministers. The Chief Secretary is also the administrative head of the government. Each government department is headed by a minister, who is assisted by an Additional Chief Secretary or a Principal Secretary, who is usually an officer of Indian Administrative Service (IAS), the Additional Chief Secretary/Principal Secretary serve as the administrative head of the department they are assigned to. Each department also has officers of the rank of Secretary, Special Secretary, Joint Secretary etc. assisting the Minister and the Additional Chief Secretary/Principal Secretary. For the administration purpose, the state is divided into 07 divisions and 41 districts. Divisional Commissioner, is the head of administration on the divisional level. The administration in each district is headed by a District Magistrate/District Collector, who is also an IAS officer, and is assisted by a number of officers belonging to Rajasthan Administrative Services. In Rajasthan, the police force is led by an IPS officer holding the position of Director General of Police. Each district is supervised by a Superintendent of Police, also an IPS officer, who is supported by officers from the

Rajasthan Police Services. Their primary responsibility involves maintaining law and order and addressing relevant issues within their respective districts. The management of forests, environment, and wildlife in the district is overseen by the Divisional Forest Officer, who is a member of the Indian Forest Service. This responsibility is carried out with the assistance of officers from the Rajasthan Forest Service and Rajasthan Subordinate Service.

Rajasthan has its High court Jodhpur which has its principal seat at Jodhpur and a bench at Jaipur, with district courts and session courts in each district or Sessions Division, and lower courts at the tehsil level. The president of India appoints the chief justice of the High Court of Rajasthan judiciary on the advice of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India as well as the governor of Rajasthan. In Rajasthan, the Subordinate Judicial Service is an essential component of the state's judiciary, and it is divided into two categories: the Rajasthan Civil Judicial Services and the Rajasthan Higher Judicial Service. The former includes Civil Judges (Junior Division)/Judicial Magistrates and Civil Judges (Senior Division)/Chief Judicial Magistrate. On the other hand, the latter consists of Civil and Sessions Judges. The District Judge has control over the Subordinate Judicial Service in Rajasthan. The politics of Rajasthan has mainly been dominated mainly by the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Indian National Congress. Chief Secretary Of Rajasthan is Usha Sharma and Director General of Police or DGP of Rajasthan is Umesh Mishra.

Regions, divisions, districts and cities Rajasthan is composed of the following geographical, political and historical regions:

Bagar Hadoti Dhundhar Gorwar Shekhawati Mewar Marwar Vagad Mewat Brij Merwara Rajasthan is divided into 41 districts within 7 divisions:

A district collector or district magistrate, who is appointed by either the Indian Administrative Service or the Rajasthan Public Service Commission, governs each district. Subdivisions (Tehsils) are responsible for governing districts and are overseen by sub-divisional magistrates. Additionally, districts are further divided into blocks. A block consists of panchayats (village councils) and town municipalities. Tehsils are intermediate level panchayat between the Zilla Parishad (district councils) at the district level and gram panchayat (village councils) at the lower level. Rajasthan has 5 cities with over one million population. The absolute urban population of the state is 17.4 million, which constitutes 24.87% of the total urban population of the state. There are 10 municipal corporations, 34 municipal councils and 172 municipal boards or nagar pachayats in the state. Jaipur, Jodhpur, and Kota have two municipal corporations each since October 2019, as their populations have exceeded 1 million.

Communication Major internet service provider (ISP) and telecom companies are present in Rajasthan including Vodafone Idea, BSNL, Airtel, Jio, Data Infosys Limited, RailTel Corporation of India, Software Technology Parks of India (STPI). Data Infosys was the first ISP to bring the internet to Rajasthan in April 1999 and OASIS was the first private mobile telephone company.

Economy Rajasthan's economy is primarily agricultural and pastoral. Wheat and barley are cultivated over large areas, as are pulses, sugarcane, and oilseeds. Cotton and tobacco are the state's cash crops. Rajasthan is among the largest producers of edible oils in India and the second-largest producer of oilseeds. Rajasthan is also the biggest wool-producing state in India and the main opium producer and consumer. There are mainly two crop seasons. The water for irrigation comes from wells and tanks. The Indira Gandhi Canal irrigates

northwestern Rajasthan.

The main industries are mineral based, agriculture-based, and textile based. Rajasthan is the second-largest producer of polyester fibre in India. Several prominent chemical and engineering companies are located in the city of Kota, in southern Rajasthan. Rajasthan is pre-eminent in quarrying and mining in India. The Taj Mahal was built from white marble which was mined from a town called Makrana. The state is the second-largest source of cement in India. It has rich salt deposits at Sambhar, copper mines at Khetri, Jhunjhunu, and zinc mines at Dariba, Zawar mines and Rampura Agucha (opencast) near Bhilwara. Dimensional stone mining is also undertaken in Rajasthan. Jodhpur sandstone is mostly used in monuments, important buildings, and residential buildings. This stone is termed as Chittar Patthar. Jodhpur leads in the handicraft and guar gum industries. Rajasthan is also a part of the Mumbai-Delhi Industrial corridor set to benefit economically. The state gets 39% of the DMIC, with major districts of Jaipur, Alwar, Kota and Bhilwara benefiting. Rajasthan also has reserves of low-silica limestone. Rajasthan connected 100% of its population to electricity power in 2019 (raising the rate of electricity access from 71% of the population in 2015). The renewable energy sector plays the most important role in the increase of generation capacities, with the main focus on solar energy. In 2020, Bhadla Solar Park was recognised as the largest cluster of photovoltaic power plants in a single region in the world, with the installed power exceeding the 2.2 gigawatt peak. Rajasthan is also a significant producer of silver. The state produced 679.172 tonnes of silver in 2018-19, 609.153 tonnes in 2019-20, and 705.676 tonnes in 2020-21.

Transportation Rajasthan is connected by many national highways, the most renowned being NH 8, which is India's first 4-8 lane highway. Rajasthan also has an inter-city surface transport system both in terms of railways and bus network. All chief cities are connected by air, rail, and road.

Air Jaipur International Airport (JAI) in Jaipur, is the state's largest, busiest and only international airport. Jaipur International Airport offers international service to Dubai, Bangkok, Sharjah and Muscat. There are five civilian airports in Rajasthan including Jodhpur Airport, Udaipur Airport, Ajmer Airport, Bikaner Airport and Jaisalmer Airport. Domestic airports are operated by the Airports Authority of India (AAI) and shares its airside with the Indian Air Force. These airports connect Rajasthan with the major cities of India such as Mumbai, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Chennai and Bangalore.

Railway Railways length in the state constitute 8.66 per cent of all India route length. Jaipur Junction is the headquarters of the North Western Railway. Jaipur, Ajmer, Bikaner are the busiest railway stations in the state. Kota is the only electrified section served by three Rajdhani Expresses and trains to all major cities of India. Jaipur Superfast Express, fastest train under Superfast category of trains; connects the finance capital of India Mumbai to Jaipur. Luxury tourist train Maharajas' Express runs across North-West and Central India, mainly centred on Rajasthan. There is also an international railway, the Thar Express from Jodhpur (India) to Karachi (Pakistan). However, this is not open to foreign nationals. Jaipur Metro is the metro rail system in the city of Jaipur. It is the only metro rail system in Rajasthan and has been operational since 3 June 2015. It is the first metro in India to run on triple-storey elevated road and metro track.

Road The state is served by a substantial road network, providing links between urban centres, agricultural market-places and rural areas. There are 33 national highways (NH) in the state, covering a total distance of 10,004.14 km (6,216.28 mi). The state has a total road length of 269,028 km (167,166 mi). The Department of Public Works is responsible for maintaining and expanding the state highways system and major district roads.

Jaipur-Kishangarh Expressway forms a segment of the NH-8 which is a part of the Golden Quadrilateral project. Rajasthan State Road Transport Corporation (RSRTC) was established in 1964 to provide economical and reliable passenger road transport service in the state with connecting services to adjoining states. For travelling locally, the state, like most of the country, has auto rickshaws and cycle rickshaws. Average speed on state highways varies between 50 and 60 kilometres per hour (31-37 mph) due to the heavy presence of vehicles; in villages and towns, speeds are as low as 25-30 km/h (16-19 mph).

Demographics Population According to the 2011 Census of India, Rajasthan has a total population of 68,548,437. The state contributes to 5.66% of India's population. The population density is 201 people per square kilometre. The sex ratio in 2011, at 928 women to 1000 men, was lower than the national figure of 943. The native Rajasthani people make up the majority of the state's population. The state of Rajasthan is also populated by Sindhis, who came to Rajasthan from Sindh province (now in Pakistan) during the India-Pakistan separation in 1947. Brahmins, according to Outlook constituted 8% to 10% of the population of Rajasthan as per a 2003 report, but only 7% in a 2007 report. According to a 2007 DNA India report, 12.5% of the state are Brahmins. According to a report by Moneycontrol.com at the time of 2018 Rajasthan Legislative Assembly election, the Scheduled Caste (SC) population was 18%, Scheduled Tribe (ST) was 13%, Jats 12%, Gurjars and Rajputs 9% each, Brahmins and Meenas 7% each. A Hindustan Times report from 2019 also agrees to the total ST population of 13%, of which Meenas constitute the biggest group at 7%. According to a Deutsche Welle report, the Jats constitute 12-15% of the population of Rajasthan, followed by Meenas with 10% and Gurjars with 6%. While as per a 2007 BBC Hindi report, Meenas were 14% and Gurjars were 4% of the state's population.

Language Hindi is the official language of the state, while English is the additional official language. The languages of Rajasthan primarily belong to the Rajasthani group of Indo-Aryan languages, which most people regard as their own language. In the north are dialects of Punjabi and Bagri, which is a transition between Rajasthani and Punjabi. In the northeast Shekhawati and Dhundari are spoken which gradually merge with Haryanvi. In the east Mewati is spoken in the Mewat region, while in the far east Braj is spoken. To the southeast Haryanvi is spoken. To the west in the heart of the Thar Desert Marwari is spoken, which merges to Gujarati in the southwest. In the south, in the Mewar region, Mewari is spoken, while in the hills of Wagad, Wagdi, a Bhil language, is spoken. Many speakers of Rajasthani languages refer to their language as Hindi, and Standard Hindi is the medium of education and is common in cities. Urdu is also common in cities although the vast majority of Muslims speak one of the Rajasthani languages as their first language. Sindhi is also common in the cities and along the border with Sindh in Pakistan where Dhatki, a transition between Marwari and Sindhi, is the main dialect on both sides of the border. The languages taught under the three-language formula are:

First language: Hindi Second language: English Third language: Gujarati, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi or Urdu

Religion Rajasthan's residents are mainly Hindus, who account for 88.49% of the population. Muslims make up 9.07%, Sikhs 1.27% and Jains 0.91% of the population.

Culture Food Rajasthani cooking was influenced by both the war-like lifestyles of its inhabitants and the availability of ingredients in this arid region. Food that could last for several days and could be eaten without heating was preferred. Thus, pickles of Rajasthan are quite famous for their tangy and spicy flavour. The Panchkuta delicacy is also a famous one - meaning 5 vegetables - a dish that lasts for several days, and is

made out of certain weed plants that only grow in the wild desert. The scarcity of water and fresh green vegetables have all had their effect on cooking. It is known for its snacks like Bikaneri Bhujia. Other famous dishes include bajre ki roti (millet bread) and lahsun ki chutney (hot garlic paste), mawa kachori Mirchi Bada, Pyaaj Kachori and ghevar from Jodhpur, Alwar ka Mawa (milk cake), Kadhi kachori from Ajmer, Malpua from Pushkar, Daal kachori (Kota kachori) from Kota and rassgullas from Bikaner. Originating from the Marwar region of the state is the concept of Marwari Bhojnalaya or vegetarian restaurants, today found in many parts of India, which offer vegetarian food popular among Marwari people. Ghee is an essential ingredient in most Rajasthani cuisines, and dollops of ghee are poured over food as a welcoming gesture for guests. Dal-baati-churma is very popular in Rajasthan. The traditional way to serve it is to first coarsely mash the baati, and then pour pure ghee on top of it. It is served with daal (lentils) and spicy garlic chutney; it is also served with besan (gram flour) ki kadi. It is commonly served at all festivities, including religious occasions, wedding ceremonies, and birthday parties in Rajasthan.

Music and dance The Ghoomar dance from Jaipur, Jodhpur, and Kalbelia of the Kalbelia tribe has gained international recognition. Folk music is a large part of the Rajasthani culture. The Manganiyar, Meena and Langa communities from Rajasthan are notable for their folk music. Kathputli, Bhopa, Chang, Teratali, Ghindr, Gair dance, Kachchhi Ghor, and Tejaji are examples of traditional Rajasthani culture. Folk songs are commonly ballads that relate heroic deeds and love stories; and religious or devotional songs known as bhajans and banis which are often accompanied by musical instruments like dholak, sitar, and sarangi are also sung.

Art Rajasthan is known for its traditional, colourful art. The block prints, tie and dye prints, gota patti (main), Bagaru prints, Sanganer prints, and Zari embroidery are major export products from Rajasthan. Handicraft items like wooden furniture and crafts, carpets, and blue pottery are commonly found here. Shopping reflects the colourful culture, Rajasthani clothes have a lot of mirror work and embroidery. Traditional Rajasthani dress for females consists of an ankle-length skirt and a short top, known as chaniya choli. A piece of cloth is used to cover the head, both for protection from heat and maintenance of modesty. Rajasthani dresses are usually designed in bright colours such as blue, yellow, and orange.

Education In recent years, Rajasthan has worked on improving education. The state government has been making sustained efforts to raise the education standard. Schools in the state are either managed by the government or by private trusts. The medium of instruction in most of the schools is mainly English, or Hindi. Under the 10+2+3 plan, after completing secondary school, students typically enroll for two years in a junior college, also known as pre-university, or in schools with a higher secondary facility affiliated with the Board of Secondary Education or any central board. Students choose from one of three streams, namely liberal arts, commerce, or science. Upon completing the required coursework, students may enrol in general or professional degree programs. The secondary schools are affiliated with the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE), the Central Board for Secondary Education (CBSE), and the National Institute of Open School (NIOS). Rajasthan has 52 universities, 26 state funded public universities, 7 deemed universities, an IIT in Jodhpur, an IIM in Udaipur, an NIT in Jaipur, a National Law University in Jodhpur, and one central and state-run university. Kota, is renowned for being a hub for training students in various national-level competitive exams that are necessary for securing admission to engineering and medical colleges across the country. In order to promote a reading culture among the rural population, the state has established new libraries up to the panchayat level and computerised all public libraries throughout the state, providing modern amenities to readers and subscriber.

Literacy In recent decades the literacy rate of Rajasthan has increased significantly. In 1991, the state's literacy rate was only 38.55% (54.99% male and 20.44% female). In 2001, the literacy rate increased to 60.41% (75.70% male and 43.85% female). This was the highest leap in the percentage of literacy recorded in India (the rise in female literacy being 23%). At the Census 2011, Rajasthan had a literacy rate of 67.06% (80.51% male and 52.66% female). Although Rajasthan's literacy rate is below the national average of 74.04% and although its female literacy rate is the lowest in the country, the state has been praised for its efforts and achievements in raising literacy rates. In rural areas of Rajasthan, the literacy rate is 76.16% for males and 45.8% for females. This has been debated across all the party levels, when the governor of Rajasthan set a minimum educational qualification for the village panchayat elections.

Tourism Rajasthan attracted a total of 45.9 million domestic and 1.6 million foreign tourists in 2017, which is the tenth highest in terms of domestic visitors and fifth highest in foreign tourists. The tourism industry in Rajasthan is growing effectively each year and is becoming one of the major income sources for the state government. Rajasthan is home to many attractions for domestic and foreign travellers, including the forts and palaces of Jaipur, the lakes of Udaipur, the temples of Rajsamand and Pali, sand dunes of Jaisalmer and Bikaner, Havelis of Mandawa and Fatehpur, the wildlife of Sawai Madhopur, the scenery of Mount Abu, the tribes of Dungarpur and Banswara, and the cattle fair of Pushkar. Rajasthan is known for its customs, culture, colours, majestic forts, and palaces, folk dances and music, local festivals, local food, sand dunes, carved temples and Havelis. Rajasthan's Jaipur Jantar Mantar, Mehrangarh Fort and Stepwell of Jodhpur, Dilwara Temples, Chittor Fort, Lake Palace, miniature paintings in Bundi, and numerous city palaces and Havelis are part of the architectural heritage of India. Jaipur, the Pink City, is noted for the ancient houses made of a type of sandstone dominated by a pink hue. In Jodhpur, most houses are painted blue. At Ajmer, there is white marble Bara-dari on the Anasagar lake and Soniji Ki Nasiyan. Jain Temples dot Rajasthan from north to south and east to west. Dilwara Temples of Mount Abu, Shrinathji Temple of Nathdwara, Ranakpur Jain temple dedicated to Lord Adinath in Pali District, Jain temples in the fort complexes of Chittor, Jaisalmer and Kumbhalgarh, Lodurva Jain temples, Mirpur Jain Temple of Sirohi, Sarun Mata Temple at Kotputli, Bhandasar and Karni Mata Temple of Bikaner and Mandore of Jodhpur are some of the best examples. Keoladeo National Park, Ranthambore National Park, Sariska Tiger Reserve, Tal Chhapar Sanctuary, are wildlife attractions of Rajasthan. Mewar festival of Udaipur, Teej festival and Gangaur festival in Jaipur, Desert festival of Jodhpur, Brij Holi of Bharatpur, Matsya festival of Alwar, Kite festival of Jodhpur, Kolayat fair in Bikaner are some of the most popular fairs and festivals of Rajasthan.

See also Outline of Rajasthan North India

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External links [Government Official Site of the Government of Rajasthan, India](#) [Official Tourism Site of Rajasthan, India](#)

General information Geographic data related to Rajasthan at OpenStreetMap The Modern Endangered Archives Program Hereditary Music of Western Rajasthan collection is available through the UCLA Library.

Sikkim

Sikkim (SIK-im; Nepali: [सिक्किम]) is a state in northeastern India. It borders Bhutan in the east, the Tibet Autonomous Region of China in the north and northeast, Koshi Province of Nepal in the west, and West Bengal in the south. Sikkim is also close to the Siliguri Corridor, which borders Bangladesh. Sikkim is the least populous and second-smallest among the Indian states. Situated in the Eastern Himalaya, Sikkim is notable for its biodiversity, including alpine and subtropical climates, as well as being a host to Kangchenjunga, the highest peak in India and third-highest on Earth. Sikkim's capital and largest city is Gangtok. Almost 35% of the state is covered by Khangchendzonga National Park - a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Kingdom of Sikkim was founded by the Namgyal dynasty in the 17th century. It was ruled by Buddhist priest-kings known as the Chogyal. It became a princely state of the British Indian Empire in 1890. Following Indian independence, Sikkim continued its protectorate status with the Union of India after 1947 and the Republic of India after 1950. It enjoyed the highest literacy rate and per capita income among Himalayan states. In 1973, anti-royalist riots took place in front of the Chogyal's palace. In 1975, after the Indian Army took over the city of Gangtok, a referendum was held that led to the dissolution of the monarchy and Sikkim's joining India as its 22nd state. Modern Sikkim is a multiethnic and multilingual Indian state. The predominant religion is Hinduism, with a significant Vajrayana Buddhist minority. Sikkim's economy is largely dependent on agriculture and tourism. As of 2019, the state had the fifth-smallest GDP among Indian states, although it is also among the fastest-growing.

Toponymy The name Sikkim is believed to be a combination of the Limbu words su "new" and khyim "palace" or "house". The Tibetan name for Sikkim is Drenjong (འབྲས་ཇོང་།, Wylie transliteration: 'bras ljongs), which means "valley of rice", while the Bhutias call it Beyul Demazong, which means "the hidden valley of rice". According to folklore, after establishing Rabdentse as his new capital, Bhutia king Tensung Namgyal built a palace and asked his Limbu Queen to name it. The Lepcha people, the original inhabitants of Sikkim, called it Nye-mae-el, meaning "paradise". In historical Indian literature, Sikkim is known as Indrakil, the garden of the war god Indra.

History The Lepchas are considered to be the earliest inhabitants of Sikkim. However the Limbus and the Magars also lived in the inaccessible parts of West and South districts as early as the Lepchas perhaps lived in the East and North districts. The Buddhist saint Padmasambhava, also known as Guru Rinpoche, passed through the land in the 8th century. The Guru is reported to have blessed the land, introduced Buddhism, and foretold the era of monarchy that would arrive in Sikkim centuries later.

Foundation of the monarchy According to legend, Khye Bumsa, a 14th-century prince from the Minyak House in Kham of Tibetan ancestry, received a divine revelation instructing him to travel south to seek his fortunes. A fifth-generation descendant of Khye Bumsa, Phuntsog Namgyal, became the founder of Sikkim's monarchy in 1642, when he was consecrated as the first Chogyal, or priest-king, of Sikkim by the three venerated lamas at Yuksom. Phuntsog Namgyal was succeeded in 1670 by his son, Tensung Namgyal, who moved the capital from Yuksom to Rabdentse (near modern Pelling). In 1700, Sikkim was invaded by the Bhutanese with the help of the half-sister of the Chogyal, who had been denied the throne. The Bhutanese were driven away by the Tibetans, who restored the throne to the Chogyal ten years later. Between 1717 and 1733, the kingdom faced many raids by the Nepalese in the west and Bhutanese in the east, culminating with the destruction of the capital Rabdentse by the Nepalese. In 1791, the Dalai Lama sent troops to support Sikkim and defend Tibet

against the Gorkha Kingdom. Following the subsequent defeat of Gorkha, an alliance of Sino-Tibetans established control over Sikkim.

During the British Raj Following the beginning of British rule of neighbouring India, Sikkim allied with Britain against their common adversary, Nepal. The Nepalese attacked Sikkim, overrunning most of the region including the Terai. This prompted the British East India Company to attack Nepal, resulting in the Gurkha War of 1814. Treaties signed between Sikkim and Nepal resulted in the return of the territory annexed by the Nepalese in 1817. However, ties between Sikkim and the British weakened when the latter began taxation of the Morang region. In 1849, two British physicians, Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker and Archibald Campbell, the latter being the superintendent of Darjeeling, ventured into the mountains of Sikkim with the prior permission of King Tsugphu Namgyal. The doctors were detained by an influential Dewan, leading to a punitive British expedition against the kingdom, after which the Darjeeling district and Morang were annexed to British India in 1853. The Chogyal of Sikkim became a titular ruler under the directive of the British governor as a result of the invasion. Sikkim became a British protectorate in the later decades of the 19th century, formalised by a convention signed with China in 1890. Sikkim was gradually granted more sovereignty over the next three decades, and became a member of the Chamber of Princes, the assembly representing the rulers of the Indian princely states, in 1922.

Indian protectorate Prior to Indian independence, Jawaharlal Nehru, as the Vice-President of the Executive Council, pushed through a resolution in the Indian Constituent Assembly to the effect that Sikkim and Bhutan, as Himalayan states, were not 'Indian states' and their future should be negotiated separately. A standstill agreement was signed in February 1948. Meanwhile, Indian independence and its move to democracy spurred a fledgling political movement in Sikkim, giving rise to the formation of Sikkim State Congress (SSC), a pro-accession political party. The party sent a plate of demands to the palace, including a demand for accession to India. The palace attempted to defuse the movement by appointing three secretaries from the SSC to the government and sponsoring a counter-movement in the name of Sikkim National Party, which opposed accession to India. The demand for responsible government continued, and the SSC launched a civil disobedience movement. The Chogyal Palden Thondup Namgyal asked India for help in quelling the movement, which was offered in the form of a small military police force and an Indian Dewan. In 1950, a treaty was agreed between India and Sikkim which gave Sikkim the status of an Indian protectorate. Sikkim came under the suzerainty of India, which controlled its external affairs, defence, diplomacy and communications. In other respects, Sikkim retained administrative autonomy. A state council was established in 1953 to allow for constitutional government under the Chogyal. Chogyal Palden Thondup Namgyal was able to preserve autonomy and shape a "model Asian state" where the literacy rate and per capita income were twice as high as neighbouring Nepal, Bhutan and India. Meanwhile, the Sikkim National Congress demanded fresh elections and greater representation for Nepalis in Sikkim. People marched on the palace against the monarchy. In 1973, anti-royalist agitations took place, which needed to be quelled using Indian security forces.

Merger and statehood In 1975, the Prime Minister of Sikkim Kazi Lhendup Dorjee, appealed to the Indian Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi for Sikkim to become a state of India. In April of that year, the Indian Army took over the city of Gangtok and disarmed the Chogyal's palace guards. Thereafter, a referendum was held in which 97.5 per cent of voters supported abolishing the monarchy, effectively approving union with India. India is said to have stationed 20,000-40,000 troops in a country of only 200,000 during the referendum. On 16 May 1975, Sikkim became the 22nd state of the Indian Union, and the monarchy was abolished. To enable the incorporation of the new state, the Indian Parliament amended the Indian Constitution. First, the 35th Amendment laid down a set of conditions that made Sikkim an "Associate State", a special designation not

used by any other state. A month later, the 36th Amendment repealed the 35th Amendment, and made Sikkim a full state, adding its name to the First Schedule of the Constitution.

Recent history In 2000, the seventeenth Karmapa, Urgyen Trinley Dorje, who had been confirmed by the Dalai Lama and accepted as a tulku by the Chinese government, escaped from Tibet, seeking to return to the Rumtek Monastery in Sikkim. Chinese officials were in a dilemma on this issue, for any protests to India would mean an explicit endorsement of India's governance of Sikkim, which China still recognised as an independent state occupied by India. The Chinese government eventually recognised Sikkim as an Indian state in 2003, in return for India declaring Tibet as a part of the territory of China; New Delhi had accepted Tibet as part of China in 1954, but China appears to have believed that the agreement had lapsed. The 2003 agreement led to a thaw in Sino-Indian relations. On 6 July 2006, the Sikkimese Himalayan pass of Nathu La was opened to cross-border trade, becoming the first open border between India and China. The pass, which was first opened during the 1904 Younghusband Expedition to Tibet, had remained closed since the 1962 Sino-Indian War. On 18 September 2011, a magnitude 6.9Mw earthquake struck Sikkim, killing at least 116 people in the state and in Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Tibet. More than 60 people died in Sikkim alone, and the city of Gangtok suffered significant damage.

Geography Situated in the Himalayan mountains, the state of Sikkim is characterised by mountainous terrain. Almost the entire state is hilly, with an elevation ranging from 280 metres (920 ft) in the south at the border with West Bengal to 8,586 metres (28,169 ft) in the northern peaks near Nepal and Tibet. The summit of Kangchenjunga, the world's third-highest peak, is the state's highest point, situated on the border between Sikkim and Nepal. For the most part, the land is unfit for agriculture because of the rocky, precipitous slopes. However, some hill slopes have been converted into terrace farms.

Numerous snow-fed streams have carved out river valleys in the west and south of the state. These streams combine into the major Teesta River and its tributary, the Rangeet, which flow through the state from north to south. About a third of the state is heavily forested. The Himalayan mountains surround the northern, eastern and western borders of Sikkim. The Lower Himalayas, lying in the southern reaches of the state, are the most densely populated.

The state has 28 mountain peaks, more than 80 glaciers, 227 high-altitude lakes (including the Tsongmo, Gurudongmar and Khecheopalri Lakes), five major hot springs, and more than 100 rivers and streams. Eight mountain passes connect the state to Tibet, Bhutan and Nepal. Sikkim's hot springs are renowned for their medicinal and therapeutic value. Among the state's most notable hot springs are those at Phurchachu, Yumthang, Borang, Ralang, Taram-chu and Yumey Samdong. The springs, which have a high sulphur content, are located near river banks; some are known to emit hydrogen. The average temperature of the water in these hot springs is 50 C (122 F).

Geology The hills of Sikkim mainly consist of gneiss and schist which weather to produce generally poor and shallow brown clay soils. The soil is coarse, with large concentrations of iron oxide; it ranges from neutral to acidic and is lacking in organic and mineral nutrients. This type of soil tends to support evergreen and deciduous forests. The rock consists of phyllites and schists, and is highly susceptible to weathering and erosion. This, combined with the state's heavy rainfall, causes extensive soil erosion and the loss of soil nutrients through leaching. As a result, landslides are frequent, often isolating rural towns and villages from the major urban centres.

Climate The state has five seasons: winter, summer, spring, autumn, and monsoon season. Sikkim's climate ranges from sub-tropical in the south to tundra in the north. Most of the inhabited regions of Sikkim experience a temperate climate, with temperatures seldom exceeding 28 C (82 F) in summer. The average annual temperature for most of Sikkim is around 18 C (64 F). Sikkim is one of the few states in India to receive regular snowfall. The snow line ranges from 6,100 metres (20,000 ft) in the south of the state to 4,900 metres (16,100 ft) in the north. The tundra-type region in the north is snowbound for four months every year, and the temperature drops below 0 C (32 F) almost every night. In north-western Sikkim, the peaks are frozen year-round; because of the high altitude, temperatures in the mountains can drop to as low as -40 C (-40 F) in winter. During the monsoon, heavy rains increase the risk of landslides. The record for the longest period of continuous rain in Sikkim is 11 days. Fog affects many parts of the state during winter and the monsoons, making transportation perilous.

Flora and fauna Sikkim is situated in an ecological hotspot of the lower Himalayas, one of only three among the ecoregions of India. The forested regions of the state exhibit a diverse range of fauna and flora. Owing to its altitudinal gradation, the state has a wide variety of plants, from tropical species to temperate, alpine and tundra ones, and is perhaps one of the few regions to exhibit such a diversity within such a small area. Nearly 81 per cent of the area of Sikkim comes under the administration of its forest department. Sikkim is home to around 5,000 species of flowering plants, 515 rare orchids, 60 primula species, 36 rhododendron species, 11 oak varieties, 23 bamboo varieties, 16 conifer species, 362 types of ferns and ferns allies, 8 tree ferns, and over 900 medicinal plants. A relative of the Poinsettia, locally known as "Christmas Flower", can be found in abundance in the mountainous state. The Noble Dendrobium is the official flower of Sikkim, while the rhododendron is the state tree. Orchids, figs, laurel, bananas, sal trees and bamboo grow in the Himalayan subtropical broadleaf forests of the lower altitudes of Sikkim. In the temperate elevations above 1,500 metres (4,900 ft) there are Eastern Himalayan broadleaf forests, where oaks, chestnuts, maples, birches, alders, and magnolias grow in large numbers, as well as Himalayan subtropical pine forests, dominated by Chir pine. Alpine-type vegetation is typically found between an altitude of 3,500 to 5,000 metres (11,500 to 16,400 ft). In lower elevations are found juniper, pine, firs, cypresses and rhododendrons from the Eastern Himalayan subalpine conifer forests. Higher up are Eastern Himalayan alpine shrub and meadows and high-altitude wetlands, which are home to a wide variety of rhododendrons and wildflowers.

The fauna of Sikkim include the snow leopard, musk deer, Himalayan tahr, red panda, Himalayan marmot, Himalayan serow, Himalayan goral, muntjac, common langur, Asian black bear, clouded leopard, marbled cat, leopard cat, dhole, Tibetan wolf, hog badger, binturong, and Himalayan jungle cat. Among the animals more commonly found in the alpine zone are yaks, mainly reared for their milk, meat, and as a beast of burden. The avifauna of Sikkim include the impeyan pheasant, crimson horned pheasant, snow partridge, Tibetan snowcock, bearded vulture and griffon vulture, as well as golden eagles, quails, plovers, woodcocks, sandpipers, pigeons, Old World flycatchers, babblers and robins. Sikkim has more than 550 species of birds, some of which have been declared endangered. Sikkim also has a rich diversity of arthropods, many of which remain unstudied. Some of the most understudied species are Sikkimese arthropods, specifically butterflies. Of the approximately 1,438 butterfly species found in the Indian subcontinent, 695 have been recorded in Sikkim. These include the endangered Kaiser-i-hind, the Yellow Gorgon and the Bhutan Glory.

National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries List of National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries of Sikkim:

Khangchendzonga National Park Pangolakha Wildlife Sanctuary Fambong Lho Wildlife Sanctuary Kyongnosla Alpine Sanctuary Maenam Wildlife Sanctuary Barsey Rhododendron Sanctuary Shingba Rhododendron Sanctuary Kitam Bird Sanctuary Sling Dong Faireanum Orchid Conservation Reserve

Government and politics According to the Constitution of India, Sikkim has a parliamentary system of representative democracy for its governance; universal suffrage is granted to state residents. The government structure is organised into three branches:

Executive: As with all states of India, a governor stands at the head of the executive power of state, just as the president is the head of the executive power in the Union, and is appointed by the President of India. The governor's appointment is largely ceremonial, and his or her main role is to oversee the swearing-in of the chief minister. The chief minister, who holds the real executive powers, is the head of the party or coalition garnering the largest majority in the state elections. The governor also appoints cabinet ministers on the advice of the chief minister. **Legislature:** Sikkim has a unicameral legislature, the Sikkim Legislative Assembly, like most other Indian states. Its state assembly has 32 seats, including one reserved for the Sangha. Sikkim is allocated one seat in each of the two chambers of India's national bicameral legislature, the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha. **Judiciary:** The judiciary consists of the Sikkim High Court and a system of lower courts. The High Court, located at Gangtok, has a Chief Justice along with two permanent justices. The Sikkim High Court is the smallest state high court in the country. In 1975, after the abrogation of Sikkim's monarchy, the Indian National Congress gained a majority in the 1977 elections. In 1979, after a period of instability, a popular ministry headed by Nar Bahadur Bhandari, leader of the Sikkim Sangram Parishad Party, was sworn in. Bhandari held on to power in the 1984 and 1989 elections. In the 1994 elections, Pawan Kumar Chamling of the Sikkim Democratic Front became the Chief Minister of the state. Chamling and his party had since held on to power by winning the 1999, 2004, 2009 and 2014 elections. However, the 2019 legislative assembly elections were won by the Sikkim Krantikari Morcha party and the chief minister since then is Prem Singh Tamang. The current Governor of Sikkim is Lakshman Acharya. Sikkim is among India's most environmentally conscious states, having banned plastic water bottles "in all government functions and meetings" and polystyrene products (throughout the state).

Subdivisions Sikkim has six districts - Gangtok District, Mangan District, Namchi District, Pakyong District, Geyzing District and Soreng District. The district capitals are Gangtok, Mangan, Namchi, Pakyong, Gyalshing and Soreng respectively. These six districts are further divided into 16 subdivisions; Pakyong, Rongli, Rangpo and Gangtok are the subdivisions of the Gangtok and Pakyong Districts. Soreng, Yuksom, Gyalshing and Dentam are the subdivisions of the Geyzing and Soreng district. Chungthang, Dzongu, Kabi and Mangan are the subdivisions of the Mangan district. Ravongla, Jorethang, Namchi and Yangyang are the subdivisions of the Namchi district. Each of Sikkim's districts is overseen by a state government appointee, the district collector, who is in charge of the administration of the civilian areas of the district. The Indian Army has control over a large part of the state, as Sikkim forms part of a sensitive border area with China. Many areas are restricted to foreigners, and official permits are needed to visit them.

Economy Sikkim's nominal state gross domestic product (GDP) was estimated at US\$4.6 billion in 2019, with GDP per capita being \$7,530 (■ 5,50,000) thus constituting the third-smallest GDP among India's 28 states. The state's economy is largely agrarian based on the terraced farming of rice and the cultivation of crops such as maize, millet, wheat, barley, oranges, tea, and cardamom. Sikkim produces more cardamom than any other Indian state and is home to the largest cultivated area of cardamom. Sikkim achieved its ambition to convert its agriculture to fully organic between 2003 and 2016, and became the first state in India to achieve this

distinction. Because of its hilly terrain and poor transport infrastructure, Sikkim lacks a large-scale industrial base. Brewing, distilling, tanning and watchmaking are the main industries and are mainly located in the southern regions of the state, primarily in the towns of Melli and Jorethang. In addition, a small mining industry exists in Sikkim extracting minerals such as copper, dolomite, talc, graphite, quartzite, coal, zinc, and lead. Despite the state's minimal industrial infrastructure, Sikkim's economy has been among the fastest-growing in India since 2000; the state's GDP expanded by 89.93% in 2010 alone. In 2003, Sikkim decided to fully convert to organic farming and achieved this goal in 2015 becoming India's first "organic state". In recent years, the government of Sikkim has extensively promoted tourism. As a result, state revenue has increased 14 times since the mid-1990s. Sikkim has furthermore invested in a fledgling gambling industry promoting both casinos and online gambling. The state's first casino, the Casino Sikkim, opened in March 2009. In the year 2010, the government subsequently issued three gambling licences for casinos and online sports betting in general. The Playwin lottery has been a notable success in the state. The opening of the Nathu La pass on 6 July 2006, connecting Lhasa, Tibet, to India, was billed as a boon for Sikkim's economy. Trade through the pass remains hampered by Sikkim's limited infrastructure and government restrictions in both India and China, though the volume of traded goods has been steadily increasing.

Transport Air Sikkim did not have any operational airport for a long time because of its rough terrain. However, in October 2018, Pakyong Airport, the state's first airport, located in Pakyong Town at a distance of 30 km (19 mi) from Gangtok, became operational after a four-year delay. It has been constructed by the Airports Authority of India on 200 acres of land. At an altitude of 4,700 feet (1,400 m) above sea level, it is one of the five highest airports in India. The airport is capable of operating ATR aircraft. Before October 2018, the closest operational airport to Sikkim was Bagdogra Airport near Siliguri in northern West Bengal. The airport is located about 124 km (77 mi) from Gangtok, and frequent buses connect the two. A daily helicopter service run by the Sikkim Helicopter Service connects Gangtok to Bagdogra; the flight is thirty minutes long, operates only once a day, and can carry four people. The Gangtok helipad is the only civilian helipad in the state.

Roads National Highway 10 (NH 10; formerly NH 31A) links Siliguri to Gangtok. Sikkim Nationalised Transport runs bus and truck services. Privately run bus, tourist taxi, and jeep services operate throughout Sikkim and also connect it to Siliguri. A branch of the highway from Melli connects western Sikkim. Towns in eastern, southern and western Sikkim are connected to the hill stations of Kalimpong and Darjeeling in northern West Bengal. The state is furthermore connected to Tibet by the mountain pass of Nathu La. List of national highways of Sikkim:

Rail Sikkim lacks significant railway infrastructure. The closest major railway stations are Siliguri Junction and New Jalpaiguri in neighbouring West Bengal. However, the New Sikkim Railway Project has been launched to connect the town of Rangpo in Sikkim with Sevoke on the West Bengal border. This line is Sevoke-Rangpo Railway Line from Sivok railway station to Rangpo railway station. The five-station line is intended to support both economic development and Indian Army operations and was initially planned to be completed by 2015, though as of 2023 its construction has met with delays. In 2019, the railway line up to Rangpo was expected to be completed in 2021. In the second phase the line will be extended up to Gangtok. In addition, the Ministry of Railways proposed plans in 2010 for railway lines linking Mirik in West Bengal to Namchi, Daramdin, Ranipool, and Gangtok.

Infrastructure Sikkim's roads are maintained by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO), an offshoot of the Indian Army. The roads in southern Sikkim are in relatively good condition, landslides being less frequent in this region. The state government maintains 1,857 kilometres (1,154 mi) of roadways that do not fall under the

BRO's jurisdiction. Sikkim receives most of its electricity from 19 hydroelectric power stations. Power is also obtained from the National Thermal Power Corporation and Power Grid Corporation of India. By 2006, the state had achieved 100 per cent rural electrification. However, the voltage remains unstable and voltage stabilisers are needed. Per capita consumption of electricity in Sikkim was approximately 182 kWh in 2006. The state government has promoted biogas and solar power for cooking, but these have received a poor response and are used mostly for lighting purposes. In 2005, 73.2 per cent of Sikkim's households were reported to have access to safe drinking water, and the state's large number of mountain streams assures a sufficient water supply. On 8 December 2008, it was announced that Sikkim had become the first state in India to achieve 100 per cent sanitation coverage, becoming completely free of public defecation, thus attaining the status of "Nirmal State".

Demographics Sikkim is India's least populous state, with 610,577 inhabitants according to the 2011 census. Sikkim is also one of the least densely populated Indian states, with only 86 persons per square kilometre. However, it has a high population growth rate, averaging 12.36% per cent between 2001 and 2011. The sex ratio is 889 females per 1,000 males, with a total of 321,661 males and 286,027 females recorded in 2011. With around 98,000 inhabitants as of 2011, the capital Gangtok is the most significant urban area in the mostly rural state; in 2005, the urban population in Sikkim constituted around 11.06 per cent of the total. In 2011, the average per capita income in Sikkim stood at ■ 81,159 (US\$1,305).

Languages The official languages of the state are Nepali, Sikkimese (Bhutia), Lepcha, Limbu, Newar, Rai, Gurung, Magar, Sherpa, Tamang, Sunwar (Mukhia) and Bhujel. Nepali and English are the primary working languages of the executive and legislature, whereas the others are used for the purpose of preservation of culture and tradition in the state. Nepali is the lingua franca of Sikkim, while Sikkimese (Bhutia), Lepcha, Limbu and others are spoken in certain areas of the state. English is also spoken and understood in most of Sikkim. Other languages include Dzongkha, Groma, Hindi, Majhi, Majhwar, Thulung, Tibetan, and Yakha.

Ethnicity The majority of Sikkim's residents are Nepali Indians. The native Sikkimese include the Bhutias, who migrated from the Kham district of Tibet in the 14th century, and the Lepchas, who are believed to pre-date the Bhutias and are the oldest known inhabitants. Tibetans reside mostly in the northern and eastern reaches of the state. Migrant resident communities known as Plainsmen Sikkimese include Bengalis, Biharis and Marwaris, who are prominent in commerce in South Sikkim and Gangtok, only those who are the native residents since 1946.

Religion According to the 2011 census, 57.8% follow Hinduism, making it the state's majority religion. Buddhism is followed by 27.4% of the population, while Christianity is followed by 9.9%. Between 2001 and 2011, Christianity was the fastest growing religion in the state, going from 6.67% to 9.91% of the population. It was thus the fourth state with the highest Christian growth in the period, behind only Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Meghalaya. As of 2014, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Sikkim is the largest Christian denomination in Sikkim. Hinduism, on the other hand, declined from 60.93% to 57.76% of the population in the same period. Sikkim was the fourth state with the biggest decline in the percentage of Hindus, behind only Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Assam. Vajrayana Buddhism, which accounts for 27.3% of the population, is Sikkim's second-largest, yet most prominent religion. Prior to Sikkim's becoming a part of the Indian Union, Vajrayana Buddhism was the state religion under the Chogyal. Sikkim has 75 Buddhist monasteries, the oldest dating back to the 1700s. The public and visual aesthetics of Sikkim are executed in shades of Vajrayana Buddhism and Buddhism plays a significant role in public life, even among Sikkim's majority Nepali Hindu population. Other religious minorities include Muslims of Tibet, Bihari ethnicity and Jains, who each account for

roughly 1% of the population. The traditional religions of the native Sikkimese account for much of the remainder of the population. Sikkim have 7 mosques, 2 Gurudwara, 336 Hindu temples and 168 churches. Although tensions between the Lepchas and the Nepalese escalated during the merger of Sikkim with India in the 1970s, there has never been any major degree of communal religious violence, unlike in other Indian states. The traditional religion of the Lepcha people is Mun, an animist practice which coexists with Buddhism and Christianity.

Districts There are 6 districts in Sikkim, each overseen by a Central Government appointee, the district collector, who is in charge of the administration of the civilian areas of the districts. The Indian Army has control of a large territory, as the state is a sensitive border area. Many areas are restricted and permits are needed to visit them. The six districts are:

Culture Festivals and holidays Sikkim's Gorkhali majority celebrate all major Hindu festivals, including Tihar (Diwali) and Dashain (Dashera). Traditional local festivals, such as Maghe Sankranti, Ramnavmi, Janmastami, Holi, Shivaratri, Navratri, Sakela, Chasok Tangnam and Bhimsen Puja, are popular. Losar, Saga Dawa, Lhabab Duechen, Drupka Teshi and Bhumchu are among the Buddhist festivals celebrated in Sikkim. During the Losar (Tibetan New Year), most offices and educational institutions are closed for a week. Sikkimese Muslims celebrate Eid ul-Fitr and Muharram. Christmas has been promoted in Gangtok to attract tourists during the off-season. Western rock music and Indian pop have gained a wide following in Sikkim. Nepali rock and Lepcha music are also popular. Sikkim's most popular sports are football and cricket, although hang gliding and river rafting have grown popular as part of the tourism industry.

Cuisine Traditional cuisines of the Lepcha, Limbu, Magar, and Bhutia peoples incorporate the rich biodiversity of the place. The Buddhist saint Padmasambhava, also known as Guru Rinpoche, who passed through ancient Sikkim in the eighth century noted the rich produce of the place in his writings, There are about 155 varieties of fruits with different tastes and nutritional values. [These include] a walnut that tastes like butter; a fruit known as wallay... and a grape with the taste of wine. There are fruits called tingding with the taste of meat, and sedey, which can be eaten as the equivalent of an entire meal; turnips, and thirty-seven other types of root vegetables are available. There are twenty different varieties of garlic. Altogether, among the edible plants, there are 360 varieties available. There are wild radishes, along with tsolay, nyolay, and grapes in the valley. In the trees, among the rocks and hanging from the cliffs there are beehives. Noodle-based dishes such as thukpa, chow mein, thenchuk, fakthu, gyathuk and wonton are common in Sikkim. Momos - steamed dumplings filled with vegetables, chicken, mutton, beef or pork and served with soup - are a popular snack. Beer, whiskey, rum and brandy are widely consumed in Sikkim, as is tongba, a millet-based alcoholic beverage that is popular in Nepal and Darjeeling. Sikkim has the third-highest per capita alcoholism rate among all Indian states, behind Punjab and Haryana.

Media In 1957, a Nepali monthly magazine Kanchenjunga became the first news outlet for the masses in Sikkim. The southern urban areas of Sikkim have English, Nepali and Hindi daily newspapers. Nepali-language newspapers, as well as some English newspapers, are locally printed, whereas Hindi and English newspapers are printed in Siliguri. Important local dailies and weeklies include Hamro Prajashakti (Nepali daily), Himalayan Mirror (English daily), the Samay Dainik, Sikkim Express (English), Kanchanjunga Times (Nepali weekly), Pragya Khabar (Nepali weekly) and Himali Bela. Furthermore, the state receives regional editions of national English newspapers such as The Statesman, The Telegraph, The Hindu and The Times of India. Himalaya Darpan, a Nepali daily published in Siliguri, is one of the leading Nepali daily newspapers in the region. The Sikkim Herald is an official weekly publication of the government. Online media covering Sikkim include the

Nepali newspaper Himgiri, the English news portal Haalkhabar and the literary magazine Tistarangit. Avyakta, Bilokan, the Journal of Hill Research, Khaber Khagaj, Panda, and the Sikkim Science Society Newsletter are among other registered publications. Internet cafs are well established in the district capitals, but broadband connectivity is not widely available. Satellite television channels through dish antennae are available in most homes in the state. Channels served are largely the same as those available in the rest of India, although Nepali-language channels are also available. The main service providers include Airtel digital TV, Tata Sky, Dish TV, DD Free Dish and Nayuma.

Education In 2011, Sikkim's adult literacy rate was 82.2 per cent: 87.29 per cent for males and 76.43 per cent for females. There are a total of 1,157 schools in the state, including 765 schools run by the state government, seven central government schools and 385 private schools. There is one Institute of National Importance, one central university and four private universities in Sikkim offering higher education. Recently, Government of Sikkim has approved the open school board named Board of Open Schooling and Skill Education, BOSSE to provide Secondary Education, Senior Secondary as well as Skill & Vocational Education up to pre-degree level and to provide opportunity to continue education to such students who have missed the opportunity of school education. Sikkim has a National Institute of Technology, currently operating from a temporary campus in Ravangla, South Sikkim, which is one among the ten newly sanctioned NITs by the Government of India under the 11th Five year Plan, 2009. The NIT Sikkim also has state of art super computing facility named PARAM Kanchenjunga which is said to be fastest among all 31 NITs. Sikkim University is the only central university in Sikkim. The public-private funded institution is the Sikkim Manipal University of Technological Sciences, which offers higher education in engineering, medicine and management. It also runs a host of distance education programs in diverse fields. Medhavi Skills University is a private university located in the state of Sikkim, India. It was established in 2021 under the Sikkim Private Universities, (Amendment) Act, 2021. The university aims to provide skill-based education to students and bridge the gap between academia and industry. There are two state-run polytechnic schools - the Advanced Technical Training Centre (ATTC) and the Centre for Computers and Communication Technology (CCCT) - which offer diploma courses in various branches of engineering. ATTC is situated at Bardang, Singtam, and CCCT at Chisopani, Namchi. Sikkim University began operating in 2008 at Yangang, which is situated about 28 kilometres (17 mi) from Singtam. Many students, however, migrate to Siliguri, Kolkata, Bangalore and other Indian cities for their higher education. The campus of the National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology (NIELIT), under the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology of the Government of India, is at Pakyong in East Sikkim, and offers formal and informal education in the IT/ITES sector.

Towns and cities The major towns and cities of Sikkim are as follows: Gangtok, Pakyong, Namchi, Jorethang, Rangpo, Singtam, Gyalshing, Mangan, Soreng, Pelling, Rhenock, Rongli, Rorathang, Ravangla, Chungthang, Ranipool, Lachen, Nayabazar, Lachung, Dikchu, Majitar, Legship, Melli, Yuksom, Sherathang, Namthang, Rinchenpong, Singhik, Hee Burmiok, Tashiding, Kumrek, Makha, Yangang, and Damthang.

Sports The popular sports played in Sikkim include football, cricket, archery, volleyball, tennis, badminton, and athletics. Adventure sports like paragliding, hiking and mountain biking are also popular in Sikkim. The stadiums of Sikkim are as follows:

Mining Cricket Stadium, Rangpo Paljor Stadium, Gangtok Bhaichung Stadium, Namchi Resithang Athletics Stadium, Gangtok.

See also Outline of Sikkim Nepali Language Recognition Day

Notes References Further reading and bibliography External links Government Official website Official website of Sikkim Tourism

General information Geographic data related to Sikkim at OpenStreetMap

Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu is the southernmost state of India. The tenth largest Indian state by area and the sixth largest by population, Tamil Nadu is the home of the Tamil people, who speak the Tamil language-the state's official language and one of the longest surviving classical languages of the world. The capital and largest city is Chennai. Located on the south-eastern coast of the Indian peninsula, Tamil Nadu is straddled by the Western Ghats and Deccan Plateau in the west, the Eastern Ghats in the north, the Eastern Coastal Plains lining the Bay of Bengal in the east, the Gulf of Mannar and the Palk Strait to the south-east, the Laccadive Sea at the southern cape of the peninsula, with the river Kaveri bisecting the state. Politically, Tamil Nadu is bound by the Indian states of Kerala, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh, and encloses a part of the union territory of Puducherry. It shares an international maritime border with the Northern Province of Sri Lanka at Pamban Island. Archaeological evidence indicates that the Tamil Nadu region could have been inhabited more than 385,000 years ago by archaic humans. The state has more than 5,500 years of continuous cultural history. Historically, the Tamilakam region was inhabited by Tamil-speaking Dravidian people, who were ruled by several regimes over centuries such as the Sangam era triumvirate of the Cheras, Cholas and Pandyas, the Pallavas (3rd-9th century CE), and the later Vijayanagara Empire (14th-17th century CE). European colonisation began with establishing trade ports in the 17th century, with the British controlling much of the state as a part of the Madras Presidency for two centuries. After the Indian Independence in 1947, the region became the Madras State of the Republic of India and was further reorganised when states were redrawn linguistically in 1956 into its current shape. The state was renamed as Tamil Nadu, meaning "Tamil Country", in 1969. Hence, culture, cuisine and architecture have seen multiple influences over the years and have developed diversely. As of December 2023, Tamil Nadu had an economy with a gross state domestic product (GSDP) of ₹27.22 trillion (US\$320 billion), making it the second-largest economy amongst the 28 states of India. It has the country's 9th-highest GSDP per capita of ₹315,220 (US\$3,700) and ranks 11th in human development index. Tamil Nadu is also one of the most industrialised states, with the manufacturing sector accounting for nearly one-third of the state's GDP. With its diverse culture and architecture, long coastline, forests and mountains, Tamil Nadu is home to a number of ancient relics, historic buildings, religious sites, beaches, hill stations, forts, waterfalls and four World Heritage Sites. The state's tourism industry is the largest among the Indian states. The state has three biosphere reserves, mangrove forests, five National Parks, 18 wildlife sanctuaries and 17 bird sanctuaries. The Tamil film industry, nicknamed as Kollywood, plays an influential role in the state's popular culture.

Etymology The name is derived from Tamil language with nadu meaning "land" and Tamil Nadu meaning "the land of Tamils". The origin and precise etymology of the word Tamil is unclear with multiple theories attested to it. In the ancient Sangam literature, Tamilakam refers to the area of present-day Tamil Nadu, Kerala and parts of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. *Tolkappiyam* (2nd to 1st century BCE) indicates the borders of Tamilakam as Tirumala and Kanniyakumari. The name Tamilakam is used in other Sangam era literature such as *Puṇaṇṇūru*, *Patirupattu*, *Cilappatikaram*, and *Manimekalai*. *Cilappatikaram* (5th to 6th century CE) and *Ramavataram* (12th century CE) mention the name Tamil Nadu to denote the region.

History Prehistory (before 5th century BCE) Archaeological evidence indicates that the Tamil Nadu region could have been inhabited more than 385,000 years ago by archaic humans. Artifacts recovered in Adichanallur by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) indicate a continuous history from more than 3,800 years ago. Neolithic celts with the Indus script dated between 1500 and 2000 BCE indicate the use of the Harappan

language. Excavations at Keezhadi have revealed a large urban settlement, with the earliest artefact dated to 580 BCE, during the time of urbanisation in the Indo-Gangetic plain. Further epigraphical inscriptions found at Adichanallur use Tamil Brahmi, a rudimentary script dated to 5th century BCE. Potsherds uncovered from Keeladi indicate a script which might be a transition between the Indus Valley script and Tamil Brahmi script used later.

Sangam period (5th century BCE-3rd century CE) The Sangam period lasted for about eight centuries, from 500 BCE to 300 CE with the main source of history during the period coming from the Sangam literature. Ancient Tamilakam was ruled by a triumvirate of monarchical states, Cheras, Cholas and Pandyas. The Cheras controlled the western part of Tamilakam, the Pandyas controlled the south, and the Cholas had their base in the Kaveri delta. The kings called Vendhar ruled over several tribes of Velala (peasants), headed by the Velir chiefs. The rulers patronised multiple religions including vedic religion, Buddhism and Jainism and sponsored some of the earliest Tamil literature with the oldest surviving work being *Tolkappiyam*, a book of Tamil grammar. The kingdoms had significant diplomatic and trade contacts with other kingdoms to the north and with the Romans. Much of the commerce from the Romans and Han China were facilitated via seaports including Muziris and Korkai with spices being the most prized goods along with pearls and silk. From 300 CE, the region was ruled by the Kalabhras, warriors belonging to the Vellalar community, who were once feudatories of the three ancient Tamil kingdoms. The Kalabhra era is referred to as the "dark period" of Tamil history, and information about it is generally inferred from any mentions in the literature and inscriptions that are dated many centuries after their era ended. The twin Tamil epics *Cilappatikaram* and *Manimekalai* were written during the era. Tamil classic *Tirukkural* by Thiruvalluvar, a collection of couplets is attributed to the same period.

Medieval era (4th-13th century CE) Around the 7th century CE, the Kalabhras were overthrown by the Pandyas and Cholas, who patronised Buddhism and Jainism before the revival of Saivism and Vaishnavism during the Bhakti movement. Though they existed previously, the period saw the rise of the Pallavas in the sixth century CE under Mahendravarman I, who ruled parts of South India with Kanchipuram as their capital. The Pallavas were noted for their patronage of architecture: the massive gopuram, ornate towers at the entrance of temples, originated with the Pallava architecture. They built the group of rock-cut monuments in Mahabalipuram and temples in Kanchipuram. Throughout their reign, the Pallavas remained in constant conflict with the Cholas and Pandyas. The Pandyas were revived by Kadungon towards the end of the 6th century CE and with the Cholas in obscurity in Uraiyur, the Tamil country was divided between the Pallavas and the Pandyas. The Pallavas were finally defeated by Chola prince Aditya I in the 9th century CE.

The Cholas became the dominant kingdom in the 9th century under Vijayalaya Chola, who established Thanjavur as Chola's new capital with further expansions by subsequent rulers. In the 11th century CE, Rajaraja I expanded the Chola Empire with conquests of entire Southern India and parts of present-day Sri Lanka and Maldives, and increased Chola influence across the Indian Ocean. Rajaraja brought in administrative reforms including the reorganisation of Tamil country into individual administrative units. Under his son Rajendra Chola I, the Chola Empire reached its zenith and stretched as far as Bengal in the north and across the Indian Ocean. The Cholas built many temples in the Dravidian style with the most notable being the Brihadisvara Temple at Thanjavur, one of the foremost temples of the era built by Rajaraja, and Gangaikonda Cholapuram, built by Rajendra. The Pandyas again reigned supreme early in the 13th century under Maravarman Sundara I. They ruled from their capital of Madurai and expanded trade links with other maritime empires. During the 13th century, Marco Polo mentioned the Pandyas as the richest empire in existence. The Pandyas also built a number of temples including the Meenakshi Amman Temple at Madurai.

Vijayanagar and Nayak period (14th-17th century CE) In the 13th and 14th centuries, there were repeated attacks from Delhi Sultanate. The Vijayanagara kingdom was founded in 1336 CE. The Vijayanagara empire eventually conquered the entire Tamil country by c. 1370 and ruled for almost two centuries until its defeat in the Battle of Talikota in 1565 by a confederacy of Deccan sultanates. Later, the Nayaks, who were the military governors in the Vijayanagara Empire, took control of the region amongst whom the Nayaks of Madurai and Nayaks of Thanjavur were the most prominent. They introduced the palayakkararar system and re-constructed some of the well-known temples in Tamil Nadu including the Meenakshi Temple in Madurai.

Later conflicts and European colonisation (17th to 20th century CE) In the 18th century, the Mughal Empire administered the region through the Nawab of the Carnatic with his seat at Arcot, who defeated the Madurai Nayaks. The Marathas attacked several times and defeated the Nawab after the Siege of Trichinopoly (1751-1752). This led to a short-lived Thanjavur Maratha kingdom.

Europeans started to establish trade centres from the 16th century along the eastern coast. The Portuguese arrived in 1522 and built a port named So Tom near present-day Mylapore in Madras. In 1609, the Dutch established a settlement in Pulicat and the Danes had their establishment in Tharangambadi. On 20 August 1639, Francis Day of the British East India Company met with the Vijayanagar emperor Peda Venkata Raya and obtained a grant for land on the Coromandel coast for their trading activities. A year later, the company built Fort St. George, the first major English settlement in India, which became the nucleus of the British Raj in the region. By 1693, the French established trading posts at Pondichry. In September 1746, the French captured Madras during the Battle of Madras. The British regained control of Madras in 1749 through the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle and resisted a French siege attempt in 1759. The British and French competed to expand the trade which led to Battle of Wandiwash in 1760 as part of the Seven Years' War. The Nawabs of the Carnatic surrendered much of their territory to the British East India Company in the north and bestowed tax revenue collection rights in the South, which led to constant conflicts with the Palaiyakkarars known as the Polygar Wars. Puli Thevar was one of the earliest opponents, joined later by Rani Velu Nachiyar of Sivagangai and Kattabomman of Panchalakurichi in the first series of Polygar wars. The Maruthu brothers along with Oomaithurai, the brother of Kattabomman, formed a coalition with Dheeran Chinnamalai and Kerala Varma Pazhassi Raja, which fought the British in the Second Polygar War. In the later 18th century, the Mysore kingdom captured parts of the region and engaged in constant fighting with the British which culminated in the four Anglo-Mysore Wars.

By the 18th century, the British had conquered most of the region and established the Madras Presidency with Madras as the capital. After the defeat of Mysore in the Fourth Anglo-Mysore War in 1799 and the British victory in the second Polygar war in 1801, the British consolidated most of southern India into what was later known as the Madras Presidency. On 10 July 1806, the Vellore mutiny, which was the first instance of a large-scale mutiny by Indian sepoys against the British East India Company, took place in Vellore Fort. After the Indian Rebellion of 1857, the British Parliament passed the Government of India Act 1858, which transferred the governance of India from the East India Company to the British crown, forming the British Raj. Failure of the summer monsoons and administrative shortcomings of the Ryotwari system resulted in two severe famines in the Madras Presidency, the Great Famine of 1876-78 and the Indian famine of 1896-97 which killed millions and the migration of many Tamils as bonded labourers to other British countries eventually forming the present Tamil diaspora. The Indian Independence movement gathered momentum in the early 20th century with the formation of the Indian National Congress, which was based on an idea propagated by the members of the Theosophical Society movement after a Theosophical convention held in Madras in December 1884. Tamil Nadu was the base of various contributors to the Independence movement including V. O. Chidambaram Pillai,

Subramaniya Siva and Bharatiyar. The Tamils formed a significant percentage of the members of the Indian National Army (INA), founded by Subhas Chandra Bose.

Post-Independence (1947-present) After the Independence of India in 1947, the Madras Presidency became Madras state, comprising present-day Tamil Nadu and parts of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Kerala. Andhra state was split from the state in 1953 and the state was further reorganised when states were redrawn linguistically in 1956 into the current shape. On 14 January 1969, Madras state was renamed Tamil Nadu, meaning "Tamil country". In 1965, agitations against the imposition of Hindi and in support of continuing English as a medium of communication arose which eventually led to English being retained as an official language of India alongside Hindi. After independence, the economy of Tamil Nadu conformed to a socialist framework, with strict governmental control over private sector participation, foreign trade, and foreign direct investment. After experiencing fluctuations in the decades immediately after Indian independence, the economy of Tamil Nadu consistently exceeded national average growth rates from the 1970s, due to reform-oriented economic policies. In the 2000s, the state has become one of the most urbanised states in the country with a higher Human Development Index compared to national average.

Environment Geography Tamil Nadu covers an area of 130,058 km² (50,216 sq mi) and is the tenth-largest state in India. Located on the south-eastern coast of the Indian peninsula, Tamil Nadu is straddled by the Western Ghats and Deccan Plateau in the west, the Eastern Ghats in the north, the Eastern Coastal Plains lining the Bay of Bengal in the east, the Gulf of Mannar and the Palk Strait to the south-east, and the Laccadive Sea at the southern cape of the peninsula. Politically, Tamil Nadu is bound by the Indian states of Kerala, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh, and the union territory of Puducherry. It shares an international maritime border with the Northern Province of Sri Lanka at Pamban Island. The Palk Strait and the chain of low sandbars and islands known as Rama's Bridge separate the region from Sri Lanka, which lies off the southeastern coast. The southernmost tip of mainland India is at Kanyakumari where the Indian Ocean meets the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea.

The Western Ghats run south along the western boundary with the highest peak at Doddabetta (2,636 m (8,648 ft)) in the Nilgiri Hills. The Eastern Ghats run parallel to the Bay of Bengal along the eastern coast and the strip of land between them forms the Coromandel region. They are a discontinuous range of mountains intersected by Kaveri river. Both mountain ranges meet at the Nilgiri mountains which run in a crescent approximately along the borders of Tamil Nadu with northern Kerala and Karnataka, extending to the relatively low-lying hills of the Eastern Ghats on the western portion of the Tamil Nadu-Andhra Pradesh border. The Deccan plateau is the elevated region bound by the mountain ranges and the plateau slopes gently from west to east resulting in major rivers arising in the Western Ghats and flowing east into the Bay of Bengal. The coastline of Tamil Nadu is 1,076 km (669 mi) long, and is the second longest state coastline in the country after Gujarat. There are coral reefs located in the Gulf of Mannar and Lakshadweep islands. Tamil Nadu's coastline was permanently altered by the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004.

Geology Tamil Nadu falls mostly in a region of low seismic hazard with the exception of the western border areas that lie in a low to moderate hazard zone; as per the 2002 Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) map, Tamil Nadu falls in Zones II and III. The volcanic basalt beds of the Deccan plateau were laid down in the massive Deccan Traps eruption, which occurred towards the end of the Cretaceous period, between 67 and 66 million years ago. Layer after layer was formed by the volcanic activity that lasted many years and when the volcanoes became extinct, they left a region of highlands with typically vast stretches of flat areas on top like a table. The predominant soils of Tamil Nadu are red loam, laterite, black, alluvial and saline. Red soil, with a higher iron

content, occupies a larger portion of the state and all the inland districts. Black soil is found in western Tamil Nadu and parts of the southern coast. Alluvial soil is found in the fertile Kaveri delta region, with laterite soil found in pockets, and saline soil across the coast where the evaporation is high.

Climate The region has a tropical climate and depends on monsoons for rainfall. Tamil Nadu is divided into seven agro-climatic zones: northeast, northwest, west, southern, high rainfall, high altitude hilly, and Kaveri delta. A tropical wet and dry climate prevails over most of the inland peninsular region except for a semi-arid rain shadow east of the Western Ghats. Winter and early summer are long dry periods with temperatures averaging above 18 C (64 F); summer is exceedingly hot with temperatures in low-lying areas exceeding 50 C (122 F); and the rainy season lasts from June to September, with annual rainfall averaging between 750 and 1,500 mm (30 and 59 in) across the region. Once the dry northeast monsoon begins in September, most precipitation in India falls in Tamil Nadu, leaving other states comparatively dry.

A hot semi-arid climate predominates in the land east of the Western Ghats which includes inland south and south central parts of the state and gets between 400 and 750 millimetres (15.7 and 29.5 in) of rainfall annually, with hot summers and dry winters with temperatures around 20-24 C (68-75 F). The months between March and May are hot and dry, with mean monthly temperatures hovering around 32 C (90 F), with 320 millimetres (13 in) precipitation. Without artificial irrigation, this region is not suitable for agriculture. The southwest monsoon from June to September accounts for most of the rainfall in the west of the region. The Arabian Sea branch of the southwest monsoon hits the Western Ghats from Kerala and moves northward along the Konkan coast, with precipitation on the western region of the state. The lofty Western Ghats prevent the winds from reaching the Deccan Plateau; hence, the leeward region (the region deprived of winds) receives very little rainfall. The Bay of Bengal branch of the southwest monsoon heads toward northeast India, picking up moisture from the Bay of Bengal. The Coromandel coast does not receive much rainfall from the southwest monsoon, due to the shape of the land. The northern and eastern parts of Tamil Nadu receive most of their rains from the northeast monsoon. The northeast monsoon takes place from November to early March, when the surface high-pressure system is strongest. The North Indian Ocean tropical cyclones occur throughout the year in the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea, bringing devastating winds and heavy rainfall. The annual rainfall of the state is about 945 mm (37.2 in) of which 48 per cent is through the northeast monsoon, and 52 per cent through the southwest monsoon. The state has only 3% of the water resources nationally and is entirely dependent on rains for recharging its water resources. Monsoon failures lead to acute water scarcity and severe drought.

Flora and fauna Forests occupy an area of 22,643 km² (8,743 sq mi) constituting 17.4% of the geographic area. There is a wide diversity of plants and animals in Tamil Nadu, resulting from its varied climates and geography. Deciduous forests are found along the Western Ghats while tropical dry forests and scrub lands are common in the interior. The southern Western Ghats have rain forests located at high altitudes called the South Western Ghats montane rain forests. The Western Ghats eco-region is one of the eight hottest biodiversity hotspots in the world and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. There are about 2,000 species of wildlife that are native to Tamil Nadu, 5640 species of angiosperms (including 1,559 species of medicinal plants, 533 endemic species, 260 species of wild relatives of cultivated plants, 230 red-listed species), 64 species of gymnosperms (including four indigenous species and 60 introduced species) and 184 species of pteridophytes apart from bryophytes, lichen, fungi, algae, and bacteria. Common plant species include the state tree: palmyra palm, eucalyptus, rubber, cinchona, clumping bamboos (*Bambusa arundinacea*), common teak, *Anogeissus latifolia*, Indian laurel, grewia, and blooming trees like Indian laburnum, ardisia, and solanaceae. Rare and unique plant life includes *Combretum ovalifolium*, ebony (*Diospyros nilagrica*), *Habenaria rariflora* (orchid), *Alsophila*, *Impatiens elegans*, *Ranunculus reniformis*, and royal fern.

Important ecological regions of Tamil Nadu are the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve in the Nilgiri Hills, the Agasthyamala Biosphere Reserve in the Agastya Mala-Cardamom Hills and Gulf of Mannar coral reefs. The Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve covers an area of 10,500 km² (4,100 sq mi) of ocean, islands and the adjoining coastline including coral reefs, salt marshes and mangroves. It is home to endangered aquatic species, including dolphins, dugongs, whales and sea cucumbers. Bird sanctuaries, including Thattekad, Kadalundi, Vedanthangal, Ranganathittu, Kumarakom, Neelapattu, and Pulicat, are home to numerous migratory and local birds.

Protected areas cover an area of 3,305 km² (1,276 sq mi), constituting 2.54% of the geographic area and 15% of the 22,643 km² (8,743 sq mi) recorded forest area of the state. Vedanthangal Bird Sanctuary, established in 1936, was India's first wildlife sanctuary. Mudumalai National Park was established later in 1940. The protected areas are administered by the Ministry of Environment and Forests of the government of India and the Tamil Nadu Forest Department. Pichavaram consists of a number of islands interspersing the Vellar estuary in the north and Coleroon estuary in the south with mangrove forests. The Pichavaram mangrove forests is one of the largest mangrove forests in India covering 45 km² (17 sq mi) and supports the existence of rare varieties of economically important shells, fishes and migrant birds. The state has five National Parks covering 307.84 km² (118.86 sq mi)-Anamalai, Mudumalai, Mukurthi, Gulf of Mannar, a marine national park and Guindy, an urban national park within Chennai. Tamil Nadu has 18 wildlife sanctuaries. Tamil Nadu is home to one of the largest populations of endangered Bengal tigers and Indian elephants in India. There are five declared elephant sanctuaries in Tamil Nadu as per Project Elephant-Agasthyamalai, Anamalai, Coimbatore, Nilgiris and Srivilliputtur. Tamil Nadu participates in Project Tiger and has five declared tiger reserves-Anamalai, Kalakkad-Mundanthurai, Mudumalai, Sathyamangalam and Megamalai. There are seventeen declared bird sanctuaries in Tamil Nadu.

There is one conservation reserve at Tiruvidadimarudur in Thanjavur district. There are two zoos recognised by the Central Zoo Authority of India namely Arignar Anna Zoological Park and Madras Crocodile Bank Trust, both located in Chennai. The state has other smaller zoos run by local administrative bodies such as Coimbatore Zoo in Coimbatore, Amirthi Zoological Park in Vellore, Kurumpampatti Wildlife Park in Salem, Yercaud Deer Park in Yercaud, Mukkombu Deer Park in Tiruchirapalli and Ooty Deer Park in Nilgiris. There are five crocodile farms located at Amaravati in Coimbatore district, Hogenakkal in Dharmapuri district, Kurumbapatti in Salem district, Madras Crocodile Bank Trust in Chennai and Sathanur in Tiruvannamalai district. Threatened and endangered species found in the region include the grizzled giant squirrel, grey slender loris, sloth bear, Nilgiri tahr, Nilgiri langur, lion-tailed macaque, and the Indian leopard.

Administration and politics Administration Chennai is the capital of the state and houses the state executive, legislative and head of judiciary. The administration of the state government functions through various secretariat departments. There are 43 departments of the state and the departments have further sub-divisions which may govern various undertakings and boards. The state is divided into 38 districts, each of which is administered by a District Collector, who is an officer of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) appointed to the district by the Government of Tamil Nadu. For revenue administration, the districts are further subdivided into 87 revenue divisions administered by Revenue Divisional Officers (RDO) which comprise 310 taluks administered by Tahsildars. The taluks are divided into 1349 revenue blocks called Firkas which consist of 17,680 revenue villages. The local administration consists of 15 municipal corporations, 121 municipalities and 528 town panchayats in the urban areas, and 385 panchayat unions and 12,618 village panchayats, administered by Village Administrative Officers (VAO). Greater Chennai Corporation, established in 1688, is the

second oldest in the world and Tamil Nadu was the first state to establish town panchayats as a new administrative unit.

Legislature In accordance with the Constitution of India, the governor is a state's de jure head and appoints the chief minister who has the de facto executive authority. The Indian Councils Act 1861 established the Madras Presidency legislative council with four to eight members but was a mere advisory body to the governor of the presidency. The strength was increased to twenty in 1892 and fifty in 1909. Madras legislative council was set-up in 1921 by the Government of India Act 1919 with a term of three years and consisted of 132 Members of which 34 were nominated by the Governor and the rest were elected. The Government of India Act 1935 established a bicameral legislature with the creation of a new legislative council with 54 to 56 members in July 1937. The first legislature of Madras state under the Constitution of India was constituted on 1 March 1952 after the 1952 elections. The number of seats post the reorganisation in 1956 was 206, which was further increased to 234 in 1962. In 1986, the state moved to a unicameral legislature with the abolition of the Legislative Council by the Tamil Nadu Legislative Council (Abolition) act, 1986. The Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly is housed in the Fort St. George in Chennai. The state elects 39 members to the Lok Sabha and 18 to the Rajya Sabha of the Indian Parliament.

Law and order The Madras High Court was established on 26 June 1862 and is the highest judicial authority of the state with control over all the civil and criminal courts in the state. It is headed by a Chief Justice and has a bench at Madurai since 2004. The Tamil Nadu Police, established as Madras state police in 1859, operates under the home ministry of the Government of Tamil Nadu and is responsible for maintaining law and order in the state. As of 2023, it consists of more than 132,000 police personnel, headed by a Director General of Police. Women form 17.6% of the police force and specifically handle violence against women through 222 special all-women police stations. As of 2023, the state has 1854 police stations, the highest in the country, including 47 railway and 243 traffic police stations. The traffic police under different district administrations are responsible for the traffic management in the respective regions. The state is consistently ranked as one of the safest for women with a crime rate of 22 per 100,000 in 2018.

Politics Elections in India are conducted by the Election Commission of India, an independent body established in 1950. Politics in Tamil Nadu was dominated by national parties till the 1960s. Regional parties have ruled ever since. The Justice Party and Swaraj Party were the two major parties in the erstwhile Madras Presidency. During the 1920s and 1930s, the Self-Respect Movement, spearheaded by Theagaroya Chetty and E. V. Ramaswamy (commonly known as Periyar), emerged in the Madras Presidency and led to the formation of the Justice party. The Justice Party eventually lost the 1937 elections to the Indian National Congress and Chakravarti Rajagopalachari became the chief minister of the Madras Presidency. In 1944, Periyar transformed the Justice party into a social organisation, renaming the party Dravidar Kazhagam, and withdrew from electoral politics.

After independence, Rajagopalachari served as the last Governor General of India before India became a republic. C. N. Annadurai, a follower of Periyar, formed the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) in 1949. The Congress dominated the political scene in Tamil Nadu in the 1950s and 1960s under the leadership of K. Kamaraj, who led the party after the death of Jawaharlal Nehru and ensured the selection of Lal Bahadur Shastri and Indira Gandhi as prime ministers. The anti-Hindi agitations led to the rise of Dravidian parties and the first such government was formed in 1967. In 1972, a split in the DMK resulted in the formation of the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) led by M. G. Ramachandran. These two Dravidian parties continued to dominate the electoral politics in the state with the national parties often aligning as junior partners.

M. Karunanidhi, who became the leader of the DMK after Annadurai and J. Jayalalithaa, who succeeded as the leader of AIADMK after M. G. Ramachandran dominated the state politics from the 1980s to early 2010s, serving as chief ministers combined for over 32 years. The state has produced three Indian presidents, namely, Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, R. Venkataraman, and APJ Abdul Kalam.

Demographics As per the 2011 census, Tamil Nadu had a population of 72.1 million and is the seventh most populous state in India. The population is projected to be 76.8 million in 2023 and to grow to 78 million by 2036. Tamil Nadu is one of the most urbanised states in the country with more than 48.4 per cent of the population living in urban areas. As per the 2011 census, the sex ratio was 996 females per 1000 males, higher than the national average of 943. The sex ratio at birth was recorded as 954 during the fourth National Family Health Survey (NFHS) in 2015-16 which reduced further to 878 in the fifth NFHS in 2019-21, ranking third worst amongst states. As per the 2011 census, Literacy rate was 80.1%, higher than the national average of 73%. The literacy rate was estimated to be 82.9% as per the 2017 National Statistical Commission (NSC) survey. As of 2011, there were about 23.17 million households with 7.42 million children under the age of six. A total of 14.4 million (20%) belonged to Scheduled Castes (SC) and 0.8 million (1.1%) to Scheduled tribes (ST). As of 2017, the state had the lowest fertility rate in India with 1.6 children born for each woman, lower than required for sustaining the population. As of 2022, Tamil Nadu had a Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.692, higher than that of the overall HDI of the country (0.644) and ranked 14th amongst the Indian states and territories. As of 2019, the life expectancy at birth was 74 years, one of the highest amongst Indian states. As of 2023, 2.2% of the people live below the poverty line as per the Multidimensional Poverty Index, one of the lowest rates amongst Indian states.

Cities and towns The capital of Chennai is the most populous urban agglomeration in the state with more than 8.6 million residents, followed by Coimbatore, Madurai, Tiruchirappalli and Tiruppur, respectively.

Religion and ethnicity The state is home to a diverse population of ethno-religious communities. According to the 2011 census, Hinduism is followed by 87.6% of the population. Christians form the largest religious minority in the state with 6.1% of the population; Muslims form 5.9% of the population. Tamils form a majority of the population with minorities including Telugus, Marwaris, Gujaratis, Parsis, Sindhis, Odias, Kannadigas, Anglo-Indians, Bengalis, Punjabis, and Malayalees. The state also has a significant expatriate population. As of 2011, the state had 3.49 million immigrants.

Language Tamil is the official language of Tamil Nadu, while English serves as the additional official language. Tamil is one of the oldest languages and was the first to be recognised as a classical language of India. As per the 2011 census, Tamil is spoken as the first language by 88.4% of the state's population, followed by Telugu (5.87%), Kannada (1.78%), Urdu (1.75%), Malayalam (1.01%) and other languages (1.24%) Various varieties of Tamil are spoken across regions such as Madras Bashai in northern Tamil Nadu, Kongu Tamil in Western Tamil Nadu, Madurai Tamil around Madurai and Nellore Tamil in South-eastern Tamil Nadu. It is part of the Dravidian languages and preserves many features of Proto-Dravidian, though modern-day spoken Tamil in Tamil Nadu freely uses loanwords from other languages such as Sanskrit and English. Korean, Japanese, French, Mandarin Chinese, German and Spanish are spoken by foreign expatriates in the state.

LGBT rights The LGBT rights in Tamil Nadu are among the most progressive in India. In 2008, Tamil Nadu set up the Transgender welfare board and was the first to introduce a transgender welfare policy, wherein transgender people can avail free sex reassignment surgery in government hospitals. Chennai Rainbow Pride

has been held in Chennai annually since 2009. In 2021, Tamil Nadu became the first Indian state to ban conversion therapy and forced sex-selective surgeries on intersex infants, following the directions of the Madras High Court. In 2019, the Madras High Court ruled that the term "bride" under the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 includes trans-women, thereby legalising marriage between a man and a transgender woman.

Culture and heritage
Clothing Tamil women traditionally wear a sari, a garment that consists of a drape varying from 5 to 9 yards (4.6 to 8.2 m) in length and 2 to 4 feet (0.61 to 1.22 m) in breadth that is typically wrapped around the waist, with one end draped over the shoulder, baring the midriff, as according to Indian philosophy, the navel is considered as the source of life and creativity. Ancient Tamil poetry such as the Cilappadhikaram, describes women in exquisite drapery or sari. Women wear colourful silk saris on special occasions such as marriages. The men wear a dhoti, a 4.5 metres (15 ft) long, white rectangular piece of non-stitched cloth often bordered in brightly coloured stripes. It is usually wrapped around the waist and the legs and knotted at the waist. A colourful lungi with typical batik patterns is the most common form of male attire in the countryside. People in urban areas generally wear tailored clothing, and western dress is popular. Western-style school uniforms are worn by both boys and girls in schools, even in rural areas. The Kanchipuram silk sari is a type of silk sari made in the Kanchipuram region in Tamil Nadu and these saris are worn as bridal and special occasion saris by most women in South India. It has been recognised as a Geographical indication by the Government of India in 2005-2006. Kovai Cora is a type of cotton sari made in the Coimbatore.

Cuisine Rice is the diet staple and is served with sambar, rasam, and poriyal as a part of a Tamil meal. Coconut and spices are used extensively in Tamil cuisine. The region has a rich cuisine involving both traditional non-vegetarian and vegetarian dishes made of rice, legumes, and lentils with its distinct aroma and flavour achieved by the blending of flavourings and spices. The traditional way of eating a meal involves being seated on the floor, having the food served on a banana leaf, and using clean fingers of the right hand to take the food into the mouth. After the meal, the fingers are washed; the easily degradable banana leaf is discarded or becomes fodder for cattle. Eating on banana leaves is a custom thousands of years old, imparts a unique flavour to the food, and is considered healthy. Idli, dosa, uthappam, pongal, and paniyaram are popular breakfast dishes in Tamil Nadu. Palani Panchamirtham, Ooty varkey, Kovilpatti Kadalai Mittai, Manapparai Murukku and Srivilliputhur Palkova are unique foods that have been recognised as Geographical Indications.

Literature Tamil Nadu has an independent literary tradition dating back over 2500 years from the Sangam era. Early Tamil literature was composed in three successive poetic assemblies known as the Tamil Sangams, the earliest of which, according to legend, were held on a now vanished continent far to the south of India. This includes the oldest grammatical treatise, Tolkappiyam, and the epics Cilappatikaram and Manimekalai. The earliest epigraphic records found on rock edicts and hero stones date from around the 3rd century BCE. The available literature from the Sangam period was categorised and compiled into two categories based roughly on chronology: the *Pattinapalam* consisting of *Ettuttokai* and the *Pattupattu*, and the *Pattinapalam*. The existent Tamil grammar is largely based on the 13th-century grammar book *Nannul* based on the *Tolkappiyam*. Tamil grammar consists of five parts, namely *ettuttu*, *sol*, *poru*, *yppu*, *ai*. *Tirukkural*, a book on ethics by Thiruvalluvar, is amongst the most popular works of Tamil literature. The Tamil literature that followed in the next 300 years after the Sangam period is generally called the "post-Sangam" literature which included the Five Great Epics and the Five Minor Epics. In the early medieval period, Vaishnava and Shaiva literature became prominent following the Bhakti movement in the sixth century CE with hymns composed by the Alvars and the Nayanars. In the following years, Tamil literature again flourished with notable works including *Ramavataram*, written in the 12th century CE by Kambar. After a lull in the intermediate years due to various invasions and instability, the Tamil literature recovered in the 14th century

CE, with the notable work being Tiruppukal by Arunagirinathar. In 1578, the Portuguese published a Tamil book in old Tamil script named Thambiraan Vanakkam, thus making Tamil the first Indian language to be printed and published. Tamil Lexicon, published by the University of Madras, is the first among the dictionaries published in any Indian language. The 19th century gave rise to the Tamil Renaissance and writings and poems by authors such as Meenakshi Sundaram Pillai, U.V. Swaminatha Iyer, Ramalinga Swamigal, Maraimalai Adigal, and Bharathidasan. During the Indian Independence Movement, many Tamil poets and writers sought to provoke national spirit, social equity and secularist thoughts, notably Subramania Bharati and Bharathidasan.

Architecture Dravidian architecture is the distinct style of rock architecture in Tamil Nadu. In Dravidian architecture, the temples consisted of porches or mantapas preceding the door leading to the sanctum, gate-pyramids or gopurams in quadrangular enclosures that surround the temple, and pillared halls used for many purposes. These features are the invariable accompaniments of these temples. Besides these, a South Indian temple usually has a tank called the kalyani or pushkarni. The gopuram is a monumental tower, usually ornate at the entrance of the temple forms a prominent feature of koils and Hindu temples of the Dravidian style. They are topped by the kalasam, a bulbous stone finial and function as gateways through the walls that surround the temple complex. The gopuram's origins can be traced back to the Pallavas who built the group of monuments in Mahabalipuram and Kanchipuram. The Cholas later expanded the same and by the Pandya rule in twelfth century, these gateways became a dominant feature of a temple's outer appearance. The state emblem also features the Lion Capital of Ashoka with an image of a Gopuram on the background. Vimanam are similar structures built over the garbhagriha or inner sanctum of the temple but are usually smaller than the gopurams in the Dravidian architecture with a few exceptions including the Brihadisvara Temple in Thanjavur. The Mugal influence in medieval times and the British influence later gave rise to a blend of Hindu, Islamic and Gothic revival styles, resulting in the distinct Indo-Saracenic architecture. Several buildings and institutions built during the British era followed the style. By the early 20th century, art deco made its entry in the urban landscape. After Indian Independence, Tamil architecture witnessed a rise in Modernism with the transition from lime-and-brick construction to concrete columns.

Arts Tamil Nadu is a major centre for music, art and dance in India. Chennai is called the cultural capital of South India. In the Sangam era, art forms were classified into: iyal (poetry), isai (music) and nadakam (drama). Bharatanatyam is a classical dance form that originated in Tamil Nadu and is one of the oldest dances of India. Other regional folk dances include Karakattam, Kavadi, Koodiyattam, Oyilattam, Paraiattam and Puravaiattam. The dance, clothing, and sculptures of Tamil Nadu exemplify the beauty of the body and motherhood. Koothu is an ancient folk art, where artists tell stories from the epics accompanied by dance and music. The ancient Tamil country had its own system of music called Tamil Pannisai described by Sangam literature such as the Silappatikaram. A Pallava inscription dated to the 7th century CE has one of the earliest surviving examples of Indian music in notation. There are many traditional instruments from the region dating back to the Sangam period such as parai, tharai, yazh and murasu. Nadaswaram, a reed instrument that is often accompanied by the thavil, a type of drum instrument, are the major musical instruments used in temples and weddings. Melam is a group of madhalams and other similar percussion instruments from the ancient Tamilakam which are played during events. The traditional music of Tamil Nadu is known as Carnatic music, which includes rhythmic and structured music by composers such as Muthuswami Dikshitar. Gaana, a combination of various folk musics, is sung mainly in the working-class area of North Chennai.

The state is home to many museums, galleries, and other institutions which engage in arts research and are major tourist attractions. Established in the early 18th century, the Government Museum and the National Art Gallery are amongst the oldest in the country. The museum inside the premises of Fort St. George maintains a

collection of objects of the British era. The museum is managed by the Archaeological Survey of India, and has in its possession the first Flag of India hoisted at Fort St George after the declaration of India's Independence on 15 August 1947. Tamil Nadu is also home to the Tamil film industry nicknamed as "Kollywood" and is one of the largest industries of film production in India. The term Kollywood is a blend of Kodambakkam and Hollywood. The first silent film in South India was produced in Tamil in 1916 and the first talkie was a multilingual film, Kalidas, which was released on 31 October 1931, barely seven months after India's first talking picture Alam Ara. Samikannu Vincent, who had built the first cinema of South India in Coimbatore, introduced the concept of "Tent Cinema" in which a tent was erected on a stretch of open land close to a town or village to screen the films. The first of its kind was established in Madras, called "Edison's Grand Cinemamegaphone".

Festivals Pongal is a major and multi-day harvest festival celebrated by Tamils. It is observed in the month of Thai according to the Tamil solar calendar and usually falls on 14 or 15 January. It is dedicated to the Surya, the Sun God and the festival is named after the ceremonial "Pongal", which means "to boil, overflow" and refers to the traditional dish prepared from the new harvest of rice boiled in milk with jaggery offered to Surya. Mattu Pongal is meant for celebration of cattle when the cattle are bathed, their horns polished and painted in bright colours, garlands of flowers placed around their necks and processions. Jallikattu is a traditional event held during the period attracting huge crowds in which a bull is released into a crowd of people, and multiple human participants attempt to grab the large hump on the bull's back with both arms and hang on to it while the bull attempts to escape.

Puthandu is known as Tamil New Year which marks the first day of year on the Tamil calendar. The festival date is set with the solar cycle of the solar Hindu calendar, as the first day of the Tamil month Chithirai and falls on or about 14 April every year on the Gregorian calendar. Karthikai Deepam is a festival of lights that is observed on the full moon day of the Kartika month, called the Kartika Pournami, falling on the Gregorian months of November or December. Thaipusam is a Tamil festival celebrated on the first full moon day of the Tamil month of Thai coinciding with Pusam star and dedicated to lord Murugan. Kavadi Aattam is a ceremonial act of sacrifice and offering practiced by devotees which is a central part of Thaipusam and emphasises debt bondage. Aadi Perukku is a Tamil cultural festival celebrated on the 18th day of the Tamil month of Adi which pays tribute to water's life-sustaining properties. The worship of Amman and Ayyanar deities are organised during the month in temples across Tamil Nadu with much fanfare. Panguni Uthiram is marked on the purnima (full moon) of the month of Panguni and celebrates the wedding of various Hindu gods. Tyagaraja Aradhana is an annual music festival devoted to composer Tyagaraja. In Tiruvaiyaru in Thanjavur district, thousands of music artists congregate every year. Chennaiyil Thiruvaiyaru is a music festival which has been conducted from 18 to 25 December every year in Chennai. Chennai Sangamam is a large annual open Tamil cultural festival held in Chennai with the intention of rejuvenating the old village festivals, art and artists. Madras Music Season, initiated by Madras Music Academy in 1927, is celebrated every year during the month of December and features performances of traditional Carnatic music by artists from the city.

Economy The economy of the state consistently exceeded national average growth rates, due to reform-oriented economic policies in the 1970s. As of December 2023, Tamil Nadu's GSDP was **■**27.22 trillion (US\$320 billion), second highest amongst Indian states, which had grown significantly from **■**2.19 trillion (US\$26 billion) in 2004. The per-capita NDSP is **■**315,220 (US\$3,700). Tamil Nadu is the most urbanised state in India. Though the state had the lowest percentage of people under the poverty line, rural unemployment rate is considerably higher at 47 per thousand compared to the national average of 28. As of 2020, the state had the most number of factories at 38,837 units with an engaged work-force of 2.6 million. The state has a diversified industrial base anchored by different sectors including automobiles, software services, hardware, textiles,

healthcare and financial services. As of 2022, services contributed to 55% of the GSDP followed by manufacturing at 32% and agriculture at 13%. There are 42 Special Economic Zones (SEZ) in the state. As per a report by Government of India, Tamil Nadu is the most export competitive state of India in 2023.

Services As of 2022, the state is amongst the major Information technology (IT) exporters of India with a value of **■**576.87 billion (US\$6.8 billion). Established in 2000, Tidel Park in Chennai was amongst the first and largest IT parks in Asia. The presence of SEZs and government policies have contributed to the growth of the sector which has attracted foreign investments and job seekers from other parts of the country. In the 2020s, Chennai has become a major provider of SaaS and has been dubbed the "SaaS Capital of India". The state has two stock exchanges, Coimbatore Stock Exchange, established in 2013, and Madras Stock Exchange, established in 2015 and India's third-largest by trading volume. The Madras Bank, the first European-style banking system in India, was established on 21 June 1683, followed by the first commercial banks such as Bank of Hindustan (1770) and General Bank of India (1786). The Bank of Madras merged with two other presidency banks to form the Imperial Bank of India in 1921 which in 1955 became the State Bank of India, the largest bank in India. More than 400 financial industry businesses including three banks are headquartered in the state. The state hosts the south zonal office of the Reserve Bank of India, the country's central bank, along with its zonal training centre and staff college at Chennai. There is a permanent back office of the World Bank in the state.

Manufacturing Manufacturing in various sectors is governed by the state owned industrial corporation Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation (TIDCO) apart from central government owned companies. Electronics hardware is a major manufacturing industry with an output of \$5.37 billion in 2023, largest amongst Indian states. A large number of automotive companies have their manufacturing bases in the state with the automotive industry in Chennai accounting for more than 35% of India's overall automotive components and automobile output, earning the nickname "Detroit of India". The Integral Coach Factory in Chennai manufactures railway coaches and other rolling stock for Indian Railways. Another major industry is textiles with the state being home to more than half of the operating fiber textile mills in India. Coimbatore is often referred to as the Manchester of South India due to its cotton production and textile industries. As of 2022, Tiruppur exported garments worth US\$480 billion, contributing to nearly 54% of the all the textile exports from India and the city is known as the knitwear capital due to its cotton knitwear export. As of 2015, the textile industry in Tamil Nadu accounts for 17% of the total invested capital in all the industries. As of 2021, 40% of leather goods exported from India worth **■**92.52 billion (US\$1.1 billion) are being manufactured in the state. The state supplies two-thirds of India's requirements of motors and pumps, and is one of the largest exporters of wet grinders with "Coimbatore Wet Grinder", a recognised Geographical indication. There are two ordnance factories in Aruvankadu and Tiruchirappalli. AVANI, headquartered in Chennai, manufactures armoured fighting vehicles, main battle tanks, tank engines and armored clothing for the use of the Indian Armed Forces. ISRO, the Indian space agency, operates a propulsion facility at Mahendragiri.

Agriculture Agriculture contributes 13% to the GSDP and is a major employment generator in rural areas. As of 2022, the state had 6.34 million hectares under cultivation. Rice is the staple food grain with the state being one of the largest producers in India with an output of 7.9 million tonnes in 2021-22. The Kaveri delta region is known as the Rice Bowl of Tamil Nadu. Among non-food grains, sugarcane is the major crop with an annual output of 16.1 million tonnes in 2021-22. The state is a producer of spices and is the top producer of oil seeds, tapioca, cloves and flowers in India. The state accounts for 6.5% of fruit and 4.2% of vegetables production in the country. The state is a leading producer of banana and mango with more than 78% of the area under fruit cultivation. As of 2019, the state was the second largest producer in India of natural rubber and coconuts. Tea is a popular crop in hill-stations with the state being a major producer of a unique flavoured Nilgiri tea. As of

2022, the state is the largest producer in India of poultry and eggs with an annual production of 20.8 billion units, contributing to more than 16% of the national output. The state has a fishermen population of 1.05 million and the coast consists of 3 major fishing harbors, 3 medium fishing harbors and 363 fish landing centres. As of 2022, the fishing output was 0.8 million tonnes with a contribution of 5% to the total fish production in India. Aquaculture includes shrimp, sea weed, mussel, clam and oyster farming across more than 6000 hectares. M. S. Swaminathan, known as the "father of the Indian Green Revolution" was from Tamil Nadu.

Infrastructure Water supply Tamil Nadu accounts for nearly 4% of the land area and 6% of the population of India, but has only 3% of the water resources of the country. The per capita water availability is 800 m³ (28,000 cu ft) which is lower than the national average of 2,300 m³ (81,000 cu ft). The state is dependent on the monsoons for replenishing the water resources. There are 17 major river basins with 61 reservoirs and about 41,948 tanks with a total surface water potential of 24,864 million cubic metres (MCM), 90% of which is used for irrigation. The utilisable groundwater recharge is 22,423 MCM. The major rivers include Kaveri, Bhavani, Vaigai and Thamirabarani. With most of the rivers originating from other states, Tamil Nadu depends on neighbouring states for considerable quantum of water which has often led to disputes. The state has 116 large dams. Apart from the rivers, the majority of the water comes from rainwater stored in more than 41,000 tanks and 1.68 million wells across the state. Water supply and sewage treatment are managed by the respective local administrative bodies such as the Chennai MetroWater Supply and Sewage Board in Chennai. Desalination plants including the country's largest at Minjur provide alternative means of drinking water. As per the 2011 census, only 83.4% of the households have access to safe drinking water, less than the national average of 85.5%. Water sources are also threatened by environmental pollution and effluent discharge from industries.

Health and sanitation The state is one of the leading states in terms of sanitation facilities with more than 99.96% of people having access to toilets. The state has robust health facilities and ranks higher in all health related parameters such as high life expectancy of 74 years (sixth) and 98.4% institutional delivery (second). Of the three demographically related targets of the Millennium Development Goals set by the United Nations and expected to be achieved by 2015, Tamil Nadu achieved the goals related to improvement of maternal health and of reducing infant mortality and child mortality by 2009. The health infrastructure in the state includes both government-run and private hospitals. As of 2023, the state had 404 public hospitals, 1,776 public dispensaries, 11,030 health centres and 481 mobile units run by the government with a capacity of more than 94,700 beds. The General Hospital in Chennai was established on 16 November 1664 and was the first major hospital in India. The state government administers free polio vaccine for eligible age groups. Tamil Nadu is a major centre for medical tourism and Chennai is termed as "India's health capital". Medical tourism forms an important part of the economy with more than 40% of total medical tourists visiting India making it to Tamil Nadu.

Communication Tamil Nadu is one of four Indian states connected by undersea fibre-optic cables. As of 2023, four mobile phone service companies operate GSM networks including Bharti Airtel, BSNL, Vodafone Idea and Reliance Jio offering 4G and 5G mobile services. Wireline and broadband services are offered by five major operators and other smaller local operators. Tamil Nadu is amongst the states with a high internet usage and penetration. In 2018, the state government unveiled a plan to lay 55,000 km (34,000 mi) of optical fiber across the state to provide high-speed internet.

Power and energy Electricity distribution in the state is done by the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board headquartered at Chennai. As of 2023, the average daily consumption is 15,000 MW. Only 40% of the power is generated locally, with the remaining 60% met through purchases. As of 2022, the state was the fourth largest power consumer with a per capita availability of 1588.7 Kwh. As of 2023, the state has the third highest installed

power capacity of 38,248 MW with 54.6% from renewable resources. Thermal power is the largest contributor with more than 10,000 MW. Tamil Nadu is the only state with two operational nuclear power plants. The plant at Kalpakkam is the first fully indigenous nuclear power station in India. The Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant is the largest nuclear power station in India. It generates nearly one-third of the total nuclear power generated in the country. Tamil Nadu has the largest established wind power capacity in India with over 8,000 MW, mostly based out of two regions, Palghat Gap and Muppandal. The latter is one of the largest operational onshore wind farms in the world.

Media Newspaper publishing started in the state started with the launch of the weekly The Madras Courier in 1785. It was followed by the weeklies Madras Gazette and Government Gazette in 1795. The Spectator, founded in 1836 was the first English newspaper to be owned by an Indian and became the first daily newspaper in 1853. The first Tamil newspaper, Swadesamitran was launched in 1899. The state has a number of newspapers and magazines published in various languages including Tamil, English and Telugu. The major dailies with more than 100,000 circulation per day include The Hindu, Dina Thanthi, Dinakaran, The Times of India, Dina Malar, and The Deccan Chronicle. Several periodicals and local newspapers prevalent in select localities also bring out editions from multiple cities. Government-run Doordarshan broadcasts terrestrial and satellite television channels from its Chennai centre set up in 1974. DD Podhigai, Doordarshan's Tamil language regional channel was launched on 14 April 1993. There are more than 30 private satellite television networks including Sun Network, one of India's largest broadcasting companies is the state, established in 1993. The cable TV service is entirely controlled by the state government while DTH and IPTV is available via various private operators. Radio broadcasting began in 1924 by the Madras Presidency Radio Club. All India Radio was established in 1938. There are many AM and FM radio stations operated by All India Radio, Hello FM, Suryan FM, Radio Mirchi, Radio City and BIG FM among others. In 2006, the government of Tamil Nadu distributed free televisions to all families, which has led to high penetration of television services. From the early 2010s, Direct to Home has become increasingly popular replacing cable television services. Tamil television serials form a major prime time source of entertainment.

Others Fire services are handled by the Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Services which operates 356 operating fire stations. Postal service is handled by India Post, which operates more than 11,800 post offices in the state. The first post office was established at Fort St. George on 1 June 1786.

Transportation Roads Tamil Nadu has an extensive road network covering about 271,000 km as of 2023 with a road density of 2,084.71 kilometres (1,295.38 mi) per 1000 km² which is higher than the national average of 1,926.02 kilometres (1,196.77 mi) per 1000 km². The Highways Department (HD) of the state was established in April 1946 and is responsible for construction and maintenance of national highways, state highways, major district roads and other roads in the state. It operates through eleven wings with 120 divisions and maintains 73,187 kilometres (45,476 mi) of highways in the state.

There are 48 National Highways in Tamil Nadu, totalling 6,805 kilometres (4,228 mi) in length. The National Highways Wing of the state highways department, established in 1971, is responsible for the maintenance of National Highways, as laid down by National Highways Authority of India (NHAI). There are also state highways, totalling 6,805 kilometres (4,228 mi) long, which connect district headquarters, important towns and national highways in the state. As of 2020, 32,598 buses are operated with the state transport units operating 20,946 buses along with 7,596 private buses and 4,056 mini buses. Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation (TNSTC), established in 1947 when private buses operating in Madras presidency were nationalised, is the primary public transport bus operator in the state. It operates buses along intra and inter state bus routes, as

well as city routes with eight divisions including the State Express Transport Corporation Limited (SETC) which runs long-distance express services. Metropolitan Transport Corporation in Chennai and State Express Transport Corporation. As of 2020, Tamil Nadu had 32.1 million registered vehicles.

Rail The rail network in Tamil Nadu forms a part of Southern Railway of Indian Railways, which is headquartered in Chennai with four divisions in the state namely Chennai, Tiruchirappalli, Madurai and Salem. As of 2023, the state had a total railway track length of 5,601 km (3,480 mi) covering a route length of 3,858 km (2,397 mi). There are 532 railway stations in the state with Chennai Central, Chennai Egmore, Coimbatore Junction and Madurai Junction being the top revenue earning stations. Indian railways also has a coach manufacturing unit at Chennai, electric locomotive sheds at Arakkonam, Erode and Royapuram, diesel locomotive sheds at Erode, Tiruchirappalli and Tondiarpet, Steam locomotive shed at Coonoor along with various maintenance depots.

Chennai has a well-established suburban railway network operated by Southern railway, covering 212 km (132 mi) which was established in 1928. The Mass Rapid Transit System (MRTS) is an elevated urban mass transit system established in 1995 operating on a single line from Chennai Beach to Velachery. Chennai Metro is a rapid transit rail system in Chennai which was opened in 2015 and consists of two operational lines operating across 54.1 km (33.6 mi) in 2023. Nilgiri Mountain Railway is a 1,000 mm (3 ft 3+3⁄8 in) metre gauge railway in Nilgiris district which was built by the British in 1908 and is the only rack railway in India.

Air The aviation history of the state began in 1910, when Giacomo D'Angelis built the first powered flight in Asia and tested it in Island Grounds. In 1915, Tata Air Mail started an airmail service between Karachi and Madras, marking the beginning of civil aviation in India. On 15 October 1932, J. R. D. Tata flew a Puss Moth aircraft carrying air mail from Karachi to Bombay's Juhu Airstrip and the flight was continued to Madras piloted by aviator Nevill Vintcent marking the first scheduled commercial flight. There are three international, one limited international and six domestic or private airports in Tamil Nadu.

Chennai airport, which is the fourth busiest airport by passenger traffic in India, is a major international airport and the main gateway to the state. Other international airports in the state include Coimbatore and Tiruchirappalli while Madurai is a customs airport with limited international flights. Domestic flights are operational to certain airports like Tuticorin and Salem while flights are planned to be introduced to more domestic airports by the UDAN scheme of Government of India. The region comes under the purview of the Southern Air Command of the Indian Air Force. The Air Force operates three air bases in the state Sulur, Tambaram and Thanjavur. The Indian Navy operates airbases at Arakkonam, Uchipuli and Chennai. In 2019, Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) announced the setting up a new rocket launch pad near Kulasekharapatnam in Thoothukudi district.

Water There are three major ports, Chennai, Ennore and Thoothukudi, which are managed by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways of the Government of India. There is an intermediate sea port at Nagapattinam and sixteen other minor ports, which are managed by the department of highways and minor ports of the Government of Tamil Nadu. Tamil Nadu forms part of both the Eastern Naval Command and Southern Naval Command of the Indian Navy, which has a major base at Chennai and logistics support base at Thoothukudi.

Education Tamil Nadu is one of the most literate states in India, with a literacy rate estimated to be 82.9% as per the 2017 National Statistical Commission survey, higher than the national average of 77.7%. The state had

seen one of the highest literacy growth since the 1960s due to the midday meal scheme introduced on a large scale by K. Kamaraj to increase school enrolment. The scheme was further upgraded in 1982 to "Nutritious noon-meal scheme" to combat malnutrition. As of 2022, the state has one of the highest enrolment to secondary education at 95.6%, far above the national average of 79.6%. An analysis of primary school education by Pratham showed a low drop-off rate but poor quality of education compared to certain other states. As of 2022, the state had over 37,211 government schools, 8,403 government-aided schools and 12,631 private schools which educate 5.47 million, 2.84 million, and 5.69 million students respectively. There are 3,12,683 teachers with 80,217 teachers in government-aided schools with an average teacher-pupil ratio of 1:26.6. Public schools are all affiliated with the Tamil Nadu State Board, while private schools may be affiliated with either of Tamil Nadu Board of Secondary Education, Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (ICSE) or National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS). School education starts with two years of kindergarten from age three onwards and then follows the Indian 10+2 plan, ten years of school and two years of higher secondary education.

As of 2023, there are 56 universities in the state including 24 public universities, four private universities and 28 deemed-to-be universities. The University of Madras was founded in 1857 and is one of India's first modern universities. There are 510 engineering colleges including 34 government colleges in the state. Indian Institute of Technology Madras is a premier institute of engineering and College of Engineering, Guindy, Anna University founded in 1794 is the oldest engineering college in India. The Officers Training Academy of the Indian Army is headquartered at Chennai. There are also 496 polytechnic institutions with 92 government colleges and 935 arts and science colleges in the state including 302 government run colleges. Madras Christian College (1837), Presidency College (1840) and Pachaiyappa's College (1842) are amongst the oldest arts and science colleges in the country.

There are over 870 medical, nursing and dental colleges in the state including 21 for traditional medicine and four for modern medicine. The Madras Medical College was established in 1835 and is one of the oldest medical colleges in India. As per the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) rankings in 2023, 26 universities, 15 engineering, 35 arts science, 8 management and 8 medical colleges from the state are ranked amongst the top 100 in the country. As of 2023, the state has a 69% reservation in educational institutions for socially backward sections of society, the highest among all Indian states. There are ten institutes of national importance in the state. Research institutes including Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Central Institute for Cotton Research, Sugarcane Breeding Research Institute, Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding (IFGTB) and Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education are involved in agricultural research. As of 2023, the state has 4,622 public libraries. Established in 1896, Connemara Public Library is one of the oldest and is amongst the four National Depository Centres in India that receive a copy of all newspapers and books published in the country. The Anna Centenary Library is the largest library in Asia. There are many research institutions spread across the state. Chennai book fair is an annual book fair organised by the Booksellers and Publishers Association of South India (BAPASI) and is typically held in December-January.

Tourism and recreation With its diverse culture and architecture and varied geographies, Tamil Nadu has a robust tourism industry. In 1971, the Government of Tamil Nadu established the Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation, which is the nodal agency responsible for the promotion of tourism and development of tourist related infrastructure in the state. It is managed by the Tourism, Culture and Religious Endowments Department. The tag line "Enchanting Tamil Nadu" was adopted in the tourism promotions. In the 21st century, the state has been amongst the top destinations for domestic and international tourists. As of 2020, Tamil Nadu recorded the most tourist foot-falls with more than 140.7 million tourists visiting the state. Tamil Nadu's coastline

is 1,076 kilometres (669 mi) long, with many beaches dotting the coast. Marina Beach spanning 13 km (8.1 mi) is the second-longest urban beach in the world. As the state is straddled by the Western and Eastern ghats, it is home to many hill stations, popular amongst them are Udagamandalam (Ooty) situated in the Nilgiri Hills and Kodaikanal in the Palani hills. There are a number of rock-cut cave-temples and more than 34,000 temples in Tamil Nadu built across various periods some of which are several centuries old. With many rivers and streams, there are a number of waterfalls in the state including the Courtallam and Hogenakkal Falls. There are four World Heritage Sites declared by UNESCO in the state: Group of Monuments at Mahabalipuram, Great Living Chola Temples, Nilgiri Mountain Railway, and Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve.

Sports Kabaddi is a contact sport which is the state game of Tamil Nadu. Pro Kabaddi League is the most popular region based franchise tournament with Tamil Thalaivas representing the state. Chess is a popular board game which originated as Sathurangam in the 7th century CE. Chennai is often dubbed "India's chess capital" as the city is home to multiple chess grandmasters, including former world champion Viswanathan Anand. The state played host to the World Chess Championship 2013 and 44th Chess Olympiad in 2022. Traditional games like Pallanguzhi, Uriyadi, Gillidanda, Dhaayam are played across the region. Jallikattu and Rekla are traditional sporting events involving bulls. Traditional martial arts include Silambattam, Gatta gusthi, and Adimurai.

Cricket is the most popular sport in the state. The M.A. Chidambaram Stadium established in 1916 is among the oldest cricket stadiums in India and has hosted matches during multiple ICC Cricket World Cups. Established in 1987, MRF Pace Foundation is a bowling academy based in Chennai. Chennai is home to the most successful Indian Premier League (IPL) cricket team, Chennai Super Kings, and hosted the finals during the 2011, 2012, and 2024 seasons. Football is also popular with the Indian Super League being the major club competition and Chennaiyin FC representing the state. There are multi-purpose venues in major cities including Chennai and Coimbatore, which host football and athletics. Chennai also houses a multi-purpose indoor complex for volleyball, basketball, kabaddi and table tennis. Chennai hosted the 1995 South Asian Games. Tamil Nadu Hockey Association is the governing body of hockey in the state and Mayor Radhakrishnan Stadium in Chennai was the venue for the international hockey tournaments, the 2005 Men's Champions Trophy and the 2007 Men's Asia Cup. Madras Boat Club (founded in 1846) and Royal Madras Yacht Club (founded in 1911) promote sailing, rowing and canoeing sports in Chennai. Inaugurated in 1990, Madras Motor Race Track was the first permanent racing circuit in India and hosts formula racing events. Coimbatore is often referred to as "India's Motorsports Hub" and the "Backyard of Indian Motorsports" and hosts the Kari Motor Speedway, a Formula 3 Category circuit. Horse racing is held at the Guindy Race Course and the state has three 18-hole golf courses, the Cosmopolitan Club, the Gymkhana Club and the Coimbatore Golf Club.

Notes See also Chronology of Tamil history Outline of Tamil Nadu Tamil inscriptions

References External links

Geographic data related to Tamil Nadu at OpenStreetMap

Telangana

Telangana is a state in India situated in the south-central part of the Indian subcontinent on the high Deccan Plateau. It borders Maharashtra to the north, Chhattisgarh to the northeast, Andhra Pradesh to the southeast, and Karnataka to the southwest. It is the eleventh largest state by area and the twelfth most populated state in India, according to the 2011 census. On 2 June 2014, Telangana was separated from the northwestern part of United Andhra Pradesh as a newly formed state, with Hyderabad as its capital. Telugu, one of the classical languages of India, is the most widely spoken and the primary official language of Telangana state, whereas Urdu is recognised as the second official language. Additionally, several tribal languages such as Gondi, Kolami, Koya and Lambadi are spoken in different regions of the state. The economy of Telangana is the eighth largest in India, with a gross state domestic product (GSDP) of ₹18 trillion (US\$210 billion) and has a GSDP per capita of ₹390,564 (US\$4,600) for the financial year 2024-25. Telangana has emerged as a major focal point for IT software companies, industry and the services sector. The state is also the main administrative center of many Indian defence aerospace and research labs including Bharat Dynamics Limited, Defence Metallurgical Research Laboratory, Defence Research and Development Organisation and Defence Research and Development Laboratory.

Etymology According to one popular theory, the name derives from Trilinga desha ("land of three lingas") as the region is home to 3 prominent Shaivite shrines: Kaleshwaram (present day Telangana), Srisailem and Draksharama (present day Andhra Pradesh). According to Jayadheer Tirumala Rao, a historian, the name Telangana has Gondi origins. He asserts that it is derived from "Telangadh," which means "south" in the Gondi language, and has been referred in the "Gond script dating back to about 2,000 years." One of the earliest recorded uses of a similar term is found in the name of Malik Maqbul Tilangani (14th century CE), who was called Tilangani, which implies that he was from Telangana. He was the commander of the Warangal Fort (Kataka Pili) and later Wazir (Minister) under Firuz Shah Tughlaq. A 16th-century travel writer, Firishta, recorded in his book:

During the just reign of Ibrahim Kootb Shah, Tulingana, like Egypt, became the mart of the whole world. Merchants from Toorkistan, Arabia, and Persia resorted to it; and they met with such encouragement that they found in it inducements to return frequently. The greatest luxuries from foreign parts daily abounded at the king's hospitable board. The word "Telinga" changed over time to "Telangana" and the name "Telangana" was designated to distinguish the predominantly Telugu region of the erstwhile Hyderabad State from its predominantly Marathi one, Marathwada. After Asaf Jahi ceded the Seemandhra region to the British, the rest of the Telugu region retained the name Telangana and the other parts were called Madras Presidency's Circars and Ceded Districts.

History Throughout antiquity and the Middle Ages, the Telangana region was part of multiple Indian empires; such as the Maurya, Satavahana, Vishnukundina, Chalukya, Chola, Rashtrakuta, Kakatiya, Delhi Sultanate, Bahmani Sultanate and Golconda Sultanate. During the 17th to 19th centuries, the region was ruled by the Mughals and Nizam of Hyderabad. In 1823, the Nizams ceded Northern Circars (in Coastal Andhra) and Ceded Districts (in Rayalaseema) to British India under a subsidiary alliance which reduced it to that of a landlocked princely state bounded on all sides by British India. Following Indian Independence in 1947, Hyderabad state joined the Union of India in 1948 after a police action. In 1956, Hyderabad State was dissolved and its Telugu-speaking region Telangana was merged with the Andhra State to form Andhra Pradesh. A

peasant-driven movement began to advocate for separation from Andhra Pradesh starting in the early 1950s, and continued until Telangana was granted statehood on 2 June 2014. The historic city Golconda in pre-Independent Hyderabad established itself as a diamond trading centre, and until the end of the 19th century, the Golconda market was the primary source of the finest and largest diamonds in the world. Thus, the name Golconda Diamonds became synonymous with Golconda itself.

Early history From 230 BCE to 220 CE, the Satavahana dynasty became the dominant power in this area. It originated from the lands between the Godavari and Krishna rivers and was based at Amaravathi and Dharanikota. After the decline of the Satavahanas, various dynasties, such as the Vakataka, Vishnukundina, Chalukya, Rashtrakuta and Western Chalukya, ruled the area.

Medieval period The Telangana area experienced its golden age during the reign of the Kakatiya dynasty, which ruled most parts of the present-day Andhra Pradesh and Telangana from 1083 to 1323 CE. Rudrama Devi and Prataparudra II were prominent rulers from the this dynasty. The dynasty weakened with the attack of Malik Kafur in 1309 and was dissolved after the defeat of Prataparudra by the forces of Muhammad bin Tughluq in 1323.

The area came under the rule of the Delhi Sultanate in the 14th century, followed by the Bahmani Sultanate. Quli Qutb Mulk, a governor of Golconda, revolted against the Bahmani Sultanate and established the Qutb Shahi dynasty in 1518. On 21 September 1687, the Golconda Sultanate came under the rule of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb after a year-long siege of the Golconda fort. During the early seventeenth century a strong cotton-weaving industry existed in Telangana. Large quantities of cotton were produced for domestic consumption and exporting. High quality plain and patterned cloth made of muslin and calico was produced. In 1712, Qamar-ud-din Khan was appointed by emperor Farrukhsiyar as the viceroy of Deccan with the title Nizam-ul-Mulk (meaning "Administrator of the Realm"). He was later recalled to Delhi, with Mubariz Khan appointed as the viceroy. In 1724, Qamar-ud-din Khan defeated Mubariz Khan to reclaim the Deccan suba, establishing it as an autonomous province of the Mughal empire. He took the name Asif Jah, starting what came to be known as the Asaf Jahi dynasty. He named the area Hyderabad Deccan. Subsequent rulers retained the title Nizam ul-Mulk and were called Asif Jahi Nizams or nizams of Hyderabad. Hyderabad Nizams remained the tributary of marathas after suffering series of defeats paying annual chauth in return for retaining their domain. The Medak and Warangal divisions of Telangana were part of their realm.

When Asif Jah I died in 1748, there was political unrest due to contention for the throne among his sons, who were aided by opportunistic neighbouring states and colonial foreign forces. In 1769, Hyderabad city became the formal capital of the Nizams. The Nizam Nasir-ud-dawlah, Asaf Jah IV signed the subsidiary alliance with the British in 1799 and lost its control over the state's defence and foreign affairs. All of the Telugu speaking regions of present-day Telangana, Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema were under the rule of Asaf Jahi I. However, after the second monarch, Nizam Ali Khan, Asaf Jah II (1762-1803), signed the Treaty of Subsidiary Alliance with the British in 1798, the rulers were soon under financial duress as the state had to pay the British East India Company lakhs of rupees a year to maintain the foreign troops. The Nizam's government kept borrowing money from Palmer and Company in the first half of the 19th century, which it could not repay. Instead, the EIC paid-off the bank, and in return annexed the present day Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema regions from the Nizams, which were since then referred to as Circars (which means the region sold to the British lords) and Ceded, respectively. Hyderabad State became a princely state among the presidencies and provinces of British India. In 1787, heavy flooding killed over 20,000, causing a plague which killed about 10,656 people in Telangana.

Modern period When India became independent from the British Empire in 1947, the Nizam of Hyderabad did not want to merge with the Indian Union and wanted to remain independent. The Government of India annexed Hyderabad State on 17 September 1948 after a military operation called Operation Polo. It appointed a civil servant, M. K. Vellodi, as first chief minister of Hyderabad State on 26 January 1950. He administered the state with the help of English-educated bureaucrats from the Madras and Bombay states, who were familiar with British systems of administration unlike the bureaucrats of Hyderabad State who used a completely different administrative system. The official language of the state was switched from Urdu to English. In 1952, Burgula Ramakrishna Rao was elected chief minister of the Hyderabad State in its first democratic election. During this time, there were violent agitations by some Telangana natives to send the Madras state bureaucrats back and implement a rule by the natives (mulkis) of Hyderabad. Syed Alam Sharjil was elected chief minister of Hyderabad after Dr. Burgula Ramakrishna Rao resigned from the post.

The Telangana Rebellion was a peasant revolt supported by the communists. It originated in the Telangana regions of the Hyderabad State between 1946 and 1951, led by the Communist Party of India (CPI). The revolt began in the Nalgonda district against the feudal lords of Reddy and Velama castes. It quickly spread to the Warangal and Bidar districts. Peasant farmers and labourers revolted against the local feudal landlords (jagirdars and deshmukhs) and later against the Nizam Osman Ali Khan. The violent phase of the movement ended after the government of India's Operation Polo. Starting in 1951, the CPI shifted to a more moderate strategy of seeking to bring communism to India within the framework of Indian democracy. In December 1953, the States Reorganisation Commission (SRC) was appointed to form states on a linguistic basis. An agreement was reached between Telangana leaders and Andhra leaders on 20 February 1956 to merge Telangana and Andhra with promises to safeguard Telangana's interests. After reorganisation in 1956, the region of Telangana was merged with Andhra State to form Andhra Pradesh. Following this Gentlemen's agreement, the central government established the unified state of Andhra Pradesh on 1 November 1956. G.O 553 of 1959 from the united Andhra Pradesh state moved two revenue divisions of Bhadrachalam from East Godavari and Aswaraopeta from West Godavari to Khammam for administrative convenience.

There had been several movements to revoke the merger of Telangana and Andhra, major ones occurring in 1969, 1972, and 2009. The movement for a new state of Telangana gained momentum in the 21st century by an initiative of Kalvakuntla Chandrashekar Rao from Bharat Rashtra Samithi later joined by the Telangana Political Joint Action Committee (TJAC), including political leadership representing the Telangana area. On 9 December 2009 the government of India announced the process of formation of the Telangana state. Violent protests led by people in the Coastal Andhra and Rayalseema regions occurred immediately after the announcement, and the decision was put on hold on 23 December 2009. The movement continued in Hyderabad and other districts of Telangana. There were hundreds of claimed suicides, strikes, protests and disturbances to public life demanding separate statehood.

On 30 July 2013, the Congress Working Committee unanimously passed a resolution to recommend the formation of a separate Telangana state. After various stages the bill was placed in the Parliament of India in February 2014. In February 2014, Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014 bill was passed by the Parliament of India for the formation of Telangana state, comprising ten districts from north-western Andhra Pradesh. The bill received the assent of the president and was published in the Gazette on 1 March 2014. The state of Telangana was officially formed on 2 June 2014. Kalvakuntla Chandrashekar Rao was elected as the first chief minister of Telangana, following elections in which the Bharat Rashtra Samithi party secured a majority. Hyderabad would remain as the joint capital of both Telangana and Andhra Pradesh for a period. Within the

decade, Hyderabad would become the capital of the state of Telangana, and a new capital was selected for Andhra Pradesh. Andhra Pradesh picked Amaravati as its capital and relocated its secretariat in 2016 and its legislature in 2017.

Geography Telangana is situated on the Deccan Plateau, in the central stretch of the eastern seaboard of the Indian Peninsula. It covers 112,077 square kilometres (43,273 sq mi). The region is drained by two major rivers, with about 79% of the Godavari River catchment area and about 69% of the Krishna River catchment area, but most of the land is arid. Telangana is also drained by several minor rivers such as the Bhima, the Maner, the Manjira, the Musi, and the Tungabhadra. The annual rainfall is between 900 and 1500mm in northern Telangana and 700 to 900mm in southern Telangana, from the southwest monsoons. Telangana contains various soil types, some of which are red sandy loams (Chalaka), Red loamy sands (Dubba), lateritic soils, salt-affected soils, alluvial soils, shallow to medium black soils and very deep black cotton soils. These soil types allow the planting of a variety of fruits and vegetable crops such as mangoes, oranges, coconut, sugarcane, paddy, banana and flower crops.

Climate Telangana is a semi-arid area and has a predominantly hot and dry climate. Summers start in March, and peak in mid-April with average high temperatures in the 37-38 C (99-100 F) range. The monsoon arrives in June and lasts until Late-September with about 755 mm (29.7 inches) of precipitation. A dry, mild winter starts in late November and lasts until early February with little humidity and average temperatures in the 22-23 C (72-73 F) range.

Ecology The Central Deccan Plateau dry deciduous forests ecoregion covers much of the state, including Hyderabad. The characteristic vegetation is woodlands of *Hardwickia binata* and *Albizia amara*. Over 80% of the original forest cover has been cleared for agriculture, timber harvesting, or cattle grazing, but large blocks of forest can be found in Nagarjunsagar-Srisailem Tiger Reserve and elsewhere. The more humid Eastern Highlands moist deciduous forests cover the Eastern Ghats in the eastern part of the state.

National parks and sanctuaries Telangana has three National Parks: Kasu Brahmananda Reddy National Park in Hyderabad district, and Mahavir Harina Vanasthali National Park and Mrugavani National Park in Ranga Reddy district.

Wildlife sanctuaries in Telangana include Eturunagaram Wildlife Sanctuary and Pakhal Wildlife Sanctuary in Warangal District, Kawal Tiger Reserve and Pranahita Wildlife Sanctuary in Adilabad district, Kinnerasani Wildlife Sanctuary in Khammam district, Manjira Wildlife Sanctuary in Medak district, Nagarjunsagar-Srisailem Tiger Reserve in Nalgonda and Mahbubnagar districts, Pocharam Wildlife Sanctuary in Medak and Nizamabad districts, Shivaram Wildlife Sanctuary in Karimnagar district. Sacred groves are small areas of forest preserved by local people. Sacred groves provide sanctuary to the local flora and fauna. Some are included within other protected areas, like Kadalivanam in Nagarjunsagar-Srisailem Tiger Reserve, but most stand alone. There are 65 sacred groves in Telangana—two in Adilabad district, thirteen in Hyderabad district, four in Karimnagar district, four in Khammam district, nine in Mahbubnagar district, four in Medak district, nine in Nalgonda district, ten in Ranga Reddy district, and three in Warangal district.

Demographics Language Telugu, one of the classical languages of India, is the official language of Telangana and Urdu is the second official language of the state. About 75% of the population of Telangana speak Telugu and 12% speak Urdu. Before 1948, Urdu was the official language of Hyderabad State, and due to a lack of

Telugu-language educational institutions, Urdu was the language of the educated elite of Telangana. After 1948, once Hyderabad State joined the new Republic of India, Telugu became the language of government, and as Telugu was introduced as the medium of instruction in schools and colleges, the use of Urdu among non-Hyderabad Muslims decreased. Both Telugu and Urdu are used in services across the state, such as the Telangana Legislature website, with Telugu and Urdu versions of the website available, as well as the Hyderabad metro, wherein both languages are used on station names and signs along with English and Hindi. The Urdu spoken in Telangana is called Hyderabad Urdu, which in itself is a dialect of the larger Dakhini Urdu dialects of South India. Although the language is spoken by most Hyderabad Muslims, the language in a literary context has long been lost, and standard Urdu is used. Hindi is spoken mainly in Hyderabad, as well as some other urban areas like Warangal. Lambadi, a language related to Rajasthani dialects, is used across the state. Marathi is predominant in regions bordering Maharashtra, especially in the old Adilabad district, while Kannada is spoken by significant minorities along some parts of the Karnataka border. The old Adilabad district has a large number of speakers of tribal languages such as Gondi and Kolami, while Koya is a language spoken by significant numbers in Bhadrachalam district and along the Chhattisgarh border. Telangana ranked eighth in the Fiscal Health Index (FHI) 2025, with a score of 43.6.

Religion and culture According to the 2011 census, Hindus form 85.1% of the state's population. Muslims form 12.7% and Christians form 1.3%. Religious edifices like the Lakshmi Narasimha Temple in Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district, Makkah Masjid in Hyderabad, the ancient Bhadrakali Temple and Govinda Rajula Gutta in Warangal, Alampur Jogulamba Temple in Jogulamba Gadwal district and Medak Cathedral in Medak District, Kondagattu Anjaneya Swamy Temple in Jagtial District, Kothakonda Veerabhadra Swamy Temple, Lord Shiva temple in Vemulawada of Rajanna Sircilla district are several of its most famous places of worship. Buddhism also flourished in the region and many Aramams can be found. Hyderabad cuisine and Kakatiya architecture both from Telangana, are on the list of creativity UNESCO creative city of gastronomy and UNESCO World Heritage Site. The cultural centers of Telangana, Hyderabad and Warangal, are noted for their wealth and renowned historical structures - Ramappa Temple (UNESCO World Heritage Site), Charminar, Qutb Shahi Tombs, Falaknuma Palace, Chowmahalla Palace, Warangal Fort, Kakatiya Kala Thoranam, Thousand Pillar Temple and the Bhongir Fort.

Literacy According to the 2011 census, Telangana's literacy rate is 66.46%. Male literacy and female literacy are 74.95% and 57.92%, respectively. Hyderabad district has the highest literacy rate with 80.96% and Mahabubnagar district has the lowest with 56.06%. In a 2019 report, the Key Indicators of Household Social Consumption on Education in India, by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Telangana has a literacy rate of 72.8% which is the fourth lowest among large states. It also has the second lowest literacy rate among rural women at 53.7%. 37.1% of the population aged 3-35 years received free education at pre-primary and higher levels in Telangana.

Administrative divisions The state is divided into 33 districts. The latest two new districts, Mulugu and Narayanpet, were formed on 17 February 2019. The districts are divided into 70 revenue divisions which are further divided into 584 mandals. There are a total of 10,909 revenue villages in the state. Each district is administered by a District Collector, each revenue division is headed by a Revenue Divisional Officer, and each mandal is managed by a Mandal Revenue Officer. Each village in every mandal is administered by a Village Revenue Officer (VRO) under the supervision of the Tahsildar (MRO). The districts in the state are:

Local governments There are a total of 12 cities in the state. Hyderabad is the biggest city in the state and 4th largest city in India. There are 13 municipal corporations and 132 municipalities in the state for urban

governance. Each local body has its own elected councils and members and executive staffs for governance and administration. There are 12,777 gram panchayats, 566 mandal praja parishads, and 31 zilla praja parishads in the state for rural governance.

Government and politics Telangana is governed by a parliamentary system of representative democracy, a feature the state shares with other Indian states. Universal suffrage is granted to residents. There are three branches of government.

Executive authority is vested in the Council of Ministers headed by the Chief Minister, although the titular head of government is the Governor. The governor is the head of state appointed by the President of India. The leader of the party or coalition with a majority in the Legislative Assembly is appointed as the chief minister by the governor, and the Council of Ministers are appointed by the governor on the advice of the chief minister. The Council of Ministers reports to the Legislative Assembly. The legislature, the Telangana Legislative Assembly and the Telangana Legislative Council, consists of elected members and special office bearers such as the Speaker and Deputy Speaker, that are elected by the members. Assembly meetings are presided over by the speaker or the deputy speaker in the speaker's absence. The Assembly is bicameral with 119 Members of the Legislative Assembly and 40 Member of the Legislative Council. Terms of office run for five years unless the Assembly is dissolved prior to the completion of the term. The Legislative Council is a permanent body with one-third of members retiring every two years. The judiciary is composed of the High Court of Judicature at Hyderabad and a system of lower courts. Auxiliary authorities known as panchayats, for which local body elections are regularly held, govern local affairs. The state contributes seats to Lok Sabha. The main political parties in the regional politics are the Bharat Rashtra Samithi, All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen, Bharatiya Janata Party and Indian National Congress. Following the Telangana Legislative Assembly Election in 2023, the Indian National Congress under Anumula Revanth Reddy was elected to power.

Economy The economy of Telangana is mainly driven by agriculture. Two important rivers of India, the Godavari and Krishna, flow through the state, providing irrigation. Farmers in Telangana mainly depend on rain-fed water sources for irrigation. Rice is the major food crop. Other important crops are cotton, sugar cane, mango, and tobacco. Recently, crops used for vegetable oil production such as sunflower and peanuts have gained favour. There are many multi-state irrigation projects in development, including Godavari River Basin Irrigation Projects and Nagarjuna Sagar Dam, the world's highest masonry dam. The state has also started to focus on the fields of information technology and biotechnology. Telangana is one of top IT-exporting states of India. There are 68 Special Economic Zones in the state. Telangana is a mineral-rich state, with coal reserves at Singareni Collieries Company.

Agriculture Rice is the major food crop and staple food of the state. Other important crops are maize, tobacco, mango, cotton and sugar cane. Agriculture has been the chief source of income for the state's economy. The Godavari and Krishna rivers flow through the state, providing irrigation. Apart from major rivers, there are small rivers like Tunga Bhadra, Bima, Dindi, Kinnerasani, Manjeera, Manair, Penganga, Pranahitha, peddavagu and Taliperu. There are many multi-state irrigation projects in development, including Godavari River Basin Irrigation Projects and Nagarjuna Sagar Dam, the world's highest masonry dam. Agri Export Zones for the following produce have been proposed for the following locations:

Gherkins: Mahabubnagar, Rangareddy, Medak, Karimnagar, Warangal Mangoes and grapes: Hyderabad, Rangareddy, Medak, Mahabubnagar In 2019, environmental anthropologist Andrew Flachs raised concerns

regarding the financial and social pressures experienced by small cotton farmers in Telangana after conducting ethnographic research in the area. The GM (genetically modified) seeds he focused on were introduced to combat pests and low yields. Within 10 years, GM cottonseeds, which are solely bred by private breeders, were able to capture more than 90% of the Indian market, which was formerly a public market. The privatisation of seed brands in formerly public markets has been accompanied by pesticides, fertilisers, consultations, and herbicides which are needed to manage the new monocultures. He found that this introduction, however, negatively impacted farmers' ecological knowledge about seed choices and cotton-plant management. Flachs surveyed farming households about their experiences with GM hybrid cottonseeds from 2012 to 2016. His research initially focused on the agricultural decision-making process among Telangana cotton farmers in the wake of genetically modified seed market expansion, then later on the concept of *manci digubadi* as a script. *Manci digubadi* means "good yields," with a more extended phrasing being "*manci digubadi annakunthunnu*," which translates to "I'm hoping for good yields." The concept of *manci digubadi*, as described by Flachs, posits that seed choice should be made based on whether or not it has "good yields," which is dependent solely on what the individual believes is "good." Flachs further argues that this script is used in the absence of reliable experiential knowledge in the face of agricultural development and GMOs. This is because, in the pursuit of a good yield, cotton farmers learn little about the seeds they use before they switch to the next promising new brands, some of which have been smuggled in or bought on the black market. Marketing, the constant influx of new options, and the fear of missing out on popular seeds also contribute to the high turnover. This high turnover and the resulting lack of experiential knowledge have resulted in cotton farmers unwittingly planting the same type of seed multiple times because they are under different brand names. In contrast to this, farmers adopt and abandon seeds from public-sector-bred crops like rice and heirloom vegetables more slowly so they can rely more on experiential knowledge to make decisions. Telangana cotton farmers are at risk for debt and suicide caused by agricultural pressures such as unreliable credit, pest problems, and agricultural management uncertainty. Flachs argues that seed choices and the rationalisation behind the choice are central to the agricultural political economy, as seed choice is "the first decision that cotton farmers make and one that they cannot take back." Flachs argues that cotton seed choices are driven less by economic rationalism and more by an aspiration to overcome generational poverty and historical marginalisation. Flachs found evidence in his work suggesting that many farmers' seed choices are influenced by the choices of their neighbours or more wealthy landowners. As an example of *manci digubadi* being used in place of experiential knowledge, Flachs gives the story of a farmer who had planted the Mahyco company's Neeraja cottonseed for nine years abandoned that seed in favour of Kaveri's Jaadoo seed after hearing reports that the Jaadoo seeds had done well in a neighbouring village. Farmers also seek advice from non-household experts such as pesticide shop managers and university extension agents. There is no objective cost-benefit analysis because the costs and benefits are ambiguous due to things variations of factors like weather and pests and farmers having no reliable measure for what constitutes a good yield for cotton.

Industries Several major manufacturing and services industries are in operation mainly around Hyderabad. Automobiles and auto components, spices, mines and minerals, textiles and apparels, pharmaceutical, horticulture, and poultry farming are the main industries in Telangana. In terms of services, Hyderabad is nicknamed "Cyberabad" due to the location of major software industries in the city. Prior to secession, it contributed 10% to India's and 98% to Andhra Pradesh's exports in the IT and ITES sectors in 2013. With Hyderabad in the front line of Telangana's goal to promote information technology in India, the city boasts the HITEC City as its premier hub. IT companies/hubs have also been set up in Warangal, Karimnagar, and Khammam. The state government is in the process of developing industrial parks at different places, for specific groups of industries. The existing parks are Software Park at Hyderabad, HITEC City for software units, Apparel Park at Gundlapochampalli, Export Promotion Park at Pashamylaram, Biotechnology park at Turkapally. Hyderabad is also a major site for healthcare-related industries including hospitals and pharmaceutical

organisations such as Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences, Yashoda Hospitals, LV Prasad Eye Care, Akruti Institute of cosmetic and plastic surgery, Fever Hospital, Durgabai Deshmukh, Continental Hospitals and Apollo Hospitals. Many pharmaceutical and pharmaceutical-related companies like Dr. Reddy's Laboratories, Shantha Biotechnics and Aragen (Formerly GVK BIO) are based out of Hyderabad. In addition, Hyderabad-based healthcare non-profits include the Indian Heart Association, a cardiovascular disease NGO.

Tourism Telangana Tourism Development Corporation (TGTDC) is a state government agency which promotes tourism in Telangana. Telangana has a variety of tourist attractions including historical places, monuments, forts, waterfalls, forests and temples.

Waterfalls Kuntala Waterfall (45 metres (148 ft)) is located in Kuntala, Adilabad district. Bogatha Waterfall is located in Wazeedu Mandal, Jayashankar Bhupalpally district, Telangana. Savatula Gundam Waterfalls in Adilabad district

Media The print media mainly consists of Telugu and English newspapers. Nava Telangana, Sakshi, Andhra Jyothi, Eenadu and Namaste Telangana are all Telugu newspapers. English newspapers are Deccan Chronicle, The Times of India, The Hindu, Telangana Today and The Hans India. Notable Urdu newspapers include Etemaad Daily, The Munsif Daily, and The Siasat Daily.

Infrastructure Irrigation projects Public transport The state is well connected with other states by means of road, rail and airways. The Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TGSRTC) is the major public transport corporation that connects all the cities and villages. Mahatma Gandhi Bus Station (M.G.B.S) in Hyderabad is the central bus-station of the state. Jubilee Bus Station in Secunderabad serves inter city bus services.

Roadways The state has a total of 16 national highways and accounts for a total length of 3,550.69 km (2,206.30 mi).

Railways The history of railways in this region dates back to 1874, during the rule of Nizam of Hyderabad. The Nizam's Guaranteed State Railway had its beginnings in a line built privately by the Nizam. Much to the dismay of the British authorities, the Nizam bore all the expenses for the construction of the line. Today, it operates under the auspices of the South Central Railway founded in 1966. The landmark building Rail Nilayam in Secunderabad is the Zonal Headquarters office of South Central Railway. Secunderabad and Hyderabad are the main divisions of the South Central Railway that fall in the state.

Airports Rajiv Gandhi International Airport at Shamshabad is an international airport serving the city of Hyderabad. It is the largest airport in the state and one of the busiest airports in the country. The government has plans to upgrade Warangal Airport, Nizamabad Airport and Ramagundam Airport - with plans to construct airports in Ramagundam and Kothagudem using the UDAN scheme. Warangal has a domestic airport in Mamunooru which was established in the year 1930 during the Nizam period. All the exports and imports of Azam Jahi Mills, Warangal were done through the Warangal Airport.

Culture The state has a rich tradition in classical music, painting and folk performance arts such as Burra katha, Tholu bommalata (shadow puppet show), and Perini Shivatandavam, Gussadi dance, Kolatam and Bathukamma. The important festivals of the state are Bonalu and Bathukamma.

Architecture Badami Chalukya architecture is spread across the state, notable temple is Alampur Jogulamba Temple. Chalukyas of Vemulavada built many temples such as Bheemeshvara temple, Raja Rajeswara Temple, Vemulawada.

Medieval forts such as the Bhongir Fort, Khammam Fort, and Rachakonda Fort are spread across the state. Among the notable ones is the Warangal Fort, which served as the capital of the Kakatiya dynasty. The Kakatiya Kala Thoranam within the fort has become a symbol of Telangana, and features on the state emblem. Ramappa Temple is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The fort complex, and Thousand Pillar Temple, are on the tentative list of the UNESCO World Heritage sites. Kollapur, and Jataprole Samsthanams, Gadwal Samsthanam built temples in Dravidian architecture. The Qutb Shahi dynasty established the city of Hyderabad as their capital. The Charminar, Golconda Fort, and Qutb Shahi tombs in Hyderabad were built by kings of the Qutb Shahi dynasty. The Nizam era saw the construction of palaces such as the Chowmahalla Palace and Falaknuma Palace, as well as elaborate public buildings such as the Osmania General Hospital and Osmania University, all in Hyderabad.

Places of Worship The state is home to places of worship built for different religions. Hindu places of worship include Bhadrachalam Temple, Gnana Saraswati Temple, Yadagirigutta Temple, Ramappa Temple, Vemulawada Raja Rajeshwara temple, Kondagattu Anjaneya Swamy Temple, the Thousand Pillar Temple, and the Statue of Equality (Ramanuja). Muslims worship at holy places such as Makkah Masjid near Charminar, Khairtabad Mosque, Mian Mishk Masjid, Toli Masjid and Spanish Mosque. Christian places of worship include the Diocese of Dornakal of the Church of South India, Bahe Church of South India, and Medak Cathedral. There are also some Buddhist destinations, such as Nelakondapalli, Dhulikatta, Phanigiri and Kolanpaka. Parsi Fire Temple, Secunderabad is a place of worship for the Parsis.

Cinema Telugu cinema, also known by its sobriquet as Tollywood, is a part of Indian cinema producing films in the Telugu language, and is centred in the Hyderabad, Telangana neighbourhood of Film Nagar. In the early 1990s, the Telugu film industry had largely shifted from Chennai to Hyderabad. The Telugu film industry is the second-largest film industry in India next to Bollywood. In the years 2005, 2006 and 2008 the Telugu film industry produced the largest number of films in India, exceeding the number of films produced in Bollywood. The industry holds the Guinness World Record for the largest film production facility in the world.

Cuisine Telangana cuisine is a unique and delicious cuisine that is influenced by the region's rich history of deccan and Telugu culture. The cuisine is known for its use of spices, millets, and rotis. Telangana cuisine also features a variety of other dishes, including biryani, haleem, and kebabs.

Visual arts Indigenous art forms of Telangana include the Cherial scroll painting, Nirmal paintings, and Karimnagar Silver Filigree. A distinctive Persianate style of painting, called Deccan painting developed in the region during the medieval period. Notable museums in the state include the Salar Jung Museum, which is one of the largest in India, Telangana State Archaeology Museum, City Museum, and Nizam Museum in Hyderabad, Warangal Museum in Warangal, and Alampur Museum in Alampur.

Education Telangana has multiple institutes of higher education along with numerous primary and secondary schools. The Department of Higher Education deals with matters relating to education at various levels in the state.

According to a 2019 report, the state has a literacy rate of 72.8%, which is one of the lowest in India. Schools in Telangana are run by the state government or private organisations, which include religious institutions. Some specialised schools such as the Kendriya Vidyalayas and Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas are run by agencies of the central government. As of 2017, there are 41,337 schools in the state, with about 70% of them being government schools. Telangana is home to 27 universities, which include three central universities, 17 state universities, two deemed universities, and five private universities. The Osmania University in Hyderabad, established in 1918, is the oldest modern university in the state, and one of the largest university systems in the world. The University of Hyderabad consistently ranks among the top universities in the country. Apart from these, specialised Institutes of National Importance in the state include AIIMS Bibinagar, IIT Hyderabad, and NIT Warangal. Other notable institutions include Indian School of Business, ICFAI Business School Hyderabad, Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University, Hyderabad, Kakatiya University, International Institute of Information Technology, Hyderabad, NALSAR University of Law, Kaloji Narayana Rao University of Health Sciences, National Institute of Fashion Technology Hyderabad, Footwear Design and Development Institute, National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research, Hyderabad, and Rajiv Gandhi University of Knowledge Technologies, Basar, among others.

Sports The Hyderabad FC is a professional football club based in Hyderabad and plays in top-tier league of India, the Indian Super League. The home ground of the club is G.M.C Balayogi Athletic Stadium, in Gachibowli. The Hyderabad cricket team is represented in the Ranji Trophy and has won twice. The Sunrisers Hyderabad, an Indian Premier League franchise, is based in Hyderabad and has won the trophy once. Deccan Chargers, a currently defunct franchise from Hyderabad, also won the Indian Premier League once. The Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium is the home ground of both Hyderabad cricket team and Sunrisers Hyderabad. It hosts international as well as domestic matches. The Hyderabad Hunters, a Premier Badminton League franchise; the Telugu Titans, a Pro Kabaddi League franchise; the Hyderabad Sky, a UBA Pro Basketball League franchise and the Telugu Tigers, a Premier Futsal franchise are also based in Hyderabad. Hyderabad Hunters have won the Premier Badminton League title. Other stadiums include G. M. C. Balayogi Athletic Stadium, Lal Bahadur Shastri Stadium and Gachibowli Indoor Stadium.

Notable people See also Bekkara Hyderabad State Hyderabad State (1948-1956) List of people from Telangana Telangana Language Day List of cities and towns in Telangana

Notes References Further reading External links

Official site of Telangana government General information

Telangana web resources provided by GovPubs at the University of Colorado Boulder Libraries Telangana at the Encyclopdia Britannica Wikimedia Atlas of Telangana Geographic data related to Telangana at OpenStreetMap

Tripura

Tripura () is a state in northeastern India. The third-smallest state in the country, it covers 10,491 km² (4,051 sq mi); and the seventh-least populous state with a population of 3.67 million. It is bordered by Assam and Mizoram to the east and by Bangladesh to the north, south and west. Tripura is divided into 8 districts and 23 sub-divisions, where Agartala is the capital and the largest city in the state. Tripura has 19 different tribal communities with a majority Bengali population. Bengali, Kokborok and English are the state's official languages. The area of modern Tripura - ruled for several centuries by the Manikya Dynasty - was part of the Tripuri Kingdom (also known as Hill Tippera). It became a princely state under the British Raj during its tenure, and acceded to independent India in 1947. It merged with India in 1949 and was designated as a 'Part C State' (union territory). It became a full-fledged state of India in 1972. Tripura lies in a geographically isolated location in India, as only one major highway, National Highway 8, connects it with the rest of the country. Five mountain ranges - Baramura, Atharamura, Longtharai, Shakhan and Jampui Hills - run north to south, with intervening valleys; Agartala, the capital, is located on a plain to the west. The state has a tropical savanna climate, and receives seasonal heavy rains from the south west monsoon. Forests cover more than half of the area, in which bamboo and cane tracts are common. Tripura has the highest number of primate species found in any Indian state. Due to its geographical isolation, economic progress in the state is hindered. Poverty and unemployment continue to plague Tripura, which has a limited infrastructure. Most residents are involved in agriculture and allied activities, although the service sector is the largest contributor to the state's gross domestic product. According to the 2011 census, Tripura is one of the most literate states in India, with a literacy rate of 87.75%. Mainstream Indian cultural elements coexist with traditional practices of the ethnic groups, such as various dances to celebrate religious occasions, weddings and festivities; the use of locally crafted musical instruments and clothes; and the worship of regional deities. The sculptures at the archaeological sites Unakoti, Pilak and Devtamura provide historical evidence of artistic fusion between organised and indigenous religions.

Etymology The name Tripura is linked to the Hindu goddess Tripura Sundari, the presiding deity of the Tripura Sundari Temple at Udaipur, one of the 51 Shakti Peethas (pilgrimage centres of Shaktism), and to the legendary tyrant king Tripur, who reigned in the region. Tripur was the 39th descendant of Druhyu, who belonged to the lineage of Yayati, a king of the Lunar Dynasty. There are alternative theories regarding the origin of the name Tripura, such as a possible etymological reinterpretation to Sanskrit of a Tibeto-Burman (Kokborok) name. Variants of the name include Tipra, Tuipura and Tippera, which can all denote the indigenous people inhabiting the area. A Kokborok etymology from ti (water) and pra (near) has been suggested; the boundaries of Tripura extended to the Bay of Bengal when the kings of the Tipra Kingdom held sway from the Garo Hills of Meghalaya to Arakan, the present Rakhine State of Burma; so the name may reflect vicinity to the sea.

History Although there is no evidence of Lower Paleolithic or Middle Paleolithic settlements in Tripura, Upper Paleolithic tools made of fossilised wood have been found in the Haora and Khowai valleys. The Indian epic, the Mahabharata; ancient religious texts, the Puranas; and the Edicts of Ashoka - stone pillar inscriptions of the Mauryan emperor Ashoka dating from the third century BC - all mention Tripura. An ancient name of Tripura (as mentioned in the Mahabharata) is Kirat Desh (English: "The land of Kirat"), probably referring to the Kirata Kingdoms or the more generic term Kirata. However, it is unclear whether the extent of modern Tripura is coterminous with Kirat Desh. The region was under the rule of the Twipra Kingdom for centuries, but when this dynasty began is not documented. The Rajmala, a chronicle of Tripuri kings which was first written in the 15th

century, provides a list of 179 kings, from antiquity up to Krishna Kishore Manikya (1830-1850), but it is not a reliable source.

The boundaries of the kingdom changed over the centuries. At various times, the borders reached south to the jungles of the Sundarbans on the Bay of Bengal; east to Burma; and north to the boundary of the Kamarupa kingdom in Assam. There were several Muslim invasions of the region from the 13th century onward, which culminated in Mughal dominance of the plains of the kingdom in 1733, although their rule never extended to the hill regions. The Mughals had influence over the appointment of the Tripuri kings.

Tripura became a princely state during British rule in India. The kings had an estate in British India, known as Tippera district or Chakla Roshanbad (now the Comilla district of Bangladesh), in addition to the independent area known as Hill Tippera, roughly corresponding to the present-day Tripura state. Udaipur, in the south of Tripura, was the capital of the kingdom, until the king Krishna Manikya moved the capital to Old Agartala in the 18th century. It was moved to the new city of Agartala in the 19th century. Bir Chandra Manikya (1862-1896) modelled his administration on the pattern of British India, and enacted reforms including the formation of Agartala Municipal Corporation.

Post-independence (1947-present) Following the independence of India in 1947, Tippera district - the estate in the plains of British India - became Comilla district of East Pakistan, and Hill Tippera remained under a regency council until 1949. The Maharani Regent of Tripura signed the Tripura Merger Agreement on 9 September 1949, making Tripura a Part C state of India. It became a Union Territory, without a legislature, in November 1956 and an elected ministry was installed in July 1963. Full statehood was conferred in 1971 by the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act, 1971. The geographic partition that coincided with the independence of India resulted in major economic and infrastructural setbacks for the state, as road transport between the state and the major cities of the newly independent India had to follow a more circuitous route, around East Pakistan. The road distance between Kolkata and Agartala before the partition was less than 350 km (220 mi), and increased to 1,700 km (1,100 mi), as the route now avoided East Pakistan. The geopolitical isolation was aggravated by an absence of rail transport. After the partition of India, many Bengali Hindus migrated to Tripura as refugees fleeing religious persecution in Muslim-majority East Pakistan, especially after 1949. Settlement by Hindu Bengalis increased during the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971. Parts of the state were shelled by the Pakistan Army during the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971. Following the war, the Indian government reorganised the North East region to ensure effective control of the international borders - three new states came into existence on 21 January 1972: Meghalaya, Manipur, and Tripura. Before Tripura's merger with the Union of India, majority of the population composed of Tripuri people. Ethnic strife between the indigenous Tripuri tribe and the predominantly immigrant Bengali community led to scattered violence, and an insurgency spanning decades, including occasional massacres such as the 1980 Mandai massacre. This gradually abated following the establishment of a tribal autonomous district council and the use of strategic counter-insurgency operations. Tripura remains peaceful, as of 2016. In retaliation for the communal violence against the Hindu minority in neighbouring Bangladesh, mosques in several areas in Tripura were attacked from 19 to 26 October 2021. The influx of refugees from erstwhile East Pakistan and present day Bangladesh leads to minoritisation of the indigenous peoples of Tripura.

Geography Tripura is a landlocked state in North East India, where the seven contiguous states - Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura - are collectively known as the Seven Sister States. Spread over 10,491.69 km² (4,050.86 sq mi), Tripura is the third-smallest among the 28 states in the country, behind Goa and Sikkim. It extends from 22°56'N to 24°32'N, and 91°09'E to 92°20'E. Its maximum

extent measures about 178 km (111 mi) from north to south, and 131 km (81 mi) east to west. Tripura is bordered by the country of Bangladesh to the west, north and south; and the Indian states of Assam to the north east; and Mizoram to the east. It is accessible by national highways passing through the Karimganj district of Assam and Mamit district of Mizoram.

Topography The physiography is characterised by hill ranges, valleys and plains. The state has five anticlinal ranges of hills running north to south, from Baramura in the west, through Atharamura, Longtharai and Shakhan, to the Jampui Hills in the east. The intervening synclines are the Agartala-Udaipur, Khowai-Teliamura, Kamalpur-Ambasa, Kailasahar-Manu and Dharmanagar-Kanchanpur valleys. At an altitude of 939 m (3,081 ft), Betling Shib in the Jampui range is the state's highest point. The small isolated hillocks interspersed throughout the state are known as tillas, and the narrow fertile alluvial valleys, mostly present in the west, are called Dong/lungas. A number of rivers originate in the hills of Tripura and flow into Bangladesh. The Khowai, Dhalai, Manu, Juri and Longai flow towards the north; Sumli to the north west; the Bijoy; Gumti to the west; and the Muhuri and Feni to the south west. The lithostratigraphy data published by the Geological Survey of India dates the rocks, on the geologic time scale, between the Oligocene epoch, approximately 34 to 23 million years ago, and the Holocene epoch, which started 12,000 years ago. The hills have red laterite soil that is porous. The flood plains and narrow valleys are overlain by alluvial soil, and those in the west and south constitute most of the agricultural land. According to the Bureau of Indian Standards, on a scale ranging from I to V in order of increasing susceptibility to earthquakes, the state lies in seismic zone V.

Climate The state has a tropical savanna climate, designated Aw under the Kppen climate classification. The undulating topography leads to local variations, particularly in the hill ranges. The four main seasons are winter, from December to February; pre-monsoon or summer, from March to April; monsoon, from May to September; and post-monsoon, from October to November. During the monsoon season, the south west monsoon brings heavy rains, which cause frequent floods. The average annual rainfall between 1995 and 2006 ranged from 1,979.6 to 2,745.9 mm (77.94 to 108.11 in). During winter, temperatures range from 13 to 27 C (55 to 81 F), while in the summer they fall between 24 and 36 C (75 and 97 F). According to a United Nations Development Programme report, the state lies in "very high damage risk" zone from wind and cyclones.

Flora and fauna Like most of the Indian subcontinent, Tripura lies within the Indomalayan realm. According to the Biogeographic classification of India, the state is in the "North-East" biogeographic zone. In 2011 forests covered 57.73% of the state. Tripura hosts three different types of ecosystems: mountain, forest and freshwater. The evergreen forests on the hill slopes and the sandy river banks are dominated by species such as *Dipterocarpus*, *Artocarpus*, *Amoora*, *Elaeocarpus*, *Syzygium* and *Eugenia*. Two types of moist deciduous forests comprise the majority of the vegetation: moist deciduous mixed forest and Sal (*Shorea robusta*)-predominant forest. The interspersion of bamboo and cane forests with deciduous and evergreen flora is a peculiarity of Tripura's vegetation. Grasslands and swamps are also present, particularly in the plains. Herbaceous plants, shrubs, and trees such as *Albizia*, *Barringtonia*, *Lagerstroemia* and *Macaranga* flourish in the swamps of Tripura. Shrubs and grasses include *Schumannianthus dichotoma* (shitalpati), *Phragmites* and *Saccharum* (sugarcane). According to a survey in 1989-90, Tripura hosts 90 land mammal species from 65 genera and 10 orders, including such species as elephant (*Elephas maximus*), bear (*Melursus ursinus*), binturong (*Arctictis binturong*), wild dog (*Cuon alpinus*), porcupine (*Artherurus assamensis*), barking deer (*Muntiacus muntjak*), sambar (*Cervus unicolor*), wild boar (*Sus scrofa*), gaur (*Bos gaurus*), leopard (*Panthera pardus*), clouded leopard (*Neofelis nebulosa*), and many species of small cats and primates. Out of 15 free ranging primates of India, seven are found in Tripura; this is the highest number of primate species found in any Indian state. The wild buffalo (*Bubalus arnee*) is extinct now. There are nearly 300 species of birds in the state.

Wildlife sanctuaries of the state are Sipahijola, Gumti, Rowa and Trishna wildlife sanctuaries. National parks of the state are Clouded Leopard National Park and Rajbari National Park. These protected areas cover a total of 566.93 km² (218.89 sq mi). Gumti is also an Important Bird Area. In winter, thousands of migratory waterfowl throng Gumti and Rudrasagar lakes.

Administrative divisions In January 2012, major changes were implemented in the administrative divisions of Tripura. There had previously been four districts - Dhalai (headquarters Ambassa), North Tripura (headquarters Kailashahar), South Tripura (headquarters Udaipur, Tripura), and West Tripura (headquarters Agartala). Four new districts were carved out of the existing four in January 2012 - Khowai, Unakoti, Sipahijala and Gomati. Six new subdivisions and five new blocks were also added. Each is governed by a district collector or a district magistrate, usually appointed by the Indian Administrative Service. The subdivisions of each district are governed by a sub-divisional magistrate and each subdivision is further divided into blocks. The blocks consist of Panchayats (village councils) and town municipalities. As of 2012, the state had eight districts, 23 subdivisions and 58 development blocks. National census and state statistical reports are not available for all the new administrative divisions, as of March 2013. Agartala, the capital of Tripura, is the most populous city. Other major towns with a population of 10,000 or more (as per 2015 census) are Sabroom, Dharmanagar, Jogendranagar, Kailashahar, Pratapgarh, Udaipur, Amarpur, Belonia, Gandhigram, Kumarghat, Khowai, Ranirbazar, Sonamura, Bishalgarh, Teliamura, Mohanpur, Melaghar, Ambassa, Kamalpur, Bishramganj, Kathaliya, Santirbazar and Baxanagar.

Government and politics Tripura is governed through a parliamentary system of representative democracy, a feature it shares with other Indian states. Universal suffrage is granted to residents. The Tripura government has three branches: executive, legislature and judiciary. The Tripura Legislative Assembly consists of elected members and special office bearers that are elected by the members. Assembly meetings are presided over by the Speaker or the Deputy Speaker in case of Speaker's absence. The Assembly is unicameral with 60 Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLA). The members are elected for a term of five years, unless the Assembly is dissolved prior to the completion of the term. The judiciary is composed of the Tripura High Court and a system of lower courts. Executive authority is vested in the Council of Ministers headed by the Chief Minister. The Governor, the titular head of state, is appointed by the President of India. The leader of the party or a coalition of parties with a majority in the Legislative Assembly is appointed as the chief minister by the governor. The Council of Ministers are appointed by the governor on the advice of the chief minister. The Council of Ministers reports to the Legislative Assembly.

Tripura sends two representatives to the Lok Sabha (the lower house of the parliament of India) and one representative to the Rajya Sabha (parliament's upper house). In the 2019 Indian general election, both parliament lower house seats were won by the Bharatiya Janata Party. Panchayats, (local self-governments) elected by local body elections operate in many villages for self-governance. Tripura also has a unique tribal self-governance body, the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council. This council is responsible for some aspects of local governance in 527 villages with high density of the scheduled tribes. The main political parties are the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the Left Front, the All India Trinamool Congress and Indian National Congress along with regional parties like the IPFT and INPT. Until 1977, the state was governed by the Indian National Congress. The Left Front was in power from 1978 to 1988, and then again from 1993 to 2018. In 1988-93, the Congress and Tripura Upajati Juba Samiti were in a ruling coalition. In the 2013 Tripura Legislative Assembly election, the Left Front won 50 out of 60 seats in the Assembly. The 2018 assembly election resulted in loss for the Left Front; the Bharatiya Janata Party won an overall majority in the state, resulting in the end of the Communist Party's uninterrupted twenty-five year rule. The BJP won 44 out of 60

seats in the Assembly by coalition with the IPFT. The CPI (M) only got 16 seats and Indian National Congress lost by huge margins in all constituencies. Communism in the state had its beginnings in the pre-independence era, inspired by freedom struggle activities in Bengal, and culminating in regional parties with communist leanings. It capitalised on the tribal dissatisfaction with the mainstream rulers, and has been noted for connection with the "sub-national or ethnic searches for identity". Since the 1990s, there has been an ongoing irredentist Tripura rebellion, involving militant outfits such as the National Liberation Front of Tripura and the All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF); terrorist incidents involving the ATTF claimed a recorded number of 389 victims in the seven-year period from 1993 to 2000. The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 (AFSPA) was first enforced in Tripura on 16 February 1997 when terrorism was at its peak in the state. The Act, as per its provisions, was subsequently reviewed and extended every six months. However, in view of the improvement in the situation and fewer terrorist activities being reported, the Tripura government in June 2013 reduced operational areas of the AFSPA to 30 police station areas. The last six-month extension to AFSPA was approved in November 2014, and after about 18 years of operation, it was repealed on 29 May 2015.

Economy Tripura's gross state domestic product for 2022-23 was ₹640 billion (US\$7.6 billion) at constant price (2022-23), recording 10.38% growth over the previous year. In the same period, the GDP of India was ₹277,520 billion (US\$3.3 trillion), with a growth rate of 8.55%. Annual per capita income at current price of the state was ₹157,752 (US\$1,900), compared to the national per capita income ₹197,280 (US\$2,300). In 2009, the tertiary sector of the economy (service industries) was the largest contributor to the gross domestic product of the state, contributing 53.98 per cent of the state's economy compared to 23.07 per cent from the primary sector (agriculture, forestry, mining) and 22.95 per cent from the secondary sector (industrial and manufacturing). According to the Economic Census of 2005, after agriculture, the maximum number of workers were engaged in retail trade (28.21% of total non-agricultural workforce), followed by manufacturing (18.60%), public administration (14.54%), and education (14.40%). Tripura is an agrarian state with more than half of the population dependent on agriculture and allied activities. However, due to hilly terrain and forest cover, only 27% of the land is available for cultivation. Rice, the major crop of the state, is cultivated in 91% of the cropped area. According to the Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Government of Tripura, in 2009-10, potato, sugarcane, mesta, pulses and jute were the other major crops cultivated in the state. Jackfruit and pineapple top the list of horticultural products. Traditionally, most of the indigenous population practised jhum method (a type of slash-and-burn) of cultivation. The number of people dependent on jhum has declined over the years.

Fish farming has made significant advances in the state. At the end of 2009-10, the state produced a surplus of 104.3 million fish seeds, primarily carp. Rubber and tea are the important cash crops of the state. Tripura ranks second to Kerala in the production of natural rubber in the country. The state is known for its handicraft, particularly hand-woven cotton fabric, wood carvings, and bamboo products. High quality timber including sal, garjan, teak and gamar are found abundantly in the forests of Tripura. Tata Trusts signed a pact with Government of Tripura in July 2015 to improve fisheries and dairy production in the state.

The industrial sector of the state continues to be highly underdeveloped - brickfields and tea industry are the only two organised sectors. Tripura has considerable reservoirs of natural gas. According to estimates by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), the state has 400 billion metres³ reserves of natural gas, with 16 billion metres³ is recoverable. ONGC produced 480 million metres³ natural gas in the state, in 2006-07. In 2011 and 2013, new large discoveries of natural gas were announced by ONGC. Tourism industry in the state is growing - the revenue earned in tourism sector crossed ₹10 million (US\$120,000) for the first time in 2009-10, and surpassed ₹15 million (US\$180,000) in 2010-11. Although Bangladesh is in a trade deficit with India, its export to Tripura is significantly more than import from the state; a report in the newspaper The Hindu estimated

Bangladesh exported commodities valued at about ■3.5 billion (US\$41 million) to the state in 2012, as opposed to "very small quantity" of import. Alongside legal international trade, unofficial and informal cross-border trade is rampant. In a research paper published by the Institute of Developing Economies in 2004, the dependence of Tripura's economy on that of Bangladesh was emphasised. The economy of Tripura can be characterised by the high rate of poverty, low capital formation, inadequate infrastructure facilities, geographical isolation and communication bottlenecks, inadequate exploration and use of forest and mineral resources, slow industrialisation and high unemployment. More than 50% of the population depends on agriculture for sustaining their livelihood. However agriculture and allied activities contribution to Gross State Domestic Production (GSDP) is only 23%, this is primarily because of low capital base in the sector. Despite the inherent limitation and constraints coupled with severe resource shortages for investing in basic infrastructure, this has brought consistent progress in the quality of life and income of people across all sections of society. The state government through its Tripura Industrial Policy and Tripura Industrial Incentives Scheme, 2012, has offered heavy subsidies in capital investment and transport, preferences in government procurement, waivers in tender processes and fees, yet the impact has not been much significant beyond a few industries being set up in the Bodhjungnagar Industrial Growth Center. The Planning Commission estimates the poverty rate of all North East Indian states by using headcount ratio of Assam (the second largest state in North East India after Arunachal Pradesh). According to 2001 Planning Commission assessment, 22 per cent of Tripura's rural residents were below the poverty line. However, the Tripura government's independent assessment, based on consumption distribution data, reported that, in 2001, 55 per cent of the rural population was below the poverty line. Geographic isolation and communication bottlenecks coupled with insufficient infrastructure have restricted economic growth of the state. High rate of poverty and unemployment continues to be prevalent.

Transport Air Maharaja Bir Bikram Airport, located 12 km northwest of Agartala at Singerbhil, is the second busiest airport in northeast India after Guwahati. There are direct flights to Kolkata, Imphal, Delhi, Shillong, Guwahati, Bangalore, Dibrugarh, Aizawl, Ahmedabad, Bangalore and Chittagong. The major airlines are flybig, Air India, Akasa Air, Spicejet and IndiGo. Passenger helicopter services are available between the capital and major towns (Kailashahar, Dharmanagar) as well as to more remote areas such as Kanchanpur, Belonia and Gandacherra.

Railway Agartala was connected to India's railway network with the advent of the railways in the subcontinent in 1853 but the link was broken when India was partitioned in 1947. Railway services were established in Tripura in 1964 by constructing 1,000 mm (3 ft 3+38 in) metre gauge track from Lumding in Assam to Dharmanagar and Kailasahar in Tripura but the track did not reach Agartala. Rail transport was absent in the state until 2008-09 when the railway track was extended to the capital Agartala. The metre gauge rail track was connected to 5 ft 6 in (1,676 mm) broad gauge at Lumding. The major railway stations in this line are in Agartala, Dharmanagar, and Kumarghat. This metre gauge track was converted to 1,676 mm (5 ft 6 in) broad gauge in 2016 and now trains run from Agartala to Kolkata and Delhi. The total length of this railway track in Tripura state is 153 km. It is a single line without electrification. The Agartala sabroom line was coupled and became fully operational from 2019. A new railway line is being laid westwards from Agartala to Akhaura in Bangladesh. This will reduce the distance between Agartala and Kolkata by over 1000 km and provide rail access to the Port of Chittagong. Some major Express trains that operate from Agartala are - Agartala - Anand Vihar Terminal Rajdhani Express

Agartala - KSR Bengaluru Humsafar Express Agartala - Firozpur Cantonment Tripura Sundari Express Agartala - Sealdah Kanchanjunga Express Agartala - Deoghar Weekly Express Agartala - Rani Kamalapati(Bhopal) Weekly Express Agartala - Secunderabad Superfast Special Agartala - Jiribam Janshatabdi Express

Road Only one major road, the National Highway 8 (NH-8), connects Tripura to the rest of India. Starting at Sabroom in southern Tripura, it heads north to the capital Agartala, turns east and then north-east to enter the state of Assam. Locally known as "Assam Road", the NH-8 is often called the lifeline of Tripura. However, the highway is single lane and of poor quality; often landslides, rains or other disruptions on the highway cut the state off from its neighbours. Another National Highway, NH 108, connects the town of Panisagar in northern Tripura with Aizawl, Mizoram. The Tripura Road Transport Corporation is the government agency overlooking public transport on road. A hilly and land-locked state, Tripura is dependent mostly on roads for transport. The total length of roads in the state is 16,931 km (10,520 mi) of which national highways constitute 88 km (55 mi) and state highways 689 km (428 mi), as of 2009-10. Residents in rural areas frequently use waterways as a mode of transport. Tripura has an 856 km (532 mi) long international border with Bangladesh, of which 777.4 km (483.1 mi) is fenced, as of 2012. Several locations along the border serve as bilateral trading points between India and Bangladesh, such as Akhaura near Agartala, Raghna, Srimantpur, Belonia, Khowai and Kailasahar. A bus service exists between Agartala and Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh. In 2013, the two countries signed an agreement to establish a 15 km (9.3 mi) railway link between Agartala and the Akhaura junction of Bangladesh. Citizens of both countries need visa to legally enter the other country; however, illegal movement and smuggling across the border are widespread.

Media and communication Doordarshan (DD) has a television station in Agartala. Other full-time based channels are Headlines Tripura, News Vanguard, PB 24, Prime Television Network, Chini Khorang, Swrangchati News and many more. As of 2014, 56 daily and weekly newspapers are published in Tripura. Most of the newspapers are published in Bengali, except for one Kokborok daily (Hachukni Kok), one Manipuri weekly (Marup), two English dailies and three bilingual weeklies. Notable dailies include Ajkal Tripura, Daily Desher Katha, Dainik Sambad and Syandan Patrika. In a study by Indian Institute of Mass Communication in 2009, 93% of the sampled in Tripura rated television as very effective for information and mass education. In the study, 67% of the sampled listened to radio and 80-90% read newspaper. Most of the major Indian telecommunication companies are present in the state, such as Airtel, Vi, Jio and BSNL. Mobile connections outnumber landline connections by a wide margin. As of 2011, the state-controlled BSNL has 57,897 landline subscribers and 325,279 GSM mobile service connections. There are 84 telephone exchanges (for landlines) and 716 post offices in the state, as of 2011.

Electricity Till 2014, Tripura was a power deficit state. In late 2014, Tripura reached surplus electricity production capacity by using its recently discovered natural gas resources, and installing high efficiency gas turbine power plants. The state has many power-generating stations. These are owned by Tripura State Electricity Corporation (TSECL), natural gas-powered thermal power stations at Rokhia and Baramura, and the ONGC Tripura Power Company in Palatana. The ONGC plant has a capacity of 726.6 MW, with the second plant's commissioning in November 2014. It is the largest individual power plant in the northeast region. The state also has a hydro power station on the Gumti River. The combined power generation from these three stations is 100-105 MW. The North Eastern Electric Power Corporation (NEEPCO) operates the 84 MW Agartala Gas Turbine Power Plant near Agartala. As of November 2014, another thermal power plant is being built at Monarchak. With the newly added power generation capacity, Tripura has with enough capacity to supply all seven sister states of northeast India, as well export power to neighbouring countries such as Bangladesh. With recent discoveries, the state has abundant natural gas reserves to support many more power generation plants, but lacks pipeline and transport infrastructure to deliver the fuel or electricity to India's national grid.

Irrigation and fertilizers As of 2011, 255,241 hectares (985 sq mi) of land in Tripura cultivable, of which 108,646 hectares (419 sq mi) has the potential to be covered by irrigation projects. However, only 74,796 hectares (289 sq mi) is irrigated. The state lacks major irrigation projects; it depends on medium-sized projects sourced from Gumti, Khowai (at Chakmaghat) and Manu rivers, and minor projects administered by village-level governing bodies that utilise tube wells, water pumps, tanks and lift irrigation. ONGC and Chambal Fertilizers & Chemicals are jointly building a fertiliser plant to leverage ONGC's natural gas discoveries in Tripura. Expected to be in operation by 2017, the 1.3 million tonnes per year plant will supply the northeastern states.

Drinking water Drinking Water and Sanitation (DWS) wing] of Public Works Department manages the drinking water supply in the state. Schools and Anganwadi Centers have been specifically targeted to improve drinking water supply as well as attendance to these institutions. Many areas of Tripura have the problem of excessive iron content in groundwater requiring the installation of Iron Removal Plants (IRP). Tripura State has received the best State Award for Water & Sanitation under the category of Small States in the IBN7 Diamond State Award function for doing commendable work to provide drinking water supply to the people with the sparsely distributed tribal population in hamlets of hilly regions of the State. However, a study by the DWS Department found a depleting water table and excessive contamination. Still, packaged drinking water under brands "Tribeni", "Eco Freshh", "Blue Fina", "Life Drop" and "Aqua Zoom" among others is manufactured and sold in the state. Filters of many types and brands, in addition to locally manufactured ceramic type filters, are sold in the state although their acceptance in rural areas is less.

Education As per 2011 census, the literacy rate of Tripura was 87.75 per cent, the fourth-highest in India (which had a national literacy rate of 74.04 per cent). A state government survey in 2013 announced that Tripura has the highest literacy rate in India at 94.65 per cent. Schools in Tripura are run by the state government, TTAADC or private organisations, which include religious institutions. Instruction in schools is mainly in Bengali or English, though Kokborok and other regional languages are also used. Some of the special schools include Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya, residential schools run by Tripura Tribal Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society (TTWREIS), missionary organisations like St. Paul's, St. Arnold's, Holy Cross, Don Bosco, and St. John's. The schools are affiliated to the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE), the Central Board for Secondary Education (CBSE), the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) or the Tripura Board of Secondary Education. Under the 10+2+3 plan, after completing secondary school, students typically enroll for two years in a junior college or in a higher secondary school affiliated either to the Tripura Board of Secondary Education or to other central boards. Students choose from one of the three streams-liberal arts, commerce or science. As in the rest of India, after passing the Higher Secondary Examination (the grade 12 examination), students may enroll in general degree programs such as bachelor's degree in arts, commerce or science, or professional degree programs such as engineering, law or medicine. According to the Economic Review of Tripura 2010-11, Tripura has a total of 4,455 schools, of which 2,298 are primary schools. The total enrolment in all schools of the state is 767,672. Tripura has one Central University (Tripura University), one State University (M. B. B. University) and one private university (a branch of the Institute of Chartered Financial Analysts of India). There are 15 general colleges, three engineering colleges (Tripura Institute of Technology, National Institute of Technology, Agartala and NIEILT, Agartala), two medical colleges (Agartala Government Medical College and Tripura Medical College), three nursing or paramedical colleges, three polytechnic colleges, one law college, one Government Music College Archived 1 July 2015 at the Wayback Machine, one College of Fisheries, Institute of Advance Studies in Education, one Regional College of Physical Education Archived 5 September 2015 at the Wayback Machine at Panisagar and one art college.

Healthcare Healthcare in Tripura features a universal health care system run by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare of the Government of Tripura. The health care infrastructure is divided into three tiers - the primary health care network, a secondary care system comprising district and sub-divisional hospitals and tertiary hospitals providing speciality and super speciality care. As of 2010-11, there are 17 hospitals, 11 rural hospitals and community health centres, 79 primary health centres, 635 sub-centres/dispensaries, 7 blood banks and 7 blood storage centres in the state. Homeopathic and Ayurvedic styles of medicine are also popular in the state. The National Family Health Survey - 3 conducted in 2005-06 revealed that 20% of the residents of Tripura do not generally use government health facilities, and prefers the private medical sector. This is overwhelmingly less than the national level, where 65.6% do not rely on government facilities. As in the rest of India, Tripura residents also cite poor quality of care as the most frequent reason for non-reliance over the public health sector. Other reasons include distance of the public sector facilities, long waiting time, and inconvenient hours of operation. As of 2010, the state's performance in major public health care indices, such as birth rate, infant mortality rate and total fertility rate is better than the national average. The state is vulnerable to epidemics of malaria, diarrhoea, Japanese encephalitis and meningitis. In summer 2014 the state witnessed a major malaria outbreak.

Demographics Population Tripura ranks second to Assam as the most populous state in North East India. According to the provisional results of 2011 census of India, Tripura has a population of 3,671,032 with 1,871,867 males and 1,799,165 females. It constitutes 0.3% of India's population. The sex ratio of the state is 961 females per thousand males, higher than the national ratio 940. The population density is 350 persons per square kilometre. The literacy rate of Tripura in 2011 was 87.75%, above the national average of 74.04%, and third highest among all the states. Tripura ranked sixth in Human Development Index (HDI) among 35 states and union territories of India, according to the 2006 estimate by India's Ministry of Women and Child Development; the HDI of Tripura was 0.663, better than the all-India HDI of 0.605. In 2011, the police in Tripura recorded 5,803 cognisable offences under the Indian Penal Code, a number second only to Assam (66,714) in North East India. The crime rate in the state was 158.1 per 100,000 people, less than the all-India average of 192.2. However, 2010 reports showed that the state topped all the states for crime against women, with a rate of 46.5 per 100,000 people, significantly more than the national rate of 18.

Ethnic groups According to the 2001 census of India, Bengalis represented almost 65 per cent of Tripura's population while the scheduled tribe population (including the Tripuris) amounted to a little over 30 per cent, with rest belonging to other minorities including Hindi speakers. The state's "scheduled tribes", recognised by the country's constitution, consist of 19 ethnic groups and many sub-groups, with diverse languages and cultures. In 2001, the largest such group were Kokborok-speaking Tripuris, who had a population of 543,848, representing 17.0 per cent of the state's population and 54.7 per cent of the "scheduled tribe" population. The other major groups, in descending order of population, were the Reang (16.6), Jamatia (7.5 per cent), Chakma (6.5 per cent), Halam (4.8 per cent), Mog (3.1 per cent), Munda (1.2 per cent), Kuki (1.2 per cent), Garo (1.1 per cent) and a sizeable Meitei population. There are approximately 35,000-40,000 members of the Bru (Reang) tribe in the state, who came as refugees from Mizoram after the 1997 ethnic violence.

Languages The official languages of the state are Bengali, English and Kokborok (Tripuri). Bengali is the most widely spoken language, while Kokborok is the most prominent language among the Tripuri people. Other minority languages such as Mog, Manipuri, Halam (old Kuki), Garo and Chakma, Odia, Bishnupriya, belonging to Indo-European and Sino-Tibetan families are spoken in the state. Thadou, a nearly extinct language, was spoken by only four people in one village as of 2012.

Religion According to 2011 census, Hinduism is the majority religion in the state, followed by 83.40% of the population. Muslims make up 8.60% of the population, Christians 4.35%, and Buddhists 3.41%. Christianity is chiefly followed by members of the Kuki tribes (Halam, Ranglong, Hrangkhoh, Lushai, Darlong, Thadou people etc. also known as Old Kukis) and as per 2011 census has 159,882 adherents.

Demography of indigenous population Before Indian independence, Tripura was a tribal majority state. In 1941, the native Tripuris made up 62.06% of the population in present-day Tripura while the non-Tripuri people, mainly Bengalis and non-Bengalis occupies rest of the percentage. The percentage of Tripuris decreased from 62.06% in 1941 (before partition) to 48.65% (after partition) in 1951 due to East Bengali refugees who were coming from East Pakistan present-day-Bangladesh. Since 1971, the indigenous Tripuri population of Tripura has increased from 28.44% in 1981 to 31.05% in 2001. The 2011 census stated that indigenous Tripuri constitute 31.78% of the state population which is up from the previous census record of 31.05% in 2001.

By geography Most of the area of Tripura is part of the TTAADC area, which is an Autonomous Region within Tripura under 6th schedule of the Indian Constitution and the western part of Tripura is called the General ward area, where Bengalis formed the overwhelming majority of the population.

The total area of the TTAADC is about 7,132.56 km², which covers about 68% of the total area (10,491 km²) of Tripura respectively. It's a thinly populated area of the state with vast area.

The population of the TTAADC area is 1,216,465 out of which the Native Scheduled Tribes (Tripuris) are 1,021,560, constituting an overwhelming 83.4% of the region's population. While the population of General ward area of Tripura is 2,457,452 but out of total 10,491 km² state area, the General region have a total area of only 3,358.44 km², which covers only about 32% of the total area of the state. Out of the total population of 3,673,917 (as per 2011 census) the population of Scheduled Tribes is 1,166,813 (31.76% of the state population). Therefore, the number of Scheduled Tribes of the state who reside in the TTAADC area is 87.55% of the total Indigenous population of Tripura as a whole, while small segments of the native Tribes population also reside in General ward area.

Arrival of Bengali refugees During the Partition of Bengal in 1947, hundreds of thousands of Bengali refugees fled from East Bengal into India's Tripura following the Partition of India. It is estimated that between the years 1947-51, around 610,000 Bengalis - a figure almost equal to the state's total population poured into the state leading to a profound demographic change during this first phase. Again during the Bangladesh liberation war of 1971, in the second phase of migration, around 1.038 million Bengalis (most being Hindus) moved into various parts of Tripura as refugees with most of them settling down permanently afterwards. Until Bangladesh liberation war, Tripura had sheltered around 1.3 million refugees. The number of the refugees was almost equal to the indigenous population and the majority of them were rehabilitated and permanently settled in Tripura, altering the demography which became the basis of changes in resource distribution, economy, culture, polity, society and a cause of conflicts between the immigrants and the indigenous peoples.

Culture The diverse ethno-linguistic groups of Tripura have given rise to a composite culture. The major Tripuri clans are: Tripura, Debbarma, Jamatia, Reang, Noatia, and Murasing. And there are tribal groups such as Chakma, Halam(old kuki), Garo, Kuki, Mizo, Uchoi, Dhamai, Roaza, Mag, Munda, Oraon and Santhal who migrated in Tripura as tea labourers. Bengali people represent the largest ethno-linguistic community of the state. Bengali culture, as a result, is the main non-indigenous culture. The Tripuri Maharajas were great patrons

of Bengali culture, especially literature; Bengali language replaced Kokborok as the language of the court. Elements of Bengali culture, such as Bengali literature, Bengali music, and Bengali cuisine are widespread, particularly in the urban areas of the state. Tripura is noted for bamboo and cane handicrafts. Bamboo, wood and cane are used to create an array of furniture, utensils, hand-held fans, replicas, mats, baskets, idols and interior decoration materials. Music and dance are integral to the culture of the state. Some local musical instruments are the sarinda, chongpreng (both string instruments), and sumui (a type of flute). Each indigenous community has its own repertoire of songs and dances performed during weddings, religious occasions, and other festivities. The Tripuri and Jamatia people perform gorja dance during the Gorja puja. Jhum dance (also called tangbiti dance), lebang dance, mamita dance, and mosak sulmani dance are other Tripuri dance forms. Reang community, the second largest scheduled tribe of the state, is noted for its hojagiri dance that is performed by young girls balanced on earthen pitchers. Bizhu dance is performed by the Chakmas during the Bizhu festival (the last day of the month of Chaitra in Hindu calendar). Other dance forms include wangala dance of the Garo people, hai-hak dance of the Halam branch of Kuki people, and sangrai dance and owa dance of the Mog. Alongside such traditional music, mainstream Indian musical elements such as Indian classical music and dance, Rabindra Sangeet are also practised. Sachin Dev Burman, a member of the royal family, was a maestro in the filmi genre of Indian music. Hindus believe that Tripura Sundari is the patron goddess of Tripura and an aspect of Shakti. Durga Puja, Kali Puja, Dolyatra, Ashokastami and the worship of the Chaturdasha deities are important festivals in the state. Some festivals represent confluence of different regional traditions, such as Ganga puja, Garia puja, Kharchi puja and Ker puja. Unakoti, Pilak and Devtamura are historic sites where large collections of stone carvings and rock sculptures are noted. Like Neermahal is a cultural Water Palace of this state. Sculptures are evidence of the presence of Buddhist and Brahmanical orders for centuries, and represent a rare artistic fusion of traditional organised religions and tribal influence.

Performing arts Tripura had a wide collection of notable art and cultural displays.

Mamita dance : A Tripuri dance form performed during Mamita occasion, which is after the harvesting of year's first crops and to worship Ama Mailuma. Gorja dance : Tripuri dance performed during Gorja puja. Hojagiri dance : A divine Tripuri dance form. The dance is performed on the occasion of Hojagiri festivals or Laxmi Puja, held in the following full moon night of Durga Puja. generally after 3rd day of Dashera. The Goddess Mailuma (Tipra Indigenous Goddess) is worshipped on this day. Lebang dance : A Tripuri dance form. Mosak Sulmani dance : A Tripuri dance form. Jadu Kolija : A Tripuri folk-classical song. Dangsa Mwsamung: A type of Tripuri play performed on stage. Other dance forms of minority groups include Sangrai dance and Owa dance of Mog, Hai-hak dance of Halam, Wangla dance of Garo, Bizhu dance of Chakma. Alongside such traditional music, mainstream Indian musical elements such as Indian classical music and dance are also practised. Sachin Dev Burman, a member of the Tripuri royal family, was a maestro in the filmi genre of Indian music. Local musical instruments are:

sarinda : A Tripuri string instrument. chongpreng : Tripuri string instrument. sumui : Tripuri flute.

Sports Football and cricket are the most popular sports in the state. The state capital Agartala has its own club football championships every year in which many local clubs compete in a league and knockout format. The Tripura cricket team participates in the Ranji Trophy, the Indian domestic cricket competition. The state is a regular participant of the Indian National Games and the North Eastern Games. Tennis player Somdev Devvarman, who won the gold medal in the Men's Singles event at the 2010 Asian Games, has family roots in Tripura. He was the first Indian to win a gold medal in the men's singles tennis event of the Asian Games. In 2016, Dipa Karmakar from Agartala became the first ever female gymnast from India to qualify for the Olympics

when she qualified for the women's artistic gymnastics event of 2016 Summer Olympics. Other notable gymnasts from Tripura include Mantu Debnath, Kalpana Debnath, and Bishweshwar Nandi.

People See also Tipraland Habugra List of cities and towns in Tripura Tripura Industrial Development Corporation

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Tripura Government Tripura Tourism Public Service Commission Archived 7 May 2021 at the Wayback Machine Election Department General information

Geographic data related to Tripura at OpenStreetMap

Uttar Pradesh

Uttar Pradesh (UTT-■r pr■-DESH, abbr. UP; Hindi: Uttar Prad■■, pronounced [■■■■■ p■■■de■■] , lit. 'Northern Province') is a state in northern India. With over 241 million inhabitants, it is the most populated state in India as well as the most populous country subdivision in the world - more populous than all but four other countries outside of India (China, United States, Indonesia, and Pakistan) - and accounting for 16.5 per cent of the population of India or around 3 per cent of the total world population. The state is bordered by Rajasthan to the west, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Delhi to the northwest, Uttarakhand and Nepal to the north, Bihar to the east, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand to the south. It is the fourth-largest Indian state by area covering 243,286 km² (93,933 sq mi), accounting for 7.3 per cent of the total area of India. Lucknow serves as the state capital, with Prayagraj being the judicial capital. It is divided into 18 divisions and 75 districts. Uttar Pradesh was established in 1950 after India had become a republic. It is a successor to the United Provinces, established in 1935 by renaming the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, in turn established in 1902 from the North-Western Provinces and the Oudh Province. Though long known for sugar production, the state's economy is now dominated by the services industry. The service sector comprises travel and tourism, hotel industry, real estate, insurance and financial consultancies. The economy of Uttar Pradesh is the third-largest state economy in India, with ■18.63 lakh crore (US\$220 billion) in gross domestic product and a per capita GSDP of ■68,810 (US\$810). The High Court of the state is located in Prayagraj. The state contributes 80 seats to the lower house Lok Sabha and 31 seats and the upper house Rajya Sabha. On 9 November 2000, a new state, Uttaranchal (now Uttarakhand), was created from Uttar Pradesh's western Himalayan hill region. The two major rivers of the state, the Ganges and its tributary Yamuna, meet at the Triveni Sangam in Prayagraj, a Hindu pilgrimage site. Other notable rivers are Gomti and Sarayu. The forest cover in the state is 6.1 per cent of the state's geographical area. The cultivable area is 82 per cent of the total geographical area, and the net area sown is 68.5 per cent of the cultivable area. Inhabitants of the state are called Awadhi, Bagheli, Bhojpuri, Brajwasi, Bundeli, or Kannauji, depending upon their region of origin. Hinduism is practised by more than three-fourths of the population, followed by Islam. Hindi is the most widely spoken language and is also the official language of the state, along with Urdu. Uttar Pradesh was home to most of the mainstream political entities that existed in ancient and medieval India including the Maurya Empire, Harsha Empire, Gupta Empire, Pala Empire, Delhi Sultanate and Mughal Empire as well as many other empires. At the time of the Indian independence movement in the early 20th century, there were three major princely states in Uttar Pradesh - Ramgadi, Rampur and Benares and served as a focal point for the 1857 rebellion against British rule. The state houses several holy Hindu temples and pilgrimage centres. Along with several historical, natural and religious tourist destinations, including Agra, Aligarh, Ayodhya, Bareilly, Gorakhpur, Kanpur, Kushinagar, Lucknow, Mathura, Meerut, Prayagraj, Varanasi, and Vrindavan, Uttar Pradesh is also home to three World Heritage sites.

History Prehistory Modern human hunter-gatherers have been in Uttar Pradesh since between around 85,000 and 72,000 years ago. There have also been prehistorical finds in the state from the Middle and Upper Paleolithic dated to 21,000-31,000 years old and Mesolithic/Microlithic hunter-gatherer settlement, near Pratapgarh, from around 10550-9550 BCE. Villages with domesticated cattle, sheep, and goats and evidence of agriculture began as early as 6000 BCE, and gradually developed between c. 4000 and 1500 BCE beginning with the Indus Valley Civilisation and Harappa culture to the Vedic period and extending into the Iron Age.

Ancient and classical period Out of the sixteen mahajanapadas (lit. 'great realms') or oligarchic republics that existed in ancient India, seven fell entirely within the present-day boundaries of the state. The kingdom of Kosala, in the Mahajanapada era, was also located within the regional boundaries of modern-day Uttar Pradesh. According to Hinduism, the divine King Rama of the Ramayana epic reigned in Ayodhya, the capital of Kosala. Krishna, another divine king of Hindu legend, who plays a key role in the Mahabharata epic and is revered as the eighth reincarnation (Avatar) of the Hindu god Vishnu, is said to have been born in the city of Mathura. The aftermath of the Kurukshetra War is believed to have taken place in the area between the Upper Doab and Delhi, (in what was Kuru Mahajanapada), during the reign of the Pandava King Yudhishtira. The kingdom of the Kurus corresponds to the Black and Red Ware and Painted Gray Ware culture and the beginning of the Iron Age in northwest India, around 1000 BCE. Control over Gangetic plains region was of vital importance to the power and stability of all of India's major empires, including the Maurya (320-200 BCE), Kushan (100-250 CE), Gupta (350-600), and Gurjara-Pratihara (650-1036) empires. Following the Huns' invasions that broke the Gupta empire, the Ganges-Yamuna Doab saw the rise of Kannauj. During the reign of Harshavardhana (590-647), the Kannauj empire reached its zenith. It spanned from Punjab in the north and Gujarat in the west to Bengal in the east and Odisha in the south. It included parts of central India, north of the Narmada River and it encompassed the entire Indo-Gangetic Plain. Many communities in various parts of India claim descent from the migrants of Kannauj. Soon after Harshavardhana's death, his empire disintegrated into many kingdoms, which were invaded and ruled by the Gurjara-Pratihara empire, which challenged Bengal's Pala Empire for control of the region. Kannauj was several times invaded by the South Indian Rashtrakuta dynasty, from the 8th century to the 10th century. After the fall of the Pala empire, the Chero dynasty ruled from the 12th century to the 18th century.

Delhi Sultanate Uttar Pradesh was partially or entirely ruled by the Delhi Sultanate for 320 years (1206-1526). Five dynasties ruled over the Delhi Sultanate sequentially: the Mamluk dynasty (1206-90), the Khalji dynasty (1290-1320), the Tughlaq dynasty (1320-1414), the Sayyid dynasty (1414-51), and the Lodi dynasty (1451-1526). The first Sultan of Delhi, Qutb ud-Din Aibak, conquered some parts of Uttar Pradesh, including Meerut, Aligarh, and Etawah. His successor, Iltutmish, expanded the Sultanate's rule over Uttar Pradesh by defeating the King of Kannauj. During the reign of Sultan Balban, the Mamluk dynasty faced numerous rebellions in the state, but he was able to suppress them and establish his authority. Alauddin Khilji, extended his conquests to various regions in the state, including Varanasi and Prayagraj. Apart from the rulers, the Delhi Sultanate era also saw the growth of Sufism in Uttar Pradesh. Sufi saints, such as Nizamuddin Auliya and Qutbuddin Bakhtiar Kaki, lived during this period and their teachings had a significant impact on the people of the region. Sultanat era in the state also witnessed the construction of mosques and tombs, including the Atala Masjid in Jaunpur, the Jama Masjid in Fatehpur Sikri, and the Ghiyath al-Din Tughluq's Tomb in Tughlaqabad.

Medieval and early modern period In the 16th century, Babur, a Timurid descendant of Timur and Genghis Khan from Fergana Valley (modern-day Uzbekistan), swept across the Khyber Pass and founded the Mughal Empire, covering India, along with modern-day Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh. The Mughals were descended from Persianised Central Asian Turks (with significant Mongol admixture). In the Mughal era, Uttar Pradesh became the heartland of the empire. Mughal emperors Babur and Humayun ruled from Delhi. In 1540 an Afghan, Sher Shah Suri, took over the reins of Uttar Pradesh after defeating the Mughal King Humayun. Sher Shah and his son Islam Shah ruled Uttar Pradesh from their capital at Gwalior. After the death of Islam Shah Suri, his prime minister Hemu became the de facto ruler of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and the western parts of Bengal. He was bestowed the title of Hemchandra Vikramaditya (title of Vikramaditya adopted from Vedic period) at his formal coronation took place at Purana Qila in Delhi on 7 October 1556. A month later, Hemu died in the Second Battle of Panipat, and Uttar Pradesh came under Emperor Akbar's rule. Akbar ruled from Agra and Fatehpur Sikri. In the 18th century, after the fall of Mughal authority, the power

vacuum was filled by the Maratha Empire, in the mid-18th century, the Maratha army invaded the Uttar Pradesh region, which resulted in Rohillas losing control of Rohilkhand to the Maratha forces led by Raghunath Rao and Malha Rao Holkar. The conflict between Rohillas and Marathas came to an end on 18 December 1788 with the arrest of Ghulam Qadir, the grandson of Najeeb-ud-Daula, who was defeated by the Maratha general Mahadaji Scindia. In 1803-04, following the Second Anglo-Maratha War, when the British East India Company defeated the Maratha Empire, much of the region came under British suzerainty.

British India era Starting from Bengal in the second half of the 18th century, a series of battles for north Indian lands finally gave the British East India Company accession over the state's territories. Ajmer and Jaipur kingdoms were also included in this northern territory, which was named the "North-Western Provinces" (of Agra). Although UP later became the fifth-largest state of India, NWPA was one of the smallest states of the British Indian empire. Its capital shifted twice between Agra and Allahabad. Due to dissatisfaction with British rule, a serious rebellion erupted in various parts of North India, which became known as the Indian Rebellion of 1857; Bengal regiment's sepoy stationed at Meerut cantonment, Mangal Pandey, is widely considered as its starting point. After the revolt failed, the British divided the most rebellious regions by reorganising their administrative boundaries, splitting the Delhi region from 'NWFP of Agra' and merging it with Punjab Province, while the Ajmer-Marwar region was merged with Rajputana and Oudh was incorporated into the state. The new state was called the North Western Provinces of Agra and Oudh, which in 1902 was renamed as the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh. It was commonly referred to as the United Provinces or its acronym UP. In 1920, the capital of the province was shifted from Allahabad to Lucknow. The high court continued to be at Allahabad, but a bench was established at Lucknow. Allahabad continues to be an important administrative base of today's Uttar Pradesh and has several administrative headquarters. Uttar Pradesh continued to be central to Indian politics and was especially important in modern Indian history as a hotbed of the Indian independence movement. The state hosted modern educational institutions such as the Aligarh Muslim University, Banaras Hindu University and Darul Uloom Deoband. Nationally known figures such as Ram Prasad Bismil and Chandra Shekhar Azad were among the leaders of the movement in Uttar Pradesh, and Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru, Madan Mohan Malaviya and Govind Ballabh Pant were important national leaders of the Indian National Congress. The All India Kisan Sabha was formed at the Lucknow session of the Congress on 11 April 1936, with the famous nationalist Sahajanand Saraswati elected as its first president, to address the longstanding grievances of the peasantry and mobilise them against the zamindari landlords attacks on their occupancy rights, thus sparking the Farmers movements in India. During the Quit India Movement of 1942, Ballia district overthrew the colonial authority and installed an independent administration under Chittu Pandey. Ballia became known as "Baghi Ballia" (Rebel Ballia) for this significant role in India's independence movement.

Post-independence After India's independence, the United Provinces were renamed "Uttar Pradesh" (lit. 'northern province'), preserving UP as the abbreviation of the state's name, with the change coming into effect on 24 January 1950. The new state was formed after the merger of several princely states and territories, including the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, and the Delhi territory. The state has provided nine of India's prime ministers which is more than any other state and is the source of the largest number of seats in the Lok Sabha. Despite its political influence since ancient times, its poor record in economic development and administration, poor governance, organised crime and corruption have kept it among India's backward states. The state has been affected by repeated episodes of caste-related and communal violence. In December 1992 the disputed Babri Mosque located in Ayodhya was demolished by Hindu activists, leading to widespread violence across India. In 2000, northern districts of the state were separated to form the state of Uttarakhand.

Geography Uttar Pradesh, with a total area of 240,928 square kilometres (93,023 sq mi), is India's fourth-largest state in terms of land area and is roughly of same size as United Kingdom. It is situated on the northern spout of India and shares an international boundary with Nepal. The Himalayas border the state on the north, but the plains that cover most of the state are distinctly different from those high mountains. The larger Gangetic Plain region is in the north; it includes the Ganges-Yamuna Doab, the Ghaghra plains, the Ganges plains and the Terai. The smaller Vindhya Range and plateau region are in the south. It is characterised by hard rock strata and a varied topography of hills, plains, valleys and plateaus. The Bhabhar tract gives place to the terai area which is covered with tall elephant grass and thick forests interspersed with marshes and swamps. The sluggish rivers of the bhabhar deepen in this area, their course running through a tangled mass of thick undergrowth. The terai runs parallel to the bhabhar in a thin strip. The entire alluvial plain is divided into three sub-regions. The first in the eastern tract consisting of 14 districts which are subject to periodical floods and droughts and have been classified as scarcity areas. These districts have the highest density of population which gives the lowest per capita land. The other two regions, the central and the western, are comparatively better with a well-developed irrigation system. They suffer from waterlogging and large-scale user tracts. In addition, the area is fairly arid. The state has more than 32 large and small rivers; of them, the Ganga, Yamuna, Saraswati, Sarayu, Betwa, and Ghaghara are larger and of religious importance in Hinduism. Cultivation is intensive in the state. Uttar Pradesh falls under three agro-climatic zones viz. Middle Gangetic Plains region (Zone-IV), Upper Gangetic Plains region (Zone-V) and Central Plateau and Hills region (Zone-VIII). The valley areas have fertile and rich soil. There is intensive cultivation on terraced hill slopes, but irrigation facilities are deficient. The Siwalik Range which forms the southern foothills of the Himalayas, slopes down into a boulder bed called 'bhabhar'. The transitional belt running along the entire length of the state is called the terai and bhabhar area. It has rich forests, cutting across it are innumerable streams which swell into raging torrents during the monsoon.

Climate Uttar Pradesh has a humid subtropical climate and experiences four seasons. The winter in January and February is followed by summer between March and May and the monsoon season between June and September. Summers are extreme with temperatures fluctuating anywhere between 0-50 C (32-122 F) in parts of the state coupled with dry hot winds called the Loo. The Gangetic plain varies from semiarid to sub-humid. The mean annual rainfall ranges from 650 mm (26 inches) in the southwest corner of the state to 1,000 mm (39 inches) in the eastern and south eastern parts of the state. Primarily a summer phenomenon, the Bay of Bengal branch of the Indian monsoon is the major bearer of rain in most parts of state. After summer it is the southwest monsoon which brings most of the rain here, while in winters rain due to the western disturbances and north-east monsoon also contribute small quantities towards the overall precipitation of the state.

The rain in Uttar Pradesh can vary from an annual average of 170 cm (67 inches) in hilly areas to 84 cm (33 inches) in Western Uttar Pradesh. Given the concentration of most of this rainfall in the four months of the monsoon, excess rain can lead to floods and shortage to droughts. As such, these two phenomena, floods and droughts, commonly recur in the state. The climate of the Vindhya Range and plateau is subtropical with a mean annual rainfall between 1,000 and 1,200 mm (39 and 47 inches), most of which comes during the monsoon. Typical summer months are from March to June, with maximum temperatures ranging from 30-38 C (86-100 F). There is a low relative humidity of around 20% and dust-laden winds blow throughout the season. In summer, hot winds called loo blow all across Uttar Pradesh.

Flora and fauna Uttar Pradesh has an abundance of natural resources. In 2011, the recorded forest area in the state was 16,583 km² (6,403 sq mi) which is about 6.9% of the state's geographical area. In spite of rapid deforestation and poaching of wildlife, a diverse flora and fauna continue to exist in the state. Uttar Pradesh is a

habitat for 4.2% of all species of Algae recorded in India, 6.4% of Fungi, 6.0% of Lichens, 2.9% of Bryophytes, 3.3% of Pteridophytes, 8.7% of Gymnosperms, 8.1% of Angiosperms. Several species of trees, large and small mammals, reptiles, and insects are found in the belt of temperate upper mountainous forests. Medicinal plants are found in the wild and are also grown in plantations. The Terai-Duar savanna and grasslands support cattle. Moist deciduous trees grow in the upper Gangetic plain, especially along its riverbanks. This plain supports a wide variety of plants and animals. The Ganges and its tributaries are the habitat of large and small reptiles, amphibians, fresh-water fish, and crabs. Scrubland trees such as the Babool (*Vachellia nilotica*) and animals such as the Chinkara (*Gazella bennettii*) are found in the arid Vindhya. Tropical dry deciduous forests are found in all parts of the plains. Since much sunlight reaches the ground, shrubs and grasses are also abundant. Large tracts of these forests have been cleared for cultivation. Tropical thorny forests, consisting of widely scattered thorny trees, mainly babool are mostly found in the southwestern parts of the state. Uttar Pradesh is known for its extensive avifauna. The most common birds which are found in the state are doves, peafowl, junglefowl, black partridges, house sparrows, songbirds, blue jays, parakeets, quails, bulbuls, comb ducks, kingfishers, woodpeckers, snipes, and parrots. Bird sanctuaries in the state include Bakhira Sanctuary, National Chambal Sanctuary, Chandra Prabha Wildlife Sanctuary, Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary, Kaimoor Wildlife Sanctuary, and Okhla Sanctuary. Other animals in the state include reptiles such as lizards, cobras, kraits, and gharials. Among the wide variety of fishes, the most common ones are mahaseer and trout. Some animal species have gone extinct in recent years, while others, like the lion from the Gangetic Plain, the rhinoceros from the Terai region, Ganges river dolphin primarily found in the Ganges have become endangered. Many species are vulnerable to poaching despite regulation by the government.

Divisions, districts and cities Uttar Pradesh is divided into 75 districts under these 18 divisions:

The following is a list of top districts from state of Uttar Pradesh by population, ranked in respect of all India.

Each district is governed by a District Magistrate, who is an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer appointed Government of Uttar Pradesh and reports to Divisional Commissioner of the division in which his district falls. The Divisional Commissioner is an IAS officer of high seniority. Each district is divided into subdivisions, governed by a Sub-Divisional Magistrate, and again into Blocks. Blocks consists of panchayats (village councils) and town municipalities. These blocks consists of urban units viz. census towns and rural units called gram panchayat. Uttar Pradesh has more metropolitan cities than any other state in India. The absolute urban population of the state is 44.4 million, which constitutes 11.8% of the total urban population of India, the second-highest of any state. According to the 2011 census, there are 15 urban agglomerations with a population greater than 500,000. Uttar Pradesh has a complex system of municipalities. Nagar Nigam (Municipal Corporation) are urban local bodies in large cities such as Lucknow, Kanpur, Varanasi and cities having population more than 4 million. These governed by a mayor and councillors elected from wards. Nagar Palika Parishad or Municipal Council, serves medium-sized towns like Bela Pratapgarh, Jalaun, or Bisalpur and are governed by a chairperson and councillors. Nagar Panchayat which operate in smaller towns and semi-urban areas like Badlapur, Jaunpur, Bikapur, or Chilkana Sultanpur, are governed by a chairman and councillors. There are 14 Municipal Corporations, while Noida and Greater Noida in Gautam Budha Nagar district are specially administered by statutory authorities under the Uttar Pradesh Industrial Development Act, 1976. In 2011, state's cabinet ministers headed by the then Chief Minister Mayawati announced the separation of Uttar Pradesh into four different states of Purvanchal, Bundelkhand, Avadh Pradesh and Paschim Pradesh with twenty-eight, seven, twenty-three and seventeen districts, respectively, later the proposal was turned down when the Akhilesh Yadav-lead Samajwadi Party came to power in the 2012 election.

Demographics Uttar Pradesh has a very large population and a high population growth rate. From 1991 to 2001 its population increased by over 26 per cent. It is the most populous state in India, with 199,581,477 people on 1 March 2011. The state contributes to 16.2 per cent of India's population. As of 2021, the estimated population of the state is around 240 million people. The population density is 828 people per square kilometre, making it one of the most densely populated states in the country. It has the largest scheduled caste population whereas scheduled tribes are less than 1 per cent of the total population. The sex ratio in 2011, at 912 women to 1000 men, was lower than the national figure of 943. The low sex ratio in Uttar Pradesh, is a result of various factors, such as sex-selective abortion, female infanticide, and discrimination against girls and women. The state's 2001-2011 decennial growth rate (including Uttarakhand) was 20.1 per cent, higher than the national rate of 17.64 per cent. It has a large number of people living below the poverty line. As per a World Bank document released in 2016, the pace of poverty reduction in the state has been slower than the rest of the country. Estimates released by the Reserve Bank of India for the year 2011-12 revealed that the state had 59 million (59,819,000) people below the poverty line, the most for any state in India. The central and eastern districts in particular have very high levels of poverty. The state is also experiencing widening consumption inequality. As per the report of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation released in 2020, the state per capita income is below ₹80,000 (US\$950) per annum. As per 2011 census, Uttar Pradesh, the most populous state in India, is home to the highest numbers of both Hindus and Muslims. The literacy rate of the state at the 2011 census was 67.7 per cent, which was below the national average of 74 per cent. The literacy rate for men is 79 per cent and for women 59 per cent. In 2001 the literacy rate in the state stood at 56 per cent overall, 67 per cent for men and 43 per cent for women. A report based on a National Statistical Office (NSO) survey revealed that Uttar Pradesh's literacy rate is 73 per cent, less than the national average of 77.7 per cent. According to the report, in the rural region, the literacy rate among men is 80.5 per cent and women is 60.4 per cent, while in urban areas, the literacy rate among men is 86.8 per cent and women is 74.9 per cent. Hindi is the primary official language and is spoken by the majority of the population. Bhojpuri is the second most spoken language of the state, it is spoken by almost 11 per cent of the population. Most people speak regional languages classified as dialects of Hindi in the census. These include Awadhi, spoken in Awadh in central Uttar Pradesh; Bhojpuri spoken in Purvanchal in eastern Uttar Pradesh; and Braj Bhasha spoken in the Braj region in Western Uttar Pradesh. These languages have also been recognised by the state government for official use in their respective regions. Urdu is given the status of a second official language, spoken by 5.4 per cent of the population. English is used as a means of communication for education, commerce, and governance. It is commonly spoken and employed as a language of instruction in educational institutions, as well as for conducting business transactions and managing administrative affairs. Other notable languages spoken in the state include Punjabi (0.3 per cent) and Bengali (0.1 per cent).

Governance and administration The state is governed by a parliamentary system of representative democracy. Uttar Pradesh is one of the seven states in India, where the state legislature is bicameral, comprising two houses: the Vidhan Sabha (Legislative Assembly) and the Vidhan Parishad (Legislative Council). The Legislative Assembly consists of 404 members who are elected for five-year terms. The Legislative Council is a permanent body of 100 members with one-third (33 members) retiring every two years. The state sends the largest number of legislators to the national Parliament. The state contributes 80 seats to Lok Sabha, the lower house of the Indian Parliament, and 31 seats to Rajya Sabha, the upper house. The Government of Uttar Pradesh is a democratically elected body in India with the governor as its constitutional head and is appointed by the president of India for a five-year term. The leader of the party or coalition with a majority in the Legislative Assembly is appointed as the chief minister by the governor, and the council of ministers is appointed by the governor on the advice of the chief minister. The governor remains a ceremonial head of the state, while the chief minister and his council are responsible for day-to-day government functions. The Council of Ministers consists of Cabinet Ministers and Ministers of State (MoS). The Secretariat headed by the Chief Secretary

assists the council of ministers. The Chief Secretary is also the administrative head of the government. Each government department is headed by a minister, who is assisted by an Additional Chief Secretary or a Principal Secretary, who is usually an officer of Indian Administrative Service (IAS), the Additional Chief Secretary/Principal Secretary serves as the administrative head of the department they are assigned to. Each department also has officers of the rank of Secretary, Special Secretary, Joint Secretary etc. assisting the Minister and the Additional Chief Secretary/Principal Secretary. For administration, the state is divided into 18 divisions and 75 districts. Divisional Commissioner, an IAS officer is the head of administration on the divisional level. The administration in each district is headed by a District Magistrate, who is also an IAS officer, and is assisted by several officers belonging to state services. District Magistrate being the head of the district administration, is responsible for maintaining law and order and providing public services in the district. At the block level, the Block Development Officer (BDO) is responsible for the overall development of the block. The Uttar Pradesh Police is headed by an IPS officer of the rank of Director general of police. A Superintendent of Police, an IPS officer assisted by the officers of the Uttar Pradesh Police Service, is entrusted with the responsibility of maintaining law and order and related issues in each district. The Divisional Forest Officer, an officer belonging to the Indian Forest Service manages the forests, environment, and wildlife of the district, assisted by the officers of Provincial Forest Service and Uttar Pradesh Forest Subordinate Service.

The judiciary in the state consists of the Allahabad High Court in Prayagraj, the Lucknow Bench of Allahabad High Court, district courts and session courts in each district or Sessions Division, and lower courts at the tehsil level. The president of India appoints the chief justice of the High Court of the Uttar Pradesh judiciary on the advice of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India as well as the governor of Uttar Pradesh. Subordinate Judicial Service, categorised into two divisions viz. Uttar Pradesh civil judicial services and Uttar Pradesh higher judicial service are another vital part of the judiciary of Uttar Pradesh. While the Uttar Pradesh civil judicial services comprise the Civil Judges (Junior Division)/Judicial Magistrates and civil judges (Senior Division)/Chief Judicial Magistrate, the Uttar Pradesh higher judicial service comprises civil and sessions judges. The Subordinate judicial service (viz. The district court of Etawah and the district court of Kanpur Dehat) of the judiciary at Uttar Pradesh is controlled by the District Judge. Politics in Uttar Pradesh has been dominated by four political parties - the Samajwadi Party, the Bahujan Samaj Party, the Bharatiya Janata Party, and the Indian National Congress. The political landscape of the state is often characterised by intense competition and polarisation, leading to caste-based tensions and communal conflicts. Critics often suggest that despite Uttar Pradesh's significant political legacy of producing eight Prime Ministers, the state continues to struggle with issues that hinder its overall advancement.

Crime and accidents According to the National Human Rights Commission of India (NHRC), Uttar Pradesh tops the list of states of encounter killings and custodial deaths. In 2014, the state recorded 365 judicial deaths out of a total 1,530 deaths recorded in the country. NHRC further said, of the over 30,000 murders registered in the country in 2016, Uttar Pradesh had 4,889 cases. A data from Minister of Home Affairs (MHA) avers, Bareilly recorded the highest number of custodial death at 25, followed by Agra (21), Allahabad (19) and Varanasi (9). National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data from 2011 says, the state has the highest number of crimes among any state in India, but due to its high population, the actual per capita crime rate is low. The state also continues to top the list of states with maximum communal violence incidents. An analysis of Ministers of State of Home Affairs states (2014), 23 per cent of all incidents of communal violence in India took place in the state. According to a research assembled by State Bank of India, Uttar Pradesh failed to improve its Human Development Index (HDI) ranking over a period of 27 years (1990-2017). Based on sub-national human development index data for Indian states from 1990 to 2017, the report also stated that the value of human development index has steadily increased over time from 0.39 in 1990 to 0.59 in 2017. The Uttar Pradesh Police, governed by the Department of Home and Confidential, is the largest police force in the world. Uttar

Pradesh also reported the highest number of deaths - 41,746 - due to road accidents till December 2022, according to "Road Accidents in India" report of Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. The UP Transport Department report also indicates that the primary cause of road accident fatalities was over-speeding, which accounted for 40 per cent of deaths. Drunken driving contributed to 10 per cent of fatalities, while 12 per cent of deaths were due to driving on the wrong side. Additionally, 10 per cent of accident deaths were caused by the use of mobile phones, and 5 per cent resulted from running red lights. The remaining 23 per cent of deaths were attributed to factors such as losing control of the vehicle, drowsiness, poor road visibility, and engineering defects. Between 2006 and 2010, the state has been hit with three terrorist attacks, including explosions in a landmark holy place, a court and a temple. The 2006 Varanasi bombings were a series of bombings that occurred across the Hindu holy city of Varanasi on 7 March 2006. At least 28 people were killed and as many as 101 others were injured. In the afternoon of 23 November 2007, within a span of 25 minutes, six consecutive serial blasts occurred in the Lucknow, Varanasi, and Faizabad courts, in which 28 people were killed. Another blast occurred on 7 December 2010, the blast occurred at Sheetla Ghat in Varanasi in which more than 38 people were killed. In February 2016, a series of bomb blasts occurred at the Jhakarkati Bus Station in Kanpur, killing 2 people and injuring more than 30.

Economy In terms of net state domestic product (NSDP), Uttar Pradesh is the fourth-largest economy in India, with an estimated gross state domestic product of ₹14.89 lakh crore (US\$180 billion), contributing 8.4% of India's gross domestic product. According to the report generated by India Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF), in 2014-15, Uttar Pradesh has accounted for 19% share in the country's total food grain output. About 70% of India's sugar comes from Uttar Pradesh. Sugarcane is the most important cash crop as the state is country's largest producer of sugar. As per the report generated by Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA), total sugarcane production in India was estimated to be 28.3 million tonnes in the fiscal ending September 2015 which includes 10.47 million tonnes from Maharashtra and 7.35 million tonnes from Uttar Pradesh. The state has significant reserves of cement-grade limestone and crystalline marble, in districts of Mirzapur and Sonbhadra, supporting a growing cement and refractory industry. With 359 manufacturing clusters, cement is the top sector of SMEs in Uttar Pradesh. The Uttar Pradesh Financial Corporation (UPFC) was established in 1954 under the SFCs Act of 1951 mainly to develop small- and medium-scale industries in the state. The UPFC also provides working capital to existing units with a soundtrack record and to new units under a single window scheme. In July 2012, due to financial constraints and directions from the state government, lending activities were suspended except for State Government Schemes. The state has reported total private investment worth over Rs. 25,081 crores during the years of 2012 and 2016. According to a 2015 report by the World Bank on the Ease of Doing Business in India, Uttar Pradesh was ranked among the top 10 states and was the first among the northern states. The state is home to over 11,500 leather production units, primarily concentrated in Agra and Kanpur, making it one of India's leading leather manufacturing regions. Uttar Pradesh also contributes around 15 per cent of India's total fabric production and employs nearly 30 per cent of the country's artisan workforce. According to the Uttar Pradesh Budget Documents (2019-20), Uttar Pradesh's debt burden is 29.8 per cent of the GSDP. The state's total financial debt stood at ₹2.09 lakh crore (US\$25 billion) in 2011. Uttar Pradesh has not been able to witness double-digit economic growth despite consistent attempts over the years. The GSDP is estimated to have grown 7 per cent in 2017-18 and 6.5 per cent in 2018-19 which is about 10 per cent of India's GDP. According to a survey conducted by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), Uttar Pradesh's unemployment rate increased 11.4 percentage points, rising to 21.5 per cent in April 2020. Uttar Pradesh has the largest number of net migrants migrating out of the state. The 2011 census data on migration shows that nearly 14.4 million (14.7%) people had migrated out of Uttar Pradesh. Marriage was cited as the predominant reason for migration among females. Among males, the most important reason for migration was work and employment. Uttar Pradesh continues to have regional disparities, particularly with the western districts of the state showing higher development indicators such as per capita district development

product (PCDDP) and gross district development product (GDDP) compared to other regions. Due to inadequate infrastructure and a dense population, Purvanchal faces notable socio-economic disparities. For 2021-22 the GDDP for Purvanchal it is ₹5.37 lakh crore, while for Western Uttar Pradesh (including the Upper Doab, Rohilkhand and Braj) it is ₹9.44 lakh crore. For the Bundelkhand and Awadh regions, the GDDP remained ₹99,029.34 crore and ₹3.36 lakh crore, respectively. As of 2021-22, the per capita annual income in eastern districts is about one-fourth of the national average at ₹12,741 while the state's average stood at ₹17,349.

In 2009-10, the tertiary sector of the economy (service industries) was the largest contributor to the gross domestic product of the state, contributing 44.8 per cent of the state domestic product compared to 44 per cent from the primary sector (agriculture, forestry, and tourism) and 11.2 per cent from the secondary sector (industrial and manufacturing). Noida, Meerut, and Agra rank as the top 3 districts with the highest per capita income, whereas Lucknow and Kanpur rank 7th and 9th in per capita income. During the 11th five-year plan (2007-2012), the average gross state domestic product (GSDP) growth rate was 7.3 per cent, lower than 15.5 per cent, the average for all states of the country. The state's per capita GSDP was ₹29,417 (US\$350), lower than the national per capita GSDP of ₹60,972 (US\$720). Labor efficiency is higher at an index of 26 than the national average of 25. Textiles and sugar refining, both long-standing industries in Uttar Pradesh, employ a significant proportion of the state's total factory labour. The economy also benefits from the state's tourism industry.

Transportation The state has the largest railway network in the country but in relative terms has only sixth-highest railway density despite its plain topography and largest population. As of 2015, there were 9,077 km (5,640 mi) of rail in the state. The railway network in the state is controlled by two divisions of the Indian Railways viz. North Central Railway and North Eastern Railway. Prayagraj is the headquarters of the North Central Railway and Gorakhpur is the headquarters of the North Eastern Railway. Lucknow and Moradabad serve as divisional Headquarters of the Northern Railway Division. Lucknow Swarna Shatabdi Express, the second fastest Shatabdi Express train, connects the Indian capital of New Delhi to Lucknow while Kanpur Shatabdi Express, connects New Delhi to Kanpur Central. This was the first train in India to get the new German LHB coaches. The railway stations of Prayagraj Junction, Agra Cantonment, Lucknow Charbagh, Gorakhpur Junction, Kanpur Central, Mathura Junction and Varanasi Junction are included in the Indian Railways list of 50 world-class railway stations. The Lucknow Metro, along with the Kanpur Metro (Orange line), are rapid transit systems that serve Lucknow and Kanpur, respectively. The state has a large, multimodal transportation system with the largest road network in the country. It has 42 national highways, with a total length of 4,942 km (3,071 miles) comprising 8.9 per cent of the total national highways length in India. The Uttar Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (UPSRTC) was established in 1972 to provide transportation in the state with connecting services to adjoining states. The UPSRTC's current fleet consists of 11,238 buses operating on 2,762 routes across a total distance of 768,065 km (477,253 mi) throughout the state, generating an average daily income of ₹16 crore (US\$1.9 million). Despite its extensive operation, many of UPSRTC buses are now outdated and unreliable, raising concerns about their condition and the impact on passenger safety. All cities are connected to state highways, and all district headquarters are being connected with four lane roads which carry traffic between major centres within the state. One of them is Agra-Lucknow Expressway, which is a 302 km (188 miles) controlled-access highway constructed by UPEIDA. Uttar Pradesh has the highest road density in India - 1,027 km (638 miles) per 1,000 km² (390 square miles) - and the largest surfaced urban-road network in the country - 50,721 km (31,517 miles).

By passenger traffic in India, Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport in Lucknow and Lal Bahadur Shastri Airport in Varanasi, are the major international airports and the main gateway to the state. Another international airport has been built at Kushinagar. However, since its inauguration, Kushinagar International Airport has not yet seen any outbound flights to international destinations. Ayodhya Airport, officially known as Maharshi Valmiki International Airport, was inaugurated on 30 December 2023 and currently facilitates domestic air travel. Uttar Pradesh has six domestic airports located at Agra, Allahabad, Bareilly, Ghaziabad, Gorakhpur and Kanpur. Under the collaboration with civilian aviation authority, these domestic airports are primarily used by the Indian Air Force for operational flexibility, especially during emergencies or natural disasters. Developed under Regional Connectivity Scheme (UDAN), Chitrakoot Airport is the first and only airport in the Bundelkhand region. Although inaugurated in 2024, the airport has remained largely inactive due to low passenger traffic, and flight operations were suspended in December 2024 owing to poor visibility and operational challenges. Similarly, the airports in Azamgarh, Aligarh, Moradabad, Shravasti, and Saharanpur have faced temporary closures due to limited commercial viability, low passenger traffic, and a shortage of suitable aircraft. The Noida International Airport is proposed to be built near Jewar in Gautam Buddha Nagar, district. Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Uran Akademi (IGRUA) is a premier pilot training institute located in Amethi. Established in 1985 under the Ministry of Civil Aviation, IGRUA provides commercial pilot training programs.

Sports Traditional sports, now played mostly as a pastime, include wrestling, swimming, kabaddi, and track-sports or water-sports played according to local traditional rules and without modern equipment. Some sports are designed to display martial skills such as using a sword or 'Pata' (stick). Due to a lack of organised patronage and requisite facilities, these sports survive mostly as individuals' hobbies or local competitive events. Among modern sports, field hockey is popular and Uttar Pradesh has produced top-level players in India, such as Nitin Kumar. and Lalit Kumar Upadhyay. Recently, cricket has become more popular than field hockey. Uttar Pradesh won its first Ranji Trophy tournament in February 2006, beating Bengal in the final. Shaheed Vijay Singh Pathik Sports Complex is a newly built international cricket stadium with a capacity of around 20,000 spectators. Wrestling has deep roots in Uttar Pradesh, with many akharas (traditional wrestling schools) spread across the state. The Uttar Pradesh football team (UPFS) serves as the governing body for football in Uttar Pradesh. It holds authority over the Uttar Pradesh football team and is officially affiliated with the All India Football Federation. The UPFS participates in sending state teams to compete in all National Football Championships organised by the All India Football Federation. Additionally, the UPFS oversees two Mandal Football Associations: the Aligarh Football Association and the Kanpur Football Association. The Uttar Pradesh Badminton Association is a sports body affiliated to Badminton Association of India responsible for overseeing players representing Uttar Pradesh at the national level. The Buddh International Circuit hosted India's inaugural F1 Grand Prix race on 30 October 2011. Races were only held three times before being cancelled due to falling attendance and lack of government support. The government of Uttar Pradesh considered Formula One to be entertainment and not a sport, and thus imposed taxes on the event and participants.

Education Uttar Pradesh has a prolonged tradition of education, although historically it was primarily confined to the elite class and religious schools. Sanskrit-based learning formed the major part of education from the Vedic to the Gupta periods. As cultures travelled through the region they brought their bodies of knowledge with them, adding Pali, Persian and Arabic scholarship to the community. These formed the core of Hindu-Buddhist-Muslim education until the rise of British colonialism. The present schools-to-university system of education owes its inception and development in the state (as in the rest of the country) to foreign Christian missionaries and the British colonial administration. Schools in the state are either managed by the government or by private trusts. Hindi is used as a medium of instruction in most of the schools except those affiliated to the CBSE or the council for ICSE boards. Under the 10+2+3 plan, after completing secondary school, students

typically enroll for two years in a junior college, also known as pre-university, or in schools with a higher secondary facility affiliated with the Uttar Pradesh Board of High School and Intermediate Education (commonly referred to as U.P. Board) or a central board. Students choose from one of three streams, namely liberal arts, commerce, or science. Upon completing the required coursework, students may enrol in general or professional degree programs. In a study done by Child Rights and You (CRY) and the Centre for Budgets, Governance, and Accountability (CBGA), Uttar Pradesh spent ₹9,167 per pupil, which is below the national average of ₹12,768. The pupil/teacher ratio is 39:1, lower than the national average of 23:1. According to the National Bureau of Economic Research, the state reported the second-highest teacher absenteeism (31 per cent) in rural public schools among 19 surveyed states. According to an answer given by the Union Education Minister in 2020 in the Lok Sabha, about 17.1 per cent of all elementary teacher posts in government schools in Uttar Pradesh are vacant. In terms of absolute numbers, the figure stands at 210,000. In February 2024, the Uttar Pradesh government informed legislative assembly that, 85,152 posts of headmasters and assistant teachers are vacant in the state.

Uttar Pradesh has more than 45 universities, including six central universities, twenty eight state universities, eight deemed universities, two IITs in Varanasi and Kanpur, AIIMS Gorakhpur and AIIMS Rae Bareilly, an IIM in Lucknow Founded in 1845, La Martinire Girls' College in Lucknow, stands as one of the oldest schools in India. Located in Amethi, Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Petroleum Technology (RGPT), provides education and training in STEM fields, particularly emphasising the petroleum industry. With deemed university status, the RGPT awards degrees in its own right. King George's Medical University (KGMU), located in Lucknow, is an institution for medical education, research, and healthcare services. The Integral University, a state level institution, was established by the Uttar Pradesh Government to provide education in different technical, applied science, and other disciplines. The Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies was founded as an autonomous organisation by the national ministry of culture. Jagadguru Rambhadracharya Handicapped University is the only university established exclusively for the disabled in the world. As of 2023, the state has 573 public libraries. Established in 1875, Maulana Azad Library is one of the oldest and is the largest university library in Asia. Rampur Raza Library is a repository of Indo-Islamic cultural heritage established in the last decades of the 18th century. It was established in 1774 by nawab Faizullah Khan and now an autonomous body under the Ministry of Culture. Thornhill Mayne Memorial also known as Allahabad Public Library, has an approximate collection of 125,000 books, 40 types of magazines, and 28 different newspapers in Hindi, English, Urdu and Bangla and it also contains 21 Arabic manuscripts. A large number of Indian scholars are educated at different universities in Uttar Pradesh. Notable scholars who were born, worked or studied in the geographic area of the state include Harivansh Rai Bachchan, Motilal Nehru, Harish Chandra and Indira Gandhi.

Tourism Uttar Pradesh ranks first in domestic tourist arrivals among all states of India. According to the Ministry of Tourism (Government of India), 1.6 million foreign tourists and approximately 317.91 million domestic tourists visited the state in 2023. The Taj Mahal attracts some 7 million people a year, earning almost ₹98 crore (US\$12 million) in ticket sales in 2023-24. The state is home to three World Heritage Sites: the Taj Mahal, Agra Fort, and the nearby Fatehpur Sikri. Religious tourism plays a significant role in the state's economy. Varanasi is a major religious hub and one of the seven sacred cities (Sapta Puri) in Hinduism and Jainism. Vrindavan is considered to be a holy place for Vaishnavism. Sravasti generally considered as revered sites in Buddhism, believed to be where the Buddha taught many of his Suttas (sermons). Owing to the belief as to the birthplace of Rama, Ayodhya (Awadh) has been regarded as one of the seven most important pilgrimage sites. Millions gather at Prayagraj to take part in the Magh Mela festival on the banks of the Ganges. This festival is organised on a larger scale every 12th year and is called the Kumbh Mela, where over 10 million Hindu pilgrims congregate in one of the largest gatherings of people in the world. Buddhist attractions in Uttar Pradesh include stupas and monasteries. The historically important towns of Sarnath where Gautama Buddha gave his first

sermon after his enlightenment and died at Kushinagar; both of which are important pilgrimage sites for Buddhists. Also at Sarnath are the Pillars of Ashoka and the Lion Capital of Ashoka, both important archaeological artefacts with national significance. At a distance of 80 km (50 miles) from Varanasi, Ghazipur is famous not only for its Ghats on the Ganges but also for the tomb of Lord Cornwallis, the 18th-century Governor of East India Company ruled Bengal Presidency. The tomb is maintained by the Archaeological Survey of India. Jhansi Fort, located in the city of Jhansi, is closely associated with the "First War of Indian Independence", also known as the "Great Rebellion" or the Indian Rebellion of 1857. The fort is constructed in accordance with medieval Indian military architecture, featuring thick walls, bastions, and various structures within its complex. The architecture reflects a blend of Hindu and Islamic styles.

Healthcare Uttar Pradesh has a mix of public as well as private healthcare infrastructure. Public healthcare in Uttar Pradesh is provided through a grid of primary health centers, community health centers, district hospitals, and medical colleges. Although an extensive network of public and private sector healthcare providers has been built, the available health infrastructure is inadequate to meet the demand for health services in the state. In 15 years to 2012-13, the population increased by more than 25 per cent. The public health centres, which are the frontline of the government's health care system, decreased by 8 per cent. Smaller sub-centres, the first point of public contact, increased by no more than 2 per cent over the 25 years to 2015, a period when the population grew by more than 51 per cent. The state is also facing challenges such as a shortage of healthcare professionals, increasing cost of healthcare, a lack of essential medicines and equipment, the mushrooming of private healthcare and a lack of planning. The number of doctors registered with State Medical Councils or the Medical Council of India in Uttar Pradesh was 77,549. In 2019, the number of government hospital in rural and urban areas of Uttar Pradesh stood at 4,442 with 39,104 beds and 193 with 37,156 beds respectively. The average population served per government hospital stands at 47,782 individuals. As of December 2023, Out-of-pocket expenditures in Uttar Pradesh is ₹60,883 crore (US\$7.2 billion), highest in India. A newborn in Uttar Pradesh is expected to live four years fewer than in the neighbouring state of Bihar, five years fewer than in Haryana and seven years fewer than in Himachal Pradesh. The state contributed to the largest share of almost all communicable and noncommunicable disease deaths, including 48 per cent of all typhoid deaths (2014); 17 per cent of cancer deaths and 18 per cent of tuberculosis deaths (2015). Its maternal mortality ratio is higher than the national average at 285 maternal deaths for every 100,000 live births (2021), with 64.2 per cent of pregnant women unable to access minimum ante-natal care. Around 42 per cent of pregnant women, more than 1.5 million, deliver babies at home. About two-thirds (61 per cent) of childbirths at home in the state are unsafe. It has the highest child mortality indicators, from the neonatal mortality rate to the under-five mortality rate of 64 children who die per 1,000 live births before five years of age, 35 die within a month of birth, and 50 do not complete a year of life.

Culture Language and literature Several texts and hymns of the Vedic literature were composed in Uttar Pradesh. Renowned Indian writers who have resided in Uttar Pradesh were Kabir, Ravidas, and Tulsidas, who wrote much of his Ram Charit Manas in Varanasi. The festival of Guru Purnima is dedicated to Sage Vyasa, and also known as Vyasa Purnima as it is the day which is believed to be his birthday and also the day he divided the Vedas. Hindi became the language of state administration with the Uttar Pradesh Official Language Act of 1951. A 1989 amendment to the act added Urdu, as an additional language of the state. Linguistically, the state spreads across the Central, East-Central, and Eastern zones of the Indo Aryan languages. The major Hindi languages of the state are Awadhi, Bagheli, Bundeli, Braj Bhasha, Kannauji, and Hindustani. Bhojpuri, an Eastern Indo Aryan language, is also spoken in the state.

Music and dance With each district of Uttar Pradesh having its unique music and tradition, traditional folk music in Uttar Pradesh has been categorised in three different ways including music transmitted orally, music with unknown composers and music performed by custom. During the medieval period, two distinct types of music began to emerge in Uttar Pradesh. One was the courtly music, which received support from cities like Agra, Fatehpur Sikri, Lucknow, Jaunpur, Varanasi, and Banda. The other was the religious music stemming from the Bhakti Cult, which thrived in places like Mathura, Vrindavan, and Ayodhya. The popular folk music of Uttar Pradesh includes sohar, which is sung to celebrate the birth of a child. Evolved into the form of semi-classical singing, Kajari sung during the rainy season, and its singing style is closely associated the Benares gharana. Ghazal, Thumri and Qawwali which is a form of Sufi poetry is popular in the Awadh region, Rasiya (especially popular in Braj), which celebrate the divine love of Radha and Krishna. Khayal is a form of semi-classical singing which comes from the courts of Awadh. Other forms of music are Biraha, Chaiti, Chowtal, Alha, and Sawani. Kathak, a classical dance form, owes its origin to the state of Uttar Pradesh. Ramlila is one of the oldest dramatic folk dances; it depicts the life of the Hindu deity Rama and is performed during festivals such as Vijayadashami. Nautanki is a traditional form of folk theatre that originated in Uttar Pradesh. It typically portrays a variety of themes ranging from historical and mythological tales to social and political commentary. In the gharana dance form, both the Lucknow and the Benares gharanas are situated in the state. Charkula is popular dance of the Braj region.

Fairs and festivals Chhath Puja is the biggest festival of eastern Uttar Pradesh. The Kumbh Mela, organised in the month of Maagha (February-March), is a major festival held every twelve years in rotation at Prayagraj on the river Ganges. Lathmar Holi is a local celebration of the Hindu festival of Holi. It takes place well before the actual Holi in the town of Barsana near Mathura. Taj Mahotsav, held annually at Agra, is a colourful display of the culture of the Braj area. Ganga Mahotsav, a festival of Kartik Purnima, is celebrated fifteen days after Diwali.

Cuisine Mughlai cuisine is a style of cooking developed in the Indian subcontinent by the imperial kitchens of the Mughal Empire. It represents the cooking styles used in North India, especially Uttar Pradesh, and has been strongly influenced by Central Asian cuisine. Awadhi cuisine from the city of Lucknow consists of both vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes. It has been greatly influenced by Mughlai cuisine. Bhojpuri cuisine is a style of food preparation common in the districts located near the Bihar border. Bhojpuri foods are mostly mild and tend to be less hot in terms of spices used. The cuisine consists of both vegetable and meat dishes.

See also List of people from Uttar Pradesh Outline of India UP Gaurav Samman

Explanatory notes References External links Government Official website Official tourism site Archived 27 January 2023 at the Wayback Machine General information Uttar Pradesh web resources provided by GovPubs at the University of Colorado Boulder Libraries Uttar Pradesh at the Encyclopdia Britannica Wikimedia Atlas of Uttar Pradesh Geographic data related to Uttar Pradesh at OpenStreetMap

Uttarakhand

Uttarakhand (Hindi: उत्तराखण्ड, pronounced [ʊt̪t̪ərəˈkʰəɳd̪], lit. 'Northern Land'), also known as Uttaranchal (English: ; the official name until 2007), is a state in northern India. The state is bordered by Himachal Pradesh to the northwest, Tibet to the north, Nepal to the east and Uttar Pradesh to the south. Uttarakhand has a total area of 53,483 km² (20,650 sq mi), equal to 1.6% of the total area of India. Dehradun serves as the state capital, with Nainital being the judicial capital. The state is divided into two divisions, Garhwal and Kumaon, with a total of 13 districts. The forest cover in the state is 45.4% of the state's geographical area. The cultivable area is 16% of the total geographical area. The two major rivers of the state, the Ganges and its tributary Yamuna, originate from the Gangotri and Yamunotri glaciers respectively. Ranked 6th among the Top 10 Greenest States in India with Best AQI. Uttarakhand's history dates back to prehistoric times, with archaeological evidence showcasing human habitation. It was part of the ancient Kuru and the Panchal kingdoms during the Vedic age, and later saw the rise of dynasties like the Kunindas and influence of Buddhism as evidenced by Ashokan edicts. Though primarily driven by agriculture and hydropower, the state's economy is now dominated by the service industry. The service sector comprises primarily travel, tourism, and hotel industry. The Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) of Uttarakhand is ₹3.78 lakh crore (US\$45 billion). The state contributes five seats to the lower house Lok Sabha and three seats to the upper house Rajya Sabha. Inhabitants of the state are called either Garhwali or Kumaoni depending on their region of origin. Hinduism is practiced by more than three-fourths of the population, with Islam being the next-largest religious group. Hindi is the most widely spoken language and is also the official language of the state, along with native regional languages include Garhwali, Jaunsari, Gurjari and Kumaoni. The state is often referred to as the "Devabhumi" (lit. 'Land of the Gods'), due to its religious significance and numerous Hindu temples and pilgrimage centres found throughout the state. Along with several historical, natural and religious tourist destinations, including Char Dham, Haridwar, Rishikesh, Panch Kedar, Himalayas, and Sapta Badri. Uttarakhand is also home to two World Heritage sites.

Etymology Uttarakhand's name is derived from the Sanskrit words *uttara* (उत्तर) meaning 'north', and *khaṇḍa* (खण्ड) meaning 'section' or 'part', altogether simply meaning 'Northern Part'. The name finds mention in early Hindu scriptures as the combined region of "Kedarkhand" (present day Garhwal) and "Manaskhand" (present day Kumaon). Uttarakhand was also the ancient Puranic term for the central stretch of the Indian Himalayas.

History Archaeological evidence supports the existence of humans in the region since prehistoric times. Though initially, it was believed that due to harsh climate and mountainous terrain, this was a barren and uninhabited land. But after various excavations and the study of ancient literature, it is now established that the history of Uttarakhand goes back to Stone Age. Evidences of Stone Age settlements have been found in various parts of Kumaon and Garhwal, particularly notable are the rock shelters at Lakhudiyar, Almora.

The region formed a part of the Uttarakuru Kingdom during the Vedic age of Ancient India. Among the first major dynasties of Kumaon were the Kunindas in the second century BCE who practised an early form of Shaivism. Ashokan edicts at Kalsi show the early presence of Buddhism in this region. Ancient rock paintings, rock shelters, paleolithic age stone tools (hundreds of thousands of years old), and megaliths provide evidence that the mountains of the region have been inhabited since prehistoric times. There are also archaeological remains that show the existence of early Vedic (c. 1500 BCE) practices in the area. The Pauravas, Khasas,

Kiratas, Nandas, Mauryas, Kushanas, Kunindas, Guptas, Karkotas, Palas, Gurjara-Pratiharas, Katyuris, Raikas, Chands, Parmars or Panwars, Mallas, Shahs and the British have ruled Uttarakhand in turns. Among the first major dynasties of Garhwal and Kumaon were the Kunindas in the second century BCE who practised an early form of Shaivism and traded salt with Western Tibet. It is evident from the Ashokan edict at Kalsi in Western Garhwal that Buddhism made inroads in this region. Shamanic Hindu practices deviating from Hindu orthodoxy also persisted here. However, Garhwal and Kumaon were restored to nominal Vedic Hindu rule due to the travels of Shankaracharya and the arrival of migrants from the plains.

Between the 4th and 14th centuries, the Katyuri dynasty dominated lands of varying extents from the Katyur valley (modern-day Baijnath) in Kumaon. The historically significant temples at Jageshwar are believed to have been built by the Katyuris and later remodelled by the Chands. Other peoples of the Tibeto-Burman group known as Kirata are thought to have settled in the northern highlands as well as in pockets throughout the region, and are believed to be ancestors of the modern day Bhotiya, Raji, Jad, and Banrawat people. During the medieval period, the region was consolidated under the Katyuri rulers of Kumaon also known as 'Kurmanchal Kingdom'. After the fall of Katyuris, the region was divided into the Kumaon Kingdom and the Garhwal Kingdom.

By the medieval period, the region was consolidated under the Garhwal Kingdom in the west and the Kumaon Kingdom in the east. During this period, learning and new forms of painting (the Pahari school of art) developed. Modern-day Garhwal was likewise unified under the rule of Parmars who, along with many other Rajputs and Brahmins, also arrived from the plains. In 1791, the expanding Gorkha Empire of Nepal overran Almora, the seat of the Kumaon Kingdom. It was annexed to the Kingdom of Nepal by Amar Singh Thapa. In 1803, the Garhwal Kingdom also fell to the Gurkhas. After the Anglo-Nepalese War, this region was ceded to the British as part of the Treaty of Sugauli and the erstwhile Kumaon Kingdom along with the eastern region of Garhwal Kingdom was merged with the Ceded and Conquered Provinces. In 1816, the Garhwal Kingdom was re-established from a smaller region in Tehri as a princely state.

In the southern part of Uttarakhand in Haridwar district (earlier part of Saharanpur till 1988) the dominance and kingship (rajya) was exercised by some local Hindu rulers, the area was under control of Parmar (Panwar) chief in eastern Saharanpur including Haridwar in kingship of Raja Sabha Chandra of Jabarhera (Jhabrera). The Panwar clan held more than 500 villages there in upper Doab, and that situation was confirmed in 1759 in a grant by a Rohilla governor of 505 villages and 31 hamlets to one Manohar Singh (written in some records as Raja Nahar Singh son of Sabha Chandra). In 1792 Ram Dayal and his son Sawai Singh were ruling the area but due to some family reasons Ramdayal left Jhabrera and went to Landhaura village, now some villages were under the control of Raja Ramdayal Singh at Landhaura, and some under his son Sawai Singh at Jhabrera. Hence, there were two branches of Jhabrera State (riyasat) main branch at Jhabrera and the second one at Landhaura, both father and son were ruling simultaneously without any conflicts till the death of Raja Sawai Singh of Jabarhera in 1803. After the death of Sawai Singh total control of powers transferred to Ram Dayal Singh at Landhaura, but some villages were given to descendants of Sawai Singh and her widow to collect revenue. By 1803 the Landhaura villages numbered 794 under Raja Ram Dayal Singh. Raja Ram Dayal Singh died on 29 March 1813. These holdings, at least those in the original grant made by the Rohilla governor, were initially recognised by the British in land settlements concluded with Ram Dayal and his heirs. As the years passed, more and more settlements appear to have been made with the village communities, however, and by 1850 little remained of the once vast estate of the Landhaura Khbars. There are many temples and Ghats on Ganga built by Rajas of Landhaura estate, therefore they also famous as ' Haridwari Rajas' in folk history and literature. Famous Dakshamahadev Temple at Kankhal was built by Queen DhanKaur of Landhaura in 1810

A.D.

Next the Timli estate Founded in Dehradun mid-15th century by Chaudhari Ram Singh, a member of the Chokar Hindu family, the estate remained under the rule of this dynasty until its eventual annexation. In 1548, two chieftains, Pohda Singh and Lal Karan, from the Titron region in Saharanpur district, crossed the Sivalik hills, conquered the entire Dehradun area, and established the Timli estate. They also founded a town named Timli Chaudhari Bhagwan Singh have power of magistrate. Raja Ranjit Singh of Samthar state, born in 1943, was married at a young age to a princess from the Chokar family, which ruled in Timli estate in Dehradun.

After India attained independence from the British, the Garhwal Kingdom was merged into the state of Uttar Pradesh, where Uttarakhand composed the Garhwal and Kumaon Divisions. Until 1998, Uttarakhand was the name most commonly used to refer to the region, as various political groups, including the Uttarakhand Kranti Dal (Uttarakhand Revolutionary Party), began agitating for separate statehood under its banner. Although the erstwhile hill kingdoms of Garhwal and Kumaon were traditional rivals the inseparable and complementary nature of their geography, economy, culture, language, and traditions created strong bonds between the two regions. These bonds formed the basis of the new political identity of Uttarakhand, which gained significant momentum in 1994, when demand for separate statehood achieved almost unanimous acceptance among both the local populace and national political parties. The most notable incident during this period was the Rampur Tiraha firing case on the night of 1 October 1994, which led to a public uproar. On 24 September 1998, the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly and Uttar Pradesh Legislative Council passed the Uttar Pradesh Reorganisation Bill, which began the process of forming a new state. Two years later the Parliament of India passed the Uttar Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2000 and thus, on 9 November 2000, Uttarakhand became the 27th state of the Republic of India. Uttarakhand is also well known for the mass agitation of the 1970s that led to the formation of the Chipko environmental movement and other social movements. Though primarily a livelihood movement rather than a forest conservation movement, it went on to become a rallying point for many future environmentalists, environmental protests, and movements the world over and created a precedent for non-violent protest. It stirred up the existing civil society in India, which began to address the issues of tribal and marginalised people. So much so that, a quarter of a century later, India Today mentioned the people behind the "forest satyagraha" of the Chipko movement as among "100 people who shaped India". One of Chipko's most salient features was the mass participation of female villagers. It was largely female activists that played pivotal role in the movement. Gaura Devi was the leading activist who started this movement, other participants were Chandi Prasad Bhatt, Sunderlal Bahuguna, and Ghanshyam Raturi, the popular Chipko poet.

Geography Uttarakhand has a total area of 53,483 km² (20,650 sq mi), of which 86% is mountainous and 65% is covered by forest. Most of the northern part of the state is covered by high Himalayan peaks and glaciers. In the first half of the nineteenth century, the expanding development of Indian roads, railways, and other physical infrastructure was giving rise to concerns over indiscriminate logging, particularly in the Himalaya. Two of the most important rivers in Hinduism originate in the glaciers of Uttarakhand, the Ganges at Gangotri and the Yamuna at Yamunotri. They are fed by myriad lakes, glacial melts, and streams. These two along with Badrinath and Kedarnath form the Chota Char Dham, a holy pilgrimage for the Hindus. Uttarakhand lies on the southern slope of the Himalaya range, and the climate and vegetation vary greatly with elevation, from glaciers at the highest elevations to subtropical forests at the lower elevations. The highest elevations are covered by ice and bare rock. Below them, between 3,000 and 5,000 metres (9,800 and 16,400 ft) are the western Himalayan alpine shrub and meadows. The temperate western Himalayan subalpine conifer forests grow just below the tree line. At 3,000 to 2,600 metres (9,800 to 8,500 ft) elevation they transition to the temperate western Himalayan broadleaf forests, which lie in a belt from 2,600 to 1,500 metres (8,500 to 4,900 ft) elevation.

Below 1,500 metres (4,900 ft) elevation lie the Himalayan subtropical pine forests. The Upper Gangetic Plains moist deciduous forests and the drier Terai-Duar savanna and grasslands cover the lowlands along the Uttar Pradesh border in a belt locally known as Bhabar. These lowland forests have mostly been cleared for agriculture, but a few pockets remain.

Climate Uttarakhand has a temperate but varies greatly from north to south. The climatic conditions experienced in the state vary subtropical in the southern part to alpine in the upper reaches of the Himalayan mountain in the northern parts. The winter season from December to February, is extreme with temperatures fluctuating anywhere between 5 C (41 F) to 20 C (68 F). In higher altitudes and mountainous regions, temperatures often drop below freezing point. Cold winds blow across Uttarakhand, especially in the higher altitudes and mountainous regions. These winds bring cold temperatures and often carry moisture, contributing to the heavy snowfall in places like the Himalayan ranges and hill stations. During Pre-monsoon or hot weather season from March to May, temperature starts to rise and steadily rises till it reaches its peak in May to the middle of June, when the mean maximum temperature in southern parts and valleys of the state is at about 34 C (93 F) to 38 C (100 F), But in recent days the maximum temperature has increased up to 40 C (104 F). and mean minimum temperature is at about 20 C (68 F) to 24 C (75 F) C. June to September constitutes the southwest monsoon season and the period of October and November is of post monsoon season. The state receives rainfall mainly due monsoon depressions originating in the Bay of Bengal during the southwest monsoon season. The total annual rainfall for the state as a whole is 133 cm and total annual number of rainy days are about 63 cm. Although, rainfall in the state varies from place to place due to its rugged topography. Precipitation is not heavy and occurs in the form of rain and snow. Winds are generally light of the order of 1 to 4 kmph in the valleys and 5 to 10 kmph at elevations of 2 km increasing further with higher altitudes.

Flora and fauna Uttarakhand has a diversity of flora and fauna. It has a recorded forest area of 34,666 km² (13,385 sq mi), which constitutes 65% of the total area of the state. The vegetation of the state majorly comprises alpine trees and tropical rainforests. The state is home to rare species of plants and animals, many of which are protected by sanctuaries and reserves. National parks in Uttarakhand include the Jim Corbett National Park (the oldest national park of India) in Nainital and Pauri Garhwal District, and Valley of Flowers National Park & Nanda Devi National Park in Chamoli District, which together are a UNESCO World Heritage Site. A number of plant species in the valley are internationally threatened, including several that have not been recorded from elsewhere in Uttarakhand. Rajaji National Park in Haridwar, Dehradun and Pauri Garhwal District and Govind Pashu Vihar National Park & Gangotri National Park in Uttarkashi District are some other protected areas in the state. Bengal tigers and leopards are found in areas that are abundant in hills but may also venture into the lowland jungles. Smaller felines include the jungle cat, fishing cat, and leopard cat. Other mammals include four kinds of deer (barking, sambar, hog and chital), sloth, Brown and Himalayan black bears, Indian grey mongooses, otters, yellow-throated martens, bharal, Indian pangolins, and langur and rhesus monkeys. In the summer, elephants can be seen in herds of several hundred. Marsh crocodiles (*Crocodylus palustris*), gharials (*Gavialis gangeticus*) and other reptiles are also found in the region. Local crocodiles were saved from extinction by captive breeding programs and subsequently re-released into the Ramganga river. Several freshwater terrapins and turtles like the Indian sawback turtle (*Kachuga tecta*), brahminy river turtle (*Hardella thurjii*), and Ganges softshell turtle (*Trionyx gangeticus*) are found in the rivers. Butterflies and birds of the region include red helen (*Papilio helenus*), the great eggfly (*Hypolimnos bolina*), common tiger (*Danaus genutia*), pale wanderer (*Pareronia avatar*), jungle babbler, tawny-bellied babbler, great slaty woodpecker, red-breasted parakeet, orange-breasted green pigeon and chestnut-winged cuckoo. In 2011, a rare migratory bird, the bean goose, was also seen in the Jim Corbett National Park. A critically endangered bird, last seen in 1876 is the Himalayan quail endemic to the western Himalayas of the state. Evergreen oaks, rhododendrons, and conifers predominate in the hills. *Prunus cerasoides* (pahiyya), sal (*Shorea robusta*), silk cotton tree

(*Bombax ciliata*), *Dalbergia sissoo*, *Mallotus philippensis*, *Acacia catechu*, *Bauhinia racemosa*, and *Bauhinia variegata* (camel's foot tree) are some other trees of the region. *Albizia chinensis*, the sweet sticky flowers of which are favoured by sloth bears, are also part of the region's flora. A decade long study by Prof. Chandra Prakash Kala concluded that the Valley of Flowers is endowed with 520 species of higher plants (angiosperms, gymnosperms and pteridophytes), of these 498 are flowering plants. The park has many species of medicinal plants including *Dactylorhiza hatagirea*, *Picrorhiza kurroa*, *Aconitum violaceum*, *Polygonatum multiflorum*, *Fritillaria roylei*, and *Podophyllum hexandrum*. In the summer season of 2016, a large portion of forests in Uttarakhand caught fires and rubbed to ashes during Uttarakhand forest fires incident, which resulted in the damage of forest resources worth billions of rupees and death of 7 people with hundreds of wild animals died during fires. During the 2021 Uttarakhand forest fires, there was widespread damage to the forested areas in Tehri district. A number of native plants are deemed to be of medicinal value. The government-run Herbal Research and Development Institute carries out research and helps conserve medicinal herbs that are found in abundance in the region. Local traditional healers still use herbs, in accordance with classical Ayurvedic texts, for diseases that are usually cured by modern medicine.

Demographics The native people of Uttarakhand are generally called Uttarakhandi and sometimes specifically either Garhwali or Kumaoni depending on their place of origin in either the Garhwal or Kumaon region. According to the 2011 Census of India, Uttarakhand has a population of 10,086,292 comprising 5,137,773 males and 4,948,519 females, with 69.77% of the population living in rural areas. The state is the 20th most populous state of the country having 0.83% of the population on 1.63% of the land. The population density of the state is 189 people per square kilometre having a 2001-2011 decadal growth rate of 18.81%. The gender ratio is 963 females per 1000 males. The crude birth rate in the state is 18.6 with the total fertility rate being 2.3. The state has an infant mortality rate of 43, a maternal mortality rate of 188 and a crude death rate of 6.6.

Social groups Uttarakhand has a multiethnic population spread across two geocultural regions: Garhwal, and Kumaon. A large portion of the population is Rajput (various clans of erstwhile landowning rulers and their descendants), including members of the native Garhwalis, Kumaonis and Gurjars as well as a number of migrants. According to a 2007 study by Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, Uttarakhand has the highest percentage of Brahmins of any state in India, with approximately 20% of the population. Uttarakhand is among the few Indian states where the historic Upper Caste forms a major share of the population. Of the rest 18.3% of the population is classified as Other Backward Classes (OBCs) Gurjars majorly. 18.76% of the population belongs to the Scheduled Castes (an official term for the lower castes in the traditional caste system in India). Scheduled Tribes such as the Jaunsaris, Bhotiyas, Tharus, Buksas, Rajis, Jads, and Banrawats constitute 2.89% of the population. Several non-scheduled tribal groups such as Shaukas and Gurjars are also found here. Van Gurjars (found in Shivalik hills) and Bhotiya are nomadic tribes while Jaunsaris are completely settled tribe.

Languages The official language of Uttarakhand is Hindi, which according to the 2011 census is spoken natively by 43% of the population, and is also used throughout the state as a lingua franca. The major regional languages of Uttarakhand are Garhwali, which according to the 2011 census is spoken by 23% of the population, mostly in the western half of the state, Kumaoni, spoken in the eastern half and native to 20%, and Jaunsari, whose speakers are concentrated in Dehradun district in the southwest and make up 1.3% of the state's population. These three languages are closely related, with Garhwali and Kumaoni in particular making up the Central Pahari language subgroup. The languages have been part of various scattered conservation efforts due to their active decline beginning in the later quarter of the 20th century. The decline is hypothesized to be the result of heavy state-sponsored promotion of Hindi as the official language. All the languages

enumerated so far belong to the Indo-Aryan family. Apart from a few other minority Indo-Aryan languages, like Buksa Tharu and Rana Tharu (of Udham Singh Nagar district in the south-east), Mahasu Pahari (found in Uttarkashi in the north-west), and Doteli, Uttarakhand is also home to a number of indigenous Sino-Tibetan languages, most of which are spoken in the north of the state. These include Jad (spoken in Uttarkashi district in the north-west), Rongpo (of Chamoli district), and several languages of Pithoragarh district in the north-east: Byangsi, Chaudangsi, Darmiya, Raji and Rawat. Another indigenous Sino-Tibetan language, Rangas, became extinct by the middle of the 20th century. Additionally, two non-indigenous Sino-Tibetan languages are also represented: Kulung (otherwise native to Nepal) and Tibetan. The Indian classical language Sanskrit has been declared a second official language, by the BJP government for its allegedly historic association with the region. At present the language has no native speakers and its use is constrained to educational and religious settings. There are also sizeable populations of speakers of some of India's other major languages: Urdu (4.2%) and Punjabi (2.6%), both mostly found in the southern districts, Bengali (1.5%) and Bhojpuri (0.95%), both mainly present in Udham Singh Nagar district in the south-east, and Nepali (1.1%, found throughout the state, but most notably in Dehradun and Uttarkashi).

Religion More than four-fifths of Uttarakhand's residents are Hindus. Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, and Jains make up the remaining population, with the Muslims being the largest minority. Hill regions are almost entirely Hindu, while the plains regions have a significant minority of Muslims and Sikhs.

Administrative divisions Uttarakhand is divided into 13 districts under two divisions viz. Kumaon and Garhwal. Each division is administered by a divisional commissioner. Four new districts named Didihat, Kotdwar, Ranikhet, and Yamunotri were declared by then Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, Ramesh Pokhriyal, on 15 August 2011 but yet to be officially formed.

Each district is administered by a district magistrate. The districts are further divided into sub-divisions, which are administered by sub-divisional magistrates; sub-divisions comprise tehsils which are administered by a tehsildar and community development blocks, each administered by a block development officer. Urban areas are categorised into three types of municipalities based on their population; municipal corporations, each administered by a municipal commissioner, municipal councils and, nagar panchayats (town councils), each of them administered by a chief executive officer. Rural areas comprise the three tier administration; district councils, block panchayats (block councils) and gram panchayats (village councils). All state and local government offices have a five-year term. According to the 2011 census, Dehradun, and Udham Singh Nagar are the most populous districts, each of them having a population of over one million.

Government and administration Following the Constitution of India, Uttarakhand, like all Indian states, has a parliamentary system of representative democracy. The Legislative Assembly is unicameral consists of 70 members who are elected for five-year terms. Assembly meetings are presided over by the Speaker, or the Deputy Speaker in the Speaker's absence. The Uttarakhand Council of Ministers is appointed by the Governor of Uttarakhand on the advice of the Chief Minister of Uttarakhand and reports to the Legislative Assembly. Leader of the Opposition leads the Official Opposition in the Legislative Assembly. The state contributes five seats to Lok Sabha, the lower house of the Indian Parliament, and three seats to Rajya Sabha, the upper house. The Government of Uttarakhand is a democratically elected body in India with the governor as its constitutional head and is appointed by the president of India for a five-year term. The leader of the party or coalition with a majority in the Legislative Assembly is appointed as the chief minister by the governor, and the council of ministers is appointed by the governor on the advice of the chief minister. The governor remains a ceremonial head of the state, while the chief minister and his council are responsible for day-to-day government

functions. The Council of Ministers consists of Cabinet Ministers and Ministers of State (MoS). The Secretariat headed by the Chief Secretary assists the council of ministers. The Chief Secretary is also the administrative head of the government. Each government department is headed by a minister, who is assisted by an Additional Chief Secretary or a Principal Secretary, who is usually an officer of Indian Administrative Service (IAS), the Additional Chief Secretary/Principal Secretary serves as the administrative head of the department they are assigned to. Each department also has officers of the rank of Secretary, Special Secretary, Joint Secretary etc. assisting the Minister and the Additional Chief Secretary/Principal Secretary. For administration, the state is divided into two divisions and 13 districts. Divisional Commissioner, an IAS officer is the head of administration on the divisional level. The administration in each district is headed by a District Magistrate, who is also an IAS officer, and is assisted by several officers belonging to state services. District Magistrate being the head of the district administration, is responsible for maintaining law and order and providing public services in the district. At the block level, the Block Development Officer (BDO) is responsible for the overall development of the block. The Uttarakhand Police is headed by an IPS officer of the rank of Director general of police. A Superintendent of Police, an IPS officer assisted by the officers of the Uttarakhand Police Service, is entrusted with the responsibility of maintaining law and order and related issues in each district. The Divisional Forest Officer, an officer belonging to the Indian Forest Service manages the forests, environment, and wildlife of the district, assisted by the officers of Uttarakhand Forest Service and Uttarakhand Forest Subordinate Service. The judiciary in the state consists of the Uttarakhand High Court in Nainital, district courts and session courts in each district or Sessions Division, and lower courts at the tehsil level. The president of India appoints the chief justice of the High Court of the Uttarakhand judiciary on the advice of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India as well as the governor of Uttarakhand. Subordinate Judicial Service, categorised into two divisions viz. Uttarakhand civil judicial services and Uttarakhand higher judicial service are another vital part of the judiciary of Uttarakhand. While the Uttarakhand civil judicial services comprise the Civil Judges (Junior Division)/Judicial Magistrates and civil judges (Senior Division)/Chief Judicial Magistrate, the Uttarakhand higher judicial service comprises civil and sessions judges. The State Politics is heavily dominated by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) since 2017 with the Indian National Congress as the chief Opposition.

Culture Architecture and crafts Among the prominent local crafts is wood carving known as Likhai, which appears most frequently in the ornately decorated temples of the Kumaon region in Uttarakhand. Intricately carved designs of floral patterns, deities, and geometrical motifs also decorate the doors, windows, ceilings, and walls of village houses. Paintings and murals are used to decorate both houses and temples.

Garhwali Miniature painting is a form of miniature painting that flourished in the region between the 17th and 19th century. Mola Ram is credited as the true father of the Garhwali Branch of the wider Pahari School. Kumaoni art often is geometrical in nature, while Garhwali art is known for its closeness to nature. Aipan is a GI certified Kumaoni ritual folk art done mainly during special ceremonies, the festival of Diwali, marriages and other religious rituals. Its predominantly female practitioners believe that it invokes a divine power which brings about good fortune and deters evil. The art is special as it is done on empty walls, which are brick-red in colour, called geru. The actual art is done with a white paste made of rice flour. Jyuti patta is a class of water color paintings done on rituals, called Jyuti. Some scholars also consider Jyuti to be synonymous with the word mother of the world. To give concrete form to the deity, two-dimensional geometry is given expression in the form of frescoes. This is a geometric or decorative semi-graphic structure in which different colours and symbols are used. This structure called Jyuti also gets a new dimension by the use of ochre or biswar of Tepan. Jyunti is prepared on the surface of wall or paper and the composition is given with cotton and a brush of limiter. In this artform, various qualities of a specific deity are shown. Other crafts of Uttarakhand include handcrafted gold jewellery, basketry from Garhwal, woollen shawls, scarves, and rugs. The latter are mainly produced by the Bhotiyas of northern Uttarakhand.

Arts and literature Uttarakhand's diverse ethnicities have created a rich literary tradition in languages including Hindi, Garhwali, Kumaoni, Jaunsari, and Tharu. Many of its traditional tales originated in the form of lyrical ballads and chanted by itinerant singers and are now considered classics of Hindi literature. Abodh Bandhu Bahuguna, Badri Datt Pandey, Ganga Prasad Vimal; Mohan Upreti, Naima Khan Upreti, Prasoon Joshi, Shailesh Matiyani, Shekhar Joshi, Shivani, Taradutt Gairola, Tom Alter; Lalit Kala Akademi fellow - Ranbir Singh Bisht; Sangeet Natak Akademi Awardees - B. M. Shah, Narendra Singh Negi; Sahitya Akademi Awardees - Leeladhar Jagudi, Shivprasad Dabral Charan, Manglesh Dabral, Manohar Shyam Joshi, Ramesh Chandra Shah, Ruskin Bond and Viren Dangwal; Jnanpith Awardee and Sahitya Akademi fellow Sumitranandan Pant are some major literary, artistic and theatre personalities from the state. prominent philosophers, Indian independence activists and social-environmental activists; Anil Prakash Joshi, Basanti Devi, Gaura Devi, Govind Ballabh Pant, Chandi Prasad Bhatt, Deep Joshi, Hargovind Pant, Kalu Singh Mahara, Kunwar Singh Negi, Mukandi Lal, Nagendra Saklani, Sri Dev Suman, Ram Prasad Nautiyal, Sunderlal Bahuguna and Vandana Shiva are also from Uttarakhand.

Cuisine The primary food of Uttarakhand is vegetables with wheat being a staple, although non-vegetarian food is also served. A distinctive characteristic of Uttarakhand cuisine is the sparing use of tomatoes, milk, and milk-based products. Coarse grain with high fibre content is very common in Uttarakhand due to the harsh terrain. Crops most commonly associated with Uttarakhand are Buckwheat (locally called Kotu or Kuttu) and the regional crops, Maduwa and Jhangora, particularly in the interior regions of Kumaon and Garhwal. Generally, either Desi Ghee or Mustard oil is used for the purpose of cooking food. Simple recipes are made interesting with the use of hash seeds Jakhya as spice, chutney made of Bhang is also a regional cuisine. Bal Mithai is a popular fudge-like sweet. Other popular dishes include Dubuk, Chains, Kap, Bhatiya, Jaula, Phana, Paliyo, Chutkani and Sei. In sweets; Swal, Ghughut/Khajur, Arsa, Mishri, Gatta and Gulgulas are popular. Many regional variations of Kadhi called Jhoi or Jholi is also popular. Another staple of the Kumaon region is a black soybean dal referred to as Bhatt or chudkani. A grinded dal chaisu is also popular in the Garhwal region. The state has a predominant non-vegetarian population, with some estimates suggesting 75% of the population being non-vegetarian. Various boar, chicken, mutton and hare recipes are popular in the region. A popular mutton dish bhutwa, is made from goat intestine and other offcuts.

Dances and music The dances of the region are connected to life and human existence and exhibit myriad human emotions. Langvir Nritya is a dance form for males that resembles gymnastic movements. Barada Nati folk dance is another dance of Jaunsar-Bawar, which is practised during some religious festivals. Other well-known dances include Hurka Baul, Jhora-Chanchri, Chhapeli, Thadya, Jhumaila, Pandav, Chauphula, and Chholiya. Music is an integral part of the Uttarakhandi culture. Popular types of folk songs include Mangal, Basanti, Khuder and Chhopati. These folk songs are played on instruments including Dhol, Damau, Turri, Ransingha, Dholki, Daur, Thali, Bhankora, Mandan and Mashakbaja. "Bedu Pako Baro Masa" is a popular folk song of Uttarakhand with international fame and legendary status within the state. It serves as the cultural anthem of Uttarakhandi people worldwide. Music is also used as a medium through which the gods are invoked. Jagar is a form of spirit worship in which the singer, or Jagariya, sings a ballad of the gods, the ballads evoke local deities with allusions to great epics, like Mahabharat and Ramayana, that describe the adventures and exploits of the god being invoked. B. K. Samant, Basanti Bisht, Chander Singh Rahi, Girish Tiwari 'Girda', Gopal Babu Goswami, Heera Singh Rana, Jeet Singh Negi, Meena Rana, Mohan Upreti, Narendra Singh Negi and Pritam Bhartwan are popular folk singers and musicians from the state, so are Bollywood singer Jubin Nautiyal and country singer Bobby Cash.

Fairs and festivals The festivals of Kumbh Mela at Haridwar, Ramlila, Ramman of Garhwal, the traditions of Vedic chantings and Yoga are included in the list of Intangible cultural heritage of the UNESCO.

Kumauni Holi, in forms including Baithki Holi, Khari Holi, and Mahila Holi, all of which start from Vasant Panchami, are festivals and musical affairs that can last almost a month. Almora Dussehra is a regional variant of Dussehra, dating back to 1936. It is distinct for burning fifteen distinct effigies, each representing the members of the Hindu mythological villain Ravana's entire bloodline. The effigies are all ornate and exquisitely designed. They are paraded through the city of Almora before finally being set on fire to symbolise the triumph of good over evil. Ramman is an agro-religious festival and ritual masked theatre endemic to the Garhwali People in the Saloor Dungra village of the Pailkhanda Valley in the Chamoli district. The festival serves as an offering to the village deity, Bhumichetrapal or Bhumiya Devta, in the courtyard of the village temple. Every day of the festival, the Devta takes a round of the village. The festival lasts for ten days during which time the local epic of Rama is sung and masked dances depicting different aspects of life take place in the courtyard of the Bhumiya Devta's temple.

Haridwar Kumbh Mela, one of the major Hindu pilgrimages, takes place in Uttarakhand. Haridwar is one of the four places in India where this mela is organised. Haridwar most recently hosted the Purna Kumbh Mela from Makar Sankranti (14 January 2010) to Vaishakh Purnima Snan (28 April 2010). Hundreds of foreigners joined Indian pilgrims in the festival, which is considered the largest religious gathering in the world. Phool-Dei is a folk festival which welcomes the spring season in the state. The festival is celebrated on the first day of the Hindu month, Chaitra. In some places, the festival is celebrated as carnival and the celebration goes on for a month. The term 'Dei' refers to a ceremonial pudding which is the key food in this festival that is made from jaggery. White flour and curd are also offered. Young children gather together and go to every house in their village/towns with plates full of rice, jaggery, coconut, green leaves, and flowers. In return, they are presented with blessings and gifts like sweets, jaggery, and money. The wishing and blessing part also include placing flowers and rice on the doorsteps of the houses by the children. People of village sing and dance on their folk songs to celebrate the festival of spring along with exchanging wishes for well-being and prosperity of their family and relatives. Harela is a kumaoni festival hypothesized to date back to the indigenous population. 10-11 days before the Sankranti of Shravan, a bed is made by adding soil in bamboo pots etc. Grains grown during the rainy season like paddy, maize, urad etc. are sown, this is called Hariyala. Harakali Mahotsav, Idols of Gauri Maheshwar, Ganesha and Karkitkeya are made from clay, coloured in them and worshiped with various fruits, flowers, dishes and sweets in a bed of greenery on the night of the month of Sanat. On the second day, the Harela of Uttarang Puja is placed on the head. Sisters and daughters-in-law apply tilak and tilak and put Harela on their heads. They are given gifts. Ganga Dussehra, Vasant Panchami, Makar Sankranti, Ghee Sankranti, Khatarua, Vat Savitri, and Phul Dei (The festival of spring) are other major festivals. In addition, various fairs like Kanwar Yatra, Kandali Festival, Ramman, Kauthig, Nauchandi Mela, Giddi Mela, Uttarayani Mela and Nanda Devi Raj Jat take place.

Economy The Uttarakhand state is the second fastest growing state in India. Its gross state domestic product (GSDP) (at constant prices) more than doubled from ₹24,786 crore in FY2005 to ₹60,898 crore in FY2012. The real GSDP grew at 13.7% (CAGR) during the FY2005-FY2012 period. The contribution of the service sector to the GSDP of Uttarakhand was just over 50% during FY 2012. Per capita income in Uttarakhand is ₹198738 (FY 2018-19), which is higher than the national average of ₹126406 (FY 2018-19). According to the Reserve Bank of India, the total foreign direct investment in the state from April 2000 to October 2009 amounted to US\$46.7 million. Like most of India, agriculture is one of the most significant sectors of the economy of Uttarakhand. Basmati rice, wheat, soybeans, groundnuts, coarse cereals, pulses, and oil seeds are

the most widely grown crops. Fruits like apples, oranges, pears, peaches, lychees, and plums are widely grown and important to the large food processing industry. Agricultural export zones have been set up in the state for lychees, horticulture, herbs, medicinal plants, and basmati rice. During 2010, wheat production was 831 thousand tonnes and rice production was 610 thousand tonnes, while the main cash crop of the state, sugarcane, had a production of 5058 thousand tonnes. As 86% of the state consists of hills, the yield per hectare is not very high. 86% of all croplands are in the plains while the remaining is from the hills. The state also holds the GI tag for Tejpatta (*Cinnamomum tamala*) or Indian bay leaf, which is known to add flavour to dishes and also possesses several medicinal properties.

Other key industries include tourism and hydropower, and there is prospective development in IT, ITES, biotechnology, pharmaceuticals and automobile industries. The service sector of Uttarakhand mainly includes tourism, information technology, higher education, and banking. During 2005-2006, the state successfully developed three Integrated Industrial Estates (IIEs) at Haridwar, Pantnagar, and Sitarganj; Pharma City at Selakui; Information Technology Park at Sahasradhara (Dehradun); and a growth centre at Sigaddi (Kotdwar). Also in 2006, 20 industrial sectors in public private partnership mode were developed in the state.

Transportation Uttarakhand has 2,683 km (1,667 mi) of roads, of which 1,328 km (825 mi) are national highways and 1,543 km (959 mi) are state highways. The state has 14 national highways, comprising 2.2% of the total national highways length in India. The Uttarakhand Transport Corporation (UTC), established on 31 October 2003 after reorganizing the State Road Transport Corporation (SRTC). The corporation provides transportation in the state with connecting services to adjoining states. The UTC buses are the most common and affordable mode of transportation in Uttarakhand. As of 2012, approximately 1000 buses are being plied by the UTC on 35 nationalised routes along with many other non-nationalised routes. There are also private transport operators operating approximately 3000 buses on non-nationalised routes along with a few interstate routes in Uttarakhand and the neighbouring state of Uttar Pradesh. For travelling locally, the state, like most of the country, has auto rickshaws and cycle rickshaws. In addition, remote towns and villages in the hills are connected to important road junctions and bus routes by share mode of transportation. As over 86% of state's terrain consists of hills, railway services are very limited in the state and are largely confined to the plains. In 2011, the total length of railway tracks was about 345 km (214 mi). The most important railway station in Kumaun Division of Uttarakhand is at Kathgodam. Kathgodam is the last terminus of the broad-gauge line of North East Railways that connects Nainital with Delhi, Dehradun, and Howrah. Other notable railway stations are at Pantnagar, Lalkuan and Haldwani. Dehradun railway station is a railhead of the Northern Railways. Haridwar station is situated on the Delhi-Dehradun and Howrah-Dehradun railway lines. One of the main railheads of the Northern Railways, Haridwar Junction Railway Station is connected by broad gauge line. Roorkee comes under Northern Railway region of Indian Railways on the main Punjab - Mughal Sarai trunk route and is connected to major Indian cities. Other railheads are Rishikesh, Kotdwar and Ramnagar linked to Delhi by daily trains. Jolly Grant Airport in Dehradun and Pantnagar Airport in Pantnagar are the major airports and the main gateway to the state. Jolly Grant Airport is the busiest airport in the state with six daily flights to Delhi Airport. Pantnagar Airport of the Kumaon region have 1 daily air service to Delhi and return too. The state has also proposed creating the Naini Saini Airport in Pithoragarh, Bharkot Airport in Chinyalisaur in Uttarkashi district and Gauchar Airport in Gauchar, Chamoli district.

Tourism Uttarakhand has many tourist spots due to its location in the Himalayas. There are many ancient temples, forest reserves, national parks, hill stations, and mountain peaks that draw large number of tourists. There are 44 nationally protected monuments in the state. Oak Grove School in the state is on the tentative list for World Heritage Sites. Two of the most holy rivers in Hinduism the Ganges and Yamuna, originate in

Uttarakhand. Binsar Devta is a popular Hindu temple in the area. Uttarakhand has long been called "Land of the Gods" as the state has some of the holiest Hindu shrines, and for more than a thousand years, pilgrims have been visiting the region in the hopes of salvation and purification from sin. Gangotri and Yamunotri, the sources of the Ganges and Yamuna, dedicated to Ganga and Yamuna respectively, fall in the upper reaches of the state and together with Badrinath (dedicated to Vishnu) and Kedarnath (dedicated to Shiva) form the Chota Char Dham, one of Hinduism's most spiritual and auspicious pilgrimage circuits. Haridwar, meaning "Gateway to the God", is a prime Hindu destination. Haridwar hosts the Haridwar Kumbh Mela every twelve years, in which millions of pilgrims take part from all parts of India and the world. Rishikesh near Haridwar is known as the preeminent yoga centre of India. The state has an abundance of temples and shrines, many dedicated to local deities or manifestations of Shiva and Durga, references to many of which can be found in Hindu scriptures and legends. Uttarakhand is, however, a place of pilgrimage for the adherents of other religions too. Piran Kaliyar Sharif near Roorkee is a pilgrimage site to Muslims, Gurudwara Darbar Sahib, in Dehradun, Gurudwara Hemkund Sahib in Chamoli district, Gurudwara Nanakmatta Sahib in Nanakmatta and Gurudwara Reetha Sahib in Champawat district are pilgrimage centres for Sikhs. Tibetan Buddhism has also made its presence with the reconstruction of Mindrolling Monastery and its Buddha Stupa, described as the world's highest at Clement Town, Dehradun. Auli and Munsiri are well-known skiing resorts in the state. The state has 12 national parks and wildlife sanctuaries, which cover 13.8% of the total area of the state. They are located at different altitudes varying from 800 to 5400 metres. The oldest national park on the Indian sub-continent, Jim Corbett National Park, is a major tourist attraction.

Vasudhara Falls, near Badrinath, is a waterfall with a height of 122 metres (400 ft) set in a backdrop of snow-clad mountains. The state has always been a destination for mountaineering, hiking, and rock climbing in India. A recent development in adventure tourism in the region has been whitewater rafting in Rishikesh. Due to its proximity to the Himalaya ranges, the place is full of hills and mountains and is suitable for trekking, climbing, skiing, camping, rock climbing, and paragliding. Roopkund is a trekking site, known for the mysterious skeletons found in a lake, which was featured by National Geographic Channel in a documentary. The trek to Roopkund passes through the meadows of Bugyal. New Tehri city has Tehri Dam, with a height of 260.5 metres (855 ft) is the tallest dam in India. It is currently ranked No 10 on the List of Tallest Dams in the world. Tehri Lake with a surface area of 52 km² (20 sq mi), is the biggest lake in the state of Uttarakhand. It has good options for Adventure Sports and various water sports like Boating, Banana Boat, Bandwagon Boat, Jet Ski, Water Skiing, Para-sailing, Kayaking.

Education The educational system prevailing in the state's schools specifies an initial 10-year course of study, which is divided into three stages: lower primary, upper primary, and secondary school-known as 4+3+3, which signifies the number of years for each stage. After the first 10 years of schooling, students typically enroll in Higher Secondary Schooling in one of the three major streams-liberal arts, commerce, or science. Upon completing the required coursework, students can enroll in general or professional undergraduate (UG) degree-college programmes. Schools in the state are either managed by the government or by private trusts. The majority of public schools are affiliated with the Uttarakhand Board of School Education (UBSE) use Hindi as a medium of instruction. Private schools in Uttarakhand-which use English as the language of instruction-are affiliated to one of three administering bodies, CBSE, CISCE, or ICSE. Uttarakhand has more than 20 universities, including one central university, twelve state universities, three deemed universities, one IIT in Roorkee, one IIM in Kashipur and an AIIMS in Rishikesh. Inaugurated by Jawahar Lal Nehru in 1960, G.B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, provides research and training in agriculture and engineering. Located in Bharsar and Ranichauri, Veer Chandra Singh Garhwali Uttarakhand University of Horticulture and Forestry, is a state agricultural university and has two campuses, one is in Bharsar town of Pauri Garhwal district and other is in Ranichauri town of Tehri Garhwal district. Kumaun University; located in Nainital, is one

of the oldest universities in the region. Uttarakhand is home to some of premier institutes of India that hold the status of national importance due to their significant contributions to education, research, and national development. Founded in 1906, Forest Research Institute (FRI) is the oldest institutions of its kind. Its campus hosts the Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy (IGNFA), the staff college that trains officers selected for the Indian Forest Service (IFS). Located in Dehradun, The Doon School has been consistently ranked as the best all-boys residential school in India. Established in 1959, Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNA), Mussoorie, trains civil servants for the Indian Administrative Service (IAS). The Indian Military Academy (IMA), is officer training academy for the Indian Army. The academy trains officer cadets for the Permanent Commission into the Army.

Sports Due to its mountainous terrain and rivers, Uttarakhand attract tourists and adventure seekers for adventure sports, such as paragliding, sky diving, rafting and bungee jumping. Uttarakhand is home to some of the highest peaks in India, including Nanda Devi and Tirsuli, popular for mountaineering expeditions and climbing activities. Traditional sports Mallakhamb (pole gymnastics), Gatka (a form of martial arts) and Gulli Danda (similar to cricket) are preserved, are preserved but have limited exposure. More recently, golf has also become popular with Ranikhet being a favorite destination. The Cricket Association of Uttarakhand is the governing body for cricket activities. The Uttarakhand cricket team represents Uttarakhand in Ranji Trophy, Vijay Hazare Trophy and Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy. Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium in Dehradun is the home ground of Uttarakhand cricket team. Uttarakhand has state-level associations for various sports that organize tournaments and promote talent development. The Uttarakhand State Football Association is the governing body for association football. The Uttarakhand football team represents Uttarakhand in the Santosh Trophy and other leagues. The Indira Gandhi International Sports Stadium in Haldwani is the home ground of Uttarakhand football team.

Notable people See also Outline of Uttarakhand Himalayan states Indian Himalayan Region Mountain Temples and Temple Mountains

References Further reading External links

Uttarakhand Government Portal Uttarakhand Tourism General information

Uttarakhand at the Encyclopdia Britannica Map of Uttarakhand with places of interest and historical attractions, mountainshepherds.com. Geographic data related to Uttarakhand at OpenStreetMap

West Bengal

West Bengal is a state in the eastern portion of India. It is situated along the Bay of Bengal, along with a population of over 91 million inhabitants within an area of 88,752 km² (34,267 sq mi) as of 2011. The population estimate as of 2023 is 99,723,000. West Bengal is the fourth-most populous and thirteenth-largest state by area in India, as well as the eighth-most populous country subdivision of the world. As a part of the Bengal region of the Indian subcontinent, it borders Bangladesh in the east, and Nepal and Bhutan in the north. It also borders the Indian states of Jharkhand, Odisha, Bihar, Sikkim and Assam. The state capital is Kolkata, the third-largest metropolis, and seventh largest city by population in India. West Bengal includes the Darjeeling Himalayan hill region, the Ganges delta, the Rarh region, the coastal Sundarbans and the Bay of Bengal. The state's main ethnic group are the Bengalis, with the Bengali Hindus forming the demographic majority. The area's early history featured a succession of Indian empires, internal squabbling, and a tussle between Hinduism and Buddhism for dominance. Ancient Bengal was the site of several major Janapadas, while the earliest cities date back to the Vedic period. The region was part of several ancient pan-Indian empires, including the Vangas, Mauryans, and the Guptas. The citadel of Gauda served as the capital of the Gauda kingdom, the Pala Empire, and the Sena Empire. Islam was introduced through trade with the Abbasid Caliphate, but following the Ghurid conquests led by Bakhtiyar Khalji and the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate, the Muslim faith spread across the entire Bengal region. During the Bengal Sultanate, the territory was a major trading nation in the world, and was often referred to by the Europeans as the "richest country to trade with". It was absorbed into the Mughal Empire in 1576. Simultaneously, some parts of the region were ruled by several Hindu states, and Baro-Bhuyan landlords, and part of it was briefly overrun by the Suri Empire. Following the death of Emperor Aurangzeb in the early 1700s, the proto-industrialised Mughal Bengal became a semi-independent state under the Nawabs of Bengal, and showed signs of the first Industrial Revolution. The region was later annexed into the Bengal Presidency by the British East India Company after the Battle of Buxar in 1764. From 1772 to 1911, Calcutta was the capital of all of East India Company's territories and then the capital of the entirety of India after the establishment of the Viceroyalty. From 1912 to India's Independence in 1947, it was the capital of the Bengal Province. The region was a hotbed of the Indian independence movement and has remained one of India's great artistic and intellectual centres. Following widespread religious violence, the Bengal Legislative Council and the Bengal Legislative Assembly voted on the Partition of Bengal in 1947 along religious lines into two independent dominions: West Bengal, a Hindu-majority Indian state, and East Bengal, a Muslim-majority province of Pakistan which later became the independent Bangladesh. The state was also flooded with Hindu refugees from East Bengal (present-day Bangladesh) in the decades following the 1947 partition of India, transforming its landscape and shaping its politics. The early and prolonged exposure to British administration resulted in an expansion of Western education, culminating in developments in science, institutional education, and social reforms in the region, including what became known as the Bengali Renaissance. Several regional and pan-Indian empires throughout Bengal's history have shaped its culture, cuisine, and architecture. Post-Indian independence, as a welfare state, West Bengal's economy is based on agricultural production and small and medium-sized enterprises. The state's cultural heritage, besides varied folk traditions, ranges from stalwarts in literature including Nobel-laureate Rabindranath Tagore to scores of musicians, film-makers and artists. For several decades, the state underwent political violence and economic stagnation after the beginning of communist rule in 1977 before it rebounded. In 2023-24, the economy of West Bengal is the sixth-largest state economy in India with a gross state domestic product (GSDP) of ₹17.19 lakh crore (US\$200 billion), and has the country's 20th-highest GSDP per capita of ₹121,267 (US\$1,400) as of 2020-21. Despite being one of the fastest-growing major economies, West Bengal has struggled to attract foreign direct investment due to adverse land acquisition policies, poor infrastructure,

and red tape. It also has the 26th-highest ranking among Indian states in human development index, with the index value being lower than the Indian average. The state government debt of ₹6.47 lakh crore (US\$77 billion), or 37.67% of GSDP, has dropped from 40.65% since 2010-11. West Bengal has three World Heritage sites and ranks as the eight-most visited tourist destination in India and third-most visited state of India globally.

Etymology The origin of the name Bengal (Bangla and Bongo in Bengali) is unknown. One theory suggests the word derives from "Bang", the name of a Dravidian tribe that settled the region around 1000 BCE. The Bengali word Bongo might have been derived from the ancient kingdom of Vanga (or Banga). Although some early Sanskrit literature mentions the name Vanga, the region's early history is obscure. In 1947, at the end of British rule over the Indian subcontinent the Bengal Legislative Council and the Bengal Legislative Assembly voted on the Partition of Bengal along religious lines into two separate entities: West Bengal, which continued as an Indian state and East Bengal, a province of Pakistan, which came to be known as East Pakistan and later became the independent Bangladesh. In 2011 the Government of West Bengal proposed a change in the official name of the state to Paschim Banga (Bengali: পশ্চিমবঙ্গ Pshchimbngg). This is the native name of the state, literally meaning "western Bengal" in the native Bengali language. In August 2016 the West Bengal Legislative Assembly passed another resolution to change the name of West Bengal to "Bengal" in English and "Bangla" in Bengali. Despite the Trinamool Congress government's efforts to forge a consensus on the name change resolution, the Indian National Congress, the Left Front and the Bharatiya Janata Party opposed the resolution. However, the central government has turned down the proposal maintaining the state should have one single name for all languages instead of three and it should not be the same as that of any other territory (pointing out that the name 'Bangla' may create confusion with neighbouring Bangladesh).

History Ancient and classical period Stone Age tools dating back 20,000 years have been excavated in the state, showing human occupation 8,000 years earlier than scholars had thought. According to the Indian epic Mahabharata the region was part of the Vanga kingdom. Several Vedic realms were present in the Bengal region, including Vanga, Rarh, Pundravardhana and the Suhma kingdom. One of the earliest foreign references to Bengal is a mention by the Ancient Greeks around 100 BCE of a land named Gangaridai located at the mouths of the Ganges. Bengal had overseas trade relations with Suvarnabhumi (Burma, Lower Thailand, the Lower Malay Peninsula and Sumatra). According to the Sri Lankan chronicle Mahavamsa, Prince Vijaya (c. 543 - c. 505 BCE), a Vanga kingdom prince, conquered Lanka (modern-day Sri Lanka) and named the country Sinhala kingdom. The kingdom of Magadha was formed in the 7th century BCE, consisting of the regions now comprising Bihar and Bengal. It was one of the four main kingdoms of India at the time of the lives of Mahavira, the principal figure of Jainism and Gautama Buddha, founder of Buddhism. It consisted of several janapadas, or kingdoms. Under Ashoka, the Maurya Empire of Magadha in the 3rd century BCE extended over nearly all of South Asia, including Afghanistan and parts of Balochistan. From the 3rd to the 6th centuries CE, the kingdom of Magadha served as the seat of the Gupta Empire.

Two kingdoms-Vanga or Samatata, and Gauda-are said in some texts to have appeared after the end of the Gupta Empire although details of their ascendancy are uncertain. The first recorded independent king of Bengal was Shashanka, who reigned in the early 7th century. Shashanka is often recorded in Buddhist annals as an intolerant Hindu ruler noted for his persecution of the Buddhists. He murdered Rajyavardhana, the Buddhist king of Thanesar, and is noted for destroying the Bodhi tree at Bodhgaya, and replacing Buddha statues with Shiva lingams. After a period of anarchy, the Pala dynasty ruled the region for four hundred years beginning in the 8th century. A shorter reign of the Hindu Sena dynasty followed. Rajendra Chola I of the Chola dynasty invaded some areas of Bengal between 1021 and 1023. Islam was introduced through trade with the Abbasid Caliphate. Following the Ghurid conquests led by Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khalji and the establishment of the

Delhi Sultanate, it spread across the entire Bengal region. Mosques, madrasas and khanqahs were built throughout these stages. During the Islamic Bengal Sultanate, founded in 1352, Bengal was a major world trading nation and was often referred by the Europeans as the richest country with which to trade. Later, in 1576, it was absorbed into the Mughal Empire.

Medieval and early modern periods Subsequent Muslim conquests helped spread Islam throughout the region. It was ruled by dynasties of the Bengal Sultanate and feudal lords under the Delhi Sultanate for the next few hundred years. The Bengal Sultanate was interrupted for twenty years by a Hindu uprising under Raja Ganesha. In the 16th century, Mughal general Islam Khan conquered Bengal. Administration by governors appointed by the court of the Mughal Empire gave way to semi-independence under the Nawabs of Murshidabad, who nominally respected the sovereignty of the Mughals in Delhi. Several independent Hindu states were established in Bengal during the Mughal period, including those of Pratapaditya of Jessore District and Raja Sitaram Ray of Bardhaman. Following the death of Emperor Aurangzeb and the Governor of Bengal, Shaista Khan, the proto-industrialised Mughal Bengal became a semi-independent state under the Nawabs of Bengal, and showed signs of the world's first Industrial Revolution. The Koch dynasty in northern Bengal flourished during the 16th and 17th centuries; it weathered the Mughals and survived until the advent of the British colonial era.

Colonial period Several European traders reached this area in the late 15th century. The British East India Company defeated Siraj ud-Daulah, the last independent Nawab, in the Battle of Plassey in 1757. The company gained the right to collect revenue in Bengal subah (province) in 1765 with the signing of the treaty between the East India company and the Mughal emperor following the Battle of Buxar in 1764. The Bengal Presidency was established in 1765; it later incorporated all British-controlled territory north of the Central Provinces (now Madhya Pradesh), from the mouths of the Ganges and the Brahmaputra to the Himalayas and the Punjab. The Bengal famine of 1770 claimed millions of lives due to tax policies enacted by the British company. Calcutta, the headquarters of the East India company, was named the capital of British-held territories in India in 1773. The failed Indian rebellion of 1857 started near Calcutta and resulted in a transfer of authority to the British Crown, administered by the Viceroy of India.

The Bengal Renaissance and the Brahmo Samaj socio-cultural reform movements significantly influenced the cultural and economic life of Bengal. Between 1905 and 1911 an abortive attempt was made to divide the province of Bengal into two zones. Bengal suffered from the Great Bengal famine in 1943, which claimed three million lives during World War II. Bengalis played a major role in the Indian independence movement, in which revolutionary groups such as Anushilan Samiti and Jugantar were dominant. Armed attempts against the British Raj from Bengal reached a climax when news of Subhas Chandra Bose leading the Indian National Army against the British reached Bengal. The Indian National Army was subsequently routed by the British.

Indian independence and afterwards When India gained independence in 1947, Bengal was partitioned along religious lines. The western part went to the Dominion of India and was named West Bengal. The eastern part went to the Dominion of Pakistan as a province called East Bengal (later renamed East Pakistan in 1956), becoming the independent nation of Bangladesh in 1971. In 1950 the Princely State of Cooch Behar merged with West Bengal. In 1955 the former French enclave of Chandannagar, which had passed into Indian control after 1950, was integrated into West Bengal; portions of Bihar were also subsequently merged with West Bengal. Both West and East Bengal experienced large influxes of refugees during and after the partition in 1947. Refugee resettlement and related issues continued to play a significant role in the politics and socio-economic condition of the state.

During the 1970s and 1980s, severe power shortages, strikes and a violent Marxist-Maoist movement by groups known as the Naxalites damaged much of the city's infrastructure, leading to a period of economic stagnation and deindustrialisation. The Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971 resulted in an influx of millions of refugees to West Bengal, causing significant strains on its infrastructure. The 1974 smallpox epidemic killed thousands. West Bengal politics underwent a major change when the Left Front won the 1977 assembly election, defeating the incumbent Indian National Congress. The Left Front, led by the Communist Party of India (Marxist), governed the state for the next three decades. The state's economic recovery gathered momentum after the central government introduced economic liberalisations in the mid-1990s. This was aided by the advent of information technology and IT-enabled services. Beginning in the mid-2000s, armed insurgents conducted minor terrorist attacks in some parts of the state. Clashes with the administration took place at several controversial locations over the issue of industrial land acquisition. This became a decisive reason behind the defeat of the ruling Left Front government in the 2011 assembly election. Although the economy was severely damaged during the unrest in the 1970s, the state has managed to revive its economy steadily throughout the years. The state has shown improvement regarding bandhs (strikes) and educational infrastructure. Significant strides have been made in reducing unemployment, though the state suffers from substandard healthcare services, a lack of socio-economic development, poor infrastructure, unemployment and civil violence. In 2006 the state's healthcare system was severely criticised in the aftermath of the West Bengal blood test kit scam.

Geography West Bengal is on the eastern bottleneck of India, stretching from the Himalayas in the north to the Bay of Bengal in the south. The state has a total area of 88,752 square kilometres (34,267 sq mi). The Darjeeling Himalayan hill region in the northern extreme of the state is a part of the eastern Himalayas mountain range. In this region is Sandakfu, which, at 3,636 m (11,929 ft), is the highest peak in the state. The narrow Terai region separates the hills from the North Bengal plains, which in turn transitions into the Ganges delta towards the south. The Rarh region intervenes between the Ganges delta in the east and the western plateau and high lands. A small coastal region is in the extreme south, while the Sundarbans mangrove forests form a geographical landmark at the Ganges delta. The main river in West Bengal is the Ganges, which divides into two branches. One branch enters Bangladesh as the Padma, or Pdda, while the other flows through West Bengal as the Bhagirathi River and Hooghly River. The Farakka barrage over the Ganges feeds the Hooghly branch of the river by a feeder canal. Its water flow management has been a source of lingering dispute between India and Bangladesh. The Teesta, Torsa, Jaldhaka and Mahananda rivers are in the northern hilly region. The western plateau region has rivers like the Damodar, Ajay and Kangsabati. The Ganges delta and the Sundarbans area have numerous rivers and creeks. Pollution of the Ganges from indiscriminate waste dumped into the river is a major problem. Damodar, another tributary of the Ganges and once known as the "Sorrow of Bengal" (due to its frequent floods), has several dams under the Damodar Valley Project. At least nine districts in the state suffer from arsenic contamination of groundwater, and as of 2017 an estimated 1.04 crore people were afflicted by arsenic poisoning. West Bengal's climate varies from tropical savanna in the southern portions to humid subtropical in the north. The main seasons are summer, the rainy season, a short autumn and winter. While the summer in the delta region is noted for excessive humidity, the western highlands experience a dry summer like northern India. The highest daytime temperatures range from 38 to 45 C (100 to 113 F). At night, a cool southerly breeze carries moisture from the Bay of Bengal. In early summer, brief squalls and thunderstorms known as Kalbaisakhi, or Nor'westers, often occur. West Bengal receives the Bay of Bengal branch of the Indian Ocean monsoon that moves in a southeast to northwest direction. Monsoons bring rain to the whole state from June to September. Heavy rainfall of above 250 centimetres (98 in) is observed in the Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, and Cooch Behar district. During the arrival of the monsoons, low pressure in the Bay of Bengal region often leads to the formation of storms in the coastal areas. Winter (December-January) is mild

over the plains with average minimum temperatures of 15 C (59 F). A cold and dry northern wind blows in the winter, substantially lowering the humidity level. The Darjeeling Himalayan Hill region experiences a harsh winter, with occasional snowfall.

Flora and fauna The "India State of Forest Report 2017", recorded forest area in the state is 16,847 km² (6,505 sq mi), while in 2013, forest area was 16,805 km² (6,488 sq mi), which was 18.93% of the state's geographical area, compared to the then national average of 21.23%. Reserves and protected and unclassed forests constitute 59.4%, 31.8% and 8.9%, respectively, of forested areas, as of 2009. Part of the world's largest mangrove forest, the Sundarbans in southern West Bengal. From a phytogeographic viewpoint, the southern part of West Bengal can be divided into two regions: the Gangetic plain and the littoral mangrove forests of the Sundarbans. The alluvial soil of the Gangetic plain, combined with favourable rainfall, makes this region especially fertile. Much of the vegetation of the western part of the state has similar species composition with the plants of the Chota Nagpur plateau in the adjoining state of Jharkhand. The predominant commercial tree species is *Shorea robusta*, commonly known as the sal tree. The coastal region of Purba Medinipur exhibits coastal vegetation; the predominant tree is the *Casuarina*. A notable tree from the Sundarbans is the ubiquitous sundari (*Heritiera fomes*), from which the forest gets its name. The distribution of vegetation in northern West Bengal is dictated by elevation and precipitation. For example, the foothills of the Himalayas, the Dooars, are densely wooded with sal and other tropical evergreen trees. Above an elevation of 1,000 metres (3,300 ft), the forest becomes predominantly subtropical. In Darjeeling, which is above 1,500 metres (4,900 ft), temperate forest trees like oaks, conifers and rhododendrons predominate. 3.26% of the geographical area of West Bengal is protected land, comprising fifteen wildlife sanctuaries and five national parks-Sundarbans National Park, Buxa Tiger Reserve, Gorumara National Park, Neora Valley National Park and Singalila National Park. Extant wildlife includes Indian rhinoceros, Indian elephant, deer, leopard, gaur, tiger and crocodiles, as well as many bird species. Migratory birds come to the state during the winter. The high-altitude forests of Singalila National Park shelter barking deer, red panda, chinkara, takin, serow, pangolin, minivet and kalij pheasants. The Sundarbans are noted for a reserve project devoted to conserving the endangered Bengal tiger, although the forest hosts many other endangered species such as the Gangetic dolphin, river terrapin and estuarine crocodile. The mangrove forest also acts as a natural fish nursery, supporting coastal fishes along the Bay of Bengal. Recognising its special conservation value, the Sundarbans area has been declared a Biosphere Reserve.

Government and politics West Bengal is governed through a parliamentary system of representative democracy, a feature the state shares with other Indian states. Universal suffrage is granted to residents. There are two branches of government. The legislature, the West Bengal Legislative Assembly, consists of elected members and special office bearers such as the Speaker and Deputy Speaker, who are elected by the members. Assembly meetings are presided over by the Speaker or the Deputy Speaker in the Speaker's absence. The judiciary is composed of the Calcutta High Court and a system of lower courts. Executive authority is vested in the Council of Ministers headed by the Chief Minister although the titular head of government is the Governor. The Governor is the Head of State appointed by the President of India. The leader of the party or coalition with a majority in the Legislative Assembly is appointed as the Chief Minister by the Governor. The Council of Ministers is appointed by the Governor on the advice of the Chief Minister. The Council of Ministers reports to the Legislative Assembly. The Assembly is unicameral with 295 members, or MLAs, including one nominated from the Anglo-Indian community. Terms of office run for five years unless the Assembly is dissolved before the completion of the term. Auxiliary authorities known as panchayats, for which local body elections are regularly held, govern local affairs. The state contributes 42 seats to the Lok Sabha and 16 seats to the Rajya Sabha of the Indian Parliament. Politics in West Bengal is dominated by the All India Trinamool Congress (AITC), Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Indian National Congress (INC), and the Left Front

alliance (led by the Communist Party of India (Marxist) or CPI(M)). Following the West Bengal State Assembly Election in 2011, the All India Trinamool Congress and Indian National Congress coalition under Mamata Banerjee of the All India Trinamool Congress was elected to power with 225 seats in the legislature. Prior to this, West Bengal was ruled by the Left Front for 34 years (1977-2011), making it the world's longest-running democratically elected communist government. Banerjee was re-elected twice as Chief Minister in the 2016 West Bengal Legislative Assembly election and 2021 West Bengal Legislative Assembly election with 211 and 215 seats respectively, an absolute majority by the Trinamool Congress. The state has one autonomous region, the Gorkhaland Territorial Administration.

Districts and cities Districts As of 1 November 2023, West Bengal is divided into 23 districts.

Each district is governed by a district collector or district magistrate, appointed by either the Indian Administrative Service or the West Bengal Civil Service. Each district is subdivided into sub-divisions, governed by a Sub-Divisional Magistrate, and again into blocks. Blocks consists of panchayats (village councils) and town municipalities.

Cities The capital and largest city of the state is Kolkata-the third-largest urban agglomeration and the seventh-largest city in India. Asansol is the second-largest city and urban agglomeration in West Bengal. Major planned cities of West Bengal include Bidhannagar, New Town, Kalyani, Haldia, Durgapur and Kharagpur. Kolkata has some planned neighbourhoods like New Garia, Tollygunge, and Lake Town. Siliguri is an economically important city, strategically located in the northeastern Siliguri Corridor (Chicken's Neck) of India. Other larger cities in West Bengal are Barrackpore, Baharampur, Basirhat, Bardhaman, Howrah, Chandannagar, Jalpaiguri, Haldia and Purulia etc.

Economy As of 2015, West Bengal has the sixth-highest GSDP in India. GSDP at current prices (base 2004-2005) has increased from Rs 2,086.56 billion in 2004-05 to Rs 8,00,868 crores in 2014-2015, reaching Rs 10,21,000 crores in 2017-18. GSDP per cent growth at current prices varied from a low of 10.3% in 2010-2011 to a high of 17.11% in 2013-2014. The growth rate was 13.35% in 2014-2015. The state's per capita income has lagged the all India average for over two decades. As of 2014-2015, per capita NSDP at current prices was Rs 78,903. Per-capita NSDP growth rate at current prices varied from 9.4% in 2010-2011 to a high of 16.15% in 2013-2014. The growth rate was 12.62% in 2014-2015. In 2015-2016, the percentage share of Gross Value Added (GVA) at factor cost by economic activity at the constant price (the base year 2011-2012) was Agriculture-Forestry and Fishery-4.84%, Industry 18.51% and Services 66.65%. It has been observed that there has been a slow but steady decline in the percentage share of industry and agriculture over the years. Agriculture is the leading economic sector in West Bengal. Rice is the state's principal food crop. Rice, potato, jute, sugarcane and wheat are the state's top five crops. Tea is produced commercially in northern districts; the region is well known for Darjeeling and other high-quality teas. State industries are localised in the Kolkata region, the mineral-rich western highlands, and the Haldia Port region. The Durgapur-Asansol colliery belt is home to a number of steel plants. Important manufacturing industries include: engineering products, electronics, electrical equipment, cables, steel, leather, textiles, jewellery, frigates, automobiles, railway coaches and wagons. The Durgapur centre has established several industries in the areas of tea, sugar, chemicals and fertilisers. Natural resources like tea and jute in nearby areas have made West Bengal a major centre for the jute and tea industries. Years after independence, West Bengal is dependent on the central government for help in meeting its demands for food; food production remained stagnant, and the Indian green revolution bypassed the state. However, there has been a significant increase in food production since the 1980s and the state now has a surplus of grains. The state's share of total industrial output in India was 9.8% in

1980-1981, declining to 5% by 1997-1998. In contrast, the service sector has grown at a rate higher than the national rate. The state's total financial debt stood at ₹1,918,350 million (US\$23 billion) as of 2011.

In the period 2004-2010, the average gross state domestic product (GSDP) growth rate was 13.9% (calculated in Indian rupee terms) lower than 15.5%, the average for all states of the country. The economy of West Bengal has witnessed many surprising changes in direction. The agricultural sector in particular rose to 8.33% in 2010-11 before tumbling to -4.01% in 2012-13. Many major industries such as the Uttarpara Hindustan Motors car manufacturing unit, the jute industry, and the Haldia Petrochemicals unit experienced shutdowns in 2014. In the same year, plans for a 300 billion Jindal Steel project was mothballed. The tea industry of West Bengal has also witnessed shutdowns for financial and political reasons. The tourism industry of West Bengal was negatively impacted in 2017 because of the Gorkhaland agitation. However, over the years due to effective changes in the stance towards industrialisation, ease of doing business has improved in West Bengal. Steps are being taken to remedy this situation by promoting West Bengal as an investment destination. A leather complex has been built in Kolkata. Smart cities are being planned close to Kolkata, and major roadway projects are in the offing to revive the economy. West Bengal has been able to attract 2% of the foreign direct investment in the last decade.

Transport As of 2011, the total length of surface roads in West Bengal was over 92,023 kilometres (57,180 miles); national highways comprise 2,578 km (1,602 mi) and state highways 2,393 km (1,487 mi). As of 2006, the road density of the state was 103.69 kilometres per square kilometre (166.87 miles per square mile), higher than the national average of 74.7 km/km² (120.2 mi/sq mi). As of 2011, the total railway route length was around 4,481 km (2,784 mi). Kolkata is the headquarters of three zones of the Indian Railways-Eastern Railway and South Eastern Railway and the Kolkata Metro, which is the newly formed 17th zone of the Indian Railways. The Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) serves the northern parts of the state. The Kolkata metro is the country's first underground railway. The Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, part of NFR, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport at Dum Dum, Kolkata, is the state's largest airport. Bagdogra Airport near Siliguri is a customs airport that offers international service to Bhutan and Thailand, besides regular domestic service. Kazi Nazrul Islam Airport, India's first private sector airport, serves the twin cities of Asansol-Durgapur at Andal, Paschim Bardhaman. Kolkata is a major river port in eastern India. The Kolkata Port Trust manages the Kolkata and the Haldia docks. There is passenger service to Port Blair on the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Cargo ship service operates to ports in India and abroad, operated by the Shipping Corporation of India. Ferries are a principal mode of transport in the southern part of the state, especially in the Sundarbans area. Kolkata is the only city in India to have trams as a mode of transport; these are operated by the Calcutta Tramways Company. Several government-owned organisations operate bus services in the state, including: the Calcutta State Transport Corporation, the North Bengal State Transport Corporation, the South Bengal State Transport Corporation, the West Bengal Surface Transport Corporation and the Calcutta Tramways Company. There are also private bus companies. The railway system is a nationalised service without any private investment. Hired forms of transport include metered taxis and auto rickshaws, which often ply specific routes in cities. In most of the state, cycle rickshaws and in Kolkata, hand-pulled rickshaws and electric rickshaws are used for short-distance travel.

Demographics According to the provisional results of the 2011 national census, West Bengal is the fourth-most-populous state in India with a population of 91,347,736 (7.55% of India's population). The state's 2001-2011 decennial population growth rate was 13.93%, lower than the 1991-2001 growth rate of 17.8% and lower than the national rate of 17.64%. The gender ratio is 947 females per 1,000 males. As of 2011, West Bengal had a population density of 1,029 inhabitants per square kilometre (2,670/sq mi) making it the

second-most densely populated state in India, after Bihar. The literacy rate is 77.08%, higher than the national rate of 74.04%. Data from 2010 to 2014 showed the life expectancy in the state was 70.2 years, higher than the national value of 67.9. The proportion of people living below the poverty line in 2013 was 19.98%, a decline from 31.8% a decade prior. Scheduled castes and tribes form 28.6% and 5.8% of the population, respectively, in rural areas and 19.9% and 1.5%, respectively, in urban areas. In September 2017, West Bengal achieved 100% electrification, after some remote villages in the Sunderbans became the last to be electrified. As of September 2017, of 125 towns and cities in Bengal, 76 have achieved open defecation free (ODF) status. All towns in the districts of: Nadia, North 24 Parganas, Hooghly, Bardhaman and East Medinipur are ODF zones, with Nadia becoming the first ODF district in the state in April 2015. A study conducted in three districts of West Bengal found that accessing private health services to treat illness had a catastrophic impact on households. This indicates the importance of the public provision of health services to mitigate poverty and the impact of illness on poor households. The latest Sample Registration System (SRS) statistical report shows that West Bengal has the lowest fertility rate among Indian states. West Bengal's total fertility rate was 1.6, lower than neighbouring Bihar's 3.4, which is the highest in the entire country. Bengal's TFR of 1.6 roughly equals that of Canada. Bengalis, consisting of Bengali Hindus, Bengali Muslims, Bengali Christians and a few Bengali Buddhists, comprise the majority of the population. Marwari, Maithili and Bhojpuri speakers are scattered throughout the state; various indigenous ethnic Buddhist communities such as the Sherpas, Bhutias, Lepchas, Tamangs, Yolmos and ethnic Tibetans can be found in the Darjeeling Himalayan hill region. Native Khortha speakers are found in Malda district. Surjapuri, a language considered to be a mix of Maithili and Bengali, is spoken across northern parts of the state. The Darjeeling Hills are mainly inhabited by various Gorkha communities who overwhelmingly speak Nepali (also known as Gorkhali), although there are some who retain their ancestral languages like Lepcha. West Bengal is also home to indigenous tribal Adivasis such as: Santhal, Munda, Oraon, Bhumij, Lodha, Kol and Toto. There are a small number of ethnic minorities primarily in the state capital, including : Chinese, Tamils, Maharashtrians, Odias, Malayalis, Gujaratis, Anglo-Indians, Armenians, Jews, Punjabis and Parsis. India's sole Chinatown is in eastern Kolkata.

Languages The state's official languages are Bengali and English; Nepali has additional official status in the three subdivisions of Darjeeling district. In 2012, the state government passed a bill granting additional official status to Hindi, Odia, Punjabi, Santali and Urdu in areas where speakers exceed 10% of the population. In 2019, another bill was passed by the government to include Kamtapuri, Kurmali and Rajbanshi as additional official languages in blocks, divisions or districts where the speakers exceed 10% of the population. On 24 December 2020, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee announced Telugu as an additional official language. As of the 2011 census, 86.22% of the population spoke Bengali, 5.00% Hindi, 2.66% Santali, 1.82% Urdu and 1.26% Nepali as their first language.

Religion West Bengal is religiously diverse, with regional cultural and religious specificities. Although Hindus are the predominant community, the state has a large minority Muslim population. Christians, Buddhists and others form a minuscule part of the population. As of 2011, Hinduism is the most common religion, with adherents representing 70.54% of the total population. Muslims, the second-largest community, comprise 27.01% of the total population, Three of West Bengal's districts: Murshidabad, Malda and Uttar Dinajpur, are Muslim-majority. Sikhism, Christianity, Buddhism and other religions make up the remainder. Buddhism remains a prominent religion in the Himalayan region of the Darjeeling hills; almost the entirety of West Bengal's Buddhist population is from this region. Christianity is mainly found among the tea garden tribes at tea plantations scattered throughout the Dooars of Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar districts. The Hindu population of West Bengal is 64,385,546 while the Muslim population is 24,654,825, according to the 2011 census.

Culture Literature The Bengali language boasts a rich literary heritage it shares with neighbouring Bangladesh. West Bengal has a long tradition of folk literature, evidenced by the Charyapada, a collection of Buddhist mystic songs dating back to the 10th and 11th centuries; Mangalkavya, a collection of Hindu narrative poetry composed around the 13th century; Shreekrishna Kirtana, a pastoral Vaishnava drama in verse composed by Boru Chandidas; Thakurmar Jhuli, a collection of Bengali folk and fairy tales compiled by Dakshinaranjan Mitra Majumder; and stories of Gopal Bhar, a court jester in medieval Bengal. In the 19th and 20th centuries, Bengali literature was modernised in the works of authors such as Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, whose works marked a departure from the traditional verse-oriented writings prevalent in that period; Michael Madhusudan Dutt, a pioneer in Bengali drama who introduced the use of blank verse; and Rabindranath Tagore, who reshaped Bengali literature and music. Indian art saw the introduction of Contextual Modernism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Other notable figures include Kazi Nazrul Islam, whose compositions form the avant-garde genre of Nazrul Sangeet, Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay, whose works on contemporary social practices in Bengal are widely acclaimed, and Manik Bandyopadhyay, who is considered one of the leading lights of modern Bengali fiction. In modern times, Jibanananda Das has been acknowledged as "the premier poet of the post-Tagore era in India". Other writers include: Bibhutibhushan Bandopadhyay, best known for his work Pather Panchali; Tarashankar Bandopadhyay, well known for his portrayal of the lower strata of society; Manik Bandopadhyay, a pioneering novelist; and Ashapurna Devi, Shirshendu Mukhopadhyay, Saradindu Bandopadhyay, Buddhadeb Guha, Mahashweta Devi, Samaresh Majumdar, Sanjeev Chattopadhyay, Shakti Chattopadhyay, Buddhadeb Basu, Joy Goswami and Sunil Gangopadhyay.

Music and dance A notable music tradition is the Baul music, practised by the Bauls, a sect of mystic minstrels. Other folk music forms include Gombhira and Bhawaiya. Folk music in West Bengal is often accompanied by the ektara, a one-stringed instrument. Shyama Sangeet is a genre of devotional songs, praising the Hindu goddess Kali; kirtan is devotional group songs dedicated to the god Krishna. Like other states in northern India, West Bengal also has a heritage in North Indian classical music. Rabindrasangeet, songs composed and set to words by Rabindranath Tagore, and Nazrul geeti (by Kazi Nazrul Islam) are popular. Also prominent are Dwijendralal, Atulprasad and Rajanikanta's songs, and adhunik or modern music from films and other composers. From the early 1990s, new genres of music have emerged, including what has been called Bengali Jeebonmukhi Gaan (a modern genre based on realism). Bengali dance forms draw from folk traditions, especially those of the tribal groups, as well as the broader Indian dance traditions. Chhau dance of Purulia is a rare form of masked dance.

Films West Bengali films are shot mostly in studios in the Kolkata neighbourhood of Tollygunge; the name "Tollywood" (similar to Hollywood and Bollywood) is derived from that name. The Bengali film industry is well known for its art films, and has produced acclaimed directors like Satyajit Ray who is widely regarded as one of the greatest filmmakers of the 20th century, Mrinal Sen whose films were known for their artistic depiction of social reality, Tapan Sinha, and Ritwik Ghatak. Some contemporary directors include veterans such as: Buddhadeb Dasgupta, Tarun Majumdar, Goutam Ghose, Aparna Sen, and Rituparno Ghosh, and a newer pool of directors such as Kaushik Ganguly and Srijit Mukherji. Uttam Kumar was the most popular lead actor for decades, and his romantic pairing with actress Suchitra Sen in films attained legendary status. Soumitra Chatterjee, who acted in many Satyajit Ray-films, and Prosenjit Chatterjee are among other popular lead male actors. As of 2020, Bengali films have won India's annual National Film Award for Best Feature Film twenty-two times in sixty seven years, the highest among all Indian languages.

Fine arts There are significant examples of fine arts in Bengal from earlier times, including the terracotta art of Hindu temples and the Kalighat paintings. Bengal has been in the vanguard of modernism in fine arts.

Abanindranath Tagore, called the father of modern Indian art, started the Bengal School of Art, one of whose goals was to promote the development of styles of art outside the European realist tradition that had been taught in art colleges under the British colonial administration. The movement had many adherents, including: Gaganendranath Tagore, Ramkinkar Baij, Jamini Roy and Rabindranath Tagore. After Indian Independence, important groups such as the Calcutta Group and the Society of Contemporary Artists were formed in Bengal and came to dominate the art scene in India.

Reformist heritage The capital, Kolkata, was the workplace of several social reformers, including Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar and Swami Vivekananda. Their social reforms eventually led to a cultural atmosphere that made it possible for practices like sati, dowry, and caste-based discrimination, or untouchability, to be abolished. The region was also home to several religious teachers, such as Chaitanya, Ramakrishna, Prabhupada and Paramahansa Yogananda.

Cuisine Rice and fish are traditional favourite foods, leading to a saying in Bengali, "machhe bhate bangali", that translates as "fish and rice make a Bengali". Bengal's vast repertoire of fish-based dishes includes hilsa preparations, a favourite among Bengalis. There are numerous ways of cooking fish depending on its texture, size, fat content and bones. Most of the people also consume eggs, chicken, mutton, and shrimp. Panta bhat (rice soaked overnight in water) with onion and green chili is a traditional dish consumed in rural areas. Common spices found in a Bengali kitchen include cumin, ajmoda (radhuni), bay leaf, mustard, ginger, green chillies and turmeric. Sweets occupy an important place in the diet of Bengalis and at their social ceremonies. Bengalis make distinctive sweetmeats from milk products, including Rshogolla, Chmchm, Kalojam and several kinds of sondesh. Pitha, a kind of sweet cake, bread, or dim sum, are specialties of the winter season. Sweets such as narkol-naru, til-naru, moa and payesh are prepared during festivals such as Lakshmi puja. Popular street foods include Aloor Chop, Beguni, Kati roll, biryani, and phuchka.

Clothing Bengali women commonly wear the sari, often distinctly designed according to local cultural customs. In urban areas, many women and men wear western attire. Among men, western dress has greater acceptance. Particularly on cultural occasions, men also wear traditional costumes such as the panjabi with dhuti while women wear salwar kameez or sari. West Bengal produces several varieties of cotton and silk saris in the country. Handlooms are a popular way for the state's rural population to earn a living through weaving. Every district has weaving clusters, which are home to artisan communities, each specialising in specific varieties of handloom weaving. Notable handloom saris include tant, jamdani, garad, korial, baluchari, tussar and muslin.

Festivals Durga Puja is the biggest, most popular and widely celebrated festival in West Bengal. The five-day-long colourful Hindu festival includes intense celebration across the state. Pandals are erected in various cities, towns, and villages throughout West Bengal. The city of Kolkata transforms Durga Puja. It is decked up in lighting decorations and thousands of colourful pandals are set up where effigies of the goddess Durga and her four children are displayed and worshipped. The idols of the goddess are brought in from Kumortuli, where idol-makers work throughout the year fashioning clay models of the goddess. Since independence in 1947, Durga Puja has slowly changed into more of a glamorous carnival than a religious festival. Today people of diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds partake in the festivities. On Vijayadashami, the last day of the festival, the effigies are paraded through the streets with riotous pageantry before being immersed into the rivers. Rath Yatra is a Hindu festival which celebrates Jagannath, a form of Krishna. It is celebrated with much fanfare in Kolkata as well as in rural Bengal. Images of Jagannath are set upon a chariot and pulled through the streets.

Other major festivals of West Bengal include: Poila Baishakh the Bengali new year, Dolyatra or Holi the festival of lights, Poush Parbon, Kali Puja, Nabaddip Shakta Rash, Saraswati Puja, Deepavali, Lakshmi Puja, Janmashtami, Jagaddhatri Puja, Vishwakarma Puja, Bhai Phonta, Rakhi Bandhan, Kalpataru Day, Shivratri, Ganesh Chaturthi, Maghotsav, Karam festival, Kartik Puja, Akshay Tithi, Raas Yatra, Guru Purnima, Annapurna Puja, Charak Puja, Gajan, Buddha Purnima, Christmas, Eid ul-Fitr, Eid ul-Adha and Muharram. Rabindra Jayanti, Kolkata Book Fair, Kolkata Film Festival, and Nazrul Jayanti. All are important cultural events. Eid al-Fitr is the most important Muslim festival in West Bengal. They celebrate the end of Ramadan with prayers, alms-giving, shopping, gift-giving, and feasting. Christmas, called B'odin (Great day) is perhaps the next major festival celebrated in Kolkata, after Durga Puja. Although Hinduism is the major religion in the state, people show significant passion to the festival. Just like Durga Puja, Christmas in Kolkata is an occasion when all communities and people of every religion take part. Large masses of people go to parks, gardens, museums, parties, fairs, churches and other places to celebrate the day. A lot of Hindus go to Hindu-temples and the festival is celebrated there too with Hindu rituals. The state tourism department organises a gala Christmas Festival every year in Park Street. The whole of Park Street is hung with colourful lights, and food stalls sell cakes, chocolates, Chinese cuisine, momo, and various other items. The state invites musical groups from Darjeeling and other North East India states to perform choir recitals, carols, and jazz numbers. Buddha Purnima, which marks the birth of Gautama Buddha, is one of the most important Hindu/Buddhist festivals and is celebrated with much gusto in the Darjeeling hills. On this day, processions begin at the various Buddhist monasteries, or gumpas, and congregate at the Chowrasta (Darjeeling) Mall. The Lamas chant mantras and sound their bugles, and students, as well as people from every community, carry the holy books or pustaks on their heads. Besides Buddha Purnima, Dashain, or Dusshera, Holi, Diwali, Losar, Namsoong or the Lepcha New Year, and Losoong are the other major festivals of the Darjeeling Himalayan region. Each year between July and August at Tarakeswar Yatra held, nearly 10 million devotees come from various part of India bringing holy water of Ganga in order to offer it to Lord Shiva. Poush Mela is a popular winter festival of Shantiniketan, with performances of folk music, Baul songs, dance, and theatre taking place throughout the town. Ganga Sagar Mela coincides with the Makar Sankranti, and hundreds of thousands of Hindu pilgrims converge where the river Ganges meets the sea to bathe en masse during this fervent festival.

Education West Bengal schools are run by the state government or private organisations, including religious institutions. Instruction is mainly in English or Bengali, though Urdu is also used, especially in Central Kolkata. Secondary schools are affiliated with the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE), the Central Board for Secondary Education (CBSE), the National Institute of Open School (NIOS), West Bengal Board of Secondary Education, or the West Bengal Board of Madrasah Education. As of 2016 85% of children within the 6 to 17-year age group attend school (86% do so in urban areas and 84% in rural areas). School attendance is almost universal among the 6 to 14-year age group then drops to 70% with the 15 to 17-year age group. There is a gender disparity in school attendance in the 6 to 14-year age group, more girls than boys are attending school. In Bengal, 71% of women aged 15-49 years and 81% of men aged 15-49 years are literate. Only 14% of women aged 15-49 years in West Bengal have completed 12 or more years of schooling, compared with 22% of men. 22% of women and 14% of men aged 15-49 years have never attended school.

Some of the notable schools in the city are: Ramakrishna Mission Narendrapur, Baranagore Ramakrishna Mission, Sister Nivedita Girls' School, Hindu School, Hare School, La Martiniere Calcutta, Calcutta Boys' School, St. James' School (Kolkata), South Point School, Techno India Group Public School, St. Xavier's Collegiate School, and Loreto House, Loreto Convent, Pearl Rosary School are some of which rank among the best schools in the country. Many of the schools in Kolkata and Darjeeling are colonial-era establishments housed in buildings that are exemplars of neo-classical architecture. Darjeeling's schools include: St. Paul's, St.

Joseph's North Point, Goethals Memorial School, and Dow Hill in Kurseong. West Bengal has eighteen universities. Kolkata has played a pioneering role in the development of the modern education system in India. It was the gateway to the revolution of European education during the British Raj. Sir William Jones established the Asiatic Society in 1794 to promote oriental studies. People such as Ram Mohan Roy, David Hare, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Alexander Duff and William Carey played leading roles in setting up modern schools and colleges in the city. The University of Calcutta, the oldest and one of the most prestigious public universities in India, has 136 affiliated colleges. Fort William College was established in 1810. The Hindu College was established in 1817. The Lady Brabourne College was established in 1939. The Scottish Church College, the oldest Christian liberal arts college in South Asia, started in 1830. The Vidyasagar College was established in 1872 and was the first purely Indian-run private college in India. In 1855 the Hindu College was renamed the Presidency College. The state government granted it university status in 2010 and it was renamed Presidency University. Kazi Nazrul University was established in 2012. The University of Calcutta and Jadavpur University are prestigious technical universities. Visva-Bharati University at Santiniketan is a central university and an institution of national importance.

Other higher education institutes of importance in West Bengal include: St. Xavier's College, Kolkata, Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, Indian Institute of Management Calcutta (the first IIM), Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Kolkata, Indian Statistical Institute, Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur (the first IIT), Indian Institute of Engineering Science and Technology, Shibpur (the first IEST), Indian Institute of Information Technology, Kalyani, Medical College, Kolkata, National Institute of Technology, Durgapur, National Institute of Technical Teachers' Training and Research, Kolkata, National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research, Kolkata, and West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences. In 2003 the state government supported the creation of West Bengal University of Technology, West Bengal University of Health Sciences, West Bengal State University, and Gour Banga University. Jadavpur University (Focus area-Mobile Computing and Communication and Nano-science), and the University of Calcutta (Modern Biology) are among two of the fifteen universities selected under the "University with Potential for Excellence" scheme. University of Calcutta (Focus Area-Electro-Physiological and Neuro-imaging studies including mathematical modelling) has also been selected under the "Centre with Potential for Excellence in a Particular Area" scheme. In addition, the state is home to Kalyani University, The University of Burdwan, Vidyasagar University, and North Bengal University all well established and nationally renowned schools that cover education needs at the district level and the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Kolkata. Apart from this there is a Deemed university run by the Ramakrishna mission named Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda University at Belur Math. There are several research institutes in Kolkata. The Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science is the first research institute in Asia. C. V. Raman was awarded the Nobel Prize for his discovery (Raman Effect) done at the IACS. The Bose Institute, Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics, S. N. Bose National Centre for Basic Sciences, Indian Institute of Chemical Biology, Central Glass and Ceramic Research Institute, Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute Durgapur, Central Research Institute for Jute and Allied Fibers, National Institute of Research on Jute and Allied Fibre Technology, Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute, National Institute of Biomedical Genomics (NIBMG), Kalyani, and the Variable Energy Cyclotron Centre are the most prominent. Notable scholars who were born, worked, or studied in the geographic area of the state include physicists: Satyendra Nath Bose, Meghnad Saha, and Jagadish Chandra Bose; chemist Prafulla Chandra Roy; statisticians Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis and Anil Kumar Gain; physician Upendranath Brahmachari; educator Ashutosh Mukherjee; and Nobel laureates Rabindranath Tagore, C. V. Raman, Amartya Sen, and Abhijit Banerjee

Media In 2005 West Bengal had 505 published newspapers, of which 389 were in Bengali. Ananda Bazar Patrika, published in Kolkata with 1,277,801 daily copies, has the largest circulation for a single-edition, regional

language newspaper in India. Other major Bengali newspapers are: Bartaman, Ei Samay, Sangbad Pratidin, Aajkaal and Uttarbanga Sambad. Major English language newspapers include The Telegraph, The Times of India, Hindustan Times, The Hindu, The Statesman, The Indian Express and Asian Age. Some prominent financial dailies such as: The Economic Times, Financial Express, Business Line and Business Standard are widely circulated. Vernacular newspapers such as those in Hindi, Nepali, Gujarati, Odia, Urdu and Punjabi also exist. DD Bangla is the state-owned television broadcaster. Multi system operators provide a mix of Bengali, Nepali, Hindi, English and international channels via cable. Bengali 24-hour television news channels include ABP Ananda, News18 Bangla, Republic Bangla, Kolkata TV, News Time, Zee 24 Ghanta, TV9 Bangla, Calcutta News and Channel 10. All India Radio is a public radio station. Private FM stations are available only in cities like Kolkata, Siliguri, and Asansol. Vodafone Idea, Airtel, BSNL, Jio are available cellular phone providers. Broadband Internet is available in select towns and cities and is provided by the state-run BSNL and by other private companies. Dial-up access is provided throughout the state by BSNL and other providers.

Sports Cricket and association football are popular. West Bengal, unlike most other states of India, is noted for its passion and patronage of football. Kolkata is one of the major centres for football in India and houses top national clubs such as Mohun Bagan Super Giant, East Bengal Club and Mohammedan Sporting Club.

West Bengal has several large stadiums. Eden Gardens was one of only two 100,000-seat cricket stadiums in the world; renovations before the 2011 Cricket World Cup reduced the capacity to 66,000. The stadium is the home to various cricket teams such as the Kolkata Knight Riders, the Bengal cricket team and the East Zone. The 1987 Cricket World Cup final was hosted in Eden Gardens. The Calcutta Cricket and Football Club is the second-oldest cricket club in the world. Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan (VYBK), is a multipurpose stadium in Kolkata, with a current capacity of 85,000. It is the largest stadium in India by seating capacity. Before its renovation in 2011, it was the second-largest football stadium in the world, having a seating capacity of 120,000. It has hosted many national and international sporting events like the SAF Games of 1987 and the 2011 FIFA friendly football match between Argentina and Venezuela featuring Lionel Messi. In 2008 legendary German goalkeeper, Oliver Kahn played his farewell match on this ground. The stadium hosted the final match of the 2017 FIFA U-17 World Cup. Notable sports persons from West Bengal include former Indian national cricket team captain Sourav Ganguly, Pankaj Roy, Olympic tennis bronze medallist Leander Paes and chess grand master Dibyendu Barua.

See also Bangal Bengali language movements in India Ghoti people List of people from West Bengal List of tourist attractions in West Bengal Outline of West Bengal

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Andaman and Nicobar Islands

The Andaman and Nicobar Islands is a union territory of India comprising 836 islands, of which only 31 are inhabited. The islands are grouped into two main clusters: the northern Andaman Islands and the southern Nicobar Islands, separated by a 150 km (93 mi) wide channel. The capital and largest city of the territory, Port Blair (officially Sri Vijaya Puram), is located approximately 1,190 km (740 mi) from Chennai and 1,255 km (780 mi) from Kolkata in mainland India. The islands are situated between the Bay of Bengal to the west and the Andaman Sea to the east. The northernmost point is 901 km (560 mi) from the mouth of the Hooghly River. Indira Point, located at 645'10"N and 9349'36"E on the southern tip of Great Nicobar, is the southernmost point of India. The territory shares maritime borders with Indonesia located about 165 km (103 mi) to the south, Myanmar located 280 km (170 mi) to the north-east and Thailand located 650 km (400 mi) to the south-east. The islands occupy a total land area of approximately 8,249 km² (3,185 sq mi) with a population of 380,581 as per the 2011 census. The territory is divided into three districts: Nicobar, South Andaman, and North and Middle Andaman with the capitals at Car Nicobar, Port Blair and Mayabunder respectively. Genetic and cultural studies suggest that the indigenous Andamanese people may have been isolated from other populations during the Middle Paleolithic era, more than 30,000 years ago. Archeological evidence of civilisation has been dated back to 2,200 years. In the 11th century, Cholas, one of the three Tamil kingdoms, used the islands as a naval base to launch expeditions in South East Asia. The Danish were the first Europeans to arrive on the islands in 1755. The islands became part of the British Raj in 1868. During the Second World War, the islands were invaded by the Empire of Japan. After Indian Independence in 1947, the region became a province and later a union territory after the adoption of the Constitution of India in 1950. The islands host the Andaman and Nicobar Command, the only geographical command operated jointly by the three major wings of the Indian Armed Forces: the Army, the Air Force and the Navy. While Hindi and English are the official languages, the major spoken languages include Bengali, Tamil and Telugu. Indigenous people speak any of the Andamanese or Nicobarese family of languages. Hinduism is the majority religion in the union territory, with a significant Christian minority. The islands include North Sentinel Island, home to the Sentinelese people, an uncontacted tribe.

Etymology The name Andaman might have been derived from Handuman, after the Indian God Hanuman from the Hindu epic Ramayana. The place was called with a similar name by the Malays, who used to be involved in slave trade in the region. The place was also referred by various names such as Angademan by Ptolemy in the 2nd century CE and Angamanian by Marco Polo in 13th century. Nicobar, which was located in the sea route connecting South India to South East Asia, was known as Nakkavaram, meaning "open/naked land" borrowed from Tamil language which later became Nicobar. In the middle ages (500-1500 AD), Nicobar was known as Lankhabatus in Arabia, probably a mis-transcription of the name Nakkavaram. An 11th-century work Kathasaritsagar indicates the name as Narikel Dweep (meaning Coconut Island in Bengali). Marco Polo termed the island as Necuverann, while the islands were known as Lo-Jan Kuo in China, a translation of Nakkavar with the same meaning.

History Early history Genetic and cultural studies suggest that the indigenous Andamanese people may have been isolated from other populations during the Middle Paleolithic era, which ended 30,000 years ago. Archeological work on the islands has concentrated on shell midden sites. The islands were mentioned by Ptolemy in the 2nd century CE.

Middle ages The Nicobar islands existed on a major trade route connecting India to the South East Asia and had much contact with the outside world for centuries. But there are very few accounts of information as there was no written language with the indigenous people to document their history. The islands appeared in the accounts of travellers like Faxian in the 6th century and I-T'sing in the 7th century. In the 11th century, Rajendra Chola I of the Chola dynasty of Tamilakam invaded parts of South East Asia using the Nicobar islands as an intermediate naval base. It was part of an established Chola trade route connecting India and South East Asia, a practice that continued during the subsequent reigns of Rajendra II and Kulothunga I. Chola inscriptions from Thanjavur, dated to 1050, describe the islands as Ma-Nakkavaram meaning "great open/naked land" in Tamil. The islands were later noted by Marco Polo in the 13th century and Friar Oderic in the early 14th century.

European colonisation The European colonisation on the islands began when settlers from the Danish East India Company arrived on the Nicobar Islands on 12 December 1755. On 1 January 1756, the Nicobar Islands were made into a Danish colony, first named Nye Danmark (New Denmark) and later Frederikserne (Frederick's Islands). The islands were managed from the Danish colony of Tranquebar in the Indian mainland. However, various attempts to settle on the islands were unsuccessful due to repeated outbreaks of malaria, which led to the death of the colonists.

Between 1778 and 1783, William Bolts tried to establish an Austrian colony on the Nicobar islands, mistakenly assuming that the Danish had abandoned the claims to the islands, renaming them Theresa Islands. In 1789, the British colonised the Andaman islands to set up a naval base and establish a penal colony. In 1794, a first batch of 100 prisoners were sent to the island but the settlement was abandoned in 1796. In 1858, the British established a colony near Port Blair. Between 1864 and 1868, Italy tried to buy the island from the Danish. On 16 October 1868, the Danish sold the rights to the Nicobar islands to the British, which was made part of the British India in 1869. In 1872, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands were united under a single command and administered by a chief commissioner based out of Port Blair. The construction of the Cellular Jail started in 1896 and was completed in 1906. The jail was used to house political prisoners and independence activists away from the Indian mainland.

World War II During the Second World War, the islands were invaded by the Japanese as a part of their attack on the allies in 1942. Port Blair was captured by the Japanese on 23 March 1942 and established control over the island. The provisional control was passed on to the Azad Hind of Subhash Chandra Bose on 29 December 1943, based on the understanding with the Japanese with the islands renamed as Shaheed-Dweep (Martyr Island) and Swaraj-dweep (Self-rule Island). Bose appointed General A. D. Loganathan as the governor of the islands, who had limited power while the real control of the islands remained with the Japanese. In the years under Japanese occupation, there have been reports of widespread looting, arson, rape and extra judicial killings. Local people were often killed on trivial matters with the largest being the Homfreyganj massacre on 30 January 1944, where 44 local civilians were shot by the Japanese on suspicion of spying. Japanese Vice Admiral Teizo Hara and Major-General Tamenori Sato surrendered to Lieutenant Colonel Nathu Singh, the commanding officer of the Rajput Regiment on 15 August 1945 aboard the Royal Navy ship Rocksand and the territory was officially handed back over to the British to Brigadier J. A. Salomons, commander of the 116th Indian Infantry Brigade, and Chief Administrator Noel Patterson, in a ceremony performed at the Gymkhana Ground in Port Blair on 7 October 1945. Approximately 2,000 people in the Andamans are thought to have died as a result of the occupation, and at least 501 were tortured by the Japanese. The former figure represents 10% of the pre-war population of Port Blair.

Post independence During the Partition of India, the British announced their intention to retain possession of the islands and use them to resettle Anglo-Indians and Anglo-Burmese on these islands. The islands were claimed by the Indian National Congress for India and the Muslim League for Pakistan during the partition negotiations. After the Indian Independence in 1947, the islands became part of the Dominion of India. As per the Constitution of India, the Islands were designated as the only part D territory in 1950, to be administered by a lieutenant governor appointed by the Government of India. The islands were later used to resettle people displaced during the partition with a substantial number of displaced immigrants establishing agricultural colonies. The islands became a separate union territory administered by the Government of India, following the re-organization in 1956. The islands have been developed into a key defence establishment since the 1980s due to its strategic location in the Bay of Bengal across the Strait of Malacca. On 26 December 2004, the coasts of the Andaman and Nicobar islands experienced 10 m (33 ft) high tsunami waves following an undersea earthquake in the Indian Ocean which resulted in more than 2,000 casualties, 46,000 injuries and rendering at least 40,000 homeless. The locals and tourists on the islands suffered the greatest casualties while the indigenous people largely survived unscathed due to movement to high grounds following the oral traditions passed down over generations that warned them to evacuate following earthquakes.

Geography The territory consists of 836 islands and islets occupying an area of 8,249 km² (3,185 sq mi), of which only 31 are permanently inhabited. The islands extend from 6 to 14 North latitudes and from 92 to 94 East longitudes. The islands are grouped into the north Andaman islands and south Nicobar islands, separated by the 150 km (93 mi) wide Ten Degree Channel. The Andamans cover an area of 6,408 km² (2,474 sq mi) while the Nicobar group covers an area of 1,841 km² (711 sq mi). The highest point is the Saddle Peak at 732 m (2,402 ft), located in North Andaman Island.

The northernmost point of the islands is 901 km (560 mi) away from the mouth of the Hooghly River in the Indian mainland. The territory shares maritime borders with Indonesia located about 165 km (103 mi) to the south, Myanmar located 280 km (170 mi) to the north-east and Thailand located 650 km (400 mi) to the south-east. Indira Point, the southernmost point of India, is located at 645'10"N and 9349'36"E at the southern tip of Great Nicobar. The capital and largest city is Port Blair (officially Sri Vijaya Puram), located 1,190 km (740 mi) from Chennai and 1,255 km (780 mi) from Kolkata on the Indian mainland. Barren Island, the only active volcano in India, is located in the Andaman Sea. The islands have a 1,962 km (1,219 mi) long coast-line. The topography of the territory varies significantly across various islands. The islands may have sandy, rocky sandstone or marshy beaches on the coastlines and might be surrounded by shoals and coral reefs. The altitude varies significantly from completely flat islands to gradually raising topography from the coast to the interior in larger islands. The islands are generally surrounded by shallow seas of varying depths in the vicinity with some deep natural bays occurring along certain coasts. The islands have a moderate temperature around the year with the average ranging from 23 C to 31 C. The islands have a tropical climate with warm summers and not so chill winters. The rainfall is dependent on the monsoons and tropical cyclones are common in late summer.

Flora and fauna The islands have mangroves interspersed with marshes, coconut trees or dispersed bushy vegetation along the coast. There are twelve types of forests that occur in the islands including evergreen, deciduous, mangrove, littoral, bamboo, sub-montane and brackish water forests. North Andaman is characterised by wet evergreen forests with climbing plants, Middle Andaman has moist deciduous forests and South Andaman islands have epiphytic vegetation, mostly ferns and orchids. The North Nicobar islands are mostly barren with grasslands while evergreen forests form the dominant vegetation in the central and southern islands of the Nicobar group. The forest coverage is estimated to be 86.2% of the total land area with about

2,200 varieties of plants of which 200 are endemic and 1,300 do not occur in mainland India. There are more than 200 species used for timber.

There are more than 8300 species of fauna of which 1117 are endemic to the islands. Most of the larger species were introduced by colonists and travellers, some of which became endemic due to their prolonged isolation. There are about 55 mammal species of which 32 are endemic with 26 species of rats and 14 species of bats, the most among the mammals. The endangered Indian elephant can be found in forested or mountainous areas of the islands, which were originally introduced from the mainland to help with the timber extraction in 1883. Endangered and critically endangered species endemic to the islands include the Andaman white-toothed shrew, Andaman spiny shrew, Jenkin's shrew, Nicobar spiny shrew, Nicobar tree shrew, Miller's Nicobar rat, Palm rat, Andaman teal, Nicobar scops owl, Andaman boobook and Darwin's eastern frog. Other large fauna include Wild boar, Spotted deer, Barking deer and Sambar deer. There are about 270 species of birds in the islands of which 90 are endemic. The islands' caves are nesting grounds for the Edible-nest swiftlet, whose nests are prized for bird's nest soup. The islands serve as an intermediate resting site for birds such as Horsfield's bronze cuckoo, Zappey's flycatcher and Javan pond heron during long distance migrations. The Nicobar pigeon found in the islands is the closest living relative to the extinct Dodo.

There are about 64 species of reptiles of which half of them are endemic to the islands. More than 1350 species of echinoderms and molluscs and 200 species of corals are found in the seas surrounding the islands. Larger marine species include salt water crocodiles, dugongs, turtles, dolphins and whales. There are more than 1350 species of fishes including 13 fresh water species. The islands are well known for prized shellfish, the commercial exploitation of which began in the early 20th century. The territory is home for about 896 species of winged insects including 225 butterflies species. There are about nine national parks, 96 wildlife sanctuaries and one biosphere reserve in the islands. The Andaman regional centre of the Zoological Survey of India was established in 1977. The Mahatma Gandhi Marine National Park was established in 1983 and consists of 15 islands in South Andaman.

Demographics As per the 2011 census, the population was 380,581, of which 202,871 (53.3%) were males and 177,710 (46.7%) were females. The sex ratio was 878 females per 1,000 males. There were a total of 94,551 households and about 143,488 (37.7%) of the population lived in urban areas. Hinduism (69.5%) is the major religion of people of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands followed by Christianity (21.7%) and Islam (8.5%).

The Andaman islands were populated by the indigenous people (the Great Andamanese, the Onge, the Jarawa and the Sentinelese) who were isolated and spoke Andamanese languages for thousands of years. The Nicobar islands, which was part of trade routes and was frequented by travellers, were populated by Shompen people before the islands were settled by Nicobarese people, who spoke Austroasiatic languages. The islands include the North Sentinel Island, home to the Sentinelese people, among the only known uncontacted tribe in India. When the islands were first colonised, the population of the natives were estimated to be around 5,000 and while the population of islands temporarily increased during colonisation, the population saw a massive spike post-1960s due to the policies of the Union Government that encouraged settlers from other parts of the country. In the early 21st century, the population of indigenous people has drastically dropped. As of 2016, it was estimated to consist of 44 Great Andamanese, 380 Jarawas, 101 Onges, 15 Sentinelese and 229 Shompens. The Government of India is trying to protect the remnant population by providing access to healthcare facilities, communication and social engagement.

Languages The Andamanese people speak about a dozen endangered Andamanese languages, which belong to two families, Great Andamanese and Ongan that are unrelated to each other or to any other language group. There are two unattested languages: Sentinelese, spoken by Sentinelese people, who refuse contact with outsiders, which might be related to Ongan as per Anvita Abbi and Jangil, which became extinct in the 1920s. Indigenous to the Nicobar Islands are the Shompen language, spoken by Shompen people and the five Nicobarese languages, which form part of the Austroasiatic language family and are spoken by about 29,000 people or 7.6% of the population. The majority of the population, however, are speakers of immigrant languages which include Bengali (28.5%), Tamil (15.2%), Telugu (13.2%), Hindi (12.9%), Malayalam (7.2%), Sadri (5.5%), and Kurukh (4%). Hindi is the official language of the region, while English is declared an additional official language for communication purposes.

Administration and politics The islands form a part of the union territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands and is administered by a Lieutenant Governor on behalf of the Government of India. The union territory was established in 1956 with a chief commissioner as the head of the administration. In 1982, the Lieutenant Governor replaced the Chief Commissioner as the head of administration. In 1981, a "Pradesh council" with councillors as representatives of the people was constituted to advise the Lieutenant Governor. The territory sends one representative to Lok Sabha of the Indian Parliament from its Andaman and Nicobar Islands Lok Sabha constituency. The territory is divided into three districts, each headed by a deputy commissioner. The Calcutta High Court has jurisdiction over the islands with a permanent seat at Port Blair.

The indigenous communities have their own system of administration. There are long term settlements known as baraij and short-term settlements known as chang. The coast-dwellers (aryoto) have semi-permanent settlements and the interior groups (eremtaga) dwell on temporary settlements, which enable them to migrate during dry seasons.

Economy As of 2022, the GSDP was ₹103 billion (US\$1.2 billion). Agriculture is a major occupation with nearly 50% of the population engaged in the sector. Only about 48,675 hectares (120,280 acres) of land, which is about 6% of the total land area, can be used for agriculture. Rice is the main food crop, grown in about 20% of the arable land. Most of the food for consumption is imported from mainland India. Coconut and arecanut are the cash crops grown in the Nicobar islands. Other crops include pulses, oilseeds, vegetables like okra, brinjal, cucurbit and radish; spices and fruits such as mango, sapota, orange, banana, guava and pineapple. Rubber, red oil, palm and cashew are grown on a limited scale in plantations. The territory has an exclusive economic zone of more than 0.6 million sq. km, which contributes to the fishing industry. As of 2017, the region produced 27,526 tonnes of fish, mostly from marine sector with minor contribution from inland fisheries. As of 2008, there were 1,833 registered small-scale industries with majority being involved in engineering, woodworking and textiles apart from 21 factories. District Industries Centre (DIC) is the body responsible for the development of small and medium industries in the islands. Andaman and Nicobar Islands Integrated Development Corporation Limited (ANIIDCO), established in 1988, is responsible for the development and economic growth of the islands.

Tourism Tourism is one of the major contributors to the economy of the islands. The islands had more than 400,000 visitors in 2016 with a 94% contribution from domestic tourists. In 2018, plans to develop facilities in various islands under the National Institute of Transforming India (NITI) Aayog was initiated by Government of India, with the aim of increasing tourist inflows. Foreign tourists are issued Restricted Area Permits (RAP) which gives access to specific areas with conditions. While domestic tourists do not require a permit to visit the accessible parts of the islands, the tribal reserves are forbidden and requires special permission for access.

The islands have many beaches due to its long coastline and various water sports are practised including kayaking, scuba diving and parasailing. Major attractions include the Cellular Jail, Chatham Saw Mill, Forest Museum, Samudrika Naval Marine Museum, Anthropological Museum, Fisheries Aquarium, Science Center and Carbyn's cove in Port Blair; Bharatpur, Lakshmanpur and Sitapur beaches in Shaheed Dweep; Elephant and Radhanagar beaches in Swaraj Dweep; Hudi tikri, Red, Bird and Bat islands, Amkunj beach near Rangat; Dhaninallah mangroves and Karmatang beach near Mayabunder; limestone caves and mud volcanoes near Diglipur; Craggy island and Ross & Smith islands and various national parks and protected sanctuaries.

Transportation The islands are served by Veer Savarkar International Airport near Port Blair which has regular flights to major cities in India. The airport operates as a civil enclave, sharing airside facilities with INS Utkrosh of the Indian Navy. The airport has a single runway of 3,290 m (10,794 ft) in length, with the civilian terminal operated by the Airports Authority of India with air traffic operations managed by the Indian Navy. Andaman and Nicobar Command of Indian Armed Forces operates air bases of Car Nicobar AFS, INS Kohassa, INS Utkrosh and INS Baaz. There are 23 ports along the islands with a major port at Port Blair and eight other significant ports including Diglipur, Mayabunder, Rangat, Hut Bay, Car Nicobar, Katchal and Campbell Bay. In 2022, the Government of India proposed the development of a new container ship terminal and an airport at Great Nicobar. There are 39 light houses situated across the islands. As of 2018, there are 422 km (262 mi) long national highways in the state with the major highway being the 230.7 km (143.4 mi) long NH 4 connecting Port Blair and Diglipur.

Infrastructure Power There is no single power grid connecting all the islands and independent power houses caters to the power requirements of individual islands. The islands have an installed power capacity of 68.46 MW with majority of the power generated from diesel power plants and a single hydroelectric powerplant of 5.25 MW on Kalpong river. In 2016, a new 15 MW diesel power plant was established in South Andaman with Japanese assistance. Commissioned in June 2020, a 10 MW photovoltaic power station is operated by NLC India in Port Blair. In 2022, the government proposed additional power plants and infrastructure to be developed in Great Nicobar.

Telecommunication 4G mobile service is provided by various telecom operators in the islands. Till 2020, Internet was provided through satellite links and access was limited. Bharat Broadband Network started work on laying fiber optic submarine cables connecting the islands with Chennai in December 2018. On 10 August 2020, the undersea optical fibre cable went live, which enabled high-speed broadband connections in the islands.

Education The first primary school in the islands was established in 1881. During Independence, 12 schools were functioning on the islands including one high school. As of 2023, there are 428 schools functioning in the islands with a total enrolment of 86,081 students. Jawaharlal Nehru Rajkeeya Mahavidyalaya was the first institute of higher education, established in 1967. Mahatma Gandhi Government College was established in 1990 and is affiliated to Pondicherry University. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Government Polytechnic was established in 1984 and the affiliated engineering college, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Institute of Technology was established in 1989. Andaman Law College is the only law college in the state, established in 2016. The Andaman and Nicobar Islands Institute of Medical Sciences was established in 1963.

In popular culture Arthur Conan Doyle refers to the Andaman islands in the Sherlock Holmes novel *The Sign of the Four*. Bengali author Sunil Gangopadhyay based the events of one his Kakababu series of adventure thriller

novels, Sabuj Dwiper Raja (1976), on the islands. In 1979, it was made into a film of the same name, shot extensively on the islands. The National Award-winning Malayalam film Kaalapani was set against the backdrop of Port Blair's Cellular Jail and was extensively shot in the islands. The Netflix Original Series Kaala Paani is based on a fictional illness that spreads in the islands.

See also Coral reefs in India List of islands of India

Notes References

== External links ==

Chandigarh

Chandigarh is a city and union territory in northwestern India, serving as the shared capital of the states of Punjab and Haryana. Situated near the foothills of the Shivalik range of Himalayas, it borders Haryana to the east and Punjab in the remaining directions. Chandigarh constitutes the bulk of the Chandigarh Capital Region or Greater Chandigarh, which also includes the adjacent satellite cities of Panchkula in Haryana and Mohali in Punjab. It is located 260 km (162 miles) northwest of New Delhi and 229 km (143 miles) southeast of Amritsar and 104 km (64 miles) southwest of Shimla. Chandigarh is one of the earliest planned cities in post-independence India and is internationally known for its architecture and urban design. The master plan of the city was prepared by Swiss-French architect Le Corbusier, which built upon earlier plans created by the Polish architect Maciej Nowicki and the American planner Albert Mayer. Most of the government buildings and housing in the city were designed by a team headed by Le Corbusier and British architects Dame Jane Drew and Maxwell Fry. Chandigarh's Capitol Complex-as part of a global ensemble of Le Corbusier's buildings-was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO at the 40th session of the World Heritage Conference in July 2016. Chandigarh has grown greatly since its initial construction, and has also driven the development of Mohali and Panchkula; the tri-city metropolitan area has a combined population of over 1,611,770. The city has one of the highest per capita incomes in the country. The union territory has the third-highest Human Development Index among Indian states and territories. In 2015, a survey by LG Electronics ranked it as the happiest city in India on the happiness index. In 2015, an article published by the BBC identified Chandigarh as one of the few master-planned cities in the world to have succeeded in terms of combining monumental architecture, cultural growth, and modernisation.

Etymology The name Chandigarh means "fort of Chandi" and is a compound of Chandi, which refers to the Hindu goddess Chandi, a manifestation of Shakti, and Garh, meaning stronghold or fortress. The name is taken from a village where a temple dedicated to goddess Chandi stood. The temple exists today at Chandi Mandir, on the outskirts of the city, in the neighbouring district of Panchkula in Haryana. The motif or sobriquet of "The City of Beauty" was derived from the City Beautiful movement, which was a popular philosophy in North American urban planning during the 1890s and 1900s. Architect Albert Mayer, the initial planner of Chandigarh, lamented the American rejection of City Beautiful concepts and declared, "We want to create a beautiful city". The phrase was used as a logo in official publications in the 1970s and is now how the city describes itself.

History **Partition and independence** The establishment of the city of Chandigarh was the result of the crises and chaos in northwestern India in the aftermath of its independence from British colonial rule. During the partition of India in 1947, the province of Punjab was divided into two: the majority Hindu and Sikh eastern portion that remained in India and the majority Muslim western portion that became part of Pakistan. Lahore, the provincial capital of undivided Punjab, though fiercely contested during partition, was eventually ceded to Pakistan. The provincial government of independent India's East Punjab state was left without an administrative center or capital. The loss of Lahore, the need for the rehabilitation of refugees from West Pakistan and a mounting exodus of business communities from the state created a sense of urgency. Shimla, the former summer capital of both British India and the Punjab province, partially housed the government of East Punjab state. Shimla's inability to fully contain the administrative machinery resulted in government offices to be scattered at several places across the state, imposing difficulties and costs on the public as well as the government.

Conception and initial planning It was decided by representatives of the government of India and of the state of East Punjab to build a new capital for the state, because attaching capital functions to an existing city-all of which were considered inadequate and had swollen in size due to migration of refugees from West Pakistan-was considered as costly as building a new city.

The new capital needed to have enough space for government machinery, for resettlement of refugees and their businesses, for expansion, and adequate rail, road and air connectivity; it also had to assuage the psychological loss of partition, its construction supposed to stimulate the state's devastated economy, as well as being a 'symbolic gesture' of unity, stability, and an assertion of India's newfound sovereignty. India's erstwhile Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru personally endorsed the project, remarking: "Let this be a new town, symbolic of the freedom of India, unfettered by the traditions of the past ... an expression of the nation's faith in the future." The capital was to be located in the most populous part of the state, between the Doaba and Ambala districts, and projected to hold about 500,000 people. Several existing cities and towns across the state were considered for the possible development of the new capital, but all rejected for different reasons. Political lobbying also made the selection of an existing city as the new capital difficult. The absence of political consensus on the location of the new capital and the large costs involved threatened the project. In 1948, three possible sites were settled upon, one lying in the Ambala district, one in Ludhiana, and one, the most preferred of the three, being partially in Ambala and Patiala state (which was then not part of the East Punjab state). The first site, in Ambala district's Kharar tehsil, was ultimately selected to be the location of the new capital after aerial reconnaissance by Parmeshwari Lal Varma and Prem Nath Thapar. The name of the new city derived from a temple dedicated to Hindu goddess Chandi present in one of these villages. The location was praised by the later team of the city's architects for being beautiful and practical. Agricultural lands, including large mango groves, of fifty-eight villages with a population of 21,000 people were to be affected by the construction of the city, involving the displacement of many of them. The affected villagers, encouraged and supported by political parties (such as the Socialist Party and Akali Dal), began agitating against the project. Political opposition to the project also stemmed from a desire for relocation of the new capital to sites favourable to the opponents. The government reached an agreement with the affected villagers in October 1950, and established a local committee to advise on rehabilitation of displaced people, thus ending the agitation.

Masterplan Mayer plan It was decided by the state government that a town planner for Chandigarh would be selected after interviewing several of them in England. However, Nehru suggested that a town planner already present in India and familiar with it be hired instead, and recommended two such people. One of them-Albert Mayer, an American town planner-was selected in December 1949 to design the master plan of Chandigarh. Mayer's recruitment received extensive international media attention. Mayer enlisted several experts from the US to aid him in preparing the masterplan of Chandigarh, including Matthew Nowicki, a US-based Polish architect, who was to work on the city's architectural design. Mayer produced a fan-shaped plan, spreading southward between the Patiala-ki-rao and Sukhna Cho streams, with the capitol located on a promontory in Sukhna's fork at the upper margin, a university at the very north, a railway station to the east, an industrial area to the southeast and a commercial block in the center. The city was to be made up of several neighbourhood units, or superblocks, arranged in districts of various shapes roughly one-by-half kilometre in size, each containing residences, bazaar, schools, parks, health centres, theatres and meeting halls. The superblocks were to be arranged in a curvilinear street layout with adequate road space for future motor traffic. Mayer's plan was based on the ideals of the Garden City movement and the Radburn idea. While Mayer provided a masterplan and Nowicki gave a detailed draft for one neighbourhood unit, Chandigarh also required an architect to develop the architectural design of the city and its structures. Nowicki had also prepared a preliminary design for the capitol complex, and had agreed to join the city's architectural development independently of Mayer. In August 1950, Nowicki died in a plane crash, and Mayer was unlikely to be able to

execute the masterplan without his assistance. This, coupled with Mayer's extended leaves from the state and mounting expenses due to adverse USD exchange rates, resulted in Mayer—who was still keen on continuing the project—being dropped from the plan.

Corbusier plan Between November and December 1950, Thapar and Varma travelled to Europe to find replacements and recruited a four-member team headed by Swiss-French architect Le Corbusier, also including English couple-duo Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew, and Corbusier's cousin Pierre Jeanneret. Fry, Drew and Jeanneret were to work at Chandigarh for three years, while Corbusier would make two visits every year, each lasting one month. The association of the city with Corbusier catapulted it into global limelight. Corbusier came to India in February 1951, and joined Fry and Jeanneret who had arrived earlier. They were joined by Indian staff in Shimla, including a team of young Indian architects and town-planners who were to learn from them as much as assist them. Although told to adhere to Mayer's masterplan, the new team considered it inadequate and made significant modifications, much to Mayer's dismay as he tried in vain to retain it. Corbusier assumed control of the masterplan and designed buildings of the capitol complex, while the rest of the team directed construction work and designed other buildings of the city. Key components of the previous plan were incorporated into the new one—the positions of the central commercial block, the railway station, the industrial area, and the capitol complex remained roughly similar; the University was moved to the west, the superblocks were retained, but expanded, standardised and named 'sectors'. The overall density was increased by 20%. The earlier curvilinear street plan was replaced with a rectilinear grid plan, with a seven-tiered road system consisting the highway, the central axes, arterial roads, market roads, sector circulation roads, residential streets and pedestrian walkways. The new plan was quickly accepted by officials. The capitol complex was designed to contain four main buildings: the Palace of Assembly, the High Court of Justice, the Secretariat, and a fourth structure—earlier the Governor's Palace and later Museum of Knowledge—whose construction was deferred. Also included in it were several monuments, notably the Monument of the Open Hand. Initial plan envisioned the capitol complex to dominate the city, but in later plans artificial hills were used to visually separate the two. It was to be independent India's 'answer' to the British built complex in New Delhi. The city centre was designed by Corbusier to contain commercial and administrative buildings with a central pedestrian plaza.

Construction A schedule for construction was prepared soon after the takeover of the project by Corbusier's team. The first structures to be built were temporary quarters for the engineers and architects. 30 sectors were to be constructed in the first phase, and another 17 in the second phase. Several laws were passed 1952 onwards to regulate development within the city and in its 5-mile radius (expanded later to 10), and to preserve the city's planned character. By September 1953, all state government departments and staff had been shifted from Shimla to Chandigarh. The city was built to be the state's capital all year round, abandoning the British practice of moving the provincial government to Shimla during the summer. On 7 October 1953, the capital was officially inaugurated in a ceremony presided over by President Rajendra Prasad. The construction was done on a tight budget, primarily using locally available materials, extensive manual labour and minimal machinery. A committee was set up under Mohinder Singh Randhawa for landscaping of the city, and an elaborate landscaping plan was devised. In 1954, the Panjab University, which had been functioning in a widely scattered area until then, purchased over 300 acres of land in sector 14 where a self-contained permanent campus was built for it in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The 1956 merger of PEPSU with the Punjab state shot up construction costs due to requirements of extra offices and housing in the city, and caused revisions in the assembly building's design. In the 1960s, a medical research center and college of engineering were established in sector 12, two government colleges, one for men and one for women, were built in sector 11, and a polytechnic institute was created in sector 26. The Chandi Mandir military cantonment and an industrial township in Pinjore were built to the northeast of the city, despite objections from Corbusier. During excavations

for the city's construction in the 1950s and 60s, artefacts, a cemetery and a settlement belonging to the Indus Valley civilisation were discovered around present-day sector 17. Sector 22 was the first sector to be developed. The large population of construction workers that came to build the city lived in self-built small mud or brick shacks during this period. 13 types of government housing, from the Chief Minister's to those for low income employees, were developed by Fry, Drew and Jeanneret. Following the departure of Fry and Drew, some house types were also developed by Jeet Malhotra, Manmohan Nath Sharma, Aditya Prakash and Eulie Chowdhury. Jeanneret, Chowdhury and others also designed several types of furniture influenced by local craftsmanship for use in the city's public buildings, which were manufactured from local hardwood by carpenters across northern India. Jeanneret was appointed chief architect and town planner for Chandigarh and lived in the city until 1965. The Secretariat was the first of the capitol complex buildings to be completed. The High Court became functional in March 1955, although modifications and additions to it continued till later. The Assembly building containing two legislative chambers enclosed within a square exterior-a hyperbolic assembly chamber and a pyramid-topped council chamber-was completed in 1962. A ceremonial door hand painted by Corbusier was installed at the Assembly Building in 1964. Work on foundations of the fourth building set against the hills to complete the architectural composition of the complex, initially designed to be the governor's residence (which was disapproved by Nehru for being 'undemocratic') and changed later to a museum, was begun in the 1960s but the structure was never built. Two of the six monuments planned in the Capitol Complex remain incomplete. These include Geometric Hill and Martyrs Memorial. Drawings were made, and they were begun in 1956, but they were never completed. Corbusier remained committed to Chandigarh's development until his death in 1965.

Reorganisation and afterwards In 1966, after a long drawn movement by factions of the Akali Dal for an exclusively Punjabi state-and counter demands by Haryanvi and Himachali leaders-the former bilingual state was divided along linguistic lines: the northwestern areas became Punjab, the southeastern ones Haryana, and the northeastern hilly areas were transferred to Himachal Pradesh. Chandigarh was originally allotted to Haryana based on its Hindi-speaking majority per the 1961 census, but was later converted into a union territory instead, owing to apprehensions of Sikh disaffection with the city going to Haryana. It became the shared capital of Punjab and Haryana, both of which were quick to extend their claims over it. In 1970, after deliberations about possible resolutions including a division of the city, prime minister Indira Gandhi assigned it to Punjab with Haryana to be given the Fazilka tehsil and granted funds for a new capital as compensation. The administration of the union territory, which also included 34 villages adjacent to the city, came under the direct control of the union government, and the city became the centre of three governments. Periodic unofficial reports after the reorganisation suggested that the people of Chandigarh wanted the city to stay a union territory. According to a 1982 survey, 80% of the city's residents preferred it staying a UT. In 1985, terms of an unimplemented wider accord granted the city to the state of Punjab, with Haryana slated to get 70,000 acres of land from Punjab in return. By 1971, 11-15% of Chandigarh's population was living in illegal settlements. Transit colonies for slum-dwellers were set up on the margins of the city, becoming permanent with time. In the 1970s, city officials discovered a sculpture park built by public works employee and artist Nek Chand who had been secretly building it since 1957 using various materials-rocks found in the hills and waterbodies around the city, discarded materials from pre-existing villages, and waste generated by the city's construction-on a piece of forest land adjacent to the capitol complex. The park was named 'Rock Garden' and inaugurated in 1976, receiving national and international attention in the 1980s. In the late 1980s and 1990s, attempts by the city authorities to demolish the garden were thwarted by public protests. Funding for the Open Hand monument, whose construction had been delayed due to financial constraints, was sanctioned in 1972. It was completed in 1985 and the motif was adopted and vigorously promoted as the official symbol of the city in the 1980s, with smaller monuments containing the icon built at other places such that the sign became ubiquitous in the city. The city is surrounded by several satellite towns that depend on it for services and facilities. Punjab built the

town of Mohali in an area originally set aside for greenbelt southwest of Chandigarh, and Haryana developed Panchkula to the city's southeast (in addition to the already built Chandimandir cantonment to its east), both with the aim of reinforcing their claims on the city. The villages in the union territory saw rapid urbanisation. In the late 1970s and 1980s, efforts were made towards more integrated regional urban planning in the wider Chandigarh Capital Region.

Geography Location Chandigarh is located by the foothills of the Shivalik Range of the Himalayas in northwest India. It covers an area of approximately 114 km². It borders the states of Punjab and Haryana. The exact geographic coordinates of Chandigarh are 30.74N 76.79E / 30.74; 76.79. It has an average elevation of 321 metres (1053 ft). The city, lying in the northern plains, includes a vast area of flat, fertile land. Its northeast covers sections of Bhabar, while the remainder of its terrain is part of the Terai. Its surrounding cities are Mohali, New Chandigarh, Patiala, Zirakpur and Rupnagar in Punjab, and Panchkula and Ambala in Haryana. Chandigarh is situated 44 km (28 miles) north of Ambala, 229 km (143 miles) southeast of Amritsar, and 250 km (156 miles) north of Delhi.

Climate Chandigarh has a humid subtropical climate (Kppen: Cwa) characterised by a seasonal rhythm: very hot summers, mild winters, unreliable rainfall, and great temperature variation (−1 to 45 C or 30.2 to 113.0 F). The average annual rainfall is 1,110.7 millimetres or 43.73 inches. The city also receives occasional winter rains from the Western Disturbance originating over the Mediterranean Sea. The western disturbances bring rain predominantly from mid-December until the end of April, which can be heavier sometimes with strong wind and hail if the weather turns colder (during March-April months), which usually proves disastrous to local crops. Cold winds usually tend to come from the Himalayas that lie to the north, which receive snowfall during wintertime. The city experiences the following seasons and the respective average temperatures:

Spring: During spring (from February-end to mid-April), temperatures vary between a maximum of 13 to 20 C or 55.4 to 68.0 F and a minimum of 5 to 12 C or 41.0 to 53.6 F. **Autumn:** In autumn (from September-end to mid-November), the temperature may rise to a maximum of 30 C or 86 F. Temperatures usually remain between 10 and 22 C or 50.0 and 71.6 F in autumn. The minimum temperature is around 6 C or 42.8 F. **Summer:** The temperature in summer (from mid-April to mid-June) usually peaks at around 43 C or 109.4 F in mid-June, and generally varies between 38 and 42 C (100.4 and 107.6 F). **Monsoon:** During the monsoon season (from mid-June to mid-September), Chandigarh receives moderate to heavy rainfall and sometimes heavy to very heavy rainfall (generally during August or September). Usually, the rain-bearing monsoon winds blow from the southwest/southeast. The city mostly receives heavy rain from the south (which is mainly persistent rain), but it generally receives most of its rain during the monsoon season either from the northwest or the northeast. The maximum amount of rain received by the city of Chandigarh during the monsoon season is 195.5 millimetres or 7.70 inches in a single day. **Winter:** Winters (November-end to February-end) are mild but can get chilly during peak winter weeks. Average temperatures in the winter generally fluctuate between a maximum of 5 to 14 C or 41.0 to 57.2 F and a minimum of −1 to 5 C or 30.2 to 41.0 F. Rain usually comes from the west during winter, and it rains for 2-3 days, sometimes with hailstorms. Chandigarh has been ranked 27th best "National Clean Air City" (under Category 1 >10L Population cities) in India.

Wildlife and biodiversity Most of Chandigarh is covered by dense banyan and eucalyptus plantations. Ashoka, cassia, mulberry and other trees flourish in the forested ecosystem. The city is surrounded by forests that sustain many animal and plant species. Deer, sambars, barking deer, parrots, woodpeckers, and peacocks inhabit the protected forests. Sukhna Lake hosts a variety of ducks and geese and attracts migratory birds from parts of Siberia and Japan in the winter season. The Parrot Bird Sanctuary Chandigarh provides a home to a

large number of parrots. Sukhna Wildlife Sanctuary was declared a wildlife sanctuary in 1998.

Heritage Trees of Chandigarh Many trees in Chandigarh are given the status of the natural heritage of the city. The Chandigarh government has identified a list of 31 trees as Heritage Trees. The Department of Forest & Wildlife Chandigarh Administration is the nodal department for this purpose and has published a detailed booklet about it. The trees in the city that are a hundred or more years old have been given heritage status.

Landscape Sukhna Lake, a 3 km² artificial rain-fed lake in Sector 1, was created in 1958 by damming the Sukhna Choe, a seasonal stream coming down from the Shivalik Hills.

Chandigarh has a belt of parks running from sectors. It is known for its green belts and other special tourist parks. Sukhna Lake itself hosts the Garden of Silence. The Rock Garden, is located near the Sukhna Lake and has numerous sculptures made by using a variety of different discarded waste materials. The Zakir Hussain Rose Garden (which is also Asia's largest rose garden) contains nearly 825 varieties of roses in it and more than 32,500 varieties of other medicinal plants and trees. Other gardens include the Garden of Fragrance in Sector 36, Garden of Palms in Sector 42, Butterfly Park in Sector 26, Valley of Animals in Sector 49, the Japanese Garden in Sector 31 which is designed in traditional Japanese style and known for its peaceful atmosphere, the Terraced Garden in Sector 33, Shanti Kunj Garden, the Botanical garden and the Bougainvillea Garden. There is also the Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh in Sector 10.

Demographics Population As of 2011 India census, Chandigarh had a population of 1,055,450, giving it a density of about 9,252 (7,900 in 2001) persons per square kilometre. Males constitute 55% of the population and females 45%. The sex ratio is 818 females for every 1,000 males. The child-sex ratio is 880 females per thousand males. Chandigarh has an effective literacy rate of 86.77% (based on population 7 years and above), higher than the national average; with male literacy of 90.81% and female literacy of 81.88%. 10.8% of the population is under 6 years of age. The population of Chandigarh formed 0.09 per cent of India in 2011. There has been a substantial decline in the population growth rate in Chandigarh, with just 17.10% growth between 2001 and 2011. Since the 1951-1961 period, the growth rate has decreased from 394.13% to 17.10%, a likely cause being the rapid urbanisation and development in neighbouring cities. The urban population constitutes 97.25% of the total and the rural population makes up 2.75%, as there are only a few villages within Chandigarh, situated on its Western and South-Eastern border, and the majority of people live in the heart of Chandigarh.

Languages English and Hindi are the official languages used by the Chandigarh UT administration. The majority of the population speaks Hindi (67.76%) while Punjabi is spoken by 22.02%. Government schools use English, Hindi, and Punjabi textbooks. The percentage of Punjabi speakers has fallen from 36% in 1981 to 22% in 2011, while that of Hindi speakers has increased from 51% to 67%.

Religion Hinduism is the predominant religion of Chandigarh followed by 80.71% of the population. Sikhism is the second most followed religion in the city, followed by 13.11% of the people, followed by Islam at 4.87%. Minorities are Christians at 0.83%, Jains at 0.19%, Buddhists at 0.11%, those that didn't state a religion at 0.10%, and others are 0.02%. There are several places of worship located all over the city, with many in each sector, including the historic Mata Basanti Devi Mandir in Sector 24. The temple is dedicated to Goddess Shitala and specially visited by devotees during first Tuesday of Chaitra month after Holi. Chandi Mandir, Mata Mansa Devi Mandir and Mata Jayanti Devi Mandir are important Hindu temples located near Chandigarh.

Saketri Shiv Mandir in Panchkula is another nearby historic temple dedicated to Lord Shiva. Nada Sahib Gurudwara, a famous place for Sikh worship lies in its vicinity. Apart from this, there are a couple of historical mosques in Manimajra and Burail. The Diocese of Simla and Chandigarh serves the Catholics of the city, with a co-cathedral in the city, which also governs most of the convent schools in Chandigarh.

Health The table below shows the data from the district nutrition profile of children below the age of 5 years, in Chandigarh, as of year 2020.

The table below shows the district nutrition profile of women in Chandigarh between the ages of 15 and 49 years, as of the year 2020.

Government and politics Administrator of the union territory Article 239 of the Constitution of India provides for the administration of the Union Territories by the President through an administrator. Since 1984 the Governor of Punjab has served concurrently as the administrator of Chandigarh. Gulab Chand Kataria has been the administrator of the union territory since 27 July 2024.

Politics Chandigarh, as a union territory, is not entitled to a state-level election: thus State Assembly elections are not held and it is directly controlled by the central government. One seat for Chandigarh is allocated in the Lok Sabha elections held every five years. Manish Tewari (INC) is the Member of Parliament elected in 2024 from the Chandigarh Lok Sabha constituency.

Civic administration The city is governed by a civic administration or local government headed by Municipal Commissioner Amit Kumar and Mayor Harpreet Kaur Babla. The city comprises 35 wards represented by 35 elected councillors, and also nominates 9 councillors. On 27 March 2022, Union Home Minister Amit Shah announced that the Chandigarh employees who were working under the Punjab service rules until 2022, would be working under the central civil services rules from 1 April 2022. The move was criticised by political parties such as the AAP, the INC and the Akali Dal. Composition of Chandigarh Municipal Corporation after 2021 Chandigarh Municipal Corporation election as of December 2021:

Civic utilities The prime responsibilities of the civic body Municipal Corporation Chandigarh, are to ensure cleanliness and sanitation in the city, illumination of street lights, maintenance of parks, and sewerage disposal. The city has both brick and pipe sewers laid in four phases. In September 2020, the civic body announced that it would upgrade and renew the 50-year-old sewerage system. The pilot project for the 24x7 water supply is expected to begin in Chandigarh in May 2021, which was initially to start in September 2020 and end in March 2022. On 8 April 2021, the Chandigarh Smart City Ltd (CSCL) board is yet to take the final decision. In 2021, the BJP-ruled corporation had increased the water tariff by 1.5 to 2.5 times. This created a widespread discontent among the residents. In 2021, there was an acute shortage of parking spaces. The problem was aggravated by an increase of 17% in parking rates by the Municipal Corporation. The increase in the waste collection charges, water tariff and property tax rates during the last five years 2016 to 2021 were unpopular among the public. During the COVID-19 pandemic in India, concerns were raised about whether sufficient relief measures had been taken by the local government. The sitting Councillors were accused of not being found to be approachable when the public needed support.

Cleanliness In 2025, the municipal corporation prepared a detailed agenda item to construct the city's first Integrated Municipal Solid Waste Processing Plant with a capacity of 550 tons per day (TPD) for 17 years, including two years of plant construction and 15 years of operation and maintenance. This will be a compressed biogas (CBG) plant to produce energy . This will be the city's first decentralised garbage processing facility in Sector 49. This facility is intended to serve four bulk waste generator housing societies, including Kendriya Vihar, Pushpak Enclave, Progressive Society, and Telehos Society, which collectively produce a daily output of 491 kg dry waste and 958 kg wet waste . So far, Chandigarh's first decentralised garbage processing unit has had mixed responses from RWAs and housing societies over potential concerns about smell and emissions . In 2016, Chandigarh was the second cleanest city of India. In 2021, Chandigarh fell 66 positions in the list of cleanest cities in India. The garbage piled up at the Dadu Majra garbage dump site. The city's cleanliness was once a point for the city, and its decline became an important poll issue.

Economy Chandigarh has been rated as one of the "Wealthiest Towns" of India. The Reserve Bank of India ranked Chandigarh as the third-largest deposit centre and seventh-largest credit centre nationwide as of June 2012. With an average household monthly income of ₹199,000 (US\$2,400), Chandigarh is one of the richest towns in India. Chandigarh's gross state domestic product for 2014-15 is estimated at ₹290 billion (equivalent to ₹440 billion or US\$5.2 billion in 2023) at current prices. According to a 2014 survey, Chandigarh is ranked 4th in the top 50 cities identified globally as "emerging outsourcing and IT services destinations". The Rajiv Gandhi Chandigarh Technology Park, also known as the Chandigarh IT Park, is a special economic zone which has facilities for information technology. Technology Park, which has changed the economic scenario of the city and the vicinity by facilitating the growth of the economy, especially in the Services sector.

Employment The government is a major employer in Chandigarh, with three governments having their base here, those being the Chandigarh Administration, the Punjab government, and the Haryana government. A significant percentage of Chandigarh's population, therefore, consists of people who are either working for one of these governments or have retired from government service, mainly armed forces. For this reason, Chandigarh is often called a "Pensioner's Paradise". Ordnance Cable Factory of the Ordnance Factories Board has been set up by the Government of India. There are about 15 medium-to-large industries, including two in the public sector. In addition, Chandigarh has over 2,500 units registered under the small-scale sector. The city's important industries are paper manufacturing, basic metals and alloys, and machinery. Other industries in the city are food products, sanitary ware, auto parts, machine tools, pharmaceuticals, and electrical appliances. The main occupation here is trade and business. However, the Punjab and Haryana High Court, Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER), the availability of an IT Park, and more than a hundred government schools provide other job opportunities to people. Four major trade promotion organisations have their offices in Chandigarh. These are The Associated Chambers of Commerce & Industry, ASSOCHAM India, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry, (FICCI) the PhD Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) having regional offices in Chandigarh. Chandigarh IT Park (also known as Rajiv Gandhi Chandigarh Technology Park) is the city's attempt to break into the information technology world. Chandigarh's infrastructure, proximity to Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, and Himachal Pradesh, and the IT talent pool attract IT businesses looking for office space in the area. Major Indian firms and multinational corporations like Quark, Infosys, EVERY, TechMahindra, Airtel, Amadeus IT Group, DLF have set up base in the city and its suburbs. The work of the Chandigarh Metro was slated to start by 2019. It was opposed by the Member of Parliament from Chandigarh, Kirron Kher. With an estimated cost of around ₹109 billion including 50% funds from the governments of Punjab and Haryana and 25% from Chandigarh and government of India, funds from the Japanese government were proposed to include approximately 56% of the cost. However, the project was turned down owing to its non-feasibility. Kher promised a film city for Chandigarh. After winning the seat, she said that she had difficulty in acquiring land in Chandigarh. Her proposal was accepted by the

Chandigarh Administration and the film city is proposed to be set up in Sarangpur, Chandigarh. This has been considered as a source of employment in the future.

Culture Festivals Every year, in September or October during the festival of Navratri, many associations and organisations hold a Ramlila event, which has been conducted here for over 50 years. The Rose Festival in Zakir Hussain Rose Garden every February shows thousands of subspecies of roses. Chandigarh Carnival is an annual mega tourism event of Chandigarh Administration which is held in the last week of November every year. As a part of event, the department organises various fun and flora activities including setting up of amusement park, stalls, day cultural programmes etc. The Mango Festival is held during the monsoons, and other festivals are held at Sukhna Lake. Punjabi historic festivals like Lohri, Basant, Vaisakhi are also celebrated with great fervor and enthusiasm across the city.

Transport Unified Transport Metropolitan Authority, Chandigarh was made in 2023 to plan and execute the transportation needs of the Chandigarh Metropolitan Region.

Road Chandigarh has a seven-tiered system of roads arranged in a grid plan to create separation of fast and slow motor traffic from pedestrians and cyclists. This system, named 'les Sept Voies' (lit. 'the Seven V's') by Corbusier, include the highway connecting the city to other cities, central axes (identified as Marg, ■■■■■■: Jan Marg, Madhya Marg, Dakshin Marg, Uttar Marg, Himalaya Marg, Purv Marg), arterial roads enveloping the sectors (identified as Path, ■■■: Vidya Path, Udyan Path, Vigyan Path, Sarovar Path, Sukhna Path, Chandi Path, Udyog Path, Shanti Path), main shopping street bisecting each sector, circulation roads within the sector, residential streets, and cyclist and pedestrian paths. Chandigarh has the largest number of vehicles per capita in India. Wide, well-maintained roads and parking spaces all over the city ease local transport. The Chandigarh Transport Undertaking (CTU) operates public transport buses from its Inter State Bus Terminals (ISBT) in Sectors 17 and 43 of the city. CTU also operates frequent bus services to the neighbouring states of Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, and to Delhi. Chandigarh is well-connected by road to the following nearby cities, by the following highway routes:

NH 7 to Patiala in the southwest. NH 152 to Ambala and Kaithal in the south (NH 44 catches up from Ambala to Panipat-Delhi). NH 5 to Shimla in the northeast, and to Ludhiana in the west.

Air Chandigarh Airport has scheduled commercial flights to the major cities of India. An international terminal was completed in 2015, and international flight routes to Dubai and Sharjah were started. The runway is located in Chandigarh, while the terminal is in Mohali. The governments of Punjab and Haryana each have a 24.5% stake in the international terminal building, while the Airports Authority of India holds a 51% stake.

Rail Chandigarh Junction railway station lies in the Northern Railway zone of the Indian Railways network and provides connectivity to most of the regions of India. The railway station also serves the neighbouring town of Panchkula. There were long-standing proposals to develop a metro rail system in the city, which were formally scrapped in 2017.

Education There are numerous educational institutions in Chandigarh. These range from privately and publicly operated schools to colleges. These include Panjab University, Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER), Punjab Engineering College, Indian Institute of Science Education and Research,

National Institute of Technical Teacher Training and Research (NITTTR), Post Graduate Government College, and DAV College. According to the Chandigarh administration's department of education, there are a total of 115 government schools in Chandigarh, including Government Model Senior Secondary School, Sector 16, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Bhavan Vidyalaya, convent schools like St. Anne's Convent School, St. John's High School, Chandigarh, Sacred Heart Senior Secondary School and Carmel Convent School, and other private schools like Delhi Public School and D.A.V. Public School. Chandigarh has also emerged as a significant hub for IAS coaching centres in North India. With the ever-increasing popularity of civil services among the youth, the city has seen a proliferation of coaching institutes catering to UPSC aspirants. According to a survey conducted by O2 IAS Academy, many students from neighbouring states like Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, and Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir prefer Chandigarh over Delhi for their IAS preparation due to its superior living conditions, access to educational resources, and quality teaching. Local Educational Institutes have contributed to the growing prominence of Chandigarh as a centre for civil services preparation.

Sports The Sector 16 Stadium has been a venue of several international cricket matches, but it has lost prominence after the PCA Stadium was constructed in Mohali. It still provides a platform for cricketers in this region to practise and play inter-state matches. The Chandigarh Golf Club has a 7,202-yard, 18-hole course known for its challenging narrow fairways, dogleg 7th hole, and floodlighting on the first nine holes.

Tourist attractions The main tourist attractions in Chandigarh are:

Natural landscape Rock Garden of Chandigarh Garden of Springs, Chandigarh Zakir Hussain Rose Garden Japanese Garden, Chandigarh Parrot Bird Sanctuary, Chandigarh Mahendra Chaudhary Zoological Park Sukhna Lake Sukhna Wildlife Sanctuary Rose Festival (Chandigarh) Heritage Trees of Chandigarh Sukhna Interpretation Centre Terraced Garden Leisure Valley, Chandigarh

Museums Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh Gandhi Bhawan, Chandigarh Open Hand Monument Indian Air Force Heritage Museum

Architecture Open Hand Monument Palace of Assembly, Chandigarh Chandigarh Capitol Complex Secretariat Building, Chandigarh

Others Sector-17, Chandigarh Burail Fort Manimajra Fort Chandi Mandir Elante Mall Paras Downtown Square Tagore Theatre

Postcolonial significance Background For Nehru, Chandigarh represented a vision of how a new planned city could be a canvas for the regeneration of the nation itself after centuries of British colonial rule and the dilution of Indian character from the nation's towns. Guided by the architectural optics of Le Corbusier, the development of Chandigarh was part of a state-driven exercise to break from the traditions of imperialism in urban planning and begin the process of healing from the injustices suffered.

Modernism in new town design Off the back of this conflation of assets Chandigarh then was well poised to serve a function as a city-building project in national identity. From a federal policy perspective, the

development of the new town became a tool in India for modernisation and an intended driver of economic activity, legal reform, and regional growth as well as a significant agent for the decolonisation project. After India's independence in 1947, policymakers for the new Indian government were required to contend with issues such as rapid rural depopulation, urban congestion, and poverty. As well as in Chandigarh this policy tool was implemented in the creation of new capital cities in Bhubaneswar and Gandhinagar, and more broadly throughout India in the 112 planned cities created between independence and 1971, purposed to absorb migration from those regions and provide hubs for growing industries such as in steel and energy. These examples from a genealogy of utopian urban forms developed in post-independence India as a panacea for issues related to underdevelopment as well as post-independence complications to do with separatist religious conflict and the resulting diplomatic tensions. Chandigarh is the first example of a state-funded master-planned modernisation scheme. These "urban utopias" attempt to enforce nation-building policies through a federalised rule of law at a regional level, and diffuse postcolonial urbanism which codes justice in its design. The intent is that the economic success and progressivism of cities such as Chandigarh as a lightning rod for social change would gradually be emulated at the scale of the nation. Chandigarh was for Nehru and Le Corbusier an embodiment of the egalitarian potential offered by modernism, where the machine age would complete the liberation of the nation's citizens through the productive capacity of industrial technology and the relative ease of constructing civic facilities such as dams, hospitals, and schools; the very antithesis of the conservative and traditional legacy of colonialism. Though built as a state capital Chandigarh came to be focused on industry and higher education. The specialisation of these new towns in particular functions represents a crucial aspect of the modernisation process as a decolonising enterprise, in completing a national portfolio where each town forms a part of the utopian model for contemporary India. The post-colonialism of Chandigarh is rooted in the transformation of the political ideas of those such as Nehru who generated a new Indian nationalism through the design of newly built forms. Scholars such as Edward Said have emphasised the sinister nature of nostalgia and the romanticisation of colonial architecture in newly independent colonies as artefacts that perpetuate the ideological legacy of the hegemony and replicate the hierarchy of power even after decolonisation. Insofar as modernism in architecture (which defined town planning under the Nehru era of rule) represents an active radical break from tradition and a colonial past even the very presence of Le Corbusier has been recognised as a form of resistance to the legacy of British influence in Indian architecture, as he provided the first non-British influence on design thinking in India, enabling a generational shift in the contemporary cohort of architects and planners to be hired by the state throughout the rest of the century who were initiated under Modernist conditioning. As early as the 1950s the presence of the International Style could be detected in the design of houses in India, "whether mistri or architect-designed". The development of low-cost housing was a priority for Chandigarh, and the modern forms designed by Corbusier are characterised by a dispensing with colonial forms focused on classic aesthetics and a refocusing on strategies such as using narrow frontages and orientation for minimising direct exposure to the sun and maximising natural ventilation and efficient cost while providing modern amenities in the International Style aesthetic. These developments are credited as the beginning of a "Chandigarh architecture", inspiring gradual experimentation with form and an "Indianising" of the International Style which precipitated the formation of the country's new cultural identity in town design. In 2024, *Tropical Modernism: Architecture and Independence*, an exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, featured designs for Chandigarh.

Criticisms Criticisms are well established regarding the implementation of the postcolonial vision of Nehru and Le Corbusier and the critical emphasis on its influence. Claims have been made that the focus on Corbusier's architect-centred discourse erases the plural authorship of the narrative of Chandigarh's development, arguing that it was, in fact, a hybridity of values and of "contested modernities" of Western and indigenous Indian origin and cultural exchanges rather than an uncontested administrative enterprise. Such criticism is consistent with claims that decolonisation in India has marked a shift from segregation based on race to segregation based on

class and that planned cities are truly "designed" ones which represent the values and interests of a westernised middle-class Indian elite which ignore the complexities of India's diverse ethnic and cultural landscape and enabled neocolonial hierarchies such as the imposition of the Hindi language on non-conforming castes. Brent C. Brolin argues that Le Corbusier ignored Indian preferences in designing the housing and communities and that the residents have done what they can to recreate their accustomed lifestyle. Furthermore, the early over-saturation of the minimalist International Style in building design in Chandigarh has attracted criticisms of effecting a "democratic, self-effacing banality", though this criticism is perhaps negligent of how this was necessary for galvanising higher standards of urban living throughout the country.

Notable people Villages Khuda Jassu

See also Ambala-Chandigarh Expressway Emblem of Chandigarh Kaimbwala Navyug Ramlila and Dussehra Committee New Chandigarh, Punjab

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Further reading External links

Government The official website of Chandigarh Administration General information Geographic data related to Chandigarh at OpenStreetMap

Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu

Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu (IPA: [d̪aːd̪aː n̪aːɡaːr̪aːh̪aːveliː, d̪aːm̪aːn̪ d̪iː]) is a union territory in India. The territory was constituted through the merger of the former territories of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu. Plans for the proposed merger were announced by the Government of India in July 2019; the necessary legislation was passed in the Parliament of India in December 2019 and came into effect on 26 January 2020. The territory is made up of four separate geographical entities: Dadra, Nagar Haveli, Daman, and the island of Diu. All four areas were formerly part of Portuguese India, with a joint capital at Panjim, Goa. They came under Indian rule in the mid-20th century after the Annexation of Goa and of the Free Dadra and Nagar Haveli. Goa, Daman and Diu were jointly administered until 1987, when Goa was granted statehood after the Konkani language agitation. The current capital is Daman and Silvassa is the largest city.

History Daman and Diu were Portuguese colonies from the 1520s until annexed by India on 19 December 1961. Dadra and Nagar Haveli were Portuguese territories from 1779 until annexed by the Indian army on 11 August 1961. Portugal officially recognised Indian sovereignty over the areas in 1974 following the Carnation Revolution. Daman and Diu were administered as part of the union territory of Goa, Daman and Diu between 1962 and 1987, becoming a separate union territory when Goa was granted statehood. In July 2019, the Government of India proposed merging the two territories into a single union territory in order to reduce duplication of services and reduce the cost of administration. Legislation to this effect, the Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu (Merger of Union territories) Bill, 2019, was tabled in the Parliament of India on 26 November 2019 and assented to by the President of India on 9 December 2019. The two union territories had previously shared a common administrator and government officials. The town of Daman was chosen to be the capital of the new combined union territory. The appointed day for the act to come into effect was notified as 26 January 2020 by the Government of India.

Geography Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu is composed of four distinct areas located in Western India. Dadra is a small enclave within the state of Gujarat. Nagar Haveli is a C-shaped enclave located between the states of Gujarat and Maharashtra which contains a counterenclave of Gujarat around the village of Maghval. Daman is an enclave on the southeast coast of Gujarat, while Diu is an island off the southcentral coast of Gujarat.

Administration Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu is administered as a union territory of India by virtue of Article 240 (2) of the Constitution of India. The President of India appoints an administrator to administer the territory on behalf of the central Government of India. The central government may appoint advisers to assist the administrator with his/her duties.

Districts The union territory is made up of three districts:

Law enforcement and justice Law enforcement within the territory is the responsibility of the Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu Police. The territory falls under the jurisdiction of the Bombay High Court.

In the Parliament of India Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu sends two members (MPs) to the lower house of the Indian parliament the Lok Sabha. The territory is divided into the constituencies of Daman and Diu and Dadra and Nagar Haveli.

Demographics See also Goan Civil Code Goa, Daman and Diu Portuguese India 2019 Daman Indigenous Land Clearing Protests Dadra and Nagar Haveli Lok Sabha constituency Daman and Diu Lok Sabha constituency

References External links Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu Administration Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu Tourism

Delhi

Delhi, officially the National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi, is a city and a union territory of India containing New Delhi, the capital of India. Straddling the Yamuna river, but spread chiefly to the west, or beyond its right bank, Delhi shares borders with the state of Uttar Pradesh in the east and with the state of Haryana in the remaining directions. Delhi became a union territory on 1 November 1956 and the NCT in 1995. The NCT covers an area of 1,484 square kilometres (573 sq mi). According to the 2011 census, the population of Delhi city proper was over 11 million, while the NCT's population was about 16.8 million. The topography of the medieval fort Purana Qila on the banks of the river Yamuna matches the literary description of the citadel Indraprastha in the Sanskrit epic Mahabharata; however, excavations in the area have revealed no signs of an ancient built environment. From the early 13th century until the mid-19th century, Delhi was the capital of two major empires, the Delhi Sultanate and the Mughal Empire, which covered large parts of South Asia. All three UNESCO World Heritage Sites in the city, the Qutub Minar, Humayun's Tomb, and the Red Fort, belong to this period. Delhi was the early centre of Sufism and Qawwali music. The names of Nizamuddin Auliya and Amir Khusrau are prominently associated with it. The Khariboli dialect of Delhi was part of a linguistic development that gave rise to the literature of Urdu and later Modern Standard Hindi. Major Urdu poets from Delhi include Mir Taqi Mir and Mirza Ghalib. Delhi was a notable centre of the Indian Rebellion of 1857. In 1911, New Delhi, a southern region within Delhi, became the capital of the British Indian Empire. After independence in 1947, New Delhi continued as the capital of the Dominion of India, and after 1950 of the Republic of India. Post partition, Delhi experienced one of the fastest urban transformations in South Asia. The city's population nearly doubled between 1941 and 1951—from approximately 920,000 to 1.74 million—driven largely by the arrival of over 500,000 Hindu and Sikh refugees from the lands of what is now known as Pakistan, while roughly two-thirds of Delhi's Muslim residents, concentrated mainly in the old walled city, were displaced or migrated to Pakistan. By the early 1950s, urbanization intensified under the Delhi Improvement Trust (established in 1937), which initiated multiple schemes for congestion relief, housing, and urban improvement. However, post-Partition challenges, including land scarcity and rising property prices, limited project completions. During this period, the state acquired agricultural land from surrounding villages for refugee rehabilitation and infrastructure expansion, often under ordinances such as the 1955 Delhi Control of Building Operations Act. Private developers also purchased village lands for residential colonies, for example in Hauz Khas in the mid-1950s. In 1957, the Delhi Development Authority was established. Successive Master Plans converted large tracts of agricultural and village land into residential, commercial, and industrial zones, expanding the city's built-up area from about 326 km in 1961 to approximately 702 km by 2001. Continuous migration from other Indian states, industrial growth, and large-scale state planning further accelerated this process, transforming Delhi from a cluster of villages and small townships into a densely urbanized metropolis, with 97.5 percent of its population classified as urban by 2011. Delhi's urban agglomeration, which includes the satellite cities of Gurgaon, Noida, Greater Noida, Ghaziabad, Faridabad, and YEIDA City located in an area known as the National Capital Region (NCR), has an estimated population of over 28 million, making it the largest metropolitan area in India and the second-largest in the world (after Tokyo). Delhi ranks fifth among the Indian states and union territories in human development index, and has the second-highest GDP per capita in India (after Goa). Although a union territory, the political administration of the NCT of Delhi today more closely resembles that of a state of India, with its own legislature, high court and an executive council of ministers headed by a chief minister. New Delhi is jointly administered by the federal government of India and the local government of Delhi, and serves as the capital of the nation as well as the NCT of Delhi. Delhi is also the centre of the National Capital Region, which is an "interstate regional planning" area created in 1985. Delhi hosted the inaugural 1951 Asian Games, the 1982 Asian Games, the 1983 Non-Aligned Movement summit, the 2010 Men's Hockey World Cup, the 2010 Commonwealth Games,

the 2012 BRICS summit, the 2023 G20 summit, and was one of the major host cities of the 2011 and 2023 Cricket World Cups.

Toponym There are a number of myths and legends associated with the origin of the name Delhi. One of them is derived from Dhillu or Dilu, a king who built a city at this location in 50 BCE and named it after himself. Another legend holds that the name of the city is based on the Prakrit word dhili (loose) and that it was used by the Tomaras to refer to the city because the iron pillar of Delhi had a weak foundation and had to be moved. According to Panjab Notes and Queries, the name of the city at the time of King Prithviraj was dilpat, and that dilpat and dilli are probably derived from the old Hindi word dil meaning "eminence". The former director of the Archaeological Survey of India, Alexander Cunningham, mentioned that dilli later became dihli/dehli. Some suggest the coins in circulation in the region under the Tomaras were called dehlival. According to the Bhavishya Purana, King Prithviraja of Indraprastha built a new fort in the modern-day Purana Qila area for the convenience of all four castes in his kingdom. He ordered the construction of a gateway to the fort and later named the fort dehali. Some historians believe that Dhilli or Dhillika is the original name for the city while others believe the name could be a corruption of the Hindustani words dehleez or dehali-both terms meaning "threshold" or "gateway"-and symbolic of the city as a gateway to the Gangetic Plain. The people of Delhi are referred to as Delhiites or Dilliwalas. The city is referenced in various idioms of the Northern Indo-Aryan languages. Examples include:

Abh¹ Dill² d³r hai (■■■■ ■■■■■■ ■■■■ ■■ / ■■■■ ■■■■ ■■■■ ■■) or its Persian version, Hanuz Dehli dur ast (■■■■■ ■■■■■ ■■■■ ■■■■), literally meaning "Delhi is still far away", which is generically said about a task or journey still far from completion. ■s-p⁴s barse, Dill⁵ p⁶n⁷ tarse (■■-■■■ ■■■■, ■■■■■■ ■■■■ ■■■■ / ■■ ■■■■ ■■■■■ ■■■■ ■■■■ ■■■■), literally meaning "It pours all around, while Delhi lies parched". An allusion to the sometimes semi-arid climate of Delhi, it idiomatically refers to situations of deprivation when one is surrounded by plenty. The form Delhi, spelled in the Latin script with the h following the l, originated under colonial rule and is an alternation of the spelling based on the Urdu name of the city (■■■■■, Dehli).

History Ancient and early medieval periods Traditionally seven cities have been associated with the region of Delhi. The earliest, Indraprastha, is part of a literary description in the Sanskrit epic Mahabharata (composed c. 400 BCE to 300 CE but describing an earlier time) which situates a city on a knoll on the banks of the river Yamuna. According to art historian Catherine B. Asher, the topographical description of the Mahabharata matches the area of Purana Qila, a 14th-century CE fort of the Delhi sultanate, but the analogy does not go much further. Whereas the Mahabharata speaks of a beautifully decorated city with surrounding fortifications, the excavations have yielded "uneven findings of painted grey pottery characteristic of the eleventh century BCE; no signs of a built environment, much fewer fortifications, have been revealed." The earliest architectural relics date back to the Maurya period (c. 300 BCE); in 1966, an inscription of the Mauryan Emperor Ashoka (273-235 BCE) was discovered near Srinivaspuri. Remains of several major cities can be found in Delhi. The first of these was in the southern part of present-day Delhi. Tomara Rajput King Anang Pal built the Lal Kot and several temples in 1052 CE. The Chauhan Rajputs under Vigraharaja IV conquered Lal Kot in the mid-12th century and renamed it Qila Rai Pithora.

Late medieval period Prithviraj Chauhan was defeated in 1192 by Muhammad Ghori in the second battle of Tarain. Qutb-ud-din Aibak, was given the responsibility of governing the conquered territories of India after Ghori returned to his capital, Ghor. When Ghori died without an heir in 1206 CE, Qutb-ud-din assumed control of Ghori's Indian possessions and laid the foundation of the Delhi Sultanate and the Mamluk dynasty. He began

construction of the Qutb Minar and Quwwat-al-Islam (Might of Islam) mosque, the earliest extant mosque in India. It was his successor, Iltutmish (1211-1236), who consolidated the conquest of northern India. At 72.5 m (238 ft), the Qutb Minar, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Delhi, was completed during the reign of Sultan Iltutmish in the 13th century. Although its style has some similarities with the Jarkurgan minaret, it is more closely related to the Ghaznavid and Ghurid minarets of Central Asia. Razia, daughter of Iltutmish, became the Sultana of Delhi upon the former's death. For the next three hundred years, Delhi was ruled by a succession of Turkic, Indian and an Afghan, Lodi dynasty. They built several forts and townships that are part of the seven cities of Delhi. Delhi was a major centre of Sufism during this period. The Mamluk Sultanate (Delhi) was overthrown in 1290 by Jalal ud din Firuz Khalji (1290-1320). Under the second Khalji ruler, Ala-ud-din Khalji, the Delhi sultanate extended its control south of the Narmada River in the Deccan. The Delhi sultanate reached its greatest extent during the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq (1325-1351). In an attempt to bring the whole of the Deccan under control, he moved his capital to Daulatabad, Maharashtra in central India. However, by moving away from Delhi he lost control of the north and was forced to return to Delhi to restore order. The southern provinces then broke away. In the years following the reign of Firoz Shah Tughlaq (1351-1388), the Delhi Sultanate rapidly began to lose its hold over its northern provinces. Delhi was captured and sacked by Timur in 1398, who massacred 100,000 captive civilians. Delhi's decline continued under the Sayyid dynasty (1414-1451), until the sultanate was reduced to Delhi and its hinterland. Under the Afghan Lodi dynasty (1451-1526), the sultanate recovered control of Punjab and the Gangetic plain to once again achieve domination over Northern India. However, the recovery was short-lived and the sultanate was destroyed in 1526 by Babur, founder of the Mughal dynasty.

Early modern period In 1526, Babur, a descendant of Genghis Khan and Timur from the Fergana Valley in modern-day Uzbekistan, invaded India and defeated the last Lodhi sultan in the First Battle of Panipat and founded the Mughal Empire that ruled from Delhi and Agra. The Mughal dynasty ruled Delhi for more than three centuries, with a sixteen-year hiatus during the reigns of Sher Shah Suri and Hemu from 1540 to 1556. Shah Jahan built the seventh city of Delhi that bears his name Shahjahanabad, which served as the capital of the Mughal Empire from 1638 and is today known as the Old City or Old Delhi. After the death of Aurangzeb in 1707, the Mughal Empire's influence declined rapidly as the Hindu Maratha Empire from Deccan Plateau rose to prominence. In 1737, Maratha forces led by Baji Rao I sacked Delhi following their victory against the Mughals in the First Battle of Delhi. In 1739, the Mughal Empire lost the huge Battle of Karnal in less than three hours against the numerically outnumbered but militarily superior Persian army led by Nader Shah of Persia. After his invasion, he completely sacked and looted Delhi, carrying away immense wealth including the Peacock Throne, the Daria-i-Noor, and Koh-i-Noor. The Mughals, severely further weakened, could never overcome this crushing defeat and humiliation which also left the way open for more invaders to come, including eventually the British. Nader eventually agreed to leave the city and India after forcing the Mughal emperor Muhammad Shah I to beg him for mercy and granting him the keys of the city and the royal treasury. A treaty signed in 1752 made Marathas the protectors of the Mughal throne in Delhi. The city was sacked again in 1757 by the forces of Ahmad Shah Durrani, although it was not annexed by the Afghan Empire and being its vassal state under the Mughal emperor. Then the Marathas battled and won control of Delhi from the Afghans.

Colonial period In 1803, during the Second Anglo-Maratha War, the forces of British East India Company defeated the Maratha forces in the Battle of Delhi. During the Indian Rebellion of 1857, Delhi fell to the forces of East India Company after a bloody fight known as the Siege of Delhi. The city came under the direct control of the British Government in 1858. It was made a district province of the Punjab. In 1911, it was announced that the capital of the British Indian Empire was to be transferred from Calcutta to Delhi. This formally transferred on 12 December 1911. The name "New Delhi" was given in 1927, and the new capital was inaugurated on 13 February 1931. New Delhi was officially declared as the capital of the Union of India after the country gained

independence on 15 August 1947.

Partition and post-independence During the partition of India, around five hundred thousand Hindu and Sikh refugees, mainly from West Punjab migrated to Delhi, whereas around three hundred thousand Muslim residents of the city migrated to Pakistan. Delhi has expanded much since 1947; the small part of it that was constructed during the British period has come to be informally known as Lutyens' Delhi. The States Reorganisation Act, 1956 created the Union Territory of Delhi from its predecessor, the Chief Commissioner's Province of Delhi. The Constitution (Sixty-ninth Amendment) Act, 1991 declared the Union Territory of Delhi to be formally known as the National Capital Territory of Delhi. The Act gave Delhi its legislative assembly along Civil lines, though with limited powers. Delhi was the primary site in the nationwide anti-Sikh pogroms of 1984, which resulted in the death of around 2,800 people in the city according to government figures, though independent estimates of the number of people killed tend to be higher. The riots were set off by the assassination of Indira Gandhi-the Prime Minister of India at the time-by her Sikh bodyguards. In 2001, the Parliament of India building in New Delhi was attacked by armed militants, killing six security personnel. India suspected Pakistan-based Jihadist militant groups were behind the attack, which caused a major diplomatic crisis between the two countries. There were further terrorist attacks in Delhi in 2005 and 2008, resulting in a total of 92 deaths. In 2020, Delhi witnessed its worst communal violence in decades. The riots caused 53 people to be killed, two-thirds of whom were Muslims, and the rest Hindus.

Geography Delhi is located in Northern India, at 28.61N 77.23E■ / 28.61; 77.23. The city is bordered on its northern, western, and southern sides by the state of Haryana and to the east by that of Uttar Pradesh (UP). Two prominent features of the geography of Delhi are the Yamuna flood plains and the Delhi ridge. The Yamuna River was the historical boundary between Punjab and UP, and its flood plains provide fertile alluvial soil suitable for agriculture but, are prone to recurrent floods. The Yamuna, a sacred river in Hinduism, is the only major river flowing through Delhi. The Hindon River separates Ghaziabad from the eastern part of Delhi. The Delhi ridge originates from the Aravalli Range in the south and encircles the west, northeast, and northwest parts of the city. It reaches a height of 318 m (1,043 ft) and is a dominant feature of the region. In addition to the wetlands formed by the Yamuna River, Delhi continues to retain over 500 ponds (wetlands < 5 ha (12 acres)), that in turn support a considerable number of bird species. Delhi's ponds, despite experiencing ecological deterioration due to garbage dumping and concretisation, support the largest number of bird species known to be using ponds anywhere in the world. Existing policy in Delhi prevents the conversion of wetlands and, quite inadvertently, has led to the city's ponds becoming invaluable refugia for birds. The National Capital Territory of Delhi covers an area of 1,483 km² (573 sq mi), of which 783 km² (302 sq mi) is designated rural, and 700 km² (270 sq mi) urban therefore making it the largest city in terms of area in the country. It has a length of 51.9 km (32 mi) and a width of 48.48 km (30 mi). Delhi is included in India's seismic zone-IV, indicating its vulnerability to major earthquakes.

Climate Delhi features a hot semi-arid climate (Kppen BSh) bordering a dry winter humid subtropical climate (Kppen Cwa). The warm season lasts from 21 March to 15 June with an average daily high temperature above 39 C (102 F). The hottest day of the year is usually witnessed between 26 and 30 May, with an average high of 42 C (108 F) and low of 27 C (81 F). The cold season lasts from 26 November to 9 February with an average daily high temperature below 20 C (68 F). The coldest day of the year is usually witnessed between 1 and 10 January, with an average low of 6.9 C (44.4 F) and high of 19.3 C (66.7 F). In early March, the wind direction changes from north-westerly to south-westerly. From April to October the weather is hot. The monsoon arrives at the end of June, along with an increase in humidity. The brief, mild winter starts in late November, peaks in January and heavy fog often occurs. Delhi receives an average annual precipitation of 774.4 mm (30.49 in).

Air pollution According to the World Health Organization (WHO), Delhi was the most polluted city in the world in 2014. In 2016, WHO downgraded Delhi to eleventh-worst in the urban air quality database. However, as recently as 2022, data from the WHO and IQAir, alongside comprehensive research, ranked Delhi as the fourth most polluted city globally. According to one estimate, air pollution causes the death of about 10,500 people every year. Air quality index is generally moderate (101-200) level between January and September, and then it drastically deteriorates to Very Poor (301-400), Severe (401-500) or Hazardous (500+) levels in three months between October and December, due to various factors including stubble burning (a type of biomass burning), fire crackers burning during Diwali and cold weather. During 2013-14, peak levels of fine particulate matter (PM) increased by about 44%, primarily due to high vehicular and industrial emissions, construction work and crop burning in adjoining states. It has the highest level of the airborne particulate matter, PM_{2.5} considered most harmful to health, with 153 micrograms. Rising air pollution level has significantly increased lung-related ailments (especially asthma and lung cancer) among Delhi's children and women. The dense smog and haze during winter results in major air and rail traffic disruptions every year. According to Indian meteorologists, the average maximum temperature during winters has declined notably since 1998 due to rising air pollution. India's Ministry of Earth Sciences published a research paper in October 2018 attributing almost 41% of PM_{2.5} air pollution in Delhi to vehicular emissions, 21.5% to dust/fire and 18% to industries. The director of Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) alleged that the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) is lobbying "against the report" because it is "inconvenient" to the automobile industry. Environmentalists have also criticised the Delhi government for not doing enough to curb air pollution and to inform people about air quality issues. In 2014, an environmental panel appealed to India's Supreme Court to impose a 30% cess on diesel cars, but till date no action has been taken to penalise the automobile industry. Most of Delhi's residents are unaware of alarming levels of air pollution in the city and the health risks associated with it. In 2020, annual average PM_{2.5} in the city stood at 107.6 µg/m³, which is almost 21.5 times the WHO's PM_{2.5} Guideline (5 µg/m³; set in September 2021). These pollution levels are estimated to reduce the life expectancy of an average person living in Delhi by almost 10.1 years. However, as of 2015, awareness, particularly among the foreign diplomatic community and high-income Indians, was noticeably increasing. Since the mid-1990s, Delhi has undertaken some measures to curb air pollution-it has the third-highest quantity of trees among Indian cities; the Delhi Transport Corporation operates the world's largest fleet of environmentally friendly compressed natural gas (CNG) buses. In 1996, the CSE started a public interest litigation in the Supreme Court of India that ordered the conversion of Delhi's fleet of buses and taxis to run on CNG and banned the use of leaded petrol in 1998. In 2003, Delhi won the United States Department of Energy's first 'Clean Cities International Partner of the Year' award for its "bold efforts to curb air pollution and support alternative fuel initiatives". The Delhi Metro has also been credited for significantly reducing air pollutants in the city. However, according to several authors, most of these gains have been lost, especially due to stubble burning, a rise in the market share of diesel cars and a considerable decline in bus ridership. According to CSE and System of Air Quality Weather Forecasting and Research (SAFAR), burning of agricultural waste in nearby Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh regions results in severe intensification of smog over Delhi. Delhi has been ranked 7th best "National Clean Air City" (under Category 1 >10L Population cities) in India according to 'Swachh Vayu Survekshan 2024 Results'. According to the World Air Quality Report 2024, Delhi remains the world's most polluted capital city.

Civic administration Currently, the NCT of Delhi is made up of one division, 11 districts, 33 subdivisions, 59 census towns, and 300 villages. On the other way, the NCT of Delhi is divided into three municipalities. The boundaries of municipalities may be different from district boundaries:

Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), which occupies an area of 1,397.3 km² (539.5 sq mi) and is sub-divided into 12 zones, that is, Centre, South, West, Najafgarh, Rohini, Civil Lines, Karol Bagh, SP-City, Keshavpuram,

Narela, Shahdara North and Shahdara South. Raja Iqbal Singh is the current mayor of the unified Municipal Corporation of Delhi since 25 April 2025. New Delhi Municipality, which occupies an area of 42.7 km² (16.5 sq mi) Delhi Cantonment, which occupies an area of 42.3 km² (16.3 sq mi) Between 13 January 2011 and 22 May 2022, MCD was divided into three municipal corporations:

South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) had jurisdiction over South and West Delhi areas, including Mahipalpur, Rajouri Garden, Uttam Nagar, Badarpur, Jaitpur, Janakpuri, Hari Nagar, Tilak Nagar, Dwarka, Jungpura, Greater Kailash, R K Puram, Malviya Nagar, Kalkaji, Ambedkar Nagar and Pul pehladpur. North Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC) had jurisdiction over areas such as Badli, Rithala, Bawana, Kirari, Mangolpuri, Tri Nagar, Model Town, Sadar Bazar, Chandni Chowk, Matia Mahal, Karol Bagh, Moti Nagar East Delhi Municipal Corporation (EDMC) had jurisdiction over areas such as Patparganj, Kondli, Laxmi Nagar, Seemapuri, Gonda, Karawal Nagar, Babarpur and Shahadra. Delhi is home to the High Court of Delhi. The High Court of Delhi is the highest in the Delhi before Supreme Court. The High Court of Delhi just like the apex court and other High Courts in India is the Court of record. Delhi is also home to various District Court according to jurisdictions. Delhi have Currently seven District Courts namely Tis Hazari Court Complex, Karkardooma Court Complex, Patiala House Court Complex, Rohini Court Complex, Dwarka Courts Complex, Saket Court Complex, and Rouse Avenue Court Apart from the District Courts Delhi also have Consumer Courts, CBI Courts, Labour Courts, Revenue Courts, Army tribunals, electricity tribunals, Railway Tribunals, and other various tribunals situated according to appropriate jurisdictions. For policing purposes Delhi is divided into fifteen police districts which are further subdivided into 95 local police station zones. Delhi currently has 180 police stations.

Government and politics As a first-level administrative division, the National Capital Territory of Delhi has its own Legislative Assembly, Lieutenant Governor, the council of ministers, and Chief Minister. Members of the legislative assembly are directly elected from territorial constituencies in the NCT. The legislative assembly was abolished in 1956, after which direct federal control was implemented until it was re-established in 1993. The municipal corporation handles civic administration for the city as part of the Panchayati Raj Act. The Government of India and the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi jointly administer New Delhi, where both bodies are located. The Parliament of India, the Rashtrapati Bhavan (Presidential Palace), Cabinet Secretariat, and the Supreme Court of India are located in the municipal district of New Delhi. There are 70 assembly constituencies and seven Lok Sabha (Indian Parliament's lower house) constituencies in Delhi. The Indian National Congress (Congress) formed all the governments in Delhi until the 1990s, when the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), led by Madan Lal Khurana, came to power. In 1998, the Congress returned to power under the leadership of Sheila Dikshit, who was subsequently re-elected for 3 consecutive terms. But in 2013, the Congress was ousted from power by the newly formed Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) led by Arvind Kejriwal forming the government with outside support from the Congress. However, that government was short-lived, collapsing only after 49 days. Delhi was then under President's rule until February 2015, after which AAP returned to power after a landslide victory, winning 67 out of the 70 seats in the Delhi Legislative Assembly. AAP held power until Feb 2025. Following assembly elections in 2025, BJP came to power.

Economy Delhi is the largest commercial center in northern India. As of 2016 recent estimates of the economy of the Delhi urban area have ranged from \$370 billion to \$400 billion (PPP metro GDP) ranking it either the most or second-most productive metro area of India. The nominal GSDP of the NCT of Delhi for 2016-17 was estimated at ₹6,224 billion (US\$74 billion), 13% higher than in 2015-16. Oxford Economics Global Cities index 2025 ranked Delhi as the best city in India and 119th best city in the world in Economics Category. As per the Economic survey of Delhi (2005-2006), the tertiary sector contributes 70.95% of Delhi's gross SDP followed by

secondary and primary sectors with 25.20% and 3.85% contributions, respectively. Delhi's workforce constitutes 32.82% of the population, and increased by 52.52% between 1991 and 2001. Delhi's unemployment rate decreased from 12.57% in 1999-2000 to 4.63% in 2003. In December 2004, 636,000 people were registered with various employment exchange programmes in Delhi. In 2018 the total workforce in national and state governments and the quasi-government sector was 594,000, and the private sector employed 273,000. Key service industries are information technology, telecommunications, hotels, banking, media and tourism. Construction, power, health and community services and real estate are also important to the city's economy. Delhi has one of India's largest and fastest growing retail industries. Manufacturing also grew considerably as consumer goods companies established manufacturing units and headquarters in the city. Delhi's large consumer market and the availability of skilled labour has also attracted foreign investment. In 2001, the manufacturing sector employed 1,440,000 workers and the city had 129,000 industrial units.

Utility services Delhi's municipal water supply is managed by the Delhi Jal Board (DJB). As of April 2025, it supplied 900 million gallons per day (MGD), whereas the estimated consumption requirement is 963 MGD. The shortfall is met by private and public tube wells and hand pumps. At 240 MGD, the Bhakra storage is DJB's largest water source, followed by the Yamuna and Ganges rivers. Delhi's groundwater level is falling and its population density is increasing, so residents often encounter acute water shortage. Research on Delhi suggests that up to half of the city's water use is unofficial groundwater. In Delhi, daily domestic solid waste production is 8000 tonnes which is dumped at three landfill locations by MCD. The daily domestic waste water production is 470 MGD and industrial waste water is 70 MGD. A large portion of the sewage flows untreated into the Yamuna river. The city's electricity consumption is about 1,265 kWh per capita but the actual demand is higher. In Delhi power distribution is managed by TPDDL and BSES Yamuna & BSES Rajdhani since 2002, transmission of power is done by Delhi Transco Limited and Powergrid, while generation of power is by IPGCL and PPCL. The city also imports a significant quantum of power from other states. The Delhi Fire Service runs 43 fire stations that attend about 15,000 fire and rescue calls per year. The state-owned MTNL and private enterprises such as Airtel, Vi, Jio, and provide telephone and cell phone services to the city. Cellular coverage is available in GSM, 3G, 4G, 4G+ and 5G.

Transport Air Indira Gandhi International Airport, situated to the south-west of Delhi, is the main gateway for the city's domestic and international civilian air traffic. In 2015-16, the airport handled more than 48 million passengers, making it the busiest airport in India and South Asia. Terminal 3, which cost ₹96.8 billion (US\$1.1 billion) to construct between 2007 and 2010, handles an additional 37 million passengers annually. In 2010, IGIA was conferred the 4th best airport award in the world in the 15-25 million category, by Airports Council International. The airport was rated as the Best airport in the world in the 25-40 million passengers category in 2015, by Airports Council International. Delhi Airport was awarded The Best Airport in Central Asia and Best Airport Staff in Central Asia at the Skytrax World Airport Awards 2015. Hindon Domestic Airport in Ghaziabad was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi as the second airport for the Delhi-NCR Region on 8 March 2019. A second international airport open for commercial flights has been suggested either by expansion of Meerut Airport or construction of a new airport in Greater Noida. The Noida International Airport project in Jewar has been approved by the Uttar Pradesh government and is scheduled to open in 2025. The Delhi Flying Club, established in 1928 with two de Havilland Moth aircraft named Delhi and Roshanara, was based at Safdarjung Airport which started operations in 1929, when it was the Delhi's only airport and the second in India. The airport functioned until 2001; however, in January 2002 the government closed the airport for flying activities because of security concerns following 9/11. Since then, the club only carries out aircraft maintenance courses and is used for helicopter rides to Indira Gandhi International Airport for VIP including the president and the prime minister.

Road Delhi has the highest road density of 2103 km/100 km² in India. It is connected to other parts of India by five National Highways: NH 1, NH 2, NH 8, NH 10 and NH 24. The Delhi-Mumbai and Delhi-Kolkata prongs of the Golden Quadrilateral start from the city. The majority of the city's roads which are 60 ft (18 m) wide or above are maintained by the Public Works Department (PWD) which is under the jurisdiction of the Government of Delhi while some are maintained by Delhi Development Authority and New Delhi Municipal Council which are under the jurisdiction of the Government of India. Roads and streets less than 60 ft (18 m) wide are maintained by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi. Roads and streets in unauthorised colonies are maintained by the local Member of the Legislative Assembly. Buses are the most popular means of road transport, catering to about 60% of Delhi's total demand. Delhi has one of India's largest bus transport systems. In 1998, the Supreme Court of India ruled that all public transport vehicles in Delhi must be fuelled by compressed natural gas (CNG) to tackle increasing vehicular pollution. The state-owned Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) is a major bus service provider which operates the world's largest fleet of CNG-fuelled buses. In addition, cluster scheme buses are operated by Delhi Integrated Multi-Modal Transit System (DIMTS) with the participation of private concessionaires and DTC. In December 2017, the DTC and cluster buses carried over 4.19 million passengers per day. Kashmiri Gate ISBT, Anand Vihar ISBT and Sarai Kale Khan ISBT are the main bus terminals for outstation buses plying to neighbouring states. Delhi's rapid rate of economic development and population growth has resulted in an increasing demand for transport, creating excessive pressure on the city's transport infrastructure. To meet the transport demand, the State and Union government constructed a mass rapid transit system, including the Delhi Metro. Delhi Bus Rapid Transit System runs between Ambedkar Nagar and Delhi Gate. As per February 2024, Delhi has around 1,650 electric buses managed by the Delhi Transport Corporation, the highest in India and the third highest in the world after Shenzhen and Santiago. Personal vehicles, especially cars also form a major chunk of vehicles plying on Delhi roads. As of 2007, private vehicles account for 30% of the total demand for transport. Delhi has the highest number of registered cars compared to any other metropolitan city in India. Taxis, auto rickshaws, and cycle rickshaws also ply on Delhi roads in large numbers. As of 2008, the number of vehicles in the metropolitan region, Delhi NCR, was 11.2 million (11.2 million). In 2008, there were 85 cars in Delhi for every 1,000 of its residents. In 2017, the number of vehicles in Delhi city alone crossed the ten million mark with the transport department of Delhi Government putting the total number of registered vehicles at 10,567,712 until 25 May of the year.

Railway Delhi is a major junction in the Indian railway network and is the headquarters of the Northern Railway. The main railway stations are New Delhi, Old Delhi, Hazrat Nizamuddin, Anand Vihar, Delhi Sarai Rohilla and Delhi Cantt. The Delhi Metro, a mass rapid transit system built and operated by Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC), serves many parts of Delhi and the neighbouring cities Ghaziabad, Faridabad, Gurgaon and Noida. As of June 2025, the metro consists of ten operational lines with a total length of 353.23 km (219.49 mi) and 257 stations, and several other lines are under construction. The Phase-I was built at a cost of US\$2.3 billion and the Phase-II was expected to cost an additional ■216 billion (US\$2.6 billion). Phase-II has a total length of 128 km (80 mi) and was completed by 2010. Delhi Metro completed 20 years of operation on 24 December 2022. It carries millions of passengers every day. In addition to the Delhi Metro, a suburban railway, the Delhi Suburban Railway exists.

Metro The Delhi Metro is a rapid transit system serving Delhi, Ghaziabad, Faridabad, Gurgaon and Noida in the National Capital Region of India. It is the world's tenth-largest metro system by length of lines. It was India's second modern public transportation system. The network consists of 10 colour-coded lines serving 257 stations with a total length of 353.23 kilometres (219.49 mi). The system has a mix of underground, at-grade, and elevated stations using both broad-gauge and standard-gauge. All stations have escalators, lifts, and tactile tiles to guide the visually impaired from station entrances to trains. There are 18 designated parking sites at the Metro stations. In March 2010, DMRC partnered with Google India (through Google Transit) to provide train

schedule and route information to mobile devices with Google Maps. It has a combination of elevated, at-grade, and underground lines, and uses both broad gauge and standard gauge rolling stock. Multiple types of rolling stock are used: Mitsubishi-ROTEM Broad gauge, Bombardier MOVIA, Mitsubishi-ROTEM Standard gauge, and CAF Beasain Standard gauge. The Phase-I of Delhi Metro was built for US\$2.3 billion and the Phase-II was expected to cost an additional ₹216 billion (US\$2.6 billion). Phase-II has a total length of 128 km (80 mi) and was completed by 2010. Delhi Metro completed 20 years of operation on 24 December 2022. It carries millions of passengers every day. Although the Delhi Metro was built and is operated by the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC), a state-owned company with equal equity participation of the governments of India and Delhi, it is under the administrative control of the Indian government's Ministry of Urban Development. Besides the construction and operation of the Delhi Metro, DMRC is also involved in the planning and implementation of metro rail, monorail, and high-speed rail projects in India and providing consultancy services to other metro projects in the country as well as abroad.

Demographics Population growth According to the 2011 census of India, the population of the NCT of Delhi is 16,753,235. The corresponding population density was 11,297 persons per km² with a sex ratio of 866 women per 1000 men, and a literacy rate of 86.34%. In 2004, the birth rate, death rate and infant mortality rate per 1000 population were 20.03, 5.59 and 13.08, respectively. In 2001, the population of Delhi increased by 285,000 as a result of migration and by 215,000 as a result of natural population growth, which made Delhi one of the fastest-growing cities in the world. Dwarka Sub City, Asia's largest planned residential area, is located within the National Capital Territory of Delhi. Urban expansion has resulted in Delhi's urban area now being considered as extending beyond the NCT boundaries to incorporate the towns and cities of neighbouring states including Faridabad and Gurgaon in Haryana, and Ghaziabad and Noida in Uttar Pradesh, the total population of which is estimated by the United Nations to be over 28 million. According to the UN this makes Delhi urban area the world's second-largest urban area after Tokyo, although Demographia declares the Jakarta urban area to be the second-largest. The 2011 census provided two figures for urban area population: 16,314,838 within the NCT boundary, and 21,753,486 for the Extended Urban Area. The 2021 regional plan released by the Government of India renamed the Extended Urban Area from Delhi Metropolitan Area (DMA) as defined by the 2001 plan, to Central National Capital Region (CNCR).

Slums As of 2012, around 49% of the population of Delhi lives in slums and unauthorised colonies without any civic amenities. The majority of these slums have inadequate provisions to the basic facilities and according to a DUSIB report, almost 22% of people engage in open defecation.

Religions Hinduism is Delhi's predominant religious faith, with 81.68% of Delhi's population, followed by Islam (12.86%), Sikhism (3.40%), Jainism (0.99%), Christianity (0.87%), and Buddhism (0.11%). Other minority religions include Zoroastrianism, Bahá'ism and Judaism.

Languages According to the 50th report of the commissioner for linguistic minorities in India, which was submitted in 2014, Hindi is Delhi's most spoken language, with 80.94% speakers, followed by Punjabi (7.14%), Urdu (6.31%) and Bengali (1.50%). 4.11% of Delhites speak other languages. Hindi is also the official language of Delhi while Urdu and Punjabi have been declared as additional official languages.

Culture Delhi's culture has been influenced by its lengthy history and historic association as the capital of India. Although a strong Punjabi Influence can be seen in language, dress and cuisine brought by the large number of refugees who came following the partition in 1947 the recent migration from other parts of India has made it a

melting pot. This is exemplified by many significant monuments in the city. The Archaeological Survey of India recognises 1,200 heritage buildings and 175 monuments as national heritage sites. In the Old City, the Mughals and the Turkic rulers constructed several architecturally significant buildings, such as the Jama Masjid-India's largest mosque built in 1656 and the Red Fort. Three World Heritage Sites-the Red Fort, Qutub Minar and Humayun's Tomb-are located in Delhi. Other monuments include the India Gate, the Jantar Mantar-an 18th-century astronomical observatory-and the Purana Qila-a 16th-century fortress. The Laxminarayan Temple, Akshardham temple, Gurudwara Bangla Sahib, the Bahá'í Faith's Lotus Temple and the ISKCON temple are examples of modern architecture. Raj Ghat and associated memorials houses memorials of Mahatma Gandhi and other notable personalities. New Delhi houses several government buildings and official residences reminiscent of British colonial architecture, including the Rashtrapati Bhavan, the Secretariat, Rajpath, the Parliament of India and Vijay Chowk. Safdarjung's Tomb is an example of the Mughal gardens style. Some regal havelis (palatial residences) are in the Old City. Lotus Temple is a Bahá'í House of Worship completed in 1986. Notable for its flowerlike shape, it serves as the Mother Temple of the Indian subcontinent and has become a prominent attraction in the city. The National Museum and National Gallery of Modern Art are some of the largest museums in the country. Other museums in Delhi include the National Museum of Natural History, National Rail Museum and National Philatelic Museum. Chandni Chowk, a 17th-century market, is one of the most popular shopping areas in Delhi for jewellery and Zari saris. Delhi's arts and crafts include, Zardozi-an embroidery done with gold thread-and Meenakari-the art of enamelling.

Festivals Delhi's association and geographic proximity to the capital, New Delhi, has amplified the importance of national events and holidays like Republic Day, Independence Day (15 August) and Gandhi Jayanti. On Independence Day, the Prime Minister addresses the nation from the Red Fort. The Republic Day Parade is a large cultural and military parade showcasing India's cultural diversity and military strength. Over the centuries, Delhi has become known for its composite culture, and a festival that symbolises this is the Phool Walon Ki Sair, which takes place in September. Flowers and pankhe-fans embroidered with flowers-are offered to the shrine of the 13th-century Sufi saint Khwaja Bakhtiyar Kaki and the Yogmaya Temple, both situated in Mehrauli. Religious festivals include Diwali (the festival of lights), Mahavir Jayanti, Guru Nanak's Birthday, Raksha Bandhan, Durga Puja, Holi, Lohri, Chauth, Krishna Janmastami, Maha Shivratri, Eid ul-Fitr, Moharram and Buddha Jayanti. The Qutub Festival is a cultural event during which performances of musicians and dancers from all over India are showcased at night, with the Qutub Minar as a backdrop. Other events such as Kite Flying Festival, International Mango Festival and Vasant Panchami (the Spring Festival) are held every year in Delhi. The Auto Expo, Asia's largest auto show, is held in Delhi biennially. The New Delhi World Book Fair, held biennially at the Pragati Maidan, is the second-largest exhibition of books in the world. Delhi is often regarded as the "Book Capital" of India because of high readership. India International Trade Fair (IITF), organised by ITPO is the biggest cultural and shopping fair of Delhi which takes place in November each year and is visited by more than 1.5 million people.

Cuisine As India's national capital and centuries old Mughal capital, Delhi influenced the food habits of its residents and is where Mughlai cuisine originated. Along with Indian cuisine, a variety of international cuisines are popular among the residents. This variety of cuisines created a unique style of cooking which became popular throughout the world, with dishes such as Kebab, biryani, tandoori. The city's classic dishes include butter chicken, dal makhani, shahi paneer, aloo chaat, chaat, dahi bhalla, kachori, gol gappe, samosa, chole bhature, chole kulche, gulab jamun, jalebi and lassi. The fast living habits of Delhi's people has motivated the growth of street food outlets. A trend of dining at local dhabas is popular among the residents. High-profile restaurants have gained popularity in recent years, among the popular restaurants are the Karim Hotel, the Punjab Grill and Bukhara. The Gali Paranthe Wali (the street of fried bread) is a street in Chandni Chowk particularly for food eateries since the 1870s. Almost the entire street is occupied by fast food stalls or street

vendors. It has nearly become a tradition that almost every prime minister of India has visited the street to eat paratha at least once. Other Indian cuisines are also available in this area even though the street specialises in north Indian food.

Education Private schools in Delhi-which use either English or Hindi as the language of instruction-are affiliated to one of three administering bodies, the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE), the Central Board for Secondary Education (CBSE) or the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS). In 2004-05, approximately 1,529,000 students were enrolled in primary schools, 822,000 in middle schools and 669,000 in secondary schools across Delhi. Female students represented 49% of the total enrolment. The same year, the Delhi government spent between 1.58% and 1.95% of its gross state domestic product on education. Schools and higher educational institutions in Delhi are administered either by the Directorate of Education, the NCT government or private organisations. In 2006, Delhi had 165 colleges, five medical colleges and eight engineering colleges, seven major universities and nine deemed universities. The premier management colleges of Delhi such as Faculty of Management Studies (Delhi) and Indian Institute of Foreign Trade rank the best in India. All India Institute of Medical Sciences Delhi is a premier medical school for treatment and research. National Law University, Delhi is a prominent law school and is affiliated with the Bar Council of India. The Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi situated in Hauz Khas is a premier engineering college of India and ranks as one of the top institutes in South Asia. Delhi Technological University (formerly Delhi College of Engineering), Indira Gandhi Delhi Technical University for Women (formerly Indira Gandhi Institute of Technology), Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology, Netaji Subhas University of Technology (formerly Netaji Subhas Institute of Technology), Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University and National Law University, Delhi are the only state universities. Delhi University, Jawaharlal Nehru University and Jamia Millia Islamia are the central universities, and Indira Gandhi National Open University is for distance education. As of 2008, about 16% of all Delhi residents possessed at least a college graduate degree. According to the Directorate of Education and GNCTD the following languages are taught in schools in Delhi under the three-language formula:

First language: Hindi, Urdu, English Second language: English Third language: Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, Gujarati, Marathi, Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic

Media As the capital of India, Delhi is the focus of political reportage, including regular television broadcasts of Parliament sessions. Many national media agencies, including the state-owned Press Trust of India, Media Trust of India and Doordarshan, are based in the city. Television programming includes two free terrestrial television channels offered by Doordarshan, and several Hindi, English, and regional-language cable channels offered by multi system operators. Satellite television has yet to gain a large number of subscribers in the city. Print journalism remains a popular news medium in Delhi. The city's Hindi newspapers include Navbharat Times, Hindustan Dainik, Punjab Kesari, Pavitra Bharat, Dainik Jagran, Dainik Bhaskar, Amar Ujala and Dainik Desbandhu. Among the English language newspapers, the Hindustan Times, with a daily circulation of over a million copies, is the single largest daily. Other major English newspapers include The Times of India, The Hindu, The Indian Express, Business Standard, The Pioneer, The Statesman, and The Asian Age. Regional language newspapers include the Malayalam daily Malayala Manorama and the Tamil dailies Dinamalar and Dinakaran. Qaumi Duniya Daily was a local Urdu newspaper, which has since moved online. Radio is a less popular mass medium in Delhi, although FM radio has gained popularity since the inauguration of several new stations in 2006. A number of state-owned and private radio stations broadcast from Delhi.

Sports Delhi hosted the first Asian Games in 1951 from 4 to 11 March. A total of 489 athletes representing 11 Asian National Olympic Committees participated in 57 events from eight sports and discipline. The Games was the successor of the Far Eastern Games and the revival of the Western Asiatic Games. On 13 February 1949, the Asian Games Federation was formally established in Delhi, with Delhi unanimously announced as the first host city of the Asian Games. National Stadium was the venue for all events. Over 40,000 spectators watched the opening ceremony of the Games in National Stadium. Delhi hosted the ninth Asian Games for the second time in 1982 from 19 November to 4 December. This was the second time the city has hosted the Asian Games and was also the first Asian Games to be held under the aegis of the Olympic Council of Asia. A total of 3,411 athletes from 33 National Olympic Committees participated in these games, competing in 196 events in 21 sports and 23 disciplines. The Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, which has a capacity of 60,000 people, was built purposely for the event and hosted its opening ceremony. Delhi hosted the Nineteenth Commonwealth Games in 2010, which ran from 3 to 14 October and was the largest sporting event held in India. The opening ceremony of the 2010 Commonwealth Games was held at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, the main stadium of the event, in New Delhi at 7:00 pm Indian Standard Time on 3 October 2010. The ceremony featured over 8,000 performers and lasted for two and a half hours. It is estimated that ■3.5 billion (US\$41 million) were spent to produce the ceremony. Events took place at 12 competition venues. 20 training venues were used in the Games, including seven venues within Delhi University. The rugby stadium in Delhi University North Campus hosted rugby games for Commonwealth Games. Cricket and football are the most popular sports in Delhi. There are several cricket grounds, or maidans, located across the city. The Arun Jaitley Stadium (known commonly as the Kotla) is one of the oldest cricket grounds in India and is a venue for international cricket matches. It is the home ground of Delhi cricket team and the Indian Premier League franchise Delhi Capitals. The Delhi cricket team represents the city in the Indian domestic tournaments. It has produced several world-class international cricketers such as Virender Sehwag, Virat Kohli, Gautam Gambhir, Madan Lal, Chetan Chauhan, Shikhar Dhawan, Ishant Sharma, Manoj Prabhakar and Bishan Singh Bedi to name a few. The Railways and Services cricket teams of domestic circuit also play their home matches in Delhi, at the Karnail Singh Stadium and the Palam A Stadium, respectively. Ambedkar Stadium, a football stadium in Delhi which holds 21,000 people, was the venue for the Indian football team's World Cup qualifier against UAE on 28 July 2012. Delhi hosted the Nehru Cup in 2007 and 2009, in both of which India defeated Syria 1-0. Delhi's professional association football club Delhi FC competes in I-League. In the Elite Football League of India, Delhi's first professional American football franchise, the Delhi Defenders played its first season in Pune. Buddh International Circuit in Greater Noida, a suburb of Delhi, formerly hosted the Formula 1 Indian Grand Prix.

City-based clubs See also Delhi metropolitan area List of people from Delhi List of twin towns and sister cities in India Smog tower

Notes References Further reading External links

Official website Delhi web resources provided by GovPubs at the University of Colorado Boulder Libraries Delhi at the Encyclopædia Britannica Wikimedia Atlas of Delhi Geographic data related to Delhi at OpenStreetMap

Jammu and Kashmir

Jammu and Kashmir may refer to:

Jammu and Kashmir (union territory), a region administered by India as a union territory since 2019 Jammu and Kashmir (state), a region administered by India as a state from 1952 to 2019 Jammu and Kashmir (princely state), a princely state of the British Raj extending into the Indian Union between 1846 and 1952 Azad Kashmir or Azad Jammu and Kashmir, a region administered by Pakistan as an autonomous administrative division Kashmir, the northernmost geographical region of the Indian subcontinent

See also Kashmir conflict Aksai Chin Trans-Karakoram Tract Gilgit-Baltistan Ladakh Jammu (disambiguation) Kashmir (disambiguation) JK (disambiguation), common abbreviation

Ladakh

Ladakh () is a region administered by India as a union territory and constitutes an eastern portion of the larger Kashmir region that has been the subject of a dispute between India and Pakistan since 1947 and India and China since 1959. Ladakh is bordered by the Tibet Autonomous Region to the east, the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh to the south, both the Indian-administered union territory of Jammu and Kashmir and the Pakistan-administered Gilgit-Baltistan to the west, and the southwest corner of Xinjiang across the Karakoram Pass in the far north. It extends from the Siachen Glacier in the Karakoram range to the north to the main Great Himalayas to the south. The eastern end, consisting of the uninhabited Aksai Chin plains, is claimed by the Indian Government as part of Ladakh, but has been under Chinese control. In the past, Ladakh gained importance from its strategic location at the crossroads of important trade routes, but as Chinese authorities closed the borders between Tibet Autonomous Region and Ladakh in the 1960s, international trade dwindled. Since 1974, the Government of India has successfully encouraged tourism in Ladakh. As Ladakh is strategically important, the Indian military maintains a strong presence in the region. The largest town in Ladakh is Leh, followed by Kargil, each of which headquarters a district. The Leh district contains the Indus, Shyok and Nubra river valleys. The Kargil district contains the Suru, Dras and Zaskar river valleys. The main populated regions are the river valleys, but the mountain slopes also support pastoral Changpa nomads. The main religious groups in the region are Muslims (mainly Shia) (46%), Buddhists (mainly Tibetan Buddhists) (40%), and Hindus (12%) with the remaining 2% made of other religions. Ladakh is both the largest and the second least populous union territory of India. Its culture and history are closely related to those of Tibet. Ladakh was established as a union territory of India on 31 October 2019, following the passage of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act. Prior to that, it was part of the Jammu and Kashmir state.

Names and their etymology The classical name in Tibetan: ལ་དག་ལྷོ་ཁྱེད་, Wylie: La dwags, THL: la dak means the "land of high passes". Ladak is its pronunciation in several Tibetan dialects. The English spelling Ladakh is derived from Persian: ladāk. The region was previously known as Maryul (see page for etymology). Medieval Islamic scholars called Ladakh the "Great Tibet" (derived from Turko-Arabic Ti-bat, meaning "highland"); Baltistan and other trans-Himalayan states in Kashmir's vicinity were referred to as "Little Tibets". It has also been called Ma-Lo-Pho (by Hiuen Tsang) or Lal Bhumī. Names in the local language include Kanchapa (Land of snow) and Ripul (Country of mountains).

History Ancient history Rock carvings found in many parts of Ladakh indicate that the area has been inhabited from Neolithic times. Ladakh's earliest inhabitants consisted of nomads known as Kampa. Later settlements were established by Mons from Kullu and Brokpas who originated from Gilgit. Around the 1st century, Ladakh was a part of the Kushan Empire. Buddhism spread into western Ladakh from Kashmir in the 2nd century. The 7th-century Buddhist traveller Xuanzang describes the region in his accounts. Xuanzang's term of Ladakh is Mo-lo-so, which has been reconstructed by academics as *Malasa, *Marśa, or *Mrśa, which is believed to have been the original name of the region. For much of the first millennium, western Tibet comprised Zhangzhung kingdom(s), which practised the Bon religion. Sandwiched between Kashmir and Zhangzhung, Ladakh is believed to have been alternatively under the control of one or other of these powers. Academics find strong influences of Zhangzhung language and culture in "upper Ladakh" (from the middle section of the Indus valley to the southeast). The penultimate king of Zhangzhung is said to have been from Ladakh. From around 660 CE, the Tang dynasty and the Tibetan Empire started contesting the "four garrisons" of the Tarim Basin (present day Xinjiang), a struggle that lasted three centuries. Zhangzhung fell victim to Tibet's ambitions in c.

634 and disappeared. Karkota Empire and the Umayyad Caliphate too joined the contest for Xinjiang soon afterwards. Baltistan and Ladakh were at the centre of these struggles. Academics infer from the slant of Ladakhi chronicles that Ladakh may have owed its primary allegiance to Tibet during this time, but that it was more political than cultural. Ladakh remained Buddhist and its culture was not yet Tibetan.

Early medieval history In the 9th century, Tibet's ruler Langdarma was assassinated and Tibet fragmented. Kyide Nyimagon, Langdarma's great-grandson, fled to West Tibet c. 900 CE, and founded a new West Tibetan kingdom at the heart of the old Zhangzhung, now called Ngari in the Tibetan language.

Nyimagon's eldest son, Lhachen Palgyigon, is believed to have conquered the regions to the north, including Ladakh and Rutog. After the death of Nyimagon, his kingdom was divided among his three sons, Palgyigon receiving Ladakh, Rutog, Thok Jalung and an area referred to as Demchok Karpo (a holy mountain near the present-day Demchok village). The second son received Guge-Purang (called "Ngari Korsum") and the third son received Zaskar and Spiti (to the southwest of Ladakh). This three-way division of Nyimagon's empire was recognised as historic and remembered in the chronicles of all the three regions as a founding narrative.

He gave to each of his sons a separate kingdom, viz., to the eldest Dpal-gyi-gon, Maryul of Mngah-ris, the inhabitants using black bows; ru-thogs [Rutog] of the east and the Gold-mine of Hgog [possibly Thok Jalung]; nearer this way Lde-mchog-dkar-po [Demchok Karpo]; ... The first West Tibetan dynasty of Maryul founded by Palgyigon lasted five centuries, being weakened towards its end by the conquests of the Mongol/Mughal noble Mirza Haidar Dughlat. Throughout this period the region was called "Maryul", possibly from the original proper name *Mrasa (Xuangzhang's, Mo-lo-so), but in the Tibetan language it was interpreted to mean "lowland" (the lowland of Ngari). Maryul remained staunchly Buddhist during this period, having participated in the second diffusion of Buddhism from India to Tibet via Kashmir and Zaskar.

Medieval history Between the 1380s and early 1510s, many Islamic missionaries propagated Islam and proselytised the Ladakhi people. Sayyid Ali Hamadani, Sayyid Muhammad Nur Baksh and Mir Shamsuddin Iraqi were three important Sufi missionaries who propagated Islam to the locals. Mir Sayyid Ali was the first one to make Muslim converts in Ladakh and is often described as the founder of Islam in Ladakh. Several mosques were built in Ladakh during this period, including in Mulbhe, Padum and Shey, the capital of Ladakh. His principal disciple, Sayyid Muhammad Nur Baksh also propagated Islam to Ladakhis and the Balti people rapidly converted to Islam. Noorbakshia Islam is named after him and his followers are only found in Baltistan and Ladakh. During his youth, Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin expelled the mystic Sheikh Zain Shahwalli for showing disrespect to him. The sheikh then went to Ladakh and proselytised many people to Islam. In 1505, Shamsuddin Iraqi, a noted Shia scholar, visited Kashmir and Baltistan. He helped in spreading Shia Islam in Kashmir and converted the overwhelming majority of Muslims in Baltistan to his school of thought.

It is unclear what happened to Islam after this period and it seems to have received a setback. Mirza Muhammad Haidar Dughlat who invaded and briefly conquered Ladakh in 1532, 1545 and 1548, does not record any presence of Islam in Leh during his invasion although Shia Islam and Noorbakshia Islam continued to flourish in other regions of Ladakh. King Bhagan reunited and strengthened Ladakh and founded the Namgyal dynasty (Namgyal means "victorious" in several Tibetan languages). The Namgyals repelled most Central Asian raiders and temporarily extended the kingdom as far as Nepal. During the Balti invasion led by Raja Ali Sher Khan Anchan, many Buddhist temples and artefacts were damaged. Ali Sher Khan took the king and his soldiers as captives. Jamyang Namgyal was later restored to the throne by Ali Sher Khan and given the

hand of a Muslim princess in marriage. Her name was Gyal Khatun or Argyal Khatoon. She was to be the first queen and her son was to become the next ruler. Historical accounts differ upon who her father was. Some identify Ali's ally and Raja of Khaplu Yabgo Shey Gilazi as her father, while others identify Ali himself as the father. In the early 17th century efforts were made to restore the destroyed artefacts and gonpas by Sengge Namgyal, the son of Jamyang and Gyal. He expanded the kingdom into Zangskar and Spiti. Despite a defeat of Ladakh by the Mughals, who had already annexed Kashmir and Baltistan, Ladakh retained its independence.

Islam begins to take root in the Leh area in the beginning of the 17th century after the Balti invasion and the marriage of Gyal to Jamyang. A large group of Muslim servants and musicians were sent along with Gyal to Ladakh and private mosques were built where they could pray. The Muslim musicians later settled in Leh. Several hundred Baltis migrated to the kingdom and according to oral tradition many Muslim traders were granted land to settle. Many other Muslims were invited over the following years for various purposes. In the late 17th century, Ladakh sided with Bhutan in its dispute with Tibet which, among other reasons, resulted in its invasion by the Tibetan Central Government. This event is known as the Tibet-Ladakh-Mughal war of 1679-1684. Kashmiri historians assert that the king converted to Islam in return for the assistance by Mughal Empire after this, however, Ladakhi chronicles do not mention such a thing. The king agreed to pay tribute to the Mughals in return for defending the kingdom. The Mughals, however, withdrew after being paid off by the 5th Dalai Lama.

Princely state of Jammu and Kashmir In 1834, the Sikh Zorawar Singh, a general of Raja Gulab Singh of Jammu, invaded and annexed Ladakh to Jammu under the suzerainty of the Sikh Empire. After the defeat of the Sikhs in the First Anglo-Sikh War, the state of Jammu and Kashmir was established as a separate princely state under British suzerainty. The Namgyal family was given the jagir of Stok, which it nominally retains to this day. European influence began in Ladakh in the 1850s and increased. Geologists, sportsmen, and tourists began exploring Ladakh. In 1885, Leh became the headquarters of a mission of the Moravian Church. Ladakh was administered as a wazarat under Dogra rule, with a governor termed wazir-e-wazarat. It had three tehsils, based at Leh, Skardu and Kargil. The headquarters of the wazarat was at Leh for six months of the year and at Skardu for six months. When the legislative assembly, called Praja Sabha, was established in 1934, Ladakh was given two nominated seats in the assembly. Ladakh was claimed as part of Tibet by Phuntsok Wangyal, a Tibetan Communist leader.

Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir At the time of the partition of India in 1947, the Dogra ruler Maharaja Hari Singh chose to remain independent of India or Pakistan. Pakistani soldiers from Gilgit invaded in October and had reached Ladakh. To get defence assistance from India, Singh was told by Nehru to sign the Instrument of Accession to India, and military operations were initiated to counter the invasion. The wartime conversion of the pony trail from Sonamarg to Zoji La by army engineers permitted tanks to move up and successfully capture the pass. The advance continued. Dras, Kargil and Leh were liberated and Ladakh cleared of the infiltrators. In 1949, China closed the border between Nubra and Xinjiang, blocking old trade routes. In 1955 China began to build roads connecting Xinjiang and Tibet through the Aksai Chin area. The Indian effort to gain control of Aksai Chin led to the Sino-Indian War of 1962, which India lost. China also built the Karakoram highway jointly with Pakistan. India built the Srinagar-Leh Highway during this period, cutting the journey time between Srinagar and Leh from 16 days to two. The route, however, remains closed during the winter months due to heavy snowfall. Construction of a 6.5 km (4.0 mi) tunnel across Zoji La pass is under consideration to make the route functional throughout the year.

The Kargil War of 1999, codenamed "Operation Vijay" by the Indian Army, saw infiltration by Pakistani troops into parts of Western Ladakh, namely Kargil, Dras, Mushkoh, Batalik and Chorbitla, overlooking key locations on the Srinagar-Leh highway. Extensive operations were launched in high altitudes by the Indian Army with considerable artillery and air force support. Pakistani troops were evicted from the Indian side of the Line of Control which the Indian government ordered was to be respected and which was not crossed by Indian troops. The Indian government was criticised by the Indian public because India respected geographical co-ordinates more than India's opponents: Pakistan and China. The Ladakh region was divided into the Kargil and Leh districts in 1979. In 1989, there were violent riots between Buddhists and Muslims. Following demands for autonomy from the Kashmiri-dominated state government, the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council was created in the 1990s. Leh and Kargil districts now each have their own locally elected Hill Councils with some control over local policy and development funds. In 1991, a Peace Pagoda was erected in Leh by Nipponzan Myohoji. There was a heavy presence of Indian Army and Indo-Tibetan Border Police forces in Ladakh. These forces and People's Liberation Army forces from China have, since the 1962 Sino-Indian War, had frequent stand-offs along the Ladakh portion of the Line of Actual Control. Out of the 857-kilometre-long (533 mi) border in Ladakh, only 368 km (229 mi) is the International Border, and the remaining 489 km (304 mi) is the Line of Actual Control. The stand-off involving the most troops was in September 2014 in the disputed Chumar region when 800 to 1,000 Indian troops and 1,500 Chinese troops came into close proximity to each other.

Ladakh Division On 8 February 2019, Ladakh became a separate Revenue and Administrative Division within Jammu and Kashmir, having previously been part of the Kashmir Division. As a division, Ladakh was granted its own Divisional Commissioner and Inspector General of Police. Leh was initially chosen to be the headquarters of the new division however, following protests, it was announced that Leh and Kargil will jointly serve as the divisional headquarters, each hosting an Additional Divisional Commissioner to assist the Divisional Commissioner and Inspector General of Police who will spend half their time in each town.

Union territory of Ladakh The people of Ladakh had been demanding Ladakh to be constituted as a separate territory since 1930s, because of perceived unfair treatment by Kashmir and Ladakh's cultural differences with predominantly Muslim Kashmir valley, while some people in Kargil opposed union territory status for Ladakh. The first organised agitation was launched against Kashmir's "dominance" in the year 1964. In late 1980s, a much larger mass agitation was launched to press their demand for union territory status. In August 2019, a reorganisation act was passed by the Parliament of India which contained provisions to reconstitute Ladakh as a union territory, separate from the rest of Jammu and Kashmir on 31 October 2019. Under the terms of the act, the union territory is administered by a Lieutenant Governor acting on behalf of the union Government of India and does not have an elected legislative assembly or chief minister. Each district within the union territory continues to elect an autonomous district council as done previously. The demand for Ladakh as separate union territory was first raised by the parliamentarian Kushok Bakula Rinpoche around 1955, which was later carried forward by another parliamentarian Thupstan Chhewang. The former Jammu and Kashmir state used to obtain large allocation of annual funds from the union government based on the fact that the large geographical area of the Ladakh (comprising 65% of total area), but Ladakh was allocated only 2% of the state budget based on its relative population. Within the first year of the formation of Ladakh as separate union territory, its annual budget allocation has increased 4 times from ₹57 crore to ₹232 crore. On 24 September 2025, the protest march led by Sonam Wangchuk demanded full statehood of Ladakh.

Geography Ladakh is the highest plateau in India with most of it being over 3,000 m (9,800 ft). It extends from the Himalayan to the Kunlun Ranges and includes the upper Indus River valley.

Historically, the region included the Baltistan (Baltiyul) valleys (now mostly in Pakistani-administered Kashmir), the entire upper Indus Valley, the remote Zaskar, Lahaul and Spiti districts to the south, much of Ngari (including the Rudok region and Guge in the east), Aksai Chin in the northeast, and the Nubra Valley to the north, over Khardong La in the Ladakh Range. Contemporary Ladakh borders Tibet to the east, the Lahaul and Spiti regions to the south, the Vale of Kashmir, Jammu and Baltiyul regions to the west, and the southwest corner of Xinjiang, China across the Karakoram Pass in the far north. The historically vague divide between Ladakh and the Tibetan Plateau commences to the north in an intricate maze of ridges to the east of Rudok, including Aling Kangri and Mavang Kangri, continuing southeastward toward northwestern Nepal. Before partition, Baltistan, now part of Pakistan, had been a district of Ladakh; Skardu was the winter capital of Ladakh, with Leh being the summer capital. The mountain ranges in this region were formed over 45 million years by the folding of the Indian Plate into the more stationary Eurasian Plate. The drift continues, causing frequent earthquakes in the Himalayan region. The peaks in the Ladakh Range are at a medium altitude close to the Zoji-la (5,000-5,500 m or 16,400-18,000 ft) and increase toward southeast, culminating in the twin summits of Nun-Kun (7,000 m or 23,000 ft). The Suru and Zaskar Valleys form a great trough, enclosed by the Himalayas and the Zaskar Range. Rangdum is the highest inhabited region in the Suru valley, after which the valley rises to 4,400 m (14,400 ft) at Pensi-la, the gateway to Zaskar. Kargil, the only town in the Suru Valley, is the second-most important town in Ladakh. It was an important staging post on the routes of trade caravans prior to 1947, being more-or-less equidistant (at about 230 kilometres) from Srinagar, Leh, Skardu and Padum. The Zaskar Valley lies in the troughs of the rivers Stod and Lungnak. The region experiences heavy snowfall; the Pensi-la is open only between June and mid-October. Dras and the Mushkoh Valley form the western extremity of Ladakh. The Indus River is the backbone of Ladakh. Most major historical and current towns - Shey, Leh, Basgo and Tingmosgang (but not Kargil), are close to the Indus River. After the Indo-Pakistani War of 1947, the stretch of the Indus flowing through Ladakh became the only part of this river, which is greatly venerated in the Hindu religion and culture, that still flows through India. The Siachen Glacier is in the eastern Karakoram Range in the Himalaya Mountains along the disputed India-Pakistan border. The Karakoram Range forms a great watershed that separates China from the Indian subcontinent and is sometimes called the "Third Pole". The glacier lies between the Salto Ridge immediately to the west and the main Karakoram Range to the east. At 76 km (47 mi) long, it is the longest glacier in the Karakoram and second-longest in the world's non-polar areas. It falls from an altitude of 5,753 m (18,875 ft) above sea level at its source at Indira Col on the China border down to 3,620 m (11,880 ft) at its snout. Saser Kangri is the highest peak in the Saser Muztagh, the easternmost subrange of the Karakoram Range in India, Saser Kangri I having an altitude of 7,672 m (25,171 ft). The Ladakh Range has no major peaks; its average height is a little less than 6,000 m (20,000 ft), and few of its passes are less than 5,000 m (16,000 ft). The Pangong range runs parallel to the Ladakh Range for about 100 km (62 mi) northwest from Chushul along the southern shore of the Pangong Lake. Its highest point is about 6,700 m (22,000 ft) and the northern slopes are heavily glaciated. The region comprising the valley of the Shayok and Nubra rivers is known as Nubra. The Karakoram Range in Ladakh is not as mighty as in Baltistan. The massifs to the north and east of the Nubra-Siachen line include the Apsarasas Group (highest point at 7,245 m or 23,770 ft) the Rimo Muztagh (highest point at 7,385 m or 24,229 ft) and the Teram Kangri Group (highest point at 7,464 m or 24,488 ft) together with Mamostong Kangri (7,526 m or 24,692 ft) and Singhi Kangri (7,202 m or 23,629 ft). North of the Karakoram lies the Kunlun. Thus, between Leh and eastern Central Asia there is a triple barrier - the Ladakh Range, Karakoram Range, and Kunlun. Nevertheless, a major trade route was established between Leh and Yarkand.

Ladakh is a high-altitude desert; the Himalayas create a rain shadow which generally denies passage of any monsoon clouds. The main source of water is the winter snowfall on the mountains. Recent flooding in the region (e.g., the 2010 floods) has been attributed to abnormal rain patterns and retreating glaciers, both of

which have been found to be linked to global climate change. The Leh Nutrition Project, headed by Chewang Norphel-also known as the "Glacier Man"-creates artificial glaciers as one solution for retreating glaciers. The regions on the north flank of the Himalayas - Dras, the Suru valley and Zangskar - experience heavy snowfall and remain cut-off from the rest of the region for several months during the year, just as the entire region remains isolated by road from the rest of the country. Summers are short, though they are long enough to grow crops; summer weather is dry and pleasant. Peak temperatures range from 3 to 35 C (37 to 95 F) in the summer and minimums range from -20 to -35 C (-4 to -31 F) in winter. The Zaskar (along with its tributaries) is the primary waterway of the region. The Zaskar freezes solid during the winter, and the famous Chadar trek takes place on the magnificent frozen river.

Flora and fauna Vegetation is extremely sparse in Ladakh except along streambeds and wetlands, on high slopes, and irrigated places. About 1250 plant species, including crops, were reported from Ladakh. The plant *Ladakiella klimesii*, growing up to 6,150 metres (20,180 ft) above sea level, was first described here and named after this region. The first European to study the wildlife of this region was William Moorcroft in 1820, followed by Ferdinand Stoliczka, an Austrian-Czech palaeontologist, who carried out a massive expedition there in the 1870s. There are many lakes in Ladakh such as Kyago Tso. The bharal (or blue sheep) is the most abundant mountain ungulate in the Ladakh region, although it is not found in some parts of Zangskar and Sham areas. The bharal is one of the preferred choices of prey of the rare snow leopard. The Asiatic ibex is a mountain goat that is distributed in the western part of Ladakh. It is the second-most abundant mountain ungulate in the region, with a population of about 6,000 individuals. It is adapted to rugged areas where it easily climbs near-vertical rock faces when threatened. The Ladakhi urial is another unique mountain sheep that inhabits the mountains of Ladakh. The population is declining, however, and there are not more than 3,000 individuals left in Ladakh. The urial is endemic to Ladakh, where it is distributed only along two major river valleys, namely the Indus and Shayok. The animal is often persecuted by farmers, whose crops are allegedly damaged by flocks of urial. Its population declined dramatically in the late twentieth century, due to indiscriminate shooting by hunters along the Leh-Srinagar Highway. The Tibetan argali (or nyan) is the largest wild sheep species in the world, standing 1.1 to 1.2 metres (3.5 to 4 ft) at the shoulder, possessing very large, curled horns measuring 900-1,000 mm (35-39 in). It is distributed on the Tibetan Plateau and its marginal ranges, encompassing a total home range of 2.5 million km² (0.97 million sq mi); however, there is only a small population, of about 400 animals, in Ladakh. Unlike other mountain sheep and goat species, the argali prefers open, grassy fields and rolling hills as it prefers to run, rather than climb into steep terrain, to flee from danger. The endangered Tibetan antelope, or chiru in Indian English (or Ladakhi tsos), has traditionally been hunted for its wool (shahtoosh), a natural fibre of some of the finest quality. The wool of the Tibetan antelope is prized for its lightweight feel and as a status symbol. The wool must be pulled out by hand, a process done after the animal is killed. The fibre is smuggled into Kashmir and woven into exquisite shawls by Kashmiri workers. Ladakh is also home to the Tibetan gazelle, which inhabits the vast rangelands in eastern Ladakh bordering Tibet.

The kiang, or Tibetan wild ass, is common in the grasslands of Changthang, numbering about 2,500 individuals. These animals are in conflict with the nomadic people of Changthang who hold the Kiang responsible for pasture degradation. There are about 200 snow leopards in Ladakh of an estimated 7,000 worldwide. The Hemis High Altitude National Park in central Ladakh is an especially good habitat for this predator as it has abundant prey populations. The Eurasian lynx, is another rare cat that preys on smaller herbivores in Ladakh. It is mostly found in Nubra, Changthang and Zangskar. The Pallas's cat, which looks somewhat like a house cat, is very rare in Ladakh and not much is known about the species. The Tibetan wolf, which sometimes preys on the livestock of the Ladakhis, is the most persecuted among the predators. There are also a few brown bears in the Suru Valley and the area around Dras. The Tibetan sand fox has been discovered in this region. Among smaller animals, marmots, hares, and several types of pika and vole are common.

Flora Scant precipitation makes Ladakh a high-altitude desert with extremely scarce vegetation over most of its area. Natural vegetation mainly occurs along water courses and on high altitude areas that receive more snow and cooler summer temperatures. Human settlements, however, are richly vegetated due to irrigation. Natural vegetation commonly seen along watercourses includes seabuckthorn (*Hippophae* spp.), wild roses of pink or yellow varieties, tamarisk (*Myricaria* spp.), caraway, stinging nettles, mint, *Physochlaina praealta*, and various grasses.

Administration Under the terms of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, Ladakh is administered as a union territory without a legislative assembly or elected government. The head of government is a Lieutenant Governor appointed by the President of India who is assisted by civil servants of the Indian Administrative Service.

Districts Municipalities Leh Kargil

Autonomous District Councils Ladakh is administered by 2 autonomous district councils, they are:

Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, Kargil Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, Leh The two autonomous district councils work with village panchayats to take decisions on economic development, healthcare, education, land use, taxation, and local governance which are further reviewed at the block headquarters in the presence of the chief executive councillor and executive councillors. The government of Jammu and Kashmir looks after law and order, the judicial system, communications and the higher education in the region. The two autonomous district councils continue to exist following the formation of the union territory of Ladakh on 31 October 2019. Government of India announced the formation of 5 new districts, namely Zaskar, Drass, Sham, Nubra, and Changthang in Ladakh to ease administration and increase representation by the year 2028. With this move, the total number of districts in Ladakh will increase from two to seven.

Law enforcement and justice Ladakh is under the jurisdiction of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. The union territory of Ladakh has its own police force headed by a director general of police.

Ladakh in the Parliament of India Ladakh sends one member (MP) to the lower house of the Indian parliament, the Lok Sabha. The MP for the Ladakh constituency in the current Lok Sabha is Mohmad Haneefa, who was elected as an independent candidate.

Economy The land is irrigated by a system of channels which funnel water from the ice and snow of the mountains. The principal crops are barley and wheat. Rice was previously a luxury in the Ladakhi diet, but, subsidised by the government, has now become a cheap staple. Naked barley (Ladakhi: nas, Urdu: grim) was traditionally a staple crop all over Ladakh. Growing times vary considerably with altitude. The extreme limit of cultivation is at Korzok, on the Tso-moriri lake, at 4,600 m (15,100 ft), which has what are widely considered to be the highest fields in the world. A minority of Ladakhi people were also employed as merchants and caravan traders, facilitating trade in textiles, carpets, dyestuffs and narcotics between Punjab and Xinjiang. However, since the Chinese Government closed the borders between Tibet Autonomous Region and Ladakh, this international trade has completely dried up. Indus river flowing in the Ladakh region is endowed with vast hydropower potential. Solar and wind power potentials are also substantial. Though the region is a remote hilly

area without all-weather roads, the area is also rich in limestone deposits to manufacture cement from the locally available cheap electricity for various construction needs. Since 1974, the Indian Government has encouraged a shift in trekking and other tourist activities from the troubled Kashmir region to the relatively unaffected areas of Ladakh. Although tourism employs only 4% of Ladakh's working population, it accounted for 50% of the region's GNP in the year 2000. Since then, tourism has increased, exceeding 500,000 people in 2022 and 2023. The sharpest growth began after 2010 when the Bollywood film 3 Idiots -filmed in part on the Pangong Lake in Ladakh - became a big hit in India. This is a contrast to the population of Leh, 31,000. This increase adds to the economy but it is having negative effects on the land due to the increase in waste and increasing water scarcity. This era is recorded in Arthur Neves The Tourist's Guide to Kashmir, Ladakh, and Skardo, first published in 1911, described in the Lonely Planet travel guide in 2002.

Transportation There are about 1,800 km (1,100 mi) of roads in Ladakh of which 800 km (500 mi) are surfaced. The majority of roads in Ladakh are looked after by the Border Roads Organisation. There are two main roads that connect Ladakh with the rest of the country, NH1 connecting Srinagar to Kargil and Leh, and NH3 connecting Manali to Leh. A third road to Ladakh is the Nimmu-Padam-Darcha road, which is under construction.

There is an airport in Leh, Kushok Bakula Rimpochee Airport, from which there are daily flights to Delhi and weekly flights to Srinagar and Jammu. There are two airstrips at Daulat Beg Oldie and Fukche for military transport. The airport at Kargil, Kargil Airport, was intended for civilian flights but is currently used by the Indian Army. The airport is a political issue for the locals who argue that the airport should serve its original purpose, i.e., should open up for civilian flights. Since past few years the Indian Air Force has been operating AN-32 air courier service to transport the locals during the winter seasons to Jammu, Srinagar and Chandigarh. A private aeroplane company Air Mantra landed a 17-seater aircraft at the airport, in presence of dignitaries like the Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, marking the first ever landing by a civilian airline company at Kargil Airport.

Demographics The sex ratio for Leh district declined from 1011 females per 1000 males in 1951 to 805 in 2001, while for Kargil district it declined from 970 to 901. The urban sex ratio in both the districts is about 640. The adult sex ratio reflects large numbers of mostly male seasonal and migrant labourers and merchants. About 84% of Ladakh's population lives in villages. The average annual population growth rate from 1981 to 2001 was 2.75% in Leh District and 2.83% in Kargil district.

Religion The Dras and Dha-Hanu regions are inhabited by Brokpa, Drokpa, Dard and Shinu tribes and Shina people respectively, who are predominately followers of Islam while small minorities follow Tibetan Buddhism and Hinduism. The region's population is split roughly in half between the districts of Leh and Kargil. 76.87% population of Kargil is Muslim (mostly Shia), with a total population of 140,802, while that of Leh is 66.40% Buddhist, with a total population of 133,487, as per the 2011 census. In 2024, five new districts were created. Currently Buddhism is the majority faith in five of the districts-Leh, Changthang, Zaskar, Sham and Nubra; and Islam is the majority faith in Kargil and Drass district. Majority Ladakhis, Changpa and Brokpa follow Buddhism.

Languages The predominant mother-tongue in Leh district is Ladakhi (also called Bauti), a Tibetic language. Purgi, sometimes considered a dialect of Balti, is the predominant mother-tongue of Kargil district. Within Ladakh, there is a range of dialects, so that the language of the Chang-pa people may differ markedly from that of the Purig-pa in Kargil, or the Zangskaris, but they are all mutually comprehensible. Most Ladakhi people (especially the younger generations) speak fluently in English and in Hindi too, due to the languages education

at school. Administrative work and education are carried out in English.

Culture Ladakhi culture is similar to Tibetan culture.

Cuisine Ladakhi food has much in common with Tibetan food, the most prominent foods being thukpa (noodle soup) and tsampa, known in Ladakhi as ngampe (roasted barley flour). Edible without cooking, tsampa makes useful trekking food. Strictly Ladakhi dishes include skyu and chutagi, both heavy and rich soup pasta dishes, skyu being made with root vegetables and meat, and chutagi with leafy greens and vegetables. As Ladakh moves toward a cash-based economy, foods from the plains of India are becoming more common. As in other parts of Central Asia, tea in Ladakh is traditionally made with strong green tea, butter, and salt. It is mixed in a large churn and known as gurgur cha, after the sound it makes when mixed. Sweet tea (cha ngarmo) is common now, made in the Indian style with milk and sugar. Most of the surplus barley that is produced is fermented into chang, an alcoholic beverage drunk especially on festive occasions.

Music and dance The music of Ladakhi Buddhist monastic festivals, like Tibetan music, often involves religious chanting in Tibetan as an integral part of the religion. These chants are complex, often recitations of sacred texts or in celebration of various festivals. Yang chanting, performed without metrical timing, is accompanied by resonant drums and low, sustained syllables. Religious mask dances are an important part of Ladakh's cultural life. Hemis monastery, a leading centre of the Drukpa tradition of Buddhism, holds an annual masked dance festival, as do all major Ladakhi monasteries. The dances typically narrate a story of the fight between good and evil, ending with the eventual victory of the former. Weaving is an important part of traditional life in eastern Ladakh. Both women and men weave, on different looms.

Sport The most popular sport in Ladakh is ice hockey, which is played only on natural ice generally mid-December through mid-February. Cricket is also very popular. Archery is a traditional sport in Ladakh, and many villages hold archery festivals, which are as much about traditional dancing, drinking and gambling, as they are about the sport. The sport is conducted with strict etiquette, to the accompaniment of the music of surna and daman (shehnai and drum). Polo, the other traditional sport of Ladakh, is indigenous to Baltistan and Gilgit, and was probably introduced into Ladakh in the mid-17th century by King Singge Namgyal, whose mother was a Balti princess. Polo, popular among the Baltis, is an annual affair in the Dras region of Kargil district. The Ladakh Marathon is a high-altitude marathon held in Leh every year since 2012. Held at a height of 11,500 to 17,618 feet (3,505 to 5,370 m), it is one of the world's highest marathons.

Social status of women A feature of Ladakhi society that distinguishes it from the rest of the state is the high status and relative emancipation enjoyed by women compared to other rural parts of India. Fraternal polyandry and inheritance by primogeniture were common in Ladakh until the early 1940s when these were made illegal by the government of Jammu and Kashmir. However, the practice remained in existence into the 1990s especially among the elderly and the more isolated rural populations. Another custom is known as khang-bu, or 'little house', in which the elders of a family, as soon as the eldest son has sufficiently matured, retire from participation in affairs, yielding the headship of the family to him and taking only enough of the property for their own sustenance.

Traditional medicine Tibetan medicine has been the traditional health system of Ladakh for over a thousand years. This school of traditional healing contains elements of Ayurveda and Chinese medicine, combined with

the philosophy and cosmology of Tibetan Buddhism. For centuries, the only medical system accessible to the people have been the amchi, traditional doctors following the Tibetan medical tradition. Amchi medicine remains a component of public health, especially in remote areas. Programmes by the government, local and international organisations are working to develop and rejuvenate this traditional system of healing. Efforts are underway to preserve the intellectual property rights of amchi medicine for the people of Ladakh. The government has also been trying to promote the sea buckthorn in the form of juice and jam, as some claim it possess medicinal properties. The National Research Institute for Sowa-Rigpa in Leh is an institute for research into traditional medicine and a hospital providing traditional treatments.

Education According to the 2001 census, the overall literacy rate in Leh District is 62% (72% for males and 50% for females), and in Kargil District 58% (74% for males and 41% for females). Traditionally there was little or nothing by way of formal education except in the monasteries. Usually, one son from every family was obliged to master the Tibetan script in order to read the holy books. The Moravian Mission opened a school in Leh in October 1889, and the Wazir-i Wazarat (ex officio Joint Commissioner with a British officer) of Baltistan and Ladakh ordered that every family with more than one child should send one of them to school. This order met with great resistance from the local people who feared that the children would be forced to convert to Christianity. The school taught Tibetan, Urdu, English, Geography, Sciences, Nature study, Arithmetic, Geometry and Bible study. It is still in existence today. The first local school to provide western education was opened by a local Society called "Lamdon Social Welfare Society" in 1973. Later, with support from Dalai Lama and some international organisations, the school, now known as Lamdon Model Senior Secondary School, has grown to accommodate approximately two thousand pupils in several branches. It prides itself on preserving Ladakhi tradition and culture. Schools are well distributed throughout Ladakh but 75% of them provide only primary education. 65% of children attend school, but absenteeism of both students and teachers remains high. In both districts the failure rate at school-leaving level (class X) had for many years been around 85%-95%, while of those managing to scrape through, barely half succeeded in qualifying for college entrance (class XII). Before 1993, students were taught in Urdu until they were 14, after which the medium of instruction shifted to English. As of January 2022, there were 904 Government run schools in Ladakh and 113 publicly run private schools in Ladakh. In 1994 the Students' Educational and Cultural Movement of Ladakh (SECMOL) launched Operation New Hope (ONH), a campaign to provide "culturally appropriate and locally relevant education" and make government schools more functional and effective. Central Institute of Buddhist Studies a Deemed University in Leh is the oldest institution in this region which mainly focuses on Buddhist philosophy but also offer degrees in different fields.

The University of Ladakh with its two campuses (One each in Kargil & Leh) and its constituent colleges enables students to pursue higher education without having to leave Ladakh. A central University has also been approved to be set up in Ladakh by the Union Cabinet. The Indian Astronomical Observatory is located in Hanle and is operated by the Indian Institute of Astrophysics. In December 2019, the union minister of state for home affairs Mr G Kishan Reddy, in a written response has stated in Parliament that the Government of India has approved to establish a Medical College and National Research Institute for Sowa-Rigpa in the district of Leh. In August 2021, the Parliament of India amended the Central Universities Act to establish a central university in Ladakh named "Sindhu Central University".

Media The government radio broadcaster All India Radio (AIR) and government television station Doordarshan have stations in Leh that broadcast local content for a few hours a day. Beyond that, Ladakhis produce feature films that are screened in auditoriums and community halls. They are often made on fairly modest budgets. On 14 December 2021, the first FM radio station in Ladakh was established in Leh. There are a handful of private

news outlets.

Reach Ladakh Bulletin, a biweekly newspaper in English, is the only print media published by and for Ladakhis. Rangyul or Kargil Number is a newspaper published from Kashmir covering Ladakh in English and Urdu. Ladags Melong, an initiative of SECMOL, was published from 1992 to 2005 in English and Ladakhi. Sintic Magazine, a lifestyle and tourist magazine of Ladakh, was started in 2018 in English. Some publications that cover Jammu and Kashmir as a whole provide some coverage of Ladakh.

The Daily Excelsior claims to be "The largest circulated daily of Jammu and Kashmir". Epilogue, a monthly magazine covering Jammu and Kashmir. Kashmir Times, a daily newspaper covering Jammu and Kashmir.

Gallery See also Notes References Citations Sources Emmer, Gerhard (2007), "Dga' Ldan Tshe Dbang Dpal Bzang Po and the Tibet-Ladakh-Mughal War of 1679-84", Proceedings of the Tenth Seminar of the IATS, 2003. Volume 9: The Mongolia-Tibet Interface: Opening New Research Terrains in Inner Asia, BRILL, pp. 81-108, ISBN 978-90-474-2171-9 Fisher, Margaret W.; Rose, Leo E.; Huttenback, Robert A. (1963), Himalayan Battleground: Sino-Indian Rivalry in Ladakh, Praeger, ASIN B0007DVVG2, archived from the original on 27 August 2017 Francke, August Hermann (1907), A History of Western Tibet, S. W. Partridge & Co, ISBN 9788120610439 - via archive.org {{citation}}: ISBN / Date incompatibility (help) Francke, August Hermann (1992) [first published 1926]. Antiquities of Indian Tibet. Asian Educational Services. p. 94. ISBN 81-206-0769-4. {{cite book}}: |work= ignored (help) Handa, O. C. (2001), Buddhist Western Himalaya: A politico-religious history, Indus Publishing, ISBN 978-81-7387-124-5 Jina, Prem Singh (1996), Ladakh: The Land and the People, Indus Publishing, ISBN 978-81-7387-057-6 Lo Bue, Erberto; Bray, John, eds. (2014), "Introduction", Art and Architecture in Ladakh: Cross-cultural Transmissions in the Himalayas and Karakoram, BRILL, ISBN 978-90-04-27180-7 Dorjay, Phuntsog (2014), "Embedded in Stone-Early Buddhist Rock Art of Ladakh", Ibid, BRILL, pp. 35-67, ISBN 9789004271807 Howard, Neil; Howard, Kath (2014), "Historic Ruins in the Gya Valley, Eastern Ladakh, and a Consideration of Their Relationship to the History of Ladakh and Maryul", Ibid, BRILL, pp. 68-99, ISBN 9789004271807 Petech, Luciano (1977), The Kingdom of Ladakh, c. 950-1842 A.D. (PDF), Istituto Italiano Per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente - via academia.edu Jina, Prem Singh (1 January 1995). Famous Western Explorers to Ladakh. Indus Publishing. pp. 123-. ISBN 978-81-7387-031-6.

Further reading External links

Government of Ladakh official website

Lakshadweep

Lakshadweep (Malayalam: [lɐkʃɐd̪wɐp]) is a union territory of India. It is an archipelago of 36 islands divided into three island subgroups: the Amindivi Islands in the north, the Laccadive Islands (separated from Amindivi roughly by the 11th parallel north), and the atoll of Minicoy to the south of the Nine Degree Channel. The islands are located between the Arabian Sea to the west and the Laccadive Sea to the east, about 220-440 km (140-270 mi) off the Malabar Coast of mainland India. The islands occupy a total land area of approximately 32.62 km² (12.59 sq mi) with a population of 64,473 as per the 2011 census across the ten inhabited islands. There is a 132 km (82 mi) long coastline with a lagoon area of 4,200 km² (1,600 sq mi), territorial waters of 20,000 km² (7,700 sq mi) and an exclusive economic zone of 400,000 km² (150,000 sq mi). Lakshadweep is the northernmost island group of the exposed undersea mountain range, the Chagos-Lakshadweep Ridge. The entire union territory is administered as a single district with Kavaratti as its capital. Archaeological evidence from Kalpeni indicates human settlement in the region from at least 1500 BCE with early reference to the islands in the Buddhist Jataka tales from the 3rd century BCE and the Tamil Sangam literature *Pattinappattu*. The region was controlled by the Cheras in the Sangam period (3rd century BCE to 3rd century CE) and later by the Pallavas. Islam is presumed to have been brought in the 7th century by the arrival of Muslims. In the 11th century CE, the region was under influence of the Chola kingdom and formed a part of the trade route that connected the Middle East with South Asia. It came under the influence of the Portuguese briefly in the late 15th century CE before being ruled by the Arakkal kingdom, who were vassals of the Kolathiri Rajas of Kannur. The region was under the influence of the Mysore kingdom in the late 18th century and was later annexed to the British Empire in 1799 CE. The islands became part of the Dominion of India following the Indian Independence in 1947 and was incorporated as a union territory in 1956. The name Lakshadweep literally means "one hundred thousand islands" in Malayalam and Sanskrit. English is the designated official language while Jeseri, a dialect of Malayalam, is the widely spoken native language. Dhivehi is the most spoken language in the Minicoy Island. The region comes under the judicial jurisdiction of the Kerala High Court. Fishing and agriculture are the major occupations in the islands.

Etymology The name Lakshadweep is derived from *Lakṣadvīpa* meaning "one hundred thousand islands," presumably from Sanskrit or Malayalam. Laccadive seems to be the result of the anglicization of the given name during the British Raj. Amindivi derives its name from the Amindivi people, who were the earliest inhabitants of the Amini Island. The native name of the Minicoy Island is *Maliku*, and the given name is the anglicized version derived from the Nicobarese word *Minikaa-raajje* (meaning "land of the cannibals") as the island was known then in the Andaman and Nicobar.

History **Early history** The early human migration from Africa to the Andaman Islands through India was thought by scientists to include Lakshadweep because of its location between Africa and the southwestern region of India. However, later genetic studies indicated that the majority of human ancestry in the islands derived from South Asia. Archaeological evidence from Kalpeni indicate the existence of human settlements in the region from at least 1500 BCE. The islands are mentioned in the Buddhist Jataka tales, dated to 3rd century CE. Archeological evidence indicates the spread of Buddhism to the islands during the time of Sanghmitra, the daughter of emperor Ashoka, presumed to have visited the island. Tamil Sangam literature *Pattinappattu* mentions that the region was ruled by the Cheras, one of the three kingdoms of ancient Tamilakam, in the Sangam period (3rd century BCE to 3rd century CE). The islands have been known to sailors since at least 1st century CE, as indicated in the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*. It contains an anonymous reference to the

islands off the coast of Damirica as a source of a turtle shell. In 2nd century CE, Greek historian Ptolemy mentions 1378 islands located opposite to Taprobane (Sri Lanka) with the names of some of the islands given as Kanathara (Kavaratti), Argidion (Agatti), Ammine (Amini), and Monache (Minicoy). The islands later became part of a trade route with the Roman empire, with archeological evidence from as early as 2nd century CE obtained from Kadamath and Androth islands. Other travelers and historians such as Ammianus Marcellinus (4th century CE), Faxian (5th century CE), and Cosmas (6th century CE) mention the islands in their writings.

Middle Ages Local traditions attribute the first settlement on the islands to Cheraman Perumal, the last Chera king of Kerala, though no historical evidence exists apart from the presence of ancient Hindu social stratification. According to local tradition, Islam was brought to the islands by Ubaidullah in 661 CE, whose purported grave is located in the Andrott island. Inscriptions from Vayalur (in Tamil Nadu) indicates a naval battle fought during the reign of Narasimhavarman II (680-720 CE), which resulted in the capture of the territory by the Pallavas of Kanchi in the late 7th century CE. Epigraphs indicate the capture of the region of Kavadi Dvepa (presumably Kavaratti) by the Kadambas in the 10th century CE. In the 11th century CE, the islands came under the rule of the Cholas. Chola inscriptions from Thanjavur, indicate that the region was captured by Rajendra Chola I in 1018-19 CE. In the late 11th century CE, it became part of a small Hindu kingdom before being passed on to the Kingdom of Kannur in early 12th century CE. The islands are mentioned in the writings of travelers Marco Polo and Ibn Battuta in the 13th-14th century CE.

European colonization In the late 15th century CE, the islands came under the control of the Portuguese as a source of coir for their industries. The native islanders revolted against the Portuguese and expelled them in 1545 CE. In the mid 16th century CE, all inhabited islands were conferred as jagir (land grant) to the ruling family of Kannur by the Chirakkal family of Kolathiri to grant protection from the Portuguese. The Aminidivi islands came under the rule of Tipu Sultan of Mysore Kingdom in 1787 CE and were later annexed to the British Raj in 1799 CE after the Fourth Anglo-Mysore War. The rest of the islands remained under the suzerainty of the Arakkal family in return for a payment of annual tribute to the British. The British took over the administration of these islands in 1908 CE, citing the nonpayment of taxes, and attached it to the Madras Presidency.

Post Independence After Indian Independence from colonial British rule in 1947, the islands became part of the Dominion of India, and later came under the administration of the Madras State after the Constitution of India was enacted in 1950. Following the States Reorganisation Act (1956), the islands, which were earlier divided between the South Canara and Malabar districts of the Madras state, were organized into a separate union territory administered by the Government of India. The Laccadive, Minicoy, and Amindivi Islands were collectively renamed as the Lakshadweep islands on 1 November 1973. The headquarters of the union territory remained at Kozhikode until 1964, when the seat of the Administrator was shifted to Kavaratti. The territory has developed into a key Indian naval establishment due to its strategic location near vital shipping lanes from India to the Middle East.

Geography Lakshadweep is an archipelago of 36 islands and islets that includes 12 atolls, three reefs, and five submerged banks. The islands occupy a total land area of approximately 32.62 km² (12.59 sq mi) and only ten of the islands are inhabited. The islands are located between the Arabian Sea to the west and the Laccadive Sea to the east, about 220-440 km (140-270 mi) off the Malabar Coast of mainland India. The territory is divided into three island subgroups: the Amindivi islands in the north, the Laccadive islands in the East (separated from Amindivi by the 11th parallel north), and the atoll of Minicoy to the south of the Nine Degree Channel. The islands have a 132 km (82 mi) long coastline with a lagoon area of 4,200 km² (1,600 sq mi), territorial waters of 20,000 km² (7,700 sq mi), and an exclusive economic zone of 400,000 km² (150,000 sq mi). Lakshadweep is

the northernmost island group of the exposed undersea mountain range, the Chagos-Lakshadweep Ridge. While there are no conclusive theories about the formation of the atolls, Charles Darwin proposed in 1842 CE that the subsidence of a volcanic island resulted in the formation of a fringing reef, which grew upwards with continual subsidence. The individual islands are small, with none of them measuring more than 1 mi (1.6 km) across. Most inhabited islands are situated on the eastern side of Lakshadweep and away from the low-lying lagoons to the West. The soil is generally sandy, derived from coral. According to a 2017 report, the Parali I island of Bangaram atoll has eroded and is completely inundated. Four other islands in the atoll also show various degrees of erosion: Parali II (80%), Thinnakara (14.4%), Parali III (11.4%), and Bangaram (9.9%).

Climate The islands have a tropical monsoon climate, bordering on a tropical savanna climate. The weather is warm throughout the year with temperatures ranging from 20 to 32 degree Celsius. While tropical cyclones arising in the Arabian Sea rarely strike the islands due to its smaller size, winds and waves associated with them could alter the features of the islands considerably.

Flora and fauna Lakshadweep is part of the Maldives-Lakshadweep-Chagos Archipelago tropical moist forests ecoregion. There are no forests on the islands. Nearly 400 species of flowering plants have been documented, including three species of sea grasses *Cymodocea isoetifolia*, *Syringodium isoetifolium* and *Thalassia hemprichii*, other angiosperms such as *Pandanus*, *Heliotropium foertherianum*, *Tournefortia argentea* and *Pemphis acidula*, fungi, algae, and lichens. The common flora of the atolls include coconut groves and coastal shrubs such as *Pemphis acidula*, *Cordia subcordata*, *Scaevola taccada*, *Thespesia populnea*, *Suriana maritima*, *Dodonaea viscosa*, *Guettarda speciosa*, and seaweeds such as sea lettuces, *Codium*, and *Hypena*. There are over 600 recorded species of marine fishes, 78 species of corals, 82 species of seaweed, 52 species of crabs, 2 species of lobsters, 48 species of gastropods, and 12 species of bivalves. It is one of the four coral reef regions in India. Cetacean diversity off the Lakshadweep Islands and in adjacent areas include various whales (e.g., pygmy blue, Bryde's, sperm, orca, pilot whale), and dolphins. The commonly seen are introduced cattle and poultry. Other notable marine fauna include sharks, bonitos, tunas, snappers, flying fish, Manta rays, octopuses, crabs, and turtles. There are 101 species of birds, common amongst them include the brown noddy and sooty tern and water birds such as herons, teals, and gulls. Pitti island is a declared bird sanctuary and an important breeding place for sea turtles and a number of pelagic birds including the brown noddy, lesser crested tern, and greater crested tern.

Administration and politics Lakshadweep is a Union Territory and is governed by an administrator on behalf of the Government of India. It was established in 1956 and constitutes a single Indian district. The headquarters of the union territory were at Kozhikode until 1964, when the seat of the administrator of the islands was shifted to Kavaratti. Since then, the administration secretariat is based in Kavaratti. The territory is divided into ten administrative sub-divisions headed by sub-divisional officers, except the Minicoy and Agatti islands which are headed by deputy collectors. The ten inhabited islands have village panchayats consisting of a total of 88 members across islands. These panchayats are combined to form a district panchayat, which has 26 elected members including the chairpersons of the ten village panchayats and the Member of Parliament for Lakshadweep Lok Sabha Constituency. The territory is also divided into five community development blocks: Kavaratti, Amini, Andrott, Minicoy and Kiltan, each administered by Collector-cum-Development Commissioner, who is in charge of revenue and land settlement in their respective block. The commissioner also serves as a District magistrate and is assisted by an additional district magistrate and ten executive magistrates for enforcement of law and order. The administrator acts as the Inspector General of Police and has command and control of the Lakshadweep Police, which has a sanctioned strength of 349 personnel across nine police stations. The territory elects one member to the lower house of the Indian parliament, the Lok Sabha.

Lakshadweep is a reserved constituency for Scheduled Tribes. The union territory falls under the judicial jurisdiction of the Kerala High Court at Kochi, and has a system of lower courts under its authority. There is a district and sessions court in Kavaratti (established in 1997) and two munsiff courts in Andrott and Amini islands.

Demographics According to the 2011 census, Lakshadweep has a population of 64,473, consisting of 33,123 (51.3%) males and 31,350 (48.7%) females, and had a sex ratio of 946 females per 1,000 males in 2011. It also recorded the highest sex ratio at birth amongst Indian territories as per the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) in 2021. As per the 2011 census, there were a total of 11,574 households and about 50,332 (78%) of the population lived in urban areas. As per the NSO survey in 2017, the literacy rate was 92.28%, the second highest amongst all Indian territories. As per the NFHS, the fertility rate was 1.4, significantly below the national average of 2.0.

Religion and ethnicity Islam (96.6%) is the major religion of people of the islands with Sunni Islam being the predominant denomination, followed by Hinduism (2.8%) and Christianity (0.5%). Most settlers of the islands are descendants of migrants from the Malabar coast of Southwest India and are ethnically similar to the Mappilas of Kerala. According to local tradition, Islam was brought to the islands by Ubaidullah in 661 CE. Although Islam is the predominant religion currently, the earliest settlers were probably Hindus, evidenced by the current social stratification and matrilineal kinship system in Lakshadweep. The southernmost island of Minicoy is populated by the Mahls, an ethnic group also resident in the Maldives.

Languages English is the official language of the union territory. Jeseri (also known as Dweep Basha), a dialect of Malayalam, is widely spoken language in the Amindivi and Laccadive islands. Mahl, a dialect of Dhivehi, is spoken in Minicoy. There are minor variations of the same dialect across islands. Malayalam, written in the Malayalam script, was introduced as the primary language of Lakshadweep during the British Raj. This policy has been continued since independence, with Malayalam serving as a link language on all islands, including Minicoy. Previously, a type of Arabic script, known as the Ponnani or Arabi Malayalam script, was used as the writing system.

Economy The economy is dependent on agriculture, fishery, and tourism. As of 2013, there were 72 registered micro and small industries majorly involved in the public sector, and the manufacture of food products and furniture. With a minimal arable land of 2.58 hectares, the major agriculture produce is coconuts. The major exports from Lakshadweep are coconut products including coconut fibre (coir) and fishes. The government runs five coir factories, five production demonstration centers, and seven curling units that produce coir fiber, yarn and mats.

With a vast lagoon area and an exclusive economic zone of 400,000 km² (150,000 sq mi), fishing is a major industry. The estimated annual production is 21,016 tonnes of which 60% is tuna and related fishes. About 60% of the total production is converted to dried products and 40% is allocated for local consumption. Commercial fishing is concentrated around 11 islands with skipjack tuna and yellowfin tuna being the only commercial varieties. The government runs a tuna canning factory in the islands. Fishing is carried out using mechanized fishing boats, traditional country crafts, and country crafts fitted with outboard motors.

Tourism in Lakshadweep began in 1974, when the Bangaram atoll was opened for international tourism. According to government statistics, 10,435 domestic tourists and 1,313 foreign tourists visited the islands in

2018. The government is promoting tourism as a means to increase the income of the local population, with Bangaram and Kadmat islands being promoted as potential tourist destinations. To promote tourism, activities such as scuba diving, wind surfing, snorkelling, surfing, kayaking, canoeing, water skiing, sportfishing, yachting and night sea voyages have been established. Tourists require permission to visit Lakshadweep and foreign nationals are not permitted to visit certain islands. According to the current alcohol laws of India, alcoholic beverage consumption is not permitted on the islands, except on Bangaram. In 2024, the government proposed further programmes to improve infrastructure and promote tourism. The potential negative effects of tourism on the environment and ecosystem of the islands are a subject of debate.

Infrastructure There is no single power grid that connects Lakshadweep; independent power houses cater to the power requirements of the islands. Minicoy was the first island to be electrified in 1962, followed by Kavaratti in 1964 and others later, with Bitra being the last island to be electrified in 1982. Two diesel generators were established in 1962, which generate about 51.6 Kilo Watts of power. As of 2012, the islands have 41 diesel generators and 12 solar photovoltaic systems with a total installed capacity of 18.5 Mega Watts. In January 2024, a solar power plant was commissioned to augment the power generation capacity. The world's first ever experimental low-temperature thermal desalination plant opened in Kavaratti in 2005, with a projected daily production capacity of 100,000 litres of potable water from seawater. The plant utilises the temperature difference between warm surface seawater and much colder seawater at about 500 m (1,600 ft) depth to generate potable water as well as energy. The technology was developed at the National Institute of Ocean Technology and the government has announced plans to build three more such plants. Mobile communication service is provided by state-owned BSNL across all inhabited islands and Airtel in Kavaratti and Agatti islands. In 2020, the government announced a project to install under-sea fiber optic cable for high-speed mobile and internet connectivity between Kochi and 11 islands of Lakshadweep, which was inaugurated in January 2024. Post offices run by India Post provide mail service. Lakshadweep is served by four hospitals with 200 beds, four primary health centers, and 14 sub-health centers operated by the government.

Transportation The only airport in the territory is Agatti Airport on Agatti Island. The 1.2 km (0.75 mi) runway is capable of serving small turboprop aircraft. The government announced a plan in early 2024 to extend the runway to enable it to handle larger narrow body aircraft and expand the infrastructure to convert the airport into dual-use for civilian and military purposes. The construction of a greenfield airport at Minicoy Island was also proposed. Two helicopters are presently operated by Pawan Hans and are utilised for passenger transport and emergency medical evacuation from the islands. As of 2019, there are 228 km (142 mi) of paved roads and no railway in the territory. Additional roads have been planned, including a peripheral road at Kavaratti and beach front roads at Kadamath and Agatti islands. As of 2023, seven ships operate passenger services between Kochi and the islands, with seasonal boat/ferry services available between islands. In 2024, the government unveiled a plan to develop three ports at Androth, Kalpeni and Kadamath islands as a part of the Sagar Mala project. The ten inhabited island each have a minor port. There are fifteen lighthouses on the islands, with the Minicoy Island Lighthouse (built in 1885) being the first modern lighthouse. The Indian Navy operates the INS Dweeprakshak naval base under the Southern Naval Command, commissioned in 2012.

Education The first public school was opened in Amini in 1904, followed by the establishment of elementary schools at Kiltan in 1911 and Kadmat in 1925. The first high schools were established in the 1960s in Amini and Kalpeni. As of 2023, there are 50 schools catering to 8,350 students. There are four government colleges affiliated to Pondicherry University and two colleges and three university centers affiliated to Calicut University in the territory.

See also Coral reefs in India Andaman and Nicobar Islands

Notes References Further reading R. C. Majumdar (1979) The History of Ancient Lakshadweep, Calcutta. S. Anandan, Lakshadweep - Between the sea and a hard place, The Hindu, 30 May 2021.

Lakshadweep travel guide from Wikivoyage

Puducherry

Puducherry or Pondicherry may refer to:

Places in India Puducherry (union territory), formerly known as Pondicherry Puducherry (city), capital of the union territory of Puducherry Puducherry district, formerly Pondicherry district Puducherry taluk Puducherry Lok Sabha constituency, parliament constituency

Other uses Pondicherry (film), 2022 Indian Marathi-language film Pondicherry shark, fish Pondicherry University, in Kalapet, India Puducherry Technological University, in Pondicherry, India Pondicherry football team, representing Puducherry in Indian state football competitions Bridgton, Maine, U.S., first called Pondicherry Pondichry (1754 ship)

See also All pages with titles beginning with Pondicherry All pages with titles beginning with Puducherry All pages with titles beginning with Pondichry Battle of Pondicherry, 1759 Siege of Pondicherry (disambiguation) Pondi (disambiguation) Pudu (disambiguation) Pondichry, dernier comptoir des Indes, a 1997 French film Sitana ponticeriana, the Pondichry fan-throated lizard

Mumbai

Mumbai (muum-BY; Marathi: Mumba, pronounced [mumb]) , also known as Bombay (bom-BAY; its official name until 1995), is the capital city of the Indian state of Maharashtra. Mumbai is the financial capital and the most populous city proper of India with an estimated population of 12.5 million (1.25 crore). Mumbai is the centre of the Mumbai Metropolitan Region, which is among the most populous metropolitan areas in the world with a population of over 23 million (2.3 crore). Mumbai lies on the Konkan coast on the west coast of India and has a deep natural harbour. In 2008, Mumbai was named an alpha world city. Mumbai has the highest number of billionaires out of any city in Asia. The seven islands that constitute Mumbai were earlier home to communities of Marathi language-speaking Koli people. For centuries, the seven islands of Bombay were under the control of successive indigenous rulers before being ceded to the Portuguese Empire, and subsequently to the East India Company in 1661, as part of the dowry of Catherine of Braganza in her marriage to Charles II of England. Beginning in 1782, Mumbai was reshaped by the Hornby Vellard project, which undertook reclamation of the area between the seven islands from the Arabian Sea. Along with the construction of major roads and railways, the reclamation project, completed in 1845, transformed Mumbai into a major seaport on the Arabian Sea. Mumbai in the 19th century was characterised by economic and educational development. During the early 20th century it became a strong base for the Indian independence movement. Upon India's independence in 1947 the city was incorporated into Bombay State. In 1960, following the Samyukta Maharashtra Movement, a new state of Maharashtra was created with Mumbai as the capital. Mumbai is the financial, commercial, and entertainment capital of India. Mumbai is often compared to New York City, and is home to the Bombay Stock Exchange, situated on Dalal Street. It is also one of the world's top ten centres of commerce in terms of global financial flow, generating 6.16% of India's GDP, and accounting for 25% of the nation's industrial output, 70% of maritime trade in India (Mumbai Port Trust, Dharamtar Port and JNPT), and 70% of capital transactions to India's economy. The city houses important financial institutions and the corporate headquarters of numerous Indian companies and multinational corporations. The city is also home to some of India's premier scientific and nuclear institutes and the Hindi and Marathi film industries. Mumbai's business opportunities attract migrants from all over India.

Etymology The name Mumbai (Marathi: मुंबई) originated from Mumb or Mah-Amb-the name of the patron Hindu goddess (Kula Devata) Mumbadevi of the native Koli community-and from ', meaning "mother" in the Marathi language, which is the mother tongue of the Koli people and the official language of Maharashtra. According to certain accounts, the Koli community, which hails from Kathiawar and Central Gujarat, is believed to have introduced their deity Mumba from Kathiawar (Gujarat), where her worship continues to this day. However, other sources disagree that Mumbai's name was derived from the goddess Mumba.

The oldest known names for the city are Kakamuchee and Galajunkja; these are sometimes still used. Portuguese writer Gaspar Correia recorded the name "Bombaim" after 1512 in his *Lendas da ndia* (Legends of India). While some Anglophone authors have suggested this name possibly originated as an alleged Galician-Portuguese phrase bom baim, meaning "good little bay", such suggestions lack any scientific basis. Portuguese linguist Jos Pedro Machado attributes that interpretation to a deficient knowledge of the Portuguese language of these authors, mixing up the Portuguese word "bom" with the English "bay", from the English version of the name. In 1516, Portuguese explorer Duarte Barbosa used the name Tana-Maiambu: Tana appears to refer to the adjoining town of Thane and Maiambu to Mumbadevi. The form Bombaim is still commonly used in Portuguese. Other variations recorded in the 16th and the 17th centuries include: Mombayn

(1525), Bombay (1538), Bombain (1552), Bombaym (1552), Monbaym (1554), Mombaim (1563), Mombaym (1644), Bambaye (1666), Bombaiim (1666), Bombeye (1676), Boon Bay (1690) and Bon Bahia. After the English gained possession of the city in the 17th century, the Portuguese name was anglicised as Bombay. Ali Muhammad Khan, imperial dewan or revenue minister of the Gujarat province, in the *Mirat-i Ahmedi* (1762) referred to the city as Manbai. The French traveller Louis Rousselet, who visited in 1863 and 1868, states in his book *L'Inde des Rajahs*, which was first published in 1877: "Etymologists have wrongly derived this name from the Portuguese Ba Bahia, or (French: "bonne baie", English: "good bay"), not knowing that the tutelar goddess of this island has been, from remote antiquity, Bomba, or Mumba Devi, and that she still ... possesses a temple". British officer and scholar John Briggs stated that the name Bombay was a corruption of "Mumby", which was ascribed to a portion of the island where a temple to Mumba Devi was located. By the late 20th century, the city was referred to as Mumbai or Mambai in Marathi, Konkani, Gujarati, Kannada and Sindhi, and as Bambai in Hindi. The Government of India officially changed the English name to Mumbai in November 1995. This came at the insistence of the Marathi nationalist Shiv Sena party, which had just won the Maharashtra state elections, and mirrored similar name changes across the country and particularly in Maharashtra. According to *Slate* magazine, "they argued that 'Bombay' was a corrupted English version of 'Mumbai' and an unwanted legacy of British colonial rule." *Slate* also said "The push to rename Bombay was part of a larger movement to strengthen Marathi identity in the Maharashtra region." While Mumbai is still referred to as Bombay by some of its residents and by some Indians from other regions, mention of the city by a name other than Mumbai has been controversial.

People from Mumbai A resident of Mumbai is called Mumbaikar (pronounced [mumbʱik]) in Marathi, in which the suffix -kar means a 'resident of'. The term had been in use for quite some time but it gained popularity after the official name change to Mumbai. Older terms such as Bombayite are also used infrequently.

History Early history Mumbai is built on what was once an archipelago of seven islands: Isle of Bombay, Parel, Mazagaon, Mahim, Colaba, Worli, and Old Woman's Island (also known as Little Colaba). It is not exactly known when these islands were first inhabited. Pleistocene sediments found along the coastal areas around Kandivali in northern Mumbai suggest that the islands were inhabited since the South Asian Stone Age. Perhaps at the beginning of the Common Era, or possibly earlier, they came to be occupied by the Koli fishing community. In the 3rd century BCE, the islands formed part of the Maurya Empire, during its expansion in the south, ruled by the Buddhist emperor Ashoka of Magadha. The Kanheri Caves in Borivali were excavated from basalt rock in the first century CE, and served as an important centre of Buddhism in Western India during ancient Times. The city then was known as Heptanesia (Ancient Greek: A Cluster of Seven Islands) to the Greek geographer Ptolemy in 150 CE. The Mahakali Caves in Andheri were cut out between the 1st century BCE and the 6th century CE. Between the 2nd century BCE and 9th century CE, the islands came under the control of successive indigenous dynasties: Satavahanas, Western Satraps, Abhira, Vakataka, Kalachuris, Konkan Mauryas, Chalukyas and Rashtrakutas, before being ruled by the Shilaharas from 810 to 1260. Some of the oldest edifices in the city built during this period are the Jogeshwari Caves (between 520 and 525), Elephanta Caves (between the sixth to seventh century), Walkeshwar Temple (10th century), and Banganga Tank (12th century).

King Bhimdev founded his kingdom in the region in the late 13th century and established his capital in Mahikawati (present day Mahim). The Pathare Prabhus, among the earliest known settlers of the city, were brought to Mahikawati from Saurashtra in Gujarat around 1298 by Bhimdev. The Delhi Sultanate annexed the islands in 1347-48 and controlled it until 1407. During this time, the islands were administered by the Muslim Governors of Gujarat, who were appointed by the Delhi Sultanate. The islands were later governed by the

independent Gujarat Sultanate, which was established in 1407. As a result of the Sultanate's support, numerous mosques were built, with one notable example being the Haji Ali Dargah in Worli. Erected in 1431, this magnificent structure pays homage to the revered Muslim saint, Haji Ali. From 1429 to 1431, the islands were a source of contention between the Gujarat Sultanate and the Bahmani Sultanate of Deccan. In 1493, Bahadur Khan Gilani of the Bahmani Sultanate attempted to conquer the islands but was defeated.

Portuguese and British rule The Mughal Empire, founded in 1526, was the dominant power in the Indian subcontinent during the mid-16th century. Growing apprehensive of the power of the Mughal emperor Humayun, Sultan Bahadur Shah of Gujarat was obliged to sign the Treaty of Bassein with the Portuguese Empire on 23 December 1534. According to the treaty, the Seven Islands of Bombay, the nearby strategic town of Bassein and its dependencies were offered to the Portuguese. The territories were later surrendered on 25 October 1535.

The Portuguese were actively involved in the foundation and growth of their Roman Catholic religious orders in Bombay. They called the islands by various names, which finally took the written form Bombaim. The islands were leased to several Portuguese officers during their regime. The Portuguese Franciscans and Jesuits built several churches in the city, prominent being the St. Michael's Church at Mahim (1534), St. John the Baptist Church at Andheri (1579), St. Andrew's Church at Bandra (1580), and Gloria Church at Byculla (1632). The Portuguese also built several fortifications around the city like the Bombay Castle, Castella de Aguada (Castelo da Aguada or Bandra Fort), and Madh Fort. The English were in constant struggle with the Portuguese vying for hegemony over Mumbai, as they recognised its strategic natural harbour and its natural isolation from land attacks. By the middle of the 17th century, the growing power of the Dutch Empire forced the English to acquire a station in western India. On 11 May 1661, the marriage treaty of Charles II of England and Catherine of Braganza, daughter of King John IV of Portugal, placed the islands in possession of the English Empire, as part of Catherine's dowry to Charles. However, Salsette, Bassein, Mazagaon, Parel, Worli, Sion, Dharavi, and Wadala still remained under Portuguese possession. From 1665 to 1666, the English managed to acquire Mahim, Sion, Dharavi, and Wadala.

In accordance with the Royal Charter of 27 March 1668, England leased these islands to the English East India Company in 1668 for a sum of 10 per annum. The population quickly rose from 10,000 in 1661, to 60,000 in 1675. The islands were subsequently attacked by Yakut Khan, the Muslim Koli admiral of the Mughal Empire, in October 1672, Rickloffe van Goen, the Governor-General of Dutch India on 20 February 1673, and Siddi admiral Sambal on 10 October 1673. In 1687, the English East India Company transferred its headquarters from Surat to Mumbai. The city eventually became the headquarters of the Bombay Presidency. Following the transfer, Mumbai was placed at the head of all the company's establishments in India. Towards the end of the 17th century, the islands again suffered incursions from Yakut Khan in 1689-90. The Portuguese presence ended in Mumbai when the Marathas under Peshwa Baji Rao I captured Salsette in 1737, and Bassein in 1739. By the middle of the 18th century, Mumbai began to grow into a major trading town, and received a huge influx of migrants from across India. Later, the British occupied Salsette on 28 December 1774. With the Treaty of Surat (1775), the British formally gained control of Salsette and Bassein, resulting in the First Anglo-Maratha War. The British were able to secure Salsette from the Marathas without violence through the Treaty of Purandar (1776), and later through the Treaty of Salbai (1782), signed to settle the outcome of the First Anglo-Maratha War.

From 1782 onwards, the city was reshaped with large-scale civil engineering projects aimed at merging all the seven islands of Bombay into a single amalgamated mass by way of a causeway called the Hornby Vellard,

which was completed by 1784. In 1817, the British East India Company under Mountstuart Elphinstone defeated Baji Rao II, the last of the Maratha Peshwa in the Battle of Khadki. Following his defeat, almost the whole of the Deccan Plateau came under British suzerainty, and was incorporated into the Bombay Presidency. The success of the British campaign in the Deccan marked the end of all attacks by native powers.

By 1845, the seven islands coalesced into a single landmass by the Hornby Vellard project via large scale land reclamation. On 16 April 1853, India's first passenger railway line was established, connecting Mumbai to the neighbouring town of Thana (now Thane). During the American Civil War (1861-1865), the city became the world's chief cotton-trading market, resulting in a boom in the economy that subsequently enhanced the city's stature. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 transformed Mumbai into one of the largest seaports on the Arabian Sea. In September 1896, Mumbai was hit by a bubonic plague epidemic where the death toll was estimated at 1,900 people per week. About 850,000 people fled Mumbai and the textile industry was adversely affected. While the city was the capital of the Bombay Presidency, the Indian independence movement fostered the Quit India Movement in 1942 and the Royal Indian Navy mutiny in 1946.

Independent India After India's independence in 1947, the territory of the Bombay Presidency was restructured into Bombay State. The area of Bombay State increased, after several erstwhile princely states that joined the Indian union were integrated into the state. Subsequently, the city became the capital of Bombay State. In April 1950, municipal limits of Mumbai were expanded by merging the Mumbai Suburban District and Mumbai City to form the Greater Mumbai Municipal Corporation. The Samyukta Maharashtra movement to create a separate Maharashtra state including Mumbai was at its height in the 1950s. In the Lok Sabha discussions in 1955, the Congress party demanded that the city be constituted as an autonomous city-state. The States Reorganisation Committee recommended a bilingual state for Maharashtra-Gujarat with Mumbai as its capital in its 1955 report. Bombay Citizens' Committee, an advocacy group of leading Gujarati industrialists, lobbied for Mumbai's independent status. Following protests in which 105 people died in clashes with the police, Bombay State was reorganised on linguistic lines on 1 May 1960. Gujarati-speaking areas of Bombay State were partitioned into the state of Gujarat. Maharashtra State with Mumbai as its capital was formed with the merger of Marathi-speaking areas of Bombay State, eight districts from Central Provinces and Berar, five districts from Hyderabad State, and numerous princely states enclosed between them. As a memorial to the martyrs of the Samyukta Maharashtra movement, Flora Fountain was renamed as Hutatma Chowk (Martyr's Square) and a memorial was erected.

The following decades saw massive expansion of the city and its suburbs. In the late 1960s, Nariman Point and Cuffe Parade were reclaimed and developed. The Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (BMRDA) was established on 26 January 1975 by the Government of Maharashtra as an apex body for planning and co-ordination of development activities in the Mumbai metropolitan region. In August 1979, a sister township of New Mumbai was founded by the City and Industrial Development Corporation (CIDCO) across the Thane and Raigad districts to help the dispersal and control of Mumbai's population. The textile industry in Mumbai largely disappeared after the widespread 1982 Great Bombay Textile Strike, in which nearly 250,000 workers in more than 50 textile mills went on strike. Mumbai's defunct cotton mills have since become the focus of intense redevelopment. Industrial development began in Mumbai when its economy started focusing on the petrochemical, electronic, and automotive sectors. In 1954 Hindustan Petroleum commissioned Mumbai Refinery at Trombay and BPCL Refinery. The Jawaharlal Nehru Port, which handles 55-60% of India's containerised cargo, was commissioned on 26 May 1989 across the creek at Nhava Sheva with a view to de-congest Mumbai Harbour and to serve as a hub port for the city. The geographical limits of Greater Mumbai were coextensive with municipal limits of Greater Mumbai. On 1 October 1990, the Greater Mumbai district was

bifurcated to form two revenue districts namely, Mumbai City and Mumbai Suburban, though they continued to be administered by same Municipal Administration. The years from 1990 to 2010 saw an increase in violence and terrorism activities. Following the demolition of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya, the city was rocked by the Hindu-Muslim riots of 1992-93 in which more than 1,000 people were killed. In March 1993, a series of 13 coordinated bombings at several city landmarks by Islamic extremists and the Mumbai underworld resulted in 257 deaths and over 700 injuries. In 2006, 209 people were killed and over 700 injured when seven bombs exploded on the city's commuter trains. In 2008, a series of ten coordinated attacks by armed terrorists for three days resulted in 173 deaths, 308 injuries, and severe damage to several heritage landmarks and prestigious hotels. The three coordinated bomb explosions in July 2011 that occurred at the Opera house, Zaveri Bazaar and Dadar were the latest in the series of terrorist attacks in Mumbai which resulted in 26 deaths and 130 injuries. Mumbai is the commercial capital of India and has evolved into a global financial hub. For several decades it has been the home of India's main financial services companies and a focus for both infrastructure development and private investment. From being an ancient fishing community and a colonial centre of trade, Mumbai has become South Asia's largest city and home of the world's most prolific film industry.

Geography Mumbai is on a narrow peninsula on the southwest of Salsette Island, which lies between the Arabian Sea to the west, Thane Creek to the east, and Vasai Creek to the north. Mumbai's suburban district occupies most of the island. Navi Mumbai is east of Thane Creek, and Thane is north of Vasai Creek. Mumbai consists of two distinct regions: Mumbai City district and Mumbai Suburban district, which form two separate revenue districts of Maharashtra. The city district-region is also commonly referred to as the "Island City" or South Mumbai. The total area of Mumbai is 603.4 square kilometres (233.0 sq mi). Of this, the island city spans 67.79 square kilometres (26.17 sq mi), while the suburban district spans 370 square kilometres (140 sq mi), together accounting for 437.71 square kilometres (169.00 sq mi) under the administration of Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM). The remaining areas belong to various defence establishments, the Mumbai Port Trust, the Atomic Energy Commission, and the Borivali National Park, which are out of the jurisdiction of the MCGM. The Mumbai Metropolitan Region which includes portions of Thane, Palghar and Raigad districts in addition to Greater Mumbai, covers an area of 4,355 square kilometres (1,681 sq mi). Mumbai lies at the mouth of the Ulhas River on the western coast of India, in the coastal region known as the Konkan. It sits on Salsette Island (Sashti Island), which it partially shares with the Thane district. Mumbai is bounded by the Arabian Sea to the west. Many parts of the city lie just above sea level, with elevations ranging from 10 to 15 metres (33 to 49 ft). The city has an average elevation of 14 metres (46 ft). Northern Mumbai (Salsette) is hilly, and the highest point in the city is 450 metres (1,480 ft) at Salsette in the Powai-Kanheri ranges. The Sanjay Gandhi National Park (Borivali National Park) is situated partly in the Mumbai suburban district and partly in the Thane district, covering an area of 103.09 square kilometres (39.80 sq mi). Apart from the Bhatsa Dam, six major lakes supply water to the city: Vihar Lake, Lower Vaitarna, Upper Vaitarna, Tulsi Lake, Tansa, and Powai Lake. Tulsi Lake and Vihar Lake are located within the city's limits in Borivali National Park. The supply from Powai Lake, also within the city limits, is used only for agricultural and industrial purposes. Three small rivers, the Dahisar River, Poisar River (or Poinisar River), and Oshiwara River (or Ohiwara River) originate within the park, while the Mithi River originates from Tulsi Lake and gathers water overflowing from Vihar and Powai Lakes. The coastline of the city is indented with numerous creeks and bays, stretching from the Thane creek in the east to Madh Marve on the western front. The eastern coast of Salsette Island is covered with large mangrove swamps, rich in biodiversity, while the western coast is mostly sandy and rocky. Soil cover in the city region is predominantly sandy due to its proximity to the sea. In the suburbs, the soil cover is largely alluvial and loamy. The underlying rock of the region is composed of black Deccan basalt flows, and their acidic and basic variants date back to the late Cretaceous and early Eocene eras. Mumbai sits on a seismically active zone owing to the presence of 23 fault lines in the vicinity. The area is classified as a Seismic Zone III region, which means an earthquake of up to magnitude 6.5 on the Richter magnitude scale could

occur.

Climate Mumbai has an extreme tropical wet and dry climate (Aw) under the Kppen climate classification. However, the central and northern suburbs experience a tropical monsoon climate (Am) with even heavier rainfall during the wet season. Mumbai generally has a nearly rainless stretch from October to May, with its most intense rainfall occurring during the peak wet period in July. A cooler season from December to February is followed by a hotter season from March to May. The period from June to the end of September constitutes the southwest monsoon season, and October and November form the post-monsoon season. Between June and September, the southwest monsoon rains occur in Mumbai. Pre-monsoon showers are received in May. Occasionally, north-east monsoon showers occur in October and November. The maximum annual rainfall ever recorded was 3,452 mm (136 in) for 1954. The most rainfall recorded in a single day was 944 mm (37 in) on 26 July 2005. The average total annual rainfall is 2,213.4 mm (87 in) for the Island City and 2,502.3 mm (99 in) for the suburbs. The average annual temperature is 27 C (81 F), and the average annual precipitation is 2,213 mm (87 in). In the Island City, the average maximum temperature is 31 C (88 F), while the average minimum temperature is 24 C (75 F). In the suburbs, the daily mean maximum temperature range from 29 C (84 F) to 33 C (91 F), while the daily mean minimum temperature ranges from 16 C (61 F) to 26 C (79 F). The record high is 42.2 C (108 F) set on 14 April 1952, and the record low was 7.4 C (45 F), set on 27 January 1962. Tropical cyclones are rare in the city. The worst cyclone to strike the city occurred on 23 November 1948, with gusts reaching 151 km/h (94 mph) in Juhu, resulting in 38 deaths and 47 people missing. The storm reportedly affected Mumbai for 20 hours and left the city devastated.

Mumbai is prone to monsoon floods, exacerbated by climate change, which affects heavy rains and high tides from the sea. According to the World Bank, unplanned drainage systems and informal settlements are key drivers of Mumbai's frequent floods. Among other causes of flooding in Mumbai are its geographic features: Mumbai's urban area is peninsular-comprising land-filled regions connecting seven islands-and is lower in elevation compared to its surrounding suburbs, which sit on higher ground. Over the past few decades, new informal settlements have emerged in the suburbs, leading to a rapid population increase, inadequate waste management, and drainage congestion. Rainwater from these areas flows heavily toward the low-lying urban zones, which include some slums and high-rise buildings. As a result, slums are either flooded, washed away, or collapse, causing heavy casualties. Floodwaters often linger for extended periods, causing blockages of railway lines-the most commonly used public transport in Mumbai-along with traffic jams, flooded roads, and submerged lanes. Flooding in Mumbai occurs frequently, with the 2005 Mumbai floods causing 500-1000 deaths, widespread household displacements, damage to infrastructure-including heritage sites-and resulting in significant financial losses of US\$ 1.2 billion. To reduce flooding in Mumbai, the Maharashtra government adopted a flood mitigation plan that included restructuring the drainage system, restoring the Mithi River, and re-establishing informal settlements. Local civic authorities were tasked with forecasting and issuing eviction notices, while Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), along with NGOs, would prepare to evacuate residents from vulnerable areas to temporary safe camps.

Air pollution Air pollution is a major issue in Mumbai. According to the 2016 World Health Organization Global Urban Ambient Air Pollution Database, the annual average PM_{2.5} concentration in 2013 was 63 µg/m³, which was 6.3 times higher than that recommended by the WHO Air Quality Guideline for annual mean PM_{2.5}. The Central Pollution Control Board for the Government of India and the Consulate General of the United States, Mumbai monitor and publicly share real-time air quality data. In December 2019, Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, in partnership with the McKelvey School of Engineering at Washington University in St. Louis, launched the Aerosol and Air Quality Research Facility to study air pollution in Mumbai, among other Indian

cities. Mumbai has been ranked 24th-best "National Clean Air City" (under Category 1 >10L Population cities) in India according to "Swachh Vayu Survekshan 2024 Results".

Economy Mumbai, sometimes described as the "New York City of India", is the country's most populous city and its financial and commercial capital, generating 6.16% of the total GDP. It generates 19.8% of the GDP of Maharashtra (34.4% if the Thane district is included). It serves as an economic hub of India: as of 2006, Mumbai contributed 10% of the nation's factory employment, 25% of industrial output, 33% of income tax collections, 60% of customs duty collections, 20% of central excise tax collections, 40% of foreign trade, and ₹40 billion (equivalent to ₹130 billion or US\$1.5 billion in 2023) in corporate taxes. Along with the rest of India, Mumbai has witnessed an economic boom since the liberalisation of 1991, the finance boom in the mid-nineties, and the information technology, export, services, and outsourcing boom in the 2000s. Estimates of the 2017-18 economy of the Mumbai Metropolitan Region ranged from \$368 billion to \$400 billion (PPP & metro GDP), making it either the most or second most-productive metro area of India. Many of India's numerous conglomerates (including Larsen & Toubro, State Bank of India (SBI), Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), Tata Group, Godrej and Reliance), and five of the Fortune Global 500 companies are based in Mumbai. This is facilitated by the presence of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE), the National Stock Exchange of India (NSE), and financial sector regulators such as the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).

Until the 1970s, Mumbai owed its prosperity largely to textile mills and the seaport, but the local economy has since then diversified to include finance, engineering, diamond-polishing, healthcare, and information technology. The key sectors contributing to the city's economy are: finance, gems & jewellery, leather processing, IT and ITES, textiles, petrochemical, electronics manufacturing, automobiles, and entertainment. Nariman Point and Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC) are Mumbai's major financial centres. State and central government employees comprise a large percentage of the city's workforce. Mumbai also has a large unskilled and semi-skilled self-employed population, who primarily earn their livelihood as hawkers, taxi drivers, mechanics, and other such blue collar professions. The port and shipping industry is well established, with Mumbai Port being one of India's oldest and most significant ports. Dharavi, in central Mumbai, has an increasingly large recycling industry, processing recyclable waste from other parts of the city; the district has an estimated 15,000 single-room factories. As of 2024, Mumbai is home to the third-highest number of billionaires of any city in the world. With a total wealth of around \$960 billion, it is the wealthiest Indian city and one of the richest cities in the world. As of 2008, the Globalization and World Cities Research Network has ranked Mumbai as an "alpha world city", third in its categories of Global cities. Mumbai is the third most expensive office market in the world, and was ranked among the fastest cities in the country for business startup in 2009.

Poverty, inequality, and the cost of living Despite having the largest concentration of billionaires out of any city in Asia, Mumbai is one of the most unequal cities in the world. 41.8% of the city's population live in urban slums, though slums occupy just around 7% of the city's total land area. Mumbai suffers from the same major urbanisation problems seen in many fast-growing cities in developing countries: poverty and unemployment. With available land at a premium, Mumbai residents often reside in cramped, relatively expensive housing, usually far from workplaces, and therefore require long commutes on crowded mass transit or clogged roadways. Many live close to bus or train stations, although suburban residents spend significant time travelling southward to the central commercial district. Mumbai's overall per capita residential area is 8.3 square metres, and in the city's slums, it is 2.73 square metres. According to a paper published in 2010 by the World Bank, the median income was ₹20,000 while the average was ₹40,000. By 2019, the overall average salary in Mumbai was ₹45,000. Meanwhile, the median rental cost of a one-bedroom apartment in Mumbai proper is around

■30,000. Much of the city's population lives paycheck to paycheck.

Government and politics Civic administration Greater Mumbai (or Brihanmumbai), an area of 603 km² (233 sq mi), consisting of the Mumbai City and Mumbai Suburban districts, extends from Colaba in the south, to Mulund and Dahisar in the north, and Mankhurd in the east. Its population as per the 2011 census was 12,442,373. It is administered by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) (sometimes referred to as the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai), formerly known as the Bombay Municipal Corporation (BMC). The BMC is in charge of the civic and infrastructure needs of the metropolis. The mayor, who serves for a term of 2+1/2 years, is chosen through an indirect election by the councillors from among themselves. The municipal commissioner is the chief executive officer and head of the executive arm of the municipal corporation. All executive powers are vested in the municipal commissioner who is an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer appointed by the state government. Although the municipal corporation is the legislative body that lays down policies for the governance of the city, it is the commissioner who is responsible for the execution of the policies. The commissioner is appointed for a fixed term as defined by state statute. The powers of the commissioner are those provided by statute and those delegated by the corporation or the standing committee. The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation was ranked 9th out of 21 cities for best governance & administrative practices in India in 2014. It scored 3.5 on 10 compared to the national average of 3.3.

The two revenue districts of Mumbai come under the jurisdiction of a District Collector. The collectors are in charge of property records and revenue collection for the central government, and oversee the national elections held in the city. The Mumbai Police is headed by a police commissioner, who is an Indian Police Service (IPS) officer. The Mumbai Police is a division of the Maharashtra Police, under the state Home Ministry. The city is divided into seven police zones and seventeen traffic police zones, each headed by a deputy commissioner of police. The Mumbai Traffic Police is a semi-autonomous body under the Mumbai Police. The Mumbai Fire Brigade, which is under the jurisdiction of the municipal corporation, is headed by the chief fire officer, who is assisted by four deputy chief fire officers and six divisional officers. The Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) is responsible for infrastructure development and planning of Mumbai Metropolitan Region. Mumbai is the seat of the Bombay High Court, which exercises jurisdiction over the states of Maharashtra and Goa, and the Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu. Mumbai also has two lower courts, the Small Causes Court for civil matters, and the Sessions Court for criminal cases. Mumbai also has a special Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (TADA) court for people accused of conspiring and abetting acts of terrorism in the city.

National politics Mumbai had been a traditional stronghold and birthplace of the Indian National Congress, also known as the Congress Party. The first session of the Indian National Congress was held in Mumbai from 28 to 31 December 1885. The city played host to the Indian National Congress six times during its first 50 years, and became a strong base for the Indian independence movement during the 20th century. The 1960s saw the rise of regionalist politics in Mumbai, with the formation of the Shiv Sena on 19 June 1966, under the leadership of Balasaheb Thackeray out of a feeling of resentment about the relative marginalisation of the native Marathi people in Mumbai. Shiv Sena switched from 'Marathi Cause' to larger 'Hindutva Cause' in 1985 and joined hands with Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) in the same year. The Congress had dominated the politics of Mumbai from independence until the early 1980s, when the Shiv Sena won the 1985 Mumbai Municipal Corporation elections. In 1989, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), a major national political party, forged an electoral alliance with the Shiv Sena to dislodge the Congress in the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly elections. In 1999, several members left the Congress to form the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) but later allied with the Congress as part of an alliance known as the Democratic Front. Other parties such as Maharashtra Navnirman

Sena (MNS), Samajwadi Party (SP), Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) and several independent candidates also contest elections in the city. In the Indian national elections held every five years, Mumbai is represented by six parliamentary constituencies: North, North West, North East, North Central, South Central, and South. A member of parliament (MP) to the Lok Sabha, the lower house of the Indian Parliament, is elected from each of the parliamentary constituencies. In the 2019 national election, all six parliamentary constituencies were won by the BJP and Shiv Sena in alliance, with both parties winning three seats each.

In the Maharashtra state assembly elections held every five years, Mumbai is represented by 36 assembly constituencies. A member of the legislative assembly (MLA) to the Maharashtra Vidhan Sabha (legislative assembly) is elected from each of the assembly constituencies. In the 2019 state assembly election, out of the 36 assembly constituencies, 16 were won by the BJP, 11 by the Shiv Sena, 6 by the Congress, 2 by the NCP and one by independent candidate. Elections are also held every five years to elect corporators to power in the MCGM. The Corporation comprises 227 directly elected Councillors representing the 24 municipal wards, five nominated Councillors having special knowledge or experience in municipal administration, and a mayor whose role is mostly ceremonial. In the 2012 municipal corporation elections, out of the 227 seats, the Shiv Sena-BJP alliance secured 107 seats, holding power with the support of independent candidates in the MCGM, while the Congress-NCP alliance bagged 64 seats. The tenure of the mayor, deputy mayor, and municipal commissioner is 2+1/2 years.

Transport Public transport Public transport systems in Mumbai include the Mumbai Suburban Railway, Monorail, Metro, Brihanmumbai Electric Supply and Transport (BEST) buses, black-and-yellow meter taxis, auto rickshaws and ferries. Suburban railway and BEST bus services together accounted for about 88% of the passenger traffic in 2008. Auto rickshaws are allowed to operate only in the suburban areas of Mumbai, while taxis are allowed to operate throughout Mumbai, but generally operate in South Mumbai. Taxis and Auto rickshaws in Mumbai are required by law to run on compressed natural gas (CNG), and are a convenient, economical, and easily available means of transport.

Railway The Mumbai Suburban Railway, colloquially referred to as "Locals", forms the backbone of the city's transport system. It is operated by the Central Railway and Western Railway zones of the Indian Railways. Mumbai's suburban rail systems carried a total of 63 lakh (6.3 million) passengers every day in 2007. Trains are overcrowded during peak hours, with twelve-car trains of rated capacity 1,700 passengers, actually carrying around 4,500 passengers at peak hours. The Mumbai rail network is spread at an expanse of 319 route kilometres (198 mi). 191 rakes (train-sets) of 12 car and 15 car composition are utilised to run a total of 2,226 train services in the city. The Mumbai Monorail and Mumbai Metro have been built and are being extended in phases to relieve the overcrowding on the existing network. The Monorail opened in early February 2014. The first line of the Mumbai Metro opened in early June 2014. Mumbai is the headquarters of two zones of the Indian Railways: the Central Railway (CR) headquartered at Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (formerly Victoria Terminus), and the Western Railway (WR) headquartered at Churchgate. Mumbai is also well connected to most parts of India by the Indian Railways. Long-distance trains originate from Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, Dadar, Lokmanya Tilak Terminus, Mumbai Central, Bandra Terminus, Andheri and Borivali.

Bus Mumbai's bus services carried over 5.5 million passengers per day in 2008, which dropped to 2.8 million in 2015. Public buses run by BEST cover almost all parts of the metropolis, as well as parts of Navi Mumbai, Mira-Bhayandar and Thane. The BEST operates a total of 4,608 buses with CCTV cameras installed, ferrying 4.5 million passengers daily over 390 routes. Its fleet consists of single-decker, double-decker, vestibule,

low-floor, disabled-friendly, air-conditioned and Euro III compliant diesel, compressed natural gas, and electric buses. BEST introduced air-conditioned buses in 1998. BEST buses are red in colour, based originally on the Routemaster buses of London. Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC, also known as ST) buses provide intercity transport connecting Mumbai with other towns and cities of Maharashtra and nearby states. The Navi Mumbai Municipal Transport (NMMT) and Thane Municipal Transport (TMT) also operate their buses in Mumbai, connecting various nodes of Navi Mumbai and Thane to parts of Mumbai. Buses are generally favoured for commuting short to medium distances, while train fares are more economical for longer distance commutes. The Mumbai Darshan is a tourist bus service which explores numerous tourist attractions in Mumbai. Bus Rapid Transit System (BRTS) lanes have been planned throughout Mumbai. Though 88% of the city's commuters travel by public transport, Mumbai still continues to struggle with traffic congestion. Mumbai's transport system has been categorised as one of the most congested in the world.

Water Water transport in Mumbai consists of ferries, hovercraft and catamarans. Services are provided by both government agencies as well as private partners. Hovercraft services plied briefly in the late 1990s between the Gateway of India and CBD Belapur in Navi Mumbai. They were subsequently scrapped due to lack of adequate infrastructure.

Roads Mumbai is served by National Highway 48, National Highway 66, National Highway 160 and National Highway 61. The Mumbai-Chennai and Mumbai-Delhi prongs of the Golden Quadrilateral system of National Highways start from the city. The Mumbai-Pune Expressway was the first expressway built in India. The Eastern Freeway was opened in 2013. The Bandra-Worli Sea Link bridge, along with Mahim Causeway, links the island city to the western suburbs. The three major road arteries of the city are the Eastern Express Highway from Sion to Thane, the Sion Panvel Expressway from Sion to Panvel and the Western Express Highway from Bandra to Bhayander. The 21.8 km (14 mi) long Mumbai Trans Harbour Link was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 12 January 2024, connects Mumbai with Navi Mumbai. Mumbai has approximately 1,900 km (1,181 mi) of roads. There are five tolled entry points to the city by road. Mumbai had about 721,000 private vehicles as of March 2014, 56,459 black and yellow taxis as of 2005, and 106,000 auto rickshaws, as of May 2013. Mumbai currently has one operational expressway - the Mumbai-Pune Expressway - which directly connects Mumbai with Pune. In the coming years, the great metropolis will be connected with more expressways. They are as follows:

Delhi-Mumbai Expressway: Under construction since March 2019, to be completed by 2027. Mumbai-Nagpur Expressway: Under construction since January 2019, to be completed by May 2025. Konkan Expressway: Proposed.

Air The Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (formerly Sahar International Airport) is the main aviation hub in the city and the second busiest airport in India in terms of passenger traffic. It handled 52.8 million passengers in the Financial Year 2024, an increase of 16 per cent in passenger traffic over the previous Financial Year. An upgrade plan was initiated in 2006, targeted at increasing the capacity of the airport to handle up to 40 million passengers annually and the new terminal T2 was opened in February 2014. The Navi Mumbai International airport, being built in the Kopra-Panvel area, will help relieve the increasing traffic burden on the existing airport. The Navi Mumbai International Airport was inaugurated on 8 October 2025 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, although flights have not begun immediately. Following testing, the service is aimed to commence operations by the end of the year. The Juhu Aerodrome was India's first airport, and now hosts the Bombay Flying Club and a heliport operated by state-owned Pawan Hans.

Sea Mumbai is served by two major ports, Mumbai Port Trust and Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust, which lies just across the creek in Navi Mumbai. Mumbai Port has one of the best natural harbours in the world, and has extensive wet and dry dock accommodation facilities. Jawaharlal Nehru Port, commissioned on 26 May 1989, is the busiest and most modern major port in India. It handles 55-60% of the country's total containerised cargo. Ferries from Ferry Wharf in Mazagaon allow access to islands near the city. The city is also the headquarters of the Western Naval Command, and also an important base for the Indian Navy.

Utility services Under colonial rule, tanks were the only source of water in Mumbai, with many localities having been named after them. The MCGM supplies potable water to the city from six lakes, most of which comes from the Tulsi and Vihar lakes. The Tansa lake supplies water to the western suburbs and parts of the island city along the Western Railway. The water is filtered at Bhandup, which is Asia's largest water filtration plant. India's first underground water tunnel was completed in Mumbai to supply water to the Bhandup filtration plant. About 700 million (70 crore) litres of water, out of a daily supply of 3.5 billion (350 crore) litres, is lost by way of water thefts, illegal connections and leakages, per day in Mumbai. Almost all of Mumbai's daily refuse of 7,800 tonnes (7,700 long tons; 8,600 short tons), of which 40 tonnes (39 long tons; 44 short tons) is plastic waste, is transported to dumping grounds in Gorai in the northwest, Mulund in the northeast, and to the Deonar dumping ground in the east. Sewage treatment is carried out at Worli and Bandra, and disposed of by two independent marine outfalls of 3.4 km (2.1 mi) and 3.7 km (2.3 mi) at Bandra and Worli respectively. Electricity is distributed by the Brihanmumbai Electric Supply and Transport (BEST) undertaking in the island city, and by Adani Transmission, Tata Power and the Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Co. Ltd (Mahavitaran) in the suburbs. Power supply cables are underground, which reduces pilferage, thefts and other losses. Cooking gas is supplied in the form of liquefied petroleum gas cylinders sold by state-owned oil companies, as well as through piped natural gas supplied by Mahanagar Gas Limited. The largest telephone service provider is the state-owned MTNL, which held a monopoly over fixed line and cellular services up until 2000, and provides fixed line as well as mobile WLL services. Mobile phone coverage is extensive, and the main service providers are Vodafone India, Bharti Airtel, MTNL, and Reliance Jio. Both GSM and CDMA services are available in the city. Mumbai, along with the area served by telephone exchanges in Navi Mumbai and Kalyan is classified as a Metro telecom circle. Many of the above service providers also provide broadband internet and wireless internet access in Mumbai. As of 2014, Mumbai had the highest number of internet users in India with 16.4 million (1.64 crore) users.

Demographics According to the 2011 census, the population of Mumbai city was 12,479,608. The population density is estimated to be about 20,482 inhabitants per square kilometre (53,050/sq mi). The living space is 4.5 square metres (48 sq ft) per person. Mumbai Metropolitan Region was home to 20,748,395 people by 2011. Greater Mumbai, the area under the administration of the MCGM, has a literacy rate of 94.7%, higher than the national average of 86.7%. The number of slum-dwellers in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region is estimated to be 90 lakh (9 million), up from 60 lakh (6 million) in 2001 which constitutes approximately 38.5% of the region. The sex ratio in 2011 was 838 females per 1,000 males in the island city, 857 in the suburbs, and 848 as a whole in Greater Mumbai, all numbers lower than the national average of 914 females per 1,000 males. The low sex ratio is partly because of the large number of male migrants who come to the city to work. Dharavi, Asia's second largest slum (if Karachi's Orangi Town is counted as a single slum) is located in central Mumbai and houses between 800,000 and 10 lakh (one million) people in 2.39 km² (0.92 sq mi), making it one of the most densely populated areas on Earth with a population density of at least 334,728 inhabitants per square kilometre (866,940/sq mi). The number of migrants to Mumbai from outside Maharashtra during the 1991-2001 decade was 11.2 lakh (1.12 million), which amounted to 54.8% of the net addition to the population of Mumbai. The number of households in Mumbai is forecast to rise from 42 lakh (4.2 million) in 2008 to 66 lakh (6.6 million) in 2020. The number of households with annual incomes of 20 lakh (2 million) rupees will increase from 4% to

10% by 2020, amounting to 660,000 families. The number of households with incomes from 10 to 20 lakh (1-2 million) rupees is also estimated to increase from 4% to 15% by 2020. According to the 2016 report of the Central Pollution Control Board, Mumbai is the noisiest city in India, ahead of Lucknow, Hyderabad and Delhi.

Ethnic groups and religions The religious groups represented in Greater Mumbai as of 2011 include Hindus (65.99%), Muslims (20.65%), Buddhists (4.85%), Jains (4.10%), Christians (3.27%) and Sikhs (0.49%). The linguistic/ethnic demographics in the Greater Mumbai Area are: Maharashtrians (32%), Gujaratis (20%), with the rest hailing from other parts of India. Native Christians include East Indian Catholics, who were converted by the Portuguese during the 16th century, while Goan and Mangalorean Catholics also constitute a significant portion of the Christian community of the city. Jews settled in Mumbai during the 18th century. The Bene Israeli Jewish community of Mumbai, who migrated from the Konkan villages, south of Mumbai, are believed to be the descendants of the Jews of Israel who were shipwrecked off the Konkan coast, probably in the year 175 BCE, during the reign of the Greek ruler, Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Mumbai is also home to the largest population of Parsi Zoroastrians in the world, numbering about 60,000, however their population is declining rapidly. Parsis migrated to India from Greater Iran following the Muslim conquest of Persia in the seventh century. The oldest Muslim communities in Mumbai include the Dawoodi Bohras, Ismaili Khojas, and Konkani Muslims.

Language Marathi is the official and working language of the bureaucracy along with English. Mumbai has a large polyglot population like all other metropolitan cities of India. Sixteen major languages of India are spoken in Mumbai, with the most common being Marathi and its dialect East Indian. Marathi, and its dialect, as a single language is spoken by 35.30% of the population around 4,396,870 people. Hindi is spoken by 25.90% of the population around 3,582,719 people, making it the second largest dominant language in Mumbai. Many Hindi speakers are workers from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar who migrate seasonally to Mumbai to work as labourers. Urdu and Gujarati are spoken by 11.73% and 11.45% respectively. Tamil, Marwari, Bhojpuri, Telugu, Konkani, Bengali and Malayalam are other minority languages spoken by a significant number of people in Mumbai. English is extensively spoken and is the principal language of the city's white collar workforce. A colloquial form of Hindi, known as Bumbaiya - a blend of Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati, Konkani, Urdu, Indian English and some invented words - is spoken on the streets. In the Suburbs, Marathi is spoken by 36.78% of the population and Gujarati by 31.21%.

Education Schools Schools in Mumbai are either "municipal schools" (run by the MCGM) or private schools (run by trusts or individuals), which in some cases receive financial aid from the government. The schools are affiliated with either of the following boards:

Maharashtra State Board (MSBSHSE) The All-India Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) The National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) The Central Board for Secondary Education (CBSE) The International Baccalaureate (IB) The International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE). Marathi or English is the usual language of instruction. The primary education system of the MCGM is the largest urban primary education system in Asia. The MCGM operates 1,188 primary schools imparting primary education to 485,531 students in eight languages (Marathi, Hindi, Gujarati, Urdu, English, Tamil, Telugu and Kannada). The MCGM also imparts secondary education to 55,576 students through its 49 secondary schools.

Higher education Under the 10+2+3/4 plan, students complete ten years of schooling and then enroll for two years in junior college, where they select one of three streams: arts, commerce, or science. This is followed by either a general degree course in a chosen field of study, or a professional degree course, such as law,

engineering and medicine. Most colleges in the city are affiliated with the University of Mumbai, one of the largest universities in the world in terms of the number of graduates. The University of Mumbai is one of the premier universities in India. It was ranked 41 among the Top 50 Engineering Schools of the world by America's news broadcasting firm Business Insider in 2012 and was the only university in the list from the five emerging BRICS nations viz Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. Moreover, the University of Mumbai was ranked 5th in the list of best universities in India by India Today in 2013 and ranked at 62 in the QS BRICS University rankings for 2013, a ranking of leading universities in the five BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). Its strongest scores in the QS University Rankings: BRICS are for papers per faculty (8th), employer reputation (20th) and citations per paper (28th). It was ranked 10th among the top Universities of India by QS in 2013. With 7 of the top ten Indian Universities being purely science and technology universities, it was India's 3rd best Multi Disciplinary University in the QS University ranking. The Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IIT Bombay), Mumbai, Institute of Chemical Technology (formerly UDCT / UICT), Veermata Jijabai Technological Institute (VJTI), which are India's premier engineering and technology schools, along with SNTD Women's University are the autonomous universities located in Mumbai. In April 2015, IIT Bombay launched the first US-India joint EMBA program alongside Washington University in St. Louis. Thadomal Shahani Engineering College is the first and the oldest private engineering college affiliated to the federal University of Mumbai and is also pioneered to be the first institute in the city's university to offer undergraduate level courses in Computer Engineering, Information Technology, Biomedical Engineering and Biotechnology. Grant Medical College established in 1845 and Seth G.S. Medical College are the leading medical institutes affiliated with Sir Jamshedjee Jeejeebhoy Group of Hospitals and KEM Hospital respectively. Mumbai is also home to the IIM Mumbai, Jamnalal Bajaj Institute of Management Studies (JBIMS), Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies (NMIMS), S P Jain Institute of Management and Research, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) and several other management schools. Government Law College and Sydenham College, respectively the oldest law and commerce colleges in India, are based in Mumbai. The Sir J. J. School of Art is Mumbai's oldest art institution. It also has one of the best law schools or universities of the country which is National Law Universities (NLU). Mumbai is home to two prominent research institutions: the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), and the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC). The BARC operates CIRUS, a 40 MW nuclear research reactor at their facility in Trombay. Mumbai Veterinary College is the oldest and premier Veterinary College of India and Asia, established in 1886.

Culture Mumbai's culture offers a blend of traditional and cosmopolitan festivals, food, entertainment, and night life. The city's cosmopolitan and urban-centric modern cultural offerings are comparable to other world capitals. Mumbai bears the distinction of being the most cosmopolitan city of India. Its history as a major trading centre and the expansion of an educated middle class has led to a diverse range of cultures, religions, and cuisines coexisting in the city. The variety and abundance of restaurants, cinemas, theatres, sports events and museums are a product of Mumbai's unique cosmopolitan culture. Mumbai is the birthplace of Indian cinema-Dadasaheb Phalke laid the foundations with silent movies followed by Marathi talkies-and the oldest film broadcast took place in the early 20th century. Mumbai also has a large number of cinema halls that feature Bollywood, Marathi and Hollywood movies. The Mumbai International Film Festival and the award ceremony of the Filmfare Awards, the oldest and prominent film awards given for Hindi film industry in India, are held in Mumbai. Despite most of the professional theatre groups that formed during the British Raj having disbanded by the 1950s, Mumbai has developed a thriving "theatre movement" tradition in Marathi, Hindi, English, and other regional languages. Contemporary art is featured in both government-funded art spaces and private commercial galleries. The government-funded institutions include the Jehangir Art Gallery and the National Gallery of Modern Art. Built in 1833, the Asiatic Society of Mumbai is one of the oldest public libraries in the city. The Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (formerly The Prince of Wales Museum) is a renowned museum in South Mumbai which houses rare ancient exhibits of Indian history. Mumbai has a zoo named

Jijamata Udyaan (formerly Victoria Gardens), which also harbours a garden. The rich literary traditions of the city have been highlighted internationally by Booker Prize winners Salman Rushdie, Aravind Adiga. Marathi literature has been modernised in the works of Mumbai-based authors such as Mohan Apte, Anant Kanekar, and Gangadhar Gadgil, and is promoted through an annual Sahitya Akademi Award, a literary honour bestowed by India's National Academy of Letters. Mumbai residents celebrate both Western and Indian festivals. Ganesh Chaturthi is the biggest and most important festival of Mumbai; there are almost 5000 Ganpati Pandals set up in the city for the celebrations. Other festivals like Diwali, Holi, Navratri, Christmas, Rakshabandhan, Makar Sankranti, Dussera, Eid, Durga Puja, Ram Navami, Shiv Jayanti and Maha Shivratri are some of the popular festivals in the city. The Kala Ghoda Arts Festival is an exhibition that encapsulates works of artists in the fields of music, dance, theatre and films. The Banganga Festival is a two-day music festival, held annually in the month of January, which is organised by the Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) at the historic Banganga Tank in Mumbai. The Elephanta Festival-celebrated every February on the Elephanta Islands-is dedicated to classical Indian dance and music and attracts performers from across the country. Public holidays specific to the city and the state include Maharashtra Day on 1 May, to celebrate the formation of Maharashtra state on 1 May 1960, and Gudi Padwa which is the New Year's Day for Marathi people. Beaches are a major tourist attraction in the city. The major beaches in Mumbai are Girgaum Chowpatty, Juhu Beach, Dadar Chowpatty, Gorai Beach, Marine Beach, Versova Beach, Madh Beach, Aksa Beach and Manori Beach. Most of the beaches are unfit for swimming, except Girgaum Chowpatty and Juhu Beach. Essel World is a theme park and amusement centre situated close to Gorai Beach, and includes Asia's largest theme water park, Water Kingdom. Adlabs Imagica opened in April 2013 is located near the city of Khopoli off the Mumbai-Pune Expressway.

Architecture The architecture of the city is a blend of Gothic Revival, Indo-Saracenic, Art Deco, and other contemporary styles. Most of the buildings during the British period, such as the Victoria Terminus and University of Mumbai, were built in Gothic Revival style. Their architectural features include a variety of European influences such as German gables, Dutch roofs, Swiss timbering, Romance arches, Tudor casements, and traditional Indian features. There are also a few Indo-Saracenic styled buildings such as the Gateway of India. Art Deco styled landmarks can be found along Marine Drive and west of the Oval Maidan. Mumbai has the second highest number of Art Deco buildings in the world after Miami. In the newer suburbs, modern buildings dominate the landscape. Mumbai has by far the highest number of skyscrapers in India, with 956 existing skyscrapers and 272 under construction as of 2009. The Mumbai Heritage Conservation Committee (MHCC), established in 1995, formulates special regulations and by-laws to assist in the conservation of the city's heritage structures. Mumbai has three UNESCO World Heritage Sites, the Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, the Elephanta Caves and the Victorian and Art Deco Ensemble. In the south of Mumbai, there are colonial-era buildings and Soviet-style offices. In the east are factories and some slums. On the West coast are former-textile mills being demolished and skyscrapers built on top. There are 237 buildings taller than 100 m (330 ft), compared with 327 in Shanghai and 855 in New York.

Cityscape Mumbai's cityscape consists of a variety of tall buildings and structures, most of which have been built in the last two decades. There was a significant lull in construction projects since the mid-1990s after which construction projects began taking the skyline upwards, with a major acceleration in the pace of development since 2000, when the Lower Parel area began developing. Mumbai with a commanding 77% share of tall buildings in India, is poised to maintain its position as the frontrunner in tall building construction due to its ability to command premium prices compared to other cities, thereby ensuring the economic viability of such developments within the city. Mumbai has more residential tall buildings rather than commercial, unlike the trend globally. Limited land resources and an exponential increase in urban population were the primary reasons for Mumbai's vertical growth compared to other Tier 1 Indian cities. As of June 2023, Mumbai has a

total of around 250 tall buildings out of which more than 100 are completed with more than 90 under construction.

Food Media Bollywood, the Hindi film industry based in Mumbai, produces around 150-200 films every year. The name Bollywood is a blend of Bombay and Hollywood. The 2000s saw a growth in Bollywood's popularity overseas. This led filmmaking to new heights in terms of quality, cinematography and innovative story lines as well as technical advances such as special effects and animation. Studios in Goregaon, including Film City, are the location for most movie sets. The city also hosts the Marathi film industry which has seen increased popularity in recent years, and TV production companies. Mumbai is a hub of Indian film making. Several other Indian language films such as Bengali, Bhojpuri, Gujarati, Malayalam, Tamil, Kannada, Telugu and Urdu are also occasionally shot in Mumbai. Slumdog Millionaire, an English language British film, was shot entirely in Mumbai and has garnered 8 Oscar awards.

Mumbai has numerous newspaper publications, television and radio stations. Marathi dailies enjoy the maximum readership share in the city and the top Marathi language newspapers are Maharashtra Times, Navakaal, Lokmat, Loksatta, Mumbai Chaufer, Saamana and Sakaal. Popular Marathi language magazines are Saptahik Sakaal, Grihashobhika, Lokrajya, Lokprabha and Chitralekha. Popular English language newspapers published and sold in Mumbai include The Times of India, Mid-day, Hindustan Times, DNA India and The Indian Express. Newspapers are also printed in other Indian languages. Mumbai is home to Asia's oldest newspaper, Bombay Samachar, which has been published in Gujarati since 1822. Bombay Durpan, the first Marathi newspaper, was started by Balshastri Jambhekar in 1832. Numerous Indian and international television channels can be watched in Mumbai through one of the Pay TV companies or the local cable television providers. The metropolis is also the hub of many international media corporations, with many news channels and print publications having a major presence. The national television broadcaster, Doordarshan, provides two free terrestrial channels, while three main cable networks serve most households. The wide range of cable channels available includes Zee Marathi, Zee Talkies, Colors Marathi, Star Pravah, Mi Marathi, DD Sahyadri (All Marathi channels), news channels such as ABP Majha, News 18 Lokmat, Zee 24 Taas, sports channels like ESPN, Star Sports, National entertainment channels like Colors TV, Sony, Zee TV and Star Plus, business news channels like CNBC Awaaz, Zee Business, and ET Now News channels entirely dedicated to Mumbai include Sahara Samay Mumbai. Zing a popular Bollywood gossip channel is also based out of Mumbai. Satellite television (DTH) has yet to gain mass acceptance, due to high installation costs. Prominent DTH entertainment services in Mumbai include Dish TV and Tata Sky. There are twelve radio stations in Mumbai, with nine broadcasting on the FM band, and three All India Radio stations broadcasting on the AM band. Mumbai also has access to Commercial radio providers such as Sirius. The Conditional Access System (CAS) started by the Union Government in 2006 met a poor response in Mumbai due to competition from its sister technology Direct-to-Home (DTH) transmission service.

Sports Cricket is more popular than any other sport in Mumbai. It is home to the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and Indian Premier League (IPL). Mumbai's first-class team Mumbai cricket team has won 41 Ranji Trophy titles, the most by any team. The city based Mumbai Indians compete in the Indian Premier League. Mumbai has two international cricket stadiums, the Wankhede Stadium and the Brabourne Stadium. The first cricket test match in India was played in Mumbai at the Bombay Gymkhana. The biggest cricketing event to be staged in the city so far is the final of the 2011 ICC Cricket World Cup which was played at the Wankhede Stadium. Mumbai and London are the only two cities to have hosted both a World Cup final and the final of an ICC Champions Trophy which was played at the Brabourne Stadium in 2006. Football is another popular sport in the city, with the FIFA World Cup and the English Premier League being followed widely. The

Mumbai City FC of Indian Super League (ISL) play their home matches at the Mumbai Football Arena. While the I-League 2 club Mumbai Kenkre FC uses the Cooperage Ground as home ground. When the Elite Football League of India was introduced in August 2011, Mumbai was noted as one of eight cities to be awarded a team for the inaugural season. Mumbai's first professional American football franchise, the Mumbai Gladiators, played its first season, in Pune, in late 2012. In field hockey, Mumbai is home to the Mumbai Marines and Mumbai Magicians in the World Series Hockey and Hockey India League respectively. Matches in the city are played at the Mahindra Hockey Stadium. The Indian Badminton League (IBL), now known as the Premier Badminton League is also visiting Mumbai since its inaugural edition in 2013 when the final was held in Mumbai's National Sports Club of India. In the second season, the final of the 2016 Premier Badminton League was held between home-squad Mumbai Rockets and the Delhi Dashers (formerly Delhi Acers), the visitors eventually claiming the title. The opening ceremony was also held in Mumbai while the finals in Delhi. In the 2017 Premier Badminton League (also known as Vodafone PBL 2017 for sponsorship reasons) the Mumbai Rockets beat the Hyderabad Hunters 3-1 to proceed to the final. In the final they lost 3-4 to the Chennai Smashers. U Mumba is the team representing Mumbai in the country's professional Kabaddi league, Pro Kabaddi. The Mumbai Leg of Pro Kabaddi is held at the NSCI, Worli. Rugby is another growing sport in Mumbai with league matches being held at the Bombay Gymkhana from June to November. Every February, Mumbai holds derby races at the Mahalaxmi Racecourse. McDowell's Derby is also held in February at the Turf Club in Mumbai. In March 2004, the Mumbai Grand Prix was part of the F1 powerboat world championship, and the Force India F1 team car was unveiled in the city, in 2008. In 2004, the annual Mumbai Marathon was established as a part of "The Greatest Race on Earth". Mumbai had also played host to the Kingfisher Airlines Tennis Open, an International Series tournament of the ATP World Tour, in 2006 and 2007. Mumbai hosted the 141st IOC Session from 15 to 17 October 2023. Regional and professional sports teams from Mumbai

Former regional and professional sports teams from Mumbai

International relations Twin towns and sister cities Source: Hindustan Times

See also [Geology of Mumbai](#) [List of tallest buildings in Mumbai](#) [List of people from Mumbai](#) [List of twin towns and sister cities in India](#) [INS Mumbai](#)

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Delhi

Delhi, officially the National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi, is a city and a union territory of India containing New Delhi, the capital of India. Straddling the Yamuna river, but spread chiefly to the west, or beyond its right bank, Delhi shares borders with the state of Uttar Pradesh in the east and with the state of Haryana in the remaining directions. Delhi became a union territory on 1 November 1956 and the NCT in 1995. The NCT covers an area of 1,484 square kilometres (573 sq mi). According to the 2011 census, the population of Delhi city proper was over 11 million, while the NCT's population was about 16.8 million. The topography of the medieval fort Purana Qila on the banks of the river Yamuna matches the literary description of the citadel Indraprastha in the Sanskrit epic Mahabharata; however, excavations in the area have revealed no signs of an ancient built environment. From the early 13th century until the mid-19th century, Delhi was the capital of two major empires, the Delhi Sultanate and the Mughal Empire, which covered large parts of South Asia. All three UNESCO World Heritage Sites in the city, the Qutub Minar, Humayun's Tomb, and the Red Fort, belong to this period. Delhi was the early centre of Sufism and Qawwali music. The names of Nizamuddin Auliya and Amir Khusrau are prominently associated with it. The Khariboli dialect of Delhi was part of a linguistic development that gave rise to the literature of Urdu and later Modern Standard Hindi. Major Urdu poets from Delhi include Mir Taqi Mir and Mirza Ghalib. Delhi was a notable centre of the Indian Rebellion of 1857. In 1911, New Delhi, a southern region within Delhi, became the capital of the British Indian Empire. After independence in 1947, New Delhi continued as the capital of the Dominion of India, and after 1950 of the Republic of India. Post partition, Delhi experienced one of the fastest urban transformations in South Asia. The city's population nearly doubled between 1941 and 1951—from approximately 920,000 to 1.74 million—driven largely by the arrival of over 500,000 Hindu and Sikh refugees from the lands of what is now known as Pakistan, while roughly two-thirds of Delhi's Muslim residents, concentrated mainly in the old walled city, were displaced or migrated to Pakistan. By the early 1950s, urbanization intensified under the Delhi Improvement Trust (established in 1937), which initiated multiple schemes for congestion relief, housing, and urban improvement. However, post-Partition challenges, including land scarcity and rising property prices, limited project completions. During this period, the state acquired agricultural land from surrounding villages for refugee rehabilitation and infrastructure expansion, often under ordinances such as the 1955 Delhi Control of Building Operations Act. Private developers also purchased village lands for residential colonies, for example in Hauz Khas in the mid-1950s. In 1957, the Delhi Development Authority was established. Successive Master Plans converted large tracts of agricultural and village land into residential, commercial, and industrial zones, expanding the city's built-up area from about 326 km in 1961 to approximately 702 km by 2001. Continuous migration from other Indian states, industrial growth, and large-scale state planning further accelerated this process, transforming Delhi from a cluster of villages and small townships into a densely urbanized metropolis, with 97.5 percent of its population classified as urban by 2011. Delhi's urban agglomeration, which includes the satellite cities of Gurgaon, Noida, Greater Noida, Ghaziabad, Faridabad, and YEIDA City located in an area known as the National Capital Region (NCR), has an estimated population of over 28 million, making it the largest metropolitan area in India and the second-largest in the world (after Tokyo). Delhi ranks fifth among the Indian states and union territories in human development index, and has the second-highest GDP per capita in India (after Goa). Although a union territory, the political administration of the NCT of Delhi today more closely resembles that of a state of India, with its own legislature, high court and an executive council of ministers headed by a chief minister. New Delhi is jointly administered by the federal government of India and the local government of Delhi, and serves as the capital of the nation as well as the NCT of Delhi. Delhi is also the centre of the National Capital Region, which is an "interstate regional planning" area created in 1985. Delhi hosted the inaugural 1951 Asian Games, the 1982 Asian Games, the 1983 Non-Aligned Movement summit, the 2010 Men's Hockey World Cup, the 2010 Commonwealth Games,

the 2012 BRICS summit, the 2023 G20 summit, and was one of the major host cities of the 2011 and 2023 Cricket World Cups.

Toponym There are a number of myths and legends associated with the origin of the name Delhi. One of them is derived from Dhillu or Dilu, a king who built a city at this location in 50 BCE and named it after himself. Another legend holds that the name of the city is based on the Prakrit word dhili (loose) and that it was used by the Tomaras to refer to the city because the iron pillar of Delhi had a weak foundation and had to be moved. According to Panjab Notes and Queries, the name of the city at the time of King Prithviraj was dilpat, and that dilpat and dilli are probably derived from the old Hindi word dil meaning "eminence". The former director of the Archaeological Survey of India, Alexander Cunningham, mentioned that dilli later became dihli/dehli. Some suggest the coins in circulation in the region under the Tomaras were called dehlival. According to the Bhavishya Purana, King Prithviraja of Indraprastha built a new fort in the modern-day Purana Qila area for the convenience of all four castes in his kingdom. He ordered the construction of a gateway to the fort and later named the fort dehali. Some historians believe that Dhilli or Dhillika is the original name for the city while others believe the name could be a corruption of the Hindustani words dehleez or dehali-both terms meaning "threshold" or "gateway"-and symbolic of the city as a gateway to the Gangetic Plain. The people of Delhi are referred to as Delhiites or Dilliwalas. The city is referenced in various idioms of the Northern Indo-Aryan languages. Examples include:

Abh¹ Dill² d³r hai (■■■■ ■■■■■■ ■■■■ ■■ / ■■■■ ■■■■ ■■■■ ■■) or its Persian version, Hanuz Dehli dur ast (■■■■■ ■■■■ ■■■■ ■■■■), literally meaning "Delhi is still far away", which is generically said about a task or journey still far from completion. ■s-p⁴s barse, Dill⁵ p⁶n⁷ tarse (■■-■■■ ■■■■, ■■■■■■ ■■■■ ■■■■ / ■■ ■■■■ ■■■■■■ ■■■■ ■■■■ ■■■■■■), literally meaning "It pours all around, while Delhi lies parched". An allusion to the sometimes semi-arid climate of Delhi, it idiomatically refers to situations of deprivation when one is surrounded by plenty. The form Delhi, spelled in the Latin script with the h following the l, originated under colonial rule and is an alternation of the spelling based on the Urdu name of the city (■■■■■, Dehli).

History Ancient and early medieval periods Traditionally seven cities have been associated with the region of Delhi. The earliest, Indraprastha, is part of a literary description in the Sanskrit epic Mahabharata (composed c. 400 BCE to 300 CE but describing an earlier time) which situates a city on a knoll on the banks of the river Yamuna. According to art historian Catherine B. Asher, the topographical description of the Mahabharata matches the area of Purana Qila, a 14th-century CE fort of the Delhi sultanate, but the analogy does not go much further. Whereas the Mahabharata speaks of a beautifully decorated city with surrounding fortifications, the excavations have yielded "uneven findings of painted grey pottery characteristic of the eleventh century BCE; no signs of a built environment, much fewer fortifications, have been revealed." The earliest architectural relics date back to the Maurya period (c. 300 BCE); in 1966, an inscription of the Mauryan Emperor Ashoka (273-235 BCE) was discovered near Srinivasपुरi. Remains of several major cities can be found in Delhi. The first of these was in the southern part of present-day Delhi. Tomara Rajput King Anang Pal built the Lal Kot and several temples in 1052 CE. The Chauhan Rajputs under Vigraharaja IV conquered Lal Kot in the mid-12th century and renamed it Qila Rai Pithora.

Late medieval period Prithviraj Chauhan was defeated in 1192 by Muhammad Ghori in the second battle of Tarain. Qutb-ud-din Aibak, was given the responsibility of governing the conquered territories of India after Ghori returned to his capital, Ghor. When Ghori died without an heir in 1206 CE, Qutb-ud-din assumed control of Ghori's Indian possessions and laid the foundation of the Delhi Sultanate and the Mamluk dynasty. He began

construction of the Qutb Minar and Quwwat-al-Islam (Might of Islam) mosque, the earliest extant mosque in India. It was his successor, Iltutmish (1211-1236), who consolidated the conquest of northern India. At 72.5 m (238 ft), the Qutb Minar, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Delhi, was completed during the reign of Sultan Iltutmish in the 13th century. Although its style has some similarities with the Jarkurgan minaret, it is more closely related to the Ghaznavid and Ghurid minarets of Central Asia. Razia, daughter of Iltutmish, became the Sultana of Delhi upon the former's death. For the next three hundred years, Delhi was ruled by a succession of Turkic, Indian and an Afghan, Lodi dynasty. They built several forts and townships that are part of the seven cities of Delhi. Delhi was a major centre of Sufism during this period. The Mamluk Sultanate (Delhi) was overthrown in 1290 by Jalal ud din Firuz Khalji (1290-1320). Under the second Khalji ruler, Ala-ud-din Khalji, the Delhi sultanate extended its control south of the Narmada River in the Deccan. The Delhi sultanate reached its greatest extent during the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq (1325-1351). In an attempt to bring the whole of the Deccan under control, he moved his capital to Daulatabad, Maharashtra in central India. However, by moving away from Delhi he lost control of the north and was forced to return to Delhi to restore order. The southern provinces then broke away. In the years following the reign of Firoz Shah Tughlaq (1351-1388), the Delhi Sultanate rapidly began to lose its hold over its northern provinces. Delhi was captured and sacked by Timur in 1398, who massacred 100,000 captive civilians. Delhi's decline continued under the Sayyid dynasty (1414-1451), until the sultanate was reduced to Delhi and its hinterland. Under the Afghan Lodi dynasty (1451-1526), the sultanate recovered control of Punjab and the Gangetic plain to once again achieve domination over Northern India. However, the recovery was short-lived and the sultanate was destroyed in 1526 by Babur, founder of the Mughal dynasty.

Early modern period In 1526, Babur, a descendant of Genghis Khan and Timur from the Fergana Valley in modern-day Uzbekistan, invaded India and defeated the last Lodhi sultan in the First Battle of Panipat and founded the Mughal Empire that ruled from Delhi and Agra. The Mughal dynasty ruled Delhi for more than three centuries, with a sixteen-year hiatus during the reigns of Sher Shah Suri and Hemu from 1540 to 1556. Shah Jahan built the seventh city of Delhi that bears his name Shahjahanabad, which served as the capital of the Mughal Empire from 1638 and is today known as the Old City or Old Delhi. After the death of Aurangzeb in 1707, the Mughal Empire's influence declined rapidly as the Hindu Maratha Empire from Deccan Plateau rose to prominence. In 1737, Maratha forces led by Baji Rao I sacked Delhi following their victory against the Mughals in the First Battle of Delhi. In 1739, the Mughal Empire lost the huge Battle of Karnal in less than three hours against the numerically outnumbered but militarily superior Persian army led by Nader Shah of Persia. After his invasion, he completely sacked and looted Delhi, carrying away immense wealth including the Peacock Throne, the Daria-i-Noor, and Koh-i-Noor. The Mughals, severely further weakened, could never overcome this crushing defeat and humiliation which also left the way open for more invaders to come, including eventually the British. Nader eventually agreed to leave the city and India after forcing the Mughal emperor Muhammad Shah I to beg him for mercy and granting him the keys of the city and the royal treasury. A treaty signed in 1752 made Marathas the protectors of the Mughal throne in Delhi. The city was sacked again in 1757 by the forces of Ahmad Shah Durrani, although it was not annexed by the Afghan Empire and being its vassal state under the Mughal emperor. Then the Marathas battled and won control of Delhi from the Afghans.

Colonial period In 1803, during the Second Anglo-Maratha War, the forces of British East India Company defeated the Maratha forces in the Battle of Delhi. During the Indian Rebellion of 1857, Delhi fell to the forces of East India Company after a bloody fight known as the Siege of Delhi. The city came under the direct control of the British Government in 1858. It was made a district province of the Punjab. In 1911, it was announced that the capital of the British Indian Empire was to be transferred from Calcutta to Delhi. This formally transferred on 12 December 1911. The name "New Delhi" was given in 1927, and the new capital was inaugurated on 13 February 1931. New Delhi was officially declared as the capital of the Union of India after the country gained

independence on 15 August 1947.

Partition and post-independence During the partition of India, around five hundred thousand Hindu and Sikh refugees, mainly from West Punjab migrated to Delhi, whereas around three hundred thousand Muslim residents of the city migrated to Pakistan. Delhi has expanded much since 1947; the small part of it that was constructed during the British period has come to be informally known as Lutyens' Delhi. The States Reorganisation Act, 1956 created the Union Territory of Delhi from its predecessor, the Chief Commissioner's Province of Delhi. The Constitution (Sixty-ninth Amendment) Act, 1991 declared the Union Territory of Delhi to be formally known as the National Capital Territory of Delhi. The Act gave Delhi its legislative assembly along Civil lines, though with limited powers. Delhi was the primary site in the nationwide anti-Sikh pogroms of 1984, which resulted in the death of around 2,800 people in the city according to government figures, though independent estimates of the number of people killed tend to be higher. The riots were set off by the assassination of Indira Gandhi-the Prime Minister of India at the time-by her Sikh bodyguards. In 2001, the Parliament of India building in New Delhi was attacked by armed militants, killing six security personnel. India suspected Pakistan-based Jihadist militant groups were behind the attack, which caused a major diplomatic crisis between the two countries. There were further terrorist attacks in Delhi in 2005 and 2008, resulting in a total of 92 deaths. In 2020, Delhi witnessed its worst communal violence in decades. The riots caused 53 people to be killed, two-thirds of whom were Muslims, and the rest Hindus.

Geography Delhi is located in Northern India, at 28.61N 77.23E■ / 28.61; 77.23. The city is bordered on its northern, western, and southern sides by the state of Haryana and to the east by that of Uttar Pradesh (UP). Two prominent features of the geography of Delhi are the Yamuna flood plains and the Delhi ridge. The Yamuna River was the historical boundary between Punjab and UP, and its flood plains provide fertile alluvial soil suitable for agriculture but, are prone to recurrent floods. The Yamuna, a sacred river in Hinduism, is the only major river flowing through Delhi. The Hindon River separates Ghaziabad from the eastern part of Delhi. The Delhi ridge originates from the Aravalli Range in the south and encircles the west, northeast, and northwest parts of the city. It reaches a height of 318 m (1,043 ft) and is a dominant feature of the region. In addition to the wetlands formed by the Yamuna River, Delhi continues to retain over 500 ponds (wetlands < 5 ha (12 acres)), that in turn support a considerable number of bird species. Delhi's ponds, despite experiencing ecological deterioration due to garbage dumping and concretisation, support the largest number of bird species known to be using ponds anywhere in the world. Existing policy in Delhi prevents the conversion of wetlands and, quite inadvertently, has led to the city's ponds becoming invaluable refugia for birds. The National Capital Territory of Delhi covers an area of 1,483 km² (573 sq mi), of which 783 km² (302 sq mi) is designated rural, and 700 km² (270 sq mi) urban therefore making it the largest city in terms of area in the country. It has a length of 51.9 km (32 mi) and a width of 48.48 km (30 mi). Delhi is included in India's seismic zone-IV, indicating its vulnerability to major earthquakes.

Climate Delhi features a hot semi-arid climate (Kppen BSh) bordering a dry winter humid subtropical climate (Kppen Cwa). The warm season lasts from 21 March to 15 June with an average daily high temperature above 39 C (102 F). The hottest day of the year is usually witnessed between 26 and 30 May, with an average high of 42 C (108 F) and low of 27 C (81 F). The cold season lasts from 26 November to 9 February with an average daily high temperature below 20 C (68 F). The coldest day of the year is usually witnessed between 1 and 10 January, with an average low of 6.9 C (44.4 F) and high of 19.3 C (66.7 F). In early March, the wind direction changes from north-westerly to south-westerly. From April to October the weather is hot. The monsoon arrives at the end of June, along with an increase in humidity. The brief, mild winter starts in late November, peaks in January and heavy fog often occurs. Delhi receives an average annual precipitation of 774.4 mm (30.49 in).

Air pollution According to the World Health Organization (WHO), Delhi was the most polluted city in the world in 2014. In 2016, WHO downgraded Delhi to eleventh-worst in the urban air quality database. However, as recently as 2022, data from the WHO and IQAir, alongside comprehensive research, ranked Delhi as the fourth most polluted city globally. According to one estimate, air pollution causes the death of about 10,500 people every year. Air quality index is generally moderate (101-200) level between January and September, and then it drastically deteriorates to Very Poor (301-400), Severe (401-500) or Hazardous (500+) levels in three months between October and December, due to various factors including stubble burning (a type of biomass burning), fire crackers burning during Diwali and cold weather. During 2013-14, peak levels of fine particulate matter (PM) increased by about 44%, primarily due to high vehicular and industrial emissions, construction work and crop burning in adjoining states. It has the highest level of the airborne particulate matter, PM_{2.5} considered most harmful to health, with 153 micrograms. Rising air pollution level has significantly increased lung-related ailments (especially asthma and lung cancer) among Delhi's children and women. The dense smog and haze during winter results in major air and rail traffic disruptions every year. According to Indian meteorologists, the average maximum temperature during winters has declined notably since 1998 due to rising air pollution. India's Ministry of Earth Sciences published a research paper in October 2018 attributing almost 41% of PM_{2.5} air pollution in Delhi to vehicular emissions, 21.5% to dust/fire and 18% to industries. The director of Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) alleged that the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) is lobbying "against the report" because it is "inconvenient" to the automobile industry. Environmentalists have also criticised the Delhi government for not doing enough to curb air pollution and to inform people about air quality issues. In 2014, an environmental panel appealed to India's Supreme Court to impose a 30% cess on diesel cars, but till date no action has been taken to penalise the automobile industry. Most of Delhi's residents are unaware of alarming levels of air pollution in the city and the health risks associated with it. In 2020, annual average PM_{2.5} in the city stood at 107.6 µg/m³, which is almost 21.5 times the WHO's PM_{2.5} Guideline (5 µg/m³; set in September 2021). These pollution levels are estimated to reduce the life expectancy of an average person living in Delhi by almost 10.1 years. However, as of 2015, awareness, particularly among the foreign diplomatic community and high-income Indians, was noticeably increasing. Since the mid-1990s, Delhi has undertaken some measures to curb air pollution-it has the third-highest quantity of trees among Indian cities; the Delhi Transport Corporation operates the world's largest fleet of environmentally friendly compressed natural gas (CNG) buses. In 1996, the CSE started a public interest litigation in the Supreme Court of India that ordered the conversion of Delhi's fleet of buses and taxis to run on CNG and banned the use of leaded petrol in 1998. In 2003, Delhi won the United States Department of Energy's first 'Clean Cities International Partner of the Year' award for its "bold efforts to curb air pollution and support alternative fuel initiatives". The Delhi Metro has also been credited for significantly reducing air pollutants in the city. However, according to several authors, most of these gains have been lost, especially due to stubble burning, a rise in the market share of diesel cars and a considerable decline in bus ridership. According to CSE and System of Air Quality Weather Forecasting and Research (SAFAR), burning of agricultural waste in nearby Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh regions results in severe intensification of smog over Delhi. Delhi has been ranked 7th best "National Clean Air City" (under Category 1 >10L Population cities) in India according to 'Swachh Vayu Survekshan 2024 Results' According to the World Air Quality Report 2024, Delhi remains the world's most polluted capital city.

Civic administration Currently, the NCT of Delhi is made up of one division, 11 districts, 33 subdivisions, 59 census towns, and 300 villages. On the other way, the NCT of Delhi is divided into three municipalities. The boundaries of municipalities may be different from district boundaries:

Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), which occupies an area of 1,397.3 km² (539.5 sq mi) and is sub-divided into 12 zones, that is, Centre, South, West, Najafgarh, Rohini, Civil Lines, Karol Bagh, SP-City, Keshavpuram,

Narela, Shahdara North and Shahdara South. Raja Iqbal Singh is the current mayor of the unified Municipal Corporation of Delhi since 25 April 2025. New Delhi Municipality, which occupies an area of 42.7 km² (16.5 sq mi) Delhi Cantonment, which occupies an area of 42.3 km² (16.3 sq mi) Between 13 January 2011 and 22 May 2022, MCD was divided into three municipal corporations:

South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) had jurisdiction over South and West Delhi areas, including Mahipalpur, Rajouri Garden, Uttam Nagar, Badarpur, Jaitpur, Janakpuri, Hari Nagar, Tilak Nagar, Dwarka, Jungpura, Greater Kailash, R K Puram, Malviya Nagar, Kalkaji, Ambedkar Nagar and Pul pehladpur. North Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC) had jurisdiction over areas such as Badli, Rithala, Bawana, Kirari, Mangolpuri, Tri Nagar, Model Town, Sadar Bazar, Chandni Chowk, Matia Mahal, Karol Bagh, Moti Nagar East Delhi Municipal Corporation (EDMC) had jurisdiction over areas such as Patparganj, Kondli, Laxmi Nagar, Seemapuri, Gonda, Karawal Nagar, Babarpur and Shahadra. Delhi is home to the High Court of Delhi. The High Court of Delhi is the highest in the Delhi before Supreme Court. The High Court of Delhi just like the apex court and other High Courts in India is the Court of record. Delhi is also home to various District Court according to jurisdictions. Delhi have Currently seven District Courts namely Tis Hazari Court Complex, Karkardooma Court Complex, Patiala House Court Complex, Rohini Court Complex, Dwarka Courts Complex, Saket Court Complex, and Rouse Avenue Court Apart from the District Courts Delhi also have Consumer Courts, CBI Courts, Labour Courts, Revenue Courts, Army tribunals, electricity tribunals, Railway Tribunals, and other various tribunals situated according to appropriate jurisdictions. For policing purposes Delhi is divided into fifteen police districts which are further subdivided into 95 local police station zones. Delhi currently has 180 police stations.

Government and politics As a first-level administrative division, the National Capital Territory of Delhi has its own Legislative Assembly, Lieutenant Governor, the council of ministers, and Chief Minister. Members of the legislative assembly are directly elected from territorial constituencies in the NCT. The legislative assembly was abolished in 1956, after which direct federal control was implemented until it was re-established in 1993. The municipal corporation handles civic administration for the city as part of the Panchayati Raj Act. The Government of India and the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi jointly administer New Delhi, where both bodies are located. The Parliament of India, the Rashtrapati Bhavan (Presidential Palace), Cabinet Secretariat, and the Supreme Court of India are located in the municipal district of New Delhi. There are 70 assembly constituencies and seven Lok Sabha (Indian Parliament's lower house) constituencies in Delhi. The Indian National Congress (Congress) formed all the governments in Delhi until the 1990s, when the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), led by Madan Lal Khurana, came to power. In 1998, the Congress returned to power under the leadership of Sheila Dikshit, who was subsequently re-elected for 3 consecutive terms. But in 2013, the Congress was ousted from power by the newly formed Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) led by Arvind Kejriwal forming the government with outside support from the Congress. However, that government was short-lived, collapsing only after 49 days. Delhi was then under President's rule until February 2015, after which AAP returned to power after a landslide victory, winning 67 out of the 70 seats in the Delhi Legislative Assembly. AAP held power until Feb 2025. Following assembly elections in 2025, BJP came to power.

Economy Delhi is the largest commercial center in northern India. As of 2016 recent estimates of the economy of the Delhi urban area have ranged from \$370 billion to \$400 billion (PPP metro GDP) ranking it either the most or second-most productive metro area of India. The nominal GSDP of the NCT of Delhi for 2016-17 was estimated at ₹6,224 billion (US\$74 billion), 13% higher than in 2015-16. Oxford Economics Global Cities index 2025 ranked Delhi as the best city in India and 119th best city in the world in Economics Category. As per the Economic survey of Delhi (2005-2006), the tertiary sector contributes 70.95% of Delhi's gross SDP followed by

secondary and primary sectors with 25.20% and 3.85% contributions, respectively. Delhi's workforce constitutes 32.82% of the population, and increased by 52.52% between 1991 and 2001. Delhi's unemployment rate decreased from 12.57% in 1999-2000 to 4.63% in 2003. In December 2004, 636,000 people were registered with various employment exchange programmes in Delhi. In 2018 the total workforce in national and state governments and the quasi-government sector was 594,000, and the private sector employed 273,000. Key service industries are information technology, telecommunications, hotels, banking, media and tourism. Construction, power, health and community services and real estate are also important to the city's economy. Delhi has one of India's largest and fastest growing retail industries. Manufacturing also grew considerably as consumer goods companies established manufacturing units and headquarters in the city. Delhi's large consumer market and the availability of skilled labour has also attracted foreign investment. In 2001, the manufacturing sector employed 1,440,000 workers and the city had 129,000 industrial units.

Utility services Delhi's municipal water supply is managed by the Delhi Jal Board (DJB). As of April 2025, it supplied 900 million gallons per day (MGD), whereas the estimated consumption requirement is 963 MGD. The shortfall is met by private and public tube wells and hand pumps. At 240 MGD, the Bhakra storage is DJB's largest water source, followed by the Yamuna and Ganges rivers. Delhi's groundwater level is falling and its population density is increasing, so residents often encounter acute water shortage. Research on Delhi suggests that up to half of the city's water use is unofficial groundwater. In Delhi, daily domestic solid waste production is 8000 tonnes which is dumped at three landfill locations by MCD. The daily domestic waste water production is 470 MGD and industrial waste water is 70 MGD. A large portion of the sewage flows untreated into the Yamuna river. The city's electricity consumption is about 1,265 kWh per capita but the actual demand is higher. In Delhi power distribution is managed by TPDDL and BSES Yamuna & BSES Rajdhani since 2002, transmission of power is done by Delhi Transco Limited and Powergrid, while generation of power is by IPGCL and PPCL. The city also imports a significant quantum of power from other states. The Delhi Fire Service runs 43 fire stations that attend about 15,000 fire and rescue calls per year. The state-owned MTNL and private enterprises such as Airtel, Vi, Jio, and provide telephone and cell phone services to the city. Cellular coverage is available in GSM, 3G, 4G, 4G+ and 5G.

Transport Air Indira Gandhi International Airport, situated to the south-west of Delhi, is the main gateway for the city's domestic and international civilian air traffic. In 2015-16, the airport handled more than 48 million passengers, making it the busiest airport in India and South Asia. Terminal 3, which cost ₹96.8 billion (US\$1.1 billion) to construct between 2007 and 2010, handles an additional 37 million passengers annually. In 2010, IGIA was conferred the 4th best airport award in the world in the 15-25 million category, by Airports Council International. The airport was rated as the Best airport in the world in the 25-40 million passengers category in 2015, by Airports Council International. Delhi Airport was awarded The Best Airport in Central Asia and Best Airport Staff in Central Asia at the Skytrax World Airport Awards 2015. Hindon Domestic Airport in Ghaziabad was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi as the second airport for the Delhi-NCR Region on 8 March 2019. A second international airport open for commercial flights has been suggested either by expansion of Meerut Airport or construction of a new airport in Greater Noida. The Noida International Airport project in Jewar has been approved by the Uttar Pradesh government and is scheduled to open in 2025. The Delhi Flying Club, established in 1928 with two de Havilland Moth aircraft named Delhi and Roshanara, was based at Safdarjung Airport which started operations in 1929, when it was the Delhi's only airport and the second in India. The airport functioned until 2001; however, in January 2002 the government closed the airport for flying activities because of security concerns following 9/11. Since then, the club only carries out aircraft maintenance courses and is used for helicopter rides to Indira Gandhi International Airport for VIP including the president and the prime minister.

Road Delhi has the highest road density of 2103 km/100 km² in India. It is connected to other parts of India by five National Highways: NH 1, NH 2, NH 8, NH 10 and NH 24. The Delhi-Mumbai and Delhi-Kolkata prongs of the Golden Quadrilateral start from the city. The majority of the city's roads which are 60 ft (18 m) wide or above are maintained by the Public Works Department (PWD) which is under the jurisdiction of the Government of Delhi while some are maintained by Delhi Development Authority and New Delhi Municipal Council which are under the jurisdiction of the Government of India. Roads and streets less than 60 ft (18 m) wide are maintained by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi. Roads and streets in unauthorised colonies are maintained by the local Member of the Legislative Assembly. Buses are the most popular means of road transport, catering to about 60% of Delhi's total demand. Delhi has one of India's largest bus transport systems. In 1998, the Supreme Court of India ruled that all public transport vehicles in Delhi must be fuelled by compressed natural gas (CNG) to tackle increasing vehicular pollution. The state-owned Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) is a major bus service provider which operates the world's largest fleet of CNG-fuelled buses. In addition, cluster scheme buses are operated by Delhi Integrated Multi-Modal Transit System (DIMTS) with the participation of private concessionaires and DTC. In December 2017, the DTC and cluster buses carried over 4.19 million passengers per day. Kashmiri Gate ISBT, Anand Vihar ISBT and Sarai Kale Khan ISBT are the main bus terminals for outstation buses plying to neighbouring states. Delhi's rapid rate of economic development and population growth has resulted in an increasing demand for transport, creating excessive pressure on the city's transport infrastructure. To meet the transport demand, the State and Union government constructed a mass rapid transit system, including the Delhi Metro. Delhi Bus Rapid Transit System runs between Ambedkar Nagar and Delhi Gate. As per February 2024, Delhi has around 1,650 electric buses managed by the Delhi Transport Corporation, the highest in India and the third highest in the world after Shenzhen and Santiago. Personal vehicles, especially cars also form a major chunk of vehicles plying on Delhi roads. As of 2007, private vehicles account for 30% of the total demand for transport. Delhi has the highest number of registered cars compared to any other metropolitan city in India. Taxis, auto rickshaws, and cycle rickshaws also ply on Delhi roads in large numbers. As of 2008, the number of vehicles in the metropolitan region, Delhi NCR, was 11.2 million (11.2 million). In 2008, there were 85 cars in Delhi for every 1,000 of its residents. In 2017, the number of vehicles in Delhi city alone crossed the ten million mark with the transport department of Delhi Government putting the total number of registered vehicles at 10,567,712 until 25 May of the year.

Railway Delhi is a major junction in the Indian railway network and is the headquarters of the Northern Railway. The main railway stations are New Delhi, Old Delhi, Hazrat Nizamuddin, Anand Vihar, Delhi Sarai Rohilla and Delhi Cantt. The Delhi Metro, a mass rapid transit system built and operated by Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC), serves many parts of Delhi and the neighbouring cities Ghaziabad, Faridabad, Gurgaon and Noida. As of June 2025, the metro consists of ten operational lines with a total length of 353.23 km (219.49 mi) and 257 stations, and several other lines are under construction. The Phase-I was built at a cost of US\$2.3 billion and the Phase-II was expected to cost an additional ■216 billion (US\$2.6 billion). Phase-II has a total length of 128 km (80 mi) and was completed by 2010. Delhi Metro completed 20 years of operation on 24 December 2022. It carries millions of passengers every day. In addition to the Delhi Metro, a suburban railway, the Delhi Suburban Railway exists.

Metro The Delhi Metro is a rapid transit system serving Delhi, Ghaziabad, Faridabad, Gurgaon and Noida in the National Capital Region of India. It is the world's tenth-largest metro system by length of lines. It was India's second modern public transportation system. The network consists of 10 colour-coded lines serving 257 stations with a total length of 353.23 kilometres (219.49 mi). The system has a mix of underground, at-grade, and elevated stations using both broad-gauge and standard-gauge. All stations have escalators, lifts, and tactile tiles to guide the visually impaired from station entrances to trains. There are 18 designated parking sites at the Metro stations. In March 2010, DMRC partnered with Google India (through Google Transit) to provide train

schedule and route information to mobile devices with Google Maps. It has a combination of elevated, at-grade, and underground lines, and uses both broad gauge and standard gauge rolling stock. Multiple types of rolling stock are used: Mitsubishi-ROTEM Broad gauge, Bombardier MOVIA, Mitsubishi-ROTEM Standard gauge, and CAF Beasain Standard gauge. The Phase-I of Delhi Metro was built for US\$2.3 billion and the Phase-II was expected to cost an additional ₹216 billion (US\$2.6 billion). Phase-II has a total length of 128 km (80 mi) and was completed by 2010. Delhi Metro completed 20 years of operation on 24 December 2022. It carries millions of passengers every day. Although the Delhi Metro was built and is operated by the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC), a state-owned company with equal equity participation of the governments of India and Delhi, it is under the administrative control of the Indian government's Ministry of Urban Development. Besides the construction and operation of the Delhi Metro, DMRC is also involved in the planning and implementation of metro rail, monorail, and high-speed rail projects in India and providing consultancy services to other metro projects in the country as well as abroad.

Demographics Population growth According to the 2011 census of India, the population of the NCT of Delhi is 16,753,235. The corresponding population density was 11,297 persons per km² with a sex ratio of 866 women per 1000 men, and a literacy rate of 86.34%. In 2004, the birth rate, death rate and infant mortality rate per 1000 population were 20.03, 5.59 and 13.08, respectively. In 2001, the population of Delhi increased by 285,000 as a result of migration and by 215,000 as a result of natural population growth, which made Delhi one of the fastest-growing cities in the world. Dwarka Sub City, Asia's largest planned residential area, is located within the National Capital Territory of Delhi. Urban expansion has resulted in Delhi's urban area now being considered as extending beyond the NCT boundaries to incorporate the towns and cities of neighbouring states including Faridabad and Gurgaon in Haryana, and Ghaziabad and Noida in Uttar Pradesh, the total population of which is estimated by the United Nations to be over 28 million. According to the UN this makes Delhi urban area the world's second-largest urban area after Tokyo, although Demographia declares the Jakarta urban area to be the second-largest. The 2011 census provided two figures for urban area population: 16,314,838 within the NCT boundary, and 21,753,486 for the Extended Urban Area. The 2021 regional plan released by the Government of India renamed the Extended Urban Area from Delhi Metropolitan Area (DMA) as defined by the 2001 plan, to Central National Capital Region (CNCR).

Slums As of 2012, around 49% of the population of Delhi lives in slums and unauthorised colonies without any civic amenities. The majority of these slums have inadequate provisions to the basic facilities and according to a DUSIB report, almost 22% of people engage in open defecation.

Religions Hinduism is Delhi's predominant religious faith, with 81.68% of Delhi's population, followed by Islam (12.86%), Sikhism (3.40%), Jainism (0.99%), Christianity (0.87%), and Buddhism (0.11%). Other minority religions include Zoroastrianism, Bahá'ism and Judaism.

Languages According to the 50th report of the commissioner for linguistic minorities in India, which was submitted in 2014, Hindi is Delhi's most spoken language, with 80.94% speakers, followed by Punjabi (7.14%), Urdu (6.31%) and Bengali (1.50%). 4.11% of Delhites speak other languages. Hindi is also the official language of Delhi while Urdu and Punjabi have been declared as additional official languages.

Culture Delhi's culture has been influenced by its lengthy history and historic association as the capital of India. Although a strong Punjabi Influence can be seen in language, dress and cuisine brought by the large number of refugees who came following the partition in 1947 the recent migration from other parts of India has made it a

melting pot. This is exemplified by many significant monuments in the city. The Archaeological Survey of India recognises 1,200 heritage buildings and 175 monuments as national heritage sites. In the Old City, the Mughals and the Turkic rulers constructed several architecturally significant buildings, such as the Jama Masjid-India's largest mosque built in 1656 and the Red Fort. Three World Heritage Sites-the Red Fort, Qutub Minar and Humayun's Tomb-are located in Delhi. Other monuments include the India Gate, the Jantar Mantar-an 18th-century astronomical observatory-and the Purana Qila-a 16th-century fortress. The Laxminarayan Temple, Akshardham temple, Gurudwara Bangla Sahib, the Bahá'í Faith's Lotus Temple and the ISKCON temple are examples of modern architecture. Raj Ghat and associated memorials houses memorials of Mahatma Gandhi and other notable personalities. New Delhi houses several government buildings and official residences reminiscent of British colonial architecture, including the Rashtrapati Bhavan, the Secretariat, Rajpath, the Parliament of India and Vijay Chowk. Safdarjung's Tomb is an example of the Mughal gardens style. Some regal havelis (palatial residences) are in the Old City. Lotus Temple is a Bahá'í House of Worship completed in 1986. Notable for its flowerlike shape, it serves as the Mother Temple of the Indian subcontinent and has become a prominent attraction in the city. The National Museum and National Gallery of Modern Art are some of the largest museums in the country. Other museums in Delhi include the National Museum of Natural History, National Rail Museum and National Philatelic Museum. Chandni Chowk, a 17th-century market, is one of the most popular shopping areas in Delhi for jewellery and Zari saris. Delhi's arts and crafts include, Zardozi-an embroidery done with gold thread-and Meenakari-the art of enamelling.

Festivals Delhi's association and geographic proximity to the capital, New Delhi, has amplified the importance of national events and holidays like Republic Day, Independence Day (15 August) and Gandhi Jayanti. On Independence Day, the Prime Minister addresses the nation from the Red Fort. The Republic Day Parade is a large cultural and military parade showcasing India's cultural diversity and military strength. Over the centuries, Delhi has become known for its composite culture, and a festival that symbolises this is the Phool Walon Ki Sair, which takes place in September. Flowers and pankhe-fans embroidered with flowers-are offered to the shrine of the 13th-century Sufi saint Khwaja Bakhtiyar Kaki and the Yogmaya Temple, both situated in Mehrauli. Religious festivals include Diwali (the festival of lights), Mahavir Jayanti, Guru Nanak's Birthday, Raksha Bandhan, Durga Puja, Holi, Lohri, Chauth, Krishna Janmastami, Maha Shivratri, Eid ul-Fitr, Moharram and Buddha Jayanti. The Qutub Festival is a cultural event during which performances of musicians and dancers from all over India are showcased at night, with the Qutub Minar as a backdrop. Other events such as Kite Flying Festival, International Mango Festival and Vasant Panchami (the Spring Festival) are held every year in Delhi. The Auto Expo, Asia's largest auto show, is held in Delhi biennially. The New Delhi World Book Fair, held biennially at the Pragati Maidan, is the second-largest exhibition of books in the world. Delhi is often regarded as the "Book Capital" of India because of high readership. India International Trade Fair (IITF), organised by ITPO is the biggest cultural and shopping fair of Delhi which takes place in November each year and is visited by more than 1.5 million people.

Cuisine As India's national capital and centuries old Mughal capital, Delhi influenced the food habits of its residents and is where Mughlai cuisine originated. Along with Indian cuisine, a variety of international cuisines are popular among the residents. This variety of cuisines created a unique style of cooking which became popular throughout the world, with dishes such as Kebab, biryani, tandoori. The city's classic dishes include butter chicken, dal makhani, shahi paneer, aloo chaat, chaat, dahi bhalla, kachori, gol gappe, samosa, chole bhature, chole kulche, gulab jamun, jalebi and lassi. The fast living habits of Delhi's people has motivated the growth of street food outlets. A trend of dining at local dhabas is popular among the residents. High-profile restaurants have gained popularity in recent years, among the popular restaurants are the Karim Hotel, the Punjab Grill and Bukhara. The Gali Paranthe Wali (the street of fried bread) is a street in Chandni Chowk particularly for food eateries since the 1870s. Almost the entire street is occupied by fast food stalls or street

vendors. It has nearly become a tradition that almost every prime minister of India has visited the street to eat paratha at least once. Other Indian cuisines are also available in this area even though the street specialises in north Indian food.

Education Private schools in Delhi-which use either English or Hindi as the language of instruction-are affiliated to one of three administering bodies, the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE), the Central Board for Secondary Education (CBSE) or the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS). In 2004-05, approximately 1,529,000 students were enrolled in primary schools, 822,000 in middle schools and 669,000 in secondary schools across Delhi. Female students represented 49% of the total enrolment. The same year, the Delhi government spent between 1.58% and 1.95% of its gross state domestic product on education. Schools and higher educational institutions in Delhi are administered either by the Directorate of Education, the NCT government or private organisations. In 2006, Delhi had 165 colleges, five medical colleges and eight engineering colleges, seven major universities and nine deemed universities. The premier management colleges of Delhi such as Faculty of Management Studies (Delhi) and Indian Institute of Foreign Trade rank the best in India. All India Institute of Medical Sciences Delhi is a premier medical school for treatment and research. National Law University, Delhi is a prominent law school and is affiliated with the Bar Council of India. The Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi situated in Hauz Khas is a premier engineering college of India and ranks as one of the top institutes in South Asia. Delhi Technological University (formerly Delhi College of Engineering), Indira Gandhi Delhi Technical University for Women (formerly Indira Gandhi Institute of Technology), Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology, Netaji Subhas University of Technology (formerly Netaji Subhas Institute of Technology), Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University and National Law University, Delhi are the only state universities. Delhi University, Jawaharlal Nehru University and Jamia Millia Islamia are the central universities, and Indira Gandhi National Open University is for distance education. As of 2008, about 16% of all Delhi residents possessed at least a college graduate degree. According to the Directorate of Education and GNCTD the following languages are taught in schools in Delhi under the three-language formula:

First language: Hindi, Urdu, English Second language: English Third language: Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, Gujarati, Marathi, Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic

Media As the capital of India, Delhi is the focus of political reportage, including regular television broadcasts of Parliament sessions. Many national media agencies, including the state-owned Press Trust of India, Media Trust of India and Doordarshan, are based in the city. Television programming includes two free terrestrial television channels offered by Doordarshan, and several Hindi, English, and regional-language cable channels offered by multi system operators. Satellite television has yet to gain a large number of subscribers in the city. Print journalism remains a popular news medium in Delhi. The city's Hindi newspapers include Navbharat Times, Hindustan Dainik, Punjab Kesari, Pavitra Bharat, Dainik Jagran, Dainik Bhaskar, Amar Ujala and Dainik Desbandhu. Among the English language newspapers, the Hindustan Times, with a daily circulation of over a million copies, is the single largest daily. Other major English newspapers include The Times of India, The Hindu, The Indian Express, Business Standard, The Pioneer, The Statesman, and The Asian Age. Regional language newspapers include the Malayalam daily Malayala Manorama and the Tamil dailies Dinamalar and Dinakaran. Qaumi Duniya Daily was a local Urdu newspaper, which has since moved online. Radio is a less popular mass medium in Delhi, although FM radio has gained popularity since the inauguration of several new stations in 2006. A number of state-owned and private radio stations broadcast from Delhi.

Sports Delhi hosted the first Asian Games in 1951 from 4 to 11 March. A total of 489 athletes representing 11 Asian National Olympic Committees participated in 57 events from eight sports and discipline. The Games was the successor of the Far Eastern Games and the revival of the Western Asiatic Games. On 13 February 1949, the Asian Games Federation was formally established in Delhi, with Delhi unanimously announced as the first host city of the Asian Games. National Stadium was the venue for all events. Over 40,000 spectators watched the opening ceremony of the Games in National Stadium. Delhi hosted the ninth Asian Games for the second time in 1982 from 19 November to 4 December. This was the second time the city has hosted the Asian Games and was also the first Asian Games to be held under the aegis of the Olympic Council of Asia. A total of 3,411 athletes from 33 National Olympic Committees participated in these games, competing in 196 events in 21 sports and 23 disciplines. The Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, which has a capacity of 60,000 people, was built purposely for the event and hosted its opening ceremony. Delhi hosted the Nineteenth Commonwealth Games in 2010, which ran from 3 to 14 October and was the largest sporting event held in India. The opening ceremony of the 2010 Commonwealth Games was held at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, the main stadium of the event, in New Delhi at 7:00 pm Indian Standard Time on 3 October 2010. The ceremony featured over 8,000 performers and lasted for two and a half hours. It is estimated that ■3.5 billion (US\$41 million) were spent to produce the ceremony. Events took place at 12 competition venues. 20 training venues were used in the Games, including seven venues within Delhi University. The rugby stadium in Delhi University North Campus hosted rugby games for Commonwealth Games. Cricket and football are the most popular sports in Delhi. There are several cricket grounds, or maidans, located across the city. The Arun Jaitley Stadium (known commonly as the Kotla) is one of the oldest cricket grounds in India and is a venue for international cricket matches. It is the home ground of Delhi cricket team and the Indian Premier League franchise Delhi Capitals. The Delhi cricket team represents the city in the Indian domestic tournaments. It has produced several world-class international cricketers such as Virender Sehwag, Virat Kohli, Gautam Gambhir, Madan Lal, Chetan Chauhan, Shikhar Dhawan, Ishant Sharma, Manoj Prabhakar and Bishan Singh Bedi to name a few. The Railways and Services cricket teams of domestic circuit also play their home matches in Delhi, at the Karnail Singh Stadium and the Palam A Stadium, respectively. Ambedkar Stadium, a football stadium in Delhi which holds 21,000 people, was the venue for the Indian football team's World Cup qualifier against UAE on 28 July 2012. Delhi hosted the Nehru Cup in 2007 and 2009, in both of which India defeated Syria 1-0. Delhi's professional association football club Delhi FC competes in I-League. In the Elite Football League of India, Delhi's first professional American football franchise, the Delhi Defenders played its first season in Pune. Buddh International Circuit in Greater Noida, a suburb of Delhi, formerly hosted the Formula 1 Indian Grand Prix.

City-based clubs See also Delhi metropolitan area List of people from Delhi List of twin towns and sister cities in India Smog tower

Notes References Further reading External links

Official website Delhi web resources provided by GovPubs at the University of Colorado Boulder Libraries Delhi at the Encyclopedia Britannica Wikimedia Atlas of Delhi Geographic data related to Delhi at OpenStreetMap

Bengaluru

Bengaluru, also known as Bangalore (its official name until 1 November 2014), is the capital and largest city of the southern Indian state of Karnataka. As per the 2011 census, the city had a population of 8.4 million, making it the third most populous city in India and the most populous in South India. The Bengaluru metropolitan area had a population of around 8.5 million, making it the fifth most populous urban agglomeration in the country. It is located near the centre of the Deccan Plateau, at a height of 900 m (3,000 ft) above sea level. The city is known as India's "Garden City", due to its parks and greenery. Archaeological artifacts indicate that the human settlement in the region happened as early as 4000 BCE. The first mention of the name "Bengalooru" is from an old Kannada stone inscription from 890 CE found at the Nageshwara Temple. From 350 CE, it was ruled by the Western Ganga dynasty, and in the early eleventh century, the city became part of the Chola empire. In the late Middle Ages, the region was part of the Hoysala Kingdom and then the Vijayanagara Empire. In 1537 CE, Kempe Gowda I, a feudal ruler under the Vijayanagara Empire, established a mud fort which is considered the foundation of the modern city of Bengaluru and its oldest areas, or petes, which still exist. After the fall of the Vijayanagara Empire, Kempe Gowda declared independence, and the city was expanded by his successors. In 1638 CE, an Adil Shahi army defeated Kempe Gowda III, and the city became a jagir (feudal estate) of Shahaji Bhonsle. The Mughals later captured Bengaluru and sold it to Maharaja Chikka Devaraja Wodeyar of the Kingdom of Mysore. After the death of Krishnaraja Wodeyar II in 1759 CE, Hyder Ali seized control of the kingdom of Mysore and with it, the administration of Bengaluru, which passed subsequently to his son, Tipu Sultan. The city was captured by the British East India Company during the Anglo-Mysore Wars, and became part of the Princely State of Mysore. The administrative control of the city was returned to Krishnaraja Wodeyar III, then Maharaja of Mysore, and the old city developed under the dominions of the Mysore kingdom. In 1809 CE, the British shifted their military garrison to the city and established the cantonment, outside the old city. In the late 19th century CE, the city was essentially composed of two distinct urban settlements, the old pete and the new cantonment. Following India's independence in 1947, Bengaluru became the capital of Mysore State, and remained the capital when the state was enlarged and unified in 1956 and subsequently renamed as Karnataka in 1973. The two urban settlements which had developed as independent entities, merged under a single urban administration in 1949. Bengaluru is one of the fastest-growing metropolises in India. As of 2023, the metropolitan area had an estimated GDP of \$359.9 billion, and is one of the most productive metro areas of India. The city is a major centre for information technology (IT), and is consistently ranked amongst the world's fastest growing technology hubs. It is widely regarded as the "Silicon Valley of India", as the largest hub and exporter of IT services in the country. Manufacturing is a major contributor to the economy and the city is also home to several state-owned manufacturing companies. Bengaluru also hosts several institutes of national importance in higher education.

Etymology The earliest known reference to the name "Bengaluru" was on a ninth-century hero stone or *vīra gallu* found in Begur. The Old Kannada inscription belonging to the Western Ganga dynasty mentions the place in a battle in 890 CE. However, Kempe Gowda I used the name of a village near Kodigehalli, to name the city as Bengaluru during its foundation in 1537 CE. Bangalore is an anglicised version of the city's Kannada name. The city was also referred to as "Kalyanapura" or "Kalyanapuri" ("Auspicious City") and "Devanahalli" during the later Vijayanagara period in 16th century CE. An apocryphal story states that the twelfth-century Hoysala king Veera Ballala II, while on a hunting expedition, lost his way in the forest. Tired and hungry, he came across a poor old woman who served him boiled beans. The grateful king named the place "Benda-Kaal-uru" (literally, "town of boiled beans"), which eventually evolved into "Bengaluru". Suryanath Kamath has hypothesised that the name was derived from *benga*, the Kannada term for *Pterocarpus*

marcupium (also known as the Indian Kino Tree), a species of dry and moist deciduous trees that grows abundantly in the region. Other theories include that the city was called as "Venkaturu" because of the Venkataramana temples built by Kempe Gowda, and "Benacha kalluru" because of the abundance of quartz stones ("benacha kal" in Kannada) in the region. On 11 December 2005, the Government of Karnataka accepted a proposal by U. R. Ananthamurthy to officially rename the city from Bangalore to Bengaluru. On 27 September 2006, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike passed a resolution to implement the name change, and the government of Karnataka officially implemented the name change from 1 November 2014 after the Union government approved the request.

History Early and middle ages Stone Age artefacts discovered at Jalahalli, Sidhapura and Jadigenahalli on Bengaluru's outskirts indicate human settlement around 4000 BCE. Iron Age tools and burial mounds from around 800 BCE, have been found in Koramangala and Chikkajala. Coins of the Roman emperors Augustus, Tiberius, Claudius, and Caligula found at Yeswanthpur and HAL indicate the involvement of the region in trans-oceanic trade with the Romans and other civilisations in the first century CE.

The region of modern-day Bengaluru was part of several successive South Indian kingdoms. Between the fourth and tenth centuries CE, the region was ruled by the Western Ganga dynasty, the first dynasty to set up effective control over the region. According to Edgar Thurston, twenty-eight kings ruled Gangavadi from the start of the Common Era until its conquest by the Cholas in the early eleventh century CE. The Western Gangas ruled as a sovereign power from 350 to 550 CE, and as feudatories of the Chalukyas of Badami, and later the Rashtrakutas until the tenth century. The Begur Nageshwara Temple was commissioned around 860 CE, during the reign of the Western Ganga King Ereganga Nitimarga I, and extended by his successor Nitimarga II. Around 1004 CE, during the reign of Raja Raja Chola I, the Cholas defeated the Western Gangas under the command of the crown prince Rajendra Chola I, and captured the region. During this period, the region witnessed the migration of many groups-warriors, administrators, traders, artisans, pastorals, cultivators, and religious personnel from the Southern Tamil speaking regions and other Kannada-speaking parts of the region. The Cholas built many temples in the region including the Chokkanathaswamy temple, Mukthi Natheshwara Temple, Choleshwara Temple, and Someshwara Temple. In 1117, the Hoysala king Vishnuvardhana defeated the Cholas in the Battle of Talakad in south Karnataka, and extended his rule over the region. In the later part of the 13th century CE, Bengaluru was a source of contention between two warring cousins, the Hoysala ruler Veera Ballala III of Halebidu and Ramanatha, who administered the Hoysala held territory in the southern Tamil speaking regions. Veera Ballala appointed a civic head at Hudi (suburb of the city) to administer the region, and promoted the village to the status of a town. After Veera Ballala's death in 1343, the region came under Vijayanagara empire, which saw the rule of four consecutive dynasties - Sangamas (1336-1485), Saluvas (1485-1491), Tuluvas (1491-1565), and Aravidu (1565-1646). In the early 16th century CE, Achyuta Deva Raya built a dam across the Arkavati river near Hesaraghatta, whose reservoir was used to supply water to the region.

Foundation and early modern history The city proper was established in 1537 CE by Kempe Gowda I, a local governor and chieftain aligned with the Vijayanagara Empire under emperor Achyuta Deva Raya. He led a campaign against Gangaraja, whom he defeated and expelled to Kanchi, and built a mud-brick fort at the site, which later became the central part of the modern city of Bengaluru. Kempe Gowda referred to the new town as his "Gandubhumi" ("Land of Heroes"). Within the fort, the town was divided into smaller divisions, each called a **pete** (Kannada pronunciation: [pete]). The town had two main streets-Chikkapete and Doddapete, which intersected to form the Doddapete Square in the heart of the town. Kempe Gowda also built the temple at Basavanagudi, and expanded other temples. He also constructed various tanks such as Kempambudhi,

Dharmambudhi, and Sampangi for water storage. Vijayanagara literature refers to the city by various names such as "Devarayanagara" and "Kalyanapura" or "Kalyanapuri" ("auspicious city"). After the fall of the Vijayanagara Empire in 1565 CE in the Battle of Talikota, Kempe Gowda declared independence. His successor, Kempe Gowda II, built four towers to mark the boundary of the town. In 1638 CE, a Adil Shahi army led by Ranadulla Khan and Shahaji Bhonsle (father of Shivaji) defeated Kempe Gowda III, and the region became a jagir (feudal estate) of Shahaji. In 1639 CE, Shahaji ordered the reconstruction of the town and built large fortifications, and new reservoirs to solve the water shortage in the region. In 1687 CE, Mughal general Kasim Khan, under orders from Aurangzeb, defeated Ekoji I, the son of Shahaji, and leased the town to Chikkadevaraja Wodeyar (1673-1704 CE), the then ruler of the Kingdom of Mysore. After the death of Krishnaraja Wodeyar II in 1759 CE, Hyder Ali, Commander-in-Chief of the Mysore Army, proclaimed himself the ruler of the Mysore kingdom. He built the Delhi and Mysore gates at the northern and southern ends of the city in 1760 CE. The kingdom later passed to Hyder Ali's son Tipu Sultan, and the Lal Bagh garden was established around 1760 CE. During the period, the city developed into a commercial and military centre of strategic importance.

The Bengaluru fort was captured by British forces under Charles Cornwallis on 21 March 1791 during the Third Anglo-Mysore War and became the centre for British resistance against Tipu Sultan. Following Tipu's death in the Fourth Anglo-Mysore War (1799 CE), the Bengaluru pete was incorporated into the Princely State of Mysore, whose administrative control remained with the Maharaja of Mysore. The city was further developed by the Maharaja of Mysore. The Residency of Mysore State, established in Mysore in 1799 was shifted to Bengaluru in 1804. It was abolished in 1843 before being revived in 1881 and served till the Indian independence in 1947. The British found the city as an appropriate place to station its garrison and therefore it was moved in 1809 from Seringapatam to Ulsoor, about 6 km (4 mi) northeast of the original pete. A town grew up around the surroundings by absorbing several villages in the area, and came to be known as Bengaluru cantonment. The new centre had its own municipal and administrative apparatus, though technically it was a British enclave within the territory of the princely state of Mysore. Further developments such as the introduction of telegraph connections to other major Indian cities in 1853 and a rail connection to Madras in 1864, contributed to the economic growth of the city.

Later modern and contemporary history In the late 19th century CE, Bengaluru was essentially composed of two cities, with the pete, whose residents were predominantly Kannadigas and the cantonment created by the British, whose residents were predominantly Tamils and English people. Throughout the 19th century, the Cantonment, which was known as the Civil and Military Station of Bangalore, gradually expanded and acquired a distinct cultural and political salience. It had a large military presence and a cosmopolitan civilian population that came from outside the state of Mysore. The British developed the infrastructure of the city, widened roads, and established new settlements. The city was divided into eight wards in 1862, and was expanding. The first exclusive residential area was established in Chamarajpet in 1892, and a new wholesale market was established in Tharagupet in 1895. The city was hit by a plague epidemic in 1898 that claimed nearly 3,500 lives. The crisis caused by the outbreak led to the improvement in sanitation facilities, and establishment of new communication lines to co-ordinate anti-plague operations. Regulations for building new houses with proper sanitation facilities came into effect, a health officer was appointed, and the city was divided into four wards for better co-ordination. New extensions in Malleswaram and Basavanagudi were developed in the north and south of the pete.

In 1906, Bengaluru became one of the first cities in India to have electricity. In 1912, the Bangalore torpedo, an offensive explosive weapon widely used for clearing obstacles in World War I and World War II, was devised in

Bengaluru by British army officer Captain McClintock of the Madras Sappers and Miners. Bengaluru's reputation as the "Garden City of India" began in 1927 with the silver jubilee celebrations of the rule of Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV. Several projects such as the construction of parks, public buildings and hospitals were instituted to improve the city. Bengaluru played an important role during the Indian independence movement. Mahatma Gandhi visited the city in 1927 and 1934 and addressed public meetings here. In 1926, the labour unrest in Binny Mills due to demand by textile workers for payment of bonus resulted in lathi charge and police firing, resulting in the death of four workers, and several injuries. In July 1928, there were notable communal disturbances in Bengaluru, like when a Ganesh idol was removed from a school compound in the Sultanpet area of Bengaluru. In 1940, the first flight between Bengaluru and Mumbai took off, which placed the city on India's urban map. After India's independence in August 1947, Bengaluru remained in the newly carved Mysore State of which the Maharaja of Mysore was the Rajapramukh (appointed governor). The "City Improvement Trust" was formed in 1945, and in 1949, the "City" and the "Cantonment" merged to form the Bengaluru City Corporation. The Government of Karnataka later constituted the Bangalore Development Authority in 1976 to coordinate the activities of these two bodies. Public sector employment and education provided opportunities for Kannadigas from the rest of the state to migrate to the city. Bengaluru experienced rapid growth in the decades 1941-51 and 1971-81, which saw the arrival of many immigrants from northern Karnataka. By 1961, Bengaluru had become the sixth-largest city in India, with a population of 1,207,000. In the following decades, Bengaluru's manufacturing base continued to expand with the establishment of various public and private companies.]

By the 1980s, urbanisation had spilled over the current boundaries, and in 1986, the Bangalore Metropolitan Region Development Authority, was established to co-ordinate the development of the entire region as a single unit. On 8 February 1981, a major fire broke out at Venus Circus in Bengaluru, where more than 92 people died, the majority of them children. Bengaluru experienced a growth in its real estate market in the 1980s and 1990s, spurred by capital investors from other parts of the country who converted Bengaluru's large plots and colonial bungalows into multi-storied apartments. Since the late 1980s, many information technology companies were set up in the city and by the end of the 20th century, Bengaluru had established itself as the Silicon Valley of India. The population has increased significantly due to migration from other parts for work, and the city has become the third most populous city in 2011. During the 21st century, Bengaluru has had major terrorist attacks in 2008, 2010, and 2013.

Geography Bengaluru lies in the southeast of the South Indian state of Karnataka in the heart of the Mysore Plateau (a region of the larger Deccan Plateau) at an average elevation of 900 m (2,953 ft). The city covers an area of 741 km² (286 sq mi). The Bengaluru metropolitan region covers an area of 7,005 km² (2,705 sq mi) across three districts-Bengaluru urban, Bengaluru rural and Ramanagara. The Bangalore Metropolitan Region Development Authority, established in 1985, is responsible for the planning of the metropolitan region. The topography is generally flat, with the highest point at Doddabettahalli, located 962 m (3,156 ft) above sea level on a ridge on the western part of the city. Towards the south, the terrain is uneven, with small hills and rocks made of granite and gneiss. The soil in the city consist of red laterite and red, fine loamy to clayey soils. The vegetation in the eastern and northern parts consists of scrubs interspersed with various water bodies, and the southern hilly region consists of scrubs and forests. The city had a forest cover of 68.3% in the early 1970s, which reduced to less than 15% in the 2010s. Trees are frequently felled to pave way for infrastructure development. Though the city has been classified as a part of the seismic zone II (a stable zone), it has experienced earthquakes of magnitude as high as 4.5 on the Richter scale.

Hydrography There are no major rivers run in the city, though six rivers arise at the Nandi Hills, about 60 km (37 mi) to the north. The Vrishabhavathi, a tributary of Arkavathi flows through the city. Arkavathi, Dakshina Pinakini and its tributary Chinnar, and Suvarnamukhi rivers water the fringes of the city. Most of these rivers are polluted, and depleted due to sewage from the city. Kaveri runs towards the southwest of the city, the water from which is used to cater to majority of the water requirements of the city. The city has a considerable number of freshwater lakes and water tanks, most of which are seasonal and rain-fed. The city had 265 lakes in the 1960s, which shrunk to 98 by the late 2010s, and most of the city's lakes are polluted. The government began revival and conservation efforts in 2020. Groundwater occurs in silty to sandy layers of the alluvial sediments, and are extracted through open wells.

Climate Bengaluru has a tropical savanna climate (Kppen climate classification Aw) with distinct wet and dry seasons. Due to its high elevation, Bengaluru usually enjoys a more moderate climate throughout the year, although occasional heat waves can make summer somewhat uncomfortable. The dry season extends from December to February followed by the summer season from March to May. The monsoon brings most of the rainfall from June to September, followed by a post-monsoon season in October and November. April is the hottest month with an average high of 34.1 C (93.4 F), and January is the coolest month with an average low temperature of 15.1 C (59.2 F). The highest temperature ever recorded in Bengaluru was 39.2 C (103 F), recorded 24 April 2016, corresponding with the strong El Nio in that year. The lowest ever recorded is 7.8 C (46 F) in January 1884. Winter temperatures rarely drop below 14 C (57 F), and summer temperatures seldom exceed 36 C (97 F). Bengaluru receives rainfall from both the northeast and the southwest monsoons, and the wettest months is September, followed by October and August. The summer heat is moderated by fairly frequent thunderstorms, which occasionally cause power outages and local flooding, such as in 2022. Most of the rainfall occurs during the late afternoon or evening and rain before noon is infrequent. The heaviest rainfall recorded in a 24-hour period is 179 mm (7 in) recorded on 1 October 1997.

Demographics As per the 2011 census, Bengaluru had a population of 8,443,675, which made it the third most populous city in India, and the largest in South India. The urban agglomeration was home to 8,499,399 people, and was the fifth most populous urban agglomeration in India. As per a 2016 estimate, the urban agglomeration had a population of about 10.45 million. The city was amongst the fastest growing cities in the last two decades, with the population increasing substantially due to migration from rest of the country. About 13.2% of the population belonged to scheduled castes, and scheduled tribes. Residents of Bengaluru are referred to as Bengaloornavaru in Kannada and "Bangaloreans" in English. There are about 597 slums in the city, housing roughly 16% of the city's population. The city had a gini index of 0.64, indicating significant inequality. Various studies have also indicated various inequalities in the infrastructure development across different parts of the city, and other urbanisation problems such as mass displacements, proliferation of slums, and public health crisis due to water shortage and sewage problems in poor and working-class neighbourhoods. In Mercer's 2023 Quality of Living survey, which evaluates living conditions for expatriates, Bengaluru was ranked 156th globally and third in India, after Hyderabad and Pune.

Ethnicity and religion According to the 2011 census, Hinduism is the major religion with 78.9% of adherents. Muslims comprised 13.9% of the population, with Christians and Jains accounting for 5.6% and 1.0% of the population, respectively. Muslims in the city consist of Dakhini and Urdu-speaking Muslims, Kutchi Memons, Labbay, and Mappilas. Christians in Bengaluru include Roman Catholics including Tamil Christians, Mangalorean Catholics, Kannadiga Christians, Malayali Syrian Christians, Protestants, and Northeast Indian Christians. Apart from the Kannadigas native to the region, Tamils, Telugus and Deccanis, form a significant population of the city. In the 16th century, Tamil speakers, who also spoke Kannada, settled in the region for

business. Telugus came to the city on invitation of the Mysore royalty. Since the late 20th century, there has been a steady migration of people from other states for study and work. About 90% of the migrants came from the South Indian states, with the number of migrants from other parts of India increasing over the last few decades of the 20th century. Majority of the migration from non-South Indians states included Maharashtrians, Punjabis, Rajasthanis, Gujaratis, Bengalis, and from Uttar Pradesh. Migrant communities from within the state include Tuluvas and Konkanis of coastal Karnataka, and Kodavas from the state's Kodagu district. The city also had an Anglo-Indian population of about 10,000 people in 2006.

Languages As per the 2011 census, Kannada is the mother tongue of 42.1% of the city's population with 3,574,226 speakers, which is the official language of the state - followed by Tamil (1,388,305) Telugu (1,166,338), Urdu (1,104,124), Hindi (476,673), Malayalam (268,780), and Marathi (174,451). Other languages with a sizeable numbers of speakers include Konkani, Bengali, Marwari, Tulu, Odia, Gujarati, Kodagu, Punjabi, Lambadi, Sindhi and Nepali. Bengaluru Kannada is the local dialect of Kannada spoken in the region. English is widely spoken by white-collar workers and is the principal business language. With a diverse population speaking multiple languages, the city has often seen controversies and issues with respect to the usage of English and other vernacular languages. In 2023, the government mandated the usage of Kannada in the sign boards of all businesses, which led to protests. There have also been court cases, protests, and diverse public opinion on the usage of different languages in the city.

Administration and politics Administration In May 2025, the governance structure of the city was reorganized with the establishment of the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), which replaced the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP). The GBA acts as an apex body, chaired by the Chief Minister of Karnataka, to coordinate planning and development across the metropolitan region. Under this new three-tier system, the former BBMP was divided into five smaller city corporations, each with its own mayor and council, intended to improve administrative efficiency and local governance. The GBA's jurisdiction covers an area of 1,400 km² (540 sq mi). The last elections to the BBMP council were held in 2015, and its term ended in 2020, after which the body was managed by a state-appointed administrator until the new GBA structure was implemented. The Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) was established in 1976, and is the nodal agency responsible for the planning and development of the city. The BDA works in conjunction with local government and the Agenda for Bangalore's Infrastructure and Development Task Force (ABIDe) to design and implement civic and infrastructural projects in the city. The Bangalore Metropolitan Region Development Authority, established in 1985, is responsible for the planning of the metropolitan region. As the capital of the state of Karnataka, the city houses the state executive and legislative headquarters in the Vidhana Soudha, state ministries at Vikasa Soudha, and the residence of the Governor at Raj Bhavan.

Law and order Karnataka High Court in Bengaluru is the highest judicial authority in the state, and manages a series of sub-ordinate civil and criminal courts. The Bengaluru City Police (BCP) is the primary law enforcement agency in the city and is headed by a commissioner of police. The city is divided into eight zones, each of which is headed by an assistant commissioner. There are separate crime, intelligence, and administration wings of the police. The police also operate special and armed units. As of February 2024, the city police consisted of 18,308 civilian police working across 113 police stations, and 6,999 armed reserve personnel. The city had 191 cops per hundred thousand people, well below the United Nations standard of 673. Bengaluru City Traffic Police (BCTP) is responsible for the traffic management in the city. The traffic police operates 48 stations across three zones, each of which is headed by a joint commissioner. As of 2021, the crime rate in the city was 27.2 per hundred thousand people. The Bangalore Central Prison located at Parappana Agrahara, was established in 1997, and is the major prison in the city.

Politics The major part of the city falls under four parliamentary constituencies-Bangalore Rural, Bangalore Central, Bangalore North, and Bangalore South. The city elects 28 MLAs to the Karnataka Legislative Assembly. The politics of the city and the state have been dominated by the two national parties-Indian National Congress, and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Contrary to other major South Indian cities, there are no major regional parties with a considerable influence in the region, with only Janata Dal (Secular) (JDS) having some influence. In the 2023 Karnataka Legislative Assembly election, the BJP won 15 seats, and the Congress won 13 seats in the city. In the 2024 Indian general elections, the BJP won all the four Lok Sabha seats in the city. The last elections to the BBMP was held in 2015, in which the BJP won 100 seats, and the Congress won 76 seats. The Congress held the mayor post with the support of the JDS till 2019, after which the BJP captured power when the JDS switched its allegiance. In 2020, the term of the council ended, and with no elections had since been conducted till 2024, the BBMP is managed by a government appointed administrator.

Culture Arts Bengaluru is a major centre of Indian classical music and dance. The cultural scene features a diverse set of music concerts, dance performances and plays. Performances of Carnatic and Hindustani music, and dance forms like Bharat Natyam, Kuchipudi, Kathakali, Kathak, and Odissi are popular in the city. Yakshagana, a theatre art indigenous to coastal Karnataka is often played in town halls. The two main music seasons include April-May during Ram Navami, and September-October during Dusshera, when majority of the music activities are organised by various cultural organisations. Rock music is popular in the urban parts of the city, and the city has its own subgenre of rock, "Bangalore Rock", an amalgamation of classic rock, hard rock and heavy metal, and some jazz and blues. The city is home to several Indian bands, and is referred to as "Pub Capital of India" and the "Rock/Metal Capital of India" because of its underground music scene.

Several art galleries including the government-established National Gallery of Modern Art emerged in the 1990s. The Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath showcases a collection of painting, sculptures, and various other forms of art. The Indian Cartoon Gallery organised by the Indian Institute of Cartoonists, conducts periodic cartoon exhibitions. "Art Bangalore" is an international art festival, held annually in the city since 2010. Kannada Sahitya Parishat is a nonprofit organisation headquartered in Bengaluru that promotes the Kannada language and literature. The "Bangalore Literature Festival" is an annual literary event organised since 2012. Karnataka Rajyotsava, which marks the formation of Karnataka state on 1 November 1956, is celebrated on the same day annually and is a public holiday in the city. Bengaluru is a major center of the Kannada film industry, which released 224 Kannada feature films in 2018. Art theatres that stages English and Kannada language plays in the city include Chowdiah Memorial Hall, Ranga Shankara, and Ravindra Kalakshetra. British Council, Alliance Francaise de Bangalore, and Max Miller Bhavan also organise foreign language plays including those of drama companies that tour India.

Cuisine Bengaluru has diverse food options including South Indian, North Indian, Chinese, and western fast food. Popular vegetarian dishes include masala dosa, paneer biryani, and paneer butter masala. Udupi cuisine restaurants are popular and serve predominantly vegetarian, regional cuisine. Mavalli Tiffin Room, known for its Karnataka-style vegetarian food, was opened in 1924 and vegetarian tiffin restaurant Vidyarthi Bhavan opened in 1943. Since the late 1980s, many vegetarian self-service darshinis operate in the city. The city also has multiple vegan restaurants, and vegan advocacy groups, and has been named as India's most vegan-friendly city by PETA India.

Festivals Bangalore Karaga or "Karaga Shaktiyotsava" is a festival dedicated to the Hindu goddess Draupadi, and celebrated annually by the Thigala community over a period of nine days in March or April. The

Someshwara Car festival is held annually in April, when the idol of the Halasuru Someshwara Temple is taken for a procession on a flower chariot. Other popular festivals include Ugadi, Ram Navami, Eid ul-Fitr, Ganesh Chaturthi, St. Mary's feast, Dasara, Deepawali and Christmas.

Economy Bengaluru is one of the fastest-growing metropolises in India. As of 2023, Bengaluru metropolitan area had an estimated GDP of \$359.9 billion, ranking it among the most productive metro areas in India. According to the Globalization and World Cities Research Network, Bengaluru is amongst the most integrated with the global economy, classified as an alpha-city. The city contributes to nearly one-third of the state GSDP, and has a diversified industrial base dependent on services (39.5% contribution to GDP), manufacturing (36%), and agriculture (2.3%). Bengaluru has the country's fourth largest fast-moving consumer goods market. The city also has the third highest number of high-net-worth individuals in India. Major industrial sectors include information technology, automobiles, aerospace, textiles, heavy machinery, biotechnology, electronics, and communication, agriculture, and food processing. The industrial clusters are spread across the city and its suburbs. As of 2016, the city had more than 75,000 industries including more than 2,000 information technology companies. It hosted 87 Fortune 500 companies, the fifth highest number amongst the cities in India.

Bengaluru is a major center for information technology (IT), and is consistently ranked amongst the world's fastest growing technology hubs. It is widely regarded as the "Silicon Valley of India", as the largest IT hub of the country. The IT export from the city is estimated to be valued at \$64 billion in 2024, and the city contributes to more than one third of India's total IT exports. The IT industry in the city is divided into various business clusters and special economic zones such as Electronic City, International Tech Park, Software Technology Park, Bagmane Tech Park, Global Village Tech Park, World Trade Center, and Manyata Embassy Business Park amongst others. The growth of IT industry has resulted in the migration of people from all over the country, which has resulted in the demand for improvement in the city's infrastructure and presented the city with other challenges. The industry has been blamed for not favouring local employment development, increased land values, and closure of small enterprises. The resistance from the city for further investments required to develop infrastructure, has forced some of the new and expanding businesses elsewhere.

Bengaluru is also a major hub for Indian biotechnology-related industry, which was valued at nearly \$25 billion in 2021-22. The city is home to more than 40 biotech companies, and is termed as the "Biotech capital of India". The city is a major export center for agricultural produce including fruits, and poultry. Major crops include rice, maize, ragi, horse gram, oil seeds, coconuts, and fruits such as mango, papaya, banana, grapes, and pomegranate. Flowers such as roses are grown commercially. The Rail Wheel Factory at Yelahanka is a major supplier of wheels and axles for Indian Railways. State owned corporations BEML and Bharat Electronics are headquartered in the city, and manufacture aerospace components, power equipment, trainsets, armored vehicles, and electronics for both civilian and defence requirements.

Infrastructure Water supply Water supply is provided by the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB), which was established in 1964. The city receives an average of 800 million liters of water per day from rainfall. In the 16th century, Kempe Gowda constructed lakes such as the Kempambudhi Kere to store the rain water. As of 2021, the city had a daily water demand of 2100 million liters, of which 1,450 million liters is catered to by the corporation. While the city drew water from the Arkavathy River earlier, the increasing demands led to the establishment of the Cauvery water supply scheme in 1964. Majority of the water supply to the city is drawn from the Kaveri, with the amount of water drawn increasing from 135 million liters in 1974 to 1,450 million liters per day in 2014. A 2015 report indicated that one-third of the slum clearance projects lacked basic water service connections, 60% of slum dwellers lacked complete water supply lines and used a shared

water supply. The city does face water shortages, especially during summer and in years with low rainfall. In early 2024, Bengaluru faced one of its most severe water crises in recent decades. A combination of a weak 2023 monsoon, leading to depleted reservoirs in the Cauvery basin, and rapidly falling groundwater levels left large parts of the city with acute shortages. Thousands of borewells, which supply nearly half the city's water, ran dry, forcing the government to regulate and commandeer private water tankers and impose restrictions on non-essential water usage such as car washing and filling swimming pools. The crisis highlighted the growing pressures of unplanned urbanisation and climate change on the city's water resources.

Waste management and pollution Waste collection and management is done by the city corporation. Pollution regulation and issuance of waste management guidelines is carried out by the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB), which comes under the aegis of Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), and is headquartered in the city. As of 2022, Bengaluru produced around 6000 metric tonnes of solid waste per day. The wastes are segregated, compacted, and transported to any of the three garbage processing plants in Bingipura, Mavallipura, or Kudlu. As per a 2024 study, the three garbage processing plants were found to be violating environmental regulations, and emitted high levels of particulate matter, causing damage to the local environment and increasing the pollution levels of the city. As of 2024, the corporation operated seven wet waste processing plants, 13 bio methane generation plants, and a land fill. The corporation earlier operated three more landfill sites at Mavallipura, Mandur, and Doddaballapura, which were closed after complaints from local residents, and reports of diseases due to unsanitary conditions. In 2024, the government identified four new locations for the construction of new landfill sites. As part of the waste management guidelines, the government of Karnataka has authorised specific companies to manage biomedical and e-wastes in the city. However, a report in October 2024 indicated that some of these companies were not disposing of the wastes in the prescribed manner, and are involved in re-selling. The city has considerable pollution due to vehicle and industrial exhausts, and unscientific waste disposal. The pollution level varies across localities, with higher concentrations of particulate matter reported in industrial and high traffic zones. A random sampling of the air quality index (AQI) of twenty stations within the city suggested heavy to severe air pollution around areas of high traffic. While the average air quality was at acceptable levels, the PM 2.5 levels exceeded the 60 µg/m³ threshold set by the CPCB in certain areas. A evaluation of Bengaluru's physical, biological and socioeconomic parameters indicated that the city's air quality and noise pollution were poor.

Power In 1905, Bengaluru was among the first cities to have electric power. The city was powered by hydro power generated by the hydroelectric plant in Shivanasamudra. Electricity in the city is regulated through the Bangalore Electricity Supply Company (BESCOM). The power consumption has steadily increased over the last decade and in 2022-23, the city had a peak demand of 3,632 MW. As of March 2024, the city had a daily power requirement of about 157 million kWh, and consumed nearly 40% of the power in the state. The city draws power from the state grid, which receives power from a mixture of fossil fuels and renewable sources. In 2024, BESCOM initiated the process of moving overhead lines to underground in the city.

Health and sanitation In the early 19th century, healthcare services were provided by local physicians. In 1834, English doctors were appointed, to take care of vaccination, and control the spread of epidemics. The first public clinic was established in Bangalore Fort in 1835, and a small hospital was added in 1839 in Pete area. In 1846, a large hospital was opened, with a leper colony added in 1845, and a mental hospital in 1850. The Victoria Hospital was inaugurated in 1900. As of 2024, the Bengaluru corporation managed one major general hospital, six referral hospitals, 26 maternity homes, and 230 outpatient clinics. There are many private clinics, and tertiary care hospitals in the city. The city has been growing as a center of medical tourism due to the availability of more than 50 tertiary care hospitals. Vaccination such as polio vaccine is administered by the

corporation on behalf of the government. Sanitation facilities are provided by the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board. The underground drainage and sewerage disposal system was introduced in 1922. As of 2024, about 1,400 million liters of waste water is generated daily, which flows through a network of nearly 8,387 km (5,211 mi) of sewage pipes to any of the 33 sewage treatment plants. Encroachment, and damages to the sewerage system, has resulted in wastewater entering the lakes, and polluting the water sources. As of 2024, the corporation operated 401 public toilets and 17 community toilets across the city.

Communication The first post office in the city was established in 1800. Postal services are provided by the government owned India Post, which operated 247 post offices across four zones in 2024. In 1853, telegraph was introduced for long-distance communication and about 538 km (334 mi) of telegraph lines existed in the city by 1856. Telephone services were introduced in 1928. In the early 1990s, STPI provided wired internet services for offices, and VSNL started providing dial up connections for individual homes in the city. Bengaluru has a high internet usage and is amongst the top cities in India in terms of internet penetration. Bengaluru was the first city in India to have access to fourth generation cellular services. As of 2023, four mobile phone service companies operate GSM networks including Bharti Airtel, BSNL, Vodafone Idea and Reliance Jio offered fourth and fifth generation mobile services. Wired broadband services are offered by five major operators and smaller local operators. Namma Wifi is a free municipal wireless network launched on 24 January 2014 by the Government of Karnataka, and is available in select areas in the city.

Media The first printing press in Bengaluru was established in 1840 by the Wesleyan Christian Mission. Around 1860, the English newspaper Bangalore Herald and Kannada newspaper Mysore Vrittanta Bodhini started circulation in Bengaluru. P. R. Ramayya established the Bangalore Press in 1927 and launched the Kannada newspaper Tayi Nadu and English newspaper Daily News later. Bengaluru has several newspapers and magazines published in various languages including Kannada, English, Urdu, and Tamil. As of 2022, the major dailies with a circulation of more than 100,000 copies per day include The Times of India, Vijaya Karnataka, Prajavani, and Vijayavani. Several local newspapers, and periodicals also bring out editions from the city. Local online news sites like Explocity provide local news updates.

All India Radio started AM broadcasting from its Bengaluru station on 2 November 1955. In 2001, Radio City became the first private FM radio channel in the city. As of 2020, major FM radio stations included BIG FM, Radio Mirchi, Radio City, and Red FM. The Bangalore Amateur Radio Club, an amateur radio club was established in 1959. The government run Doordarshan broadcasts terrestrial and satellite television channels from its Bengaluru centre set up on 1 November 1981. A production centre was established in the Doordarshan's Bengaluru office in 1983, thereby allowing the introduction of a news program in Kannada on 19 November 1983. A 140 m (460 ft) high television tower was commissioned on 1 March 1985 for the broadcast of television programmes. Doordarshan launched DD Chandana, a Kannada satellite channel, on 15 August 1990. In September 1991, Star TV was the first private satellite channel to be launched in the city. Since the late 2000s, Direct To Home (DTH) services became available in Bengaluru.

Fire and rescue Fire services are handled by the Karnataka Fire and Emergency Services, which operates 50 fire stations, five fire protection squads, and three special units.

Transport Air During World War II, Walchand Hirachand sought to build and repair planes in India, and partnered with American businessman William Pawley to set up an airfield in Bengaluru. The HAL Airport began operations in 1941 as a part of Hindustan Aircraft Limited. The HAL airport was the major airport of the city till

2008, when the new Bengaluru International Airport came into existence. The Kempegowda International Airport, located at Devanahalli, about 31 km (19 mi) from the city, started operations on 24 May 2008. It is the third-busiest airport in India in terms of passenger traffic. Air-conditioned buses operated by Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation connect the airport with the city. The Training Command of the Indian Air Force is headquartered in Bengaluru. The Air Force operates an air base at Yelahanka. The city hosts Aero India, a biennial air show takes at the Yelahanka air force station.

Rail The first railway line opened for traffic between Bengaluru Cantonment and Jolarpettai on 1 August 1864. The Madras-Bangalore Mail was launched later the same year. Further railway connectivity to Renigunta was established in 1862, and to Raichur in 1871. The Yeshwantapur station was established in 1892, when a meter gauge railway line was established to Doddaballapur. The city was part of the Mysore State Railway, which became part of the Southern Railway zone of the Indian Railways in April 1951. The Bangalore railway division was established in 1971. The city became part of the South Western Railway zone was formed with headquarters in Hubballi in 2003. There are 18 railway stations in the city managed by the Indian Railways, and the major railway stations include Bengaluru City, Yesvantpur, Cantonment, Krishnarajapuram and Baiyappanahalli. As of 2024, Bengaluru does not have a suburban railway network. The first line of Bengaluru Suburban Railway is expected to be operational in 2026. Namma Metro is a rapid transit rail system in the city that was opened in 2011, and was the first operational metro in South India. As of August 2025, the metro system consists of three operational lines-the Purple, Green, and Yellow Lines-stretching a total of 96.1 km (59.7 mi), making it the second-longest operational metro network in India. The most recent addition was the Yellow Line, which became fully operational in August 2025, connecting RV Road with Bommasandra. Five more lines are under construction as a part of expansion.

Road Bengaluru has an extensive road network with about 14,000 km (8,700 mi) of roads as of 2024. The 10 km (6.2 mi) long Inner Ring Road connects Koramangala with Indira Nagar. The Outer Ring Road is a 60 km (37 mi) long peripheral road, developed between 1996 and 2002. The Peripheral Ring Road is a proposed 74 km (46 mi) semi-circular road, connecting major arterial roads. The M G Road is the major arterial road in the central business district. Bengaluru is part of the Golden Quadrilateral highway network, and lies on the Chennai-Mumbai line. The National Highways that connect to the city include: NH-44, NH-48, NH-275, NH-75, NH-648, and NH-948. The Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway, operational since March 2023, connects the city with Mysuru. The Bengaluru-Chennai Expressway is under construction since August 2019. Two other expressways-Pune-Bengaluru Expressway and Nagpur-Hyderabad-Bengaluru Expressway-have been proposed.

Intra-city bus services is handled by the Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC), which was established in 1997. As of 2024, BMTC operates 57,667 daily trips on 5,766 routes with a fleet of 6,340 buses. There are 48 bus stations, and 50 depots for intra-city bus services. BMTC introduced air-conditioned buses in 2005, which operate on major routes and as shuttle services from various parts of the city to airport. It also operates a fleet of more than 1,100 electric vehicles. Apart from single journey tickets, BMTC issues various passes for frequent users. Inter-city bus transport is handled by the Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC), owned by the Government of Karnataka. KSRTC operates various classes of services connecting other major cities in Karnataka, and other neighboring states. The major bus stations in the city include Kempegowda Bus Station, Shantinagar Bus Station, and Mysuru Road Bus Station. The other means of road transport in the city include vans, auto rickshaws, on-call metered taxis and tourist taxis. Motor vehicles were introduced in Bengaluru in 1903. As of March 2022, an average of 1,530 vehicles were registered daily in Regional Transport Offices (RTOs) in the city. As of 2023, the city had nearly ten million vehicles including 7.5

million two-wheelers. The rapid growth of vehicles and unplanned nature of growth has created several administrative problems relating to traffic congestion and infrastructure, resulting in massive traffic gridlocks. The flyovers and one-way traffic systems introduced to address the concerns, were only moderately successful. The city also has considerable air pollution due to vehicle exhaust, and a 2016 study found that over 36% of diesel vehicles operating in the city exceeded the standard limit for emissions.

Education Bengaluru is a major educational hub and home to some of the premium educational institutions in the country. The city has a 90.33% literacy rate and ranks second among the major Indian metropolitan city centres. As per the 2011 national census, Bengaluru urban had a literacy rate of around 87.7%. Until the early 19th century, education in Bengaluru was mainly run by religious leaders and restricted to students of that religion. In 1841, two native language schools were established by a London mission, and in 1842, Mummadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar established the first English School under the Wesleyan mission, which expanded to five schools by 1954. In 1857, a public education department was established, and the education was formulated as per the Indian educational policy at the time. The Bangalore Military School was established in 1945.

Bengaluru has a mix of public and private schools with the public school system managed by the school education department of Government of Karnataka. Public schools run by the Bengaluru Corporation are all affiliated with the Karnataka Board of Secondary Education, while private schools may be affiliated with either of Karnataka Board of Secondary Education, Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (ICSE) or National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS). As of 2024, there are 142 public schools run by the Bengaluru Corporation. The city also has a significant number of international schools due to cater to expats and people employed in the technology sector. School education starts with two years of Kindergarten from age three onwards and then follows the Indian 10+2 plan, ten years of school and two years of pre-university course or higher secondary education. After completing their secondary education, students either attend a pre-university course or continue an equivalent high school course in one of three streams - arts, commerce or science - in various combinations. Alternatively, students can enrol in diploma courses and upon completing the required coursework, students enroll in general or professional degrees in universities through lateral entry.

The oldest institution of higher learning in the city, the Central College, was established as a high school affiliated to Madras University in 1858. The Indian Institute of Science was established in 1909. The Government Engineering College was established as an engineering school in 1913 by M. Visvesvaraya, and was became the first engineering college in the region in 1917, affiliated to Mysore University. As of 2016, the city had six public universities, four deemed universities, eight private universities, 26 medical and dental colleges, 84 engineering colleges, 67 polytechnics, and 64 other institutes of higher learning. The Bangalore University was established in 1964, and had more than 600 affiliated colleges, before being trifurcated into Bengaluru City University and Bengaluru North University in 2017. IIM Bangalore was established as the third Indian Institute of Management in 1972. The National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences was established after the amalgamation of the All India Institute of Mental Health and hospital in 1974. The National Law School of India University was the first Indian law university to be established in 1986. Other prominent research institutes in Bengaluru include Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research, National Centre for Biological Sciences, and National Institute of Advanced Studies. There are 205 public libraries maintained by the department of public libraries. The libraries are divided across the five zones of the city, with a larger Central Public Library located in each of the zones.

Parks and recreation Bengaluru is known as the "Garden City of India" because of its greenery. In May 2012, Lonely Planet listed the city as one of the world's top ten cities to visit. As of 2024, Bengaluru has 1,288 public parks maintained by the corporation. The Lal Bagh was established in the 1760s, and was later expanded into a 240 acres (97 ha) botanical garden in the 19th century. It incorporates a hillock made of gneiss, formed billions of years ago, and is a declared national geological monument. The garden has a watch tower built in the 16th century by Kempe Gowda, a glass house built in 1889 on the model of The Crystal Palace in London, old hero stones, and houses many exotic species of plants. A biannual flowershow is held at the gardens during the weeks of India's Republic Day and Independence Day. The Cubbon Park is a large park spanning 300 acres (120 ha) in the heart of the city, and was established in 1870. It hosts the Bangalore Aquarium, and the Bangalore central library. Bannerghatta National Park is a 260.51 km² (100.58 sq mi) national park and protected area, located south of the city. The old central prison was decommissioned in 2000 and was redeveloped into Freedom Park. Elgin Talkies, built in 1896, was the first theatre in Bengaluru. In the later half of the 20th century, the city had 149 single screens, most of them situated along the Kempegowda Road near the Kempegowda Bus Station. In the 21st century, large multiplexes with multiple screens began replacing the single screen theaters, and the city is now home to a large number of multiplexes. Stage plays and dramas of different genres and languages are enacted in theatres across the city.

Sports Cricket is the most popular sport in the city and the parks in the city serve as venues for impromptu games. M. Chinnaswamy Stadium, established in 1969, is a major international cricketing venue, and has hosted matches during multiple ICC Cricket World Cups. The Karnataka State Cricket Association, located in the stadium premises, is responsible for managing organised cricket in the state. The National Cricket Academy, operated by the Board of Control for Cricket in India, is based out of the city. The city is home to the Indian Premier League (IPL) franchise Royal Challengers Bengaluru. Notable international cricketers born in the city include Erapalli Prasanna, Roger Binny, Anil Kumble, Venkatesh Prasad, Lokesh Rahul, Mayank Agarwal, and Stuart Binny.

Sree Kanteerava Stadium is a multi-purpose venue which hosts football and athletics. Association football also has a significant following in the city, and Bangalore Football Stadium hosts football matches along with the Kanteerava stadium in the city. The city is home to football clubs Bengaluru FC, FC Bengaluru United, Ozone FC, South United FC, and SC Bengaluru. Prominent international footballers from the city include Sattar Basheer, and Arumainayagam. The Kanteerava Indoor Stadium and Koramangala Indoor Stadium are indoor arenas used to host indoor sports, and other events. The Kanteerava arena hosted the South Asian Basketball Championship in 2015 and 2016. The city is home to Bengaluru Beast of the UBA Pro Basketball League, and Bengaluru Bulls of the Pro Kabaddi League, who also play their home matches at the stadium.

Bengaluru hosts the WTA Indian Open, and Bengaluru Open tennis tournaments annually. Prominent international sports people from the city include tennis grand slam champion Rohan Bopanna, former All England Open badminton champion Prakash Padukone, and former national swimming champion Nisha Millet. Other notable sportsmen who reside in the city include former Indian cricket captain Rahul Dravid, world snooker champion Pankaj Advani, and multiple tennis grand slam champion Mahesh Bhupathi. The city is home to several recreational and sports clubs such as Bangalore Club, Bowring Institute, Bangalore Golf Club and Bangalore Turf Club.

City based teams Foreign relations Bengaluru has consulates of France, Germany, Israel, and Japan, and a virtual consulate of the United States. The city also hosts a British deputy High Commission, and honorary consulates of Finland, Ireland, Maldives, Peru, and Switzerland. Canada has a trade office in the city.

Bengaluru has a sister city relationship with the following cities:

Minsk, Belarus (1973) Cleveland, United States (1992) San Francisco, United States (2008) Chengdu, China (2013)

See also History of Bengaluru Bengaluru Namma Pride March List of Chola temples in Bengaluru List of neighbourhoods in Bengaluru List of people from Bengaluru List of tallest buildings in Bengaluru List of tourist attractions in Bengaluru List of taluks in Bengaluru Urban district Tourism in Karnataka

Notes References Bibliography Further reading External links Official website of Bangalore Development Authority Bengaluru at the Encyclopdia Britannica Bengaluru web resources provided by GovPubs at the University of Colorado Boulder Libraries Geographic data related to Bengaluru at OpenStreetMap

Hyderabad

Hyderabad is the capital and largest city of the Indian state of Telangana. It occupies 650 km² (250 sq mi) on the Deccan Plateau along the banks of the Musi River, in the northern part of Southern India. With an average altitude of 536 m (1,759 ft), much of Hyderabad is situated on hilly terrain around artificial lakes, including the Hussain Sagar lake, predating the city's founding, in the north of the city centre. According to the 2011 census of India, Hyderabad is the fourth-most populous city in India with a population of 6.9 million residents within the city limits, and has a population of 9.7 million residents in the metropolitan region, making it the sixth-most populous metropolitan area in India. The Qutb Shahi dynasty's Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah established Hyderabad in 1591 to extend the capital beyond the fortified Golconda. In 1687, the city was annexed by the Mughals. In 1724, Asaf Jah I, the Mughal viceroy, declared his sovereignty and founded the Asaf Jahi dynasty, also known as the Nizams. Hyderabad served as the imperial capital of the Asaf Jahis from 1769 to 1948. As the capital of the princely state of Hyderabad, the city housed the British Residency and cantonment until Indian independence in 1947. Hyderabad was annexed by the Indian Union in 1948 and continued as a capital of Hyderabad State from 1948 to 1956. After the introduction of the States Reorganisation Act of 1956, Hyderabad was made the capital of the newly formed Andhra Pradesh. In 2014, Andhra Pradesh was split to form the state of Telangana, and Hyderabad became the joint capital of the two states until 2024. Since 1956, the city has housed the Rashtrapati Nilayam, the winter office of the president of India. Relics of the Qutb Shahi and Nizam eras remain visible today; the Charminar has come to symbolise the city. By the end of the early modern era, the Mughal Empire had declined in the Deccan, and the Nizam's patronage attracted men of letters from various parts of the world. A distinctive culture arose from the amalgamation of local and migrated artisans, with painting, handicraft, jewellery, literature, dialect and clothing prominent even today. For its cuisine, the city is listed as a creative city of gastronomy by UNESCO. The Telugu film industry based in the city is the highest-grossing film industry in India as of 2021. Until the 19th century, Hyderabad was known for its pearl industry and was nicknamed the "City of Pearls", and was the only trading centre for Golconda diamonds in the world. Many of the city's historical and traditional bazaars remain open. Hyderabad's central location between the Deccan Plateau and the Western Ghats, and industrialisation throughout the 20th century attracted major Indian research, manufacturing, educational and financial institutions. Since the 1990s, the city has emerged as an Indian hub of pharmaceuticals and biotechnology and information technology. The formation of the special economic zones of Hardware Park and HITEC City, dedicated to information technology, has encouraged leading multinationals to set up operations in Hyderabad.

History **Toponymy** The name Hyderabad means "Haydar's City" or "Lion City", from Haydar 'lion' and ■b■d 'city', after Caliph Ali Ibn Abi Talib, also known as Haydar because of his lion-like valour in battle. The city was originally called Baghnagar (city of gardens). The European travellers von Poser and Thvenot found both names in use in the 17th century. A popular legend suggests that the founder of the city, Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah, named it Bhagya-nagar ("fortunate city") after Bhagmati, a local nautch (dancing girl) whom he married. She converted to Islam and adopted the title Hyder Mahal, the city being subsequently named Hyderabad in her honour. In the year 1597, Hyderabad gained the epithet Farkhunda Bunyad (lit. 'Of Auspicious Foundation'). Following the Mughal conquest of Hyderabad, emperor Aurangzeb changed the epithet to Dar-ul-Jihad (lit. 'Abode of Holy War'), a title which appears on coins minted in the city during the reigns of Aurangzeb and Kam Bakhsh. The later Mughal emperor Shah Alam returned the city to its older epithet of Farkhunda Bunyad, and consequently Mughal coins of Shah Alam and Muhammad Shah feature this title as the city's mint-name.

Early and medieval history The discovery of Megalithic burial sites and cairn circles in the suburbs of Hyderabad, in 1851 by Philip Meadows Taylor, a polymath in the service of the Nizam, had provided evidence that the region in which the city stands has been inhabited since the Stone Age. In 2008, Archaeologists excavating near the city have unearthed Iron Age sites that may date from 500 BCE. The region comprising modern Hyderabad and its surroundings was ruled by the Chalukya dynasty from 624 CE to 1075 CE. Following the dissolution of the Chalukya empire into four parts in the 11th century, Golconda-now part of Hyderabad-came under the control of the Kakatiya dynasty from 1158, whose seat of power was at Warangal-148 km (92 mi) northeast of modern Hyderabad. The Kakatiya ruler Ganapatideva (1199-1262) built a hilltop outpost-later known as Golconda Fort-to defend their western region. The Kakatiya dynasty was reduced to a vassal of the Khalji dynasty in 1310 after its defeat by Sultan Alauddin Khalji of the Delhi Sultanate. This lasted until 1321 when the Kakatiya dynasty was annexed by Malik Kafur, Khalji's general. During this period, Khalji took the Koh-i-Noor diamond, which is said to have been mined from the Kollur Mines of Golconda, to Delhi. Muhammad bin Tughluq succeeded to the Delhi sultanate in 1325, bringing Warangal under the rule of the Tughlaq dynasty; Malik Maqbul Tilangani was appointed its governor. In 1336 the regional chieftains Musunuri Nayakas-who revolted against the Delhi sultanate in 1333-took Warangal under their direct control and declared it as their capital. In 1347 when Ala-ud-Din Bahman Shah, a governor under bin Tughluq, rebelled against Delhi and established the Bahmani Sultanate in the Deccan Plateau, with Gulbarga-200 km (124 mi) west of Hyderabad-as its capital, both the neighbouring rulers Musunuri Nayakas of Warangal and Bahmani Sultans of Gulbarga engaged in many wars until 1364-65 when a peace treaty was signed and the Musunuri Nayakas ceded Golconda Fort to the Bahmani Sultan. The Bahmani Sultans ruled the region until 1518 and were the first independent Muslim rulers of the Deccan.

In 1496 Sultan Quli was appointed as a Bahmani governor of Telangana. He rebuilt, expanded and fortified the old mud fort of Golconda and named the city "Muhammad Nagar". In 1518, he revolted against the Bahmani Sultanate and established the Qutb Shahi dynasty. The fifth Qutb Shahi sultan, Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah, established Hyderabad on the banks of the Musi River in 1591, to avoid water shortages experienced at Golconda. During his rule, he had the Charminar and Mecca Masjid built in the city. On 21 September 1687, the Golconda Sultanate came under the rule of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb after a year-long siege of the Golconda Fort. The annexed city "Hyderabad" was renamed Darul Jihad (House of War), whereas the main territories of the Golconda Sultanate were incorporated into the Mughal empire as the province Hyderabad Subah. Mughal rule in Hyderabad was administered by three main governors: Jan Sipar Khan (1688-1700), his son Rustam Dil Khan (1700-13) and Mubariz Khan (1713-24).

Modern history In 1713, Mughal emperor Farrukhsiyar appointed Mubariz Khan as Governor of Hyderabad. During his tenure, he fortified the city and controlled the internal and neighbouring threats. In 1714 Farrukhsiyar appointed Asaf Jah I as Viceroy of the Deccan-(administrator of six Mughal governorates) with the title Nizam-ul-Mulk (Administrator of the Realm). In 1721, he was appointed as Prime Minister of the Mughal Empire. His differences with the court nobles led him to resign from all the imperial responsibilities in 1723 and leave for Deccan. Under the influence of Asaf Jah I's opponents, Mughal Emperor Muhammad Shah issued a decree to Mubariz Khan, to stop Asaf Jah I which resulted in the Battle of Shakar Kheda. In 1724, Asaf Jah I defeated Mubariz Khan to establish autonomy over the Deccan, named the region Hyderabad Deccan, and started what came to be known as the Asaf Jahi dynasty. Subsequent rulers retained the title Nizam ul-Mulk and were referred to as Asaf Jahi Nizams, or Nizams of Hyderabad. The death of Asaf Jah I in 1748 resulted in a period of political unrest as his sons and grandson-Nasir Jung (1748-1750), Muzaffar Jang (1750-1751) and Salabat Jung (1751-1762)-contended for the throne backed by opportunistic neighbouring states and colonial foreign forces. The accession of Asaf Jah II, who reigned from 1762 to 1803, ended the instability. In 1768 he signed the Treaty of Masulipatam-by which the East India Company in return for a fixed annual rent, got the

right to control and collect the taxes at Coromandel Coast.

In 1769 Hyderabad city became the formal capital of the Asaf Jahi Nizams. In response to regular threats from Hyder Ali (Dalwai of Mysore), Baji Rao I (Peshwa of the Maratha Empire), and Basalath Jung (Asaf Jah II's elder brother, who was supported by French General the Marquis de Bussy-Castelnau), the Nizam signed a subsidiary alliance with the East India Company in 1798, allowing the British Indian Army to be stationed at Bolarum (modern Secunderabad) to protect the state's capital, for which the Nizams paid an annual maintenance to the British. Until 1874 there were no modern industries in Hyderabad. With the introduction of railways in the 1880s, four factories were built to the south and east of Hussain Sagar lake, and during the early 20th century, Hyderabad was transformed into a modern city with the establishment of transport services, underground drainage, running water, electricity, telecommunications, universities, industries, and Begumpet Airport. The Nizams ruled the princely state of Hyderabad during the British Raj.

Post-Independence After India gained independence, the Nizam declared his intention to remain independent rather than become part of the Indian Union or newly formed Dominion of Pakistan. The Hyderabad State Congress, with the support of the Indian National Congress and the Communist Party of India, began agitating against Nizam VII in 1948. On 17 September that year, the Indian Army took control of Hyderabad State after an invasion codenamed Operation Polo. With the defeat of his forces, Nizam VII capitulated to the Indian Union by signing an Instrument of Accession, which made him the Rajpramukh (Princely Governor) of the state until it was abolished on 31 October 1956. Between 1946 and 1951, the Communist Party of India fomented the Telangana uprising against the feudal lords of the Telangana region. The Constitution of India, which became effective on 26 January 1950, made Hyderabad State one of the part B states of India, with Hyderabad city continuing to be the capital. In his 1955 report *Thoughts on Linguistic States*, B. R. Ambedkar, then chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Indian Constitution, proposed designating the city of Hyderabad as the second capital of India because of its amenities and strategic central location. On 1 November 1956 the states of India were reorganised by language. Hyderabad state was split into three parts, which were merged with neighbouring states to form Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. The nine Telugu- and Urdu-speaking districts of Hyderabad State in the Telangana region were merged with the Telugu-speaking Andhra State to create Andhra Pradesh, with Hyderabad as its capital. Several protests, known collectively as the Telangana movement, attempted to invalidate the merger and demanded the creation of a new Telangana state. Major actions took place in 1969 and 1972, and a third began in 2010. On 30 July 2013 the government of India declared that part of Andhra Pradesh would be split off to form a new Telangana state and that Hyderabad city would be the capital city and part of Telangana, while the city would also remain the capital of Andhra Pradesh for no more than ten years. On 3 October 2013 the Union Cabinet approved the proposal, and in February 2014 both houses of Parliament passed the Telangana Bill. With the final assent of the President of India, Telangana state was formed on 2 June 2014.

Geography Hyderabad is 1,566 km (973 mi) south of Delhi, 699 km (434 mi) southeast of Mumbai, and 570 km (350 mi) north of Bangalore by road. It is situated in the southern part of Telangana in southeastern India, along the banks of the Musi River, a tributary of Krishna River located on the Deccan Plateau in the northern part of South India. Greater Hyderabad covers 650 km² (250 sq mi), making it one of the largest metropolitan areas in India. With an average altitude of 536 m (1,759 ft), Hyderabad lies on predominantly sloping terrain of grey and pink granite, dotted with small hills, the highest being Banjara Hills at 672 m (2,205 ft). The city has numerous lakes sometime referred to as sagar, meaning "sea". Examples include artificial lakes created by dams on the Musi, such as Hussain Sagar (built-in 1562 near the city centre), Osman Sagar and Himayat Sagar. As of 1996, the city had 140 lakes and 834 water tanks (ponds).

Climate Hyderabad has a tropical wet and dry climate (Kppen Aw) bordering on a hot semi-arid climate (Kppen BSh). The annual mean temperature is 26.6 C (79.9 F); monthly mean temperatures are 21-33 C (70-91 F). Summers (March-June) are hot and dry, with average highs in the mid-to-high 30s Celsius; maximum temperatures often exceed 40 C (104 F) between April and June. The coolest temperatures occur in December and January when the lowest temperature occasionally dips to 10 C (50 F). May is the hottest month when daily temperatures range from 26-39 C (79-102 F); December, the coldest, has temperatures varying from 14.5-28 C (58.1-82.4 F). Heavy rain from the south-west summer monsoon falls between June and October, supplying Hyderabad with most of its mean annual rainfall. Since records began in November 1891, the heaviest rainfall recorded in a 24-hour period was 241.5 mm (10 in) on 24 August 2000. The highest temperature ever recorded was 45.5 C (114 F) on 2 June 1966, and the lowest was 6.1 C (43 F) on 8 January 1946. The city receives 2,731 hours of sunshine per year; maximum daily sunlight exposure occurs in February.

Hyderabad has been ranked 21st best "National Clean Air City" (under Category 1 >10L Population cities) in India according to 'Swachh Vayu Survekshan 2024 Results'

Conservation Hyderabad's lakes and the sloping terrain of its low-lying hills provide habitat for an assortment of flora and fauna. As of 2016, the tree cover is 1.7% of the total city area, a decrease from 2.7% in 1996. The forest region in and around the city encompasses areas of ecological and biological importance, which are preserved in the form of national parks, zoos, mini-zoos and a wildlife sanctuary. Nehru Zoological Park, the city's largest zoo, is the first in India to have a lion and tiger safari park. Hyderabad has three national parks (Mrugavani National Park, Mahavir Harina Vanasthali National Park and Kasu Brahmananda Reddy National Park), and the Manjira Wildlife Sanctuary is about 50 km (31 mi) from the city. The other environmental reserves of Hyderabad are Kotla Vijayabhaskara Reddy Botanical Gardens, Ameenpur Lake, Shamirpet Lake, Hussain Sagar, Fox Sagar Lake, Mir Alam Tank and Patancheru Lake, which is home to regional birds and attracts seasonal migratory birds from different parts of the world. Organisations engaged in environmental and wildlife preservation include the Telangana Forest Department, Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education, the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), the Animal Welfare Board of India, the Blue Cross of Hyderabad and the University of Hyderabad.

Administration Common capital status According to the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014 part 2 Section 5: "(1) On and from the appointed day, Hyderabad in the existing State of Andhra Pradesh, shall be the common capital of the State of Telangana and the State of Andhra Pradesh for such period not exceeding ten years. (2) After the expiry of the period referred to in subsection (1), Hyderabad shall be the capital of the State of Telangana and there shall be a new capital for the State of Andhra Pradesh." The same sections also define that the common capital includes the existing area designated as the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation under the Hyderabad Municipal Corporation Act, 1955. As stipulated in sections 3 and 18(1) of the Reorganisation Act, city MLAs are members of the Telangana state assembly.

Local government The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) oversees the civic infrastructure of the city, there are six administrative zones of GHMC: South Zone-(Charminar), East Zone-(L. B. Nagar), West Zone-(Serilingampally), North Zone-(Kukatpally), Northeast Zone-(Secunderabad) and Central Zone-(Khairatabad); these zones consist of 30 "circles", which together encompass 150 municipal wards. Each ward is represented by a corporator, elected by popular vote, as of 2020 the city has 7,400,000 voters of which 3,850,000 are male and 3,500,000 are female. The corporators elect the Mayor, who is the titular head of GHMC; executive powers rest with the Municipal Commissioner, appointed by the state government. The

GHMC carries out the city's infrastructural work such as building and maintenance of roads and drains, town planning including construction regulation, maintenance of municipal markets and parks, solid waste management, the issuing of birth and death certificates, the issuing of trade licences, collection of property tax, and community welfare services such as mother and child healthcare, and pre-school and non-formal education. The GHMC was formed in April 2007 by merging the Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad (MCH) with 12 municipalities of the Hyderabad, Ranga Reddy and Medak districts covering a total area of 650 km² (250 sq mi). The Secunderabad Cantonment Board is a civic administration agency overseeing an area of 40.1 km² (15.5 sq mi), where there are several military camps. The Osmania University campus is administered independently by the university authority. Appointed in February 2021, Gadwal Vijayalakshmi of Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) is serving as the mayor of GHMC. In Hyderabad police jurisdiction is divided into three commissionerates: Hyderabad (established in 1847 AD, the oldest police commissionerate in India), Cyberabad, and Rachakonda, each headed by a commissioner of police, who are Indian Police Service (IPS) officers. The Hyderabad police is a division of the Telangana Police, under the state Home Ministry. The jurisdictions of the city's administrative agencies are, in ascending order of size: the Hyderabad Police area, Hyderabad district, the GHMC area ("Hyderabad city"), and the area under the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA). The HMDA is an apolitical urban planning agency that covers the GHMC and its suburbs, extending to 54 mandals in five districts encircling the city. It coordinates the development activities of GHMC and suburban municipalities and manages the administration of bodies such as the Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWSSB). Hyderabad is the seat of the Government of Telangana, Government of Andhra Pradesh and the President of India's winter retreat Rashtrapati Nilayam, as well as the Telangana High Court and various local government agencies. The Lower City Civil Court and the Metropolitan Criminal Court are under the jurisdiction of the High Court. The GHMC area contains 24 State Legislative Assembly constituencies, which form five constituencies of the Lok Sabha (the lower house of the Parliament of India).

Utility services The HMWSSB (Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply & Sewage Board) regulates rainwater harvesting, sewerage services, and water supply. In 2005, the HMWSSB started operating a 116 km-long (72 mi) water supply pipeline from Nagarjuna Sagar Dam to meet increasing demand. The Telangana Southern Power Distribution Company Limited (TSPDCL) manages electricity supply. As of 2014, there were 15 fire stations in the city, operated by the Telangana State Disaster and Fire Response Department. The government-owned India Post has five head post offices and many sub-post offices in Hyderabad, which are complemented by private courier services.

Pollution control Hyderabad produces around 4,500 tonnes of solid waste daily, which is transported from collection units in Imlibun, Yousufguda and Lower Tank Bund to the dumpsite in Jawaharnagar. Disposal is managed by the Integrated Solid Waste Management project which was started by the GHMC in 2010. Rapid urbanisation and increased economic activity has led to increased industrial waste, air, noise and water pollution, which is regulated by the Telangana Pollution Control Board (TPCB). The contribution of different sources to air pollution in 2006 was: 20-50% from vehicles, 40-70% from a combination of vehicle discharge and road dust, 10-30% from industrial discharges and 3-10% from the burning of household rubbish. Deaths resulting from atmospheric particulate matter are estimated at 1,700-3,000 each year. The city's "VIP areas", the Assembly building, Secretariat, and Telangana chief minister's office, have particularly low air quality index ratings, suffering from high levels of PM_{2.5}'s. Ground water around Hyderabad, which has a hardness of up to 1000 ppm, around three times higher than is desirable, is the main source of drinking water but the increasing population and consequent increase in demand has led to a decline in not only ground water but also river and lake levels. This shortage is further exacerbated by inadequately treated effluent discharged from industrial treatment plants polluting the water sources of the city.

Healthcare The Commissionerate of Health and Family Welfare is responsible for planning, implementation and monitoring of all facilities related to health and preventive services. As of 2010-11, the city had 50 government hospitals, 300 private and charity hospitals and 194 nursing homes providing around 12,000 hospital beds, fewer than half the required 25,000. For every 10,000 people in the city, there are 17.6 hospital beds, 9 specialist doctors, 14 nurses and 6 physicians. The city has about 4,000 individual clinics. Private clinics are preferred by many residents because of the distance to, poor quality of care at and long waiting times in government facilities, despite the high proportion of the city's residents being covered by government health insurance: 24% according to a National Family Health Survey in 2005. As of 2012, many new private hospitals of various sizes were opened or being built. Hyderabad has outpatient and inpatient facilities that use Unani, homoeopathic and Ayurvedic treatments. In the 2005 National Family Health Survey, it was reported that the city's total fertility rate is 1.8, which is below the replacement rate. Only 61% of children had been provided with all basic vaccines (BCG, measles and full courses of polio and DPT), fewer than in all other surveyed cities except Meerut. The infant mortality rate was 35 per 1,000 live births, and the mortality rate for children under five was 41 per 1,000 live births. The survey also reported that a third of women and a quarter of men are overweight or obese, 49% of children below 5 years are anaemic, and up to 20% of children are underweight, while more than 2% of women and 3% of men suffer from diabetes.

Demographics When the GHMC was created in 2007, the area occupied by the municipality increased from 175 km² (68 sq mi) to 650 km² (250 sq mi). Consequently, the population increased by 87%, from 3,637,483 as of 2001 census to 6,809,970 as of 2011 census, 24% of which are migrants from elsewhere in India, making Hyderabad the nation's fourth most populous city. As of 2011, the population density is 18,480/km² (47,900/sq mi) and the Hyderabad urban agglomeration had a population of 7,749,334 making it the sixth most populous urban agglomeration in the country. as of 2011 census, there are 3,500,802 male and 3,309,168 female citizens-a sex ratio of 945 females per 1000 males, higher than the national average of 926 per 1000. Among children aged 0-6 years, 373,794 are boys and 352,022 are girls-a ratio of 942 per 1000. Literacy stands at 83% (male 86%; female 80%), higher than the national average of 74.04%. The socio-economic strata consist of 20% upper class, 50% middle class and 30% working class.

Ethnicity Referred to as "Hyderabadi", the residents of Hyderabad are predominantly Telugu and Urdu speaking people, with minority Arab, Marathi, Marwari, and Pathan communities. Hyderabadi Muslims are a unique community who owe much of their history, language, cuisine, and culture to Hyderabad, and the various dynasties who previously ruled. Hadhrami Arabs, African Arabs, Armenians, Abyssinians, Iranians, Pathans and Turkish people were present before 1948; these communities, of which the Hadhrami Arabs are the largest, declined after Hyderabad State became part of the Indian Union, as they lost the patronage of the Asaf Jahi Nizams.

Religion Hindus are in the majority. Muslims form a very large minority and are present throughout the city and predominate in and around the Old City of Hyderabad. There are also Christian, Sikh, Jain, Buddhist and Parsi communities and iconic churches, mosques and temples. According to the 2011 census, the religious make-up of Greater Hyderabad was: Hindus (64.9%), Muslims (30.1%), Christians (2.8%), Jains (0.3%), Sikhs (0.3%) and Buddhists (0.1%); 1.5% did not state any religion.

Languages Telugu and Urdu are both official languages of the city, and most Hyderabadis are bilingual. The Telugu dialect spoken in Hyderabad is called Telangana Mandalika, and the Urdu spoken is called Deccani. English is a "Secondary official language" is pervasive in business and administration, and it is an important

medium of instruction in education and publications.

Slums As of 2012, in the greater metropolitan area, 13% of the population live below the poverty line. According to a 2012 report submitted by GHMC to the World Bank, Hyderabad has 1,476 slums with a total population of 1.7 million, of whom 66% live in 985 slums in the "core" of the city (the part that formed Hyderabad before the April 2007 expansion) and the remaining 34% live in 491 suburban tenements. About 22% of the slum-dwelling households had migrated from different parts of India in the last decade of the 20th century, and 63% claimed to have lived in the slums for more than 10 years. Overall literacy in the slums is 60-80% and female literacy is 52-73%. A third of the slums have basic service connections, and the remainder depend on general public services provided by the government. There are 405 government schools, 267 government-aided schools, 175 private schools, and 528 community halls in the slum areas. According to a 2008 survey by the Centre for Good Governance, 87.6% of the slum-dwelling households are nuclear families, 18% are very poor, with an income up to ₹20,000 (US\$240) per annum, 73% live below the poverty line (a standard poverty line recognised by the Andhra Pradesh Government is ₹24,000 (US\$280) per annum), 27% of the chief wage earners (CWE) are casual labour and 38% of the CWE are illiterate. About 3.7% of the slum children aged 5-14 do not go to school and 3.2% work as child labour, of whom 64% are boys and 36% are girls. The largest employers of child labour are street shops and construction sites. Among the working children, 35% are engaged in hazardous jobs.

Cityscape Neighbourhoods The historic city established by Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah on the southern side of the Musi River forms the heritage region of Hyderabad called the Purana Shahar (Old City), while the "New City" encompasses the urbanised area on the northern banks. The two are connected by many bridges across the river, the oldest of which is Purana Pul-("old bridge") built in 1578 AD. Hyderabad is twinned with neighbouring Secunderabad, to which it is connected by Hussain Sagar.

Many historic and heritage sites lie in south central Hyderabad, such as the Charminar, Mecca Masjid, Salar Jung Museum, Nizam Museum, Telangana High Court, Falaknuma Palace, Chowmahalla Palace and the traditional retail corridor comprising the Pearl Market, Laad Bazaar and Madina Circle. North of the river are hospitals, colleges, major railway stations and business areas such as Begum Bazaar, Koti, Abids, Sultan Bazar and Moazzam Jahi Market, along with administrative and recreational establishments such as the Telangana Secretariat, the India Government Mint, the Telangana Legislature, the Public Gardens, Shahi Masjid, the Nizam Club, the Ravindra Bharathi, the State Museum, the Birla Temple and the Birla Planetarium. North of central Hyderabad lies Hussain Sagar, Tank Bund Road, Rani Gunj and the Secunderabad railway station. Most of the city's parks and recreational centres, such as Sanjeevaiah Park, Indira Park, Lumbini Park, NTR Gardens, the Buddha statue and Tankbund Park are located here. In the northwest part of the city there are upscale residential and commercial areas such as Banjara Hills, Jubilee Hills, Begumpet, Khairatabad, Tolichowki, Jagannath Temple and Miyapur. The northern end contains industrial areas such as Kukatpally, Sanathnagar, Moosapet, Balanagar, Patancheru and Chanda Nagar. The northeast end is dotted with residential areas such as Malkajgiri, Neredmet, A. S. Rao Nagar and Uppal. In the eastern part of the city lie many defence research centres and Ramoji Film City. The west and southwest regions of the city, dubbed "Cyberabad", have grown rapidly since the 1990s and are home to several information technology and bio-pharmaceutical companies. Numerous skyscrapers and high-rise buildings have been constructed in key economic corridors such as Gachibowli, the Financial District, HITEC City, and Kukatpally. The rapid vertical development in these localities has propelled Hyderabad to become the city with the second-highest number of skyscrapers in India. Several landmarks such as the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport, Osman Sagar, Himayath Sagar and Kasu Brahmananda Reddy National Park are also located in the west and southwest regions of the city.

Landmarks Heritage buildings constructed during the Qutb Shahi and Nizam eras showcase Indo-Islamic architecture influenced by Medieval, Mughal and European styles. After the 1908 flooding of the Musi River, the city was expanded and civic monuments constructed, particularly during the rule of Mir Osman Ali Khan (the VIIth Nizam), whose patronage of architecture led to him being referred to as the maker of modern Hyderabad. In 2012, the government of India declared Hyderabad the first "Best heritage city of India". Qutb Shahi architecture of the 16th and early 17th centuries followed classical Persian architecture featuring domes and colossal arches. The oldest surviving Qutb Shahi structure in Hyderabad is the ruins of the Golconda Fort built in the 16th century. Most of the historical bazaars that still exist were constructed on the street north of Charminar towards the fort. The Charminar has become an icon of the city; located in the centre of old Hyderabad, it is a square structure with sides 20 m (66 ft) long and four grand arches each facing a road. At each corner stands a 56 m (184 ft)-high minaret. The Charminar, Golconda Fort and the Qutb Shahi tombs are considered to be monuments of national importance in India; in 2010 the Indian government proposed that the sites be listed for UNESCO World Heritage status.

Among the oldest surviving examples of Nizam architecture in Hyderabad is the Chowmahalla Palace, which was the seat of royal power. It showcases a diverse array of architectural styles, from the Baroque Harem to its Neoclassical royal court. The other palaces include Falaknuma Palace (inspired by the style of Andrea Palladio), Purani Haveli, King Kothi Palace and Bella Vista Palace all of which were built at the peak of Nizam rule in the 19th century. During Mir Osman Ali Khan's rule, European styles, along with Indo-Islamic, became prominent. These styles are reflected in the Indo-Saracenic style of architecture seen in many civic monuments such as the Hyderabad High Court, Osmania Hospital, City College and the Kacheguda railway station, all designed by Vincent Esch. Other landmark structures of the city constructed during his reign are the State Central Library, the Telangana Legislature, the State Archaeology Museum, Jubilee Hall, and Hyderabad railway station. Other landmarks of note are Paigah Palace, Asman Garh Palace, Basheer Bagh Palace, Errum Manzil and the Spanish Mosque, all constructed by the Paigah family.

Economy Recent estimates of the economy of Hyderabad's metropolitan area have ranged from US\$40-US\$74 billion (PPP GDP), and have ranked it either fifth- or sixth- most productive metro area of India. Hyderabad is the largest contributor to the gross domestic product (GDP), tax and other revenues, of Telangana, and the sixth largest deposit centre and fourth largest credit centre nationwide, as ranked by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in June 2012. Its per capita annual income in 2011 was ■44,300 (US\$520). As of 2006, the largest employers in the city were the state government (113,098 employees) and central government (85,155). According to a 2005 survey, 77% of males and 19% of females in the city were employed. The service industry remains dominant in the city, and 90% of the employed workforce is engaged in this sector. Hyderabad's role in the pearl trade has given it the name "City of Pearls" and up until the 18th century, the city was the only global trading centre for diamonds known as Golconda diamonds. Industrialisation began under the Nizams in the late 19th century, helped by railway expansion that connected the city with major ports. From the 1950s to the 1970s, Indian enterprises, such as Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL), Nuclear Fuel Complex (NFC), National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC), Bharat Electronics (BEL), Electronics Corporation of India Limited (ECIL), Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), Centre for DNA Fingerprinting and Diagnostics (CDFD), State Bank of Hyderabad (SBH) and Andhra Bank (AB) were established in the city. The city is home to Hyderabad Securities formerly known as Hyderabad Stock Exchange (HSE), and houses the regional office of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI). In 2013, the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) facility in Hyderabad was forecast to provide operations and transactions services to BSE-Mumbai by the end of 2014. The growth of the financial services sector has helped Hyderabad evolve from a traditional manufacturing city to

a cosmopolitan industrial service centre. Since the 1990s, the growth of information technology (IT), IT-enabled services (ITES), insurance and financial institutions has expanded the service sector, and these primary economic activities have boosted the ancillary sectors of trade and commerce, transport, storage, communication, real estate and retail. As of 2021, the IT exports from Hyderabad were ■ 1,45,522 crore (US\$19.66 billion), the city houses 1500 IT and TES companies that provide 628,615 jobs. Hyderabad's commercial markets are divided into four sectors: central business districts, sub-central business centres, neighbourhood business centres and local business centres. Many traditional and historic bazaars are located throughout the city, Laad Bazaar being the prominent among all is popular for selling a variety of traditional and cultural antique wares, along with gems and pearls.

The establishment of Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Limited (IDPL), a public sector undertaking, in 1961 was followed over the decades by many national and global companies opening manufacturing and research facilities in the city. As of 2010, the city manufactured one third of India's bulk drugs and 16% of biotechnology products, contributing to its reputation as "India's pharmaceutical capital" and the "Genome Valley of India". Hyderabad is a global centre of information technology, for which it is known as Cyberabad (Cyber City). As of 2013, it contributed 15% of India's and 98% of Andhra Pradesh's exports in IT and ITES sectors and 22% of NASSCOM's total membership is from the city. The development ofHITEC City, a township with extensive technological infrastructure, prompted multinational companies to establish facilities in Hyderabad. The city is home to more than 1300 IT and ITES firms that provide employment for 407,000 individuals; the global conglomerates include Microsoft, Apple, Amazon, Google, IBM, Yahoo!, Oracle Corporation, Dell, Facebook, CISCO, and major Indian firms including Tech Mahindra, Infosys, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Polaris, Cyient and Wipro. In 2009 the World Bank Group ranked the city as the second best Indian city for doing business. The city and its suburbs contain the highest number of special economic zones of any Indian city. The Automotive industry in Hyderabad is also emerging and making it an automobile hub. Automobile companies including as Hyundai, Hyderabad Allwyn, Praga Tools, HMT Bearings, Ordnance Factory Medak, Deccan Auto and Mahindra & Mahindra have units in the Hyderabad economic zone. Fiat Chrysler Automobiles, Maruti Suzuki and Triton Energy will invest in Hyderabad. Like the rest of India, Hyderabad has a large informal economy that employs 30% of the labour force. According to a survey published in 2007, it had 40-50,000 street vendors, and their numbers were increasing. Among the street vendors, 84% are male and 16% female, and four fifths are "stationary vendors" operating from a fixed pitch, often with their own stall. Most are financed through personal savings; only 8% borrow from moneylenders. Vendor earnings vary from ■50 (59 US) to ■800 (US\$9.50) per day. Other unorganised economic sectors include dairy, poultry farming, brick manufacturing, casual labour and domestic help. Those involved in the informal economy constitute a major portion of the urban poor. In 2024, the World Economic Forum established a Centre for Fourth Industrial Revolution (C4IR), in the city. Which it describes as a hub to leverage the latest technology in advancing the life sciences and health sectors.

Culture Hyderabad emerged as the foremost centre of culture in India with the decline of the Mughal Empire. After the fall of Delhi in 1857, the migration of performing artists to the city particularly from the north and west of the Indian subcontinent, under the patronage of the Nizam, enriched the cultural milieu. This migration resulted in a mingling of North and South Indian languages, cultures and religions, which has since led to a co-existence of Hindu and Muslim traditions, for which the city has become noted. A further consequence of this north-south mix is that both Telugu and Urdu are official languages of Telangana. The mixing of religions has resulted in many festivals being celebrated in Hyderabad such as Ganesh Chaturthi, Diwali and Bonalu of Hindu tradition and Eid ul-Fitr and Eid al-Adha by Muslims. Traditional Hyderabad garb reveals a mix of Muslim and Hindu influences with men wearing sherwani and kurta-pajama and women wearing khara dupatta and salwar kameez. Most Muslim women wear burqa and hijab outdoors. In addition to the traditional Hindu and

Muslim garments, increasing exposure to western cultures has led to a rise in the wearing of western style clothing among youths.

Literature In the past, Qutb Shahi rulers and Asaf Jahi Nizams attracted artists, architects, and men of letters from different parts of the world through patronage. The resulting ethnic mix popularised cultural events such as mushairas (poetic symposia), Qawwali (devotional songs) and Dholak ke Geet (traditional folk songs). The Qutb Shahi dynasty particularly encouraged the growth of Deccani literature leading to works such as the Deccani Masnavi and Diwan poetry, which are among the earliest available manuscripts in Urdu. Lazzat Un Nisa, a book compiled in the 15th century at Qutb Shahi courts, contains erotic paintings with diagrams for secret medicines and stimulants in the eastern form of ancient sexual arts. The reign of the Asaf Jahi Nizams saw many literary reforms and the introduction of Urdu as a language of court, administration and education. In 1824, a collection of Urdu Ghazal poetry, named Gulzar-e-Mahlaqa, authored by Mah Laqa Bai-the first female Urdu poet to produce a Diwan-was published in Hyderabad. Hyderabad has continued with these traditions in its annual Hyderabad Literary Festival, held since 2010, showcasing the city's literary and cultural creativity. Organisations engaged in the advancement of literature include the Sahitya Akademi, the Urdu Academy, the Telugu Academy, the National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language, the Comparative Literature Association of India, and the Andhra Saraswata Parishad. Literary development is further aided by state institutions such as the State Central Library, the largest public library in the state which was established in 1891, and other major libraries including the Sri Krishna Devaraya Andhra Bhasha Nilayam, the British Library and the Sundarayya Vignana Kendram.

Music and films South Indian music and dances such as the Kuchipudi and Bharatanatyam styles are popular in the Deccan region. As a result of their cultural policies, North Indian music and dance gained popularity during the rule of the Mughals and Nizams, and it was also during their reign that it became a tradition among the nobility to associate themselves with tawaif (courtesans). These courtesans were revered as the epitome of etiquette and culture and were appointed to teach singing, poetry, and classical dance to many children of the aristocracy. This gave rise to certain styles of court music, dance and poetry. Besides western and Indian popular music genres such as filmi music, the residents of Hyderabad play city-based marfa music, Dholak ke Geet (household songs based on local folklore), and qawwali, especially at weddings, festivals and other celebratory events. The state government organises the Golconda Music and Dance Festival, the Taramati Music Festival and the Premavathi Dance Festival to further encourage the development of music. Although the city is not particularly noted for theatre and drama, the state government promotes theatre with multiple programmes and festivals in such venues as the Ravindra Bharathi, Shilpakala Vedika, Lalithakala Thoranam and Lamakaan. Although not a purely music-oriented event, Numaish, a popular annual exhibition of local and national consumer products, does feature some musical performances. The city is home to the Telugu film industry, popularly known as Tollywood-as of 2021 it is the highest-grossing Indian film industry. In the 1970s, Deccani language realist films by globally acclaimed Shyam Benegal started a movement of coming of age art films in India, which came to be known as parallel cinema. The Deccani film industry ("Dollywood") produces films in the local Hyderabad dialect, which have gained regional popularity since 2005. The city has hosted international film festivals such as the International Children's Film Festival and the Hyderabad International Film Festival. In 2005, Guinness World Records declared Ramoji Film City to be the world's largest film studio.

Art and handicrafts The region is well known for its Golconda and Hyderabad painting styles which are branches of Deccan painting. Developed during the 16th century, the Golconda style is a native style blending foreign techniques and bears some similarity to the Vijayanagara paintings of neighbouring Mysore. A significant use of luminous gold and white colours is generally found in the Golconda style. The Hyderabad

style originated in the 17th century under the Nizams. Highly influenced by Mughal painting, this style makes use of bright colours and mostly depicts regional landscape, culture, costumes, and jewellery. Although not a centre for handicrafts itself, the patronage of the arts by the Mughals and Nizams attracted artisans from the region to Hyderabad. Such crafts include: Wootz steel, Filigree work, Bidriware, a metalwork handicraft from neighbouring Karnataka, which was popularised during the 18th century and has since been granted a Geographical Indication (GI) tag under the auspices of the WTO act; and Zari and Zardozi, embroidery works on textile that involve making elaborate designs using gold, silver and other metal threads. Chintz-a glazed calico textiles was originated in Golconda in 16th century. and another example of a handicraft drawn to Hyderabad is Kalamkari, a hand-painted or block-printed cotton textile that comes from cities in Andhra Pradesh. This craft is distinguished in having both a Hindu style, known as Srikalahasti and entirely done by hand, and an Islamic style, known as Machilipatnam which uses both hand and block techniques. Examples of Hyderabad's arts and crafts are housed in various museums including the Salar Jung Museum (housing "one of the largest one-man-collections in the world"), the Telangana State Archaeology Museum, the Nizam Museum, the City Museum and the Birla Science Museum.

Cuisine Hyderabadi cuisine comprises a broad repertoire of rice, wheat and meat dishes and the skilled use of various spices. Hyderabad is listed by UNESCO as a creative city of gastronomy. Hyderabadi biryani and Hyderabadi haleem, with their blend of Mughlai and Arab cuisines, carry the national Geographical Indications tag. Hyderabadi cuisine is influenced to some extent by French, but more by Arabic, Turkish, Iranian and native Telugu and Marathwada cuisines. Popular native dishes include nihari, chakna, baghara baingan and the desserts qubani ka meetha, double ka meetha and kaddu ki kheer (a sweet porridge made with sweet gourd).

Media One of Hyderabad's earliest newspapers, The Deccan Times, was established in the 1780s. Major Telugu dailies published in Hyderabad are Eenadu, Sakshi and Namasthe Telangana, while major English papers are The Times of India, The Hindu and Deccan Chronicle. The major Urdu papers include The Siasat Daily, The Munsif Daily and Etemaad. The Secunderabad Cantonment Board established the first radio station in Hyderabad State around 1919. Deccan Radio was the first radio public broadcast station in the city starting on 3 February 1935, with FM broadcasting beginning in 2000. The available channels in Hyderabad include All India Radio, Radio Mirchi, Radio City, Red FM, Big FM and Fever FM. Television broadcasting in Hyderabad began in 1974 with the launch of Doordarshan, the government of India's public service broadcaster, which transmits two free-to-air terrestrial television channels and one satellite channel. Private satellite channels started in July 1992 with the launch of Star TV. Satellite TV channels are accessible via cable subscription, direct-broadcast satellite services or internet-based television. Hyderabad's first dial-up internet access became available in the early 1990s and was limited to software development companies. The first public internet access service began in 1995, with the first private sector internet service provider (ISP) starting operations in 1998. In 2015, high-speed public WiFi was introduced in parts of the city.

Education Public and private schools in Hyderabad are governed by the Board of Secondary Education, Telangana or Central Board of Secondary Education, depending on the affiliation and follow a "10+2+3" plan. About two-thirds of pupils attend privately run institutions. Languages of instruction include English, Hindi, Telugu and Urdu. Depending on the institution, students are required to sit the Secondary School Certificate or the Indian Certificate of Secondary Education. After completing secondary education, students enrol in schools or junior colleges with higher secondary facilities. Admission to professional graduation colleges in Hyderabad, many of which are affiliated with either Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University Hyderabad (JNTUH) or Osmania University (OU), is through the Engineering Agricultural and Medical Common Entrance Test (EAM-CET). There are 13 universities in Hyderabad: six private universities, two deemed universities, six state

universities, and three central universities. The central universities are the University of Hyderabad (Hyderabad Central University, HCU), Maulana Azad National Urdu University and the English and Foreign Languages University. Osmania University, established in 1918, was the first university in Hyderabad and as of 2012 is India's second most popular institution for international students. The Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Open University, established in 1982, is the first distance-learning open university in India. Hyderabad is home to a number of centres specialising in particular fields such as biomedical sciences, biotechnology and pharmaceuticals, such as the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER), Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), Centre for DNA Fingerprinting and Diagnostics (CDFD) and National Institute of Nutrition (NIN). Hyderabad has five major medical schools-Osmania Medical College, Gandhi Medical College, Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences, Deccan College of Medical Sciences and Shadan Institute of Medical Sciences-and many affiliated teaching hospitals. An All India Institute of Medical Sciences has been sanctioned in the outskirts of Hyderabad. The Government Nizamia Tibbi College is a college of Unani medicine. Hyderabad is also the headquarters of the Indian Heart Association, a non-profit foundation for cardiovascular education. Notable central institutions in Hyderabad include the NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad (NLU), Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (IICT), National Geophysical Research Institute, National Institute of Rural Development, Indian Air Force Academy, National Industrial Security Academy, Central Institute of Tool Design, Institute of Public Enterprise, Administrative Staff College of India and the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Police Academy. Technical and research institutions include the International Institute of Information Technology, Hyderabad (IIITH), Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Pilani - Hyderabad (BITS Pilani), Tata Institute of Fundamental Research Hyderabad (TIFR-H) and Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad (IIT-H) as well as agricultural engineering institutes such as the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) and the Acharya N. G. Ranga Agricultural University. Hyderabad also has schools of fashion design including NIFT Hyderabad, management schools including the Indian School of Business, ICFAI Foundation for Higher Education, and the National Academy of Agricultural Research Management (NAARM) offering undergraduate and postgraduate courses.

Sports At the professional level, the city has hosted national and international sports events such as the 2002 National Games of India, the 2003 Afro-Asian Games, the 2004 AP Tourism Hyderabad Open women's tennis tournament, the 2007 Military World Games, the 2009 World Badminton Championships and the 2009 IBSF World Snooker Championship. The city hosts several venues suitable for professional competition such as the Swarnandhra Pradesh Sports Complex for field hockey, the G. M. C. Balayogi Stadium in Gachibowli for athletics and football, and for cricket, the Lal Bahadur Shastri Stadium and Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium, home ground of the Hyderabad Cricket Association. Hyderabad has hosted many international cricket matches, including matches in the 1987 and the 1996 ICC Cricket World Cups. The Hyderabad cricket team competes in the first-class cricket tournament Ranji Trophy, List A Vijay Hazare Trophy and Twenty20 Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy. Hyderabad is home to the Indian Premier League (IPL) franchise Sunrisers Hyderabad, champion of 2016 Indian Premier League. Previous franchise Deccan Chargers was the champion of 2009 Indian Premier League. The former professional football club of the city Hyderabad FC competed in Indian Super League (ISL) and were the champions of 2021-22 Indian Super League. During British rule, Secunderabad became a well-known sporting centre and many race courses, parade grounds and polo fields were built. Many elite clubs formed by the Nizams and the British such as the Secunderabad Club, the Nizam Club and the Hyderabad Race Club, which is known for its horse racing especially the annual Deccan derby, still exist. In more recent times, motorsports has become popular with the Andhra Pradesh Motor Sports Club organising popular events such as the Deccan 1/4 Mile Drag, TSD Rallies and 4x4 off-road rallying. The 2023 Hyderabad ePrix, at the Hyderabad Street Circuit, was the first FIA Formula E World Championship race in India.

Transport As of 2018, the most commonly used forms of medium-distance transport in Hyderabad include government-owned services such as light railways and buses, as well as privately operated taxis and auto rickshaws. These altogether serve 3.5 million passengers daily. Bus services operate from the Mahatma Gandhi Bus Station in the city centre with a fleet of 3800 buses serving 3.3 million passengers. Hyderabad Metro, a light-rail rapid transit system, was inaugurated in November 2017. As of 2020 it is a 3-track network spread upon 69.2 km (43 mi) with 57 stations and is the third-largest metro rail network in India after Delhi Metro and Namma Metro. Hyderabad's Multi-Modal Transport System (MMTS), is a three-line suburban rail service with 121 services carrying 180,000 passengers daily. Complementing these government services are minibus routes operated by Setwin (Society for Employment Promotion & Training in Twin Cities). Intercity rail services operate from Hyderabad; the main, and largest, station is Secunderabad railway station, which serves as Indian Railways' South Central Railway zone headquarters and a hub for both buses and MMTS light rail services connecting Secunderabad and Hyderabad. Other major railway stations in Hyderabad are Hyderabad Deccan, Kacheguda, Begumpet, Malkajgiri and Lingampalli.

As of 2018, there are over 5.3 million vehicles operating in the city, of which 4.3 million are two-wheelers and 1.04 million four-wheelers. The large number of vehicles coupled with relatively low road coverage-roads occupy only 9.5% of the total city area-has led to widespread traffic congestion especially since 80% of passengers and 60% of freight are transported by road. The Inner Ring Road, the Outer Ring Road, the Hyderabad Elevated Expressway, the longest flyover in India, and various interchanges, overpasses and underpasses were built to ease congestion. Maximum speed limits within the city are 50 km/h (31 mph) for two-wheelers and cars, 35 km/h (22 mph) for auto rickshaws and 40 km/h (25 mph) for light commercial vehicles and buses. Hyderabad sits at the junction of three National Highways linking it to six other states: NH-44 runs 3,963 km (2,462 mi) from Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, in the north to Kanyakumari, Tamil Nadu, in the south; NH-65, runs 841 km (523 mi) east-west between Machilipatnam, Andhra Pradesh connects Hyderabad and Suryapet with Pune, Maharashtra; 334 km (208 mi) NH-163 links Hyderabad and Bhopalpatnam, Chhattisgarh; 270 km (168 mi) NH-765 links Hyderabad to Srisaïlam, Andhra Pradesh. Five state highways, 225 km (140 mi) SH-1 links Hyderabad, to Ramagundam, SH-2, SH-4, and SH-6, either start from, or pass through, Hyderabad. Air traffic was previously handled via Begumpet Airport established in 1930, but this was replaced by Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA) (IATA: HYD, ICAO: VOHS) in 2008, capable of handling 25 million passengers and 150,000 metric-tonnes of cargo per annum. In 2020, Airports Council International, an autonomous body representing the world's airports, judged RGIA the Best Airport in Environment and Ambience and the Best Airport by Size and Region in the 15-25 million passenger category.

Sister cities Ongole is twinned with:

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Explanatory notes References General and cited references Further reading External links A guide to Hyderabad

Chennai

Chennai, also known as Madras (its official name until 1996), is the capital and largest city of Tamil Nadu, the southernmost state of India. It is located on the Coromandel Coast of the Bay of Bengal. According to the 2011 Indian census, Chennai is the sixth-most-populous city in India and forms the fourth-most-populous urban agglomeration. Incorporated in 1688, the Greater Chennai Corporation is the oldest municipal corporation in India and the second oldest in the world after London. Historically, the region was part of the Chola, Pandya, Pallava and Vijayanagara kingdoms during various eras. The coastal land which then contained the fishing village Madrasapattinam, was purchased by the British East India Company from the Nayak ruler Chennapa Nayaka in the 17th century. The British garrison established the Madras city and port and built Fort St. George, the first British fortress in India. The city was made the winter capital of the Madras Presidency, a colonial province of the British Raj in the Indian subcontinent. After India gained independence in 1947, Madras continued as the capital city of the Madras State and present-day Tamil Nadu. The city was officially renamed as Chennai in 1996. The city is coterminous with Chennai district, which together with the adjoining suburbs constitutes the Chennai Metropolitan Area, the 35th-largest urban area in the world by population and one of the largest metropolitan economies of India. Chennai has the fifth-largest urban economy and the third-largest expatriate population in India. Known as the gateway to South India, Chennai is amongst the most-visited Indian cities by international tourists and was ranked 36th among the most-visited cities in the world in 2019 by Euromonitor. Ranked as a beta-level city in the Global Cities Index, it was ranked as the second-safest city in India by National Crime Records Bureau in 2023. Chennai is a major centre for medical tourism and is termed "India's health capital". Chennai houses a major portion of India's automobile industry, hence the name "Detroit of India". It was the only South Asian city to be ranked among National Geographic's "Top 10 food cities" in 2015 and ranked ninth on Lonely Planet's best cosmopolitan cities in the world. In October 2017, Chennai was added to the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) list. It is a major film production centre and home to the Tamil-language film industry.

Etymology The name Chennai was derived from the name of Chennappa Nayaka, a Nayak ruler who served as a general under Venkata Raya of the Vijayanagara Empire from whom the British East India Company took the town in lease in 1639. The first official use of the name was in August 1639 in a sale deed to Francis Day of the East India Company. A land grant was given to the Chennakesava Perumal Temple in Chennapattanam later in 1646, which some scholars argue to be the first use of the name. The name Madras is of native origin, and has been shown to have been in use before the British established a presence in India. A Vijayanagara-era inscription found in 2015 was dated to the year 1367 and mentions the port of Madrasanpattanam, along with other small ports on the east coast, and it was theorized that the aforementioned port is the fishing port of Royapuram. Madras might have been derived from Madraspattinam, a fishing village north of Fort St. George. In July 1996, the Government of Tamil Nadu officially changed the name from Madras to Chennai. The name "Madras" continues to be used occasionally for the city as well as for places or things named after the city in the past.

History Stone Age implements have been found near Pallavaram in Chennai; according to the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), Pallavaram was a megalithic cultural establishment, and pre-historic communities resided in the settlement. The region around Chennai was an important administrative, military, and economic centre for many centuries. During the 1st century CE, a Tamil poet named Thiruvalluvar lived in the town of Mylapore, a neighbourhood of present-day Chennai. The region was part of Tondaimandalam which was ruled by the

Early Cholas in the 2nd century CE by subduing Kurumbas, the original inhabitants of the region. Pallavas of Kanchi became independent rulers of the region from 3rd to 9th century CE, and the areas of Mahabalipuram and Pallavaram were built during the reign of Mahendravarman I. In 879, Pallavas were defeated by the Later Cholas led by Aditya I, and Jatavarman Sundara Pandyan later brought the region under the Pandya rule in 1264. The region came under the influence of Vijayanagara Empire in the 15th century CE.

The Portuguese arrived in 1522 and built a port named So Tom after the Christian apostle St. Thomas, who is believed to have preached in the area between 52 and 70 CE. In 1612, the Dutch established themselves near Pulicat, north of Chennai. On 20 August 1639, Francis Day of the British East India Company, along with the Nayak of Kalahasti Chennappa Nayaka, met with the Vijayanager Emperor Peda Venkata Raya at Chandragiri and obtained a grant for land on the Coromandel coast on which the company could build a factory and warehouse for their trading activities. On 22 August, he secured the grant for a strip of land about 9.7 km (6 mi) long and 1.6 km (1 mi) inland in return for a yearly sum of five hundred lakh pagodas. The region was then formerly a fishing village known as "Madraspattanam". A year later, the company built Fort St. George, the first major English settlement in India, which became the nucleus of the growing colonial city and urban Chennai.

In 1746, Fort St. George and the town were captured by the French under General La Bourdonnais, the Governor of Mauritius, who plundered the town and its outlying villages. The British regained control in 1749 through the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle and strengthened the town's fortress wall to withstand further attacks from the French and Hyder Ali, the king of Mysore. They resisted a French siege attempt in 1759. In 1769, the city was threatened by Hyder Ali during the First Anglo-Mysore War with the Treaty of Madras ending the conflict. By the 18th century, the British had conquered most of the region and established the Madras Presidency with Madras as the capital. The city became a major naval base and became the central administrative centre for the British in South India. The city was the baseline for the Great Trigonometrical Survey of India, which was started on 10 April 1802. With the advent of railways in India in the 19th century, the city was connected to other major cities such as Bombay and Calcutta, promoting increased communication and trade with the hinterland. After India gained its independence in 1947, the city became the capital of Madras State, the predecessor of the current state of Tamil Nadu. The city was the location of the hunger strike and death of Potti Sreeramulu, which resulted in the formation of Andhra State in 1953 and eventually the re-organization of Indian states based on linguistic boundaries in 1956. In 1965, agitations against the imposition of Hindi and in support of continuing English as a medium of communication arose which marked a major shift in the political dynamics of the city and eventually led to English being retained as an official language of India alongside Hindi. On 17 July 1996, the city was officially renamed from Madras to Chennai, in line with then a nationwide trend to using less Anglicised names. On 26 December 2004, a tsunami lashed the shores of Chennai, killing 206 people in Chennai and permanently altering the coastline. The 2015 Chennai Floods submerged major portions of the city, killing 269 people and resulting in damages of ₹86.4 billion (US\$1 billion).

Environment Geography Chennai is located on the southeastern coast of India in the northeastern part of Tamil Nadu on a flat coastal plain known as the Eastern Coastal Plains with an average elevation of 6.7 m (22 ft) and highest point at 60 m (200 ft). Chennai's soil is mostly clay, shale and sandstone. Clay underlies most of the city with sandy areas found along the river banks and coasts where rainwater runoff percolates quickly through the soil. Certain areas in South Chennai have a hard rock surface. As of 2018, the city had a green cover of 14.9 per cent, with a per capita green cover of 8.5 square metres against the World Health Organization recommendation of nine square metres. As of 2017, water bodies cover an estimated 3.2 km² (1.2 sq mi) area of the city. Two major rivers flow through Chennai, the Cooum River (or Koovam) through the centre and the Adyar River to the south. A section of the Buckingham Canal built in 1877-78, runs parallel to the Bay of Bengal

coast, linking the two rivers. Kosasthalaiyar River traverses through the northern fringes of the city before draining into the Bay of Bengal, at Ennore Creek. The Otteri Nullah, an east-west stream, runs through north Chennai and meets the Buckingham Canal at Basin Bridge. The groundwater table in Chennai is at 4-5 m (13-16 ft) below ground level on average and is replenished mainly by rainwater. Of the 24.87 km (15.45 mi) coastline of the city, 3.08 km (1.91 mi) experiences erosion, with sand accretion along the shoreline at the Marina beach and the area between the Ennore Port and Kosasthalaiyar river.

Geology Chennai is situated in Seismic Zone III, indicating a moderate risk of damage from earthquakes. Owing to the tectonic zone the city falls in, the city is considered a potential geothermal energy site. The crust has old granite rocks dating back nearly a billion years indicating volcanic activities in the past with expected temperatures of 200-300 C (392-572 F) at 4-5 km (2.5-3.1 mi) depth.

Climate Under the Kppen climate classification, Chennai has the dry-summer version of a tropical savanna climate (As), closely bordering the dry-winter version (Aw) due to a February average rainfall of 4.7 mm (0.19 in). The city lies on the thermal equator and as it is also located on the coast, there is no extreme variation in seasonal temperature. The hottest time of the year is from April to June with an average temperature of 35-40 C (95-104 F). The highest recorded temperature was 45 C (113 F) on 31 May 2003. The coldest time of the year is in December-January, with average temperature of 19-25 C (66-77 F) and the lowest recorded temperature of 13.9 C (57.0 F) on 11 December 1895 and 29 January 1905. Chennai receives most of its rainfall from the northeast monsoon between October and December while smaller amounts of rain also come from the southwest monsoon between June and September. The dry season is between January and May, with March having the least average rainfall at 3.4 mm (0.13 in). The average annual rainfall is about 120 cm (47 in). The highest annual rainfall recorded was 257 cm (101 in) in 2005. Prevailing winds in Chennai are usually southwesterly between April and October and northeasterly during the rest of the year. The city relies on the annual monsoon rains to replenish water reservoirs. Cyclones and depressions are common features during the season. Water inundation and flooding happen in low-lying areas during the season with significant flooding in 2015 and 2023.

Flora and fauna A protected estuary on the Adyar River forms a natural habitat for several species of birds and animals. Chennai is also a popular city for birding with more than 130 recorded species of birds have been recorded in the city. Marshy wetlands such as Pallikaranai and inland lakes also host a number of migratory birds during the monsoon and winter. The southern stretch of Chennai's coast from Tiruvanmiyur to Neelangarai are favoured by the endangered olive ridley sea turtles to lay eggs every winter. Guindy National Park is a protected area within the city limits and wildlife conservation and research activities take place at Arignar Anna Zoological Park. Madras Crocodile Bank Trust is a herpetology research station, located 40 km (25 mi) south of Chennai. The city's tree cover is estimated to be around 64.06 km² (24.73 sq mi) with 121 recorded species belonging to 94 genera and 42 families. Major species include Copper pod, Indian beech, Gulmohar, Raintree, Neem, and Tropical Almond. The city's marine and inland water bodies house a number of fresh water and salt water fishes, and marine organisms.

Environmental issues Chennai had many lakes spread across the city, but urbanization has led to the shrinkage of water bodies and wetlands. The water bodies have shrunk from an estimated 12.6 km² (4.9 sq mi) in 1893 to 3.2 km² (1.2 sq mi) in 2017. The number of wetlands in the city has decreased from 650 in 1970 to 27 in 2015. Nearly half of the native plant species in the city's wetlands have disappeared with only 25 per cent of the erstwhile area covered with aquatic plants still viable. The major water bodies including the Adyar, Cooum and Kosasthalaiyar rivers, and the Buckingham canal are heavily polluted with effluents and waste from domestic and

commercial sources. The encroachment of urban development on wetlands has hampered the sustainability of water bodies and was a major contributor to the floods in 2015 and 2023 and water scarcity crisis in 2019. The Chennai River Restoration Trust set up by the government of Tamil Nadu is working on the restoration of the Adyar River. The Environmentalist Foundation of India is a volunteering group working towards wildlife conservation and habitat restoration.

Demographics A resident of Chennai is called a Chennaite. According to 2011 census, the city had a population of 4,646,732, within an area of 174 km² (67 sq mi). Post expansion of the city to 426 km² (164 sq mi), the Chennai Municipal Corporation was renamed as Greater Chennai Corporation and the population including the new city limits as per the 2011 census was 6,748,026. As of 2019, 40 per cent of the 1.788 million families in the city live below the poverty line. As of 2017, the city had 2.2 million households, with 40 per cent of the residents not owning a house. There are about 1,131 slums in the city housing more than 300,000 households.

Administration and politics Administration The city is governed by the Greater Chennai Corporation (formerly "Corporation of Madras"), which was established on 29 September 1688. It is the oldest surviving municipal corporation in India and the second oldest surviving corporation in the world. In 2011, the jurisdiction of the Chennai Corporation was expanded from 174 km² (67 sq mi) to an area of 426 km² (164 sq mi), divided into three regions North, South and Central covering 200 wards. The corporation is headed by a mayor, elected by the councillors, who are elected through a popular vote by the residents. The Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority (CMDA) is the nodal agency responsible for the planning and development of the Chennai Metropolitan Area, which is spread over an area of 1,189 km² (459 sq mi), covering the Chennai district and parts of Tiruvallur, Kanchipuram and Chengalpattu districts. The metropolitan area consists of four municipal corporations, 12 municipalities and other smaller panchayats. As the capital of the state of Tamil Nadu, the city houses the state executive and legislative headquarters primarily in the secretariat buildings in Fort St George. Madras High Court is the highest judicial authority in the state, whose jurisdiction extends across Tamil Nadu and Puducherry.

Law and order The Greater Chennai Police (GCP) is the primary law enforcement agency in the city and is headed by a commissioner of police. The Greater Chennai Police is a division of the Tamil Nadu Police, the administrative control of which lies with the Home ministry of the Government of Tamil Nadu. Greater Chennai Traffic Police (GCTP) is responsible for the traffic management in the city. The metropolitan suburbs are policed by the Chennai Metropolitan Police, headed by the Chennai Police Commissionerate, and the outer district areas of the CMDA are policed by respective police departments of Tiruvallur, Kanchipuram, Chengalpattu and Ranipet districts. As of 2021, Greater Chennai had 135 police stations across four zones with 20,000 police personnel. As of 2021, the crime rate in the city was 101.2 per hundred thousand people. It was ranked as the second most safest city in India by National Crime Records Bureau in 2023. In 2009, Madras Central Prison, the major prison and one of the oldest in India was demolished with the prisoners moved to the newly constructed Puzhal Central Prison.

Politics While the major part of the city falls under three parliamentary constituencies (Chennai North, Chennai Central and Chennai South), the Chennai metropolitan area is spread across five constituencies. It elects 28 MLAs to the state legislature. Being the capital of the Madras Province that covered a large area of the Deccan region, Chennai remained the centre of politics during the British colonial era. Chennai is the birthplace of the idea of the Indian National Congress, which was founded by the members of the Theosophical Society movement based on the idea conceived in a private meeting after a Theosophical convention held in the city in December 1884. The city has hosted yearly conferences of the Congress seven times, playing a major part in

the Indian independence movement. Chennai is also the birthplace of regional political parties such as the South Indian Welfare Association in 1916 which later became the Justice Party and Dravidar Kazhagam. Politics is characterized by a mix of regional and national political parties. During the 1920s and 1930s, the Self-Respect Movement, spearheaded by Theagaroya Chetty and E. V. Ramaswamy emerged in Madras. Congress dominated the political scene post Independence in the 1950s and 1960s under C. Rajagopalachari and later K. Kamaraj. The Anti-Hindi agitations led to the rise of Dravidian parties with Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) forming the first government under C. N. Annadurai in 1967. In 1972, a split in the DMK resulted in the formation of the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) led by M. G. Ramachandran. The two Dravidian parties continue to dominate electoral politics, the national parties usually aligning as junior partners to the two major Dravidian parties. Many film personalities became politicians and later chief ministers, including C. N. Annadurai, M. Karunanidhi, M. G. Ramachandran, Janaki Ramachandran and Jayalalithaa.

Culture Languages Tamil is the language spoken by most of Chennai's population; English is largely spoken by white-collar workers. As per the 2011 census, Tamil is the most spoken language with 3,640,389 (78.3%) of speakers followed by Telugu (432,295), Urdu (198,505), Hindi (159,474) and Malayalam (104,994). Madras Bashai is a variety of the Tamil spoken by people in the city. It originated with words introduced from other languages such as English and Telugu on the Tamil originally spoken by the native people of the city. Korean, Japanese, French, Mandarin Chinese, German and Spanish are spoken by foreign expatriates residing in the city.

Religion and ethnicity Chennai is home to a diverse population of ethno-religious communities. As per census of 2011, Chennai's population was majority Hindu (80.73%) with 9.45% Muslim, 7.72% Christian, 1.27% others and 0.83% with no religion or not indicating any religious preference. Tamils form majority of the population with minorities including Telugus, Marwaris, Gujaratis, Parsis, Sindhis, Odias, Goans, Kannadigas, Anglo-Indians, Bengalis, Punjabis, and Malayalees. The city also has a significant expatriate population. As of 2001, out of the 2,937,000 migrants in the city, 61.5% were from other parts of the state, 33.8% were from rest of India and 3.7% were from outside the country.

Architecture With the history of Chennai dating back centuries, the architecture of Chennai ranges in a wide chronology. The oldest buildings in the city date from the 6th to 8th centuries CE, which include the Kapaleeshwarar Temple in Mylapore and the Parthasarathy Temple in Triplicane, built in the Dravidian architecture encompassing various styles developed during the reigns of different empires. In Dravidian architecture, the Hindu temples consisted of large mantapas with gate-pyramids called gopurams in quadrangular enclosures that surround the temple. The Gopuram, a monumental tower usually ornate at the entrance of the temple forms a prominent feature of Koils and whose origins can be traced back to the Pallavas who built the group of monuments in Mamallapuram. The associated Agraharam architecture, which consists of traditional row houses can still be seen in the areas surrounding the temples. Chennai has the second highest number of heritage buildings in the country.

With the Mugals influence in mediaeval times and the British later, the city saw a rise in a blend of Hindu, Islamic and Gothic revival styles, resulting in the distinct Indo-Saracenic architecture. The architecture for several institutions followed the Indo-Saracenic style with the Chepauk Palace designed by Paul Benfield amongst the first Indo-Saracenic buildings in India. Other buildings in the city from the era designed in this style of architecture include Fort St. George (1640), Amir Mahal (1798), Government Museum (1854), Senate House of the University of Madras (1879), Victoria Public Hall (1886), Madras High Court (1892), Bharat Insurance

Building (1897), Ripon Building (1913), College of Engineering (1920) and Southern Railway headquarters (1921).

Gothic revival-style buildings include the Chennai Central and Chennai Egmore railway stations. The Santhome Church, which was originally built by the Portuguese in 1523 and is believed to house the remains of the apostle St. Thomas, was rebuilt in 1893, in neo-Gothic style. By the early 20th century, the art deco made its entry upon the city's urban landscape with buildings in George Town including the United India building (presently housing LIC) and the Burma Shell building (presently the Chennai House), both built in the 1930s, and the Dare House built in 1940 examples of this architecture. After Independence, the city witnessed a rise in Modernism, and the completion of the LIC Building in 1959, the tallest building in the country at that time, marked the transition from lime-and-brick construction to concrete columns. The presence of the weather radar at the Chennai Port prohibited the construction of buildings taller than 60 m around a radius of 10 km till 2009. This resulted in the central business district expanding horizontally, unlike other metropolitan cities, while the peripheral regions began experiencing vertical growth with the construction of taller buildings with the tallest building at 161 metres (528 ft).

Arts Chennai is a major centre for music, art and dance in India. The city is called the Cultural Capital of South India. Madras Music Season, initiated by Madras Music Academy in 1927, is celebrated every year during the month of December and features performances of traditional Carnatic music by artists from the city. Madras University introduced a course of music, as part of the Bachelor of Arts curriculum in 1930. Gaana, a combination of various folk music, is sung mainly in the working-class area of North Chennai. Chennai Sangamam, an art festival showcasing various arts of South India is held every year. Chennai has been featured in UNESCO Creative Cities Network list since October 2017 for its old musical tradition.

Chennai has a diverse theatre scene and is a prominent centre for Bharata Natyam, a classical dance form that originated in Tamil Nadu and the oldest dance form in India. Cultural centres in the city include Kalakshetra and Government Music College. Chennai is also home to some choirs, who during the Christmas season stage various carol performances across the city in Tamil and English. Chennai is home to many museums, galleries, and other institutions that engage in arts research and are major tourist attractions. Established in the early 18th century, the Government Museum and the National Art Gallery are amongst the oldest in the country. The museum inside the premises of Fort St. George maintains a collection of objects of the British era. The museum is managed by the Archaeological Survey of India and has in its possession, the first Flag of India hoisted at Fort St George after the declaration of India's Independence on 15 August 1947. Chennai is the base for Tamil cinema, nicknamed Kollywood, alluding to the neighbourhood of Kodambakkam where several film studios are located. The history of cinema in South India started in 1897 when a European exhibitor first screened a selection of silent short films at the Victoria Public Hall in the city. Swamikannu Vincent purchased a film projector and erected tents for screening films which became popular in the early 20th century. Keechaka Vadham, the first film in South India, was produced in the city and released in 1917. Gemini and Vijaya Vauhini studios, established in the 1940s, were amongst the largest and earliest in the country. Chennai hosts many major film studios, including AVM Productions, the oldest surviving studio in India.

Cuisine Chennai cuisine is predominantly South Indian with rice as its base. Most local restaurants still retain their rural flavour, with many restaurants serving food over a banana leaf. Eating on a banana leaf is an old custom and imparts a unique flavour to the food and is considered healthy. Idly and dosa are popular breakfast dishes. Chennai has an active street food culture and various cuisine options for dining including North Indian, Chinese and continental. The influx of industries in the early 21st century also brought distinct cuisines from

other countries such as Japanese and Korean to the city. Chennai was the only South Asian city to be ranked among National Geographic's "Top 10 food cities" in 2015. Chennai was named as the most vegan friendly city in India in 2018.

Economy The economy of Chennai consistently exceeded national average growth rates due to reform-oriented economic policies in the 1970s. With the presence of two major ports, an international airport, and a converging road and rail networks, Chennai is often referred to as the "Gateway to South India". According to the Globalization and World Cities Research Network, Chennai is amongst the cities most integrated with the global economy, classified as a beta-city. As of 31 March 2023, Chennai had an estimated GDP of \$143.9 billion, ranking it among the most productive metro areas in India. Chennai has a diversified industrial base anchored by different sectors including automobiles, software services, hardware, healthcare and financial services. As of 2021, Chennai is amongst the top export districts in the country, with more than US\$2563 billion in exports.

The city has a permanent exhibition complex Chennai Trade Centre at Nandambakkam. The city hosts the Tamil Nadu Global Investors Meet, a business summit organized by the Government of Tamil Nadu. With about 62% of the population classified as affluent with less than 1% asset-poor, Chennai has the fifth highest number of millionaires.

Chennai is among the major information technology (IT) hubs of India. Tidel Park, established in 2000, was amongst the first and largest IT parks in Asia. The presence of SEZs and government policies have contributed to the growth of the sector, which has attracted foreign investments and job seekers from other parts of the country. In the 2020s, the city has become a major provider of SaaS and has been dubbed the "SaaS Capital of India". The automotive industry in Chennai accounts for more than 35% of India's overall automotive components and automobile output, earning the nickname "Detroit of India". A large number of automotive companies have their manufacturing bases in the city. Integral Coach Factory in Chennai manufactures railway coaches and other rolling stock for the Indian Railways. Ambattur Industrial Estate housing various manufacturing units is among the largest small-scale industrial estates in the country. Chennai contributes more than 50 per cent of India's leather exports. Chennai is a major electronics hardware exporter.

The city was home to the now-defunct Madras Stock Exchange, India's third-largest by trading volume behind the Bombay Stock Exchange and the National Stock Exchange of India. Madras Bank, the first European-style banking system in India, was established on 21 June 1683 followed by first commercial banks such as Bank of Hindustan (1770) and General Bank of India (1786). Bank of Madras merged with two other presidency banks to form Imperial Bank of India in 1921 which in 1955 became the State Bank of India, the largest bank in India. Chennai is the headquarters of nationalized banks such as Indian Bank and Indian Overseas Bank. Chennai hosts the south zonal office of the Reserve Bank of India, the country's central bank, along with its zonal training centre and staff College, one of the two colleges run by the bank. The city also houses a permanent back office of the World Bank. About 400 financial industry businesses are headquartered in the city. DRDO, India's premier defence research agency, operates various facilities in Chennai. Heavy Vehicles Factory of the AVANI, headquartered in Chennai, manufactures Armoured fighting vehicles, Main battle tanks, tank engines and armoured clothing for the use of the Indian Armed Forces. ISRO, the premier Indian space agency primarily responsible for performing tasks related to space exploration, operates research facilities in the city. As per Euromonitor, Chennai is the fourth-most visited city in India by international tourists and 36th internationally in 2019. Medical tourism forms an important part of the city's economy, with more than 40% of total medical tourists visiting India making it to Chennai.

Infrastructure Water supply The city's water supply and sewage treatment are managed by the Chennai MetroWater Supply and Sewage Board. Water is drawn from Red Hills Lake and Chembarambakkam Lake, the major water reservoirs in the city and treated at water treatment plants located at Kilpauk, Puzhal, Chembarambakkam and supplied to the city through 27 water distribution stations. The city receives 530 million litres per day (mld) of water from Krishna River through Telugu Ganga project and 180 mld of water from the Veeranam lake project. 100 million litres of treated water per day is produced from the Minjur desalination plant, the country's largest seawater desalination plant. Chennai is predicted to face a deficit of 713 mld of water by 2026 as the demand is projected at 2,248 mld and supply estimated at 1,535 mld. The city's sewer system was designed in 1910, with some modifications in 1958.

Waste management Chennai generates 4,500 tonnes of garbage every day, of which 429 tonnes are plastic waste. The Greater Chennai Corporation undertakes garbage collection and processing with collection in some of the wards contracted to private companies. As of 2023, an average of 150 tonnes of garbage disposal is done in two landfill sites at Kodungaiyur and Pallikaranai daily. In market and business areas, the conservancy work is done during the night. As of 2022, there are public toilets in 943 locations, managed by the city corporation.

Communication Chennai is one of four Indian cities connected by undersea fibre-optic cables and is the landing point of SMW4 (connecting with Europe, Middle East and Southeast Asia), i2i and TIC (connecting with Singapore), BBG (connecting with Middle East, Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka), Gulf Bridge International (connecting with Middle East), and BRICS (connecting with Brazil, Russia, China and South Africa) with 3,175 kilometres (1,973 mi) long i2i having the world's largest design capacity of 8.4 terabits per second. As of 2023, four mobile phone service companies operate GSM networks including Bharti Airtel, BSNL, Vodafone Idea and Reliance Jio offering 4G and 5G mobile services. Wireline and broadband services are offered by five major operators and other smaller local operators. Chennai is amongst the cities with a high internet usage and penetration. As of 2022, the city had the highest average broadband speed among Indian cities, with a recorded download speed of 32.67 Mbit/s.

Power Electricity distribution is done by the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board headquartered in Chennai. As of 2023, the city consumes an average of 2,750 MW of power daily, which is above 18% of the total power consumption of 15,000 MW by the state of Tamil Nadu and ranks the second highest among all cities nationally. The city has over 248,000 streetlights maintained by the corporation. Major fossil fuel power plants in the city include North Chennai Thermal Power Station, GMR Vasavi Diesel Power Plant, Ennore Thermal Power Station, Basin Bridge Gas Turbine Power Station, Madras Atomic Power Station and Vallur Thermal Power Project. Madras Atomic Power Station located at Kalpakkam about 80 km (50 mi) south of the city is a comprehensive nuclear power production, fuel reprocessing, and waste treatment facility and is the first fully indigenous nuclear power station in India.

Health care Chennai has a well-developed health infrastructure, including both government-run and private hospitals. The corporation runs 138 primary health centres, 14 secondary health centres, three maternity hospitals and three veterinary health centres. The corporation also runs six diagnostic centres, 37 shelters and 10 health centres for the homeless. The city attracts many health tourists from abroad and other states and has been termed as India's health capital. Major government run hospitals include Government General Hospital, Government multi-super specialty hospital, Kilpauk medical college hospital, Government Royapettah Hospital, Stanley medical college hospital, Government hospital of thoracic medicine, Adyar Cancer Institute, TB Sanatorium and National Institute of Siddha. The Government General Hospital was started by 16 November

1664 and was the first major hospital in India. Major private hospitals in the city include Apollo Hospitals, Billroth Hospitals, Dr. Mehta's Hospital, Fortis Malar Hospital, Madras Medical Mission, MIOT Hospitals, Sankara Nethralaya, SRM Medical College Hospital and Research Centre, Sri Ramachandra Medical College and Research Institute, Global Hospitals, Chettinad Hospitals, Kauvery Hospital and Vijaya Hospitals. Corporation is responsible for administration of polio vaccine for eligible age groups. King Institute of Preventive Medicine and Research established in 1899 is a research institute specializing in preventive medicine and vaccination.

Media Newspaper publishing started in Chennai with the launch of the weekly The Madras Courier in 1785. It was followed by the weeklies The Madras Gazette and The Government Gazette in 1795. The Spectator, founded in 1836 was the first English newspaper in Chennai to be owned by an Indian and became the city's first daily newspaper in 1853. The first Telugu journal printed from Madras was Satya Doota in 1835, and the first Tamil newspaper, Swadesamitran, was launched in 1899. Chennai has several newspapers and magazines published in various languages including Tamil, English and Telugu. The major dailies with a circulation of more than 100,000 copies per day include The Hindu, Dina Thanthi, Dinakaran, The Times of India, Dina Malar and The Deccan Chronicle. Several periodicals and local newspapers prevalent in select localities also bring out editions from the city. The government run Doordarshan broadcasts terrestrial and satellite television channels from its Chennai centre set up in 1974. Many private satellite television networks including Sun Network, one of India's largest broadcasting companies, are based in the city. The cable TV service is entirely controlled by the state government while DTH and IPTV is available via various private operators. Radio broadcasting began in 1924 by the Madras Presidency Radio Club. All India Radio was established in 1938. The city has four AM and 11 FM radio stations operated by All India Radio, Hello FM, Suryan FM, Radio Mirchi, Radio City and BIG FM among others.

Others Fire services are handled by the Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Services, which operates 33 operating fire stations. The corporation also owns 52 community halls across the city. Postal services are handled by India Post, which operates 568 post offices, of which nearly 460 operate from rented premises. The first post office was established on 1 June 1786 at Fort St. George on 1 June 1786.

Transport Air The aviation history of Chennai began in 1910, when Giacomo D'Angelis built the first powered flight in Asia and tested it in Island Grounds. In 1915, Tata Air Mail started an airmail service between Karachi and Madras marking the beginning of civil aviation in India. In March 1930, a discussion initiated by pilot G. Vlasto led to the founding of Madras Flying Club. On 15 October 1932, J. R. D. Tata flew a Puss Moth aircraft carrying air mail from Karachi to Bombay's Juhu Airstrip and the flight was continued to Madras piloted by aviator Nevill Vintcent marking the first scheduled commercial flight. The city is served by Chennai International Airport located in Tirusulam, around 20 kilometres (12 mi) southwest of the city centre. It is the fourth-busiest airport in India in terms of passenger traffic and cargo handled. While the existing airport is undergoing expansion with an addition of 1,069.99 acres (433.01 ha), a new greenfield airport has been proposed to handle additional traffic. The region comes under the purview of the Southern Air Command of the Indian Air Force. The Air Force operates an air base at Tambaram. The Indian Navy operates airbases at Arakkonam and Chennai.

Rail The history of railway in Chennai began in 1832, when the first railway line in India was proposed between Little Mount and Chintadripet in the city which became operational in 1837. The Madras Railway was established later in 1845 and the construction on the first main line between Madras and Arcot started in 1853, which became operational in 1856. In 1944, all the railway companies operating in British India were taken over by the Government. In December 1950, the Central Advisory Committee for Railways approved the plan for

Indian Railways into six zonal systems and the Southern Railway zone was created on 14 April 1951 by merging three state railways, namely, the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway, the South Indian Railway Company, and the Mysore State Railway with Chennai as the headquarters. The city has four major railway terminals at Chennai Central, Egmore, Beach and Tambaram. Chennai Central, city's largest station provides access to other major stations nationally and is amongst the busiest stations in the country.

Suburban and MRTS

Chennai has a well-established suburban railway network operated by Southern railway, which was established in 1928. The Mass Rapid Transit System (MRTS) is an elevated urban mass transit system established in 1995 operating on a single line from Chennai Beach to Velachery.

Chennai Metro is a rapid transit rail system in Chennai that was opened in 2015. As of 2023, the metro system consists of two operational lines operating across 54.1 km (33.6 mi) with 41 stations. The Chennai metro system is being expanded with a proposed addition of three more lines and an extension of 116.1 km (72.1 mi).

Road Chennai has an extensive road network covering about 1,780 km (1,110 mi) as of 2023. Chennai is one of the termini of the Golden Quadrilateral system of National Highways. As a part of the network, the city is connected to Mumbai and Kolkata via NH 48 and NH 16 respectively. In addition, NH 32, and NH 716 originate from the city. The road network also consists of state highways which serve as arterial roads and two peripheral roads (inner and outer ring roads). There are grade separators and flyovers at major intersections. There are two expressways under construction: Chennai Port-Maduravoyal Expressway and Bangalore-Chennai Expressway.

As of 2021, there are over six million registered vehicles in the city. Public bus transport is handled by the Metropolitan Transport Corporation of Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation, which is run by the Government of Tamil Nadu. It was established in 1947 when private buses operating in Madras presidency were nationalized by the government and runs about 3233 buses As of 2023. State Express Transport Corporation Limited (SETC), established in 1980, runs long-distance express services exceeding 250 km and above and links the city with other important cities and adjoining states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and the Union Territory of Puducherry. SETC operates various classes of services such as semi-deluxe, ultra-deluxe and air-conditioned with advance booking and reservation on all of its routes. Chennai Mofussil Bus Terminus is one of the largest bus stations in Asia and caters to outstation buses. The other means of road transport in the city include vans, auto rickshaws, on-call metered taxis and tourist taxis.

Water Chennai has two major ports Chennai and Ennore which are managed by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways of the Government of India. There are three minor ports, which are managed by the department of highways and minor ports of Government of Tamil Nadu. Royapuram fishing harbour is used by fishing boats. Indian Navy has a major base at Chennai.

Education Chennai is a major educational hub and home to some of the premium educational institutions in the country. The city has a 90.33% literacy rate and ranks second among the major Indian metropolitan city centres. Chennai has a mix of public and private schools with the public school system managed by the school education department of Government of Tamil Nadu. As of 2023, there are 420 public schools run by Greater

Chennai Corporation. Public schools run by the Chennai Corporation are all affiliated with the Tamil Nadu State Board, while private schools may be affiliated with either of Tamil Nadu Board of Secondary Education, Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (ICSE) or National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS). School education starts with two years of Kindergarten from age three onwards and then follows the Indian 10+2 plan, ten years of school and two years of higher secondary education.

The University of Madras was founded in 1857 and is one of India's first modern universities. Colleges for science, arts, and commerce degrees are typically affiliated with the University of Madras, which has six campuses in the city. Indian Institute of Technology Madras is a premier institute of engineering and College of Engineering, Guindy, Anna University founded in 1794 is the oldest engineering college in India.

Officers Training Academy of the Indian Army is headquartered in the city. There are eight government-run medical colleges in the city including one dental college, three for traditional medicine and four for modern medicine apart from multiple private colleges operating under the purview of Tamil Nadu Dr. M.G.R. Medical University in Chennai. Madras Medical College was established in 1835 and is one of the oldest medical colleges in India. Chennai has many libraries with the major ones being the Connemara Public Library (estd. 1896), one of the four National Depository Centres in India that receive a copy of all newspapers and books published in the country and the Anna Centenary Library, the largest library in Asia. Chennai has two CSIR research institutions namely Central Leather Research Institute and Structural Engineering Research Centre. Chennai book fair is an annual book fair organized by the Booksellers and Publishers Association of South India (BAPASI) and is typically held in December-January.

Tourism and recreation With temples, beaches and centres of historical and cultural significance including the UNESCO Heritage Site of Mahabalipuram, Chennai is one of the most-visited cities in India with 11 million domestic and 630,000 foreign tourists visiting in 2020. The gateway to the southern part of India, Chennai was ranked among the top hundred destinations by Euromonitor. As of 2018, the city has about 7,000 luxury rooms across four- and five-star categories, with 85 per cent of the room demand coming from business travellers. Chennai has a 19 km (12 mi) coastline with many beaches including the Marina spanning 13 km (8.1 mi) which is the second-longest urban beach in the world and Elliot's Beach south of the Adyar delta.

As of 2023, Chennai has 835 public parks maintained by the corporation. The largest park is the 358-acre Tholkappia Poonga, developed to restore the fragile ecosystem of the Adyar estuary. Semmozhi Poonga is a 20 acres (8.1 ha) botanical garden maintained by the horticulture department. Madras Crocodile Bank is a reptile zoo located 40 km (25 mi) south of the city and has one of the largest collections of reptiles in the country. Arignar Anna zoological park is a large urban zoo with more than two million visitors annually. Guindy National Park is a protected area within the city limits and has a children's park and a snake park associated with it. Chennai also houses several theme parks and amusement parks. As of 2012, there are 120 cinema screens and multiplexes. Stage plays and dramas of different genres and languages are enacted in theatres across the city. Chennai is also home to several malls. The city is an important market for jewellery. Anna Nagar and Nungambakkam are amongst the expensive retail zones in the country.

Sports Cricket is the most popular sport in Chennai and was introduced in 1864 with the foundation of the Madras Cricket Club. The M.A. Chidambaram Stadium, established in 1916, is one of the oldest cricket stadiums in India and has hosted matches during multiple ICC Cricket World Cups. Other cricketing venues

include Chemplast Cricket Ground and Guru Nanak College Ground. Prominent cricketers from the city include S. Venkataraghavan, Kris Srikkanth, and Ravichandran Ashwin. Established in 1987, MRF Pace Foundation is a bowling academy based in Chennai. Chennai is home to the most successful Indian Premier League (IPL) cricket team Chennai Super Kings and hosted the finals during the 2011, 2012, and 2024 seasons.

Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium is a multi-purpose venue which hosts football and athletics and also houses a multi-purpose indoor complex for volleyball, basketball, kabaddi and table tennis. Chennai hosted the 1995 South Asian Games. Football club Chennaiyin FC competes in Indian Super League (ISL), the top tier association football league of India and uses the Nehru Stadium for their home matches. Mayor Radhakrishnan Stadium is associated with hockey and was venue for the international hockey tournament the 2005 Men's Champions Trophy and the 2007 Men's Asia Cup. Water sports are played in the Velachery Aquatic Complex. Chennai was the host of the only ATP World Tour event in India, the Chennai Open held at SDAT Tennis Stadium from 1997 to 2017. Vijay Amritraj, Mahesh Bhupathi Ramesh Krishnan and Somdev Devvarman were professional tennis players from Chennai. Chennai was home to Chennai Slam, two-time national champion of India's top professional basketball division, the UBA Pro Basketball League.

Madras Boat Club (founded in 1846) and Royal Madras Yacht Club (founded in 1911) promote sailing, rowing and canoeing sports in Chennai. Inaugurated in 1990, Madras Motor Race Track was the first permanent racing circuit in India and hosts formula racing events. Formula One driver Karun Chandhok was from the city. Horse racing is held at the Guindy Race Course and the city has two 18-hole golf courses, the Cosmopolitan Club and the Gymkhana Club established in the late nineteenth century. Chennai is often dubbed "India's chess capital" as the city is home to multiple chess grandmasters including former world champion Viswanathan Anand. The city played host to the World Chess Championship 2013 and 44th Chess Olympiad in 2022. Other sports persons from Chennai include table tennis player Sharath Kamal and two-time world carrom champion, Maria Irudayam.

City based teams International relations Foreign missions The consular presence in the city dates back to 1794, when William Abbott was appointed US consular agent for South India. As of 2022, there are 60 foreign representations in Chennai, including 16 consulates general and 28 honorary consulates. American Consulate in Chennai is amongst the top employment-based visa processing centres. The Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO) is in charge of immigration and registration activities in the city.

Sister cities Chennai has sister city relationships with the following cities of the world:

Notable people See also Areas of Chennai Timeline of Chennai

Notes References External links Official website of Chennai district India Chennai Encyclopdia Britannica entry WikiTravel Chennai India State

Kolkata

Kolkata, also known as Calcutta (its official name until 2001), is the capital and largest city of the Indian state of West Bengal. It lies on the eastern bank of the Hooghly River, 80 km (50 mi) west of the border with Bangladesh. It is the primary financial and commercial centre of eastern and one of the gateways to northeastern India. Kolkata is the seventh most populous city in India with an estimated city proper population of 4.5 million (0.45 crore) while its metropolitan region Kolkata Metropolitan Area is the third most populous metropolitan region of India with a metro population of over 15 million (1.5 crore). Kolkata is regarded by many sources as the cultural capital of India and a historically and culturally significant city in the historic region of Bengal. The three villages that predated Calcutta were ruled by the Nawab of Bengal under Mughal suzerainty. After the Nawab granted the East India Company a trading license in 1690, the area was developed by the Company into Fort William. Nawab Siraj ud-Daulah occupied the fort in 1756 but was defeated at the Battle of Plassey in 1757, after his general Mir Jafar mutinied in support of the company, and was later made the Nawab for a brief time. Under company and later crown rule, Calcutta served as the de facto capital of India until 1911. Calcutta was the second largest city in the British Empire, after London, and was the centre of bureaucracy, politics, law, education, science and the arts in India. The city was associated with many of the figures and movements of the Bengali Renaissance. It was the hotbed of the Indian nationalist movement. The partition of Bengal in 1947 affected the fortunes of the city. Following independence in 1947, Kolkata, which was once the premier centre of Indian commerce, culture, and politics, suffered many decades of political violence and economic stagnation before it rebounded. In the late 20th century, the city hosted the government-in-exile of Bangladesh during the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971. It was also flooded with Hindu refugees from East Bengal (present-day Bangladesh) in the decades following the 1947 partition of India, transforming its landscape and shaping its politics. The city was overtaken by Mumbai (formerly Bombay) as India's largest city. A demographically diverse city, the culture of Kolkata features idiosyncrasies that include distinctively close-knit neighbourhoods (paras) and freestyle conversations (adda). Kolkata's architecture includes many imperial landmarks, including the Victoria Memorial, Howrah Bridge and the Grand Hotel. The city's heritage includes India's only Chinatown and remnants of Jewish, Armenian, Greek and Anglo-Indian communities. The city is closely linked with Bhadrakol culture and the Zamindars of Bengal, including Bengali Hindu, Bengali Muslim and tribal aristocrats. The city is often regarded as India's cultural capital. Kolkata is home to institutions of national importance, including the Academy of Fine Arts, the Asiatic Society, the Indian Museum and the National Library of India. The University of Calcutta, first modern university in south Asia and its affiliated colleges produced many leading figures of South Asia. It is the centre of the Indian Bengali film industry, which is known as Tollywood. Among scientific institutions, Kolkata hosts the Geological Survey of India, the Botanical Survey of India, the Calcutta Mathematical Society, the Indian Science Congress Association, the Zoological Survey of India, the Horticultural Society, the Institution of Engineers, the Anthropological Survey of India and the Indian Public Health Association. The Port of Kolkata is India's oldest operating port. Four Nobel laureates and two Nobel Memorial Prize winners are associated with the city. Though home to major cricketing venues and franchises, Kolkata stands out in India for being the country's centre of association football. Kolkata is known for its grand celebrations of the Hindu festival of Durga Puja, which is recognized by UNESCO for its importance to world heritage. Kolkata is also known as the "City of Joy".

Etymology The word Kolkata (Bengali: কলকাতা [kolˈkɑtɑ]) derives from Klikata (Bengali: কলিকাতা [ˈkɔlikɑtɑ]), the Bengali language name of one of three villages that predated the arrival of the British; the other two villages were Sutanuti and Govindapur. There are several explanations for the etymology of this name:

Kolkata is thought to be a variation of Kalikkhetr (Bengali: কলিকক্খত্ৰ [kɔlikɔkɔt̪r]), meaning 'Field of [the goddess] Kali'. Similarly, it can be a variation of Kalikshetra (Sanskrit: कलिकशेत्र, lit. 'area of Goddess Kali'). Another theory is that the name derives from Kalighat. Alternatively, the name may have been derived from the Bengali term kilila (Bengali: কিলিলা), or 'flat area'. The name may have its origin in the words khal (Bengali: খাল [kʰal]) meaning 'canal', followed by kaḷa (Bengali: কালা [kaḷa]), which may mean 'dug'. According to another theory, the area specialised in the production of quicklime or koli chun (Bengali: কলি চুন [kɔlikɔt̪ʃun]) and coir or kata (Bengali: কাতা [kata]); hence, it was called Kolikata). Although the city's name has always been pronounced Kolkata or Klikata in Bengali, the anglicised form Calcutta was the official name until 2001, when it was changed to Kolkata in order to match Bengali pronunciation. Both English variants are used.

History The discovery and archaeological study of Chandraketugarh, 35 km (22 mi) north of Kolkata, provide evidence that the region in which the city stands has been inhabited for over two millennia. Kolkata or Kalikata in its earliest mentions, is described to be a village surrounded with jungle on the bank of river Ganga as a renowned port, commercial hub and a Hindu pilgrimage site for Kalighat Temple. The first mention of the Kalikata village was found in Bipradas Pipilai's *Manasa Vijay* (1495), where he describes how Chand Sadagar used to stop in Kalighat to worship Goddess Kali during his path to trade voyage. Later Kalikata was also found to be mentioned in Mukundaram Chakrabarti's *Chandimangal* (1594), Todar Mal's taxation-list in 1596 and Krishnaram Das's *Kalikamangal* (1676-77). Kalighat was then considered a safe place for businessmen. They used to carry on trade through the Bhagirathi and took shelter there at night. Kolkata's recorded history began in 1690 with the arrival of the English East India Company, which was consolidating its trade business in Bengal. Job Charnock is often regarded as the founder of the city; however, in response to a public petition, the Calcutta High Court ruled in 2003 that the city does not have a founder. The area occupied by the present-day city encompassed three villages: Kalikata, Gobindapur and Sutanuti. Kalikata was a fishing village, where a handful of merchants began their operations by building a factory; Sutanuti was a riverside weavers' village; and Gobindapur was a trading post for Indian merchant princes. These villages were part of an estate belonging to the Sabarna Roy Choudhury family of zamindars. The estate was sold to the East India Company in 1698. In 1712, the British completed the construction of Fort William, located on the east bank of the Hooghly River to protect their trading factory. Facing frequent skirmishes with French forces, the British began to upgrade their fortifications in 1756. The Nawab of Bengal, Siraj-ud-Daulah, condemned the militarisation and tax evasion by the company. His warning went unheeded, and the Nawab attacked; his capture of Fort William led to the killings of several East India company officials in the Black Hole of Calcutta. A force of Company soldiers (sepoys) and British troops led by Robert Clive recaptured the city the following year. Per the 1765 Treaty of Allahabad following the battle of Buxar, East India company was appointed imperial tax collector of the Mughal emperor in the province of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, while Mughal-appointed Nawabs continued to rule the province. Declared a presidency city, Calcutta became the headquarters of the East India Company by 1773. In 1793, ruling power of the Nawabs were abolished, and East India company took complete control of the city and the province. In the early 19th century, the marshes surrounding the city were drained; the government area was laid out along the banks of the Hooghly River. Richard Wellesley, Governor-General of the Presidency of Fort William between 1797 and 1805, was largely responsible for the development of the city and its public architecture. Throughout the late 18th and 19th century, the city was a centre of the East India Company's opium trade. A census in 1837 records the population of the city proper as 229,700, of which the British residents made up only 3,138. The same source says another 177,000 resided in the suburbs and neighbouring villages, making the entire population of greater Calcutta 406,700.

In 1864, a typhoon struck the city and killed about 60,000 in Kolkata. By the 1850s, Calcutta had two areas: White Town, which was primarily British and centred on Chowringhee and Dalhousie Square; and Black Town, mainly Indian and centred on North Calcutta. The city underwent rapid industrial growth starting in the early 1850s, especially in the textile and jute industries; this encouraged British companies to massively invest in infrastructure projects, which included telegraph connections and Howrah. The coalescence of British and Indian culture resulted in the emergence of a new babu class of urbane Indians, whose members were often bureaucrats, professionals, newspaper readers, and Anglophiles; they usually belonged to upper-caste Hindu communities. In the 19th century, the Bengal Renaissance brought about an increased sociocultural sophistication among city denizens. In 1883, Calcutta was host to the first national conference of the Indian National Association, which was the first avowed nationalist organisation in India. The partition of Bengal in 1905 along religious lines led to mass protests, making Calcutta a less hospitable place for the British. The capital was moved to New Delhi in 1911. Calcutta continued to be a centre for revolutionary organisations associated with the Indian independence movement. The city and its port were bombed several times by the Japanese between 1942 and 1944, during World War II. Millions starved to death during the Bengal famine of 1943 (at the same time of the war) due to a combination of military, administrative, and natural factors. Demands for the creation of a Muslim state led in 1946 to an episode of communal violence that killed over 4,000. The partition of India led to further clashes and a demographic shift-many Muslims left for East Bengal (later East Pakistan, present day Bangladesh), while hundreds of thousands of Hindus fled into the city. During the 1960s and 1970s, severe power shortages, strikes and a violent Marxist-Maoist movement by groups known as the Naxalites damaged much of the city's infrastructure, resulting in economic stagnation. During East Pakistan's secessionist war of independence in 1971, the city was home to the government-in-exile of Bangladesh. During the war, refugees poured into West Bengal and strained Kolkata's infrastructure. The Eastern Command of the Indian military, which is based in Fort William, played a pivotal role in the Indo-Pakistani war of 1971 and securing the surrender of Pakistan. During the mid-1980s, Mumbai (then called Bombay) overtook Kolkata as India's most populous city. In 1985, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi dubbed Kolkata a "dying city" in light of its socio-political woes. In the period 1977-2011, West Bengal was governed from Kolkata by the Left Front, which was dominated by the Communist Party of India (CPM). It was the world's longest-serving democratically elected communist government, during which Kolkata was a key base for Indian communism. The city's economic recovery gathered momentum after the 1990s, when India began to institute pro-market reforms. Since 2000, the information technology (IT) services sector has revitalised Kolkata's stagnant economy. The city is also experiencing marked growth in its manufacturing base. In the 2011 West Bengal Legislative Assembly election, Left Front was succeeded by the Trinamool Congress.

Geography Spread roughly meridionally along the east bank of the Hooghly River, Kolkata sits within the lower Ganges Delta of eastern India approximately 75 km (47 mi) west of the international border with Bangladesh; the city's elevation is 1.5-9 m (5-30 ft). Much of the city was originally a wetland that was reclaimed over the decades to accommodate a burgeoning population. The remaining undeveloped areas, known as the East Kolkata Wetlands, were designated a "wetland of international importance" by the Ramsar Convention (1975). As with most of the Indo-Gangetic Plain, the soil and water are predominantly alluvial in origin. Kolkata is located over the "Bengal basin", a pericratonic tertiary basin. The Bengal basin comprises three structural units: shelf or platform in the west; central hinge or shelf/slope break; and deep basinal part in the east and southeast. Kolkata is located atop the western part of the hinge zone which is about 25 km (16 mi) wide at a depth of about 45,000 m (148,000 ft) below the surface. The shelf and hinge zones have many faults, among them some are active. Total thickness of sediment below Kolkata is nearly 7,500 m (24,600 ft) above the crystalline basement; of these the top 350-450 m (1,150-1,480 ft) is Quaternary, followed by 4,500-5,500 m (14,760-18,040 ft) of Tertiary sediments, 500-700 m (1,640-2,300 ft) trap wash of Cretaceous trap and 600-800 m (1,970-2,620 ft) Permian-Carboniferous Gondwana rocks. The quaternary sediments consist of clay, silt and several grades of

sand and gravel. These sediments are sandwiched between two clay beds: the lower one at a depth of 250-650 m (820-2,130 ft); the upper one 10-40 m (30-130 ft) in thickness. According to the Bureau of Indian Standards, on a scale ranging from I to V in order of increasing susceptibility to earthquakes, the city lies inside seismic zone III.

Climate Kolkata is subject to a tropical savanna climate that is designated Aw under the Kppen climate classification. According to a United Nations Development Programme report, its wind and cyclone zone is "very high damage risk".

Temperature The annual mean temperature is 26.8 C (80.2 F); monthly mean temperatures are 19-30 C (66-86 F). Summers (March-June) are hot and humid, with temperatures in the low 30s Celsius; during dry spells, maximum temperatures sometime exceed 40 C (104 F) in May and June. Winter lasts for roughly 2+1/2 months, with seasonal lows dipping to 9-11 C (48-52 F) in December and January. May is the hottest month, with daily temperatures ranging from 27-37 C (81-99 F); January, the coldest month, has temperatures varying from 12-23 C (54-73 F). The highest recorded temperature is 43.9 C (111.0 F), and the lowest is 5 C (41 F). The winter is mild and very comfortable weather pertains over the city throughout this season. Often, in April-June, the city is struck by heavy rains or dusty squalls that are followed by thunderstorms or hailstorms, bringing cooling relief from the prevailing humidity. These thunderstorms are convective in nature, and are known locally as kal bishakhi (■■■■■■■■■■), or "Nor'westers" in English.

Rainfall Rains brought by the Bay of Bengal branch of the south-west summer monsoon lash Kolkata between June and September, supplying it with most of its annual rainfall of about 1,850 mm (73 in). The highest monthly rainfall total occurs in July and August. In these months often incessant rain for days brings life to a stall for the city dwellers. The city receives 2,107 hours of sunshine per year, with maximum sunlight exposure occurring in April. Kolkata has been hit by several cyclones; these include systems occurring in 1737 and 1864 that killed thousands. More recently, Cyclone Aila in 2009 and Cyclone Amphan in 2020 caused widespread damage to Kolkata by bringing catastrophic winds and torrential rainfall.

Environmental issues Pollution is a major concern in Kolkata. As of 2008, sulphur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide annual concentration were within the national ambient air quality standards of India, but respirable suspended particulate matter levels were high, and on an increasing trend for five consecutive years, causing smog and haze. Severe air pollution in the city has caused a rise in pollution-related respiratory ailments, such as lung cancer.

Cityscape and urban structure Kolkata, which is under the jurisdiction of the Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC), has an area of 206.08 km² (80 sq mi). The east-west dimension of the city is comparatively narrow, stretching from the Hooghly River in the west to roughly the Eastern Metropolitan Bypass in the east-a span of 9-10 km (5.6-6.2 mi). The north-south distance is greater, and its axis is used to section the city into North, Central, South and East Kolkata. North Kolkata is the oldest part of the city. Characterised by 19th-century architecture and narrow alleyways, it includes areas such as Jorasanko, Rajabazar, Maniktala, Ultadanga, Shyambazar, Shobhabazar, Bagbazar, Cossipore, Sinthee etc. The north suburban areas like Dum Dum, Baranagar, Belgharia, Sodepur, Khardaha, New Barrackpore, Madhyamgram, Barrackpore, Barasat etc. are also within the city of Kolkata (as a metropolitan structure). Central Kolkata hosts the central business district. It contains B. B. D. Bagh, formerly known as Dalhousie Square, and the Esplanade on its east; Rajiv Gandhi Sarani is on its west. The West Bengal Secretariat, General Post Office, Reserve Bank of India, Calcutta High

Court, Lalbazar Police Headquarters and several other government and private offices are located there. Another business hub is the area south of Park Street, which comprises thoroughfares such as Jawahar Lal Nehru Road, Abanindranath Thakur Sarani, Dr. Martin Luther King Sarani, Dr. Upendra Nath Brahmachari Sarani, Shakespeare Sarani and Acharay Jagadish Chandra Basu Road.

South Kolkata developed after India gained independence in 1947; it includes upscale neighbourhoods such as Bhowanipore, Alipore, Ballygunge, Kasba, Dhakuria, Santoshpur, Garia, Golf Green, Tollygunge, New Alipore, Behala, Barisha etc. The south suburban areas like Maheshtala, Budge Budge, Rajpur Sonarpur, Baruipur etc. are also within the city of Kolkata (as a metropolitan structure). The Maidan is a large open field in the heart of the city that has been called the "lungs of Kolkata" and accommodates sporting events and public meetings. The Victoria Memorial and Kolkata Race Course are located at the southern end of the Maidan. Among the other parks are Central Park in Bidhannagar and Millennium Park on Rajiv Gandhi Sarani, along the Hooghly River.

Metropolitan area and satellite cities The Kolkata metropolitan area is spread over 1,886.67 km² (728.45 sq mi) and comprises 4 municipal corporations (including Kolkata Municipal Corporation), 37 local municipalities and 24 panchayat samitis, as of 2011. The urban agglomeration encompassed 72 cities and 527 towns and villages, as of 2006. Suburban areas in the Kolkata metropolitan area incorporate parts of the following districts: North 24 Parganas, South 24 Parganas, Howrah, Hooghly and Nadia.

Two planned townships in the greater Kolkata region are Bidhannagar, also known as Salt Lake City and located north-east of the city; and Rajarhat, also called New Town and located east of Bidhannagar. In the 2000s, Sector 5 in Bidhannagar developed into a business hub for information technology and telecommunication companies. Both Bidhannagar and New Town are situated outside the Kolkata Municipal Corporation limits, in their own municipal corporations or authorities.

Economy Kolkata is the commercial and financial hub of East and Northeast India and home to the Calcutta Stock Exchange. It is a major commercial and military port, and is one of five cities in eastern India (alongside Bhubaneswar, Guwahati, Imphal, and Kushinagar) to have an international airport. Once India's leading city, Kolkata experienced a steady economic decline in the decades following India's independence due to steep population increases and a rise in militant trade-unionism, which included frequent strikes that were backed by left-wing parties. From the 1960s to the late 1990s, several factories were closed and businesses relocated. The lack of capital and resources added to the depressed state of the city's economy and gave rise to an unwelcome sobriquet: the "dying city". The city's fortunes improved after the Indian economy was liberalised in the 1990s and changes in economic policy were enacted by the West Bengal state government. Recent estimates of the economy of Kolkata's metropolitan area have ranged from \$150 to \$250 billion (PPP GDP), and have ranked it third-most productive metro area of India. Flexible production has been the norm in Kolkata, which has an informal sector that employs more than 40% of the labour force. One unorganised group, roadside hawkers, generated business worth ₹87.72 billion (equivalent to ₹300 billion or US\$3.5 billion in 2023) in 2005. As of 2001, around 0.81% of the city's workforce was employed in the primary sector (agriculture, forestry, mining, etc.); 15.49% worked in the secondary sector (industrial and manufacturing); and 83.69% worked in the tertiary sector (service industries). As of 2003, the majority of households in slums were engaged in occupations belonging to the informal sector; 36.5% were involved in servicing the urban middle class (as maids, drivers, etc.) and 22.2% were casual labourers. About 34% of the available labour force in Kolkata slums were unemployed. According to one estimate, almost a quarter of the population live on less than ₹27 (32 US) per day. Major manufacturing companies in the city are Alstom, Larsen & Toubro, Fosroc,

Videocon. As in many other Indian cities, information technology became a high-growth sector in Kolkata starting in the late 1990s; the city's IT sector grew at 70% per annum-a rate that was twice the national average. The 2000s saw a surge of investments in the real estate, infrastructure, retail, and hospitality sectors; several large shopping malls and hotels were launched. Companies such as ITC Limited, CESC Limited, Exide Industries, Emami, Eveready Industries India, Lux Industries, Rupa Company, Berger Paints, Birla Corporation, Britannia Industries and Purushottam Publishers are headquartered in the city. Philips India, PwC India, Tata Global Beverages, and Tata Steel have their registered office and zonal headquarters in Kolkata. Kolkata hosts the headquarters of two major banks: UCO Bank, and Bandhan Bank. Reserve Bank of India, State Bank of India have its eastern zonal office in Kolkata. India Government Mint, Kolkata is one of the four mints in India. Some of the oldest public sector companies are headquartered in the city such as the Coal India, National Insurance Company, Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers, Tea Board of India, Geological Survey of India, Zoological Survey of India, Botanical Survey of India, Jute Corporation of India, National Test House, Hindustan Copper and the Ordnance Factories Board of the Indian Ministry of Defence.

Demographics Population The demonym for residents of Kolkata are Calcuttan and Kolkatan. According to provisional results of the 2011 national census, Kolkata district, which occupies an area of 185 km² (71 sq mi), had a population of 4,486,679; its population density was 24,252/km² (62,810/sq mi). This represents a decline of 1.88% during the decade 2001-11. The sex ratio is 899 females per 1000 males-lower than the national average. The ratio is depressed by the influx of working males from surrounding rural areas, from the rest of West Bengal; these men commonly leave their families behind. Kolkata's literacy rate of 87.14% exceeds the national average of 74%. The final population totals of census 2011 stated the population of city as 4,496,694. The urban agglomeration had a population of 14,112,536 in 2011.

As of 2003, about one-third of the population, or 15 lakh (1.5 million) people, lived in 3,500 unregistered squatter-occupied and 2,011 registered slums. The authorised slums (with access to basic services like water, latrines, trash removal by the Kolkata Municipal Corporation) can be broadly divided into two groups-bustees, in which slum dwellers have some long term tenancy agreement with the landowners; and udbastu colonies, settlements which had been leased to refugees from present-day Bangladesh by the government. The unauthorised slums (devoid of basic services provided by the municipality) are occupied by squatters who started living on encroached lands-mainly along canals, railway lines and roads. According to the 2005 National Family Health Survey, around 14% of the households in Kolkata were poor, while 33% lived in slums, indicating a substantial proportion of households in slum areas were better off economically than the bottom quarter of urban households in terms of wealth status. Mother Teresa was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for founding and working with the Missionaries of Charity in Kolkata-an organisation "whose primary task was to love and care for those persons nobody was prepared to look after".

Language Bengali, the official state language, is the dominant language in Kolkata. English is also used, particularly by the white-collar workforce. Hindi and Urdu are spoken by a sizeable minority. Bengali Hindus form the majority of Kolkata's population; Marwaris, Biharis and Urdu-speaking Muslims compose large minorities. Among Kolkata's smaller communities are Chinese, Tamils, Nepalis, Pathans/Afghans (locally known as Kabuliwala) Odias, Telugus, Gujaratis, Anglo-Indians, Armenians, Bengali Muslims, Greeks, Tibetans, Maharashtrians, Konkanis, Malayalees, Punjabis and Parsis. The number of Armenians, Greeks, Jews and other foreign-origin groups declined during the 20th century. The Jewish population of Kolkata was 5,000 during World War II, but declined after Indian independence and the establishment of Israel; as of 2003, there were 25 Jews in the city. India's sole Chinatown is in eastern Kolkata; once home to 20,000 ethnic Chinese, its population dropped to around 2,000, as of 2009, as a result of multiple factors including repatriation

and denial of Indian citizenship following the 1962 Sino-Indian War, and immigration to foreign countries for better economic opportunities. The Chinese community traditionally worked in the local tanning industry and ran Chinese restaurants.

Religion According to the 2011 census, 76.51% of the population is Hindu, 20.60% Muslim, 0.88% Christian, 0.47% Jain, 0.31% Sikh and 0.11% Buddhist. 1.12% did not state a religion in the census.

Government and public services Civic administration Kolkata is administered by several government agencies. The Kolkata Municipal Corporation, or KMC, oversees and manages the civic infrastructure of the city's 16 boroughs, which together encompass 144 wards. Each ward elects a councillor to the KMC. Each borough has a committee of councillors, each of whom is elected to represent a ward. By means of the borough committees, the corporation undertakes urban planning and maintains roads, government-aided schools, hospitals, and municipal markets. As Kolkata's apex body, the corporation discharges its functions through the mayor-in-council, which comprises a mayor, a deputy mayor, and ten other elected members of the KMC. The functions of the KMC include water supply, drainage and sewerage, sanitation, solid waste management, street lighting, and building regulation. Kolkata's administrative agencies have areas of jurisdiction that do not coincide. Listed in ascending order by area, they are: Kolkata district; the Kolkata Police area and the Kolkata Municipal Corporation area, or "Kolkata city"; and the Kolkata metropolitan area, which is the city's urban agglomeration. The agency overseeing the latter, the Kolkata Metropolitan Development Authority, is responsible for the statutory planning and development of greater Kolkata. The Kolkata Municipal Corporation was ranked first out of 21 cities for best governance and administrative practices in India in 2014. It scored 4.0 on 10 compared to the national average of 3.3. The Kolkata Port Trust, an agency of the central government, manages the city's river port. As of 2023, the All India Trinamool Congress controls the KMC; the mayor is Firhad Hakim, while the deputy mayor is Atin Ghosh. The city has an apolitical titular post, that of the Sheriff of Kolkata, which presides over various city-related functions and conferences. As the seat of the Government of West Bengal, Kolkata is home to not only the offices of the local governing agencies, but also the West Bengal Legislative Assembly; the state secretariat, which is housed in the Writers' Building; and the Calcutta High Court. Most government establishments and institutions are housed in the centre of the city in B. B. D. Bagh (formerly known as Dalhousie Square). The Calcutta High Court is the oldest High Court in India. It was preceded by the Supreme Court of Judicature at Fort William which was established in 1774. The Calcutta High Court has jurisdiction over the state of West Bengal and the Union Territory of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Kolkata has lower courts: the Court of Small Causes and the City Civil Court decide civil matters; the Sessions Court rules in criminal cases. The Kolkata Police, headed by a police commissioner, is overseen by the West Bengal Ministry of Home Affairs. The Kolkata district elects two representatives to India's lower house, the Lok Sabha, and 11 representatives to the state legislative assembly. The Kolkata police district registered 15,510 Indian Penal Code cases in 2010, the 8th-highest total in the country. In 2010, the crime rate was 117.3 per 100,000, below the national rate of 187.6; it was the lowest rate among India's largest cities.

Utility services The Kolkata Municipal Corporation supplies the city with potable water that is sourced from the Hooghly River; most of it is treated and purified at the Palta pumping station located in North 24 Parganas district. Roughly 95% of the 4,000 tonnes of refuse produced daily by the city is transported to the dumping grounds in Dhapa, which is east of the town. To promote the recycling of garbage and sewer water, agriculture is encouraged on the dumping grounds. Parts of the city lack proper sewerage, leading to unsanitary methods of waste disposal. In 1856, the Bengal Government appointed George Turnbull to be the Commissioner of Drainage and Sewerage to improve the city's sewerage. Turnbull's main job was to be the Chief Engineer of the East Indian Railway Company responsible for building the first railway 541 miles (871 km) from Howrah to

Varanasi (then Benares). Electricity is supplied by the privately operated Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation, or CESC, to the city proper; the West Bengal State Electricity Board supplies it in the suburbs. Fire services are handled by the West Bengal Fire Service, a state agency. As of 2012, the city had 16 fire stations. State-owned Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited, or BSNL, as well as private enterprises, among them Vodafone Idea, Bharti Airtel, Reliance Jio are the leading telephone and cell phone service providers in the city. with Kolkata being the first city in India to have cell phone and 4G connectivity, the GSM and CDMA cellular coverage is extensive. As of 2010, Kolkata has 7 percent of the total broadband internet consumers in India; BSNL, VSNL, Tata Indicom, Sify, Hathway, Airtel, and Jio are among the main vendors.

Military and diplomatic establishments The Eastern Command of the Indian Army is based in the city. Being one of India's major city and the largest city in eastern and north-eastern India, Kolkata hosts diplomatic missions of many countries such as Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Canada, People's Republic of China, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Myanmar, Nepal, Russia, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Thailand, United Kingdom and United States. The U.S Consulate in Kolkata is the US Department of State's second-oldest Consulate and dates from 19 November 1792. The Diplomatic representation of more than 65 Countries and International Organization is present in Kolkata as Consulate office, honorary Consulate office, Cultural Centre, Deputy High Commission and Economic section and Trade Representation office.

Transport Public transport is provided by the Kolkata Suburban Railway, the Kolkata Metro, trams, rickshaws, taxis and buses. The suburban rail network connects the city's distant suburbs.

Rail Rapid transit Kolkata Metro is the rapid transit system of Kolkata. According to a 2013 survey conducted by the International Association of Public Transport, in terms of a public transport system, Kolkata ranks top among the six Indian cities surveyed. The Kolkata Metro, in operation since 1984, is the oldest underground mass transit system in India. The fully operational blue line spans the north-south length through the middle of the city. In 2020, part of the Second line was inaugurated to cover part of Salt Lake city, Kolkata metro area. This east-west green line connects two satellite cities of Kolkata namely Salt Lake and Howrah. Other operational lines are Purple line and Orange line.

Commuter rail Kolkata Suburban Railway is the largest and second busiest suburban railway network in the country by number of stations and track length, and also one of the largest in the world. Kolkata has five long-distance inter-city railway stations, located at Howrah (the largest and busiest railway complex in India, as of 2024), Sealdah (2nd busiest in India, as of 2024), Kolkata, Shalimar and Santragachi Junction, which connect Kolkata by rail to most cities in West Bengal and to other major cities in India. The city serves as the headquarters of three railway zones out of eighteen of the Indian Railways regional divisions namely the Kolkata Metro, Eastern Railway and the South Eastern Railway. Kolkata has international rail connectivity with Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh.

Tram Kolkata is the only Indian city with a tram network, which was operated by the Calcutta Tramways Company. It has now amalgamated to West Bengal Transport Corporation. There are three operational routes: Tollygunge to Ballygunge, Gariahat to Esplanade, Shyambazar to Esplanade. Trams are environment friendly but due to slow-moving and traffic congestion, tram attracts less passengers. Water-logging, caused by heavy rains during the summer monsoon, sometimes interrupt transportation networks.

Roads and expressways Kolkata along its metropolitan area is home to the second largest road network in India. As of 2022, total road network in the city's metropolitan area is 4,018 km (2,497 mi), while the city proper has road network of 1,850 km (1,150 mi). The city has witnessed a steady increase in the number of registered vehicles: from 17 lakhs in 2019 to 21 lakhs in 2022, an 18.52 per cent jump. With 2,448 vehicles per kilometre of road, Kolkata has the highest car density in India. This leads major traffic congestion. The city's main bus terminals are located at Esplanade and Howrah. The Kolkata-Delhi and Kolkata-Chennai prongs of the Golden Quadrilateral, and National Highway 12 start from the outskirts of the city. As of 2024, Kolkata has one state expressway and two national expressways, all in its metropolitan area. Kalyani Expressway is only state expressway, which is partially operational and partially under construction. The national expressways are Belghoria (part of AH1 and NH12), operational and Kona Expressway (part of NH12), at grade road operational but elevated corridor under construction. Some national expressways are planned or in various stages of construction to connect directly with many major metropolises and cities of India. Those are: Varanasi-Kolkata Expressway and Patna Kolkata Expressway. Kolkata has international road connectivity to Dhaka, Bangladesh by Jessore Road; to Bangkok, Thailand and Myanmar by Kolkata-Thailand-Bangkok Trilateral Highway (an extension of IMT Highway) and to Nepal and Bhutan by NH12 and proposed Haldia-Raxaul Expressway.

Hired public conveyances include auto rickshaws, which often ply specific routes, and yellow metered taxis. Almost all of Kolkata's taxis are antiquated Hindustan Ambassadors by make; newer air-conditioned radio taxis are in service as well. In parts of the city, cycle rickshaws and hand-pulled rickshaws are patronised by the public for short trips.

Air Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport, located in Dum Dum, about 16 km (9.9 mi) north-east of the city centre, operates domestic and international flights. In 2013, the airport was upgraded to handle increased air traffic.

Water The Port of Kolkata, established in 1870, is India's oldest and the only major river port. The Kolkata Port Trust manages docks in Kolkata and Haldia. The port hosts passenger services to Port Blair, capital of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands; freighter service to ports throughout India and around the world is operated by the Shipping Corporation of India. Ferry services connect Kolkata with its twin city of Howrah, located across the Hooghly River.

Healthcare As of 2011, the healthcare system in Kolkata consists of 48 government hospitals, mostly under the Department of Health & Family Welfare, Government of West Bengal, and 366 private medical establishments; these establishments provide the city with 27,687 hospital beds. For every 10,000 people in the city, there are 61.7 hospital beds, which is higher than the national average of 9 hospital beds per 10,000. Ten medical and dental colleges are located in the Kolkata metropolitan area which act as tertiary referral hospitals in the state. The Calcutta Medical College, founded in 1835, was the first institution in Asia to teach modern medicine. However, these facilities are inadequate to meet the healthcare needs of the city. More than 78% in Kolkata prefer the private medical sector over the public medical sector, due to the overburdening of the public health sector, the lack of a nearby facility, and excessive waiting times at government facilities. According to the Indian 2005 National Family Health Survey, only a small proportion of Kolkata households were covered under any health scheme or health insurance. The total fertility rate in Kolkata was 1.4, the lowest among the eight cities surveyed. In Kolkata, 77% of the married women used contraceptives, which was the highest among the cities surveyed, but use of modern contraceptive methods was the lowest (46%). The infant mortality rate in Kolkata was 41 per 1,000 live births, and the mortality rate for children under five was 49 per 1,000 live births. Among the surveyed cities, Kolkata stood second (5%) for children who had not had any vaccinations under the

Universal Immunization Programme as of 2005. Kolkata ranked second with access to an anganwadi centre under the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) programme for 57% of the children between 0 and 71 months. The proportion of malnourished, anaemic and underweight children in Kolkata was less in comparison to other surveyed cities. About 18% of the men and 30% of the women in Kolkata are obese-the majority of them belonging to the non-poor strata of society. In 2005, Kolkata had the highest percentage (55%) among the surveyed cities of anaemic women, while 20% of the men in Kolkata were anaemic. Diseases like diabetes, asthma, goitre and other thyroid disorders were found in large numbers of people. Tropical diseases like malaria, dengue and chikungunya are prevalent in Kolkata, though their incidence is decreasing. Kolkata is one of the districts in India with a high number of people with AIDS; it has been designated a district prone to high risk. As of 2014, because of higher air pollution, the life expectancy of a person born in the city is four years fewer than in the suburbs.

Education Kolkata's schools are run by the state government or private organisations, many of which are religious. Bengali and English are the primary languages of instruction; Urdu and Hindi are also used, particularly in central Kolkata. Schools in Kolkata follow the "10+2+3" plan. After completing their secondary education, students typically enroll in schools that have a higher secondary facility and are affiliated with the West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education, the ICSE, or the CBSE. They usually choose a focus on liberal arts, business, or science. Vocational programs are also available. Some Kolkata schools, for example South Point School, La Martinire Calcutta, Calcutta Boys' School, St. James' School (Kolkata), St. Xavier's Collegiate School and Loreto House, have been ranked amongst the best schools in the country. As of 2010, the Kolkata urban agglomeration is home to 14 universities run by the state government. The colleges are each affiliated with a university or institution based either in Kolkata or elsewhere in India. Aliah University which was founded in 1780 as Mohammedan College of Calcutta is the oldest post-secondary educational institution of the city. The University of Calcutta, founded in 1857, is the first modern university in South Asia. Presidency College, Kolkata (formerly Hindu College between 1817 and 1855), founded in 1855, was one of the oldest colleges in India. It was affiliated with the University of Calcutta until 2010 when it was converted to Presidency University, Kolkata in 2010. Bengal Engineering and Science University (BESU) is the second oldest engineering institution of the country located in Howrah. An Institute of National Importance, BESU was converted to India's first IIST. Jadavpur University is known for its arts, science, and engineering faculties. The Indian Institute of Management Calcutta, which was the first of the Indian Institutes of Management, was established in 1961 at Joka, a locality in the south-western suburbs. Kolkata also houses the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, which was started here in the year 2006.

The West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences is one of India's autonomous law schools, and the Indian Statistical Institute is a public research institute and university. State owned Maulana Abul Kalam Azad University of Technology, West Bengal (MAKAUT, WB), formerly West Bengal University of Technology (WBUT) is the largest Technological University in terms of student enrollment and number of Institutions affiliated by it. Private institutions include the Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda Educational and Research Institute and University of Engineering & Management (UEM).

Notable scholars Notable scholars who were born, worked or studied in Kolkata include physicists Satyendra Nath Bose, Meghnad Saha, and Jagadish Chandra Bose; chemist Prafulla Chandra Ray; statisticians Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis and Anil Kumar Gain; physician Upendranath Brahmachari; educator Ashutosh Mukherjee; and Nobel laureates Rabindranath Tagore, C. V. Raman, and Amartya Sen.

Research institutes Kolkata houses many research institutes, including the following:

Culture Kolkata is known for its literary, artistic and revolutionary heritage; as the former capital of India, it was the birthplace of modern Indian literary and artistic thought. Kolkata has been called the "City of Furious, Creative Energy" as well as the "cultural [or literary] capital of India". The presence of *paras*, which are neighbourhoods that possess a strong sense of community, is characteristic of the city. Typically, each *para* has its own community club and on occasion, a playing field. Residents engage in *addas*, or leisurely chats, that often take the form of freestyle intellectual conversation. The city has a tradition of political graffiti depicting everything from outrageous slander to witty banter and limericks, caricatures and propaganda. Kolkata has many buildings adorned with Indo-Islamic and Indo-Saracenic architectural motifs. Several well-maintained major buildings from the colonial period have been declared "heritage structures"; others are in various stages of decay. Established in 1814 as the nation's oldest museum, the Indian Museum houses large collections that showcase Indian natural history and Indian art. Marble Palace is a classic example of a European mansion that was built in the city. The Victoria Memorial, a place of interest in Kolkata, has a museum documenting the city's history. The National Library of India is the leading public library in the country while Science City is the largest science centre in the Indian subcontinent.

The popularity of commercial theatres in the city has declined since the 1980s. Group theatres of Kolkata, a cultural movement that started in the 1940s contrasting with the then-popular commercial theatres, are theatres that are not professional or commercial, and are centres of various experiments in theme, content, and production; group theatres use the proscenium stage to highlight socially relevant messages. Chitpur locality of the city houses multiple production companies of *jatra*, a tradition of folk drama popular in rural Bengal. Kolkata is the home of the Bengali cinema industry, dubbed "Tollywood" for Tollygunj, where most of the state's film studios are located. Its long tradition of art films includes globally acclaimed film directors such as Satyajit Ray, Ritwik Ghatak, Mrinal Sen, Tapan Sinha and contemporary directors such as Aparna Sen, Buddhadeb Dasgupta, Goutam Ghose and Rituparno Ghosh. During the 19th and 20th centuries, Bengali literature was modernised through the works of authors such as Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Michael Madhusudan Dutt, Rabindranath Tagore, Kazi Nazrul Islam and Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay. Coupled with social reforms led by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Swami Vivekananda and others, this constituted a major part of the Bengal Renaissance. The middle and latter parts of the 20th century witnessed the arrival of post-modernism, as well as literary movements such as those espoused by the Kallol movement, *hungryalists* and the little magazines. Large majority of publishers of the city is concentrated in and around College Street, "... a half-mile of bookshops and bookstalls spilling over onto the pavement", selling new and used books.

Kalighat painting originated in 19th century Kolkata as a local style that reflected a variety of themes including mythology and quotidian life. The Government College of Art and Craft, founded in 1864, has been the cradle as well as workplace of eminent artists including Abanindranath Tagore, Jamini Roy and Nandalal Bose. The art college was the birthplace of the Bengal school of art that arose as an avant garde and nationalist movement reacting against the prevalent academic art styles in the early 20th century. The Academy of Fine Arts and other art galleries hold regular art exhibitions. The city is recognised for its appreciation of Rabindra Sangeet (songs written by Rabindranath Tagore) and Indian classical music, with important concerts and recitals, such as Dover Lane Music Conference, being held throughout the year; Bengali popular music, including *baul* folk ballads, *kirtans* and *Gajan* festival music; and modern music, including Bengali-language *adhunik* songs. Since the early 1990s, new genres have emerged, including one comprising alternative folk-rock Bengali bands. Another new style, *jibonmukhi gaan* ("songs about life"), is based on realism.

Key elements of Kolkata's cuisine include rice and a fish curry known as machher jhol, which can be accompanied by desserts such as roshogolla, sandesh, and a sweet yoghurt known as mishti dohi. Bengal's large repertoire of seafood dishes includes various preparations of ilish, a fish that is a favourite among Calcuttans. Street foods such as beguni (fried battered eggplant slices), kati roll (flatbread roll with vegetable or chicken, mutton or egg stuffing), phuchka (a deep-fried crpe with tamarind sauce) and Indian Chinese cuisine from Chinatown are popular.

Though Bengali women traditionally wear the sari, the shalwar kameez and Western attire is gaining acceptance among younger women. Western-style dress has greater acceptance among men, although the traditional dhoti and kurta are seen during festivals. Durga Puja, held in September-October, is Kolkata's most important and largest festival; it is an occasion for glamorous celebrations and artistic decorations. The Bengali New Year, known as Poila Boishak, as well as the harvest festival of Poush Parbon are among the city's other festivals; also celebrated are Kali Puja, Diwali, Chhaith, Jitiya, Holi, Jagaddhatri Puja, Saraswati Puja, Rathayatra, Janmashtami, Maha Shivratri, Vishwakarma Puja, Lakshmi Puja, Ganesh Chaturthi, Makar Sankranti, Gajan, Kalpataru Day, Bhai Phonta, Maghotsab, Eid, Muharram, Christmas, Buddha Purnima and Mahavir Jayanti. Cultural events include the Rabindra Jayanti, Independence Day (15 August), Republic Day (26 January), Kolkata Book Fair, the Dover Lane Music Festival, the Kolkata International Film Festival, Nandikar's National Theatre Festival, Statesman Vintage & Classic Car Rally and Gandhi Jayanti.

Media The first newspaper in India, the Bengal Gazette started publishing from the city in 1780. Among Kolkata's widely circulated Bengali-language newspapers are Anandabazar Patrika, Bartaman, Ei Samay Sangbadpatra, Sangbad Pratidin, Aajkaal, Dainik Statesman and Ganashakti. The Statesman and The Telegraph are two major English-language newspapers that are produced and published from the city. Other popular English-language newspapers published and sold in the city include The Times of India, Hindustan Times, The Hindu, The Indian Express and The Asian Age. As the largest trading centre in East India, the city has several high-circulation financial dailies, including The Economic Times, The Financial Express, Business Line and Business Standard. Vernacular newspapers, such as those in the Hindi, Urdu, Gujarati, Odia, Punjabi and Chinese languages, are read by minorities. Major periodicals based in the city include Desh, Sananda, Saptahik Bartaman, Unish-Kuri, Anandalok and Anandamela. Historically, Kolkata has been the centre of the Bengali little magazine movement. All India Radio (AIR), the national state-owned radio broadcaster, airs several AM radio stations in the city. Kolkata has 10 local radio stations broadcasting on FM, including three from AIR. India's state-owned television broadcaster, Doordarshan, provides two free-to-air terrestrial channels, while a mix of Bengali, Hindi, English, and other regional channels are accessible via cable subscription, direct-broadcast satellite services, or internet-based television. Bengali-language 24-hour television news channels include ABP Ananda, News18 Bangla, Kolkata TV, Zee 24 Ghanta, TV9 Bangla and Republic Bangla.

Sports The most popular sports in Kolkata are football and cricket. Unlike most parts of India, the residents show significant enthusiasm for football. Indian Football Association, the oldest football association of the country is based here. It administers football in West Bengal. Kolkata is home to India's top football clubs such as Mohun Bagan AC, East Bengal Club and the Mohammedan SC. The Calcutta Football League, the oldest football league in Asia, was started in 1898. Mohun Bagan AC, one of the oldest football clubs in Asia, is the only organisation to be dubbed as "National Club of India". Two clubs of the city - Mohun Bagan Super Giant and East Bengal FC compete in the Indian Super League (ISL). Football matches between Mohun Bagan and East Bengal, called as the Kolkata Derby, witness large audience attendance and rivalry between patrons. The multi-use Salt Lake Stadium, also known as Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan, is India's second largest stadium by seating capacity. Most matches of the 2017 FIFA U-17 World Cup were played in this stadium

including both Semi-final matches and the Final match. Kolkata also accounted for 45% of total attendance in 2017 FIFA U-17 World Cup with an average of 55,345 spectators. The Calcutta Cricket and Football Club is the second-oldest cricket club in the world.

As in the rest of India, cricket is popular in Kolkata and is played on various grounds throughout the city. Kolkata is home to Indian Premier League (IPL) franchise Kolkata Knight Riders and also the Cricket Association of Bengal which regulates cricket in West Bengal and the Bengal cricket team. Tournaments, especially those involving cricket, football, badminton and carrom, are regularly organised here on an inter-locality or inter-club basis. The Maidan, a vast field that serves as the city's largest park, hosts several minor football and cricket clubs and coaching institutes. Eden Gardens, which has a capacity of 80,000, as of 2017, hosted the final match of the 1987 Cricket World Cup. The Netaji Indoor Stadium served as host of the 1981 Asian Basketball Championship, where India's national basketball team finished 5th, ahead of teams that belong to Asia's basketball elite, such as Iran. The city has three 18-hole golf courses. The oldest is at the Royal Calcutta Golf Club, the first golf club built outside the United Kingdom. The other two are located at the Tollygunge Club and at Fort William. The Royal Calcutta Turf Club hosts horse racing and polo matches. The Calcutta Polo Club is considered the oldest extant polo club in the world. The Calcutta Racket Club is a squash and racquet club in Kolkata. It was founded in 1793, making it one of the oldest rackets clubs in the world, and the first in the Indian subcontinent. The Calcutta South Club is a venue for national and international tennis tournaments; it held the first grass-court national championship in 1946. In the period 2005-2007, Sunfeast Open, a tier-III tournament on the Women's Tennis Association circuit, was held in the Netaji Indoor Stadium; it has since been discontinued. The Calcutta Rowing Club hosts rowing heats and training events. Kolkata, considered the leading centre of rugby union in India, gives its name to the oldest international tournament in rugby union, the Calcutta Cup. The Automobile Association of Eastern India, established in 1904, and the Bengal Motor Sports Club are involved in promoting motor sports and car rallies in Kolkata and West Bengal. The Beighton Cup, an event organised by the Bengal Hockey Association and first played in 1895, is India's oldest field hockey tournament; it is usually held on the Mohun Bagan Ground of the Maidan. Athletes from Kolkata include Sourav Ganguly, Pankaj Roy and Jhulan Goswami, who are former captains of the Indian national cricket team; Olympic tennis bronze medalist Leander Paes, golfer Arjun Atwal, and former footballers Sailen Manna, Chuni Goswami, P. K. Banerjee and Subrata Bhattacharya.

Notable people
International relations
Foreign missions There are 70 diplomatic missions in Kolkata, of which 24 are consulate missions, 2 are high commissions and rest are honorary consulates. The U.S. Consulate in Kolkata dates from 19 November 1792 and is the U.S. Department of State's second oldest consulate in the world and the oldest U.S. Consulate in India. The Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO) is in charge of immigration and registration activities in the city.

Deputy High Commissioners Bangladesh United Kingdom

Consulate Generals Australia Bhutan China France Germany Italy Japan Myanmar Nepal Thailand Russia United States

Sister cities Kolkata has sister city relationships with the following cities of the world:

See also Notes References Further reading External links Kolkata Municipal Corporation Kolkata - Incredible India

Pune

Pune (Marathi: पुणे, pronounced [puˈɳe] POO-nay), previously spelled in English as Poona (the official name until 1978), is a city in the state of Maharashtra in the Deccan plateau in Western India. It is the administrative headquarters of the Pune district, and of Pune division. In terms of the total amount of land under its jurisdiction, Pune is the largest city in Maharashtra by area, with a geographical area of 516.18 km², though by population it comes in a distant second to Mumbai. According to the 2011 Census of India, Pune has 7.2 million residents in the metropolitan region, making it the seventh-most populous metropolitan area in India. The city of Pune is part of Pune Metropolitan Region. Pune is one of the largest IT hubs in India. It is also one of the most important automobile and manufacturing hubs of India. Pune is often referred to as the "Oxford of the East" because of its educational institutions. It has been ranked "the most liveable city in India" several times. Pune at different points in time has been ruled by the Rashtrakuta dynasty, Ahmadnagar Sultanate, the Mughals, and the Adil Shahi dynasty. In the 18th century, the city was part of the Maratha Empire, and the seat of the Peshwas, the prime ministers of the Maratha Empire. Pune was seized by the British East India Company in the Third Anglo-Maratha War; it gained municipal status in 1858, the year in which Crown rule began. Many historical landmarks like Shaniwarwada, Shinde Chhatra, and Vishrambaug Wada date to this era. Historical sites from different eras dot the city. Pune has historically been a major cultural centre, with important figures like Dnyaneshwar, Shivaji, Tukaram, Bajirao I, Balaji Bajirao, Madhavrao I, Nana Fadnis, Mahadev Govind Ranade, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Mahatma Jyotirao Phule, Savitribai Phule, Gopal Ganesh Agarkar, Tarabai Shinde, Dhondo Keshav Karve, and Pandita Ramabai doing their life's work in Pune City or in an area that falls in Pune Metropolitan Region. Pune was a major centre of resistance to British Raj, with people like Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Bal Gangadhar Tilak playing leading roles in struggle for Indian independence in their times.

Etymology The earliest reference to Pune is an inscription on a Rashtrakuta Dynasty copper plate dated 937 CE, which refers to the town as Punya-vishaya. By the 13th century, it had come to be known as Punawadi. During the Rashtrakuta dynasty, the city was referred to as Punnaka and Punyapur. The copper plates of 758 and 768 CE show that the Yadava dynasty had renamed the city as Punakavishaya and Punya Vishaya. 'Vishaya' means land, while 'Punaka' and 'Punya' mean holy. The city was known as Kasbe Pune when under the command of Maratha king Shivaji's father, Shahaji. Mughal emperor Aurangzeb renamed a small neighbourhood in central part of the old city as Muhiyabad (the only divergent naming) some time between 1703 and 1705 in memory of his great-grandson Muhi-ul-Milan, who died there. The name Muhiyabad was reverted soon after Aurangzeb's death. Anglicized to Poona in 1857 by the English during British rule, the city's name was changed to Pune in 1978.

History Early and Medieval Period Copper plates dated 858 and 868 CE show that by the 9th century an agricultural settlement known as Punnaka existed at the location of the modern Pune. The plates indicate that this region was ruled by the Rashtrakuta dynasty. The Pataleshwar rock-cut temple complex was built during this era. Pune was part of the territory ruled by the Seuna Yadavas of Devagiri from the 9th century to 1327. Pune was under control of various Muslim sultanates until the late 1600s.

The Maratha Empire Pune was part of the Jagir (fiefdom) granted by the Nizamshahi (Ahmadnagar Sultanate) to Maloji Bhosale in 1599. Maloji Bhosale passed on Jagir of Pune to his son Shahaji Bhosale. The town was destroyed by Murar Jagdeo, a general from the rival Adil Shahi dynasty in 1636. Shahaji himself soon joined

Adilshahi and regained the Pune jagir. At that time he selected the town for the residence of his wife Jijabai, and young son Shivaji, the future founder of the Maratha empire. Shahaji appointed Dadoji Konddeo to help Jijabai in the administration of Jagir and in the reconstruction of the town. The Lal Mahal residence of Jijabai and Shivaji was completed in 1640 AD. Shivaji spent his young years at the Lal Mahal. Jijabai is said to have commissioned the building of the Kasba Ganapati temple. The Ganesha idol consecrated at this temple has been regarded as the presiding deity (Gramadevata) of the city.

Pune changed hands between the Mughals and the Marathas many times during the rest of the 1600s. Recognizing the military potential of Pune, the Mughal general Shaista Khan and later, the emperor Aurangzeb further developed the areas around the town. Pune was occupied again by Marathas in June 1670, four months to the battle of Sinhagad and remained in the hands of Marathas. From 1703 to 1705, towards the end of the 27-year-long Mughal-Maratha Wars, the town was occupied by Mughal emperor Aurangzeb and its name was changed temporarily to Muhiyabad. This name was abandoned and reverted to its original name soon after Aurangzeb's death.

Peshwa Rule In 1720, Baji Rao I was appointed Peshwa (prime minister) of the Maratha Empire by Shahu I, the fifth Chhatrapati of the Maratha Empire. As the Peshwa, Bajirao moved his base from Saswad to Pune in 1728, marking the beginning of the transformation of what was a kasbah into a city. He also commissioned the construction of the Shaniwar Wada on the high grounds of right bank of the Mutha River. The construction was completed in 1730, ushering in the era of Peshwa control of the city. Bajirao's son and successor, Nanasaheb constructed a lake at Katraj on the outskirts of the city and an underground aqueduct to bring water from the lake to Shaniwar Wada and the city. The aqueduct was still in working order in 2004.

The patronage of the Maratha Peshwas resulted in a great expansion of Pune, with the construction of around 250 temples and bridges in the city, including the Lakdi Pul and the temples on Parvati Hill and many Maruti, Vithoba, Vishnu, Mahadeo, Rama, Krishna, and Ganesh temples. The building of temples led to religion being responsible for about 15% of the city's economy during this period. Pune prospered as a city during the reign of Nanasaheb Peshwa. He developed Saras Baug, Heera Baug, Parvati Hill and new commercial, trading, and residential localities. Sadashiv Peth, Narayan Peth, Rasta Peth and Nana Peth were developed. The Peshwa's influence in India declined after the defeat of Maratha forces at the Battle of Panipat but Pune remained the seat of power. In 1802 Pune was captured by Yashwantrao Holkar in the Battle of Poona, directly precipitating the Second Anglo-Maratha War of 1803-1805. The Peshwa rule ended with the defeat of Peshwa Bajirao II by the British East India Company in 1818. Historian Govind Sakharam Sardesai lists 163 prominent families that held high ranks and played significant roles in politics, military, and finance in 18th century Pune. Of these 163 families, a majority(80) were Deshastha Brahmins, 46 were Chitpawan, 15 were Chandraseniya Kayastha Prabhu (CKP) whereas Karhade Brahmin and Saraswat accounted for 11 families each.

British Rule (1818-1947) The Third Anglo-Maratha War broke out between the Marathas and the British East India Company in 1817. The Peshwas were defeated at the Battle of Khadki (then spelled Kirkee) on 5 November near Pune and the city was seized by the British. It was placed under the administration of the Bombay Presidency and the British built a large military cantonment to the east of the city (now used by the Indian Army). The old city and the cantonment areas followed different patterns of development, with the latter being developed more on European lines to cater for the needs of the British military class. The old city had narrow lanes and areas segregated by caste and religion. The settlement of the regiments of the 17 Poona Horse cavalry, the Lancashire Fusiliers, the Maratha Light Infantry, and others, led to an increase in the population. Due to its milder weather, the city became the "Monsoon capital" of the Governor of Bombay, thus

making it one of the most important cities of the Bombay Presidency. The Southern Command of the Indian Army, established in 1895, is headquartered in Pune cantonment. The city of Pune was known as Poona during British rule. Poona Municipality was established in 1858. A railway line from Bombay to the city opened in 1858, run by the Great Indian Peninsula Railway (GIPR). Navi Peth, Ganj Peth (now renamed Mahatma Phule Peth) were developed during the British Raj.

Centre of Social Reform and Nationalism Pune was prominently associated with the struggle for Indian independence. In the period between 1875 and 1910, the city was a centre of agitation led by Gopal Krishna Gokhale and Bal Gangadhar Tilak. The city was also a centre for social reform led by Gopal Ganesh Agarkar, Mahatma Jyotirao Phule, feminist Tarabai Shinde, Dhondo Keshav Karve and Pandita Ramabai. They demanded the abolition of caste prejudice, equal rights for women, harmony between the Hindu and Muslim communities, and better schools for the poor. Mahatma Gandhi was imprisoned at the Yerwada Central Jail several times and placed under house arrest at the Aga Khan Palace between 1942 and 1944, where both his wife Kasturba Gandhi and aide Mahadev Desai died. Savarkar used to study in Fergusson College and performed the "Holi" of foreign items near Mutha river bank .

Pune since Indian Independence After Indian independence from the British in 1947, Pune saw enormous growth, transforming it into a modern metropolis. The Poona Municipal Council was reorganised to form the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) in 1950. The education sector in the city continued its growth in the post-independence era with the establishment of the University of Pune (now, Savitribai Phule Pune University) in 1949, the National Chemical Laboratory in 1950 and the National Defence Academy in 1955. The establishment of Hindustan Antibiotics in 1954 marked the beginning of industrial development in the Hadapsar, Bhosari, and Pimpri areas. MIDC provided the necessary infrastructure for new businesses to set up operations. In the 1970s, several engineering companies were set up in the city, allowing it to vie with Chennai. In the 1990s, Pune began to attract foreign capital, particularly in the information technology and engineering industries. IT parks were established in Aundh, Viman Nagar, Hinjawadi, Wagholi, Kharadi and Balewadi-Baner region. As a result, the city saw a huge influx of people due to opportunities offered by the manufacturing, and lately, the software industries. The breach in the Panshet dam and the resulting flood of 1961 led to severe damage and the destruction of housing close to the river banks. The mishap spurred the development of new suburbs and housing complexes. To integrate urban planning, the Pune Metropolitan Region was defined in 1967 covering the area under PMC, the Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation, the three cantonments, and the surrounding villages. In 1998 work on the six-lane Mumbai-Pune expressway began; it was completed in 2001. In 2008, the Commonwealth Youth Games took place in Pune, which encouraged development in the northwest region of the city. On 13 February 2010, a bomb exploded at the German Bakery in the upmarket Koregaon Park neighbourhood in eastern Pune, killing 17 and injuring 60. Evidence suggested that the Indian Mujahideen terrorist group carried out the attack.

21st-century Pune has evolved greatly since Indian Independence, from notable universities, colleges and management schools, earning it the nickname of the 'Oxford Of The East', to being one of the most important automobile manufacturing hub. Pune is also home to the world's largest vaccine manufacturer, Serum Institute of India.

Geography Pune is situated at approximately 18 32" north latitude and 73 51" east longitude. The city's total area is 15.642 km², and the municipal corporation area covers 518 km². By road Pune is 149 km (93 mi) south-east of Mumbai, 580 km (360 mi) south-west of Indore, 695 km (432 mi) west of Nagpur, 1,173 km (729 mi) south of Delhi, 734 km (456 mi) north of Bangalore, 562 km (349 mi) north-west of Hyderabad. Pune lies on

the western margin of the Deccan plateau, at an altitude of 560 m (1,840 ft) above sea level. It is on the leeward side of the Sahyadri mountain range, which forms a barrier from the Arabian Sea. It is a hilly city, with Vetal Hill rising to 800 m (2,600 ft) above sea level. The Sinhagad fort is at an altitude of 1,300 metres (4,300 feet). The old city of Pune is at the confluence of the Mula and Mutha rivers. The Pavana, a tributary of Mula river and Indrayani river, a tributary of the Bhima river, traverse the northwest Neighbourhoods of Pune.

Cityscape The modern city of Pune has many distinct neighbourhoods. These include the numerous peths of the old city on the eastern bank of the Mutha river, the cantonment areas of Khadki and Camp established by the British, and numerous suburbs. There are several Peths in usual localities of the Pune city. The industrial growth in the Pimpri, Chinchwad, Akurdi, Nigdi and nearby areas allowed these areas to incorporate a new governing municipal corporation. The Pune Metropolitan Region (PMR), initially defined in 1967, has grown to 7,256 km² made up of the ten talukas of the Pune district. The areas of PMC and PCMC along with the three cantonment areas of Camp, Khadki, and Dehu Road form the urban core of the PMR, which also includes seven municipal councils and 842 villages. Rapid industrialisation since the 1960s has led to large influx of people into the city. Housing supply has not kept pace with demand, causing the number of slum dwellings to increase. Approximately 36% of the population lives in 486 slum areas. Of these, 45% slum households do not have in-house toilet facilities and 10% do not have electricity. One third of the slums are on mixed ownership land. The living conditions in slums varies considerably, depending on their status (formal/informal) and in how far non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community organisations (CBOs) and government agencies are involved and committed to improving local living conditions. Since the 1990s a number of landmark integrated townships and gated communities have been developed in Pune such as Magarpatta, Nanded city, Amanora, Blue Ridge, Life Republic and Lavasa. They also offer business opportunities and access to infrastructure. According to the PMC, six townships with up to 15,000 housing units existed in Pune in 2012 and 25 more were in the planning process. The Mercer 2017 Quality of Living Rankings evaluated living conditions in more than 440 cities around the world and ranked Pune at 145, second highest in India after Hyderabad at 144. The same source highlights Pune as being among evolving business centres and as one of nine emerging cities around the world with the citation "Hosts IT and automotive companies". The 2017 Annual Survey of India's City-Systems (ASICS) report, released by the Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy, adjudged Pune as the best governed of 23 major cities.

Peths in Pune Peth is a general term in the Marathi language for a locality in Pune. Seventeen peths are located in Pune, which today constitute the old city of Pune. Most were established during the Maratha empire era under the Maratha and Peshwa rule of the city in the 18th century, before the arrival of the British. Pune is home to many distinctive peths, or place names, for various neighbourhoods. The majority of them bore the names of their founders and days of the week.

Climate Pune has a tropical wet and dry (Kppen Aw) climate, closely bordering upon a hot semi-arid climate (Kppen BSh) with average temperatures ranging between 20 and 28 C (68 and 82 F). Pune experiences three seasons: summer, monsoon, and winter. Typical summer months are from mid-March to mid-June, with maximum temperatures sometimes reaching 42 C (108 F). The warmest month in Pune is May. The city often has heavy dusty winds in May, with humidity remaining high. Even during the hottest months, the nights are usually cool due to Pune's high altitude. The highest temperature recorded was 43.3 C (109.9 F) on 30 April 1897. The monsoon lasts from June to October, with moderate rainfall and temperatures ranging from 22 to 28 C (72 to 82 F). Most of the 822 mm (32.36 in) of annual rainfall in the city falls between June and September, and July is the wettest month of the year. Hailstorms are not unheard of. For most of December and January the daytime temperature hovers around 29 C (84.2 F) while overnight temperatures are below 12 C (53.6 F).

On 11 May 2023, Koregaon Park recorded a temperature of 44.4 C (112 F)

Pune has been ranked 23rd best "National Clean Air City" (under Category 1 >10L Population cities) in India according to 'Swachh Vayu Survekshan 2024 Results'

Seismology Pune is 100 km (62 mi) north of the seismically active zone around Koyna Dam. The India Meteorological Department has assessed this area as being in Zone 3, on a scale of 2 to 5, with 5 being the most prone to earthquakes. Pune has experienced some moderate - and many low - intensity earthquakes in its history.

Demographics The city has a population of 3,124,458; while 5,057,709 people reside in the Pune Urban Agglomeration as of the 2011 census. The latter was c. 4,485,000 in 2005. According to the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC), 40% of the population lived in slums in 2001. Since Pune is a major industrial metropolis, it has attracted migrants from all parts of India. The number of people migrating to Pune rose from 43,900 in 2001 to 88,200 in 2005. The sharp increase in population during the decade 1991-2001 led to the absorption of 38 fringe villages into the city. The top five source areas of migrants are Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, and Rajasthan. The Sindhis in the city are mostly refugees and their descendants, who came to the area after the partition of India in 1947. Initially they settled in the Pimpri area, which is still home to a large number of Sindhi people. However, they are also present in other parts of the city. As agriculture has dwindled in recent decades, immigration of the erstwhile rural peoples now accounts for 70 per cent of the population growth. The average literacy rate of Pune was 86.15% in 2011 compared to 80.45% in 2001.

Religion Hinduism is the major religion, practised by a little under 80% of people in Pune. Other religions with a significant presence include Islam, Buddhism, Jainism, Christianity, Sikhism and Zoroastrianism. Of the many Hindu temples in the city, the Parvati temple complex on Parvati Hill and at least 250 others date back to the 18th century. These temples were commissioned by the Peshwas, who ruled the city at the time, and are dedicated to various deities including Maruti, Vithoba, Vishnu, Mahadeo, Rama, Krishna and Ganesh. The historic temples of Kasba Ganapati, the Tambadi (Red) Jogeshwari are considered the guardian deities of the city. Dagadusheth Halwai Ganapati Temple is the richest Ganesh temple in Pune. Pune district has two of the most important pilgrimage centres of the Varkari sect of the Bhakti movement in Maharashtra, namely Alandi where the samadhi of 13th century Saint Dnyaneshwar is located and Dehu where the 17th century Saint Tukaram lived. Every year in the Hindu month of Ashadh (June/July), the Paduka (symbolic sandals) of these saints are carried in a pilgrimage, the Pandharpur Vari, to meet Vithoba. The procession makes a stopover in the city on its way to Pandharpur attracting hundreds of thousands of Varkaris and devotees. Other important Hindu pilgrimage sites in PMR or the district include Jejuri, and five of Ashtavinayak Ganesh temples. The Shrutisagar Ashram houses the Vedanta Research Centre and a unique temple of Dakshinamurthy. Prominent mosques include Roshan Masjid, Chand Tara Masjid, Jama Masjid, and Azam Campus Masjid, Manusha Masjid. Chand Tara Masjid, located in Nana Peth, is one of the biggest and most important mosques in Pune as it is the city headquarters (markaz) for the Tablighi Jamaat. Pune is also the birthplace of Meher Baba, although his followers usually travel to Meherabad to visit his tomb. Hazrat Babajan, identified by Meher Baba as one of the five perfect masters, has a shrine (Dargah) erected in her honour under a neem tree in Pune Camp. Pune has a distinct Christian community comprising Roman Catholic, Pentecostals, CNI, Methodist, Presbyterians, Christian Missionaries helped in setting up schools and colleges all over and also spread the message of faith. The city has several churches dedicated to different Christian denominations such as St. Anthony's Shrine and Vineyard Worker's of Christ Church, Dapodi. St. Patrick's Cathedral built in 1850 is the seat of the bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Poona. Pune has Jain temples dating back to the Peshwa era. At present, there are

more than one hundred Jain temples in PMR with the one at Katraj being the largest. Pune has over 20 Gurdwaras, with Gurdwara Guru Nanak Darbar in Pune Camp and Gurdwara Shri Guru Singh Sabha in Ganesh Peth being the ones situated in the heart of the city. The 19th-century Ohel David Synagogue, known locally as Lal Deval, is said to be one of the largest synagogues in Asia outside Israel. The Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy Ajiary is a prominent Zoroastrian temple. Pune has been associated with several significant recent spiritual teachers. The controversial Guru Osho, formerly the self-styled Bhagwan Rajneesh, lived and taught in Pune for much of the 1970s and 1980s. The Osho International Meditation Resort, one of the world's largest spiritual centres, is located in Koregaon Park and attracts visitors from over a hundred countries. The meditation resort organises music and meditation festival every year during monsoon, known as Osho Monsoon Festival. Number of well known artists around the world participates in the event.

Languages Marathi is the official and most-spoken language. Pune, being the cultural capital of Maharashtra, is a centre for Marathi literature and its dialect forms the basis for the written standard of Marathi. As a destination for migrants throughout India, Hindi is also widely-spoken, as is Dakhni Urdu by the Muslim community. Gujarati and Marwari are spoken by the business community.

Government and politics Civic administration Pune Municipal Corporation and Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation are the civic bodies responsible for local government. It comprises two branches, the executive branch headed by the Municipal Commissioner, an IAS officer appointed by the Government of Maharashtra, and an elected deliberative branch, the general body, headed by the Mayor of Pune. Municipal elections are held every five years to elect councillors, commonly known as "corporators", who form the general body. The current general body of the PMC elected in February 2017 has 162 corporators representing 41 multi-member wards (39 with 4 corporators each and 2 with 3 each). The general body, in turn, elects the mayor and the deputy mayor. The mayor has a ceremonial role as the first citizen and ambassador of the city while the actual executive power lies with the municipal commissioner. For policy deliberations, corporators form several committees. Perhaps the most important of these is the 16-member Standing Committee, half of whose members retire every year. The Standing Committee and the 15 ward committees are in charge of financial approvals. PMC was ranked 8th out of 21 Indian cities for best governance and administrative practices in 2014. It scored 3.5 out of 10 compared to the national average of 3.3. The Pune City Police Department is the law enforcement agency for the city of Pune. It is a division of the Maharashtra Police and is headed by the Police Commissioner, an officer of the Indian Police Service. The Pune Police Department reports to the State Ministry of Home Affairs. A separate police commissionerate was announced for PCMC, Pune in April 2018 to be carved out of the historic Pune Police Department. The new commissionerate took charge on 15 August 2018. Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority (PMRDA) was formed on 31 March 2015 and is responsible for the integrated development of the PMR. Currently its jurisdiction extends over 7,256.46 km² (2,802 sq mi) and includes two municipal corporations, three cantonment boards, seven municipal councils, 13 census towns and 842 villages.

Utility services The PMC supplies the city with potable water that is sourced from the Khadakwasla Reservoir. There are five other reservoirs in the area that supply water to the city and the greater metropolitan area. The city lacks the capacity to treat all the sewage it generates, which leads to the Mutha river containing only sewage outside the monsoon months. In 2009 only 65% of sewage generated was treated before being discharged into the rivers. According to Anwesha Borthakur and Pardeep Singh, unplanned and haphazard development has turned the Mula-Mutha river into a dead river. The Pune municipal corporation has undertaken plans to restore life into the rivers. PMC is also responsible for collecting solid waste. Around 1,600 tons of solid waste is generated in Pune each day. The waste consists of 53% organic, compostable material;

and 47% inorganic material, of which around half is recyclable. The unrecovered solid waste is transported to the dumping grounds in Uruli devachi. The state owned Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Company Limited supplies electricity to the city. Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), owned by the central government, as well as private enterprises such as Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea are the leading telephone and cell phone service providers in the city.

Healthcare Healthcare in the PMR is provided by private and public facilities. Primary care is provided by practitioners of Allopathic medicine as well as traditional and alternative medicine (i.e. Ayurved, Homeopathy and Unani). For minor and chronic ailments, people in the region often rely on practitioners of traditional medicine. The PMR is served by three government hospitals: Sassoon Hospital, Budhrani and Dr Ambedkar Hospital. There are also a number of private hospitals such as Ranka Hospital, Sahyadri, Jahangir Nursing Home, Deenanath Mangeshkar Hospital, Sancheti Hospital, Aditya Birla Memorial Hospital, KEM Hospital, Ruby Hall, Naidu Hospital and Smile Inn Dental Clinic Pune.

Economy Pune is a well known manufacturing and industrial center of India. With an estimated nominal GDP of Rs. 3,31,478 crores for year 2019-20, Pune District is the third largest contributor to the economy of Maharashtra, after Mumbai and Thane. Pune has the fifth largest metropolitan economy and the sixth highest per capita income in the country. As per the Directorate of Economics and Statistics (Government of Maharashtra), the GDP per capita of Pune District in 2019-20 was Rs. 3,16,848. In 2014-15, the manufacturing sector provided employment to over 500,000 people.

Manufacturing The formation of MIDC in 1962 resulted in a constant process of industrial land acquisition and the creation of required support infrastructure. Since then, there has been a massive influx of several European companies who continue to be keen on setting up manufacturing facilities in the city. The city serves as headquarters to many companies. Major industrial areas around Pune are Chakan, Chinchwad, Bhosari, Pirangut, Hinjawadi, Talegaon, Talawade, Urse. The Independent referred Chakan as India's "Motor City". The Kirloskar Group, one of India's largest manufacturers and exporters of pumps and the largest infrastructure pumping project contractor in Asia, is headquartered in Pune. Kalyani Group headquartered in Pune owns Bharat Forge which operates world's largest single location forging facility consisting of fully automated forging press lines and state-of-the-art machining facility in Pune. Bajaj Auto, headquartered in Pune, is ranked as the world's fourth largest two and three wheeler manufacturer. The city is known for its automotive industry. A large number of automobile companies such as Bajaj Auto, Tata Motors, Mahindra & Mahindra, Skoda cars, Mercedes Benz, Force Motors, Kinetic Motors, General Motors, Land Rover, Jaguar, Renault, Volkswagen, and Fiat have there manufacturing plants in Chakan. Serum Institute of India, the world's fifth largest vaccine producer by volume, is based in Pune. As of August 2023, Tesla, Inc. has leased a space in Pune, marking its initial step towards establishing a presence in India.

Information technology The Rajiv Gandhi Infotech Park in Hinjawadi is a ■ 60,000 crore (US\$8.9 billion) project by the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC). The IT Park encompasses an area of about 2,800 acres (11 km²) and is home to over 800 IT companies. Besides Hinjawadi, IT companies are also located at Magarpatta, Kharadi and several other parts of the city. As of 2017, the IT sector employed more than 300,000 people. Pune has also emerged as a new hub for tech startups in India. NASSCOM, in association with MIDC, has started a co-working space for city based startups under its 10,000 startups initiative at Kharadi MIDC. Pune Food Cluster development project is an initiative funded by the World Bank. It is being implemented with the help of Small Industries Development Bank of India, Cluster Craft to facilitate the development of the fruit and vegetable processing industries in and around Pune. Major technology companies

Ubisoft Pune, Zensar Technologies, Patni Computer Systems, Persistent Systems, Indiacom, Harbinger Knowledge Products, Seniority, Monjin, Mylab Discovery Solutions, Quick Heal and KPIT Technologies are headquartered in Pune. Indian tech giant Infosys was founded in Pune who have a mega campus in city. Zensar Technologies is located in a mega campus called Zensar Park.

Entertainment Pune is an emerging centre for VFX services, with Indian and international studios such as Anibrain, Reliance Animation, Digikore Studio, HMX Media, Waffold Pune, Stereo D, Framestore and Method Studios having established their facilities here. The Meetings, Incentives, Conferencing, Exhibitions trade is expected to be boosted since the Pune International Exhibition and Convention Centre (PIECC) opened in 2017. The 97-hectare PIECC has a seating capacity of 20,000 with a floor area of 13,000 m² (139,931 sq ft). It has seven exhibition centres, a convention centre, a golf course, a five-star hotel, a business complex, shopping malls, and residences. The US\$115 million project was developed by the Pimpri-Chinchwad New Town Development Authority. There are many food joints around Pune which makes it a favourite outing destination. World Trade Center (WTC) Pune is a 1.6 million sq. ft. complex built to foster international trade. WTC Pune is part of the World Trade Centers Association.

Culture Architecture Historical attractions include the 8th century rock-cut Pataleshwar cave temple, the 18th century Shaniwar Wada, the 19th century Aga Khan Palace, Lal Mahal and Sinhagad fort. Shinde Chhatra, located at Wanowrie, is a memorial dedicated to the Maratha general Mahadaji Shinde (Scindia). The old city had many residential buildings with courtyards called Wada. However, many of these have been demolished and replaced by modern buildings. A renowned wada in Pune is the last residential palace of the Peshwa called Vishrambaug Wada which is currently being renovated by the city corporation. The city is also known for its British Raj bungalow architecture and the Garden Cities Movement layout of the Cantonment from the early 20th century. Landmark architectural works by Christopher Charles Benninger surround the city, including the Mahindra United World College of India, the Centre for Development Studies and Activities, the YMCA Retreat at Nilshi and the Samundra Institute of Maritime Studies.

Museums, parks and zoos Museums in Pune include the Raja Dinkar Kelkar Museum, Mahatma Phule Industrial Museum, Deccan college museum of Maratha history, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum, Joshi's Museum of Miniature Railway and the Pune Tribal Museum Pune also houses Blades of Glory Cricket Museum which is the biggest cricket museum in the world. The College of Military Engineering has an archive and an equipment museum; this includes a rail exhibit with a metre-gauge train. The Aga Khan Palace, where Mahatma Gandhi was interned during the Quit India movement, has a memorial dedicated to his wife, Kasturba Gandhi who died during the internment. For a city of its size, Pune has very few large public parks and gardens. Parks and green spaces in the city include the Kamala Nehru Park, Sambhaji Park, Shahu Udyan, Peshwe Park, Saras Baug, Empress Gardens, and Bund Garden. The Pu La Deshpande Udyan is a replica of the Korakuen Garden in Okayama, Japan. The Hanuman hill, Vetar hill, and Taljai Hills are protected nature reserves on hills within the city limits.

The Rajiv Gandhi Zoological Park is located in Katraj. The zoo, earlier located at Peshwe Park, was merged with the reptile park at Katraj in 1999. Pune Riverfront is under-construction being developed by Pune Municipal Corporation along the banks of Mula-Mutha River.

Performing arts Both experimental and professional theatre receive extensive patronage from the Marathi community. The Tilak Smarak Ranga Mandir, Bal Gandharva Ranga Mandir, Bharat Natya Mandir,

Yashwantrao Chavan Natya Gruha, and Sudarshan Rangmanch are prominent theatres in the city. Ganesh Kala Krida Rangamanch is the largest indoor theatre in the city, with a seating capacity of approximately 45,000. The Sawai Gandharva Sangeet Mahotsav, one of the most prominent and sought-after Indian classical music festivals in India, is held in Pune every year in December. It commemorates the life and achievements of Sawai Gandharva. The concept of Diwani Pahadi (lit. Diwali dawn) originated in Pune as a music festival on the morning of the festival of Diwali.

Festivals Ganesh Chaturthi is widely and publicly celebrated in Pune. Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak started the public celebration of the festival as a means to circumvent the colonial British government ban on Hindu gatherings through its anti-public assembly legislation in 1892. Pandals with Ganesh idols are erected all across Pune. Many Ganesh mandals display live or figurine shows called Dekhava during the festival. These shows often carry socially relevant messages. Processions of Ganpati are accompanied by Dhol-Tasha pathaks (groups who play Dhol-Tasha percussion instruments). Involvement of these pathaks has become a cultural identity of Pune with there being over 150 such groups operating in and around Pune. Jnana Prabodhini, a social organisation in Pune is widely accredited for founding the tradition of Dhol-Tasha pathaks.

Food The main cuisine of Pune is Maharashtrian cuisine. Puneri misal is one of the popular vegetarian dishes in Pune. Other famous dishes in Pune include Poha, Upma, Vada Pav, Bhel, Pani Puri, Dabeli, Sabudana vada, Pav Bhaji. Bakarwadi is a popular snack from Pune introduced in the early 1960s. Here are some of the most popular food streets in Pune:

JM Road is famous for Vada Pav, Misal Pav, and Pav Bhaji. FC Road (Fergusson College Road) is famous for Street sandwiches, Dosas, Shawarmas, and Cold Coffee.* Tulshibaug is famous for Kanda Bhaji, Puran Poli, and Chaat. East Street (Camp) is famous for Burgers, Rolls, and Desserts. Hong Kong Lane (Near Deccan Gymkhana) is famous for Momos, Chinese street food, and Chaats. Katraj Dairy Area is famous for Dairy products, Lassi, and Ice Cream.

Transport Air Pune International Airport at Lohagaon is one of the busiest airports in India. The airport is operated by the Airports Authority of India. It shares its runways with the neighbouring Indian Air Force base. In addition to domestic flights to all major Indian cities, the airport has international direct flights to Dubai, operated by Air India Express, and SpiceJet, and direct flights to Singapore operated by Vistara. Pune International Airport at Lohegaon was ranked third best in the category of 5-15 million passengers by Airport Service Quality in 2018. A new international airport, Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj International Airport has been proposed, due to the limited capacity of the existing airport. A location in the Chakan-Rajgurunagar area was chosen for the airport, but non-availability of land delayed the project for over a decade. In September 2016 the location was changed to Purandar, about 20 kilometres (12 mi) south-east of the city near the towns of Saswad and Jejuri. Changes in state government, delay or changes called for by the ministry of defence, or the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), and local opposition has delayed the project by several years. But with approvals in place from relevant authorities the project is going to be making progress per a statement made by the civil aviation minister in June 2024.

Public transport Public transport in Pune include two operational lines of the Pune Metro, bus services operated by PMPML, the Pune Suburban Railway and auto rickshaws. Work is underway on an additional, third line of Pune Metro connecting the Hinjewadi IT hub to the District Court Pune station. This line is expected to open to the public by 2025.

Metro Pune Metro is a mass rapid transit system serving the city. The system comprises two operational lines with a combined operational length of 31.25 km (19.42 mi). Construction for a third line is underway, which on completion would increase the combined operational length to 59.1 km. The two operation lines are the Purple Line and the Aqua Line. The Purple Line starts from the Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation metro station and terminates at the Swargate metro station. The Aqua line starts from the Vande Bharat metro station and ends at the Ramwadi metro station. Both lines pass through the District Court Pune metro station, which acts as a cross platform interchange. The presently under construction Line 3 will plough from Megapolis Circle in Hinjewadi till the District Court Pune station. It will see a cross platform interchange at Shivaji Nagar (for the Purple Line) and District Court (for both, the Purple and Aqua lines).

Bus service Public buses within the city and its suburbs are operated by PMPML. In January 2019, Pune became the first Indian city to adopt e-buses and Bhekrai Nagar became the country's first all electric bus depot. As of January 2025, up to 490 electric buses have been deployed across the city. PMPML operates the Rainbow BRTS system. When launched, it was the first of its kind in India bus rapid transit system in India. The project has turned out to be a failure, receiving little patronage from the local citizenry. As of 2023 only 16 km out of 68 km proposed were completed for the project. Due to the then ongoing metro construction related work and high incidences of accidents, dedicated bus lanes from Yerawda to Viman Nagar were removed in 2023. Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation runs buses from stations in Wakdevadi, Pune station and Swargate to all major cities and towns in Maharashtra and neighbouring states. Private companies also run buses to major cities throughout India.

Rail The Pune Suburban Railway (popularly called local trains) connects Pune to the industrial city of Pimpri-Chinchwad and the hill station of Lonavala. Daily express trains connect Pune to Mumbai, Nashik, Ahmedabad, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Nanded, Miraj-Sangli, Kolhapur, Jaipur, Raipur, Nagpur, Visakhapatnam, Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi, Coimbatore, Bangalore, Allahabad, Kanpur, Howrah, Jammu Tawi, Vijayawada, Darbhanga, Goa, Gwalior, Varanasi, Bhubaneswar, Ranchi, Jalgaon, Patna, and Jamshedpur. At Pune, there is a diesel locomotive shed and an electric trip shed. Pune Railway Station is administered by the Pune Railway Division of Central Railways.

Road transport Pune is well-connected to other cities by Indian and state highways. National Highway 48 connects it to Mumbai and Bangalore, National Highway 65 connects it to Hyderabad and National Highway 60 connects it to Nashik. State Highway 27 connects Pune to Ahmednagar. The Mumbai Pune Expressway is India's first six-lane high-speed expressway, and it was built in 2002. Only four wheeled vehicles are allowed on it. This expressway has reduced travel time between Pune and Mumbai to a little over two hours. Three ring roads are planned around the city. Major highways:

Personal transport Once known as the "cycle city of India", Pune has experienced a rapid growth in the number of motorised two wheelers replacing the bicycle. In 2005 the city was reported to have one million two wheelers. The report also stated that the increase in vehicular and industrial activity had led to a 10-fold increase in particulate pollution in some areas of the city. In 2018 the number of vehicles in the city has exceeded its population with 3.62 million total vehicles, 2.70 million being two wheelers. In the fiscal year 2017-18 alone 300,000 new vehicles were registered in the city, two-thirds of them two wheelers. A revival of cycling in Pune with 130 kilometres (81 mi) of cycle tracks built was attempted as a part of the BRT system under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission in 2004. However, a 2011 report revealed that only 88 kilometres (55 mi) of tracks were actually built and most were unusable at the time of the report. Under the

Smart Cities Mission, app based cycle sharing schemes have been launched in the city since late 2017. The PMC has devised the Pune Cycle Plan with 470 kilometres (290 mi) of cycle tracks planned. Cycles are also seen as a possible way of improving last mile connectivity for the metro system.

Education Pune has over a hundred educational institutes and more than nine deemed universities apart from the Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU; formerly University of Pune), which is the largest university in the country based on total number of affiliated colleges. Higher education institutes attract international students mainly from the Middle Eastern countries such as Iran, and United Arab Emirates, and also African countries such as Ethiopia and Kenya. Pune is the largest centre for Japanese learning in India. Other languages taught in the city include German, which is taught at the Goethe-Institut, and French, which is taught at Alliance Française. Several colleges in Pune have student exchange programmes with colleges in Europe.

Primary and secondary education The PMC runs 297 primary schools and 30 secondary and higher secondary schools. While it is mandatory for the PMC to provide primary education under state law, secondary education is an optional duty. In the rural and suburban areas of the PMC, public primary schools are run by the Pune Zilla Parishad. Private schools are run by education trusts and are required to undergo mandatory inspection by the concerned authorities. Private schools are eligible for financial aid from the state government. Public schools are affiliated to the Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education (State Board). The language of instruction in public schools is primarily Marathi, although the PMC also runs Urdu, English and Kannada medium schools. Along with these languages, private schools also offer instruction in Hindi and Gujarati. Private schools vary in their choice of curriculum and may follow the State Board or one of the two central boards of education, the CBSE or CISCE. Jnana Prabodhini Prashala, located in Sadashiv Peth, is the first school for intellectually gifted and talented students in India. Additionally, it counts with one of the 18 United World Colleges across the globe, having UWC Mahindra College in the Mulshi Valley.

Tertiary education Most colleges in Pune are affiliated to the SPPU (Savitribai Phule Pune University). Nine other universities have also been established in the city. Pune also hosts the Military Intelligence Training School which offers diploma courses in counter intelligence, combat intelligence, aerial imagery and interpretation, among others.

The College of Engineering Pune, an autonomous institute of the government of Maharashtra founded in 1854, is the third oldest engineering college in Asia. The Deccan Education Society was founded by local citizens in 1884, including social and political activist Bal Gangadhar Tilak, who was also responsible for founding Fergusson College in 1885. The Indian Law Society's Law College is one of the top ten law schools in India. The Armed Forces Medical College and B. J. Medical College are among the top medical colleges in India. The Armed Forces Medical College consistently ranks among the top five medical colleges in India. The Film and Television Institute of India, one of only three Indian institutions in the global CILECT film school network, is located on Law College Road. The Lalit Kala Kendra is an undergraduate department of Music, Dance and Drama on the SPPU campus that has been operational since 1987. This department features a combination of gurukul and formal education systems. The College of Military Engineering, the Army Institute of Physical Training, and the Institute of Armament Technology are also in Pune. Christ University Pune Lavasa campus, is part of Christ University, Bangalore located in Lavasa.

Symbiosis International University operates 33 colleges and institutions in the city, including the Symbiosis Institute of Business Management, the Symbiosis Institute of Management Studies, the Symbiosis Centre for

Management and Human Resource Development, the Symbiosis Law School and the Symbiosis Institute of International Business. They are ranked among the top management and law institutes in the country. The Symbiosis Institute of Computer Studies and Research is one of the few colleges in India that promotes open source technology. UWC Mahindra College, one of eighteen United World Colleges worldwide and the third in Asia, offering the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program (DP), is located near Pune.

Research institutes Pune is home to a number of governmental and non-governmental research institutes focusing on a wide range of subject areas from the humanities to the sciences. The Ministry of Defence also runs a number of defence related education, training and research establishments in and around the city. Major research centers include:

Media A number of Marathi-language newspapers from the British era continued publishing decades after independence. These included Kesari, Tarun Bharat, Prabhat and Sakal. Sakal has remained the most popular Marathi daily. Kesari is now only published as an online newspaper. The Mumbai-based Maharashtra Times, Loksatta and Lokmat have all introduced Pune based editions in the last fifteen years. The Mumbai-based popular English newspaper the Indian Express has a Pune edition. Its rival the Times of India introduced a tabloid called Pune Mirror in 2008. Mid-Day, Daily News and Analysis and Sakaal Times are other local English newspapers. The English-language newspaper The Hindu has launched a Pune edition covering local as well as national news. Another English-language online news website Puneri Pages was launched, covering local and national news. The government owned All India Radio (AIR) has been broadcasting from Pune since 1953. Savitribai Phule Pune University broadcasts programmes focusing on its different departments and student welfare schemes on its own FM radio channel called Vidyavani. A number of commercial FM channels are also received in the city. The city receives almost all of the television channels in India including broadcast, cable and direct-to-home TV.

Sports Badminton in its modern form originated in Pune. The game of badminton was also known as Poona or Poonah after the then British garrison town of Poona where it was particularly popular and where the first rules for the game were drawn up in 1873. (Games employing shuttlecocks have been played for centuries across Eurasia, but the modern game of badminton developed in the mid-19th century among the British as a variant of the earlier game of battledore and shuttlecock. "Battledore" was an older term for "racquet".)

Women's tennis ITF \$25K tournament held at Deccan Gymkhana club's tennis courts in 2021. It also hosted men's ITF \$15K event. ATP 250 Maharashtra Open was held at Balewadi till 2022. It was India's biggest professional tennis championship and only ATP event of India, where top professional tennis players participated. Popular games and sports in Pune include cricket, athletics, basketball, badminton, field hockey, football, tennis, kabaddi, paragliding, kho-kho, wrestling, rowing, and chess. The Chhatrapati Shivaji Stadium in Balewadi is the venue for wrestling and other traditional sports. The Royal Connaught Boat Club is one of several boating clubs on the Mula-Mutha river. Pune has basketball courts at the Deccan Gymkhana and at Fergusson College. Pune Skatepark is a skateboarding park built in Sahakarnagar, consisting of an eight-foot bowl in a 3,000 square foot flatground. Other prominent sporting institutions in Pune include the Nehru Stadium, the PYC Hindu Gymkhana, the Poona Golf Club and the Poona Cricket Club. The PYC has a long history of excellence in cricket. It is one of the oldest clubs in India and has produced many great cricketers, including D. B. Deodhar, Vijay Hazare and C. K. Naid.

The Neharu Stadium has hosted a game of the 1996 Cricket World Cup and five games of the 2023 Cricket World Cup including one of India against Bangladesh. The Pune International Marathon is an annual marathon conducted in Pune. The National Games of 1994 and the 2008 Commonwealth Youth Games were held in the city at the Balewadi Stadium. The Deccan Gymkhana has hosted Davis Cup matches on several occasions. The 37,000 seating capacity Maharashtra Cricket Association Stadium has hosted international cricket - T20s, One Day Internationals, and a test match. The National Education Foundation organises Enduro3, a cross country adventure race in Pune. It is a two- or three-day event with activities including cycling, trekking, river-crossing and rifle shooting. Pune Race Course was built in 1830 on 118.5 acres (0.480 km²) of land and is managed by the Royal Western India Turf Club. The course has two training tracks and two racing surfaces. The racing season is from July to October and includes the Pune Derby, the RWITC Invitational, the Independence Cup and the Southern Command Cup. The city hosted the 2009 FIVB Men's Junior World Championship.

Teams The Maharashtra cricket team and state's women's team owned by Maharashtra Cricket Association represents the state in domestic cricket competitions such as the Ranji, Vijay Hazare Trophy and women's domestic cricket respectively, is based in Pune (headquarter at Gahunje village). Pune Warriors India (2011-2014) and Rising Pune Supergiant (2016-2017) were the two teams based in Pune to play in the Indian Premier League. Poona District Football Association (PDFA) was established in 1972 and currently has more than 100 registered teams. There were two popular football clubs (now defunct) competing in the I-League from the city: Pune FC, and DSK Shivajians FC. FC Pune City was an Indian Super League football club in Pune. Established in 2014, FC Pune City became the only professional football club in India to have teams which participated at all levels of professional football; Senior Team (ISL), U-18 Team (Elite league), U- 16 Team, U-14 Team and the Women's Team. The city is home to the Pune Peshwas, runners-up in the 2015 UBA Pro Basketball League season. Pune also has an American football franchise, called the Pune Marathas, which began playing in the inaugural season of the Elite Football League of India in 2011 and which plays at the Balewadi Stadium.

International relations Twin towns and sister cities San Jose, California, United States (1992) Vacoas-Phoenix, Mauritius Austin, Texas, United States - since 2018 Fairbanks, Alaska, United States Matteson, Illinois, United States Kawasaki, Japan Troms, Norway Informal relationship Bremen, Germany Okayama, Japan

See also List of tallest buildings in Pune List of people from Pune Poonawalla

Notes References External links Official website for Pune City and District

Ahmedabad

Ahmedabad (AH-m- d-ba(h)d), also spelled Amdavad (Gujarati: [md]), is the most populous city in the Indian state of Gujarat. It is the administrative headquarters of the Ahmedabad district and the seat of the Gujarat High Court. Ahmedabad's population of 5,570,585 (per the 2011 population census) makes it the fifth-most populous city in India, and the encompassing urban agglomeration population was estimated at 8,854,444 (as of 2024) is the seventh-most populous in India. Ahmedabad is located near the banks of the Sabarmati River, 25 km (16 mi) from the capital of Gujarat, Gandhinagar, also known as its twin city. Ahmedabad has emerged as an important economic and industrial hub in India. It is the second-largest producer of cotton in India, due to which it was known as the 'Manchester of India' along with Kanpur. Ahmedabad Stock Exchange (before it was shut down in 2018) was the country's second-oldest. Cricket is a popular sport in Ahmedabad; the newly built Narendra Modi Stadium at Motera can accommodate 132,000 spectators, making it the largest stadium in the world. The planned Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Sports Enclave will be one of the biggest sports centres (Sports City) in India once complete. The effects of the liberalisation of the Indian economy have energised the city's economy towards tertiary sector activities such as commerce, communication and construction. Ahmedabad's increasing population has increased demand in the construction and housing industries, resulting in the development of skyscrapers. In 2010, Ahmedabad was ranked third in Forbes's list of fastest growing cities of the decade. In 2012, The Times of India chose Ahmedabad as India's best city to live in. The gross domestic product of Ahmedabad metro was estimated at \$136.1 billion in 2023. In 2020, Ahmedabad was ranked as the third-best city in India to live by the Ease of Living Index. In July 2022, Time magazine included Ahmedabad in its list of world's 50 greatest places of 2022. Ahmedabad has been selected as one of the hundred Indian cities to be developed as a smart city under the Government of India's flagship Smart Cities Mission. In July 2017, the historic city of Ahmedabad, or Old Ahmedabad, was declared a UNESCO World Heritage City.

History Toponymy Based on relics found in several neighbourhoods of the old city and on writings of the Persian historian al-Biruni, it is surmised that an early Bhil tribal group settlement was known as Ashaval. According to Merutunga, Karna, the Chaulukya (Solanki) ruler of Anhilvada (modern Patan), successfully launched a military campaign against Ashaval and founded a city nearby called Karnavati. The location of Karnavati is not definitively known. References from the 14th and 15th centuries mention Ashaval but do not mention Karnavati. Ahmad Shah I of the Gujarat Sultanate transferred its capital from Anhilvada to Ashaval in 1411 CE; as was customary, the city was subsequently renamed Ahmedabad after the Sultan.

Early history The area around Ahmedabad has been inhabited since the 11th century, when it was known as Ashaval. At that time, Karna, the Chaulukya (Solanki) ruler of Anhilwara (modern Patan), waged a successful war against the Bhil king of Ashaval, and established a city called Karnavati on the banks of the Sabarmati. Solanki rule lasted until the 13th century, when Gujarat came under the control of the Vaghela dynasty of Dholka. Gujarat subsequently came under the control of the Delhi Sultanate in the 14th century. However, by the earlier 15th century, the local Muslim governor Zafar Khan Muzaffar established his independence from the Delhi Sultanate and crowned himself Sultan of Gujarat as Muzaffar Shah I, thereby founding the Muzaffarid dynasty. In 1411, the area came under the control of his grandson, Sultan Ahmed Shah, who selected the forested area along the banks of the Sabarmati river for his new capital. He laid the foundation of a new walled city near Karnavati and named it Ahmedabad after himself. According to other versions, he named the city after four Muslim saints in the area who all had the name Ahmed. Ahmed Shah I laid the foundation of the city on 26

February 1411 (at 1.20 pm, Thursday, the second day of Dhu al-Qi'dah, Hijri year 813) at Manek Burj. Manek Burj is named after the legendary 15th-century Hindu saint, Maneknath, who intervened to help Ahmed Shah I build Bhadra Fort in 1411. Ahmed Shah I chose it as the new capital on 4 March 1411. Chandan and Rajesh Nath, 13th generation descendants of Saint Maneknath, perform puja and hoist the flag on Manek Burj on Ahmedabad's foundation day and for the Vijaydashami festival every year.

In 1487, Mahmud Begada, the grandson of Ahmed Shah, fortified the city with an outer wall 10 km (6.2 mi) in circumference and consisting of twelve gates, 189 bastions, and over 6,000 battlements. In 1535 Humayun briefly occupied Ahmedabad after capturing Champaner when the ruler of Gujarat, Bahadur Shah, fled to Diu. Ahmedabad was then reoccupied by the Muzaffarid dynasty until 1573 when Gujarat was conquered by the Mughal emperor Akbar. During the Mughal reign, Ahmedabad became one of the Empire's thriving centres of trade, mainly in textiles, which were exported as far as Europe. The Mughal ruler Shah Jahan spent the prime of his life in the city, sponsoring the construction of the Moti Shahi Mahal in Shahibaug. The Deccan Famine of 1630-32 affected the city, as did famines in 1650 and 1686. Ahmedabad remained the provincial headquarters of the Mughals until 1758, when they surrendered the city to the Marathas.

Modern history During the period of Maratha governance, the city became the centre of a conflict between the Peshwa of Poona and the Gaekwad of Baroda. In 1780, during the First Anglo-Maratha War, a British force under James Hartley stormed and captured Ahmedabad, but it was handed back to the Marathas at the end of the war. The British East India Company took over the city in 1818 during the Third Anglo-Maratha War. A military cantonment was established in 1824 and a municipal government in 1858. Incorporated into the Bombay Presidency during British rule, Ahmedabad became one of the most important cities in the Gujarat region. In 1864, a railway link between Ahmedabad and Mumbai (then Bombay) was established by the Bombay, Baroda, and Central India Railway (BB&CI), enabling traffic and trade between northern and southern India via the city. Over time, the city established itself as the home of a developing textile industry, which earned it the nickname "Manchester of the East".

The Indian independence movement developed roots in the city when Mahatma Gandhi established two ashrams - the Kochrab Ashram near Paldi in 1915 and the Satyagraha Ashram (now Sabarmati Ashram) on the banks of the Sabarmati in 1917 - which would become centres of nationalist activities. During the mass protests against the Rowlatt Act in 1919, textile workers burned down 51 government buildings across the city in protest at a British attempt to extend wartime regulations after the First World War. In the 1920s, textile workers and teachers went on strike, demanding civil rights and better pay and working conditions. In 1930, Gandhi initiated the Salt Satyagraha from Ahmedabad by embarking from his ashram on the Dandi Salt March. The city's administration and economic institutions were rendered inoperative in the early 1930s by the large numbers of people who took to the streets in peaceful protests, and again in 1942 during the Quit India Movement.

Post-independence Following independence and the partition of India in 1947, the city was scarred by the intense communal violence that broke out between Hindus and Muslims in 1947. Ahmedabad was the focus of settlement by Hindu migrants from Pakistan, who expanded the city's population and transformed its demographics and economy. By 1960, Ahmedabad had become a metropolis with a population of slightly under half a million people, with classical and colonial European-style buildings lining the city's thoroughfares. It was chosen as the capital of Gujarat after the partition of the State of Bombay on 1 May 1960. During this period, a large number of educational and research institutions were founded in the city, making it a centre for higher education, science, and technology. Ahmedabad's economic base became more diverse with the establishment of heavy and chemical industry during the same period. Many countries sought to emulate India's economic

planning strategy and one of them, South Korea, copied Ahmedabad's second "Five-Year Plan". Post independence Ahmedabad has seen development in manufacturing and infrastructure.

In the late 1970s, the capital shifted to the newly built city of Gandhinagar. This marked the start of a long period of decline in Ahmedabad, marked by a lack of development. The 1974 Navnirman agitation, a protest against a 20% hike in the hostel food fees at the L.D. College of Engineering in Ahmedabad, snowballed into a movement to remove Chimanbhai Patel, then chief minister of Gujarat. In the 1980s, a reservation policy was introduced in the country, which led to anti-reservation protests in 1981 and 1985. The protests witnessed violent clashes between people belonging to various castes. The city was considerably impacted by the 2001 Gujarat earthquake; up to 50 multi-storey buildings collapsed, killing 752 people and causing much damage. The following year, three days of violence between Hindus and Muslims in the western Indian state of Gujarat, known as the 2002 Gujarat riots, spread to Ahmedabad; in eastern Chamanpura, 69 people were killed in the Gulbarg Society massacre on 28 February 2002. Refugee camps were set up around the city, housing 50,000 Muslims, as well as some small Hindu camps. The 2008 Ahmedabad bombings, a series of seventeen bomb blasts, killed and injured several people. The terrorist group Harkat-ul-Jihad claimed responsibility for the attacks. Ahmedabad is one of the few cities in India that has hosted the premiers of major economies such as the US, China, and Canada. On 24 February 2020, President of the United States Donald Trump became the first US president to visit the city. The event was named Namaste Trump. Earlier, General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party Xi Jinping and Prime Minister of Canada Justin Trudeau visited the city.

Demographics Population City population increased by 23.43% from 4,519,000 as of the 2001 census of India to 5,577,940 (2,938,985 males and 2,638,955 females resulting in a sex ratio of 898 females per 1,000 males) as of the 2011 census of India making Ahmedabad the fifth most populous city in India. The urban agglomeration centred upon Ahmedabad had a population of 6,352,254 and was the seventh most populous urban agglomeration in India as of the 2011 census of India. The population of children aged 0 to 6 was 621,034 (336,063 males and 284,971 females resulting in a child sex ratio of 848 females per 1,000 males) as of the 2011 census of India. The city had an average literacy rate of 88.29%, a male literacy rate of 92.30%, and a female literacy rate of 83.85%. The estimated population of Ahmedabad city is 7,692,000, while that of the urban agglomeration area is 8,772,000 as of 2023. The 2021 census of India has been delayed to 2024-25, and the deadline to freeze administrative boundaries has been extended to 1 January 2024.

Poverty In the mid-1970s and early 1980s, the textile mills that were responsible for much of Ahmedabad's wealth faced competition from automation and domestic speciality looms. Several mills closed down, leaving between 40,000 and 50,000 people without a source of income, and many moved into informal settlements in the city centre. The Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC), the governing and administrative body of the city, simultaneously lost much of its tax base and saw an increased demand for services. In the 1990s, newly emerging pharmaceutical, chemical, and automobile manufacturing industries required skilled labour, so many migrants seeking work ended up in the informal sector and settled in slums. Ahmedabad has made efforts to reduce poverty and improve the living conditions of poor residents. The urban poverty rate has declined from 28% in 1993-1994 to 10% in 2011-2012. This is partly due to the strengthening of the AMC and its partnership with several civil society organisations (CSOs) representing poor residents. Through projects and programs, the AMC has provided utilities and basic services to slums. However, some challenges remain, and there are still many residents who lack access to sanitation, clean running water, and electricity. Riots, often rooted in religious tensions, threaten the stability of neighbourhoods and have caused spatial segregation across religious and caste lines. There remains to be seen a concerted effort to balance pro-poor, inclusive development with national initiatives that aim to create 'global cities' that are the focus of capital investment and

technological innovation.

Informal housing and slums As of 2011, about 66% of the population lives in formal housing, with the other 34% living in slums or chawls, which are tenements for industrial workers. There are approximately 700 slum settlements in Ahmedabad, and 11% of the total housing stock is public housing. The population of Ahmedabad has increased while the housing stock has remained generally constant, and this has led to a rise in the density of both formal and informal housing and a more economical usage of existing space. The Indian census estimates that the Ahmedabad slum population was 25.6% of the total population in 1991 and had decreased to 4.5% in 2011, but these numbers are contested, and local entities maintain that the census underestimates informal populations. There is a consensus that there has been a reduction in the percentage of the population that lives in slum settlements, and that there has also been a general improvement in living conditions for slum residents.

Slum Networking Project In the 1990s, the AMC faced increased slum populations. They found that residents were willing and able to pay for legal connections to water, sewage, and electricity, but because of tenure issues, they were paying higher prices for low-quality, informal connections. To address this, beginning in 1995, the AMC partnered with civil society organisations to create the Slum Networking Project (SNP) to improve basic services in 60 slums, benefitting approximately 13,000 households. This project, also known as Parivartan (Change), involved participatory planning in which slum residents were partners alongside AMC, private institutions, microfinance lenders, and local NGOs. The goal of the program was to provide both physical infrastructure (including water supply, sewers, individual toilets, paved roads, storm drainage, and tree planting) and community development (i.e. the formation of resident associations, women's groups, community health interventions, and vocational training). In addition, participating households were granted a minimum de facto tenure of ten years. The project cost a total of ₹4,350 million. Community members and the private sector each contributed ₹600 million, NGOs provided ₹90 million, and the AMC paid for the rest of the project. Each slum household was responsible for no more than 12% of the cost of upgrading their home. This project has generally been regarded as a success. Having access to basic services increased the residents' working hours, since most work out of their homes. It also reduced the incidence of illness, particularly water-borne illness, and increased children's rates of school attendance. The SNP received the 2006 UNHABITAT Dubai International Award for Best Practice to Improve the Living Environment. However, concerns remain about the community's responsibility and capacity for the maintenance of the new infrastructure. Additionally, trust was weakened when the AMC demolished two of the slums that were upgraded as part of SNP to create recreational parks.

Religion and ethnicity According to the 2011 census, Hindus are the predominant religious community in the city, comprising 81.56% of the population, followed by Muslims (13.51%), Jains (3.62%), Christians (0.85%) and Sikhs (0.24%). Buddhists, people following other religions and those who did not state any religion make up the remainder.

The Cathedral of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Mirzapur is the cathedral of the Diocese of Ahmedabad.

Most of the residents of Ahmedabad are native Gujaratis, but there is a large population with origins outside the state who speak a variety of languages, mainly Hindi and Urdu (among Muslims). There is a Sindhi community dating from Partition, and a Marathi community dating back to Maratha rule over Gujarat. The city is home to some 2,000 Parsis (Zoroastrians), and some 125 members of the Bene Israel Jewish community. There is also one synagogue in the city.

At the time of the 2011 census, 68.44% of the population spoke Gujarati, 19.49% Hindi, 3.47% Urdu, 2.24% Sindhi, 2.02% Marathi 1.90% Marwari and 0.67% Telugu as their first language.

Geography Ahmedabad lies in western India at 53 metres (174 feet) above sea level on the banks of the Sabarmati river, in north-central Gujarat. It covers an area of 505 km² (195 sq mi). The Sabarmati frequently dried up in the summer, leaving only a small stream of water, and the city is in a sandy and dry area. However, with the execution of the Sabarmati River Front Project and Embankment, the waters from the Narmada river have been diverted to the Sabarmati to keep the river flowing throughout the year, thereby eliminating Ahmedabad's water problems. The steady expansion of the Rann of Kutch threatened to increase desertification around the city area and much of the state; however, the Narmada Canal network is expected to alleviate this problem. Except for the small hills of Thaltej-Jodhpur Tekra, the city is almost flat. Three lakes lie within the city's limits-Kankaria, Vastrapur and Chandola. Kankaria, in the neighbourhood of Maninagar, is an artificial lake developed by the Sultan of Gujarat, Qutb-ud-din, in 1451. According to the Bureau of Indian Standards, the town falls under seismic zone 3, in a scale of 2 to 5 (in order of increasing vulnerability to earthquakes). Ahmedabad is divided by the Sabarmati into two physically distinct eastern and western regions. The eastern bank of the river houses the old city, which includes the central town of Bhadra. This part of Ahmedabad is characterised by packed bazaars, the pol system of closely clustered buildings, and numerous places of worship. A pol (pronounced as pole) is a housing cluster which comprises many families of a particular group, linked by caste, profession, or religion. This is a list of pols in the old walled city of Ahmedabad in Gujarat, India. Heritage of these pols has helped Ahmedabad gain a place in UNESCO's Tentative Lists, in selection criteria II, III and IV. The secretary-general of EuroIndia Centre quoted that if 12,000 homes of Ahmedabad are restored they could be very helpful in promoting heritage tourism and its allied businesses. The Art Reverie in Moto Sutharvado is Res Artis center. The first pol in Ahmedabad was named Mahurat Pol. The old city also houses the main railway station, the main post office, and some buildings of the Muzaffarid and British eras. The colonial period saw the expansion of the city to the western side of the Sabarmati river, facilitated by the construction of Ellis Bridge in 1875 (and later the modern Nehru Bridge). The western part of the city houses educational institutions, modern buildings, residential areas, shopping malls, multiplexes and new business districts centred around roads such as Ashram Road, C. G. Road, and Sarkhej-Gandhinagar Highway.

The Sabarmati Riverfront is a waterfront area being developed along the banks of the Sabarmati River in Ahmedabad, India. Proposed in the 1960s, its construction began in 2005, and it opened in 2012.

Climate Ahmedabad has a hot semi-arid climate (Kppen climate classification: BSh), with marginally less rain than required for a tropical savanna climate. There are three main seasons: summer, monsoon, and winter. Aside from the monsoon season, the climate is extremely dry. The weather is hot from March to June; the average summer maximum is 43 C (109 F), and the average minimum is 24 C (75 F). From November to February, the average maximum temperature is 30 C (86 F), and the average minimum is 13 C (55 F). Cold winds from the north are responsible for a mild chill in January. The southwest monsoon brings a humid climate from mid-June to mid-September. The average annual rainfall is about 800 millimetres (31 in), but infrequent heavy torrential rains cause local rivers to flood, and it is not uncommon for droughts to occur when the monsoon does not extend as far west as usual. The highest temperature in the city was recorded on 20 May 2016, with it reaching 48 C (118 F).

Following a heat wave in May 2010, which reached 46.8 C (116.2 F) and claimed hundreds of lives, the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC), in partnership with an international coalition of health and academic groups and with support from the Climate & Development Knowledge Network, developed the Ahmedabad Heat Action Plan. Aimed at increasing awareness, sharing information and coordinating responses to reduce the health effects of heat on vulnerable populations, the action plan is the first comprehensive plan in Asia to address the threat of adverse heat on health. It also focuses on community participation, building public awareness of the risks of extreme heat, training medical and community workers to respond to and help prevent heat-related illnesses, and coordinating an interagency emergency response effort when heat waves hit. Ahmedabad has been ranked 7th best "National Clean Air City" (under Category 1 >10L Population cities) in India according to 'Swachh Vayu Survekshan 2024 Results'

Cityscape Early in Ahmedabad's history, under Ahmed Shah, builders fused Hindu craftsmanship with Persian architecture, giving rise to the Indo-Saracenic style. Many mosques in the city were built in this fashion. Sidi Saiyyed Mosque was built in the last year of the Sultanate of Gujarat. It is entirely arched and has ten stone latticework windows or jali on the side and rear arches. Private mansions or haveli from this era have carvings. A pol is a typical housing cluster of Old Ahmedabad. After independence, modern buildings appeared in Ahmedabad. Architects given commissions in the city included Louis Kahn, who designed the IIM-A; Le Corbusier, who designed the Shodhan and Sarabhai Villas, the Sanskar Kendra and the Mill Owners' Association Building, and Frank Lloyd Wright, who designed the administrative building of Calico Mills and the Calico Dome. B. V. Doshi came to the city from Paris to supervise Le Corbusier's works and later set up the School of Architecture (now CEPT). His local works include Sangath, Amdavad ni Gufa, Tagore Memorial Hall and the School of Architecture. Charles Correa, who became a partner of Doshi's, designed the Gandhi Ashram and Achyut Kanvinde, and the Ahmedabad Textile Industry's Research Association complex. Christopher Charles Benninger's first work, the Alliance Francaise, is located in the Ellis Bridge area. Anant Raje designed major additions to Louis Kahn's IIM-A campus, namely the Ravi Mathai Auditorium and KLMD. Some of the most visited gardens in the city include Law Garden, Victoria Garden, and Bal Vatika. Law Garden was named after the College of Law located nearby. Victoria Garden is located at the southern edge of the Bhadra Fort and contains a statue of Queen Victoria. Bal Vatika is a children's park situated on the grounds of Kankaria Lake and houses an amusement park. Other gardens in the city include Parimal Garden, Usmanpura Garden, Prahlad Nagar Garden, and Lal Darwaja Garden. Ahmedabad's Kamla Nehru Zoological Park houses a number of endangered species including flamingoes, caracals, Asiatic wolves, and chinkara. The Kankaria Lake, built in 1451 CE, is one of the biggest lakes in Ahmedabad. In earlier days, it was known by the name Qutub Hoj or Hauj-e-Kutub. Lal Bahadur Shastri lake in Bapunagar is almost 136,000 square metres. In 2010, another 34 lakes were planned in and around Ahmedabad of which five lakes will be developed by AMC; the other 29 will be developed by the Ahmedabad Urban Development Authority (AUDA). Vastrapur Lake is a small artificial lake located in the western part of Ahmedabad. Beautified by local authorities in 2002, it is surrounded by greenery and paved walkways and has become a popular leisure spot for the citizens. Chandola Lake covers an area of 1200 hectares. It is home to cormorants, painted storks, and spoonbills. During the evening, many people visit this place and take a stroll. There is a recently developed lake in Naroda, and there is also the world's largest collection of antique cars in Kathwada at IB farm (Dastan Farm). AMC has also developed the Sabarmati Riverfront. Looking at the health of traffic police staff deployed near the Pirana dump site, the Ahmedabad City Police is going to install outdoor air purifiers at traffic points so that the deployed staff can breathe fresh air.

Civic administration Ahmedabad is the administrative headquarters of Ahmedabad district and is administered by the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC). The AMC was established in July 1950 under the Bombay Provincial Corporation Act of 1949. The AMC commissioner is an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer appointed by the state government who reserves the administrative executive powers, whereas the corporation

is headed by the mayor of Ahmedabad. The city residents elect the 192 municipal councillors by popular vote, and the elected councillors select the deputy mayor and mayor of the city. The mayor, Bijal Patel, was appointed on 14 June 2018. The administrative responsibilities of the AMC are water and sewerage services, primary education, health services, fire services, public transport and the city's infrastructure. AMC was ranked 9th out of 21 cities for "the best governance & administrative practices in India in 2014. It scored 3.4 out of 10 compared to the national average of 3.3." Ahmedabad registers two accidents per hour. The city is divided into seven zones, constituting 48 wards. The city's urban and suburban areas are administered by the Ahmedabad Urban Development Authority (AUDA).

The city is represented by two elected members of parliament in the Lok Sabha (the lower house of the Indian Parliament) and 21 members of the Legislative Assembly at the Gujarat Vidhan Sabha (state legislative assembly). The Gujarat High Court is located in Ahmedabad, making the city the judicial capital of Gujarat. Law enforcement and public safety is maintained by the Ahmedabad City Police, which is headed by the Police Commissioner, an Indian Police Service (IPS) officer.

Public services Electricity is generated and distributed by Torrent Power Limited, which is owned and operated by the Ahmedabad Electricity Company (a previously state-run corporation). Ahmedabad is one of the few cities in India where the power sector is privatised.

Hospitals Ahmedabad Civil Hospital Care Institute of Medical Sciences, Ahmedabad GCS Medical College, Hospital and Research Centre Krishna Heart Institute Sola Civil Hospital SVP Hospital Victoria Jubilee Hospital for Women

Culture Ahmedabad is known for its rich architecture, traditional housing designs, community-oriented settlement patterns, urban structure, as well as its unique crafts and mercantile culture. The people of Ahmedabad celebrate a vast range of festivals. Celebrations and observances include Uttarayan, a harvest festival which involves kite-flying on 14 and 15 January. The nine nights of Navratri are celebrated with people performing Garba, the most popular folk dance of Gujarat, at venues across the city. The annual Rath Yatra procession takes place on the Ashadh-sud-bij date of the Hindu calendar at the Jagannath Temple. Festivals like Diwali, Holi, Christmas, and Muharram (pan-Indian festivals) are also celebrated.

Cuisine One of the most popular dishes in Ahmedabad is the Gujarati thali, which was first served commercially by Chandvilas Hotel in 1900. It consists of roti (chapati), dal, rice, and shaak (cooked vegetables, sometimes with curry), with accompaniments of pickles and roasted papads. Sweet dishes include laddoo, mango, and vedhmi. Dhoklas, theplas, and dhebras are other popularly consumed dishes in Ahmedabad. Beverages include buttermilk and tea. Drinking alcohol is legally banned in Ahmedabad, as Gujarat is a 'dry' state. Many restaurants serve Indian and international cuisines. Most of the food outlets serve only vegetarian food, as there exists a strong tradition of vegetarianism that has been maintained by the city's Jain and Hindu communities for centuries. The first all-vegetarian Pizza Hut in the world opened in Ahmedabad. KFC has a separate staff uniform for serving vegetarian items and prepares vegetarian food in a separate kitchen, as does McDonald's. Ahmedabad has a number of restaurants serving typical Mughlai non-vegetarian food in older areas like Bhatiyar Gali, Kalupur and Jamalpur. Manek Chowk is an open square near the centre of the city that functions as a vegetable market in the morning and a jewellery market in the afternoon. However, it is best known for becoming a vast congregation of food stalls in the evening, which sell local street food. It is named after the Hindu saint Baba Maneknath. The city has diverse food options for the vegan community as well. PETA India

has named Ahmedabad as India's most vegan-friendly city of 2024.

Art and crafts Parts of Ahmedabad are known for their folk art. The artisans of Rangeela 'pol' make tie-dyed bandhunis, while the cobbler shops of Madhupura sell traditional mojdi (also known as mojri) footwear. Idols of the Hindu deity Ganesha and other religious icons are made in large numbers by artisans in the Gulbai Tekra area. In 2019, there was a surge in demand for eco-friendly idols due to increased awareness surrounding the effects of submerging the traditional plaster-of-paris idols in the Sabarmati River. The shops at the Law Garden sell mirrorwork handicrafts.

Three main literary institutions were established in Ahmedabad for the promotion of Gujarati literature: Gujarat Vidhya Sabha, Gujarati Sahitya Parishad and Gujarat Sahitya Sabha. Saptak School of Music festival is held in the first week of the new year. This event was inaugurated by Ravi Shankar. The Sanskar Kendra, one of the several buildings in Ahmedabad designed by Le Corbusier, is a museum displaying the city's history, art, culture, and architecture. The Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya and the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Memorial have permanent displays of photographs, documents, and other articles relating to the Gujarat-born Indian independence movement leaders Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. The Calico Museum of Textiles has a large collection of Indian and international fabrics, garments, and textiles. The Hazrat Pir Mohammad Shah Library has a collection of rare original manuscripts in Arabic, Persian, Urdu, Sindhi, and Turkish. The Vechaar Utensils Museum has stainless steel, glass, brass, copper, bronze, zinc, and German silver tools on display. The Conflictorium is an interactive installation space that explores conflict in society through art. The Shreyas Foundation has four museums on its campus. The Shreyas Folk Museum (Lokayatan Museum) has art forms and artefacts from various Gujarati communities. The Kalpana Mangaldas Children's Museum has a collection of toys, puppets, dance and drama costumes, coins, and a repository of recorded music from traditional shows from all over the world. Kahani houses photographs of fairs and festivals of Gujarat. Sangeeta Vadyakhand is a gallery of musical instruments from India and other countries. The L. D. Institute of Indology houses 76,000 hand-written Jain manuscripts with 500 illustrated versions and 45,000 printed books, making it the largest collection of Jain scripts, Indian sculptures, terracottas, miniature paintings, cloth paintings, painted scrolls, bronzes, woodwork, Indian coins, textiles and decorative art, paintings of Rabindranath Tagore, and art of Nepal and Tibet. The N. C. Mehta Gallery of Miniature Paintings has a collection of ornate miniature paintings and manuscripts from all over India. In 1949, the Darpana Academy of Performing Arts was established by the scientist Dr. Vikram Sarabhai and his wife, Bharat Natyam dancer Mrinalini Sarabhai. Its influence has led Ahmedabad to become a centre of Indian classical dance.

Education Primary and secondary education Schools in Ahmedabad are either run publicly by the AMC or privately by entities, trusts, and corporations. The majority of schools are affiliated with the Gujarat Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board, although some are affiliated with the Central Board for Secondary Education, Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations, International Baccalaureate, and National Institute of Open School.

Higher education and research organisations Several institutions of higher education with a focus on engineering, management, and design are located in Ahmedabad. The oldest higher educational institution is Gujarat College. Among the universities in Ahmedabad, Gujarat University is a collegiate university established in 1949 and has 286 affiliated colleges, 22 recognized institutions, and 36 postgraduate departments. Indira Gandhi National Open University, commonly known as IGNOU is a public university in India and having an active regional centre in Ahmedabad region to offer 290 ODL programs and 40+ online programs to the students lives in the city. Other state universities in the city include Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University,

Gujarat Technological University, and Kaushalya Skill University. Gujarat Vidyapith, located near the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Stadium, was founded by Mahatma Gandhi in 1920 and became a deemed university in 1963. Private universities located in the city include Ahmedabad University, CEPT University (formerly Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology), Indus University, Nirma University, GLS University, and Silver Oak University. Two Institutes of National Importance are located in the city-Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad and National Institute of Design. Other institutions located in the city include the Physical Research Laboratory, which was established in 1947 by the physicist and astronomer Vikram Sarabhai. It is an autonomous research institute under the Department of Space with a focus on research in astronomy, experimental and theoretical physics, and earth sciences. The Ahmedabad Textile Industry's Research Association (ATIRA), registered in 1947, is an autonomous, non-profit association engaged in operational and applied research in the textile industry.

Media Newspapers in Ahmedabad include English dailies such as The Times of India, Indian Express, DNA, The Economic Times, The Financial Express, Ahmedabad Mirror, and Metro. Newspapers in other languages include Divya Bhaskar, Gujarat Samachar, Sandesh, Rajasthan Patrika, Sambhaav, and Aankhodekhi. The city is home to the historic Navajivan Publishing House, which was founded in 1919 by Mahatma Gandhi. The state-owned All India Radio Ahmedabad is broadcast both on medium wave bands and FM bands (96.7 MHz) in the city. It competes with five private local FM stations: Radio City (91.1 MHz), Red FM (93.5 MHz), My FM (94.3 MHz), Radio One (95.0 MHz), Radio Mirchi (98.3 MHz) and Mirchi Love (104 MHz). Gyan Vani (104.5 MHz) is an educational FM radio station run under the media co-operation model. In March 2012, Gujarat University started a campus radio service on 90.8 MHz, which was the first of its kind in the state and the fifth in India. The state-owned television broadcaster Doordarshan provides free terrestrial channels, while three multi system operators-InCableNet, Siti Cable, and GTPL-provide a mix of Gujarati, Hindi, English, and other regional channels via cable. Telephone services are provided by landline and mobile operators such as Jio, BSNL Mobile, Airtel, and Vodafone Idea.

Economy The gross domestic product of Ahmedabad was estimated at \$64 billion in 2014. The RBI ranked Ahmedabad as the seventh largest deposit centre and seventh largest credit centre nationwide as of June 2012. In the 19th century, the textile and garments industry received strong capital investment. On 30 May 1861 Ranchhodlal Chhotalal founded the first Indian textile mill, the Ahmedabad Spinning and Weaving Company Limited, followed by the establishment of a series of textile mills such as Calico Mills, Bagicha Mills and Arvind Mills. By 1905 there were about 33 textile mills in the city. The textile industry underwent rapid expansion during the First World War and benefited from the influence of Mahatma Gandhi's Swadeshi movement, which promoted the purchase of Indian-made goods. Ahmedabad was known as the "Manchester of the East" for its textile industry. The city is the largest supplier of denim and one of the largest exporters of gemstones and jewellery in India. The automobile industry is also important to the city; after Tata's Nano project, Ford, Suzuki and Peugeot have established engine and vehicle manufacturing plants near Ahmedabad.

The Ahmedabad Stock Exchange, located in the Ambavadi area of the city, was India's second-oldest stock exchange. It is now defunct. Two of the biggest pharmaceutical companies of India-Zydus Lifesciences and Torrent Pharmaceuticals-are based in the city. The Nirma group of industries, which runs detergent and chemical industrial units, has its corporate headquarters in the city. The city houses the corporate headquarters of the Adani Group, a multinational trading and infrastructure development company. The Sardar Sarovar Project of dams and canals has improved the supply of potable water and electricity for the city. The information technology industry has developed significantly in Ahmedabad, with companies such as Tata Consultancy Services opening offices in the city. A NASSCOM survey in 2002 on the "Super Nine Indian Destinations" for

IT-enabled services ranked Ahmedabad fifth among the top nine most competitive cities in the country. The city's educational and industrial institutions have attracted students and young skilled workers from the rest of India. Ahmedabad houses other major Indian corporates such as Cadila Healthcare, Rasna, Wagh Bakri, Cadila Pharmaceuticals, and Intas Biopharmaceuticals. Ahmedabad is the second largest cotton textile centre in India after Mumbai and the largest in Gujarat. Many cotton manufacturing units operate in and around Ahmedabad. Textiles are one of the major industries of the city. Gujarat Industrial Development Corporation has acquired land in Sanand taluka of Ahmedabad to set up three new industrial estates.

Infrastructure Transportation Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport, located in Hansol and operated by the Adani Group, is Ahmedabad's principal airport. The Dholera International Airport, located 110 km (68 mi) southwest of central Ahmedabad in Navagam village, is under construction and expects completion of its first phase by 2025. The Ahmedabad railway division, an operating division under the Western Railway zone of Indian Railways, is headquartered in the city. Ahmedabad Junction railway station, locally known as Kalupur railway station, is Ahmedabad's primary and Gujarat's busiest railway hub. Other major railway stations that service the city include Chandlodiya, Gandhigram, Maninagar, and Sabarmati Junction. Public transit includes the Ahmedabad Metro, a rapid transit system inaugurated in March 2019 with 40 km of track on two lines (East-West and North-South) and a daily ridership of 90,000. Phase 2 of the Ahmedabad Metro-connecting Motera Stadium northwards to Mahatma Mandir in Gandhinagar-began construction in February 2021 and is expected to be complete by 2026. Other public transit options include the Ahmedabad BRTS, also known as Janmarg (people's way), a bus rapid transit system inaugurated in October 2009 with a total fleet of 325 buses over 19 routes and a daily ridership of 190,000. Bus transportation is also provided by Ahmedabad Municipal Transport Service (AMTS) with 700 buses over 149 routes. Both the Ahmedabad BRTS and the AMTS are overseen by the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation. Ahmedabad also has self drive car rental service provided by private companies like Just Drive Self Drive Cars. The Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation introduced "AmdaBike", a public bicycle sharing system, in December 2019 to improve last mile connectivity. MYBYK is the main service provider for AmdaBike with 300 bicycle stations-including at Ahmedabad BRTS stations-and 4,000 bicycles.

Road National Highway 48 passes through Ahmedabad and connects it with New Delhi and Mumbai. The National Highway 147 also links Ahmedabad to Gandhinagar. It is connected to Vadodara through National Expressway 1, a 94 km (58 mi)-long expressway with two exits. This expressway is part of the Golden Quadrilateral project.

In 2001, Ahmedabad was ranked as the most-polluted city in India out of 85 cities by the Central Pollution Control Board. The Gujarat Pollution Control Board gave auto rickshaw drivers an incentive of ₹10,000 to convert the fuel of all 37,733 auto rickshaws in Ahmedabad to cleaner-burning compressed natural gas to reduce pollution. As a result, in 2008, Ahmedabad was ranked as the 50th most-polluted city in India.

Sports Cricket is one of the most popular sports in the city. Narendra Modi Stadium, also known as the Motera Stadium, originally Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Stadium built in 1982, hosts both one day internationals and test matches. It is the largest stadium in the world by capacity, with a seating capacity of 132,000 spectators. It hosted the 1987, 1996, 2011, and 2023 Cricket World Cups. It is the home ground of the Gujarat cricket team, a first-class team, which competes in domestic tournaments. Ahmedabad has a second cricket stadium at the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation's Sports Club of Gujarat. The final of 2023 Cricket World cup was held at the Narendra Modi Stadium. Ahmedabad is also home to the IPL team Gujarat Titans, who won its first title in 2022 in front of its home crowd. Other popular sports include field hockey, badminton, tennis, squash and golf.

Ahmedabad has nine golf courses. Mithakhali Multi Sports Complex is being developed by the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation to promote various indoor sports. Ahmedabad has also hosted national level games for roller skating and table tennis. Kart racing is gaining popularity in the city, with the introduction of a 380 metre long track based on Formula One design concepts.

Sabarmati Marathon has been organised every year in December-January since 2011; it has categories like a full and half-marathon, a 7 km dream run, a 5 km run for the visually disabled, and a 5 km wheelchair run. In 2007, Ahmedabad hosted the 51st national level shooting games. The 2016 Kabaddi World Cup was held in Ahmedabad at The Arena by Transtadia (a renovated Kankaria football ground). Geet Sethi, a five-time winner of the World Professional Billiards Championship and a recipient of India's highest sporting award, the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna, was raised in Ahmedabad. The Adani Ahmedabad Marathon has been organised by the Adani Group every year since 2017; it attracted 8,000 participants in its first edition and also hosted its first virtual marathon in 2020 in compliance with COVID-19 guidelines. In addition, the city is slated to host the 2030 Commonwealth Games.

Olympic aspirations Ahmedabad has been identified as a potential host city for the 2036 Summer Olympics. The Gujarat government has identified 33 sites in and around Ahmedabad for the development of infrastructure to support the Olympic bid. The city's bid is also being shaped with international expertise, including Australian consultants. A Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) is being set up by the Gujarat government to manage Ahmedabad's bid for the games. The fate of the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Stadium and the Veer Savarkar Sports Complex is under consideration as part of the city's preparation for the Olympics.

International relations Twin towns - sister cities Astrakhan, Russia Columbus, United States (2008) Guangzhou, China (September 2014) Jersey City, United States (1994)

See also Patan List of people from Ahmedabad List of tallest buildings in Ahmedabad Timeline of Ahmedabad

Notes References Michell, George; Shah, Snehal, eds. (1988), Ahmadabad, Marg Publications, ISBN 8185026033 Bobbio, Tommaso (2015), Urbanisation, Citizenship and Conflict in India: Ahmedabad 1900-2000, Routledge, ISBN 9781315718774

Further reading External links

Ahmedabad Collectorate. Archived 21 July 2011 at the Wayback Machine. Ahmadabad at the Encyclopdia Britannica 245711197 Ahmedabad on OpenStreetMap

Jaipur

Jaipur (Rajasthani: Jayapura, pronounced [d̪aɪpʊ]) is the capital and the largest city of the north-western Indian state of Rajasthan. As of 2011, the city had a population of 3.1 million, making it the tenth most populous city in the country. Located 268 km (167 miles) from the national capital New Delhi, Jaipur is also known as the Pink City due to the dominant color scheme of its buildings in the old city. Jaipur was founded in 1727 by Sawai Jai Singh II, the Kachhwaha Rajput ruler of Amer, after whom the city is named. It is one of the earliest planned cities of modern India, designed by Vidyadhar Bhattacharya. During the British colonial period, the city served as the capital of Jaipur State. After Indian independence in 1947, Jaipur became the capital of the newly formed state of Rajasthan in 1949. Jaipur is a popular tourist destination in India, forming a part of the Western Golden Triangle tourist circuit along with Delhi and Agra. The city serves as a gateway to other tourist destinations in Rajasthan, such as Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Bikaner, Udaipur, Bundi, Kota, and Mount Abu; it has two World heritage sites, Amer Fort, Hawa Mahal and Jantar Mantar. On 6 July 2019, the city was placed on the World Heritage Cities list. It is also known as the Paris of India. Due to its beauty, C.V. Raman called it the "Island of Glory".

Etymology Jaipur derives its name from Sawai Jai Singh II, the Kachhwaha ruler of Amer, who founded the city in 1727. In Sanskrit, variations of the word "pur" or "pura" are commonly used to refer to a city or town. So "Jaipur" essentially means "The City of Jai" or "Jai's City".

History Jaipur was founded by the Rajput chief of Kachhwaha clan, Jai Singh II, on 18 November 1727, who ruled the region from 1699 to 1743. He planned to shift his capital from Amber, 11 kilometres (7 mi) to Jaipur to accommodate the growing population and increasing scarcity of water. Jai Singh consulted with several architects while planning the layout of Jaipur and established the city based on the principles of Vastu Shastra and Shilpa Shastra, under the architectural guidance of Vidyadhar Bhattacharya. The construction of the city began in 1726. During the rule of Sawai Ram Singh II, the city was painted pink to welcome Albert Edward, Prince of Wales in 1876. Many of the avenues remain painted in pink, giving Jaipur a distinctive appearance and the epithet Pink City. In the 19th century, the city grew rapidly and had a population of 160,000 by 1900. The wide boulevards were paved, and its chief industries included metalwork and marble, fostered by a school of art founded in 1868. In August 1981, large areas of the city including the airport, were flooded due to heavy rains from a cloudburst, resulting in the deaths of eight people and much damage to the city's Dravyavati River. On 6 July 2019, the city was named to the World Heritage Cities list.

Geography **Topography** Jaipur is located in the northeastern part of Rajasthan and covers a total area of 467 square kilometres (180 sq mi). The city is surrounded by fertile alluvial plains to the east and south, and hill chains and desert areas to the north and west. Jaipur generally slopes downwards from north to south and then to the southeast. The city is surrounded by the Nahargarh hills in the north and Jhalana in the east, which is a part of the Aravalli range. The Dravyavati River is the primary drainage channel, which by 2014 had degenerated into an untreated sewage nallah. To address this issue, a plan for the rejuvenation of the river was developed by Jaipur Development Authority (JDA) in 2015. A 13 km (8.1 mi) stretch of Dravyavati riverfront out of 47.5 km (29.5 mi) was opened after rejuvenation in 2018 and the remaining project was completed in 2022.

Climate Jaipur has a monsoon-influenced hot semi-arid climate (Kppen climate classification BSh) with long, extremely hot summers and short mild to warm winters. Annual precipitation is over 625 millimetres or 25 inches, falling mostly in July and August due to the southwest monsoon, causing the average temperatures in these two months to be lower compared to drier May and June. During the monsoon, there are frequent, heavy rains and thunderstorms, but flooding is not common. The highest temperature ever recorded was 49.0 C (120.2 F), on 23 May 1994. The city's average temperature remains below 20 C or 68 F between December and February. These months are mild, dry, and pleasant, sometimes chilly. The lowest temperature ever recorded was -2.2 C (28.0 F) on 31 January 1905, 1 February 1905, and 16 January 1964. Jaipur, like many other major cities of the world, is a significant urban heat island zone with surrounding rural temperatures occasionally falling below freezing in winters.

Jaipur has been ranked 33rd best "National Clean Air City" (under Category 1 >10L Population cities) in India.

Demographics As of the official report, Jaipur Municipal Corporation had 5,99,507 households and a population of 3,046,163. 3,87,354 (12.72%) were under the age of 7. Jaipur had a sex ratio of 900 females per 1000 males and a literacy rate of 83.33% for those 7 years and above. Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes made up 392,285 (12.88%) and 115,258 (3.78%) of the population, respectively.

Languages The official language of Jaipur is Hindi and the additional official language is English. The native and main dialect of the city is Dhundari with Marwari and Standard Hindi dialects are also spoken, along with English. According to the 2011 census, 69.69% of the population recorded their language as Hindi, 9.85% Rajasthani, 5.86% Urdu, 4.36% Marwari, 3.93% Dhundari, and 2.54% Sindhi as their first language.

Religion According to the 2011 census, Hindus form the majority religious group, accounting for 77.9% of the city's population, followed by Muslims (18.6%), Jains (2.4%) and others (1.1%).

Government and politics Administration Jaipur Development Authority is the main planning authority of the city. Jaipur Municipal Corporation (JMC) was established in the year 1994. The area of the municipal corporation is 467 km² (180 sq mi) and is headed by a mayor. In 2020, JMC was bifurcated into two Municipal Corporations, namely Greater Jaipur Municipal Corporation and Jaipur Heritage Municipal Corporation with 150 and 100 wards respectively. The latest elections were held in October 2020. The current mayor of Greater JMC is Somya Gurjar and the mayor for Heritage JMC is Munesh Gurjar since 10 November 2020. The administration duties are carried out by the municipal commissioner and his group of officials. The estimated municipal budget for the year 2022-23 is ₹8,950 lakh (US\$11 million). The key revenue sources for the corporation are taxes which include House tax, Urban Development tax and octroi compensation along with various fees and user charges. Law and order is maintained by the Jaipur city police under the jurisdiction of the Rajasthan state department. There is a district and sessions court at Jaipur to handle civil and criminal cases.

Politics Jaipur consists of two parliamentary constituencies Jaipur and Jaipur Rural. The Jaipur Lok Sabha constituency comprises eight legislative assembly segments, all of which fall partly in Jaipur city.

Infrastructure Jaipur Development Authority is the nodal government agency responsible for the planning and development of Jaipur. The municipal corporation is responsible for maintaining the city's civic infrastructure and carrying out associated administrative duties. Electricity is distributed through Jaipur Vidyut Vitaran Nigam

Limited (JVNL) owned by the Government of Rajasthan. Jaipur municipal corporation has a fire department wing with 11 fire stations and 50 fire tenders. Established in 2018, Jaipur Water Supply and Sewerage Board (JWSSB) is responsible for the management of water supply and sewerage services in the city. The agency is responsible for water supply as per the standards stipulated by the Bureau of Indian Standards, the State Pollution Control Board and the Public Health Engineering Department (PHED). It will also be responsible for financing, designing, constructing, altering, repairing, operating, and maintaining various water supply and sewerage schemes in addition to commercial services such as meter reading, billing, and revenue collection. The city has been divided into four main drainage zones, with the northern and central zones draining into the Dravyavati river, while the western zone drains into the Chandler lake, and the eastern and southern areas combined drain into the Dhundh River. Sewerage systems and STPs have been constructed accordingly, with the installed capacity being 730 km of sewer lines and 442 MLD of sewage treatment. The corporation has a solid waste management system that includes door-to-door collection, transportation of garbage in covered vehicles, proper deployment of dustbins, use of modern equipment. The system ensures private investment as well as public participation with a small amount of monthly user charges. The size of the JMC garbage can be kept at a manageable level. Sanitation work in three zones has been contracted out to private agencies.

Economy As per the official records released by the Directorate of Economics and Statistics (Rajasthan), the GDP (nominal) of Jaipur district is estimated at INR 1,22,140 crores (\$15.8 billion) in 2020-21, with a per-capita GDP of INR 141,305. In addition to its role as the provincial capital, educational, and administrative center, the economy of Jaipur is fuelled by tourism, gemstone cutting, the manufacture of jewellery and luxury textiles, and information technology. Three major trade promotion organisations have their offices in Jaipur: Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry, (FICCI) the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI) and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) which has its regional offices here. In 2008, Jaipur was ranked 31 among the 50 Emerging Global Outsourcing cities. Jaipur Stock Exchange was one of the regional stock exchanges in India and was founded in 1989 but was closed in March 2015. Jaipur has emerged as a hub of automotive industries with JCB, Hero MotoCorp and Robert Bosch GmbH having their manufacturing plants in Jaipur. There are chemical manufacturers in the city including Emami and National Engineering Industries. The city is among top emerging IT hubs of India. Mahindra World City is an integrated business zone in Jaipur with several software and IT companies. The Government of Rajasthan have built Asia's largest incubator in Jaipur - the Bhamashah Techno Hub. Jaipur is a major hub for arts and crafts. It has many traditional shops selling antiques, jewellery, handicrafts, gems, bangles, pottery, carpets, textiles, leather, and metal products. Jaipur is one of India's largest manufacturers of hand-knotted rugs. Jaipur foot, a rubber-based prosthetic leg for people with below-knee amputations, was designed and is produced in Jaipur. World Trade Park Jaipur, is a shopping mall in Jaipur opened in 2012.

Culture and cityscape Tourism Jaipur is a major tourist destination in India forming a part of the Golden Triangle. In the 2008 Conde Nast Traveller Readers Choice Survey, Jaipur was ranked the seventh best place to visit in Asia. According to TripAdvisor's 2015 Traveller's Choice Awards, Jaipur was ranked first among the Indian destinations for the year. The Presidential Suite at the Raj Palace Hotel, billed at US\$45,000 per night, was listed in second place on CNN's World's 15 most expensive hotel suites in 2012. Jaipur was ranked eighth in "The Top 15 Cities in Asia". Jaipur Exhibition & Convention Centre (JECC) is Rajasthan's biggest convention and exhibition center. Visitor attractions include the Albert Hall Museum, Hawa Mahal, Jal Mahal, City Palace, Amer Fort, Jantar Mantar, Nahargarh Fort, Jaigarh Fort, Birla Mandir, Galtaji, Govind Dev Ji Temple, Garh Ganesh Temple, Moti Dungri Ganesh Temple, Gator Chhatri, Sanghiji Jain temple and the Jaipur Zoo. The Jantar Mantar observatory, a collection of 19 astronomical instruments and Amer Fort are World Heritage Sites. Hawa Mahal is a five-storey pyramidal shaped monument with 953 windows that rises 15 metres (50 ft) from its high base. Sisodiya Rani Bagh and Kanak Vrindavan are the major parks in Jaipur. Sambhar Lake is about 56

kms from the city.

Culture Jaipur has many cultural sites like Jawahar Kala Kendra established by Charles Correa and Ravindra Manch. The Government Central Museum hosts several art and antiquities. There is a government museum at Hawa Mahal and an art gallery at Viratnagar. There are statues depicting Rajasthani culture around the city. Jaipur has many traditional shops selling antiques and handicrafts, as well as contemporary brands reviving traditional techniques, such as Anokhi. The prior rulers of Jaipur patronised some arts and crafts. They invited skilled artisans, artists, and craftsmen from India and abroad who settled in the city. Some of the crafts include bandhani, block printing, stone carving and sculpture, tarkashi, zari, gota-patti, kinari and zardozi, silver jewellery, gems, kundan, meenakari and jewellery, Lakh ki Chudiya, miniature paintings, blue pottery, ivory carving, shellac work and leather ware. Jaipur has its own performing arts. The Jaipur Gharana for Kathak is one of the three gharanas of the major north Indian classical dance form of Kathak. The Jaipur Gharana of Kathak is known for its rapid intricate dance forms, vivacious body movements and subtle Abhinaya. The Ghoomar is a popular folk dance style. Tamasha is an art form where Kathputli puppet dance is shown in play form. Major festivals celebrated in Jaipur include Elephant Festival, Gangaur, Makar Sankranti, Holi, Diwali, Vijayadashami, Teej, Eid, Mahavir Jayanti and Christmas. Jaipur is also famous for the Jaipur Literature Festival, the world's largest free literature festival in which authors, writers, and literature lovers from all over the country participate.

Architecture The city was planned according to the Indian Vastu shastra by Vidyadhar Bhattacharya in 1727. Three gates are facing east, west, and north. The eastern gate is called Suraj pol (sun gate), the western gate is called Chand pol (moon gate) and the northern gate faces the ancestral capital of Amer. The architecture of the city was heavily influenced by the 17th century architectural renaissance during Mughal rule in Northern India. The city was divided into nine blocks, two of which contained the state buildings and palaces, with the remaining seven allotted to the public. Huge ramparts were built, pierced by seven fortified gates. The city is unusual among pre-modern Indian cities in the regularity of its streets, and the division of the city into six sectors by broad streets 34 m (111 ft) wide. The urban quarters are further divided by networks of gridded streets. Five-quarters wrap around the east, south, and west sides of a central palace quarter, with a sixth quarter immediately to the east. The Palace quarter encloses the Hawa Mahal palace complex, formal gardens, and a small lake. Nahargarh Fort, which was the residence of King Sawai Jai Singh II, crowns the hill in the northwest corner of the old city.

Cuisine Typical dishes include Dal Baati Churma, Missi Roti, Gatte ki Sabzi, Lahsun ki chutney, Ker Sangri, Makke ki Ghat, Bajre ki Ghat, Bajre ki Roti and Laal Maans. Jaipur is also known for its sweets which include Ghevar, Feeni, Mawa Kachori, Gajak, Meethi thuli, Chauguni ke laddu, and Moong Thal. Additionally, Jaipur houses world-famous brands like Haldiram's, a popular snack chain.

Transport Air Jaipur International Airport is located in the southern suburb of Sanganer, which is located 13 km (8.1 mi) from Jaipur. It is the 13th busiest airport in India in daily scheduled flight operations. The airport handled 363,899 international and 2,540,451 domestic passengers in 2015-2016. Jaipur Airport also provides air cargo services. During winter, sometimes flights towards Indira Gandhi International Airport are diverted to Jaipur Airport due to heavy fog in Delhi. The airport was granted the status of international airport on 29 December 2005. The airport's apron can accommodate 14 aircraft, and the new integrated terminal building can handle up to 1,000 passengers at peak hours.

Rail Jaipur Junction railway station was built in 1875 and is situated at the centre of Rajasthan. Serving almost 35,000 passengers daily, Jaipur Junction is the busiest station in Rajasthan. The cornerstone of the existing Jaipur railway station building was laid on 4 May 1956 by Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II of Jaipur, and construction took three years to complete. The station harnesses solar energy technology to power its operations. Jaipur is the headquarters of Jaipur Railway division and North Western Railway Zone of Indian Railways. Jaipur Junction is the busiest station in Rajasthan with more than 45,000 passengers daily. During Meter Gauge era, The fastest MG Train of India & the world, Pink City Express used to connect Jaipur with Delhi. Covering the 308.2 kilometres (191.5 mi) distance in 5 hrs 30 mins time, running at a record 56 kilometres per hour (35 mph) speed until 1997. In 1997 Pink City Express got replaced by now running 12015/12016 Ajmer Shatabdi Express

Jaipur Metro commenced commercial operation on 3 June 2015. Construction on the mostly elevated part of the first line, called Phase 1A, comprising 9.63 kilometres (5.98 mi) of route from Mansarovar to Chandpole Bazaar, started in November 2010, and was completed in 2014. The Jaipur Metro began commercial service between Chandpole and Mansarovar on 3 June 2015. The Jaipur Metro Rail system is India's sixth metro rail system. The Jaipur Metro is the first metro in India to run on a triple-storey elevated road and metro track. Phase 1-B, from Chandpole to Badi Chaupar, began operation on 23 September 2020. Phase-1A is operational between Mansarovar and Chandpole consisting of nine stations namely Mansarovar, New Aatish Market, Vivek Vihar, Shyam Nagar, Ram Nagar, Civil Line, Railway Station, Sindhi Camp and Chandpole. The Phase-1B was constructed with an estimated cost of ₹97.32 billion (\$1.74 billion). It became operational on 23 September 2020.

Road Jaipur is located on National Highway No.48 connecting Delhi and Mumbai. National Highway 52 links Jaipur with Kota and National Highway 21 links Jaipur with Agra. RSRTC operates bus service to major cities in Rajasthan and other states of New Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab and Gujarat. City buses are operated by Jaipur City Transport Services Limited (JCTSL) of RSRTC. The service operates more than 400 regular and low-floor buses. Major bus depots are located at Vaishali Nagar, Vidyadhar Nagar, and Sanganer. Jaipur BRTS was approved by the government in August 2006. Jaipur BRTS is managed by JCSTL, a special-purpose vehicle formed by Jaipur Development Authority and Jaipur Nagar Nigam. In Phase I, two corridors have been proposed: a "North-South Corridor" from Sikar Road to Tonk Road and an "East-West Corridor" from Ajmer Road to Delhi Road. A section of the North-South Corridor from the bypass near Harmada to Pani Pech became operational in 2010. Jaipur Ring Road is a project of Jaipur Development Authority to reduce increasing traffic of Jaipur city which connects NH-21 (Agra Road), NH-48 (Ajmer Road), NH-52 (Tonk Road), and NH-52 (Malpura Road) having a length of 150 km. The 57 km out of 150 km long six-lane Jaipur Ring Road has been completed at Rs. 1217 crore. Bhawani Singh Road, which begins from Nehru Sahkar Bhawan and ends at the intersection where Birla Mandir is situated and hosts notable places like Rambagh Palace, the Golf Club, and Jaipur Development Authority Office falling on its path.

Education The city had three colleges, including a Sanskrit college (1865) and a girls' school (1867) opened during the reign of the Maharaja Ram Singh II. Public and private schools in Jaipur are governed by the Central Board of Secondary Education or Board of Secondary Education, Rajasthan, International Board of education and follow a "10+2" plan. This plan entails eight years of primary education and four years of secondary education. The secondary school includes two years of upper secondary education, which is more specific and diverse than the two years of lower secondary education before it. Languages of instruction include English and Hindi. Notable institutions in the city are: University of Rajasthan, Rajasthan University of Health Sciences, ARCH Academy of Design, Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar Law University, Rajasthan Sanskrit University, Haridev

Joshi University of Journalism and Mass Communication, Suresh Gyan Vihar University, Malaviya National Institute of Technology, LNM Institute of Information Technology, National Institute of Ayurveda, Sawai Man Singh Medical College, Subodh College and Vedic Kanya College. Admission to Engineering colleges in Jaipur, many of which are affiliated to Rajasthan Technical University (Kota), is through the Rajasthan Engineering Admission Process. Some of the colleges that are affiliated to Rajasthan Technical University are Maharishi Arvind Institute of Engineering & Technology, Poornima College of Engineering, Arya Group of Colleges.

Communication Major telecommunication providers include Airtel, Jio, VI (Vodafone-Idea), and BSNL which are providing mobile telephony and there are also various internet service providers in the city. The government of Rajasthan has started free WiFi at various public places like Central Park, Jantar Mantar, among others. Rajasthan's first ISP, Data Ingenious Global Limited still providing a large number of broadband customers and email services in the entire Jaipur.

Media Major daily newspapers in Jaipur include Amar Ujala, Rajasthan Patrika, Dainik Bhaskar, Indian Express, Dainik Navajyoti and The Times of India. The state-owned All India Radio is broadcast both on the medium wave and FM band in the city. Private FM stations include Radio Mirchi (98.3 MHz), Radio City (91.1 MHz), My FM (94.3 MHz), FM Tadka 95 FM (95.0 MHz), Mirchi Love (104.0 MHz), Red FM 93.5 (93.5 MHz) and Gyan Vani (105.6 MHz). The city has a community FM channel in FM Radio 7 (90.4 MHz) by India International School Institutional Network. The public broadcaster Doordarshan (Prasar Bharati) provides a regional channel in addition to the private broadcasters.

Sports The main cricket stadium in the city, Sawai Mansingh Stadium, has a seating capacity of 30,000 and has hosted national and international cricket matches. It is also the home ground of IPL team Rajasthan Royals. Sawai Mansingh Indoor Stadium, Chaugan Stadium and Railway Cricket Ground are the other sporting arenas in the city. A new stadium has been proposed for Chonp Village with a seating capacity 75,000. It would be the third-largest cricket stadium in the world after the Narendra Modi Stadium and the Melbourne Cricket Ground. The city is represented in the IPL by Rajasthan Royals (2008-2016; 2018-present) and in Pro Kabaddi League by Jaipur Pink Panthers.

In popular culture Paul McCartney wrote and recorded the Jaipur tribute song "Riding into Jaipur" (4:08) whose minimalist lyrics say: riding to Jaipur, riding through the night, riding with my baby, oh what a delight, oh what a delight, it is. The song was released on his 2001 studio album *Driving Rain*. Jaipur is the setting for the film *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel* and its sequel, *The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel*, which follow the adventures of a group of senior European immigrants who retire to Jaipur and in the process discover their true selves. The opening song of *The Mountain Goats'* 2000 album *The Coroner's Gambit*, "Jaipur," describes the narrator's arrival at "the gates of the fabled pink city."

Notable people See also History of Jaipur List of districts of Rajasthan Outline of Rajasthan Largest Indian cities by GDP

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Geographic data related to Jaipur at OpenStreetMap

Lucknow

Lucknow (Hindi: Lakhna, pronounced [lʌkˈnəʊ]) is a metropolis and the second largest city of the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh where it serves as the capital and the administrative headquarters of the eponymous district and division. The city had a population of 2.8 million according to the 2011 census making it the eleventh most populous city and the twelfth-most populous urban agglomeration of India. It is an important centre of education, commerce, aerospace, finance, pharmaceuticals, information technology, design, culture, tourism, music, and poetry. Lucknow, along with Agra and Varanasi, forms the backbone of the Uttar Pradesh Heritage Arc. In the 6th century BCE, Lucknow was part of Kosala, one of the 16 Mahajanapadas during the late Vedic period. The Nawabs of Lucknow acquired the name after the reign of the third Nawab when Lucknow became their capital. In 1856, the East India Company first moved its troops to the border, then annexed the state for alleged maladministration. Awadh was placed under a chief commissioner. Lucknow was one of the major centres of the Indian Rebellion of 1857 and actively participated in India's independence movement, emerging as a strategically important North Indian city. The city witnessed some of the pivotal moments in the history of India including the first meeting of Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Muhammad Ali Jinnah during the Congress session of 1916 when Lucknow Pact was signed. Lucknow is ranked sixth in 2023, a list of the ten fastest growing job-creating cities in India. Multiple software and IT companies are present in the city. Lucknow is an emerging automobile hub. It has been the headquarters of the Central Command of the Indian Army. It is the home of several prominent educational and research institutes and universities, including the IIM Lucknow, the Indian Institute of Information Technology, Lucknow, AKTU and the Central Drug Research Institute. Lucknow is designated as a City of Gastronomy by UNESCO heritage.

Toponymy "Lucknow" is the anglicised spelling of the local pronunciation "Lakhnau". According to one legend, the city is named after Lakshmana, a hero of the Hindu epic Ramayana. The legend states that Lakshmana had a palace or an estate in the area, which was called Lakshmanapuri (Sanskrit: लक्ष्मणपुरी, lit. Lakshmana's city). The settlement came to be known as Lakhanpur (or Lachhmanpur) by the 11th century, and later, Lucknow. A similar theory states that the city was known as Lakshmanavati (Sanskrit: लक्ष्मणवती, fortunate) after Lakshmana. The name changed to Lakhanavati, then Lakhnauti and finally Lakhnau. Yet another theory states that the city's name is connected with Lakshmi, the Hindu goddess of wealth. Over time, the name changed to Laksmanauti, Laksmnaut, Lakhsnaut, Lakhsnau and, finally, Lakhnau. Another theory is that Lucknow was named after a very influential architect named Lakhna Ahir, who built the fort Qila Lakhna.

History From the sixth to the fourth century BCE, Lucknow was part of the realm of Kosala, one of the 16 Mahajanapadas in the Late Vedic period. From 1350 onwards, Lucknow and parts of the Awadh region were ruled by the Delhi Sultanate, Sharqi Sultanate, Mughal Empire, Nawabs of Awadh, the British East India Company and the British Raj. For about eighty-four years (from 1394 to 1478), Awadh was part of the Sharqi Sultanate of Jaunpur. Emperor Humayun made it a part of the Mughal Empire around 1555. Emperor Jahangir (1569-1627) granted an estate in Awadh to a favoured nobleman, Sheikh Abdul Rahim, who later built Machchi Bhawan on this estate. It later became the seat of power from where his descendants, the Sheikhs, controlled the region. The Nawabs of Lucknow acquired the name after the reign of the third Nawab when Lucknow became their capital. The city became North India's cultural capital, and its nawabs, best remembered for their refined and extravagant lifestyles, were patrons of the arts. Under their dominion, music and dance flourished, and construction of numerous monuments took place. Of the monuments standing today, the Bara Imambara, the Chota Imambara, and the Rumi Darwaza are notable examples. One of the Nawab's enduring

legacies is the region's syncretic Hindu-Muslim culture that has come to be known as the Ganga-Jamuni Tehzeeb.

Until 1719, the subah of Awadh was a province of the Mughal Empire administered by a governor appointed by the emperor. Persian adventurer Saadat Khan, also known as Burhan-ul-Mulk, was appointed Nizam of Awadh in 1722 and established his court in Faizabad, near Lucknow. Many independent kingdoms, such as Awadh, were established as the Mughal Empire disintegrated. The third Nawab, Shuja-ud-Daula (r. 1753-1775), fell out with the British after aiding the fugitive Nawab of Bengal, Mir Qasim. Roundly defeated at the Battle of Buxar by the East India Company, he was forced to pay heavy penalties and surrender parts of his territory. Awadh's capital, Lucknow rose to prominence when Asaf-ud-Daula, the fourth Nawab, shifted his court to the city from Faizabad in 1775. The British East India Company appointed a resident (ambassador) in 1773 and by early 19th century gained control of more territory and authority in the state. They were, however, disinclined to capture Awadh outright and come face to face with the Maratha Empire and the remnants of the Mughal Empire. In 1798, the fifth Nawab Wazir Ali Khan alienated both his people and the British and was forced to abdicate. The British then helped Saadat Ali Khan take the throne. He became a puppet king, and in a treaty of 1801, yielded large part of Awadh to the East India Company while also agreeing to disband his own troops in favour of a hugely expensive, British-controlled army. This treaty effectively made the state of Awadh a vassal of the East India Company, although it continued to be part of the Mughal Empire in name until 1819. The treaty of 1801 proved a beneficial arrangement for the East India Company as they gained access to Awadh's vast treasuries, repeatedly digging into them for loans at reduced rates. In addition, the revenues from running Awadh's armed forces brought them useful returns while the territory acted as a buffer state. The Nawabs were ceremonial kings, busy with pomp and show. By the mid-nineteenth century, however, the British had grown impatient with the arrangement and demanded direct control over Awadh.

In 1856, the East India Company first moved its troops to the border, then annexed the state for alleged maladministration. Awadh was placed under a chief commissioner - Sir Henry Lawrence. Wajid Ali Shah, the then Nawab, was imprisoned, then exiled by the East India Company to Calcutta. In the subsequent Indian Rebellion of 1857, his 14-year-old son Birjis Qadra, whose mother was Begum Hazrat Mahal, was crowned ruler. Following the rebellion's defeat, Begum Hazrat Mahal and other rebel leaders sought asylum in Nepal. It is the most important center of Shia Islam in the Indian Subcontinent and has influence of Persian, Shiite, Arabic and British culture and tradition in the architecture, language and customs.

Lucknow was one of the major centres of the Indian Rebellion of 1857 and actively participated in India's independence movement, emerging as a strategically important North Indian city. During the Rebellion, the majority of the East India Company's troops were recruited from both the people and nobility of Awadh. The rebels seized control of the state, and it took the British 18 months to reconquer the region. During that period, the garrison based at the Residency in Lucknow was besieged by rebel forces during the Siege of Lucknow. The siege was relieved first by forces under the command of Sir Henry Havelock and Sir James Outram, followed by a stronger force under Sir Colin Campbell. Today, the ruins of the Residency and the Shaheed Smarak offer an insight into Lucknow's role in the events of 1857. With the rebellion over, Oudh returned to British governance under a chief commissioner. In 1877, the offices of lieutenant-governor of the North-Western Provinces and chief commissioner of Oudh were combined; then in 1902, the title of chief commissioner was dropped with the formation of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, although Oudh still retained some marks of its former independence.

The Khilafat Movement had an active base of support in Lucknow, creating united opposition to British rule, to create a Caliphate. In 1901, after remaining the capital of Oudh since 1775, Lucknow, with a population of 264,049, was merged into the newly formed United Provinces of Agra and Oudh. In 1920, the provincial seat of government moved from Allahabad to Lucknow. Upon Indian independence in 1947, the United Provinces were reorganised into the state of Uttar Pradesh, and Lucknow remained its capital. Lucknow witnessed some of the pivotal moments in the history of India. One is the first meeting of the stalwarts Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Mohd Ali Jinnah during the Indian National Congress session of 1916 (the Lucknow pact was signed and moderates and extremists came together through the efforts of Annie Besant during this session only). The Congress President for that session, Ambica Charan Majumdar in his address said that "If the Congress was buried at Surat, it is reborn in Lucknow in the garden of Wajid Ali Shah." The Kakori conspiracy involving Ram Prasad Bismil, Ashfaq Ullah Khan, Rajendra Nath Lahiri, Roshan Singh and others, followed by the Kakori trial which captured the imagination of the country, also took place in Lucknow. Culturally, Lucknow has also had a tradition of courtesans, with popular culture distilling it in the avatar of the fictional Umrao Jaan. Along with the rest of India, Lucknow became independent from Britain on 15 August 1947. It has been listed as the 17th-fastest growing city in India and 74th in the world.

Geography The Gomti River, Lucknow's chief geographical feature, meanders through the city and divides it into the Trans-Gomti and Cis-Gomti regions. Situated in the middle of the Indus-Gangetic Plain, the city is surrounded by rural towns and villages: the orchard town of Malihabad, Kakori, Mohanlalganj, Gosainganj, Chinhat and Itaunja. To the east lies Barabanki, to the west Unnao, to the south Raebareli, while to the north lie the Sitapur and Hardoi. Lucknow city is located in a seismic zone III. Lucknow stands at an elevation of approximately 123 metres (404 ft) above sea level. The city had an area of 402 km² (155 square miles) until December 2019, when 88 villages were added to the municipal limits and the area increased to 631 km² (244 square miles). Bounded on the east by Barabanki, on the west by Unnao, on the south by Raebareli and in the north by Sitapur and Hardoi, Lucknow sits on the northwestern shore of the Gomti River. As of 2008, there were 110 wards in the city. Morphologically, three clear demarcations exist: The central business district, which is a fully built up area, comprises Hazratganj, Aminabad and Chowk. A middle zone surrounds the inner zone with concrete houses while the outer zone consists of villages.

Climate Lucknow has a humid subtropical climate (Kppen Cwa) with cool, dry winters from late November to February and dry, hot summers with sunshine from late March to June. More than nine-tenths of the annual rainfall occurs from July to October when the city receives an average of 827.2 millimetres (32.57 in) from the southwest monsoon winds, although occasionally frontal rainfall from the northeast monsoon will occur in January. In winter the maximum temperature is around 25 C or 77 F and the minimum is in the 3 to 7 C (37.4 to 44.6 F) range. Fog is quite common from mid-December to late January. Occasionally, Lucknow experiences colder winter spells than places like Shimla and Mussoorie, which are situated high up in the Himalayas. In the extraordinary winter cold spell of 2012-2013, Lucknow recorded temperatures below freezing point on two consecutive days and the minimum temperature hovered around freezing point for over a week. Summers are very hot with temperatures rising into the 40 to 45 C (104 to 113 F) range, the average maxima being in the high 30s Celsius. Lucknow has been ranked 4th best "National Clean Air City" (under Category 1 >10L Population cities) in India.

Flora and fauna Lucknow has a total of 5.66 per cent of forest cover, the state average being around 7 per cent. Native tree species are: shisham, dhak, mahuamm, babul, neem, peepal, ashok, khajur, mango and gular. Several varieties of mangoes, especially Dasherri, are grown in the Malihabad adjacent to the city and a block of the Lucknow district for export. The main crops are wheat, paddy, sugarcane, mustard, potatoes, and

vegetables such as cauliflower, cabbage, tomato and brinjal. Similarly, sunflowers, roses, and marigolds are cultivated over a fairly extensive area. Many medicinal and herbal plants are grown, while common Indian monkeys are found in patches in and around city forests such as Musa Bagh.

Established in 1921, the Lucknow Zoo is one of the oldest in the country. It houses a rich collection of animals from Asia, and other continents. The zoo also has enjoyable toy train rides for visitors. The city has a botanical garden, which is a zone of wide botanical diversity. It is home to the Uttar Pradesh State Museum, which has sculptural masterpieces dating back to the 3rd century AD, including intricately carved Mathura sculptures ranging from dancing girls to scenes from the life of Buddha.

Economy The major industries in the Lucknow urban agglomeration include aeronautics, automotive, machine tools, distillery chemicals, furniture and Chikan embroidery. Lucknow is among the top cities of India by GDP. It is a centre for research and development as home to the R&D centres of the National Milk Grid of the National Dairy Development Board, the Central Institute of Medical and Aromatic Plants, the National Handloom Development Corporation and U.P. Export Corporation. Lucknow is ranked sixth in a list of the ten fastest growing job-creating cities in India according to a study conducted by ASSOCHAM Placement Pattern, Lucknow's economy was formerly based on the tertiary sector and the majority of the workforce were employed as government servants. Large-scale industrial establishments are few compared to other northern Indian state capitals like New Delhi. The economy is growing with contributions from the fields of IT, manufacturing and processing and medical/biotechnology. Business-promoting institutions such as the CII have set up their service centres in the city. Major export items are marbled products, handicrafts, art pieces, gems, jewellery, textiles, electronics, software products, computers, hardware products, apparel, brass products, silk, leather goods, glass items and chemicals. Lucknow has promoted public-private partnerships in sectors such as electricity supply, roads, expressways, and educational ventures. Lucknow in recent times have lagged in growth and only ranks 7th in per capita income in the state of Uttar Pradesh, despite being the capital. Cities like Noida, Ghaziabad and Meerut have dominated in terms of industrial growth and attracting IT jobs and opportunities. Noida ranks highest, followed by Meerut in per capita income in the state.

Multiple software and IT companies are present in the city. Tata Consultancy Services and HCL Technologies are present in the city. IT companies are located in Gomtinagar. While it still lags behind cities like Noida, Greater Noida and Meerut in IT hubs. The city is also home to a number of important national and state level headquarters for companies including Sony Corporation and Reliance Retail. The handicrafts sector accounts for 60 per cent of total exports from the state. Companies such as Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, KARAM, Berger Paints, Britannia Industries, Exide Industries, Tata Motors have set up their plants in Lucknow. Tata Motors has a plant primarily for light commercial vehicles. It was set up in 1992 and has a production capacity of 640 vehicles per day. There is also a Tata Marcopolo factory in the city. To promote the textile industry in the city, the Indian government has allocated Rs. 2 billion (2000 million rupees) to set up a textile business cluster in the city. A sprawling 40 hectares (0.40 km²; 100 acres) IT city costing 15 billion Rupees is planned by the state government at the Chak Ganjaria farms site on the road to Sultanpur and they have already approved special economic zone status for the project, which is expected to create thousands of job opportunities in the state. A defence industrial corridor is also coming in the city. Traditionally, Lucknow has been a mandi town for mangoes, melons, and grains grown in the surrounding areas. Sugarcane-growing plantations and sugar industries are also in close proximity. This attracted Edward Dyer to set up a unit based on molasses in the city. Dyer Breweries was incorporated in 1855 and was Asia's first commercial brewery. The company name was changed to Mohan Meakin Brewery in 1967 (the word "Breweries" was dropped in the eighties as the company diversified into other industries).

Lucknow is famous for its small scale industries that are based on unique styles of embroidery, namely, Chikan and Lakhnawi Zardozi, both of which are significant foreign exchange earners. Chikan has caught the fancy of fashion designers in Bollywood and abroad. It is very popular in Indian markets and have very high demand. During the period of the Nawabs, kite-making reached a high level of artistry, and is still a small-scale industry. The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology set up Software Technology Parks of India in 2001. Currently, biotechnology and information technology are the two focus areas to promote economic development in and around the city. The Ministry of Science and Technology is setting up a biotech park in the city. Lucknow is also one of the selected cities for the Smart City project of STPI. The city is being developed on the lines of Delhi's National Capital Region and will be the headquarters of the Uttar Pradesh State Capital Region or Lucknow State Capital Region. It will be developed as the country's first AI City and the largest IT hub in the country. It ranks 7th in the state as per GDP per capita. Lucknow is also being set to manufacture Brahmos Missile with the establishment of two Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) centres. Lucknow region is emerging as a key industrial and logistics hub in North India after Delhi-NCR as the warehousing sector.

Administration General administration Lucknow division which consists of six districts, and is headed by the Divisional Commissioner of Lucknow, who is an IAS officer of high seniority, the Commissioner is the head of local government institutions (including municipal corporations) in the division, is in charge of infrastructure development in his division, and is also responsible for maintaining law and order in the division. The District Magistrate of Lucknow reports to the divisional commissioner. The current commissioner is Mukesh Meshram. Lucknow district administration is headed by the District Magistrate of Lucknow, who is an IAS officer. The DM is in charge of property records and revenue collection for the central government and oversees the elections held in the city. The district has five tehsils, viz. Sadar, Mohanlalganj, Bakshi ka Talab, Malihabad and Sarojini Nagar, each headed by a Sub-Divisional Magistrate. The current DM is Vishak G. The district magistrate is assisted by a Chief Development Officer (CDO), eight Additional District Magistrates (ADM) (Finance/Revenue, East, West Trans-Gomti, Executive, Land Acquisition-I, Land Acquisition-II, Civil Supply), one City Magistrate (CM) and seven Additional City Magistrates (ACM).

Civic administration The Lucknow Municipal Corporation oversees civic activities in the city. The city's first municipal body dates from 1862 when the municipal board was established. The first Indian mayor, Syed Nabiullah, was elected in 1917 after the enforcement of the UP Municipalities Act, 1916. In 1948, the Uttar Pradesh government changed the system from an electoral one to an administrator-run one and Bhairav Datt Sanwal became the administrator. In 1959, the UP Municipalities Act, 1916 was replaced with Uttar Pradesh Municipal Corporation Act, 1959 and Lucknow Municipal Corporation was established in 1960 with Raj Kumar Shrivastava becoming the mayor. The head of the corporation is the mayor, but the executive and administration of the corporation are the responsibility of the municipal commissioner, who is an Uttar Pradesh government-appointed Indian Administrative Services (IAS) officer of high seniority. The last municipal election took place in 2017 when Sanyukta Bhatia from Bharatiya Janata Party became the first female mayor of Lucknow. Bharatiya Janata Party won 57 councillor seats, Samajwadi Party won 31 seats, independent candidates won 14 seats, and Indian National Congress won 8 seats. Ajay Kumar Dwivedi, an IAS officer, is the present municipal commissioner since 17 August 2020. The Uttar Pradesh Municipal Corporation Act, 1959 gives provisions for the establishment of ward committees, but they have not been formed yet. The sources for revenue generation for Lucknow Municipal Corporation include property tax, user charges for SWM, penalties, rent from municipal properties, income from water storage, water transmission, drainage and sanitation, grants, and charges for services such as birth and death certificates. There is also an executive committee (**■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■**) made up of 12 elected councillors from different political parties, who decide on

policy matters of the corporation.

Police administration The Police Commissionerate System was introduced in Lucknow on 14 January 2020. The district police is headed by a Commissioner of Police (CP), who is an IPS officer of ADGP rank and is assisted by two Joint Commissioners of Police (IG rank), and five Deputy Commissioners of Police (SP rank). Lucknow is divided into five zones, each headed by a Deputy Commissioner of Police. Of the two Joint Commissioners, one looks after law and order, the other crime. The current police commissioner of Lucknow City is IPS SB Shirodkar. The district police observes the citizenry through high-technology control rooms and all important streets and intersections are under surveillance with the help of CCTVs and drone cameras. Crowd-control is carried out with the help of pepper-spraying drones. There are more than 10,000 CCTV cameras deployed by the Lucknow Police Department across the city roads and trijunctions, making Lucknow the first city in the country to do so. The Lucknow Modern Police Control Room (abbreviated as MCR) is India's biggest 'Dial 112' service centre with 300 communication officers to receive distress calls from all over the state and 200 dispatch officers to rush for police help. It is billed as the India's most hi-tech police control room. Lucknow is also the center for 1090 Women Power line, a call center based service directed at dealing with eve-teasing. An Integrated 'Dial 112' Control Room building is also there which is having the world's biggest modern Police Emergency Response System (PERS).

Judicial institutions There is a bench of the Allahabad High Court in Lucknow. Aside from this, Lucknow has a District & Sessions Court, five CBI Courts, one family court and two railway courts. The High Court Bench as well as the District & Sessions Court and the CBI courts are located in Qaiser Bagh, and the railway courts are in Charbagh. People have often criticised various governments for being judicial focussed on central UP. Where western Uttar Pradesh is the economic center and has long demanded the setting up of another high court bench in west Uttar Pradesh. Almost 54% of all cases reaching the High Court originate from the 22 districts of Western UP. Still, western Uttar Pradesh does not have a High Court. People have to travel 700 km away to Allahabad for hearings. In fact 6 high courts (Shimla, Delhi, Jaipur, Chandigarh, Nainital, Jammu) from other states are closer than Allahabad from western Uttar Pradesh. Western Uttar Pradesh has been advocating to have a high court bench in Meerut so that Western Uttar Pradesh can get justice. This is important as west UP accounts for 51.71% of the state GDP.

Central government offices Since 1 May 1963, Lucknow has been the headquarters of the Central Command of the Indian Army, before which it was the headquarters of Eastern Command. Lucknow also houses a branch office of National Investigation Agency which is responsible for combating terrorist activities in India. It oversees five states of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh for Naxal and terrorist activities. The Commission of Railway Safety of India, under the Ministry of Civil Aviation, formerly had its head office in the Northeast Railway Compound in Lucknow.

Infrastructure The development of infrastructure in the city is overseen by Lucknow Development Authority (LDA), which comes under the Housing Department of Uttar Pradesh government. The Divisional Commissioner of Lucknow acts as the ex-officio chairman of LDA, whereas a vice-chairman, a government-appointed IAS officer, looks after the daily matters of the authority. The current vice-chairman of the Lucknow Development Authority is IAS Akshay Tripathi. LDA prepared the Lucknow master plan 2031.

Politics As the seat of the government of Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow is the site of the Uttar Pradesh Vidhan Sabha, a bench of the Allahabad High Court and numerous government departments and agencies. Rajnath Singh, the

Union Defense Minister, from Bharatiya Janata Party is the Member of Parliament from Lucknow Lok Sabha Constituency. Kaushal Kishore is the Member of Parliament from Mohanlalganj (Lok Sabha constituency), the second Lok Sabha constituency in Lucknow. Apart from the Lok Sabha Constituency, there are nine Vidhan Sabha Constituencies within Lucknow city:

Public utilities Madhyanchal Power Distribution Corporation Limited, also known as Madhyanchal Vidyut Vitaran Nigam is responsible for supplying electricity in Lucknow. It is under the Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Ltd. Fire safety services are provided by the Uttar Pradesh Fire Service, which is under the state government. Jal Nigam is responsible for developing and maintaining the infrastructure for water supply, sewer lines, and storm water drains. Jal Sansthan is responsible for supplying water and providing water and sewer connections. Lucknow Municipal Corporation is responsible for the solid waste management of Lucknow.

Transport Roads Two major Indian National Highways have their intersection at Lucknow's Hazratganj intersection: NH-30 to Shahjahanpur Via Sitapur in north and NH-30 to south Allahabad via Raebareli, NH-27 to Kanpur and Porbandar via Jhansi and Silchar via Gorakhpur. Multiple modes of public transport are available such as metro rail, taxis, city buses, cycle rickshaws, auto rickshaws and compressed natural gas (CNG) low-floor buses with and without air-conditioning. In recent times, air-conditioned buses have also been introduced. CNG was introduced as an auto fuel to keep air pollution under control. Radio Taxis are operated by several major companies like Ola and Uber. The Lucknow Outer Ring Road is a 104 km long, 8-lane highway project designed to improve traffic flow and connectivity in and around Lucknow, and facilitate faster travel to neighbouring districts. The road connects to several national and state highways, including Sultanpur Road, Rae Bareli Road, Hardoi Road, Kanpur Road, Ayodhya Road, and Sitapur Road.

Bus City buses Lucknow city's bus service is operated by Lucknow City Transport Services Limited (LCTSL), a public sector passenger road transport corporation headquartered in Triloki Nath Margh. It has 260 buses operating in the city. There are around 35 routes in the city. Terminals for city buses are located in Gudamba, Viraj Khand, Alambagh, Scooter India, Institute of Engineering and Technology, Babu Banarasi Das University, Safedabad, Pasi qila, Charbagh, Andhe Ki Chowki, Jankipuram, Gomti Nagar Railway Station, Budheshwar Intersection, Faizabad Road and Qaiserbagh. There are four bus depots in Gomti Nagar, Charbagh, Amausi, and Dubagga.

Inter-state buses The major Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar Inter-state Bus Terminal (ISBT) in Alambagh provides the main inter and intrastate bus lines in Lucknow. Located on National Highway 25, it provides adequate services to ongoing and incoming customers. There is a smaller bus station at Qaiserbagh. The bus terminal formally operated at Charbagh, in front of the main railway station, has now been re-established as a city bus depot. This decision was taken by the state government and UPSRTC to decongest traffic in the railway station area. A third smaller bus stop, Awadh Bus Stand is situated in Gomti Nagar. Kanpur Lucknow Roadways Service is a key service for daily commuters who travel back and forth to the city for business and educational purposes. Air conditioned "Royal Cruiser" buses manufactured by Volvo are operated by UPSRTC for inter state bus services. Main cities served by the UPSRTC intrastate bus service are Allahabad, Varanasi, Jaipur, Jhansi, Agra, Delhi, Gorakhpur. The cities outside Uttar Pradesh that are covered by inter-state bus services are Jaipur, New Delhi, Kota, Singrauli, Faridabad, Gurgaon, Dausa, Ajmer, Dehradun, and Haridwar.

Railways Lucknow is served by several railway stations in different parts of the city. The main long-distance railway station is Lucknow Railway Station located at Charbagh. It has an imposing structure built in 1923 and

acts as the divisional headquarters of the Northern Railway division. Its neighbouring and second major long-distance railway station is Lucknow Junction railway station operated by the North Eastern Railway. The city is an important junction with links to all major cities of the state and country such as New Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Chandigarh, Nashik, Amritsar, Jammu, Kota jn., Chennai, Bangalore, Ahmedabad, Pune, Indore, Bhopal, Jhansi, Jabalpur, Jaipur, Raipur and Siwan.

The city has a total of fourteen railway stations. Earlier the meter-gauge services originated at Aishbagh and connected to Lucknow city, Daliganj and Mohibullapur. Now all the stations have been converted to broad gauge. All stations lie within the city limits and are well interconnected by bus services and other public road transport. Suburban stations include Bakshi Ka Talab and Kakori. The Lucknow-Kanpur Suburban Railway was started in 1867 to cater for the needs of commuters travelling between Lucknow and Kanpur. Trains running on this service also stop at numerous stations at different locations in the city forming a suburban rail network.

Stations The city is served by the following stations-

Aishbagh Junction Alamnagar Amausi Badshahnagar Daliganj Junction Gomti Nagar Lucknow Charbagh Lucknow City Lucknow Junction Malhaur Manak Nagar Mohibullapur Transport Nagar Utraitia Junction

Air transport Lucknow is served by Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport. The airport has been ranked the second-best in the world in the small airport category. The airport is suitable for all-weather operations and provides parking facilities for up to 14 aircraft. Covering 480 hectares (4.80 km²; 1,187 acres), with Terminal 1 for international flights and Terminal 2 for domestic flights, the airport can handle Boeing 767 to Boeing 747-400 aircraft allowing significant passenger and cargo traffic. International destinations include Dubai, Muscat, Sharjah, Riyadh, Bangkok, Dammam and Jeddah. The planned expansion of the airport will allow Airbus A380 jumbo jets to land at the airport. The Nagarjuna construction company (NCC) has started the construction of the new terminal at Lucknow Airport which is expected to be completed by December 2021 to meet the growing demand. There is also a plan for runway expansion. The airport is the eleventh busiest airport in India, the busiest in Uttar Pradesh, and the second-busiest in northern India.

Metro Lucknow Metro is a rapid transit system which started its operations from 6 September 2017. Lucknow Metro system is the most-quickly built metro system in the world and most economical high-speed rapid transit system project in India. The commencement of civil works started on 27 September 2014. Lucknow has the third largest metro network in the state after Noida, Meerut and Ghaziabad. In February, Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav approved to set up of a metro rail system for the state capital. It is divided into two corridors the north-south corridor connecting Munshipulia to CCS International Airport and the east-west corridor connecting Charbagh Railway Station to Vasant Kunj. This will be the most expensive public transport system in the state but will provide a rapid means of mass transport to decongest traffic on city roads. Construction of the first phase will be complete by March 2017. The completion of metro rail project is the primary object of Uttar Pradesh government currently headed by the chief minister Yogi Adityanath On 5 September 2017, Home Minister Rajnath Singh and CM Yogi Adityanath showed green flag to the Lucknow Metro.

Cycling Lucknow is among the most bicycle-friendly cities in Uttar Pradesh. Bike-friendly tracks have been established near the chief minister's residence in the city. The four-and-a-half-kilometre (2.8 mi) track encompasses La-Martiniere College Road next to a golf club on Kalidas Marg, where the chief minister resides,

and Vikramaditya Marg, which houses the office of the ruling party. The dedicated four-metre (13 ft) lane for cyclists is separate from the footpath and the main road. With Amsterdam as the inspiration, new cycle tracks are to be constructed in the city to make it more cycle-friendly, with facilities like bike rental also in the works. In the year 2015, Lucknow also hosted a national level cycling event called 'The Lucknow Cyclothon' in which professional and amateur cyclists took part. An under-construction cycle track network by the government of Uttar Pradesh is set to make Lucknow the city with India's biggest cycle network.

Demographics The population of Lucknow Urban Agglomeration (LUA) rose above one million in 1981, while the 2001 census estimated it had risen to 2.24 million. This included about 60,000 people in the Lucknow Cantonment and 2.18 million in Lucknow city and represented an increase of 34.53% over the 1991 figure. According to the provisional report of 2011 Census of India, Lucknow city had a population of 2,815,601, of which 1,470,133 were men and 1,345,468 women. This was an increase of 25.36% compared to the 2001 figures. Between 1991 and 2001, the population registered growth of 32.03%, significantly lower than the 37.14% which was registered between 1981 and 1991. The initial provisional data suggests a population density of 1,815 inhabitants per square kilometre (4,700/sq mi) in 2011, compared to 1,443 in 2001. As the total area covered by the Lucknow district is only about 2,528 square kilometres (976 sq mi), the population density was much than the 690 inhabitants per square kilometre (1,800/sq mi) recorded at the state level. The Scheduled Caste population of the state represented 21.3% of the total population, a figure higher than the state average of 21.15%. Hindi is spoken by 88.16% of the population, while Urdu is spoken by 10.26%. The sex ratio in Lucknow city stood at 915 females per 1000 males in 2011, compared to the 2001 census figure of 888. The average national sex ratio in India is 940 according to the Census 2011 Directorate. The city has a total literacy level in 2011 of 84.72% compared to 67.68% for Uttar Pradesh as a whole. In 2001 these same figures stood at 75.98% and 56.27%. In Lucknow city, the total literate population totalled 2,147,564 people of which 1,161,250 were male and 986,314 were female. Despite the fact that the overall work-participation rate in the district (32.24%) is higher than the state average (23.7%), the rate among females in Lucknow is very low at only 5.6% and shows a decline from the 1991 figure of 5.9%.

Architecture Lucknow's buildings show different styles of architecture with the many iconic buildings built during the British and Mughal era. More than half of these buildings lie in the old part of the city. The Uttar Pradesh Tourism Department organises a "Heritage Walk" for tourists covering the popular monuments. Among the extant architecture, there are religious buildings such as Imambaras, mosques, and other Islamic shrines as well as secular structures such as enclosed gardens, baradaris, and palace complexes.

Bara Imambara in Hussainabad is a colossal edifice built in 1784 by the then Nawab of Lucknow, Asaf-ud-Daula. It was originally built to provide assistance to people affected by the deadly famine, which struck the whole of Uttar Pradesh in the same year. It is the largest hall in Asia without any external support from wood, iron or stone beams. The monument required approximately 22,000 labourers during construction. The 18 m (60 feet) tall Rumi Darwaza, built by Nawab Asaf-ud-daula (r. 1775-1797) in 1784, served as the entrance to the city of Lucknow. It is also known as the Turkish Gateway, as it was erroneously thought to be identical to the gateway at Constantinople. The edifice provides the west entrance to the Great Imambara and is embellished with lavish decorations.

Various architectural styles can be seen in the historical areas of Lucknow. The University of Lucknow shows a huge inspiration from the European style while Indo-Saracenic Revival architecture is prominently present in the Uttar Pradesh Vidhan Sabha building and Charbagh Railway station. Dilkusha Kothi is the remains of a palace constructed by the British resident Major Gore Ouseley around 1800 and showcases English Baroque

architecture. It served as a hunting lodge for the Nawab of Awadhs and as a summer resort. The Chattar Manzil, which served as the palace for the rulers of Awadh and their wives is topped by an umbrella-like dome and so named on account of Chattar being the Hindi word for "umbrella". Opposite Chattar Manzil stands the 'Lal Baradari' built by Nawab Saadat Ali Khan I between 1789 and 1814. It functioned as a throne room at coronations for the royal courts. The building is now used as a museum and contains delicately executed portraits of men who played major roles in the administration of the kingdom of Oudh.

Another example of mixed architectural styles is La Martiniere College, which shows a fusion of Indian and European ideas. It was built by Major-General Claude Martin who was born in Lyon and died in Lucknow on 13 September 1800. Originally named "Constantia", the ceilings of the building are domed with no wooden beams used for construction. Glimpses of Gothic architecture can also be seen in the college building.

Lucknow's Asafi Imambara exhibits vaulted halls as its architectural speciality. The Bara Imambara, Chhota Imambara and Rumi Darwaza stand in testament to the city's Nawabi mixture of Mughlai and Turkish styles of architecture while La Martiniere college bears witness to the Indo-European style. Even the new buildings are fashioned using characteristic domes and pillars, and at night these illuminated monuments become the city's main attractions.

Around Hazratganj, the city's central shopping area, there is a fusion of old and modern architecture. It has a multi-level parking lot in place of an old and dilapidated police station making way for extending the corridors into pebbled pathways, adorned with piazzas, green areas and wrought-iron and cast-iron lamp-posts, reminiscent of the Victorian era, flank both sides of the street.

Culture In common with other metropolitan cities across India, Lucknow is multicultural and multilingual. Many of the cultural traits and customs peculiar to Lucknow have become living legends today. The city's contemporary culture is the result of the amalgamation of the Hindu and Muslim rulers who ruled the city simultaneously. The credit for this goes to the secular and syncretic traditions of the Nawabs of Awadh, who took a keen interest in every walk of life and encouraged these traditions to attain a rare degree of sophistication. Modern-day Lucknowites are known for their polite and polished way of speaking which is noticed by visitors. The residents of Lucknow call themselves Lucknowites or Lakhnawi. It also represents the melting pot of globalisation where the legacy of Nawab's culture continues to be reflected in the traditional vocabulary of the Urdu language of the city along with better avenues for modernisation present here.

Traditional outfit Lucknow is known for its ghararas. It is a traditional women's outfit that originated from the Nawabs of Awadh. It is a pair of loose trousers with pleats below the knee worn with a kurta (shirt) and a dupatta (veil). It is embroidered with zari and zardozi along with gota (decorative lace on the knee area). This dress is made from over 24 metres (26 yd) of fabric, mostly silk, brocade and kamkhwab.

Language and poetry Although Uttar Pradesh's primary official language is Hindi, the most commonly spoken language is colloquial Hindustani. Indian English is also well understood and is widely used for business and administrative purposes, as a result of India's British heritage and Commonwealth tradition, as well as globalisation. The Urdu language is also a part of Lucknowi culture and heritage. It is mostly used by wealthier families, the remaining members of the royal family as well as in Urdu poetry and on public signs. The government has taken many innovative steps to promote Urdu. Awadhi, a dialect of the Hindi dialect continuum, is the native dialect of Lucknow and has played an important role in Lucknow's history and is still used in the

city's rural areas and by the urban population on the streets. Historically, Lucknow was considered one of the great centres of Muslim culture. Two poets, Mir Babar Ali Anis and Mirza Dabeer, became legendary exponents of a unique genre of Muslim elegiacal poetry called marsiya centred on Imam Husain's supreme sacrifice in the Battle of Karbala, which is commemorated during the annual observance of Muharram. The revolutionary Ram Prasad Bismil, who was hanged by the British at Gorakhpur jail, was largely influenced by the culture of Lucknow and remembered its name in his poetry. Surrounding towns such as Kakori, Daryabad, Fatehpur, Barabanki, Rudauli, and Malihabad produced many eminent Urdu poets and litterateurs including Mohsin Kakorvi, Majaz, Khumar Barabankvi and Josh Malihabadi.

Cuisine The Awadh region has its own distinct Nawabi-style cuisine. Since ages, the Bawarchis (chefs) and Rakabdars (royal chefs) have developed great finesse in cooking and presentation of food, under royal patronage. This gave rise to the art of cooking over a slow fire (or Dum style cooking), which has become synonymous with "Awadhi" cuisine. These Bawarchis added elaborately prepared dishes like kababs, kormas, kaliya, nahari-kulchas, zarda, sheermal, roomali rotis and warqi parathas to the traditional "Awadhi" dastarkhwaan (feast of dishes). The best-known dishes of this area consist of biryanis, kebabs and breads. Kebabs are served in a variety of styles; kakori, galawati, shami, boti, patili-ke, ghutwa and seekh are among the available varieties. Tunde ke kabab restaurants are popular for a type of soft kebab developed by a one-armed chef (hence the name Tunday) for a Nawab who had lost his teeth. The reputation of Lucknow's kebabs is not limited to the local population and the dish attracts people from other cities as well as other countries.

Lucknow is also known for its chaats, street food, kulfi, paan and sweets. Nahari kulche, a dish prepared using goat mutton, is popular among non-vegetarians. Sheermal is a type of sweet bread dish (paratha) prepared in Lucknow. Some restaurants in the city are around a century old; there are also many high-end restaurants, bakeries, lounges and pubs which cater to the affluent class and foreign travellers.

Festivals Indian festivals such as Christmas, Diwali, Durga Puja, Eid, Holi, Raksha Bandhan and Vijayadashami are celebrated with great pomp and show in the city. Some of the other festivals or processions are as follows:

Lucknow Mahotsav Lucknow Festival is organised every year to showcase Uttar Pradesh art and culture and to promote tourism. With 1975-76 designated South Asian Tourism Year, Lucknow took the opportunity to promote the city's art, culture and tourism to national and international tourists. The first Lucknow Festival was staged as a part of this promotion and ever since, with some exceptions, Lucknow Mahotsava has taken place annually.

Lucknow Literature Festival This is an annual literature festival held in the month of November every year since 2013. Lucknow LitFest is India's second-largest literature festival featuring some of the greatest writers and thinkers from across the globe.

Lucknow is known as a seat of Shia Islam and the epitome of Shia culture in India. Muslims observe Muharram, the first month of the Islamic calendar and on Ashura (the tenth day of the month) mourn the memory of Imam Husain, grandson of the Islamic prophet, Muhammad. Muharram processions in Lucknow have a special significance and began during the reign of the Awadh Nawabs. Processions such as Shahi Zarih, Jaloos-e-Mehndi, Alam-e-Ashura and Chup Tazia had special significance by the Shia community and were affected with great religious zeal and fervour until 1977 the government of Uttar Pradesh banned public Azadari

processions. For the following twenty years, processions and gatherings took place in private or community spaces including Talkatora Karbala, Bara Imambara (Imambara Asifi), Chota Imambara (Imambara Husainabad), Dargah Hazrat Abbas, Shah Najaf and Imambara Ghufraan Ma'ab. The ban was partially lifted in 1997 and Shias were successful in taking out the first Azadari procession in January 1998 on the 21st of Ramadan, the Muslim fasting month. The Shias are authorised to stage nine processions out of the nine hundred that are listed in the register of the Shias. Deva Mela

Deva Mela is celebrated during the anniversary of Sufi saint Haji Waris Ali Shah at Dewa, India which is 26 K.M from Lucknow city. Sufi songs (Qawwalis) are recited at the Dargah. Devotees also carry sheets/Chadars to the shrines.

Chup Tazia The procession originated in Lucknow before spreading to other parts of South Asia. Dating back to the era of the Nawabs, it was started by Nawab Ahmed Ali Khan Shaukat Yar Jung a descendant of Bahu Begum. It has become one of the most important Azadari processions in Lucknow and one of the nine permitted by the government. This last mourning procession takes place on the morning of the 8th of Rabi' al-awwal, the third Muslim month and includes alam (flags), Zari and a ta'zieh (an imitation of the mausoleums in Karbala). It originates at the Imambara Nazim Saheb in Victoria Street then moves in complete silence through Patanala until it terminates at the Karbala Kazmain, where the colossal black ta'zieh is buried.

Bada Mangal festival is celebrated in May as a birthday of the ancient Hanuman temple known as Purana Mandir. During this festival, fairs are conducted by the local public in the whole city. Bhandara is organised by local people almost in all streets across the city and serves free food to all the passersby irrespective of religion. Many of the Muslim Community also set up these Bhandara. It is celebrated in the name of Hindu God Lord Hanuman and reflects the Ganga Jamuni Tehzeeb.

Dance, drama and music The classical Indian dance form Kathak originated from Lucknow. Wajid Ali Shah, the last Nawab of Awadh, was a great patron and a passionate champion of Kathak. Lachhu Maharaj, Acchchan Maharaj, Shambhu Maharaj and Birju Maharaj have kept this tradition alive. Lucknow is also the home city of the eminent ghazal singer Begum Akhtar. A pioneer of the style, "Ae Mohabbat Tere anjaam pe rona aaya" is one of her best known musical renditions. Bhatkande Music Institute University at Lucknow is named after the musician Vishnu Narayan Bhatkande Bhartendu Academy of Dramatic Arts (BNA), also known as Bhartendu Natya Academy, is a theatre-training institute situated at Gomti Nagar. It is a deemed university and an autonomous organisation under the Ministry of Culture, Government of Uttar Pradesh. It was set up in 1975 by the Sangeet Natak Akademy (government of Uttar Pradesh), and became an independent drama school in 1977. Apart from government institutes, there are many private theatre groups including IPTA, Theatre Arts Workshop (TAW), Darpan, Manchkriti and the largest youth theatre group, Josh. This is a group for young people to experience theatre activities, workshops and training. Lucknow is also the birthplace of musicians including Naushad, Talat Mahmood, Anup Jalota and Baba Sehgal as well as British pop celebrity Sir Cliff Richard.

Lucknow Chikan Lucknow is known for embroidery works including chikankari, zari, zardozi, kamdani and gota making (gold lace weaving). Chikankari is an embroidery work well known all over India. This 400-year-old art in its present form was developed in Lucknow and it remains the only location where the skill is practised today. Chikankari constitutes 'shadow work' and is a delicate and artistic hand embroidery done using white thread on fine white cotton cloth such as fine muslin or chiffon. Yellowish muga silk is sometimes used in addition to the

white thread. The work is done on caps, kurtas, saris, scarfs, and other vestments. The chikan industry, almost unknown under the Nawabs, has not only survived but has flourished. About 2,500 entrepreneurs have engaged in manufacturing chikan for sale in local, national and international markets with Lucknow the largest exporter of chikan embroidered garments. As a sign of recognition, in December 2008, the Indian Geographical Indication Registry (GIR) accorded Geographical Indication (GI) status for chikankari, recognising Lucknow as the exclusive hub for its manufacture.

Quality of life Lucknow was ranked "India's second happiest city" in a survey conducted by IMRB International and LG Corporation, after only Chandigarh. It fared better than other metropolitan cities in India including New Delhi, Bangalore and Chennai. Lucknow was found to be better than other cities in areas such as food, transit and overall citizen satisfaction.

Education Lucknow is home to a number of prominent educational and research organisations including Indian Institute of Management Lucknow (IIM-L), Indian Institute of Information Technology, Lucknow (IIIT-L), Central Drug Research Institute (CDRI), Indian Institute of Toxicology Research, National Botanical Research Institute (NBRI), Institute of Engineering and Technology (IET Lko), Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia National Law University (RMNLU), Institute of Hotel Management, Lucknow (IHM), Sanjay Gandhi Postgraduate Institute of Medical Sciences (SGPGI), Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia Institute of Medical Sciences and King George's Medical University (KGMU). The National P.G. College, affiliated to the University of Lucknow, was ranked as the second-best college imparting formal education in the country by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council in 2014. Educational institutions in the city include seven universities including the University of Lucknow, a Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University, a technical university (Uttar Pradesh Technical University), a law university (RMLNLU), an Islamic university (DUNU) and many polytechnics, engineering institutes and industrial-training institutes. Other research organisations in the state include the Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants, Central Food Technological Research Institute, and the Central Glass and Ceramic Research Institute. Some of Uttar Pradesh's major schools are located in Lucknow including Delhi Public School having its branches in Eldeco, Indiranagar. Lucknow International Public School, City Montessori School, Colvin Taluqdars' College, Centennial Higher Secondary School, St. Francis' College, Loreto Convent Lucknow, St. Mary's Convent Inter College, Kendriya Vidyalaya, Lucknow Public School, Stella Maris Inter College, Seth M.R. Jaipuria School, Cathedral School, Mary Gardiner's Convent School, Modern School, Amity International School, St. Agnes, Army Public School, Mount Carmel College, Study Hall, Christ Church College, Rani Laxmi Bai School and Central Academy, Study Hall School, Vidyasthali Kanar Inter College (Unit of SHEF foundation). City Montessori School, with over 20 branches spread throughout the city, is the only school in the world to have been awarded a UNESCO Prize for Peace Education. CMS also holds a Guinness World Record for being the largest school in the world, with over 40,000 pupils. The school consistently ranks among the top schools of India. La Martiniere Lucknow, founded in 1845, is the only school in the world to have been awarded a battle honour. It is one of the oldest schools in India, often ranked among the top ten schools in the country. Lucknow also has a sports college named Guru Gobind Singh Sports College.

Minority institutions and seminaries There are several minority educational institutions in the city including Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama, Integral University, Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti Language University, Lucknow Christian College, Shia College, Era University, Era's Lucknow Medical College, and Maulana Azad National Urdu University's satellite campus.

Media Lucknow has had an influence on the Hindi film industry as the birthplace of poet, dialogue writer and script writer K. P. Saxena, Suresh Chandra Shukla born 10 February 1954 along with veteran Bollywood and

Bengali film actor Pahari Sanyal, who came from the city's well known Sanyal family. Several movies have used Lucknow as their backdrop including Vinod Kumar's 1968 film Mere Huzoor, Shashi Kapoor's Junoon, Muzaffar Ali's Umrao Jaan and Gaman, Satyajit Ray's Shatranj ke khiladi. Ismail Merchant's Shakespeare Wallah, PAA, the 2022 Hindi feature film Vikram Vedha and Shailendra Pandey's JD. In the movie Gadar: Ek Prem Katha Lucknow was used to depict Pakistan, with locations including Lal Pul, the Taj Hotel and the Rumi Darwaza used in Tanu Weds Manu. Some parts of Ladies vs Ricky Bahl, Bullett Raja, Ishaqzaade, Ya Rab and Dabangg 2 were shot in Lucknow or at other sites nearby. A major section of the Bollywood movie, Daawat-e-Ishq starring Aditya Roy Kapur and Parineeti Chopra was shot in the city as was Baawre, an Indian TV drama, airing on the Life OK channel. The government has announced to develop two film cities in Lucknow. The news channel Bharat Samachar is headquartered in Lucknow. Newspaper services in the city include Amar Ujala, Dainik Jagran, Hindustan Times, The Times of India and Dainik Bhaskar. The Pioneer newspaper, headquartered in Lucknow and started in 1865, is the second-oldest English-language newspaper in India still in production. The country's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru founded The National Herald in the city prior to World War II with Manikonda Chalapathi Rau as its editor. One of the earliest All India Radio stations has been operational in Lucknow since 1938. FM radio transmission started in Lucknow in 2000. The city has the following FM radio stations:

Radio City 91.1 MHz Red FM 93.5 MHz Radio Mirchi 98.3 MHz AIR FM Rainbow 100.7 MHz Fever 104 FM 104.0 MHz Gyan Vani 105.6 MHz (educational) AIR FM Vividh Bharti 101.6 MHz CMS FM 90.4 MHz (educational) Mirchi Love 107.2 FM BBDU FM 90.8 MHz (of Babu Banarsi Das University) "My Lucknow My Pride" is a mobile app launched by the district administration of Lucknow circa December 2015 in efforts to preserve "the cultural heritage of Lucknow" and to encourage tourism.

Sports Cricket, association football, badminton, golf, and hockey are among the most popular sports in the city. The main sports hub is the K. D. Singh Babu Stadium, which also has a swimming pool and indoor games complex. There are plans to develop KDSB stadium along the lines of Ekana Stadium. KDSB stadium needs Rs 2 billion in funds to redesign and upgrade as per international standards. The other stadiums are Dhyani Chand AstroTurf Stadium, Mohammed Shahid Synthetic Hockey Stadium, Dr. Akhilesh Das Gupta Stadium at Northern India Engineering College, Babu Banarsi Das UP Badminton Academy, Charbagh, Mahanagar, Chowk and the Sports College near the Integral University. In September 2017, Ekana International Cricket Stadium was opened to the public as it hosted 2017-18 Duleep Trophy. On 6 November 2018 Ekana International Cricket Stadium hosted its first T20 international match between Indian national cricket team and West Indies cricket team. It is the third largest cricket stadium in India by capacity after Kolkata's Eden Gardens and Ahmedabad's Narendra Modi Stadium. For decades Lucknow hosted the Sheesh Mahal Cricket Tournament. Lucknow is the headquarters for the Badminton Association of India. Located in Gomti Nagar, it was formed in 1934 and has been holding national-level tournaments in India since 1936. Syed Modi Grand Prix is an international Badminton competition held here. Junior-level Badminton players receive their training in Lucknow after which they are sent to Bangalore. The Lucknow Race Course in Lucknow Cantonment is spread over 28.42 hectares (0.2842 km²; 70.22 acres); the course's 3.2 kilometres (2.0 mi)-long race track is the longest in India. The Lucknow Golf Club is on the sprawling greens of La Martinire College. The city has produced several national and world-class sporting personalities. Lucknow sports hostel has produced international-level cricketers Mohammad Kaif, Piyush Chawla, Suresh Raina, Gyanendra Pandey, Praveen Kumar and R. P. Singh. Other notable sports personalities include hockey Olympians K. D. Singh, Jaman Lal Sharma, Mohammed Shahid and Ghaus Mohammad, the tennis player who became the first Indian to reach the quarter finals at Wimbledon. In October 2021, an IPL franchise based in Lucknow was officially formed and was later named Lucknow Super Giants. It will play its home matches at BRSABV Ekana Cricket Stadium.

City-based clubs Parks and recreation The city has parks and recreation areas managed by the Lucknow Development Authority. These include Kukrail Reserve Forest, Qaisar Bagh, Gomti Riverfront Park, Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia Park, Eco Park, Ambedkar Memorial Park, Janeshwar Mishra park, the largest park in Asia, Buddha Park, Hathi Park. It boasts lush greenery, a human-made lake, India's longest cycling and jogging track and a variety of flora. The plan is also to set up a giant Ferris wheel inside the park on the lines of London Eye, providing a panoramic view of the city. Kukrail Picnic Spot (crocodile-breeding sanctuary), located near Lucknow Indiranagar Area. This is Asia's largest crocodile-breeding center. This along with a small zoo and ample open space make it unique.

Sister cities Brisbane, Queensland Australia

Notable individuals Historical places See also Aastha Hospice & Geriatric Care Centre (2003) Amir-ud-daula Public Library Fun Republic Mall List of cities in India by population List of million-plus urban agglomerations in India List of twin towns and sister cities in India National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources Largest Indian cities by GDP

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Surat

Surat (Gujarati: [suːɾət̪]) is a city in the western Indian state of Gujarat. The word Surat directly translates to face in Gujarati, Hindi and Urdu. Located on the banks of the river Tapti near its confluence with the Arabian Sea, it used to be a large seaport. It is now the commercial and economic centre of South Gujarat, and one of the largest urban areas of western India. It has well-established diamond and textile industry, and is a major supply centre for apparels and accessories. About 90% of the world's diamonds are cut and polished in Surat. It is the second largest city in Gujarat after Ahmedabad and the eighth largest city by population and ninth largest urban agglomeration in India. It is the administrative capital of the Surat district. The city is located 284 km (176 mi) south of the state capital, Gandhinagar; 265 km (165 mi) south of Ahmedabad; and 289 km (180 mi) north of Mumbai. The city centre is located on the Tapti River (popularly known as Tapi), close to the Arabian Sea. Surat will be the world's fastest-growing city from 2019 to 2035, according to a study conducted by Economic Times. The city registered an annualised GDP growth rate of 11.5% over the seven fiscal years between 2001 and 2008. Surat was awarded "best city" by the Annual Survey of India's City-Systems (ASICS) in 2013. Surat has been selected as the first smart IT city in India which is being constituted by the Microsoft CityNext Initiative tied up with IT services majors Tata Consultancy Services and Wipro. The city has 2.97 million internet users, about 65% of total population. Surat was selected in 2015 for an IBM Smarter Cities Challenge grant. Surat has been selected as one of twenty Indian cities to be developed as a smart city under PM Narendra Modi's flagship Smart Cities Mission. Surat is also home to the world's largest office building by floor area, the Surat Diamond Bourse. Surat is listed as the second cleanest city of India as of 21 August 2020 according to the Swachh Survekshan 2020 on 20 August. It suffered a major pipeline fire which caused some damage. In the 2021 edition of the same survey, it slipped to 12th place and further dropped to 25th in 2023. Despite these recent fluctuations, Surat continues to implement various cleanliness initiatives and shared the title of the cleanest city in India with Indore in the 2023 Swachh Survekshan Awards, highlighting its ongoing efforts towards maintaining high cleanliness standards.

History Etymology The traditional account is that Surat was built up by a wealthy Hindu merchant named Gopi around the year 1500. At first, the town had no name and was simply called "the new place". Gopi consulted with astrologers, who suggested the name "Suraj", or "Suryapur", or "city of the sun". Gopi sent a request to the unnamed king of Gujarat for this to be the new town's name. The Muslim king altered it to Surat after the word surah, which is the name of the chapters of the Qur'an. However, the names Suryapur and Surat are both mentioned in sources before 1500, so both the name and the town predate Gopi's time.

Duarte Barbosa described Surat as Suratt. Jacob Peeters referred to Surat as Sourratte which is a Dutch name. There are many other names of Surat in history. Surat is referred to as Surrat, Surate or Soorat in some literature.

Surat before the Mughal Empire Before the rise of Surat in the 1500s, the nearby town of Rander was the main commercial centre in the area. Rander had a prominent Arab merchant community involved in overseas trade with regions such as Burma, China, Malaya, and Sumatra. In the 1500s, Rander declined due to Portuguese raids. Surat became an important port city around the same time, and some of Rander's merchant population likely moved to Surat for economic opportunity. Early references to Surat appear by the 10th century, but they shed little light on what type of settlement it was. As Suryapur, it is mentioned along with Bharuch as a place where an army from Anhilwara passed through in 990 en route to attack the ruler of Lata. Suryapur may also be

the port called "Surabaya" mentioned by the 10th-century Arabic geographer Istakhri as being four days south of Khambhat and five days north of Sanjan. Other Arabic authors spelled the name as "Subara" or "Sufara". The identification of this place with Surat, though, is uncertain, and in any case these early mentions of Suryapur or Surabaya do not indicate whether it was a sizeable town or just a small hamlet. Another early mention of Surat is in the 1190s, after Qutb ud-Din Aibak, then a general of Muhammad Ghuri, defeated the Chaulukya king Bhima II in battle. According to the local histories of Bakshi Mian Walad Shah Ahmad and Munshi Ghulam Mohi ud-Din, Aibak went as far south as Rander and Surat. Surat was then ruled by a Hindu chief based at nearby Kamrej. This ruler initially tried to take refuge in a garden at Surat, but then decided that he had no chance of resisting Aibak's forces and offered his submission. Aibak, in turn, confirmed him as ruler of Kamrej. From 1297, Gujarat was gradually conquered by Allauddin Khilji, the ruler of the principal state in north India at the time, the Delhi Sultanate. The Delhi Sultanate appointed Governors to control Gujarat, but this had to be forcefully imposed, notably in 1347, when Muhammad bin Tughluq sacked Surat, among other cities. Firoz Shah Tughlaq later built a fort at Surat in 1373. According to Bakshi Mian's account, when Zafar Khan was appointed governor of Gujarat in 1391, he appointed his son Masti Khan to govern Rander and Surat, but Bakshi Mian adds that Surat was not very populous at this point. As control from the Delhi Sultanate waned at the end of the 14th century, pressure grew for an independent Gujarat, culminating in Zafar Khan declaring independence in 1407. Surat was controlled directly by the nobles of the Rajput kingdom of Baglana who fell either under the Gujarat Sultans or the Deccan sultanates. However, following the fall of the Gujarat Sultanate in 1538 it was controlled by more local nobles starting with Chengiz Khan who enjoyed absolute authority over Surat, Broach, Baroda and Champaner. However, in 1637, Aurangzeb fully annexed Baglana into the Mughal Empire. In 1514, the Portuguese traveler Duarte Barbosa described Surat as an important seaport, frequented by many ships from Malabar and various parts of the world. By 1520, the name of the city had become Surat. It was burned by the Portuguese (1512 and 1530), conquered by the Mughals (1573) and was twice raided by the Maratha king Shivaji (17th century). Mughal Emperor Akbar placed major importance on Gujarat and successfully obtained numerous towns in Gujarat. The Mughals were able to conquer Surat due to his campaigns against Gujarat during his rule. In the 1570s, he launched two major campaigns against Gujarat-one of a much longer duration and one much shorter. The fall of Surat occurred during the former campaign and lasted one month and seventeen days. Akbar implemented large military power during these conquests, fighting many battles. Notably, the conquest of Surat was an important catalyst for overseas trade during the rule of the Mughal Empire as it became the most important port city of that reign and evolved into a bustling trading hub.

During the Mughal Empire It was the most prosperous port in the Mughal empire. Despite being a rich city, Surat looked like a typical "grubby" trader's town with mud-and-bamboo tenements and crooked streets, although along the riverfront there were a few mansions and warehouses belonging to local merchant princes and the establishments of Turkish, Armenian, English, French and Dutch traders. There were also hospitals for cows, horses, flies and insects run by religious Jains, which puzzled travelers. Some streets were narrow while others were of sufficient width. In the evening, especially near the Bazaar (marketplace), the streets became crowded with people and merchants (including Banyan merchants) selling their goods. Surat was a populous city during the Mughal era but also had a large transient population: during the monsoon season, when ships could come and go from the ports without danger, the city's population would swell. In 1612, England established its first Indian trading factory in Surat. The city was looted twice by the Maratha king Shivaji, with the first sacking occurring in 1664. Shivaji's raids scared trade away and caused ruin to the city. Later, Surat became the emporium of India, exporting gold and cloth. Its major industries were shipbuilding and textile manufacture. The coast of the Tapti River, from Athwalines to Dumas, was specially meant for shipbuilders, who were usually Rassis. The city continued to be prosperous until the rise of Bombay (present-day Mumbai). Afterward, Surat's shipbuilding industry declined and Surat itself gradually declined throughout the 18th century.

During 1790-1791, an epidemic killed 100,000 Gujaratis in Surat. The British and Dutch both claimed control of the city, but in 1800, the British took control of Surat. A fire in 1837 resulted in more than 500 deaths and the destruction of much of the city. By the middle of the 19th century, Surat had become a stagnant city with about 80,000 inhabitants. When India's railways opened, the city started becoming prosperous again. Silks, cotton, brocades, and objects of gold and silver from Surat became famous and the ancient art of manufacturing fine muslin was revived.

Surat under British Raj Under British Raj, Surat saw a period of decline from its success under the Mughal Empire. Though it remained a pivotal city for textile-based products, it was less important to the British as a port city than it was for the Mughals. Nevertheless, Surat was very interconnected with Asia and Europe, involving trade with both Europeans and Armenian merchants. Tactically, Surat involved itself in trade in fields that did not compete with existing European products, such as pearls and silver. The textile industry was also a large portion of Surat's shipping success. But despite being a primary port for textiles, Surat rarely manufactured these textiles locally. Bullion was also quite important to Surat's economy during this time. During his first-hand experience on a trip to Surat, English priest John Ovington recalls the great ores Surat possessed, such as gold and silver. He recollects the notable "abundance of Pearls" and other precious stones like diamonds that could "be purchas'd here [Surat] at very reasonable rates." As Ovington observed, this industry was imperative to Surat's prosperity under the British Raj and allowed it to maintain its relevance as a port city. During the Quit India Movement of Mahatma Gandhi in 1942, A large number of 3,000 Koli cultivators from Matwad, Karadi, Machhad and Kothmadi in Surat District fought against the Indian Imperial Police at Matwad with lathis and dharias on 21 August 1942. In this fight, four persons including one policeman died. The kolis also snatched away four police rifles and two bayonets. Kolis smashed up the Jalalpore Railway Station, removed the Rails and burnt down the post office. After this, situation in the neighbouring towns of Borsad, Anand and Thasra taluqas became so tense that troops were marched through the villages between 22 and 24 August 1942 to restore order.

Armenians in Surat The Armenian community in Surat, India, flourished from the 16th to the 17th centuries, leaving a lasting impact on the city's history. The Armenian gravestones in Surat, dating back to this period, are intricate and well-preserved, showcasing the community's presence and customs. Armenians in Surat were renowned traders, dealing in jewelry, precious stones, cotton, and silk. They established trade routes to destinations such as Egypt, the Levant, Turkey, Venice, and Leghorn, often traveling with their families. The British recognised the Armenians' business prowess, seeking their cooperation for trading privileges in the Mughal court. Today, these gravestones serve as a poignant reminder of the Armenian community's significant contributions to Surat's history and culture.

Modern period Post Independence After India gained independence on 15 August 1947, Surat became part of India. At that time it was a part of Bombay State. Later it became the part of Gujarat state. Along with Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Pune, Nagpur and Vadodara, Surat became one of the fast growing cities and major commercial and industrial centers of Western India. During the post-independence period, Surat has experienced considerable growth in industrial activities especially textiles and chemical along with trading activities.

1994 Plague Surat faced a major health crisis in 1994. News of a plague outbreak in Surat occurred in September 1994, and when the possibility of quarantine for the city was mentioned, many residents of Surat fled the city. About a quarter of Surat's population fled the city, including people who were in the incubation phase of the disease. This, in turn, partly contributed to the spread of the plague throughout India. In the media, the cause of the plague was attributed to poor garbage disposal. However, the spread was instead brought

about by rodents and fleas which were inadvertently caused by garbage in Surat. The disease ran more rampant through the slum population of Surat. In order to combat the spread of this disease, Surat closed its schools, universities, and public places for an indefinite period. They also ordered the shutdown of important industrial businesses, including diamond-cutting units. Eventually, antibiotics were given out and the plague was controlled. Prior to the major plague outbreak, Surat Municipal Corporation was suspended in 1993, leaving no major elected body in charge. During the plague, Suryadevara Ramachandra Rao was elected as the new administrator and launched extensive cleaning campaigns to combat the outbreak. This was a major step towards sanitation and cleanliness in Surat. Rao's campaigns included launching hotel and shop inspections (to address their irresponsible garbage practices) for several months and calling for the broadening of roads. He enforced designated sweeping of the city as well as the regular collection of garbage. Rao also demolished many illegal constructions. However, slums would often fall subject to removal when streets were widened, but Rao ensured that the residents were given alternative residential sites with adequate facilities to accommodate them. Rao's urban and sanitary-related actions fostered the revival of Surat in its post-plague state. Nevertheless, the plague had long-lasting implications for Surat. It brought attention to the lack of information and the spread of misinformation that occurred in India. Incorrect death tolls and false facts about the cause of the disease were spread, leaving lots of room for post-plague city revival both in terms of information control and cleanliness. Surat's actions pertaining to the latter eventually resulted in the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage deeming Surat as the second cleanest city in India.

Present Day Surat On 2 October 2007, Surat district was split into two by the creation of a new Tapi district, under the Surat District Re-organisation Act 2007.

Geography Surat is a port city situated on the banks of the Tapi river. After dams were built, water flow in Tapi decreased causing the original port facilities to close. The nearest port is now in the Magadalla and Hazira area of Surat Metropolitan Region. It has a famous beach called 'Dumas Beach' located in Dumas. The city is located at 21°12'18"N 72°50'24"E. It has an average elevation of 13 metres (43 ft). The Surat district is surrounded by the Bharuch, Narmada, Navsari and Tapi districts, and Gulf of Cambay to the west. The climate is tropical and monsoon rainfall is abundant. According to the Bureau of Indian Standards, the town falls under seismic zone-III, in a scale of I to V (in order of increasing vulnerability to earthquakes).

Climate Surat has a tropical savanna climate (Kppen: Aw), moderated strongly by the Sea to the Gulf of Cambay. The summer begins in early March and lasts until June. April and May are the hottest months, the average maximum temperature being 37 C (99 F). Monsoon begins in late June and the city receives about 1,200 mm (47 in) of rain by the end of September, with the average maximum being 32 C (90 F) during those months. October and November see the retreat of the monsoon and a return of high temperatures until late November. Winter starts in December and ends in late February, with average mean temperatures of around 23 C (73 F), and negligible rain. Since the 20th century, Surat has experienced some 20 floods. In 1968, most parts of the city were flooded and in 1994 a flood caused a country-wide plague outbreak, Surat being the epicenter. In 1998, 30 per cent of Surat had gone under water due to flooding in Tapi river following release of water from Ukai dam located 90 km from Surat and in Aug 2006 flood more than 95 per cent of the city was under Tapi river waters, killing more than 120 people, stranding tens of thousands in their homes without food or electricity and closing businesses and schools for weeks. The city is expected to experience more flooding and extreme weather as climate change becomes worse, so has invested in flood protection and climate resilience infrastructure.

Demographics A resident of Surat is called Surati. According to the 2011 India census, the population of Surat is 4,467,797. Surat has an average literacy rate of 89%, higher than the national average of 79.5%, male literacy is 93%, and female literacy is 84%. Males constitute 53% of the population and females 47%. In Surat, 13% of the population is under 6 years of age. Hindus are the majority community. Muslims and Jains are the largest minorities, and there is a small Buddhist and Christian community. At the time of the 2011 census, 54.42% of the population spoke Gujarati, 22.39% Hindi, 9.92% Marathi, 3.24% Urdu, 3.11% Odia, 1.74% Marwari and 1.38% Bhojpuri as their first language.

Politics Surat is a stronghold of the BJP, which has ruled Gujarat continuously for 30 years. Mukesh Dalal, of the BJP, is the MP from the Surat Lok Sabha constituency. He was elected unopposed to the Lok Sabha in 2024. Govind Dholakia he was nominated by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to the Rajya Sabha, elected unopposed for the term spanning from 2024 to 2030. The Assembly constituencies of Surat district are

Civic institutions The Surat Municipal Corporation is responsible for maintaining the city's civic infrastructure as well as carrying out associated administrative duties. At present, BJP is the ruling party with a majority. Under the Provisions of Bombay Provincial Municipal Corporations Act, 1949, Section - 4, the powers have been vested in three Distinct Statutory Authorities: the General Board, the Standing Committee, and the Municipal Commissioner. It ranked 7 out of 21 cities for best administrative practices in India in 2014. It scored 3.5 on 10 compared to the national average of 3.3. It is the only city in India to disclose municipal budgets on a weekly basis.

Public safety Surat began the 'Safe City Project' in 2011 aimed at keeping the city safe using surveillance cameras. The project was headed by Sanjay Srivastava (IPS) who was then the Joint-Commissioner of Surat Police. The 280-square-foot video wall claimed to be the largest surveillance screen in the country, is being installed in the control room of Police Commissioner Mr. Rakesh Asthana (IPS). This will help the police view the entire city live through 10,000 CCTV cameras across the city. Surat police have decided to install 5,000 CCTV cameras at sensitive points across the city. While 1,000 cameras will be night vision cameras, 4,000 others will be simple CCTV cameras. This has been installed on PPP base with the help of the city's businessmen, the city's social persons, Surat Municipal Corporation, and the Surat City Police.

Hospitals Government Medical College Surat Municipal Institute of Medical Education and Research Kiran Hospital

Economy Surat ranked ninth in India with a GDP of \$40 billion in the fiscal year 2016. The GDP of Surat in 2020 will be around \$57 billion estimated by The City Mayors Foundation, an international think tank on urban affairs. Surat is a major hub of diamond cutting and polishing. The first diamond workshops in Gujarat appeared in Surat and Navasari in the late 1950s. The major group working in this industry is people from the Saurashtra region of Gujarat. Because of demand in the American market from the early 1970s to the mid-1980s (with only a brief recession in 1979), Surat's diamond industry grew tremendously. Currently, most of the diamond polishing workshops are running in the Varachha area of Surat, mostly by the people of the Patel community. Around the world, 8 out of 10 diamonds on the market were cut and polished in Surat. This industry earns India about US\$10 billion in annual exports. That declined by about 18% in 2019 due to reduced demand for diamonds. The decline continued in 2020 when the industry closed for some months because of the COVID-19 pandemic in India. A legacy of old Dutch trade links, it began after a Surti entrepreneur returned from East Africa bringing diamond cutters. The rough diamonds are mined in South Africa and other regions of the African

continent, and go from here as smooth gems to Antwerp, Belgium where the international diamond trade is run mainly by Hasidic Jews and Jains from Palanpur in North Gujarat. Surat's economy drives from a range of manufacturing and industry fields such as diamonds, textiles, petrochemicals, shipbuilding, automobile, port etc. Since it is known for producing textiles, including silk, Surat is known as the textile hub of the nation or the Silk City of India. It is very famous for its cotton mills and Surat Zari Craft. Surat is the biggest center of MMF (man-made fiber) in India. It has a total of 381 dyeing and printing mills and 41,100 power loom units. There are over a hundred thousand units and mills in total. The overall annual turnover is around 5 billion rupees. There are over 800 cloth wholesalers in Surat. It is the largest manufacturer of clothes in India, and Surti dress material can be found in any state of India. Surat produces 9 million meters of fabric annually, which accounts for 60% of the total polyester cloth production in India. Now the city is focusing on increasing the exports of its textile. There are many SME Domestic IT Companies present in Surat. MNC IT companies like IBM, HCL have satellite or virtual branches in Surat. On 14 February 2014, Government of Gujarat DST had handover STPI Surat at Bhestan-Jiav Road, Bhestan Near Udhana-Sachin BRTS Route. Surat city administration will demand for setting up of an information technology (IT) hub and an Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT) on the outskirts of the city. Microsoft CityNext initiative has tied up with IT services majors Tata Consultancy Services and Wipro to leverage technology for sustainable growth of cities in India. The first smart IT city in India is being constituted by the Microsoft CityNext Initiative in Surat, Gujarat. In 2011, Surat hosted India's first Microsoft DreamSpark Yatra (a tech event) with speakers from Microsoft Headquarters at Redmond, Washington. The event was organised by ex-Microsoft Student Partner Samarth Zankharia. In May 2015, Tech giant IBM has chosen Surat among 16 global locations for its smart cities program to help them address challenges like waste management, disaster management and citizen services. Under the program, IBM will send a team of experts to each of the chosen cities where they will spend three weeks working closely with city staff analysing data about critical issues faced by its local bodies; the co-operation continued into 2016. Surat is being a port city, it has turned as a major commercial and industrial hub in India. It is home for many companies such as Oil and Natural Gas Corporation, Reliance Industries (Hazira Manufacturing Division), Essar Steel, Larsen & Toubro, Krishak Bharati Cooperative, NTPC Limited, Bharat Petroleum, Indian Oil Corporation, UltraTech Cement, Shell, GAIL, GSEG, Gujarat State Petroleum Corporation, Hero MotoCorp etc. Hazira Port is located in Hazira, an industrial suburb where most of the industries are located while other region is Magdalla which is also developed as Port of Magdalla. The government of Gujarat plans another project near Surat similar to Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT). The Chief Minister has suggested that the government wishes to develop DREAM to have a five-seven star hotel, bank, IT, corporate trading house, entertainment zone and other facilities while the Surat Diamond Bourse (SDB) will be based there. Allotment of Khajod land for the project is convenient for the state government because they have 2,000 acres (810 ha) of available land. The Trade Centre, located near Sarsana village, will have a 100,160 m² (1,078,100 sq ft) pillar-less air-conditioned hall with a 90 by 35 m (295 by 115 ft) pillar-less dome.

Transport Built in 1860, Surat railway station falls under the administrative control of Western Railway zone of the Indian Railways. In early 2016, the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation rated the facility the best large station in India based on cleanliness. The Sitilink or Surat BRTS is a bus rapid transit system in the city. Initiated by Bharat Shah, additional city engineer of Surat Municipal Corporation. It is operated by Surat Municipal Corporation and as of August 2017, had a network of 245 buses connecting major localities. Surat International Airport located in Magdalla, 11 kilometres (7 mi) southwest of Surat. It is the 2nd busiest airport in Gujarat in terms of both aircraft movements and passenger traffic. Currently, airlines such as Air India, Alliance Air, AirAsia India, SpiceJet, IndiGo Airlines, Air Odisha, Ventura AirConnect provide flight services from the Surat to various major cities like New Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Goa, Jaipur, Visakhapatnam. There are also regular international flights on the Sharjah route of Air India Express. Apart from the main city, Surat Airport also caters to various localities of south Gujarat including Navsari, Bardoli, Valsad,

Bharuch, Ankleshwar. Surat Metro is an under construction rapid transit rail system for the city.

Culture Food Surat is known for its food and has its own list of cherished street foods. There is a famous saying in Gujarati, "સુરત ખાઈ કાશી મરી જાય", meaning Eat in Surat and Die in Kashi for the ultimate experience of the soul. The unique dishes of Surat include locho, ghari, surti bhusu, alupuri, kavsa, ponk, ulta vadapav, undhiyu, dhokla, khaman, rasaawala kaman, and sev khamani. People's love for food in Surat is so great that there is a lane called "Khaudra Gali", which means "foodie's lane", which has all stalls of various types of dishes, the specialty being Mysore Dosa.

Education Universities Sardar Vallabhbhai National Institute of Technology, Surat is one of 31 National Institutes of Technology that are recognised as Institutes of National Importance by the Government of India. Indian Institute of Information Technology, Surat started in 2017. Most of the regional colleges are affiliated to Veer Narmad South Gujarat University (VNSGU, named after the poet Veer Narmad), which has headquarters in the Surat Metropolitan Region. Colleges are also affiliated to SNTD, Gujarat Technological University and other universities. Government Medical College, Surat is a more than 50 years old medical school of 250 yearly student admission capacity with attached tertiary care hospital, New Civil Hospital. Surat Municipal Institute of Medical Education and Research (SMIMER) is a Municipal Medical College affiliated with the Veer Narmad South Gujarat University. Auro University has also started to provide education in Surat.

Science Centre Science Centre, Surat is a multi-facility complex built by the Surat Municipal Corporation in 2009, the first of its type in western India. The complex houses a science centre, museum, an art gallery, an auditorium, an amphitheater, and a planetarium.

Sports Pandit Dindayal Upadhyay Indoor Stadium With a seating capacity of 6800, Pandit Dindayal Upadhyay Indoor Stadium is the first of its kind in the Western Region of India. The stadium frequently organises national and international indoor games such as volleyball, table tennis, gymnastics, handball, boxing, wrestling, badminton, basketball, and tennis. It has a central arena of size 63 m 33 m, rooms for participants and team officials, and other essential facilities including snack bars. This is also a convenient venue for organising cultural programs, music concerts, drama, fashion shows, seminars, conferences, and many more. The Indoor Stadium also hosted TEDxSurat 2018 on 7 October 2018 which was the largest TEDx conference in Gujarat and one of the largest TEDx conferences in the world.

Lalbhai Contractor Cricket Stadium Lalbhai Contractor Cricket Stadium has a capacity of more than 7,000 and has hosted several Ranji, Irani, and Duleep Trophy matches. The stadium is a primary destination for local cricketers and enthusiasts. The stadium has hosted several benefit matches for international cricketers.

Surat in literature The Coffee-House of Surat - by Leo Tolstoy A Voyage to Surat in the Year 1689 - by John Ovington Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency: Gujart Surat and Broach The Land of Malabar - by Duarte Barbosa Plague in Surat: Crisis in Urban Governance - by Archana Ghosh and S. Sami Ahmad Surat, Broach and Other Old Cities of Goojerat - by Theodore Hope

Neighborhoods and localities Notable people See also References
External links

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Kanpur

Kanpur (/kəˈnʌpuː/, Hindi pronunciation: [kəˈn.ɖu]), originally named Kanhapur and formerly anglicized as Cawnpore, is the second largest city of the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, after Lucknow. Founded by Rajput ruler Hindu Singh Chandel, Kanpur became one of the most important commercial and military stations of British Raj. Today it is famous for its colonial architecture, gardens, sweets, dialect, and high-quality leather, plastic, and textile products, which are exported mainly to the West. The city is home to historical monuments such as the Jajmau Ghat which dates back to the 17th century AD. Kanpur is also home to several historical sites such as the Kanpur Museum, Bhitargaon Temple, European Cemetery and Nanarao Park. It is the 12th most populous city and the 11th most populous urban agglomeration in India (2011 census). Kanpur was an important British garrison town until 1947, when India gained independence. The urban district of Kanpur Nagar serves as the headquarters of the Kanpur division, Kanpur Range and Kanpur Zone. Some of the more popular places in Kanpur include J.K. Temple, Z Square Mall, Blue World Amusement Park, Atal Ghat, Green Park Stadium and Ganga Barrage. It was the most populous urban city in the 2011 Indian census and the largest urban agglomeration in Uttar Pradesh, while the population of city and its suburbs were around 5 million, making it the eighth-most populous metropolitan area in India.

History The city of Kanpur is widely believed to have been founded by Raja Hindu Singh Chandel of the Sachendi state. Its original name was Kanhpur, possibly derived from Kanhiyapur or established to commemorate the Kanhaiya Ashtam festival, a day the Raja considered auspicious. An alternative theory suggests the name is a variation of Karnapur, linking it to the Mahabharata hero, Karna. In its early stages, Kanpur was a collection of smaller villages, including Patkapura, Kuraswam, Juhi, and Seesamau. Before the arrival of the British, the region was governed by the rulers of Kannauj and Kalpi such as Harsha Vardhan, Jai Chand and Mihir Bhoja, and later by various Muslim rulers. The strategic importance of the area was recognized by the British following their victory over Shuja-ud-Daula, the Nawab of Awadh, near Jajmau in May 1765. Although Kanpur remained part of the Oudh Kingdom until 1801, a British military camp was established there as early as 1778. The official transfer to British control occurred through the Treaty of 1801 with Nawab Saadat Ali Khan. This marked a turning point in Kanpur's history, as the British began to develop it into a major hub. Leveraging its strategic location on the banks of the Ganges, the East India Company initiated an indigo trade. The city's growth was further accelerated by major infrastructure projects, including the construction of the Grand Trunk Road in 1832 and the addition of roads connecting it to Lucknow and Kalpi in 1864. With the first woollen mill of India, commonly known as the Lal Imli (lit. 'Red Tamarind', for a brand produced by the mill) by the British India Corporation established here in 1876 by Alexander MacRobert. The eastern and northern faades of the mill are reminiscent of the Palace of Westminster, due to their architecture, proximity to the Ganga river and with the north-east corner of the mill being topped by a clock tower similar to Big Ben in London. This similarity underscores the city's importance and prestige during British rule, and extending to the present, making the Lal Imli a highlight of the city. The city is also widely regarded as the Leather City of the World and is predominantly nicknamed as the Manchester of the East, for its chemical, textile and leather industries. Alexander MacRobert has an area named after him in the city, McRobertganj.

1857 Uprising In the 19th century, Cawnpore was an important British garrison with barracks for 7,000 soldiers. During the Indian Rebellion of 1857, 900 British men, women and children were besieged in the fortifications for 22 days by rebels under Nana Sahib. They surrendered on the agreement that they would get safe passage to the nearby Sati Chaura Ghat whereupon they would board barges and be allowed to go by river to Allahabad.

Though controversy surrounds what exactly happened at the Sati Chaura Ghat and who fired the first shot, it is known that soon afterwards the departing British were shot at by the sepoys and were either killed or captured. Some of the British officers later claimed that the sepoys had, on purpose, placed the boats as high in the mud as possible, to cause delay. They also claimed that Sahib's camp had previously arranged for the sepoys to fire upon and to kill all of the English. Although the East India Company later accused Sahib of betrayal and murder of innocent people, no evidence has ever been found to prove that he planned or ordered the massacre. Some historians believe that the Sati Chaura Ghat massacre was the result of confusion and not of any plan implemented by Sahib or his associates. Lieutenant Mowbray Thomson, one of the four male survivors of the massacre, believed that the rank-and-file sepoys who spoke to him did not know of the killing to come. Many were killed and the remaining 200 British women and children were brought back to shore and sent to a building called the Bibighar ('House of the Ladies'). After some time, the commanders of the rebels decided to kill their hostages. The rebel soldiers refused to carry out orders and butchers from the nearby town were brought in to kill the hostages three days before the British entered the city on 18 July. The dismembered bodies were thrown into a deep well nearby. The British, under General Neill, retook the city and committed a series of retaliations against the rebel sepoys and those civilians caught in the area, including women, children and old men. The Cawnpore Massacre, as well as similar events elsewhere, were seen by the British as justification for unrestrained vengeance. "Remember Cawnpore" became a British war cry for the rest of the war.

Geography Kanpur is located at 26.449923N 80.331874E / 26.449923; 80.331874 in the central-western part of the state of Uttar Pradesh. The city lies at a distance of approx 484 km from national capital New Delhi and approx 80 km from the state capital Lucknow. It is a part of the historical region of Awadh. Situated in the flat Indo-Gangetic Plains, Kanpur has an average elevation of 318 m above sea level. The Ganga flows by the city and several ghats are located on its banks, notably the Sati Chaura Ghat and Sarsaiya Ghat. The Brahmavart Ghat located at Bithoor (25 km northwards) is another ghat of religious importance. Several parks and recreational areas are located in Kanpur. Nana Rao Park and Phool Bagh are among the prominent parks in city that have existed from the time of the British Raj. The Moti Jheel, a rectangular lake, was originally developed as a drinking water reservoir. The lake has now been developed as a recreational area with a landscaped garden and a children's park. Nawabganj Bird Sanctuary is also located near Kanpur.

Climate Like most of lowland northern India, Kanpur has a monsoon-influenced humid subtropical climate (Cwa) bordering on a hot semi-arid climate (BSh) under the Kppen climate classification. Kanpur sees an annual precipitation of 865-900 mm (34.1-35.4 in). The southwest monsoon enters around 20-23 June, and total precipitation from the monsoon is 750-800 mm (30-31 in). Southwest monsoon withdrawal takes place generally between the last week of September and the first week of October. The month of October also saw heavy monsoon rains in the years 1971 (133 mm), 1985 (367 mm), 1999 (137 mm), 2013 (143 mm), and 2022 (225 mm), and 2024 also saw significant rain showers. The years 2008, 2010, 2013, 2018-2022 and 2024 were ones when annual precipitation reached at least 1,000 mm (39 in).

Kanpur has been ranked the fifth best National Clean Air City in India under Category 1 (cities with populations greater than 1,000,000) by the Central Pollution Control Board.

Demographics As per the provisional results of the 2011 census, Kanpur Nagar district has a population of 4,581,000. The literacy rate was 79.65 per cent and the sex ratio was 862. There are 35 Parsis in Kanpur with their fire temple at The Mall. Hinduism is the majority religion in Kanpur with a sizeable minority of Muslims. Sikhs, Christians and Buddhists are below 2% combined. Although final 2023 census data is yet to be declared, the population of Kanpur Nagar district is projected to be 6,367,963 in 2023 (per aadhaar data). As per the 2011

census, the population of Kanpur city and its suburbs was 3,015,645, making it the largest urban agglomeration of Uttar Pradesh. Thereafter, the urban area of Kanpur city has expanded to a large extent. However, the official limits of the area are still pending approval by the Government. Tentatively, the population of Kanpur city and Kanpur metropolitan area in 2024 are projected as 3,926,000 and 5,100,000 respectively as per available data.

Awadhi is the native dialect. Hindi and Urdu are the predominant languages in the city. Punjabi is spoken by 1.25%, while Bengali is spoken by over 11,000 people in the city.

Government and politics **Urban infrastructure** The metropolitan region defined under JNNURM by Kanpur Nagar Nigam, includes the Kanpur Nagar Nigam area, 8 kilometres around KNN boundary and newly included 47 villages of Unnao district on the north-eastern side, it extends to Murtaza Nagar, in the west its limit is up to Akbarpur, Kanpur Dehat Nagar Panchayat limit, on the eastern side the limit has been expanded on the road leading to Fatehpur and in extended up to. The metropolitan region area includes the area of Shuklaganj Municipal Committee (Nagar Palika), Unnao Municipal Committee (Nagar Palika), Akbarpur Village Authority (Nagar Panchayat) and Bithoor Village Authority (Nagar Panchayat) area. In 1997-98, total metropolitan region area has increased to 89131.15 hectare out of which 4,743.9 hectare (5.31%) was non-defined (prohibited area) and rest 29,683 hectare and 54,704 hectare (61.39%) was urban and rural area respectively.

Administration General administration Kanpur division which consists of six districts, and is headed by the divisional commissioner of Kanpur, who is an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of high seniority, the commissioner is the head of local government institutions (including municipal corporations) in the division, is in charge of infrastructure development in his division, and is also responsible for maintaining law and order in the division. The district magistrate of Kanpur reports to the divisional commissioner. The current commissioner is Shri Amit Gupta. Kanpur district administration is headed by the district magistrate of Kanpur, who is an IAS officer. The DM is in charge of property records and revenue collection for the central government and oversees the elections held in the city. The DM is also responsible for maintaining law and order in the city. The DM is assisted by a chief development officer; four additional district magistrates for finance/revenue, city, land acquisition, and civil supply; one city magistrat; and seven additional city magistrates. The district has four tehsils viz. Sadar, Bilhaur, Ghatampur and Narwal, each headed by a sub-divisional magistrate. The current DM is Mr. Rakesh Kumar Singh.

Civic administration Kanpur municipality was established on 22 November 1861, and was upgraded to a municipal corporation in 1959. The local government of Kanpur is governed under the Municipal act for the state, Uttar Pradesh Municipal Corporation Act, 1959. The area under the municipal limits of Kanpur city, or Kanpur Municipal Corporation, is spread over an area of 403 square km. It oversees civic activities in the city. The head of the corporation is the mayor, but the executive and administration of the corporation are the responsibility of the municipal commissioner, who is an IAS officer. The executive wing is headed by municipal commissioner, Sudhir kumar and has the following departments: Revenue, City Cleansing, Engineering, Marg Prakash, Health, Accounts, Personnel/HRD, Swasthya Vibhag, Education, Mukya Nagar Lekha Vibhag, Pariyojna, Udyan Vibhag, Chikitsa Vibhag, Encroachment & Cattle Catching Department. There is also an executive committee present in the city. The development of infrastructure in the city is overseen by Kanpur Development Authority (KDA), which comes under the Housing Department of Uttar Pradesh government. The divisional commissioner of Kanpur acts as the ex-officio Chairman of KDA, whereas a vice chairperson, a government-appointed IAS officer, looks after the daily matters of the authority. The current vice-chairman of Kanpur Development Authority is Shri Madan Singh Garbyal. The municipality receives revenue from general

tax, advertisement tax, income from municipal properties, grants from state government etc.

Law and order The Kanpur District Court is headed by the district judge of Kanpur, who is assisted by numerous additional district judges, civil judges (senior division) and additional civil judges. Kanpur is a notified metropolitan area by UP Government under Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, and therefore has a chief metropolitan magistrate, who is assisted by several metropolitan magistrates. The district judge is Shri Pradeep Kumar Singh, and the chief metropolitan magistrate was Shri Sushil Kumar Singh.

Police administration Kanpur Nagar police administration is headed by a Commissioner of Police which is an IPS officer of the rank of Additional Director General of Uttar Pradesh Police. The present Police Commissioner of Kanpur Nagar is Shri Akhil Kumar, who is assisted by an additional Commissioner, a Joint Commissioner and several Deputy Commissioners, additional Deputy Commissioners, and Assistant Commissioners of Police who are either IPS officers or Provincial Police Service (PPS) officers. Each of the several police circles is headed by an Assistant Commissioner of Police in the rank of deputy superintendent of police.

Politics Local politics The city is divided into six zones and 110 wards with a ward population range of 19,000 to 26,000 and 110 corporators directly elected from each ward. As mandated by the 74th constitutional amendment, there were 11 ward committees in Kanpur municipal corporation in 1991. Local elections were last held in 2022, when the mayor, Pramila Pandey from the BJP, was re-elected. The previous mayor had been Captain (retired) Jagatvir Singh Drona. As of 2006, Kanpur Municipal Council has an elected mayor-in-council system.

State politics Kanpur Nagar district encompasses one Lok Sabha constituency and ten Uttar Pradesh Vidhan Sabha constituencies. The city of Kanpur has one representative member of parliament in Lok Sabha for Kanpur, Satyadev Pachauri.

Civic utilities The first development plan of the city was created by the Kanpur Development Board in 1943. This was followed by the masterplan being designed by the Town and Country Planning Department from 1962 to 1991, which was adopted after the establishment of the Kanpur Development Authority in 1974. The most recent masterplan is the Draft Master Plan of 2021 . Electricity is supplied to the city by Kanpur Electricity Supply Company (KESCO), which is under the Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Ltd (UPPCL). Fire services are under the state, Uttar Pradesh Fire Service. Water supply, sewerage is done by the Jal Kal vibhag of KMC. Infrastructure development and maintenance is done by the state's body, UP Jal Nigam. The piped water supply of Kanpur City was started in 1892. After construction of Ganga Barrage on the river, a permanent and reliable source for the water supply got available to provide 1600 mld raw water. The city also receives water from the catchment areas of rivers Ganga and Pandu. However, while the total water supply requirement is 600 mld only 385 mld of potable water is being supplied. The city loses water due to leaky pipes and contamination of natural water sources. There is a severe water crisis in Kanpur. In 2015, Ganga Pollution Control Unit in Kanpur got about Rs 200 crores to make four STPs functional. The city then reported having three STPs for domestic waste. In 2017, there was only one sewage treatment plant for waste from tanneries, biggest source of industrial pollution to the Ganga, was to be replaced by a newer one costing 400 cr as the old one could only treat 9 MLD at the most. 823.1 MLD of untreated sewage and 212.42 MLD of industrial effluent flow into the river. In 2019, another STP costing worth Rs 816.25 was to be set up. As of 2020, While the government has stopped pollution from Kanpur's biggest drain, Sishamau, of Kanpur's 48 drains, eight still have no devices to stop effluents.

Solid waste management is handled by the KMC. As of 2015, Kanpur generates 1,500 tonnes of solid wastes from domestic and industrial sources, 64,000 tonnes of hazardous waste annually which includes metals and waste generated by tanneries, dye industries and chemical industries; while coal ash produced in Kanpur amounts to 71,000 tonnes per annum.

Transport Air Kanpur Airport is a domestic airport and has direct scheduled commercial non-stop flights to New Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad and Bangalore. The nearest international airport to the city is the Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport in Lucknow, which is around 77.1 kilometres (47.9 mi) away.

Rail Indian Railways: Kanpur Central is a major railhead and is among the busiest railway stations in the country. Rail routes connect it to all major cities in the state and the country. It is an A-1 category railway station that comes under the Prayagraj railway division of North Central Railway zone of Indian Railways. Around 300 trains pass through it daily. The city of Kanpur has eleven railway stations in addition to the main Kanpur Central:

Metro: The Kanpur Metro is a mass rapid transit system in Kanpur. The metro is owned and operated by the Uttar Pradesh Metro Rail Corporation (UPMRC). It consists of two lines, the Orange Line and the Blue Line. The priority corridor of the Orange Line, which connects IIT Kanpur to Motijheel, was inaugurated by Prime Minister Modi on 28 December 2021.

Road The city has the historically important Grand Trunk Road which serves as the lifeline of the city. There are several important national highways and expressways that pass through and around Kanpur.

The UPSRTC inter state bus station (ISBT) of Kanpur is officially named as the "Shaheed Major Salman Khan bus station", and is locally known as the "Jhakarkati Bus Station". It provides buses to many important cities of India. Other important bus stations are the Chunniganj bus stand for Farrukhabad, Bareilly and Uttarakhand routes, and the Naubasta bus stand for Hamirpur route. Fazalganj is another hub for private carriers. Ring road: In 2011, it was reported by The Indian Express that the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) planned to develop a four-lane outer ring road along the periphery of Kanpur with an aim to prevent traffic congestion in the city caused by long-distance heavy vehicles. The new road, which would help heavy vehicles to bypass the city, would be developed on Built, Operate and Transfer (BOT) basis under the phase-VII of National Highways Development Programme (NHDP).

Economy Kanpur is an important economic center in India with a GDP of ~\$9 billion. There was a time when Kanpur was very prosperous but over time it lagged behind other big cities due to continuous negligence from both the national and state governments, as they diverted funds to other cities, which hampered its growth. According to GDP per capita, it ranks 9th in Uttar Pradesh. Noida and Meerut rank first and second, while the state capital Lucknow ranks seventh.

Education and research Higher education The Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur (IIT Kanpur) is a public technical and research university located in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh, India. It was established in 1959 as one of the first Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), with the assistance of a consortium of nine US research universities as part of the Kanpur Indo-American Programme (KIAP).

Other educational institutions in the city include three state universities. Chhatrapati Shahu Ji Maharaj University is one of the largest universities in northern India catering to urban and rural students offering professional and academic courses in the disciplines of Arts, Science, Commerce, Law, Engineering, Biotechnology, Computer Applications, Management and Medicine. Chandra Shekhar Azad University of Agriculture and Technology is an agricultural university named after the Indian revolutionary Chandrashekhar Azad which caters to the needs of the farming community of 29 districts of Uttar Pradesh. Harcourt Butler Technical University (HBTU) offers Bachelors, Masters, and Doctoral programs in engineering, as well as Masters programs in Business Administration, and Computer Applications. Dr. Ambedkar Institute of Technology for Handicapped, an institution to provide technical education to specially-abled students inaugurated by former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in 1997, is also situated in Kanpur. National Sugar Institute (NSI) is involved in research, training and advisory services to the sugar and allied industry, and functions under the Department of Food and Public Distribution of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution. There are also private universities in the city such as Rama University, which is part of the Rama Group. There are several private technical and management institutions in the city such as the Pranveer Singh Institute of Technology and the Axis Institute of Technology And Management, which are affiliated with Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam Technical University.

Medical education Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi Memorial Medical College (GSVM Medical College) is a state-run medical college in Kanpur. It was founded in 1956 and named after Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, a freedom fighter and journalist from Kanpur. Lala Lajpat Rai Hospital, also known as Hallet Hospital, is associated with the college. Lala Lajpat Rai Hospital in Kanpur is commonly known as Hallet Hospital because of its origins. It was initially established during the British colonial period and named after a British civil surgeon, George Henry Hallet, who served in the United Provinces (now Uttar Pradesh) and contributed to the field of public health. Although the hospital was later renamed to honor Lala Lajpat Rai, a prominent Indian freedom fighter, the original name continued to be widely used by locals.

Notable people Lala Kamalpat Singhania, industrialist Padampat Singhania, industrialist Kuldeep Yadav, cricketer Harish-Chandra, mathematician Giriraj Kishore, novelist Irshad Mirza, industrialist Gaurav Khanna, actor Rajeev Shukla, political commentator and former journalist Kamal Nath, politician Tanmay Srivastava

See also Akbarpur Lok Sabha constituency List of cities in Uttar Pradesh by population List of engineering colleges in Kanpur List of twin towns and sister cities in India Second Battle of Cawnpore List of Indian metropolitan areas by GDP

References External links

Kanpur city portal

Nagpur

Nagpur is the largest and most populated city in central India. It is the second capital and third-largest city of India's richest state, Maharashtra. Also known as the "Orange City", Nagpur is the 13th largest city in India by population. According to an Oxford's Economics report, Nagpur is projected to be the fifth fastest growing city in the world from 2019 to 2035 with an average growth of 8.41%. It has been proposed as one of the Smart Cities in Maharashtra and is one of the top ten cities in India in Smart City Project execution. Nagpur is the seat of the annual winter session of the Maharashtra state assembly. It is a major commercial and political centre of the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra. In addition, the city derives unique importance from being a key location for the Dalit Buddhist movement and the headquarters for the right-wing Hindu organisation Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). Nagpur is also known for the Deekshabhoomi, which is graded an A-class tourism and pilgrimage site, the largest hollow stupa among all the Buddhist stupas in the world. The regional branch of Bombay High Court is also situated within the city. According to a survey by ABP News-Ipsos, Nagpur was identified as the best city in India topping in livability, greenery, Public Transport, and Health Care indices in 2013. The city was adjudged the 20th cleanest city in India and the top mover in the western zone as per Swachh Sarvekshan 2016. It was awarded as the best city for innovation and best practice in Swachh Sarvekshan 2018. It was also declared as open defecation free in January 2018 under Swachh Bharat Mission. It is also one of the safest cities for women in India. The city also ranked 25th in Ease of Living index 2020 among 111 cities in India. It was ranked the 8th most competitive city in the country by the Institute for Competitiveness for the year 2017. It is famous for Nagpur oranges and is sometimes known as the Orange City for being a major trade centre of oranges cultivated in large part of the region. It is also called the Tiger Capital of India or the Tiger Gateway of India as many tiger reserves are located in and around the city and also hosts the regional office of National Tiger Conservation Authority. The city was founded in 1702 by the Gond King Bakht Buland Shah of Deogarh and later became a part of the Maratha Empire under the royal Bhonsale dynasty. The British East India Company took over Nagpur in the 19th century and made it the capital of the Central Provinces and Berar. After the first re-organisation of states, the city lost its status as the capital. Following the informal Nagpur Pact between political leaders, it was made the second capital of Maharashtra.

Etymology Nagpur is named after the river Nag which flows through the city. The old Nagpur city (today called 'Mahal') is situated on north banks of the river Nag. Pur means "city" in many Indian languages.

History One of the earlier names of Nagpur was "Fanindrapura". It derives its origin from the Marathi word *phana* (transl. hood of a cobra). Nagpur's first newspaper was named Fanindramani, which means a jewel that is believed to be suspended over a cobra's hood. It is this jewel that lights up the darkness, hence the name of the newspaper. B. R. Ambedkar claimed that both the city and the river are named after the 'Nags' who were opponents of the Indo-Aryans. During British rule, the name of the city was spelt and pronounced as "Nagpore".

Early and medieval history Human existence around present-day Nagpur can be traced back 3000 years to the 8th century BCE. Mehir burial sites at the Drugdhamna (near the Mhada colony) indicate that the megalithic culture existed around Nagpur and is still followed. The first reference to the name "Nagpur" is found in a 10th-century copper-plate inscription discovered at Devali in the neighbouring Wardha District. The inscription is a record of grant of a village situated in the Visaya (district) of Nagpura-Nandivardhana during the time of the Rastrakuta king Krsna III in the Saka year 862 (940 CE). Towards the end of the 3rd century, King Vindhyaśakti is known to have ruled the Nagpur region. In the 4th century, the Vakataka Dynasty ruled over the Nagpur

region and surrounding areas and had good relations with the Gupta Empire. The Vakataka king Prithvisena I moved his capital to Nagardhan (ancient name Nandivardhana), 38 km (24 mi) from Nagpur. After the Vakatakas, the region came under the rule of the Hindu kingdoms of the Badami Chalukyas, the Rashtrakutas. The Paramaras or Panwars of Malwa appear to have controlled the Nagpur region in the 11th century. A prashasti inscription of the Paramara king Lakshmadeva (r. c. 1086-1094) has been found at Nagpur. Subsequently, the region came under the Yadavas of Devagiri. In 1296, Allauddin Khilji invaded the Yadava Kingdom after capturing Deogiri, after which the Tughlaq Dynasty came to power in 1317. In the 17th century, the Mughal Empire conquered the region, however during Mughal era, regional administration was carried out by the Gond kingdom of Deogarh in the Chhindwara district of the modern-day state of Madhya Pradesh. In the 18th century, Bhonsles of the Maratha Empire established the Nagpur kingdom based in the city.

Modern history Bakht Buland Shah actually founded the city of Nagpur in 1702 (according to different sources) by joining the twelve small villages formerly known as Rajapur Barsa or Barasta. An able administrator, he incentivised large-scale immigration of Marathi Hindu cultivators to increase economic activity. After Bhakt Buland Shah, the next Raja of Deogarh was Chand Sultan, who resided principally in the country below the hills, fixing his capital at Nagpur, which he turned into a walled town. On Chand Sultan's death in 1739, Wali Shah, an illegitimate son of Bakht Buland, usurped the throne and Chand Sultan's widow invoked the aid of the Maratha leader Raghoji Bhosale of Berar in the interest of her sons Akbar Shah and Burhan Shah. The usurper was put to death and the rightful heirs were placed on the throne. After 1743, a series of Maratha rulers came to power, starting with Raghoji Bhosale, who conquered the territories of Deogarh, Chanda and Chhattisgarh by 1751. Nagpur was burnt substantially in 1765 and again partially in 1811 by marauding Pindaris. However, the development of the city of Nagpur continued. In 1803 Raghoji II Bhosale joined the Peshwa against the British in the Second Anglo-Maratha War, but the British prevailed. After Raghoji II's death in 1816, his son Parsaji was deposed and murdered by Mudhoji II Bhosale. Despite the fact that he had entered into a treaty with the British in the same year, Mudhoji joined the Peshwa in the Third Anglo-Maratha War in 1817 against the British but suffered a defeat at Sitabuldi in present-day Nagpur. The fierce battle was a turning point as it laid the foundations of the downfall of the Bhosales and paved the way for the British acquisition of Nagpur city. Mudhoji was deposed after a temporary restoration to the throne, after which the British placed Raghoji III Bhosale, the grandchild of Raghoji II, on the throne. During the rule of Raghoji III (which lasted until 1840), the region was administered by a British resident. In 1853, the British took control of Nagpur after Raghoji III died without leaving an heir.

From 1853 to 1861, the Nagpur Province (which consisted of the present Nagpur region, Chhindwara, and Chhattisgarh) became part of the Central Provinces and Berar and came under the administration of a commissioner under the British central government, with Nagpur as its capital. Berar was added in 1903. The advent of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway (GIP) in 1867 spurred its development as a trade centre. Tata group started its first textile mill at Nagpur, formally known as Central India Spinning and Weaving Company Ltd. The company was popularly known as "Empress Mills" as it was inaugurated on 1 January 1877, the day queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India. The non-co-operation movement was launched in the Nagpur session of 1920. The city witnessed a Hindu-Muslim riot in 1923 which had profound impact on K. B. Hedgewar, who in 1925 founded the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a public serves organisation in Mohitewada Mahal, Nagpur with an idea of creating a Hindu ethnostate. After the 1927 Nagpur riots RSS gained further popularity in Nagpur and the organisation grew nationwide.

After Indian independence After India gained independence in 1947, Central Provinces and Berar became a province of India. In 1950, the Central Provinces and Berar was reorganised as the Indian state of Madhya

Pradesh, with Nagpur as its capital. When the Indian states were reorganised along linguistic lines in 1956, Nagpur and Berar regions were transferred to the state of Bombay, which was split into the states of Maharashtra and Gujarat in 1960. At a formal public ceremony held on 14 October 1956 in Nagpur, B. R. Ambedkar and his supporters converted to Buddhism, which started the Dalit Buddhist movement that is still active. In 1994, the city of Nagpur witnessed its most violent day in modern times: in the Gowari stampede, police fired on Gowari protestors demanding Scheduled Tribe status and caused a mass panic. Nagpur completed 300 years of establishment in the year 2002. A big celebration was organised to mark the event.

Geography Topography Nagpur is located at the exact centre of the Indian subcontinent, close to the geometric centre of the quadrilateral connecting the four major metros of India, viz. Chennai, Mumbai, New Delhi and Kolkata. The city has the Zero Mile Stone locating the geographical centre of India, which was used by the British to measure all distances within the Indian subcontinent. The city lies on the Deccan plateau of the Indian subcontinent and has a mean altitude of 310.5 meters above sea level. The underlying rock strata are covered with alluvial deposits resulting from the flood plain of the Kanhan River. In some places, these give rise to granular, sandy soil. In low-lying areas, which are poorly drained, the soil is alluvial clay with poor permeability characteristics. In the eastern part of the city, crystalline metamorphic rocks such as gneiss, schist and granites are found, while in the northern part, yellowish sandstones and clays of the lower Gondwana formations are found. Nagpur city is dotted with natural and artificial lakes. The largest lake is Ambazari Lake. Other natural lakes include Gorewada Lake and Telankhedi lake. Sonegaon and Gandhisagar Lakes are artificial, created by the city's historical rulers. Nag river, Pilli Nadi, and nallas form the natural drainage pattern for the city. Nagpur is known for its greenery and was adjudged the cleanest and second greenest in India after Chandigarh in 2010.

Climate Nagpur has tropical wet and dry climate (Aw in Kppen climate classification) with dry conditions prevailing for most of the year. It receives about 163 mm of rainfall in June. The amount of rainfall is increased in July to 294 mm. Gradual decrease of rainfall has been observed from July to August (278 mm) and September (160 mm). The highest recorded daily rainfall was 304 mm on 14 July 1994. Summers are extremely hot, lasting from March to June, with May being the hottest month. Winter lasts from November to February, during which temperatures occasionally drop to 10 C (50 F). The highest recorded temperature in the city was 47 C on 30 May 2024, while the lowest was 3.1 C on 29 December 2018.

Extreme weather The average number of heat wave days occurring in Nagpur in the summer months of March, April and May is 0.5, 2.4 and 7.2 days, respectively. May is the most uncomfortable and hottest month with, for example, 20 days of heat waves being experienced in 1973, 1988 and 2010. The summer season is characterised by other severe weather activity like thunderstorms, dust storms, hailstorms and squalls. Generally, hailstorms occur during March and dust storms during March and April. These occur infrequently (1 per 10 days). Squalls occur more frequently, with 0.3 per day in March and April rising to 0.8 per day in May. Due to the heat waves in the city the Indian Government with the help of New York-based National Resources Defense Council has launched a heat wave program since March 2016.

Nagpur has been ranked 15th best "National Clean Air City" (under Category 1 >10L Population cities) in India according to 'Swachh Vayu Survekshan 2024 Results'

Demographics Population As of the 2011 census, Nagpur municipality has a population of 2,405,665. The total population constitute, 1,225,405 males and 1,180,270 females. The total children (ages 0-6) are 247,078, of

whom 128,290 are boys and 118,788 are girls. Children form 10.27% of total population of Nagpur. The total number of slums number 179,952, in which 859,487 people reside. This is around 35.73% of the total population of Nagpur. The municipality has a sex ratio of 963 females per 1,000 males and child sex ratio of 926 girls per 1,000 boys. 1,984,123 people are literate, of whom 1,036,097 are male and 948,026 are female. Average literacy rate of Nagpur city are 91.92%. Men are 94.44% and women are 89.31% literate.

Religion Hinduism is the majority religion in Nagpur city with 69.46% followers. Buddhism is the second most popular religion in Nagpur city with 15.57% following it. Nagpur is known for the Buddhist site of Deekshabhoomi. In Nagpur city, Islam is followed by 11.95%, Christianity by 1.15%, Jainism by 0.90% and Sikhism by 0.68%. Around 0.10% stated 'Other Religion' and approximately 0.20% stated 'No Particular Religion'.

Language Marathi is the most-spoken language, spoken by 60.63% of the population. Hindi and Urdu are the second and third largest languages, spoken by 22.74% and 6.36% of the population respectively. Other languages spoken in Nagpur include Chhattisgarhi (2.29%), Sindhi (1.79%), Gujarati (1.16%) and Punjabi (0.91%). There are also small numbers of Telugu, Bengali and Gondi speakers in the city.

Administration Nagpur was the capital of Central Provinces and Berar for 100 years. After the State Reorganisation in 1956, Nagpur and Vidarbha region become part of the new Maharashtra State. With this Nagpur lost the capital status and hence a pact was signed between leaders, the Nagpur Pact. According to the pact, one session of state legislature and the state legislative council takes place in Vidhan Bhavan, Nagpur. Usually the winter session takes place in the city exception being in 1966, 1971 and 2018 when the monsoon session took place in the city. Nagpur has a district court and its own bench of the Bombay High Court which was established on 9 January 1936. The city consists of six Vidhan Sabha constituencies namely Nagpur West, Nagpur South, Nagpur South West, Nagpur East, Nagpur North and Nagpur Central. These constituencies are part of the Nagpur Lok Sabha constituency.

Local government The Municipal Council for Nagpur was established in 1864. At that time, the area under the jurisdiction of the Nagpur Municipal Council was 15.5 km² and the population was 82,000. The duties entrusted to the Nagpur Municipal Council were to maintain cleanliness and arrange for street lights and water supply with government assistance. The Municipal Corporation came into existence in March 1951. Nagpur is administered by the Nagpur Municipal Corporation (NMC), which is a democratically elected civic governing body. The Corporation elects a Mayor who along with a Deputy Mayor heads the organisation. The mayor carries out the activities through various committees such as the Standing Committee, health and sanitation committee, education committee, water works, public works, public health and market committee. The administrative head of the corporation is the Municipal Commissioner, an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer appointed by the state government. The Municipal Commissioner along with the Deputy Municipal Commissioners, carry out various activities related to engineering, health and sanitation, taxation and its recovery. Various departments such as public relations, library, health, finance, buildings, slums, roads, street lighting, traffic, establishment, gardens, public works, local audit, legal services, waterworks, education, octroi and fire services manage their specific activities. The activities of NMC are administered by its zonal offices. There are 10 zonal offices in Nagpur - Laxmi Nagar, Dharampeth, Hanuman Nagar, Dhantoli, Nehru Nagar, Gandhi Baugh, Sataranjipura, Lakkadganj, Ashi Nagar and Mangalwari. These zones are divided into 145 wards. Each ward is represented by a corporator, a majority of whom are elected in local elections. NMC has various departments including healthcare, education, and a fire brigade dedicated for each service and project of the city. Nagpur Improvement Trust (NIT) is a local planning authority which works with the NMC and carries out the

development of the civic infrastructure and new urban areas on its behalf. NIT is headed by a chairman, an Indian Administrative Service Officer appointed by the state government. Since the 1990s the urban agglomeration had rapidly expanded beyond the city's municipal boundaries. This growth had presented challenges for the future growth of the city and its fringes in an organised manner. With a view of achieving balanced development within the region, the Nagpur Improvement Trust (NIT) was notified as the Special Planning Authority (SPA) for the Nagpur Metropolitan Area (NMA) and entrusted with the preparation of a Statutory Development Plan as per provisions of the MRTP Act, 1966. The notified NMA comprises areas outside the Nagpur city and includes 721 villages under 9 tehsils of the Nagpur District spreading across an area of 3,567 km². In 1999, the government of Maharashtra declared that the Nagpur Metropolitan Area shall comprise all of Nagpur city, Nagpur Gramin (rural areas near Nagpur), Hingna, Parseoni, Mauda and Kamptee Taluka and parts of Savner, Kalmeshwar, Umred and Kuhi. The boundaries of the "Metro region" around the municipal corporation limits of the city have been defined as per the notification. In 2002, the government extended the jurisdiction of the Nagpur Improvement Trust (NIT) by 25 to 40 kilometres. This new area was defined under clause 1(2) of NIT Act-1936 as "Nagpur Metropolitan Area". Maharashtra State Cabinet in 2016 had paved the way for NIT to become Nagpur Metropolitan Region Development Authority (NMRDA) NMRDA was notified by the Government of Maharashtra in March 2017. NMRDA has been made on the lines of Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority. NMRDA has been mandated to monitor development in the metropolis comprising 721 villages across nine tehsils in the district. The body is headed by Metropolitan Commissioner, an Indian Administrative Service Officer appointed by the state government as was with the NIT chairman. Currently, NIT is the planning authority for developing projects around the city in land owned by it. The Maharashtra government had appointed Larsen & Toubro (L&T) as the implementation partner to convert Nagpur into the country's first large scale, integrated, smart city. The state government had also decided to develop the city complete with five hubs, from textile centres to defence sector. Nagpur was selected from Maharashtra among other cities under Government of India's Smart Cities Mission. City was selected in the third round of selection. For the implementation of the projects under Smart Cities Mission a special purpose vehicle was formed which was named Nagpur Smart and Sustainable City Development Corporation Ltd. Nagpur Police is headed by a Police Commissioner who is of the rank of Additional Director General of Police of Maharashtra Police. Nagpur Police is divided into 5 Zones, each headed by a Deputy Commissioner of Police, while traffic zones are divided into eleven zones each headed by an inspector. The State C.I.D Regional Headquarter, State Reserve Police Force and Regional Police Training School are situated at Nagpur.

Utility services Originally, all the utility services of the city were carried out by NMC departments, but from 2008 onwards privatisation had started for major utility services. The Orange City Water Private Limited (OCW), a joint venture of Veolia Water India Pvt. Ltd and Vishwaraj Infrastructure Ltd., manages the water supply for the city as well as Nagpur Municipal Corporation's water treatment plants at Gorewada, all the elevated service reservoirs, ground service reservoirs, master balancing reservoirs commonly known as water tanks. This joint venture was established in November 2011 and was awarded the contract to execute 24x7 water supply project and operational and maintenance of waterworks for 25 years. Kanak Resources Management Ltd. was awarded the contract for garbage collection in the city as per Nagpur Bin Free Project in 2009 by NMC. It was replaced by AG Enviro Infra Project Pvt Ltd and BVG India in 2019. In electricity supply, which was first managed by MSEB was then replaced by MSEDCL. Nagpur Fire Brigade has nine fire stations at various locations in the city. India Post which is a governmental postal department has two head post offices and many post offices including sub-post offices at various locations in the city and are part of the logistics services in the city along with various other private operators.

Health care NMC in collaboration with Central Government, State Government, UNICEF, World Health Organization and Non-governmental organisation conducts and maintains various health schemes in the city.

City health line is an initiative started by NMC dedicated to the health of citizens of Nagpur. This includes providing computerised comparative information and action in the field to local citizens. NMC runs three indoor patient hospitals including Indira Gandhi Rugnalaya at LAD square, Panchpaoli Maternity Hospital in Panchpaoli and Isolation Hospital in Immamwada. Besides, the civic body runs three big diagnostic centres at Mahal, Sadar and also at Indira Gandhi Rugnalaya. Apart from these, NMC has 57 outpatient dispensaries (OPDs), including 23 health posts sanctioned under Union Government's schemes, 15 allopathy hospitals, 12 ayurvedic hospitals, three homoeopathy hospitals, three naturopathy hospitals and one Unani hospital. In 2013, ABP News-Ipsos declared Nagpur the country's best city for health care services. The city is home to numerous hospitals, some run by the government and some private and consists of various super-specialty and multi-specialty ones. Recently various cancer speciality hospitals providing treatment until tertiary care for cancer patients have been established in the city making it a natural medical hub for nearby areas and boosting healthcare system in the city. Nagpur is a health hub for Central India and caters to a large geographical area arbitrarily bounded by Delhi in the north, Kolkata in the east, Mumbai-Pune in the west and Hyderabad in the south. People from Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana regularly come to Nagpur for their health needs. Nagpur boasts of super-specialty physicians and surgeons serving its population in both public sector government-run hospitals and well equipped private hospitals catering to all strata of society. AIIMS has also been established in MIHAN, Nagpur. According to 2005 National Family Health Survey, Nagpur has a fertility rate of 1.9 which is below the replacement level. The infant mortality rate was 43 per 1,000 live births, and the mortality rate for children under five was 50 per 1,000 live births. About 57% slum and 72% non-slum children have received all the mandatory vaccines which include BCG, measles and full courses of polio and DPT. In Nagpur, 78 per cent of poor children are anaemic, including 49 per cent who have moderate to severe anaemia. About 45% of children under five years of age and 31% of women are underweight. The poor people from the city mostly cite the reason of the lack of a nearby facility, poor quality of care and excessive waiting time for not visiting any government hospitals for treatment. According to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4) of 2015-16 for Nagpur, households having improved drinking water source is 95.3%, households having improved sanitation facility is 77.3% and households having clean fuel for cooking is 87.6%. Health Insurance coverage among households in the city are 19.5%. Female sterilisation is more prominent than male sterilisation in Nagpur. Institutional births in the city is 97%. Children below 5 years who are anaemic are 43.50%, while women and men in the age group of 15 to 49 years who are anaemic are 45.00% and 21.20%, respectively.

Military establishments Nagpur is an important city for the Indian armed forces. Maintenance Command of Indian Air Force has its current headquarters at Vayusena Nagar in Nagpur. It houses Mi-8 helicopters and the IAF carriers IL-76 and handles the maintenance, repair, and operations of all aircraft, helicopters and other equipment. The ordnance factory and staff college of ordnance factory Ambazari and National Academy of Defence Production for Group A officer of ordnance factories are in the western part of the city. Sitabuldi Fort is managed by the Uttar Maharashtra and Gujarat sub area hq. of the Indian Army and citizens are allowed to visit the premises on Republic day, Maharashtra day and Independence day. The 'raison d'tre' for Kamptee, the military cantonment, is still operational. Kamptee Cantonment houses the Officers Training Academy for National Cadets Corps, which is the only one of its kind. It is also the regimental centre of one of the oldest and most respected regiments in the Indian Army, the Brigade of the Guards. Guards, located at Kamptee, are the only regiment in the Indian Army which have won two PVC (Param Veer Chakra), the highest gallantry awarded to soldiers for wartime operations. There are also other military establishments and a well equipped military hospital to care for the health of the armed forces personnel. The Army Postal Service centre is also operational in the cantonment since 1948, to provide training to personnel of Department of Post who volunteer themselves for the Army. Nagpur's National Civil Defence College provides civil defence and disaster management training to pupils from all over India and abroad. Indian Air Force's IL-76 transport planes nicknamed "Gajraj" are also

based in Nagpur.

Economy Nagpur is an emerging metropolis. Nagpur's nominal GDP was estimated to be around ₹202,438 crore (US\$24 billion) in 2023-24, making it the largest economic centre in entire central India. Nagpur district has a per-capita GDP of ₹322,927 (US\$3,800) as of 2023-24 financial year, being the highest in the central India. In 2004, it was ranked the fastest-growing city in India in terms of the number of households with an annual income of ₹10 million or more. Nagpur has been the main centre of commerce in the region of Vidarbha since its early days and is an important trading location. Although, Nagpur's economic importance gradually declined relative to Mumbai and Pune after the merging of Vidarbha into Maharashtra because of a period of neglect by the state government, the city's economy later recovered.

The city is important for the banking sector as it hosts the regional office of Reserve Bank of India, which was opened on 10 September 1956. The Reserve Bank of India has two branches in Nagpur, one of which houses India's entire gold assets. Sitabuldi market in central Nagpur, known as the heart of the city, is the major commercial market area. Nagpur is home to ice-cream manufacturer Dinshaws, Indian dry food manufacturer Haldiram's, Indian ready-to-cook food manufacturer Actchawa, spice manufacturer Suruchi International, Ayurvedic products company Vicco, Baidyanath, Vithoba, & Aroma, Water Tank & Pipe manufacturing company R C Plasto and Explosives & Ammunition company Solar Industries. For centuries, Nagpur has been famous for its orange gardens in the country, hence the name "Orange City". Orange cultivation has been expanding and it is the biggest marketplace for oranges in the country. The Maharashtra Agro Industrial Development Corporation has its multi fruit processing division called Nagpur Orange Grower's Association (NOGA) which has an installed capacity of 4,950 MT of fruits per annum. Orange is also exported to various regions in the country as well to other countries. Nagpur is also famous for the cotton and silk which is woven by its large Koshti population of handloom weavers which are around 5,000. Nagpur and the Vidarbha region have a very prominent power sector as compared to the rest of Maharashtra. Koradi Thermal Power Station and Khaparkheda Thermal Power Station are two major thermal power stations located near Nagpur and operated by MSPGCL. NTPC has a super thermal power plant called Mauda Super Thermal Power Station in Mauda around 40 km from Nagpur and Vidarbha Industries Power Limited (a subsidiary of Reliance Power) is situated at Butibori.

The Multi-modal International Hub Airport at Nagpur (MIHAN) is an ongoing project for the Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar International Airport, Nagpur. The government of Maharashtra formed a special purpose entity, Maharashtra Airport Development Company, for the development of MIHAN.

Prominent Information Technology companies such as TCS, Tech Mahindra, HCL, GlobalLogic, Persistent Systems, Infosys, T-Systems, Ebix, LTIMindtree, Accenture, Zoho, Perficient, Hexaware etc. are located at various IT parks in Nagpur. Tata Advanced Systems, erstwhile TAL Manufacturing Solutions, has its facility in the SEZ for manufacturing structural components for Boeing and Airbus. Air India Engineering Services Limited and AAR-Indamer have their MRO Facility in the SEZ. Dassault Reliance Aerospace Limited (DRAL), Thales Reliance Defence System and pharmaceutical company Lupin also have their manufacturing facilities in MIHAN. Apart from MIHAN SEZ the city has three prominent MIDC areas nearby. Prominent Industries located at various industrial areas are Indo Rama Synthetics, Gammon India Limited, KEC International, Calderys India, CEAT Tyres, Mahindra and Mahindra, Candico, Pix Transmissions, JSW Steel, ESAB India Ltd, Johnson Lifts, Sintex, Grindwell Norton, Berger Becker Coatings, Horiba India, RCCPL, Adani Wilmar, Mother Dairy, Air Liquide North India, Patanjali Foods, UltraTech Cement, Hindalco Industries, Reliance Industries, Parker Hannifin, Elkem South Asia etc. The city also has a well developed defence industry with the major public

sector defense company, Yantra India, located in the city. Also private sector defence companies such as BrahMos Aerospace, Solar Industries and Economic Explosives Limited are located in the city. The city is also fast growing as a logistics hub and houses three Inland Container Depot, one each of Container Corporation of India, Distribution Logistics Infrastructure and Adani Logistics. Owing to rich natural resources in the region, mining is a major activity. Several government organisations related to the mining industry are based or located in Nagpur, which includes Western Coalfields Limited (one of the eight fully owned subsidiaries of Coal India Limited), MOIL, Mineral Exploration and consultancy Limited, Geological Survey of India and Indian Bureau of Mines.

Culture Cultural events and literature The city contains people from other Indian states as well as people belonging to the world's major faiths, and yet is known for staying calm during communal conflicts in India. Nagpur plays host to cultural events throughout the year. Cultural and literary societies in Nagpur include Vidarbha Sahitya Sangh (for development of Marathi), Vidarbha Rashtrabhasha Prachar Samiti (promotion and spreading Hindi) and Vidarbha Hindi Sahitya Sammelan (for promoting Hindi). Marathi Sahitya Sammelan, the conference on Marathi Literature were held twice in Nagpur city. Nagpur also hosts the annual Orange City Literature festival since 2019 and Vidarbha Literary Fest since 2020, featuring local and international authors. Nagpur is the head office of Aadim Samvidhan Sanrakshan Samiti (working for the rights of scheduled tribes). The South-Central Zone Cultural Centre also sponsors cultural events in Nagpur city, such as the Orange City Craft Mela and Folk Dance Festival, Vidarbha which is noted for its numerous folk-dances such as the human tiger. Newspapers are published from Nagpur in Marathi, English and Hindi. In addition, the Government of Maharashtra organises a week-long Kalidas Festival, a series of music and dance performances, by national level artists. Nagpur Municipal Corporation in partnership with Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation organises Nagpur Mohotsav at Yeshwant Stadium, in which many distinguish artists participate. The Nagpur Municipal Corporation also organises the Orange City International Film Festival (OCIFF) annually, in association with Saptak, Pune Film Foundation, Vidarbha Sahitya Sangh, and Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University (RTMNU). The Nagpur Central Museum (est. 1863) maintains collections are mainly for Vidarbha region. Three brothers Ghulam Ali (Kotwal), Mohammad Saaduddin (Subedar) and Mohammad Saladuddin (Minister and Kotwal) from Jhajjar are remembered as great scholars of Urdu and Persian during the reign of Maharaja Senasaheb Subha Chhatrapati Raghuji Bapusaheb Bhonsle III. They founded 'Jhajjar Bagh' at Hansapuri (Now Mominpura). In this location, they built their residence 'Aina-e Mahal', a well and a Masjid (now Masjid Ahle Hadith). 'Jhajjar Bagh' also known as 'Subedar ka Bada' was located where nowadays Mohammad Ali Road at Mominpura, Jamia Masjid, Mohammad Ali Sarai and Furqania Madrasa are located. In 2013 NMC erected the gigantic Namantar Shahid Smarak in memory of Namantar Andolan martyrs. The Orange City LGBTQ Pride March is also held annually in Nagpur, along with the Nagpur LGBT Queer Carnival during the pride month

Religious places and festivals Deekshabhoomi, the largest hollow stupa or the largest dome shaped monument and an important place of the Buddhist movement is, located in Nagpur. Every year on the day of Vijayadashami, i.e. Dussehra, followers of Ambedkar visit Deekshabhoomi to mark the conversion ceremony of Ambedkar and his followers in Nagpur into Buddhism that took place on 14 October 1956. It has been given 'A' grade tourist place status by Maharashtra Government in March 2016. 14 April, which is the birthdate of Ambedkar, is celebrated as Ambedkar Jayanti. Jainism has a good presence in Nagpur. There are nearly 30 Jain temples. The old ones are Sengan Jain temple Ladpura, Parwarpura Jain temple, Kirana oli Jain temple, and Juna oli Jain temple. In west Nagpur Shri 1008 Shantinath Digamber Bhagwan temple is situated.

The most famous temple in Nagpur is Tekdi Ganesh Mandir, and is said to be one of the Swayambhu ("self-manifested") temples in the city. Sri Poddareshwar Ram Mandir Koradi Shree Mahalaxmi Jagdamba Mata Mandir popularly known as Koradi Devi Temple Located in Koradi City near Nagpur. It is one of the famous devi temple in Vidarbha. There are 51 Shakti-peeths of Devi. The Koradi Devi Temple is considered as one of the Shakti-peeths. On Navratri more than 50,000 lamps were lighted at the temple premises. Religious events are observed in the city throughout the year. Ram Navami is celebrated in Nagpur with shobha yatra with a procession of floats depicting events from the Ramayana. Processions are also held on important festivals of other religions such as Dhamma Chakra Pravartan Din, Vijayadashami, Mawlid, Guru Nanak Jayanti, Mahavir Jayanti, Durga Puja, Ganesh Chaturthi and Muharram. Like the rest of India, Nagpurkars celebrate major Hindu festivals like Diwali, Holi and Dussera with enthusiasm. Celebrations lasting for several days are held on Ganesh Chaturthi and Durga Puja festivals in virtually every small locality in the city.

The city also contains a sizeable Muslim population, and famous places of worship for Muslims include the Jama Masjid-Mominpura and Bohri Jamatkhana-Itwari. The most famous shrine (dargah) of Tajuddin Muhammad Badruddin is at Tajabad. Annual Urs is celebrated in great enthusiasm and unity on 26th of Muharram. Nagpur is also called as Tajpur as the holy shrine of Sufi Saint Baba Tajuddin. The St. Francis De Sales Cathedral is located in Sadar as well as the All Saints Cathedral church. There are many south Indian temples in Nagpur like Sarveshwara Devalayam, where all south Indian festivals are celebrated like Sitarama Kalyanam, Radha Kalyanam Dhanurmasa celebration with Andal Kalyanam, Balaji temple in seminary hills where every year Bramhotsavam to Lord Balaji and Lord Kartikeya is celebrated here. There are 2 Ayyapa temples, one at Ayyapa Nagar and the other at Harihara Nagar, Raghvendaswami Mutt, Murugananda Swami Temple at Mohan Nagar, Nimishamba Devi temple Subramanyam devastanam at Sitabuldi and many more such south Indian temples are here in Nagpur as there is quite a good populations of south Indians in Nagpur.

Marbat Festival is a unique festival for Nagpur and is organised every year a day after the bullock festival of 'Pola'. The tradition of taking out the Marbat processions of 'kali' (black) and 'pivli' (yellow) Marbats (idols), started in 1880 in the eastern part of the city. A number of 'badgyas' (Marathi) (Meaning Mascots in English), representing contemporary symbols of evil, comprise another feature of the annual processions. This festival dates back to the 19th century when the Bhonsla dynasty ruled. There is a Parsi Zoroastrian Agiary (Dar-e-Meher) in Nagpur, where the Parsi New Year is celebrated by the Parsi community in Nagpur.

Arts and crafts The tradition of painting in Nagpur was patronised by the Royal House of the Bhonsales as well as common people. Illustrated manuscripts, including of the Bhagavat, Jnaaneshwari, Shakuntala, and Geeta, and the folk patachitras related to some festivals are available besides murals. The community of artists was called chitaris (painters), and this community has today turned to sculpt. Textile was once an important industry in Nagpur. Good quality cotton was produced in abundant quantities thanks to a suitable soil and climate. With the introduction of the railways, cotton sales and goods transport flourished. Besides cotton textiles, silk and wool weaving was also practised in the district. Silk sarees and pagota, patka, dhoti, and borders were woven with the silk thread. Every year Nagpur celebrates Orange City Literature Festival in the month of November.

Cuisine The Vidharbha region has its own distinctive cuisine known as the Varhadi cuisine or Saoji cuisine. Saoji or Savji cuisine was the main cuisine of the Savji community. This traditional food is known for its spicy taste. The special spices used in the gravy include black pepper, dry coriander, bay leaves, grey cardamom, cinnamon, cloves, and ample use of poppy seeds. Non-vegetarian food especially chicken and mutton are commonly eaten in Saoji establishments in Nagpur. There are numerous Savji bhojanalays in Nagpur which are so popular in Maharashtra that the Indian chef Sanjeev Kapoor once featured Savji mutton on one of his TV

shows and the recipe is listed on his website. Nagpur is also famous for its oranges, which have some typical qualities have recently begun to attract international attention. Numerous beverages are made out of the oranges. Santra Barfi is also a famous dish, arising from orange which is produced locally in Nagpur. Mominpura is a majority Muslim area of the city and it is famous for its Mughal dishes and Biryani. The city is also famous for rare black chickens called Kadaknath Chicken which are cooked in varhadi style. Nagpur is also famous for tarri poha, a variety of flattened rice, with a spicy chana curry and has many food joints; each having their own way of preparing and serving it. Samosas are also famous in Nagpur and is available at many restaurants and food spots. Another famous food is Patodi and Kadhi.

Tourism Tiger reserves Nagpur is surrounded by many tiger reserves and acts as a gateway, hence called Tiger capital of India. Tiger reserves such as Pench Tiger Reserve is situated around 100 km from the city and can be reached through NH44 in Nagpur Jabalpur road. Tadoba National Park is situated south of the city and is around 141 km from the city. Umred Karhandla Wildlife Sanctuary, Bor Wildlife Sanctuary, Navegaon National Park, Melghat Tiger Reserve and Kanha Tiger Reserve are the other tiger reserves which are located at a radius of 200 km from the city. The city has its own reserved forest area at Seminary Hills and Gorewada.

Zoos, Gardens and Lakes Maharajbagh zoo is an existing zoo which is located in the heart of the city near Sitabuldi and consists of a variety of animals. Balasaheb Thackeray Gorewada International Zoological Park is an international zoo which has been set up beside Gorewada Lake and offers Wildlife Safari

The city consist of various natural and man made lakes. Khindsi Lake, Ambazari Lake and Gorewada Lake are the natural lakes of the city while Futala Lake, Shukrawari Lake, Sakkardara Lake, Zilpi Lake and Sonegaon lake are the man made lakes. Futala Lake is being redeveloped as the world's second largest Lighting and Musical fountain which would be available for public show on tickets. The city also has various gardens which consist of Ambazari Garden, Telankhedi Garden, Satpuda Botanical Garden, Japanese Garden and Children's Traffic Park. Apart from gardens the city also consists of various water parks. Virendra Kumar, Union Minister of Social justice and Empowerment 26 August 2022 announced that the central government with the help of the state government will create Maharashtra's First ever "Divyang Park" and the procedure in this endeavour has started. This park will be peculiar and will have different types of facilities for Divyangjans such as textiles pathways, smell, and touch gardens, sensory gardens, Skill training facilities, sports, rehabilitation facilities, and infotainment.

Religious places Nagpur boasts many religious structures that hold importance for differing religious beliefs. Deekshabhoomi and Dragon Palace are important religious places for Buddhists across India and the world. Deekshabhoomi is the place where B. R. Ambedkar with millions of his followers embraced Buddhism in the year 1956. Dragon Palace Temple is situated at Kamptee which is around 15 km (9.3 mi) from the city. It also has a state of the art Vipassana centre which was inaugurated by President of India Ram Nath Kovind on 22 September 2017. Other prominent religious structures include Ramtek Fort Temple at Ramtek which is a temple built inside a fort and is 55 km (34 mi) away from Nagpur, Adasa Ganpati Temple located near Savner is one of the eight Ashta Vinayaks in Vidarbha, Baba Tajuddin Dargah, Shri Shantinath Digambar Jain Mandir at Ramtek, Shree Ganesh Mandir Tekdi, located near Nagpur Railway Station and one of the Swayambhu temple of Lord Ganesha, Sai Baba Mandir at Wardha road, Telankhedi Hanuman Temple, Swaminarayan Temple, Koradi Temple, located at Koradi, Shri Poddreshwar Ram Temple, Balaji Temple, Siddhivinayak Temple at Zilpi, Hingna, Shri Devguru Brihaspati Dham Kshetra Chowki, at Chowki Vangram under Sawali Bibi Gram Panchayat in Hingna, All Saints Cathedral and Gurudwara Guru Nanak Darbar.

Museums The city also has some museums which are Nagpur Central Museum and Narrow Gauge Rail Museum. Raman Science Centre is a premium Science Centre of Central India, that has of late become a must see feature on the city's tourist landscape with many scientific experimental edutainment installations which also has a planetarium and a unique facility called the Science on a Sphere inside.

Transport Rail Railways started in Nagpur way back in 1867 when portion of Bombay-Bhusaval-Nagpur line was opened for traffic and train service from Nagpur to Calcutta was started in 1881. Today, a total of 254 trains stop at Nagpur railway station. These include Passenger, Express/Mail, Duronto, Rajdhani, Garib Rath, Humsafar Express, Vande Bharat Express trains. Of these 65 are daily trains and 22 terminate/originate from Nagpur. Almost 160,000 passengers board/leave Nagpur Railway Station Nagpur railway station, one of the oldest and busiest Stations of India was inaugurated in its present form on 15 January 1925 by the then Governor Sir Frank. Apart from the Nagpur railway station, Ajni railway station and Itwari railway station are the important stations in the city. Other railway stations in the city include Motibagh, Kamptee, Kalamna, Khapri and Godhani. Nagpur-Ajni rail route which is just three km (1.9 mi) long, is the shortest train run in Indian Railways primarily meant for crew to travel from Nagpur station to the workshop at Ajni. The city is the divisional headquarters for the Central Railway and South East Central Railway Zone of Indian Railways. Nagpur is a city with two divisional headquarters, a rare distinction it shares with Lucknow, which has headquarters for two different divisions in Northern Railway zone and North Eastern Railway zone.

Nagpur Metro Rail Nagpur Metro is a rapid transit system of the city which is operated by Maharashtra Metro Rail Corporation Limited (erstwhile Nagpur Metro Rail Corporation Ltd.) and started its operations on 8 March 2019. Full-fledged operation of the Phase I was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 11 December 2022. On 1 January 2023, Nagpur Metro made the record for single-day ridership of 2,02,608 passengers. Construction of Phase II has also started.

Nagpur broad-gauge Metro Rail The Nagpur broad-gauge Metro is a commuter rail project planned Nagpur and extending up to adjacent districts of Wardha and Bhandara. The project is estimated to cost INR 4.18 billion and consists of four routes, each originating from Nagpur and terminating at Narkhed, Ramtek, Wardha and Bhandara.

Road Nagpur is a major junction for roadways as India's two major national highways, Srinagar-Kanyakumari (National Highway 44) and Mumbai-Kolkata (National Highway 53) pass through the city. National Highway 47 connects Nagpur to Bamanbore in Gujarat. Nagpur is at the junction of two Asian Highways namely AH43 Agra to Matara, Sri Lanka and AH46 connecting Kharagpur, India to Dhule, India. The highway to Mumbai via Aurangabad, a shorter route, was re-built on the national highway basis. This highway significantly reduces the distance travelled by NH 6 and NH 3 between two cities. In 2009, NHA announced the extension of the existing NH 204 to Nagpur via Kolhapur-Sangli- Solapur-Tuljapur-Latur-Nanded-Yavatmal-Wardha and connecting it to the NH-7 at Butibori near Nagpur. The entire NH 204 highway has been included in the national highway mega projects for upgradation to 4-lanes, which is now completed. One more national highway NH-547 Savner-Chhindwara-Narsinghpur has connected with NH 47 at Savner near Nagpur providing another optional connectivity with the northern part of India. Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC) runs cheaper transport service for intercity, interstate, and intrastate travel. It has two bus stations in Nagpur: Nagpur Bus Sthanak (CBS-1) at Ganeshpeth and MorBhawan (CBS-2) at Jhansi Rani Square, Sitabuldi. It operates 1600 daily services from CBS-1 to long and short distances within the state and to places in other surrounding states. It also operates 750 daily services from CBS-2 to short distances within Vidarbha. The Nagpur Municipal Corporation through its bus operators (three red and one green) plies 487 buses, by which over 160,000 people

commute. The city bus operation is named as Aapli Bus (your bus). The operators consist of diesel, ethanol and CNG run buses. A total of 5,500 trips of 123 routes are covered by city buses. A common mobility card, called MAHA-CARD, has also been issued which will help people commute with buses and the metro rail. A Green bus project featuring India's first ethanol-powered buses was established in August 2014. Nagpur is connected directly with Shirdi with the help of Mumbai-Nagpur Expressway, since December 2021. After the expressway gets fully completed by December 2023, Nagpur will be directly connected with the state capital, Mumbai. Other expressways which will link Nagpur in the coming years are Nagpur-Goa Expressway, Nagpur-Hyderabad-Bengaluru Expressway and Hyderabad-Nagpur-Indore Expressway. Other local transport include Autorickshaws and private taxi operators under Ola Cabs and Uber cabs.

Air transport Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar International Airport (IATA: NAG, ICAO: VANP) is operated by Mihan India Private Limited (MIPL) and owned by Airports Authority of India. Nagpur's Air Traffic Control (ATC) is the busiest in India, with more than 300 flights flying over the city every day in 2004. In October 2005, Nagpur's Sonegaon Airport was declared an international airport and was renamed Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar International Airport. Nagpur is well connected by direct flights to Mumbai, New Delhi, Hyderabad, Lucknow, Kolkata, Bangalore, Pune, Indore, Ahmedabad, Goa, Nashik, Kishangarh, Belgaum, Nanded and Aurangabad along with an indirect flight to Thiruvananthapuram via Pune. These flights are operated by Air India, IndiGo and Star Air. Air Arabia operates a four times a week to and fro flight between Nagpur and Sharjah and Qatar Airways operates a daily direct flight to and from Doha. The Nagpur Airport has received Special Achievement Award 2012-2013 from Airports Authority of India. Nagpur became the first airport in India to commission the INDRA system and also has ADS-B system. No other airport in the country had commissioned INDRA yet. Nagpur Airport became the first airport in the country to receive an ISO 27000 certificate. In fact, Nagpur is not only the first in India but also the first in world to be certified for Air navigation service provider (ANSP). There are seven airports in the world which have ISO 27000, but none of them have it for ANSP. The government of India has identified Nagpur Airport as one of the safe airports for diverted flights and emergency landing. In fact, many flights have used the airport during emergencies. This is because all international and domestic airlines had already been informed by the government to go to Nagpur during emergencies. The availability of excellent fire fighting equipment, air traffic control equipment with latest radar, along with availability of good hospitals and hotels in the city, made the airport a good choice during emergencies. Nagpur Airport has an annual capacity of 1 million passengers, but it handles more passengers than its capacity. Airport expansion and improvement of service is in the cards and privatisation of the airport has been proposed by the government.

Education Nagpur is a major education hub in Central India. There are two types of schools in the city. NMC (Government) run schools and private schools run by trusts. These schools follow the 10+2+3/4 plan (15 years of schooling leading to the first degree), the first ten years constituting school education consisting of four years primary level, three years of upper primary level and three years of high school level with a public examination at the end of tenth class and 12th class constituting the Secondary and Higher Secondary Board Examination, respectively. This is followed by either a general degree course in a chosen field of study or a professional degree course, such as law, engineering and medicine. These schools are governed by either of the following boards: Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education, Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE), International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) and International Baccalaureate (IB). Admission to professional graduation colleges in Nagpur is through MHT-CET, JEE (Main), CAT, CLAT, GATE, CMAT, GMAT, GPAT and NEET. Nagpur has five state universities: Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University (founded in 1923 as Nagpur University, one of the oldest in the country and having more than 400 affiliated colleges), Maharashtra Animal and Fishery Sciences University, Kavikulaguru Kalidas Sanskrit University, Maharashtra National Law University & Laxminarayan Innovation Technological University and one private university, Ramdeobaba

University (RBU). Symbiosis International University also has its campus in the city Nagpur has five government medical colleges, Government Medical College, Indira Gandhi Government Medical College, Nagpur, Government Dental College, Government Ayurvedic College & All India Institute of Medical Sciences, and one private medical college, N.K.P. Salve Institute of Medical Sciences. Medical colleges in the city are affiliated to Maharashtra University of Health Sciences while AIIMS is an autonomous medical university.

Most engineering colleges in the city are affiliated with Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University. Government Polytechnic, Nagpur (established 1914) is one of the oldest polytechnic in India. Visvesvaraya National Institute of Technology, located in the city, is the only NIT in Maharashtra. Indian Institute of Information Technology has been established as a PPP with TCS and Ceinsys (erstwhile ADCC Infocad) as industry partners in 2016. A Government College of Engineering started in the academic year 2016-17. National Fire Service College, under the Ministry of Home Affairs is also located in the city which was established in the year 1957. Nagpur has two major law schools, Maharashtra National Law University, a National Law University established in 2016 and Department of Law, Nagpur University. Further many private law colleges, mostly affiliated to Nagpur University, also offer legal education in the city. Nagpur has two major management institutes, Indian Institute of Management established in 2015 and Institute of Management Technology, private management college, established in 2004. College of Agriculture is an old college in the city and was one of the first five agriculture colleges in the country founded in 1906 by the then British Government. Nagpur also has other centrally funded institutes like National Power Training Institute, Central Institute for Cotton Research, Central Institute of Mining and Fuel Research, Central Power Research Institute, National Academy of Direct Taxes, National Civil Defence College, National Research Centre for Citrus, Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation, Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Intellectual Property Management, Jawaharlal Nehru Aluminium Research Development and Design Centre (JNARDDC), National Institute of Miners' Health (NIMH), National Disaster Response Force Academy, National Academy of Defence Production and National Environmental Engineering Research Institute. Nagpur also has an IGNOU and YCMOU regional centre.

Media Lokmat Marathi-language newspaper published in Maharashtra, India. Founded in 1971 by Jawaharlal Darda, it is the largest read Marathi-language newspaper in India. and has presence in print, digital, TV and events. The Hitavada is the largest selling broadsheet English daily newspaper of Central India. It was founded in 1911 by freedom fighter Gopal Krishna Gokhale in Nagpur. Other English dailies circulated in the city include The Times of India, The Indian Express, The Economic Times and Lokmat Times. Marathi dailies circulated in city are Nava Rashtira, Sakal, Tarun Bharat, Deshonatti, Maharashtra Times, Punya Nagari, Lokshahi, Divya Marathi and Loksatta. Hindi newspapers such as Nava Bharat, Dainik Bhaskar and Lokmat Samachar are also circulated. Employment News, which is published weekly, is also circulated in Hindi, English and Urdu. Online news portal such as Nagpur Today and The Live Nagpur are also available with special focus on local news. All India Radio is the oldest radio broadcaster in the city and has its office in the Civil Lines area. Vividh Bharati, the entertainment radio station, and Gyan Vani, the educational radio station, are the FM radio stations of All India Radio and are available in the frequency 100.6 FM & 107.8 FM, respectively. Other private FM broadcasting channels with their frequencies include Radio City at 91.1 FM, Red FM at 93.5 FM, My FM at 94.3 FM, Radio Mirchi at 98.3 FM, Mirchi Love FM at 91.9 FM and Big FM at 92.7 FM. Television broadcasting in Nagpur began on 15 August 1982 with the launch of Doordarshan, the Government of India's public service broadcaster. It transmits DD National and DD News, which are free-to-air terrestrial television channels and one regional satellite channel called DD Sahyadri. Private satellite channels started in the 1990s. Lord Buddha TV and Awaaz India TV are Free-to-air television which are based in the city and are available in various cable operators and DTH platforms Satellite TV channels are accessible via cable subscription, direct-broadcast satellite services or internet-based television. Cable TV operators or multi system operators in the city include

UCN, GTPL, In Cable, BCN and Diamond Cable Network. All the DTH operators in the country are available in the city viz. Airtel digital TV, DD Free Dish, Dish TV, Sun Direct, D2h and Tata Play. The city also has its own Regional DTH operator, UCN, which serves the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra headquartered in the city itself. Broadband Internet service is available in the city and is provided by various Internet service providers. Wi-Fi is available in major educational institutions and certain areas in the city, including government institutions under Smart City plan by NSSCDCL. As of 2023, 3G services in the city are provided by BSNL, Airtel and Vodafone Idea Limited while 4G services in the city are provided by Airtel, Jio, Vodafone Idea Limited and BSNL. and 5G services in the city are provided by Airtel and Jio

Sports Nagpur is a big centre for cricket in Vidarbha owing to the presence of the Vidarbha Cricket Association. Vidarbha Cricket Association (VCA) is the governing body of cricket activities in the Vidarbha region in Maharashtra. It is affiliated to the Board of Control for Cricket in India. Nagpur is one of the few Indian cities that has more than one international cricket stadium, the older one being the Vidarbha Cricket Association Ground situated in Civil Lines, and the new one, the Vidarbha Cricket Association Stadium, inaugurated in 2008 is situated in Jamtha, Wardha Road on the outskirts of the city. Vidarbha Cricket Association Stadium has been built on Wardha road with a seating capacity of 45,000 people at a cost of ₹750 million (US\$8.9 million). It is one of the fifteen test cricket venues in the country. Vidarbha Cricket Association Ground has been the venue for the 1987 Reliance World Cup and 1996 Wills World Cup. Vidarbha Cricket Association Stadium has been the venue for the 2011 Cricket World Cup and 2016 ICC World Twenty20. The stadium also hosts certain matches of the Indian Premier League and had been the home city for the now defunct Deccan Chargers in the 2010 season and was also the home city for Kings XI Punjab along with Mohali in the 2016 season. Vidarbha Cricket Association also has a cricket academy at the main centre in Vidarbha Cricket Association Ground and three more centres. It also has its own cricket teams which play in various formats as mandated by BCCI. The Vidarbha cricket team had won the Ranji Trophy and Irani Cup consecutively in 2017-18 and 2018-19 season.

Vidarbha Hockey Association is a body governing field hockey in the Vidarbha Region and is affiliated to Hockey India as an associate member. Vidarbha Hockey Association Stadium is the hockey ground owned and managed by Vidarbha Hockey Association. Nagpur District Football Association (NDFA) is the district governing body for football in Nagpur, Maharashtra and is affiliated with the Western India Football Association, the state sports governing body. The Nagpur District Football Association is a district level football body and conducts various matches among the schools and clubs. It has its own league. NDFA Elite division Champions League, another football tournament, was held at Nagpur annually since 2010 until 2014 by Lokmat Group in Yeshwant Stadium. Indian Friends Football Club (IFFC), Rabbani, Rahul Club and Young Muslim Football Club (YMFC) are notable football clubs in the city. Other clubs include, Rabbani Club, Rahul Club, City Police, South East Central Railway, Qidwai Club, SRPF, New Globe and City Club. Nagpur FC has its own Football Academy in Dhanwate National College, Congress Nagar. Slum Soccer is a social initiative started by Vijay Barse for young runaways and former drug addicts to rehabilitate them through football. Badminton tournaments in the city are organised by Nagpur District Badminton Association (NDBA) which is affiliated to Maharashtra Badminton Association which in turn is a member of Badminton Association of India. Nagpur District Table Tennis Association organises table tennis tournaments at district level and is affiliated to Maharashtra Table Tennis Association. The city also has a divisional sports complex which consist of Indoor stadium and other gymnastic facilities. The city's major indoor arena is Vivekananda Nagar Indoor Sports Complex located near Mankapur. The arena hosts several political events, concerts and sports events like badminton, basketball, lawn tennis. The city also has various running events, for general public, organised by various institutions.

Notable people Sister cities Jinan (China)

See also MIHAN Nagpur Metro Nagpur District Make in Maharashtra List of Maratha dynasties and states List of forts Largest Indian cities by GDP

Notes References External links

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Indore

Indore (; ISO: Indaura, Hindi: [इन्दौर]) is the largest and most populous city in the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh. The commercial capital of the state, it has been declared as the cleanest city in India 8 years in a row. It is also considered the largest education hub in central India and houses campuses of both the Indian Institute of Technology and the Indian Institute of Management. Indore had a population of 5,560,000 (urban agglomeration) in 2025. The Indore Metropolitan Region now encompasses a total area of 9989.69 sq km covering Indore, Ujjain, Dewas, Pithampur, Nagda. Pithampur ranks among India's top 5 industrial hubs and is a major center for automotive and pharmaceutical manufacturing. With 1,000+ factories and Asia's longest test track, it drives central India's industrial growth. Located on the southern edge of Malwa Plateau, at an average altitude of 553 metres (1,814 ft) above sea level, it has the highest elevation among major cities of Central India. The city is 220 km west of the Bhopal, 350 km east of the Ahmedabad, 480 Km from Hazira Port, Surat and 550 Km from JNPT Sea Port, Mumbai. It serves as the headquarters of both the Indore District and the Indore Division. The high court bench at Indore is a permanent bench of Madhya Pradesh High Court in Indore constituted in 1956. Modern-day Indore traces its roots to its 16th-century founding as a trading hub between the Deccan Plateau and Delhi. It was founded on the banks of the Kanh and Saraswati rivers. The city came under the Maratha Empire, on 18 May 1724, after Peshwa Baji Rao I assumed the full control of Malwa. During the days of the British Raj, Indore State was a 19 Gun Salute (21 locally) princely state (a rare high rank) ruled by the Maratha Holkar dynasty, until they acceded to the Union of India. Indore functions as the financial capital of Madhya Pradesh and was home to the Madhya Pradesh Stock Exchange till its derecognition in 2015. Indore has been selected as one of the 100 Indian cities to be developed as a smart city under the Smart Cities Mission. It also qualified in the first round of Smart Cities Mission and was selected as one of the first twenty cities to be developed as Smart Cities. Indore has been part of the Swachh Survekshan since its inception and had ranked 25th in 2016. It has been ranked as India's cleanest city seven years in a row as per the Swachh Survekshan for the years 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023. Meanwhile, Indore has also been declared as India's first 'water plus' city under the Swachhta Survekshan 2021. Indore became the only Indian city to be selected for International Clean Air Catalyst Programme. The project, with cooperation of the Indore Municipal Corporation and the Madhya Pradesh Pollution Control Board, will be operated for a period of five years to purify the air in the city. Indore started penalising anyone giving alms to beggars starting from 1 January 2025, expanding a previous ban on giving alms to child beggars. This initiative aims to eradicate begging, with officials claiming it disrupts the begging cycle.

Etymology Gupta inscriptions name Indore as "Indrapura". It is believed that the city is named after its Indreshwar Mahadev Temple, where Shiva is the presiding deity. It is believed that Indra himself did Tapasya (meditation) in this place and led sage Swami Indrapuri to establish the temple. Later, Tukoji Rao Holkar who belonged to the Holkar clan of the Marathas and was the feudatory of Indore, renovated the temple. The older name of Indore is believed to be Indur, as referenced in historical records. In 2017, a proposal was brought forward by the Indore Municipal Corporation to rename the city as "Indur".

History Gupta Empire (Gupta Era) Gupta Empire inscription mentions Indore as city/town of Indrapura in Gupta Indore Copper plate inscription dated 146 Gupta era or 465 CE. These are also some of the earliest mentions of Indore where the city is mentioned as 'Indrapura'. Indrapura (modern day Indore) was then known for its sun temple, where in 464-65 CE, Gupta king Skandagupta had made an endowment for the permanent maintenance of the city's sun temple. The temple was constructed by two merchants of the city - Achalavarman

and Bhikunhasi.

Holkar Era (Maratha Empire) During the Mughal era, the area under the modern Indore district was equally divided between the administrations (sarkars) of Ujjain and Mandu. Kampel was the headquarters of a mahal (administrative unit) under the Ujjain sarkar of Malwa Subah (province). The area of the modern Indore city was included in the Kampel pargana (administrative unit). In 1715, the Marathas invaded this region (Mughal territory) and demanded chauth (tax) from the Mughal Amil (administrator) of Kampel. The Amil fled to Ujjain, and the local zamindars agreed to pay Chauth to the Marathas. The chief zamindar, Nandlal Chaudhary (later known as Nandlal Mandloi), paid a chauth of around Rs. 25,000 to the Marathas. Jai Singh II, the Mughal Governor of Malwa, reached Kampel on 8 May 1715, and defeated the Marathas in a battle near the village. The Marathas came back in early 1716, and raided Kampel in 1717. In March 1718, the Marathas, led by Santaji Bhonsale, invaded Malwa again, but were unsuccessful this time. By 1720, the headquarters of the local pargana were transferred from Kampel to Indore, due to the increasing commercial activity in the city. In 1724, the Marathas under the new Peshwa Baji Rao I, launched a fresh attack on the Mughals in Malwa. Baji Rao I himself led the campaign, accompanied by his lieutenants Udaji Rao Pawar, Malhar Rao Holkar and Ranoji Scindia. The Mughal Nizam met the Peshwa at Nalchha on 18 May 1724, and acceded to his demand of collecting chauth from the area. The Peshwa returned to the Deccan, but left Malhar Rao Holkar at Indore to oversee the chauth collection. The Marathas maintained friendly relations with Nandlal Chaudhary, who held influence over the local Sardars (chiefs). In 1728, they defeated the Mughals decisively in the battle of Amjhera, and consolidated their authority in the area over the next few years. On 3 October 1730, Malhar Rao Holkar was appointed as the Maratha chief of Malwa. The local zamindars, who had the title of Chaudhari, came to be known as Mandlois (after mandal, an administrative unit) during the Maratha reign. The Holkar dynasty of the Marathas, which controlled the region, conferred the title of Rao upon the local zamindar family. After Nandlal died, his son Tejkarana was accepted as the Mandloi of Kampel by the Peshwa Baji Rao I. The pargana was formally granted to Malhar Rao Holkar by merging 28 and one-half Pargana by the Peshwa in 1733. The pargana headquarters were transferred back to Kampel during his reign. After his death, his daughter-in-law Ahilyabai Holkar moved the headquarters to Indore in 1766. The tehsil of Kampel was converted into Indore tehsil by a change in the name. Ahilyabai Holkar moved the state's capital to Maheshwar in 1767, but Indore remained an important commercial and military centre.

Princely State (Indore/Holkar State) Ahalyabai Holkar is fondly remembered as a noble, saintly and courageous woman. She ruled the kingdom of Indore (which was then part of the wider Maratha Empire) for several decades. Her rule is remembered as a golden age in Indore's history. From an agricultural background herself, she married Khande Rao, prince of Indore. Thereafter, she resided in the Royal Palace. Later, she was trained in statecraft and accompanied the army to war on many occasions. At that time the Maratha Empire (which was founded by Chhatrapati Shivaji Raje Bhonsale) was at the apex of its power. There were frequent battles and skirmishes, both against foreigners as well as internal feuds. In one such battle in 1754, Ahalyabai's husband was killed. Her aged father-in-law (Malhar Rao) was shattered at the death of his son. He summoned Ahalyabai, who he loved deeply, and said: "You are now my son. I wish that you look after my kingdom". Malhar Rao Holkar died in 1766, 12 years after the death of his son Khande Rao. Malhar Rao's grandson and Khande Rao's only son Male Rao Holkar became the ruler of Indore in 1766, under Ahilya Bai's regency, but he too died within few months in April 1767. Ahilya Bai became the ruler of Indore after the death of her son with Khande Rao. Ahilya Bai was a great pioneer and builder of Hindu temples who constructed hundreds of temples and Dharmashalas throughout India. She is specially renowned for refurbishing and reconsecrating some of the most sacred sites of Hindu pilgrimage that had been desecrated and demolished in the previous century by the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb including:

Kashi Vishwanath Temple Ayodhya - Construction of Shri Rama Temple, Sarayu Ghat Badrinath - Construction of Shri Kedareshwar Temple and Hari Temple, Dharamshalas (at Rangdachati, Bidarchati, Vyasaganga, Tunganath, Pawali), construction of many kundas (at Gaurkund, Kundachatri), a garden and a kunda of warm water at Devprayag, pastoral land for cows Dwarka - Mohatajkhana, Pooja House and donation of some villages to the priests of the Dwarkadhish Temple Kedarnath - Dharmashala and Kund) Omkareshwar - Renovation of the temples of Mamaleshwar Mahadev, Amaleshwar and Trambakeshwar Temples, completing the construction of Gauri-Somnath temple, construction of a Dharmashala and pond, donation of a silver mask for adoration of the Shivalinga Rameswaram - Construction of Hanumana Temple, Shri Radha Krishna Temple, a Dharmashala, Well & Garden and many more. In 1818, the Holkars were defeated by the British during the Third Anglo-Maratha War, in the Battle of Mahidpur by which the capital was again moved from Maheshwar to Indore. A residency with British residents was established at Indore, but Holkars continued to rule Indore State as a princely state mainly due to efforts of their Dewan Tatya Jog. During that time, Indore has established the headquarters of the British Central Agency. Ujjain was originally the commercial centre of Malwa. But the British administrators such as John Malcolm decided to promote Indore as an alternative to Ujjain because the merchants of Ujjain had supported anti-British elements. In 1906 electric supply was started in the city, the fire brigade was established in 1909, and 1918, the first master-plan of the city was made by noted architect and town planner, Patrick Geddes. During the period of Maharaja Tukoji Rao Holkar II (1852-86) efforts were made for the planned development and industrial development of Indore. With the introduction of Railways in 1875, the business in Indore flourished during the reigns of Maharaja Shivaji Rao Holkar, Maharaja Tukoji Rao Holkar III and Maharaja Yeshwant Rao Holkar.

The Holkar State Darbar (Court) was composed of many Jagirdars, Sardars, Istamuradars, Mankaris and Zamindars.

Post-independence After India's independence in 1947, Holkar State, along with several neighbouring princely states, acceded to the Indian Union. On 1 November 1956, when Madhya Bharat was merged into Madhya Pradesh, Indore became part of the newly formed state. Indore a city today of nearly 4.5 million (2018) residents, has been transformed from a traditional commercial urban centre into the modern dynamic commercial capital of the state.

Climate Indore lies on a borderline between a tropical savanna climate (Aw) and a humid subtropical climate (Kppen climate classification Cwa). Because of its high elevation the climate is much more moderate compared to the North Indian plains, even during the hottest months the nights are relatively cool, which is known as Shab-e-Malwa. Three distinct seasons are observed: summer, monsoon and winter. The coldest temperature was 1.1 C (34.0 F) on 27 December 1936. Indore gets moderate rainfall of 700 to 800 mm (28 to 31 in) during June-September due to the southwest monsoon.

Indore has been ranked 6th best "National Clean Air City" (under Category 1 >10L Population cities) in India.

Demographics Indore is the most populous city in Madhya Pradesh. It is also the largest metropolitan city in Central India. According to the 2011 census of India, the population of Indore city (the area under the municipal corporation and outgrowths) was 1,994,397. The population of the Indore metropolis (urban agglomeration that includes neighbouring areas) was 2,170,295. In 2011, the city had a population density of 25,170 people per square mile (9,718 per square km), rendering it the most densely populated of all the municipalities with population over 100,000 in Madhya Pradesh. As per the 2011 census, 1,502,775 were literates, which

translates to 75.4% of the total population, with an effective literacy rate (of population 7 years and above) 85.5%, with male literacy of 89.8% and female literacy was 81.2%. The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes populations in 2011 were 309,229 and 54,075, respectively. The total number of households were 404,711. According to the 2011 census of India, the population of Indore city (the area under the municipal corporation and outgrowths) was 1,994,397. As per estimates, the population in 2025 is approximately 3,482,830.

Religion Majority of the population are Hindus (80.18%), followed by significant populations of Muslims (14.09%) and Jains (3.25%).

Languages Hindi is the official language of Indore city, it is spoken by a majority of the population. A number of Hindi dialects such as Malvi, Nimadi and Bundeli are spoken in decent numbers. Other languages with substantial number of speakers include Marathi, Urdu, Sindhi, Gujarati, Punjabi and Bengali. According to 2012 figures, around 6,000 Pakistani Hindu migrants live in the city (out of a total 10,000 in the state).

Government and politics Civic administration Indore has a city government, or municipality, with a mayor-council form of government. In 1870, the first municipality was constituted in Indore. Bakshi Khuman Singh (Commander In Chief) of Holkar State Army was appointed as chairman. Indore municipality became the first city to have an elected municipal government responsible for the welfare and growth of the city. In the year 1956, during the reorganisation of states, Indore was included in Madhya Pradesh, and later that same year, was declared a municipal corporation. Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC) is spread over an area of 269 square km. The Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC) is a unicameral body consisting of 69 Council members whose districts are divided into 12 zones and these zones had been further divided into 69 wards defined by geographic population boundaries. In 2014, 29 villages were added into the fold of the municipality. In 2015, 23 more villages were added. After these inclusions, the number of wards went up to 85, and zones 19. The mayor and councillors are elected to five-year terms. The municipal or local elections to Indore Municipal Corporation were last held in 2015. The next elections were to be held early in 2020, but as per a report from February 2020, these have not happened, although preparation of voter rolls and ward reservation happened later in July. The elected wing of the city government is headed by the Mayor and the incumbent Mayor is Pushya Mitra Bhargava. As per a report from the Free Press Journal, Indore was notified in 2018 for not having constituted ward committees. The executive wing is headed by Pratibha Pal, the municipal commissioner of Indore, who is also the first female commissioner of the city. On 8 May 2020, the budget for of ₹ 4,763 crore for 2020-21 was approved for the civic body. Major sources of revenue for the municipality include collection of property tax, water tax, rent. Indore municipality follows the guidelines as per the Madhya Pradesh Municipal Corporations Act 1956 Archived 20 September 2018 at the Wayback Machine, as well as the Madhya Pradesh Municipalities Act, 1961. The IMC is responsible for public education, correctional institutions, libraries, public safety, recreational facilities, sanitation, water supply, local planning, and welfare services.

Representation in Parliament and State Assembly Indore city is represented in the parliament through the Indore Lok Sabha constituency, which covers most of the district. In May 2019, Shankar Lalwani of Bharatiya Janata Party, who is also the chairman of the Indore Development Authority, had been elected as the Member of Parliament from Indore. As per delimitation from 2008, Indore city is represented in the state assembly constituency through 5 Constituencies, election for which last took place in 2018:

Law and order The Indore Police, a division of the Madhya Pradesh Police, is under the direct control of Department of Home Affairs. The government of Madhya Pradesh is the law enforcement agency in Indore. Indore district is divided into 39 police stations and seven police outposts. In 2012, it was reported that the Police Commissionerate system would be implemented in Indore, but this did not pan out because of tussle between the IAS and IPS officers in the state. The bill was proposed again in 2018 and has been criticised by NewsClick. The system has not been implemented as of 2020, although there has been talk of it. As of 4 September 2013, the Divisional commissioner is Dr Pawan Kumar Sharma. In Feb 2020, the new Director General of Police became Vivek Johri while SSP Indore is Harinarayan Chari Mishra.

Judiciary Indore is also a seat for one of the two permanent benches of Madhya Pradesh High Court with Gwalior, the city, its agglomerates, and other 12 districts of western Madhya Pradesh falls under the jurisdiction of Indore High Court.

Other agencies Most of the regions surrounding the city are administered by the Indore Development Authority (IDA). IDA works as an apex body for planning and co-ordination of development activities in the Indore Metropolitan Region (IMR) comprising Indore and its agglomeration covering an area of 398.72 km² (153.95 sq mi). Primarily, IDA develops new residential areas. During the early stage of development of such areas, the IDA is responsible for developing basic infrastructure. Once a sizeable number of plots are sold, the area is formally transferred to the IMC, which is then responsible for the maintenance of the infrastructure in the area. The IDA consists of two appointed components; the collector of the district, who has executive powers, and the IDA Board which includes a chairman appointed by Government of Madhya Pradesh, Municipal Commissioner of Indore and five members from Town and Country Planning Department, Forest Department, Public Health Engineering, Public Works Department and MP Electricity Board who scrutinise the collector's decisions and can accept or reject his budget proposals each year. The role of IDA is to implement the master plan for Indore prepared by the Town and Country Office, Bhopal. The headquarters of the IDA is at Race Course Road, Indore.

Civic utilities Electricity in Indore is supplied by the Madhya Pradesh Paschim Kshetra Vidyut Vitaran Company Limited, the state's agency. Major source of water in Indore are Narmada River and overhead tanks. In 2016, the central government sanctioned 70 crores under the AMRUT scheme to overhaul the water facilities. Indore used to receive 350 MLD of water from Jalud pumping station on Narmada river; while in 2019 the quantity reduced by 100 MLD, as of 2020 it has regained its capacity. The municipality supplies around 450 MLD water through piped connections to parts of the town on alternate days, other parts of the city have shortage of water. The urban poor and unauthorised slum area face a massive shortage of water, and need to purchase private water in drums, or need to have to access private tubewells. A joint study done by UN Habitat, IMC and WaterAid mapping poverty surveyed 176545 households (approximately 1/3rd of the households in the city), and found that 72% of the households did not have access to piped water supply. As of 2012, Indore generated nearly 240 MLD of sewage. As per a report from August 2018, Indore achieved 100% treatment of the faecal matter generated in the city. The city has 3 sewage treatment plants (STPs), which includes a Sequencing Batch Reactors with a capacity of 245 MLD, the largest in the world, as well as a 78 MLD and 12 MLD Upflow Anaerobic Sludge Blanket reactor at Kabitkhedi and a third with a capacity of 122 MLD. As of 2019, Indore generates over 1,115 metric tons (MT) of garbage a day, of which 650 MT is wet waste and 465 MT is dry waste. The municipality has 100% door to door collection and segregation. The city has a Centralized Processing Unit situated at Devguradia, Nemawar Road over an area of 146 acres. Waste collected at the garbage transfer stations in city is weighed, compressed and moved to this site for final processing. Indore also set up a Plastic Collection Centre (PCC) to reuse and recycle the city's plastic waste and also installed a plastic

cleansing machine known as a 'Phatka Machine'.

Swachh Survekshan Rankings (2024-2025) In the annual Swachh Survekshan 2024-25 cleanliness survey conducted by the Government of India, Indore retained its title as the cleanest city in India for the eighth consecutive year. Surat and Navi Mumbai ranked second and third respectively. Indore has planted over 16 lakh trees in 2024-25, earning a Guinness World Record, and has public transport run through 120 electric buses and 150 CNG buses. During the same felicitation, Indore was recognised as a Wetland City under Ramsar Convention. This sustained ranking underscores the city's commitment to sanitation, waste management, and civic participation.

Economy Indore is a commercial centre for goods and services. As per the official records released by the Directorate of Economics and Statistics (Madhya Pradesh), the GDP (nominal) of Indore District is estimated at Rs. 64,813 crores for the year 2020-21. While its per-capita nominal GDP was recorded at INR 1,51,101 in 2020-21. The city also hosts a biennial global investors' summit, which attracts investors from several countries. Major industrial areas surrounding the city include: Pithampur (phases I, II and III alone host 1,500 large, medium and small industrial set-ups), Indore Special Economic Zone (around 3,000 acres/ 4.7 square miles/ 1,214 hectares), Industrial Area at Dewas I, II & III (around 745 acres/ 1.15 square miles/ 300 hectares) is in the close proximity to Indore (around 35 km), on NH-3 section between Agra- Bombay Road. Sanwer industrial belt (1,000 acres/ 1.6 square miles/ 405 hectares), Laxmibainagar Industrial Area, Rau Industrial Area, Bhagirathpura Industrial Area, Kali Billod Industrial Area, Ranmal Billod Industrial Area, Shivajinagar Bhindikho Industrial Area, Hatod Industrial Area. The city also has IT Parks, Crystal IT Park (550,000 square feet), Pardeshipura IT Park (100,000 square feet), Electronic Complex, and Individual Special Economic Zones (SEZs) such as TCS SEZ, Infosys SEZ, Impetus SEZ, Diamond Park, Gems and Jewelry Park, Food Park, Apparel Park, Namkeen Cluster and Pharma Cluster. Pithampur near Indore is known as the Detroit of Madhya Pradesh. Madhya Pradesh Stock Exchange (MPSE) was set up in 1919. It is the only stock exchange in Central India and the third oldest stock exchange in India. It is located in Indore. The National Stock Exchange (NSE) has established an Investor Service Centre in the city. TCS has officially started an offshore development centre in Indore with a total campus area of around 1.5 million square feet. Collabera has also announced plans to open campuses in Indore. Infosys is setting up a new development centre at Indore at an investment of ₹1 billion in Phase I at Super Corridor. Infosys demanded an area of 130 acres (53 hectares) to open its new facility in Indore which will employ about 13,000 people. The government of MP has done the land allotment. Impetus, headquartered in Los Gatos, California, USA, with multiple offshore offices in Indore, has started operations at its 25-acre land, procured from the SEZ. Besides these, there are several small and medium-sized software development firms in Indore. Webgility, a San Francisco-based ecommerce company that has had a presence in Indore since 2007, opened a 16,000 square-foot campus at NRK Business Park in 2017. Accenture has also opened the office in Vijay Nagar area. Nagarro and Persistent Systems also had the presence in Indore. Pinnacle Industries has an EV manufacturing unit at Indore.

Culture Food Indore's culinary culture has a blend of Maharashtrian, Malwi, Rajasthani and Gujarati influence. The street food of the city is especially popular. Two of the most noteworthy street food places in Indore are Chappan Dukan and Sarafa Bazaar. As part of the Smart City project, the Chappan Dukan area has been developed as a smart food street. The cost of this project is ₹40 million and has been implemented in a 45-day period. Sarafa Bazaar, which is India's only night street-food market, attracts large crowds from the city and tourists from various places. Indore is also notable for its wide variety of namkeens or savoury items and has many popular namkeen stores across the city. Most popular food items of Indore include poha, kachori, samosa, jalebi, gulab jamun, rabdi, gajak, imarti, bhel, pani puri, hot dog, egg banjo, moong bhajiya, moong

daal halwa, dahi wada, sabudana khichdi, sabudana wada, dhokla, jeeravan, and sev. The city is debatably the most vegetarian city in India; nearly 49% of population is vegetarian at some level.

Entertainment The Yeshwant Club (named after Late the Maharaja Yeshwant Rao II Holkar of Indore) and Sayaji Club/Hotel (named after Late the Maharaja Sayaji Rao III Gaekwad of Baroda) are big sponsors for art & music and invite talents from across the world. The major art centres in Indore are the Devlalikar Kala Vithika, Ravindra Natya Grah (RNG), Mai Mangeshkar Sabha Grah, Anand Mohan Mathur Sabhagrah, DAVV auditorium, and Brilliant Convention Centre. The city has a good rock/metal music culture which is growing. Nicotine, one of the city's earliest and most renowned bands, is widely known for being the pioneer of metal music in Central India.

Festivals Rang Panchami is one of the most vibrant festivals celebrated in Indore, marked by a grand procession known as the "Ger". Unlike the Holi festival celebrated across India, Rang Panchami in Indore has a distinct cultural identity. Thousands gather in the old city area as traditional music, dancing, and colour-throwing fill the streets. Organised by local groups and supported by the municipal corporation, the event includes decorated trucks, DJs, and water cannons spraying coloured water. The celebration showcases Indore's unique blend of tradition and modernity.

Transport Air Indore is served by Devi Ahilyabai Holkar International Airport, about 8 km (5.0 mi) from the city. It is the busiest airport in the state of Madhya Pradesh with 2,828,971 passengers and 10,851 tonnes of cargo for April 2022-March 2023. Devi Ahilyabai Holkar International Airport, Indore has been adjudged as the best airport in the under-2-million-annual-passenger-footfall category in the Asia-Pacific region in the Airports Council International (ACI)'s airport service quality (ASQ) rankings for the year 2017.

Rail The Indore Junction is an A-1 grade railway station with a revenue of more than Rs. 500 million. The station comes under Ratlam Division of the Western Railways. It is situated between Ujjain and Dewas Junctions on the Indore-Gwalior Broad Gauge Railway Line. Electrification of the Indore-Dewas-Ujjain was completed in June 2012. Ratlam-Indore broad gauge conversion was completed in September 2014. Indore-Mhow section was upgraded to broad gauge in 2016 and electrified in 2017. The city of Indore has eight railway stations in addition to the main Indore Junction:

Road Indore is connected to other parts of India through National and State highways. The nearest cities to Indore by road are Dewas (around 35 km), Shajapur (100 km), Ujjain (around 57 km) and Bhopal (around 200 km). The National Highways passing through the city are:

National Highway 52 (NH 52) contains parts of the erstwhile NH3 (AB Rd stands for Agra Bombay Road) and it originates at Sangrur, Punjab and runs through Jaipur, Rajasthan, Indore, Dhule and terminates at Ankola in Karnataka. National Highway 47 starts from Bamanbore, Gujarat and reaches Indore via Ahmedabad and further connects Betul to terminate at Nagpur. The highways which have ceased to exist because of renumbering are:

National Highway 3 also known as the Agra-Bombay Road or AB Road, is an important highway connecting Agra to Mumbai via Indore, Dewas, Gwalior & Dhule. National Highway 59 & its branch NH 59A. NH 59 originated at Ahmedabad and passed through Godhra, Indore, Raipur, Brahmapur, Odisha and terminated at

Gopalpur-on-Sea while NH 59A connected Indore & Betul. The state highways passing through the city are:

MP State Highway 27 runs from Jhalawar in Rajasthan, through Ujjain, Indore, Barwaha, Burhanpur in Madhya Pradesh and terminates at Malkapur, Buldhana in Maharashtra. MP State Highway 31 (Neemuch - Ratlam - Dhar) MP State Highway 18 connects Indore to Dewas, Bhopal, Ujjain and Ahmedabad.

Public transport Indore's City Bus transport system runs through 277 km (172 mi) of road with a daily ridership of over 140,000. Atal Indore City Transport Services Ltd, a PPP scheme operates buses and radio taxis in the city. The buses designated as City Bus operate on 64 Routes with a fleet of 487 buses, with 421 bus stops. The buses are colour-coded into three colours: Blue, Magenta and Orange according to their route. Indore BRTS (iBUS) - Indore BRTS is a bus rapid transit system with 53 air-conditioned buses equipped with services like GPS and IVR which are used to track the position of the bus with information displayed on LED displays installed at the bus stops. Indore Magic (Auto Rickshaw) - Indore Auto Rickshaw is a magic service for small distance travel. Daily approx. 500,000 people travel within the city. Indore Metro is a rapid transit system that has currently completed its successful first phase trial run. Indore Cable Car was announced in January 2021 as another public transport for the city to decongest traffic. It will also be the first cable car in India to run on crowded streets. Buses for other cities which are near Indore are operated by state transport and private transport operators. Cities like Ujjain, Dewas, Khandwa, Khargone are connected through daily road buses.

Education The Daly College, founded in 1870 by General Henry Daly, is one of the oldest co-educational boarding school in the world, which was established to educate the rulers of the Central Indian princely states of the 'Marathas' and Rajputs'. The Holkar Science College, officially known as Government Model Autonomous Holkar Science College was established in 1891. Indore is the first city to have both IIT (Indian Institute of Technology Indore) and IIM (Indian Institute of Management Indore). Indore is home to a range of colleges and schools. Indore has a large student population and is a big educational centre in central India, it also is the education hub of central India. Most primary and secondary schools in Indore are affiliated with the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE); however, quite a few numbers of schools are affiliated with ICSE board, NIOS board, CBSE board, and the state level M.P. Board as well. Indian Institute of Technology Indore is one of the most prestigious institutions in the country. Started in 2009, IIT Indore has its 500-acre campus in Simrol (28 km from Indore City). IIT Indore has several disciplines including Civil Engineering, Computer Science Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Metallurgy, and Material Science. IIT Indore ranked 15 under the engineering category in the National Institute Ranking Framework. IIT Indore's central library emphasises the use of Online Information Resources. The library provides its users access to nearly 3800 electronic journals as well as access to databases such as ACM Digital Library, IEEE Xplore Digital Library, Science Direct, MathSciNet, JSTOR, SciFinder, Taylor and Francis, WILEY, and Springer. The library also provides air-conditioned and Wi-Fi enabled reading halls. Raja Ramanna Centre for Advanced Technology is a unit of Department of Atomic Energy, Government of India, engaged in R&D in non-nuclear front-line research areas of lasers, particle accelerators and related technologies. The centre is situated at the south-western end of the Indore, Madhya Pradesh. The RRCAT campus is spread over 760 hectares on the outskirts of Indore city. The campus encompasses laboratories, staff housing colony and other basic amenities like school, sports facilities, shopping complex, gardens etc. Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya, also known as DAVV (formerly known as University of Indore or Indore Vishwavidyalaya), is a university in Indore with several colleges operating under its aegis. It has two campuses within the city, one at Takshila Parisar (near Bhavarkuan Square) and another at Rabindra Nath Tagore Road, Indore. The university runs several departments including Institute of Management Studies, School of Computer Science & Information Technology (SCSIT), (IMS), School of Law (SoL), Institute of Engineering and Technology, DAVV (IET),

Educational Multimedia Research Centre (EMRC), International Institute of Professional Studies (IIPS), School of Pharmacy, School of Energy & Environmental Studies - one of the premier schools for MTech (Energy Management), School of Journalism and School of Futures Studies and Planning, which runs two MTech Courses with specialisations in Technology Management & Systems Science & Engineering, MBA (Business Forecasting), an MSc in Science & Technology Communication. The campus houses several other research and educational departments, hostels, playgrounds, and cafes. The Indian Institute of Soybean Research (IISR) (ICAR, Government of India), Asia's largest soybean research centre, is headquartered in Indore. There are 16 laboratories in the facility for different disciplines, including genetic engineering, application of artificial intelligence in image analysis, big data analysis, food processing, agriculture machinery, nanotechnology, biotechnology, remote sensing, and application of IOT in agriculture. Situated in the heart of Malwa, Indore enjoys the status of an "educational and industrial Capital of Madhya Pradesh". To initiate and strengthen agricultural research and development in Malwa and Nimar regions, the Institute of Plant Industry came into existence in the year 1924. Later on, in the year 1959, the Government College of Agriculture, Indore was established with the merger of the erstwhile Institute of Plant Industry (IPI). It was a prestigious campus of Jawaharlal Nehru Krishi Vishwa Vidyalaya, Jabalpur, since 1964. After bifurcation of Jawaharlal Nehru Krishi Vishwavidyalaya, Jabalpur in 2008 and Separate second Agricultural University is formed, that is, Rajmata Vijayaraje Scindia Krishi Vishwavidyalaya, Gwalior now College of Agriculture, Indore is coming under the jurisdiction of RVSKVV, Gwalior. The Shri Govindram Seksaria Institute of Technology and Science (SGSITS), formerly Shri Govindram Seksaria Kala Bhavan, is a public engineering institution located in Indore. It was established in 1952 as a technical institute offering licentiate and diploma courses in engineering. New Delhi granted the status of an autonomous institution in 1989. In 2020, it became the first and only Madhya Pradesh government-funded engineering college in the state to have made its place among the top 250 in the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) ranking released by Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India. The Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Medical College (MGMMC), established in 1878 as the King Edward Medical School, is one of the oldest and premiere government run medical colleges in India. It is attached to tertiary teaching hospitals named Maharaja Yeshwantrao group of Hospitals established in 1955. Indore also has two other Privately run medical colleges which act as tertiary care hospitals, they are SAIMS and Index Medical College and Hospital. The College of Veterinary Sciences and Animal Husbandry, Mhow is a constituent college of Nanaji Deshmukh Veterinary Science University, Jabalpur an autonomous Veterinary University in India, and is a pioneer college in the field of Veterinary Sciences in India. It is one of the oldest veterinary colleges in Madhya Pradesh and India was founded in 1955 the present building of the college was inaugurated by the first prime minister of India Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru on 12 November 1959. Sri Aurobindo Institute of Medical Sciences (SAIMS) is a group of colleges located in Indore. It features Mohak Hitech Speciality Hospital within the campus. VIBGYOR Group of Schools have a branch in Vijay Nagar.

Health and medicine Indore is home to 51 public health institutions and has a number of private hospitals. The healthcare facilities of Indore include Government run tertiary teaching hospital Maharaja Yeshwantrao Hospital attached to Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Medical College, Indore. Private run hospitals include Bombay Hospital, SAIMS, Index Medical College & Hospital, Choithram Hospital, Shalby Hospital, CHL Hospital, Medanta, Apollo, Vasan, Centre for Sight and Navchetna Rehabilitation and Deaddiction Centre. The National Family Health Survey of 2018 found Indore to be India's most vegetarian city, with 49% of residents eschewing meat products.

Media Print media There are about 20 Hindi dailies, 7 English dailies, 26 weeklies and monthlies, four quarterlies, two bi-monthly magazines, one annual paper, and one monthly Hindi language educational tabloid named "Campus Diary" published from the city. India's only magazine on the pump industry, Pumps India, and valve magazine Valves India are published from here.

Electronic media The radio industry has expanded with a number of private and government-owned FM channels being introduced. Indore switched to complete digitalisation of cable TV in 2013 under the second phase of digitalisation by Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Indore is covered by a network of optical fibre cables. Doordarshan Kendra Indore with studio and transmission started from July 2000.

Wi-Fi There are various companies providing paid and free Wi-Fi services across the city. Reliance's Jionet became operational in November 2013. It covers the whole city and is a 4.5 GHz high-speed Wi-Fi service which was initially free but become chargeable in 2016. Indore is the second city in India to provide free Wi-Fi across the city. AICSTL provides a high-speed free Wi-Fi service named 'Free As Air' across the Indore BRTS corridor. BSNL has also started free Wi-Fi services in prominent locations.

Sports Cricket is one of the most popular sports in the city. Indore is also home to the Madhya Pradesh Cricket Association (MPCA), Madhya Pradesh Table Tennis Association (MPTTA), and the city has one international cricket ground, the Holkar Cricket Stadium. The first ODI cricket match in the state was played in Indore at Nehru Stadium in 1983. Besides cricket, Indore is also a centre for many national and international championships. The city hosted the South Asian Billiard Championship and is a host to the three-day-long National Triathlon Championship, in which nearly 450 players and 250 sports officials belonging to 23 states take part in the action. Indore was included in holding two Guinness World Records for holding the largest tea party in the world and for making the largest burger in the world.

Cityscape **Rajwada Palace** Rajwada Palace is a historical palace in Indore city. It was built by the Holkars of the Maratha Empire about two centuries ago. This seven-storied structure is located near the Chhatris.

Shiv Vilas Palace Shiv Vilas Palace is a royal palace built during the reign of the Holkar dynasty. Also called the 'new palace', it was built after the Rajwada palace was damaged in an attack. It is on the right side of the Rajwada palace.

Gomatgiri Gomatgiri is a revered Jain pilgrimage site situated on a hill near Indore, Madhya Pradesh, India. Spread over an expanse of lush greenery, this serene location is home to a majestic 21-foot statue of Gomateshwar, also known as Bahubali, which mirrors the famous statue located in Shravanabelagola, Karnataka. Established in 1981, Gomatgiri offers a tranquil retreat for spiritual seekers and visitors alike, with its picturesque views and spiritually uplifting atmosphere. The complex houses 24 marble temples, each dedicated to one of the 24 Tirthankaras of Jainism, symbolising the religion's rich heritage and teachings. This place is not only a spiritual centre but also a popular tourist attraction, drawing visitors from all corners for its architectural beauty and the peace it offers away from the bustle of city life.

Kanch Mandir Kanch Mandir, literally 'temple of glass', is a famous Jain temple in Indore, built by Sir Seth Hukumchand Jain. Its construction began sometime around 1903.

Khajrana Ganesh Mandir Khajrana Ganesh Mandir is a pilgrimage centre in Indore, dedicated to Lord Ganapati. The current temple was built during the reign of Holkar Dynasty. The main Idol of the temple was placed in a well to save it from the mughal ruler Aurangzeb. It was recovered by the Holkar ruler Maharani Ahilya Bai Holkar. It is situated in the Khajrana area, a little distance away from Kalka Mata Temple.

Lalbagh Palace Lalbagh Palace was built by the Holkar Dynasty between 1886 and 1921. The interior is beautified with striated Italian marble pillars, many chandeliers and classical columns, murals of Greek deities, a baroque-cum-rococo dining room, an English-library-style office with leather armchairs, a Renaissance sitting room, and a Palladian queen's bedroom which was the fashion among many of the late Raj-era Indian nobility, accompanied by a billiards room. There is imitation of the Buckingham Palace gates creak at the entrance along with 28-hectare ground, where, near to the palace, stands the statue of Queen Victoria.

Manik Bagh Manik Bagh palace was built in 1930 when Maharajah Yashwant Rao Holkar II commissioned the construction of the Manik Bagh ("Jewel Garden") palace. The architect was Eckart Muthesius (1904-1989) from Germany. The maharaja was at a young age at that time, as was Muthesius who was just a couple of years older. The work outside and inside was done in a late art deco and the international style of modern architecture.

Yeshwant Club The Yeshwant Club came into existence in 1934 at the behest of late the Maharaja Tukoji Rao III Holkar of Indore. The club was established for their son, Yuvraj Yeshwant Rao Holkar. Spread over 14 acres it is a Maratha legacy of the Holkar rulers of Indore State. Initially, the club was opened for Maratha royalty, nobility, aristocracy, and the officers (Natives and British) of the Holkar State. Later its doors were opened for the business elites. Post-Indian Independence, the admission criteria were revised according to the changing times. Maharani Usha Devi, the daughter of late Maharaja Yeshwant Rao II Holkar of Indore is the Chief Patron of the club, the Honorary Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh being the President of the club.

Sirpur Lake The Sirpur Lake is the most important bird-watching site in Malwa. It is a Ramsar site located on Dhar Road in Indore. It is known for more than 180 species of resident and migratory birds. It was restored to a viable bird habitat from a heavily encroached pool over four decades since 1980 by Padmashri Bhalu Mondhe and his NGO The Nature Volunteers, and was declared an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area in 2015-16. It is one of the most important bird habitats in Malwa region. Another Ramsar site near Indore is Yashwant Sagar.

Pitra Parvat Pitra Parvat is known for the statue of Lord Hanuman situated there. The sculpture is made with 8 elements in golden colour. It took 125 workers and 7 years to complete the statue of the deity Lord Hanuman. Also present there, is a temple that has the small statue of Lord Hanuman for the devotees to worship. Lord Hanuman is seen sitting in the lap of Mother Anjani in this temple. Pitreshwar Hanuman Temple, located at Pitru Parvat on Bijasan Road in Indore, is known for its 72-foot tall Ashtadhatu statue of Lord Hanuman. Unlike typical depictions, this statue presents Hanuman in a meditative posture, making it a unique spiritual and cultural landmark. The site has become a popular tourist destination, combining religious significance with natural beauty and environmental awareness.

Annapurna Temple Annapurna Temple, located in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, is a prominent Hindu temple dedicated to Goddess Annapurna, the deity of nourishment. Inspired by the architecture of South Indian temples, the temple features a towering gopuram, intricate carvings, and vibrant sculptures. It is not only a place of worship but also a cultural and architectural attraction in the city. The temple complex also houses shrines dedicated to Lord Shiva, Lord Hanuman, and Kal Bhairav. It is a popular destination for devotees and tourists alike.

Place to visit near Indore Patalpani waterfall Mandu Mahakal Temple Omkareshwar

Notable people See also Mhow Ujjain Dewas List of people from Indore Indore City Bus Indore BRTS Indore Fashion Week Indore Metro List of cities in India by population Largest Indian Cities by GDP

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City portal at Govt. of India info. website Indore travel guide from Wikivoyage

Patna

Patna (Hindi: पाटना, pronounced [pənɑː]), historically known as Pataliputra, is the capital and largest city of the Indian state of Bihar. According to the United Nations, as of 2018, Patna had a population of 2.35 million, making it the 19th largest city in India. Covering 250 square kilometres (97 sq mi) and over 2.5 million people, its urban agglomeration is the 18th largest in India. Patna also serves as the seat of Patna High Court. The Buddhist, Hindu and Jain pilgrimage centres of Vaishali, Rajgir, Nalanda, Bodh Gaya and Pawapuri are nearby and Patna City is a sacred city for Sikhs as the tenth Sikh Guru, Guru Gobind Singh was born here. The modern city of Patna is mainly on the southern bank of the river Ganges. The city also straddles the rivers Son, Gandak and Punpun. The city is approximately 35 kilometres (22 mi) in length and 16 to 18 kilometres (9.9 to 11.2 mi) wide. One of the oldest continuously inhabited places in the world, Patna was founded in 490 BCE by the king of Magadha. Ancient Patna, known as Pataliputra, was the capital of the Magadha Empire throughout the Haryanka, Nanda, Mauryan, Shunga, Gupta, and Pala dynasties. Pataliputra was a seat of learning and fine arts. It was home to many astronomers and scholars including Aryabhata, Varshayana and Chanakya. During the Maurya period (around 300 BCE) its population was about 400,000. Patna served as the seat of power, and political and cultural centre of the Indian subcontinent during the Maurya and Gupta empires. With the fall of the Gupta Empire, Patna lost its glory. The British revived it again in the 17th century as a centre of international trade. Following the partition of Bengal presidency in 1912, Patna became the capital of Bihar and Orissa Province. Until the 19th century, it was a major trading and commercial hub in India. After independence there were a few downturns but its economy was still stable. After the separation of Jharkhand from Bihar, it lost its glory. As per the Directorate of Economics and Statistics (Government of Bihar), Nominal GDP of Patna District was estimated at INR 63,176.55 crores in 2011-12. As of 2011-12, Patna already recorded per capita gross domestic product of ₹1,08,657, way ahead of many other Indian cities and state capitals. Using figures for assumed average annual growth, Patna is the 21st fastest growing city in the world and 5th fastest growing city in India according to a study by the City Mayors Foundation. Patna registered an average annual growth of 3.72% during 2006-2010. As of 2011-12, the GDP per capita of Patna is ₹1,08,657, and its GDP growth rate is 7.29 per cent. In June 2009, the World Bank ranked Patna second in India (after Delhi) for ease of starting a business.

Etymology The name of this city has changed with time. One of the oldest cities of India, there are several theories regarding the origin of the modern name Patna (Bengali: পটনা; Devanagari: पटना; Kaithi: ; Gurmukhi: ਪਟਨਾ; Urdu: پٹنہ). It is etymologically derived from Patan (Devanagari: पतन), the name of the Hindu goddess, Patan Devi. Patan Devi Mandir is still in old Patna near Gulzarbagh mandi along with another, Patan Devi Mandir, near Takht Sri Patna Sahib. Many believe Patna derived its name from Patli, a tree variety that was found in abundance in the historic city. It is also seen on the state tourism's logo. The place is mentioned in Chinese traveller Fa Hien's records as Pa-lin-fou. The city has been known by various names through more than 2,000 years of existence - Pataligrama, Pataliputra, Kusumapura, Kusumdhwaja Pushpapuram, Padmavathi, Azimabad and the present-day Patna. Legend ascribes the origin of Patna to the mythological King Putraka who created Patna by magic for his queen Patali, literally "trumpet flower", which gives it its ancient name Pataligrama. It is said that in honour of the queen's firstborn, the city was named Pataliputra. Gram is Sanskrit for village and Putra means son. Legend also says that the Emerald Buddha was created in Patna (then Pataliputra) by Nagasena in 43 BCE.

History Ancient Era Traditional Buddhist literature attributes foundation of Patna 490 BCE as Ajatashatru, the king of Magadha, wanted to shift his capital from the hilly Rajagrhya (today Rajgir) to a strategically chosen place to better combat the Licchavis of Vaishali. He chose the site on the bank of the Ganges and fortified the area. Gautama Buddha travelled through this place in the last year of his life. He prophesied a great future for this place even as he predicted its ruin due to flood, fire, and feud. According to Dieter Schlingloff, the Buddhist accounts may have presented the grandeur of Patna as a prophecy and that its wooden fortifications, unlike other early historic Indian cities, indicate that it might be much older than thought but only archaeological excavation and C14 dates of its wooden palisades which is presently lacking may establish this.

Mauryan Empire Megasthenes, the Indo-Greek historian and ambassador to the court of Chandragupta Maurya, gave one of the earliest accounts of the city. He wrote that the city was on the confluence of the rivers Ganga and Arennovoas (Sonabhadra - Hiranyawah) and was 14 kilometres (9 mi) long and 2.82 kilometres (1.75 mi) wide. Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador to India, described the city as the greatest city on earth during its heyday. The Shungas ultimately retained control of Pataliputra and ruled for almost 100 years. The Shungas were followed by the Kanvas and eventually by the Guptas. Some Chinese travellers came to India in pursuit of knowledge and recorded their observations about Pataliputra in their travelogues. One such famous account was recorded by a Chinese Buddhist traveller Fa Hien, who visited India between 399 and 414 CE, and stayed here for many months translating Buddhist texts. When the Chinese Buddhist Monk Faxian visited the city in 400 A.D, he found the people to be rich and prosperous; they practised virtue and justice. He found that the nobles and householders of the city had constructed several hospitals in which the poor of all countries, the needy, the crippled, and the diseased, could get treatment. They could receive every kind of help gratuitously. Physicians would inspect the diseases and order them food, drink, and medicines.

Gupta and Pala empire In the years that followed, many dynasties ruled the Indian subcontinent from the city, including the Gupta Empire and the Pala kings. With the disintegration of the Gupta empire, Patna passed through uncertain times. Bakhtiar Khilji captured Bihar in the 12th century and destroyed everything, and Patna lost its prestige as the political and cultural centre of India.

Mughal Empire The Mughal Empire was a period of unremarkable provincial administration from Delhi. The most remarkable period during the Middle Ages was under the Afghan emperor Sher Shah Suri, who revived Patna in the middle of the 16th century. He built a fort and founded a town on the banks of the Ganges. Sher Shah's fort in Patna does not survive, although the Sher Shah Suri mosque, built in Afghan architectural style, does. Mughal emperor Akbar reached Patna in 1574 to crush the rebellious Afghan Chief Daud Khan. One of the navratnas from Akbar's court, his official historian and author of "Ain-i-Akbari" Abul Fazl refers to Patna as a flourishing centre for paper, stone and glass industries. He also refers to the high quality of numerous strains of rice grown in Patna, famous as Patna rice in Europe. By 1620, the city of Patna was being described as the "chiefest mart towne of all Bengala" (i.e. largest town in Bengal) in northern India, "the largest town in Bengal and the most famous for trade". This was before the founding of the city of Calcutta. Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb acceded to the request of his favourite grandson, Prince Muhammad Azim, to rename Patna as Azimabad, in 1704 while Azim was in Patna as the subedar. Patna or Azimabad did see some violent activities, according to Phillip Mason, writing in the book "The Men Who Ruled India". "Aurangzeb had restored the poll tax (Jazia) on unbelievers, which had to be compounded for. In Patna, Peacock, the factory's chief, was not sufficiently obedient. He was seized, forced to walk through the town bare-headed and bare-footed, and subjected to many other indignities before he paid up and was released." Little changed during this period other than the name. With the decline of the Mughal empire, Patna moved into the hands of the Nawabs of Bengal, who levied a heavy tax on the populace but allowed it to flourish as a commercial centre. The mansions of the

Maharaja of Tekari Raj dominated the Patna riverfront in 1811-12. In 1750, the future Nawab of Bengal, Siraj ud-Daulah revolted against his grandfather, Alivardi Khan, and seized Patna, but quickly surrendered and was forgiven. Guru Gobind Singh (22 December 1666 - 7 October 1708), the tenth Guru of the Sikhs, was born as Gobind Rai in Patna to Guru Teg Bahadur, the ninth Guru of the Sikhs, and his wife Mata Gujri. His birthplace, Patna Sahib, is one of the most sacred sites of pilgrimage for Sikhs.

Portuguese Empire As trade grew, settlements of the Portuguese empire expanded to the Bengal Gulf. Since at least 1515, the Portuguese were in Bengal as traders, and later in 1521, an embassy was sent to Gaur to create factories in the region. The Bengal Sultan after 1534 allowed the Portuguese to develop several settlements as Chitagoong e Satgaon. In 1535 the Portuguese were allied with the Bengal sultan and held the Teliagarhi pass 280 km from Patna helping to avoid the invasion by the Mughals. By then, several of the products came from Patna, and the Portuguese sent in traders, establishing a factory there in 1580 at least. The products were shipped out down the river until other Portuguese ports as Chittagoon e Satgaon, and from there to the rest of the empire.

British Empire During the 17th century, Patna became a centre of international trade. In 1620, the English East India Company established a factory in Patna for trading in calico and silk. Soon it became a trading centre for saltpetre. Francois Bernier, in *Travels in the Mogul Empire* (1656-1668), says, ". It was carried down the Ganges with great facility, and the Dutch and English sent large cargoes to many parts of the Indies, and Europe". This trade encouraged other Europeans, principally the French, Danes, Dutch, and Portuguese, to compete in the lucrative business. Peter Mundy, writing in 1632, described Patna as "the greatest mart of the eastern region". In 1763, Nawab Mir Qasim ordered the killing of 45 mainly British employees and 200 sepoys of the East India Company in the Patna massacre; the prisoners were shot to death in their cells and their bodies dumped in a well. After the decisive Battle of Buxar of 1764, the treaty of Allahabad marked the start of the political and constitutional involvement of the British in India. It gave the East India Company the right to collect a tax of this former Mughal province by the Mughal emperor. Patna was annexed by the company in 1793 to its territory when Nizamat (Mughal suzerainty) was abolished, and the British East India Company took control of the province of Bengal-Bihar. Patna, however, continued as a trading centre. In 1912, when the Bengal Presidency was partitioned, Patna became the capital of the British province of Bihar and Orissa. However, in 1936 Orissa became a separate entity with its capital. To date, a major population of Bengalis continue to live in Patna.

Indian Independence Movement People from Patna were greatly involved in the Indian independence movement. Most notable movements were the Champaran movement against the Indigo plantation and the 1942 Quit India Movement. National leaders who came from the city include Swami Sahajanand Saraswati; the first President of the Constituent Assembly of India, Dr. Rajendra Prasad; Bihar Vibhuti (Anugrah Narayan Sinha); Basawon Singh (Sinha); and Loknayak (Jayaprakash Narayan).

Post-Independence Patna remained the capital of Bihar after India gained independence in 1947, even as Bihar was partitioned again in 2000 when Jharkhand became a separate state of the Indian union. On 27 October 2013, six people were killed and 85 others were injured in a series of co-ordinated bombings at an election rally for BJP candidate Narendra Modi. On 3 October 2014, 33 people were killed and 26 injured in a stampede at Gandhi Maidan during Vijaya Dashmi celebrations.

Geography Topography Patna is on the southern bank of the river Ganges. The total area of Patna is 250 km² (97 sq mi). The municipal area constitutes 109.218 km² (42.169 sq mi). The suburban area covers 140.782 km² (54.356 sq mi). It has an average elevation of 53 m (174 ft). A characteristic feature of the geography of Patna is its confluence of major rivers. During the British Raj, Patna was part of the Bengal Presidency. After Nalanda district was carved out of Patna district in 1976, Patna was purged of all hilly regions. It is an alluvial, flat expanse of land. The land in the district is fertile and is almost entirely cultivated, with no forest cover. Alluvial soil is ideal for cultivating rice, sugarcane, and other food grains. The area under cultivation is studded with mango orchards and bamboo groves. In the fields along the banks of river Ganges, weeds such as ammannia, citrulari, hygrophile and sesbania grow. But palmyra, date palm, and mango orchards are found near habitations. Dry stretches of shrubbery are sometimes seen in the villages far from the rivers. Trees commonly found are bel, siris, jack fruit, and the red cotton tree. Patna is unique in having four large rivers in its vicinity. It is the largest riverine city in the world. The topography of Patna city is saucer shaped as per Patna City Development Plan prepared in 2006. The bridge over the river Ganges, named Mahatma Gandhi Setu, is 5575m long. It is the longest river bridge in India. Patna comes under India's seismic zone-IV, indicating its vulnerability to major earthquakes, but earthquakes have not been common in recent history. Patna also falls in the risk zone for floods and cyclones.

Climate Patna has a humid subtropical climate under the Kppen climate classification: (Cwa) with sweltering summers from late March to June, the monsoon season from late June to late September and chilly winter nights and foggy or sunny days from November to February. Highest temperature ever recorded was 46.6 C (115.9 F) in the year 1966, the lowest ever was 1.1 C (34 F) on 9 January 2013, and highest rainfall was 204.5 mm (8.05 in) in the year 1997. The table below details historical monthly averages for climate variables.

Air pollution Pollution is a major concern in Patna. According to the CAG report, tabled in the Bihar Legislative Assembly in April 2015, respirable suspended particulate matter (RSPM) level (PM-10) in Patna was 355, three-and-a-half times higher than the prescribed limit of 100 micro-gram per cubic metre, primarily due to high vehicular and industrial emissions and construction activities in the city. In May 2014, a World Health Organization survey declared Patna the second most air polluted city in India, only after Delhi, with the survey calculating the airborne particulate matter in the state capital's ambient air (PM-2.5) to be 149 micro-grams, six times more than the safe limit, which is 25 micro-grams. Severe air pollution in the city has caused a rise in pollution-related respiratory ailments, such as lung cancer, asthma, dysentery and diarrhoea. The dense smog in Patna during winter season results in major air and rail traffic disruptions every year. Patna has been ranked 10th best "National Clean Air City" (under Category 1 >10L Population cities) in India according to 'Swachh Vayu Survekshan 2024 Results'

Economy Since the 17th century, Patna has been a centre of international trade and an agricultural and textile hub, including a major silk and calico market. After gaining independence in 1947, the economy remained relatively stable, including growth in produce and manufacturing of vegetable oil. From the 1980s onwards, the economy experienced fluctuations. When liberalisation came to India in the 1990s, Patna did not attract significant global funds or foreign investment which proved a setback for the economy. Although the city had several fertiliser plants and sugar mills, due to a weakened ecosystem, many companies incurred losses and were eventually forced to close or leave the state. The economy of Patna has seen sustained growth since 2005, in particular from the fast-moving consumer goods industry, the service sector, and Green Revolution businesses. In 2009, the World Bank ranked Patna as the second best city in India to start a business. In 2010, Patna was ranked 21st fastest-growing city in the world and fifth fastest-growing city in India, and was forecast to grow at an average annual rate of 3.72% through 2020. Its largest exports are grain, sugarcane, sesame,

and Patna rice, a local medium-grained variety. There are several sugar mills in and around Patna. Patna has been described as an important business and luxury brand centre of eastern India. The major business districts of the city are Bander Bagicha, Exhibition Road, Gandhi Maidan Marg, Frazer Road, Indrapuri and Maurya Lok. Many manufacturing companies, including Hero Cycles, Britannia Industries, PepsiCo, Sonalika Tractors and UltraTech Cement have established their manufacturing plants in the Patna metropolitan area. One of the world's largest leather clusters is in Fatuha, in Patna. Patna is also emerging as an information technology hub, including Tata Consultancy Services, which started operations in 2019 at a new Patna facility.

Demographics With an estimated population of 1.68 million in 2011, Patna is the 19th most populous city in India and with over 2 million people, its urban agglomeration is the 18th largest in India. Residents of Patna are referred to by the demonym Patnaite. According to 2011 census data, Patna city had a population of 1,684,222 (before the expansion of the city limits) within the corporation limits, with 893,399 men and 790,823 women. This was a 22.3% increase compared to 2001 figures. 11.32% of the population was under six years of age, with 102,208 boys and 88,288 girls. The overall literacy rate is 83.37%, with the male literacy rate being 87.35% and female 79.89%. The sex ratio of Patna is 885 females per 1,000 males. The child sex ratio of girls is 877 per 1000 boys. The urban agglomeration had a population of 2,049,156, of which 1,087,285 are male and 961,871 are females with 82.73% literacy. Patna is the second largest city (in terms of population) in eastern India. Roughly 0.25% of Patna's population lives in slums, which makes Patna the city with the lowest percentage of people living in slums in India. Like other fast-growing cities in the developing world, Patna suffers from major urbanisation problems including unemployment, poor public health, and poor civic and educational standards for a large section of the population. In 2015, the National Sample Survey Organisation revealed that, for females in India, Patna had the highest unemployment rate at 34.6%, and for males, it was the second highest with a rate of 8% in 2011-12.

Religion and language According to the 2011 census of India, 86.39% of Patna's residents practice Hinduism. Islam is the second most popular at 12.27%. Christianity, Jainism, Sikhism, and Buddhism are among the other minority religions. 0.01% practice other religions and 0.49% no particular religion.

Hindi and Urdu are official languages of the state of Bihar, but many other languages are also spoken. The native language is Magadhi or Magahi, named after Magadha, the ancient name of South Bihar, and is most widely spoken. Hindi is spoken by 65.94% of the population, 18.04% Magahi, 9.67% Urdu, 3.19% Bhojpuri and 1.79% Maithili as their first language.

Administration The Patna sub-division (Tehsil) is one of the 6 Tehsils of the Patna district. It is headed by an IAS or state Civil service officer of the rank of Sub Divisional Magistrate (SDM). The SDM of Patna Tehsil reports to the District Magistrate (DM) of Patna District.

Blocks The Patna Tehsil is divided into 3 Blocks, each headed by a Block Development Officer (BDO). The list of Blocks is as follows:

Patna Sampatchak Phulwari Sharif

Government Civic administration The civic administration of Patna is run by several government agencies and has overlapping structural divisions. At least five administrative definitions of the city are available; listed in

ascending order of area: Patna division, Patna district (also the Patna Police area), the Patna Metropolitan Region (also known as Patna Planning area), "Greater Patna" or PRDA area, which adds to the PMC a few areas just adjacent to it and Patna Municipal Corporation area.

The Patna Municipal Corporation, or PMC, oversees and manages the civic infrastructure of the city's 75 wards, which accommodates a population of 1.7 million as per 2011 Census. The municipal corporation consists of democratically elected members; each ward elects a Councillor to the PMC. The PMC is in charge of the civic and infrastructure needs of the metropolis. As Patna's apex body, the corporation discharges its functions through the mayor-in-council, which comprises a mayor, a deputy mayor, and other elected members of the PMC. The Mayor is usually chosen through indirect election by the councillors from among themselves. The functions of the PMC include water supply, drainage and sewerage, sanitation, solid waste management, street lighting, and building regulation. The Municipal Commissioner is the chief Executive Officer and head of the executive arm of the Municipal Corporation. All executive powers are vested in the Municipal Commissioner who is an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer appointed by the state government. Although the Municipal Corporation is the legislative body that lays down policies for the governance of the city, it is the Commissioner who is responsible for the execution of the policies. The Commissioner is appointed for a fixed term as defined by state statute. The powers of the Commissioner are those provided by statute and those delegated by the Corporation or the Standing Committee. As of June 2017, the BJP won PMC Mayor seat; the mayor is Sita Sahu, while the deputy mayor is Vinay Kumar Pappu. The Patna Municipal Corporation was ranked 4th out of 21 Cities for best governance & administrative practices in India in 2014. It scored 3.6 on 10 compared to the national average of 3.3. The revenue district of Patna comes under the jurisdiction of a District Collector (District Magistrate). The Collectors are in charge of the general administration, property records and revenue collection for the Central Government, and oversee the national elections held in the city. The Bihar Urban Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (BUIDCO) and the Patna Metropolitan Area Authority, are responsible for the statutory planning and development of the Patna Metropolitan Region. Patna Metropolitan Area Authority was established in 2016. It is the superseding agency for the former Patna Regional Development Authority (PRDA), which was dissolved in 2006. In addition to the city government, numerous commissions and state authorities-including the Ministry of Tourism, the Bihar Health Department, the Bihar Water Resources Department, National Ganga River Basin Authority, Bihar State Pollution Control Board and the Bihar Public Service Commission-play a role in the life of Patnaites. As the capital of Bihar, Patna plays a major role in both state politics and central politics. In October 2016, the Bihar cabinet approved the Patna Master Plan 2031, which envisages the development of a new airport at Bihta. As of August 2015, the area of Patna city (along with its urban agglomeration) is 250 square kilometres (97 sq mi). Patna Master 2031 is the second master plan of the city that has been passed ever, after the last plan was approved for 1961-1981. Patna master plan covers six urban local bodies - Patna Municipal Corporation, Danapur Nagar Parishad, Phulwarisharif Nagar Parishad, Khagaul Nagar Parishad, Maner Nagar Panchayat and Fatuha Nagar Parishad. The new master plan proposed to increase the area of Patna city to 1,167 square kilometres (451 sq mi) to transform it as a metropolitan city. 5 satellite towns have also been proposed in the master plan at Bihta, Naubatpur, Punpun, Fatuha and Khusrupur. Patna has been selected as one of the hundred Indian cities to be developed as a smart city under Government of India's flagship Smart Cities Mission. With the grade of a Smart City, Patna will have highly up-to-date and radical provisions like uninterrupted electric supply, first-rate traffic and transport system, superior health care and many other prime utilities. Under this scheme, the city will use digital technology that will act as the integral mechanism of the aforesaid facilities and thereby further elevate the lifestyle of the citizens. A special purpose vehicle company named the Patna Smart City Limited has been formed to implement the smart city projects. On 22 November 2017, Eptisa Servicios de Ingenieria SL of Spain was chosen as the project management consultant.

Politics As the seat of the Government of Bihar, The city has several federal facilities, including the Raj Bhavan: Governor's house, the Bihar Legislative Assembly; the state secretariat, which is housed in the Patna Secretariat; and the Patna High Court. The Patna High Court is one of the oldest High Court in India. The Patna High Court has jurisdiction over the state of Bihar. Patna also has lower courts; the Small Causes Court for civil matters, and the Sessions Court for criminal cases. The Patna Police, commanded by Senior Superintendent of Police, is overseen by the Bihar Government's Home Department. The Patna district elects two representatives to India's lower house, the Lok Sabha, and 14 representatives to the state legislative assembly. The capital city of Patna has 8 State Legislative Assembly constituencies, which form two constituencies of the Lok Sabha (the lower house of the Parliament of India).

Utility services Groundwater fulfills the basic needs of the people, administered by Patna Jal Parishad under Patna Municipal Corporation. The public water supply system comprises 98 tube wells that pump water directly to the distribution mains. Around 23 overhead reservoirs of which only the ones at Agam Kuan, Gulzarbagh Press, Guru Gobind Singh Hospital and High Court serve the city. The sewerage system in Patna was set up in 1936. At present, there are four sewage treatment plants at Saidpur, Beur, Pahari and Karmali Chak. In 2019, the central government has started the process Nirmal Ganga, which is to build new sewerage infrastructure at Patna's Karmalichak as well as in Barh, Naugachia and Sultanganj. The new infrastructure will be capable of preventing the flow of 67 million litre of sewage into Ganga. As of 2011, the city's electricity consumption is about 601 kWh per capita, even though the actual demand is much higher. Electricity supply to the city is regulated and distributed by the South Bihar Power Distribution Company Limited managed by Bihar State Power Holding Company Limited (the holding company and a successor company of erstwhile Bihar State Electricity Board). The city forms the Patna Electric Supply Undertaking (PESU) Circle, which is further divided into two wings namely Patna East (consists Kankarbagh, Patna City, Gulzarbagh, Bankipore, Rajendra Nagar Divisions) and Patna West (Consists Danapur, New Capital, Pataliputra, Gardanibagh, Dak Bungalow divisions). Direct-to-home (DTH) is available via DD Free Dish, Airtel digital TV, Dish TV, Tata Sky, Videocon d2h, Sun Direct and Reliance Digital TV. Cable companies include Darsh Digital Network Pvt. Ltd., SITI Maurya Cablenet Pvt. Ltd etc. The Conditional Access System for cable television was implemented in March 2013. Patna comes under the Patna Telecom District of the Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), India's state-owned telecom and internet services provider. Both Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) and Code division multiple access (CDMA) mobile services are available. Apart from telecom, BSNL also provides broadband internet service. Among private enterprises, Bharti Airtel, Reliance Jio, Reliance GSM/CDMA, Idea Cellular, Aircel, Tata Teleservices (Tata DoCoMo, Virgin Mobile and Tata Indicom), Telenor (Formerly Uninor & Now Acquired by Bharti Airtel), Vodafone and Videocon Telecom are the leading telephone and cell phone service providers in the city. Patna was the second Indian city, after Bangalore, which offered free WiFi connectivity to its citizens in February 2014. By surpassing the previous record-holder, Beijing in China, Patna's WiFi zone is the world's longest free WiFi zone, which covers a 20-km stretch from NIT Patna on Ashok Rajpath to Danapur.

Transport Roads Patna is about 100 km south of national East - West Highway corridor. The NH 30, NH 31 and NH 2 passes through the city. The Ashok Rajpath, Patna-Danapur Road, Bailey Road, Harding Road and Kankarbagh old bypass Road are the major corridors. Patna was one of the first places in India to use horse-drawn trams for public transport. Public transportation is provided for by buses, auto rickshaws and local trains. Auto rickshaws are said to be the lifeline of the city. BSRTC has started City bus service on all major routes of Patna. App based cab service is available within city. Patna is about 70.02KM away from Chhapra

Air transport Patna Airport known as Lok Nayak Jayaprakash Narayan International Airport is classified as a restricted international airport. The arrival of several low-cost carriers and a number of new destinations have caused a growth in air traffic in recent years, as has an improvement in the situation with regard to law and order. For the period April to December 2009 the airport ranked first in a survey of 46 airports in the country in terms of percentage growth of domestic passengers as well as domestic aircraft movement. The Airport Authority of India (AAI) has proposed to develop a civil enclave at Bihta Air Force Station to serve as the new airport for Patna. The military airfield lies 40 kilometres (25 mi) southwest of Patna, in Bihta.

Railways Patna is served by several railway stations within. The Patna Junction railway station is the main railway station of the city, and one of the busiest railway stations in India. Patna lies in between New Delhi and Kolkata on Howrah-Delhi main line, which is one of the busiest rail routes in India. Patna Junction is directly connected to most of the major cities in India. The city has four additional major railway stations: Rajendra Nagar Terminal (adjacent to Kankarbagh), Patliputra Junction (near Bailey road), Danapur (near western outskirts) and Patna Sahib (in Patna City area). Danapur is the divisional headquarters of East Central Railway zone's Danapur railway division. Patna is well connected with Gaya, Jehanabad, Bihar Sharif, Rajgir, Islampur, Jamalpur Junction and Munger through daily passenger and express train services. India's longest road-cum-rail bridge, Digha-Sonpur Bridge, across the Ganges River, connects Digha, Patna to Pahleja Ghat in Sonpur. The bridge was completed in 2015, and is 4.55 kilometres (2.83 miles) long, therefore the second longest rail-cum-road bridge in India, after Bogibeel Bridge in Assam. The city is served by several major road highways and state highways, including National Highways 19, 30, 31, and 83. Pataliputra Bus Terminal is an upcoming ISBT. Asia's longest river bridge, the Mahatma Gandhi Setu (built 1982), is in Patna and connects the city to Hajipur across the Ganga. In recent times, the bridge has been witnessing major traffic chaos and accidents due to excessive numbers of vehicles passing over it and regularly overloading the structure. A new six lane road bridge across the Ganges parallel to Mahatma Gandhi Setu is already been completed and in use which is connecting Kacchi Dargah in Patna City to Bidupur in Vaishali district, which is the longest bridge in India. Patna is well connected with roads to various major cities of Bihar like Hajipur, Munger, Jamalpur, Bhagalpur, Gaya Motihari, and Purnia. Patna is 1,015 kilometres (631 miles) east from Delhi, 1,802 kilometres (1,120 miles) northeast from Mumbai, 1,527 kilometres (949 miles) north from Hyderabad and 556 kilometres (345 miles) northwest from Kolkata. Luxury bus service between Patna and several neighbouring cities is provided by the Bihar State Tourism Development Corporation and the Bihar State Road Transport Corporation. Auto rickshaws are a popular mode of transportation. Prepaid auto services operated by an all-women crew was started in 2013 in Patna, which is the first of its kind in India. Radio Taxi services are available within city limits and surrounding areas. There are also private options such as Ola Cabs.

Metro Patna Metro is an under-construction rapid transit system for the city. It would be owned and operated by state run Patna Metro Rail Corporation. It will be constructed on Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode, estimated to cost ₹140 billion (US\$2 billion). It will have 5 lines with a total planned length of 60 kilometres (37 mi), which will be built in 3 phases. Patna Monorail Project covering the municipal area is also underway. Recently the central government approved Patna metro rail project comprising two corridors (Danapur - Khemnichak and Patna Junction - Pataliputra Bus Terminal). The Ganges - navigable throughout the year - was the principal river highway across the vast Indo-Gangetic Plain. Vessels capable of accommodating five hundred merchants were known to ply this river in the ancient period; it served as a major trade route, as goods were transported from Pataliputra to the Bay of Bengal and further, to ports in Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia. The role of the Ganges as a channel for trade was enhanced by its natural links - it embraces all the major rivers and streams in both north and south Bihar. In recent times, Inland Waterways Authority of India has declared the stretch of river Ganges between Allahabad and Haldia National Inland Waterway and has taken steps to restore and maintain its navigability. The National Waterway-1, the longest Waterway in India,

stretches 1620 km in the River Ganga from Allahabad to Haldia via Varanasi, Munger, Bhagalpur passes through Patna. This National Waterways has fixed terminal at Patna.

Culture Patna's native language is Magahi or Magadhi a language derived from the ancient Magadhi Prakrit, which was created in the ancient kingdom of Magadha, the core of which was the area of Patna south of the Ganges. It is believed to be the language spoken by Gautama Buddha. Patna has a vibrant Bengali culture too with many Bengali stalwarts including the first Chief Minister of post-independence West Bengal, Bidhan Chandra Ray, being born here. The numerous Bengali speaking Patnaites have contributed massively into fine arts, culture, education and history of Bihar in general and Patna in particular. However, Magahi was the official language of the Mauryan court, in which the edicts of Ashoka were composed. The name Magahi is directly derived from the name Magadhi Prakrit, and educated speakers of Magahi prefer to call it "Magadhi" rather than "Magahi". Patna has many buildings adorned with Indo-Islamic and Indo-Saracenic architectural motifs. Several well-maintained major buildings from the colonial period have been declared "heritage structures"; others are in various stages of decay. Established in 1917 as the Bihar's first museum, the Patna Museum (■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■) houses large collections that showcase Indian natural history and Indian art. The Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Library and Sinha Library are historic public libraries of Patna. Several theatres are in or near the central part of the city, including the Bhartiya Nritya Kala Mandir, the Rabindra Parishad, Premchand Rangshala and the Kalidas Rangalaya, which is home to the Bihar art theatre. Kalidas Rangalaya also hosts the Patliputra Natya Mahotsav, a dance festival. But in the last two decades, the popularity of commercial theatres in the city has declined. The Patna School of Painting or Patna Qalaam, some times also called Company style, is an offshoot of the well-known Mughal Miniature school of painting, which flourished in Bihar during the early 18th to the mid-20th centuries. The practitioners of this art form were descendants of Hindu artisans of Mughal painting who facing persecution under the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb and who found refuge, via Murshidabad, in Patna during the late 18th century. The Patna painters differed from the Mughal painters, whose subjects included only royalty and court scenes, in that they included as subjects bazaar scenes, scenes of Indian daily life, local dignitaries, festivals and ceremonies, and nature scenes. The paintings were executed in watercolours on paper and on mica, but the style was generally of a hybrid and undistinguished quality. It is this school of painting that inspired the formation of the College of Arts and Crafts, Patna, under the leadership of Shri Radha Mohan, which is an important centre of fine arts in Bihar. Bihar Government is promoting its art and culture through Madhubani arts to educate people about Bihar's rich cultural diversity. Some well known dishes of Bihari cuisine include sattv paratha (parathas stuffed with roasted gram flour), "sattu ka sharbat" (a spiced drink with roasted gram flour as main ingredient), chokha (spicy mashed potatoes), fish curry, Bihari kebab, postaa-dana kaa halwaa, malpua, dal pitha (Similar to momos), kheer makhana (fox nut) and thekua/khajuria (a type of snack). Street foods such as samosa, chaat, jalebi, litti chokha, phuchka (a deep-fried crpe with tamarind sauce), South Indian and Chinese cuisine are favourite among Patnaites. Taj Hotel Patna is under construction at Budh Marg Lodipur. Bihari Women have traditionally worn cotton sari but shalwar kameez and other western attire are gaining acceptance among younger women. Western attire has gained wide acceptance among the urban men, although the traditional dhoti and kurta are seen during festivals. Chhath, also called Dala Chhath, is a major ancient festival in Bihar. It is celebrated twice a year: once in the summer, called the Chaiti Chhath, and once about a week after Deepawali, called the Kartik Chhath. Durga Puja, held in September-October, is Patna's another important festival; it is an occasion for glamorous celebrations. Among the city's other festivals, are Saraswati Puja, Eid, Holi, Christmas, Vishwakarma Puja, Makar Sankranti, Raksha Bandhan and Rath Yatra. Cultural events include the Patna Book Fair, Patna Sahib Mahotsav, the Patna Film Festival, Bihar Diwas, Rajgir Mahotsav, Vaishali Mahotsav and the Sonapur Cattle Fair in neighbouring towns.

Tourism Patna is home to many tourist attractions and it saw about 2.4 million tourists (including day visitors) in 2005. Tourists visiting the city accounted for 41% of the total number of tourists visiting Bihar although Bodhi Gaya was the most popular destination for foreign visitors. The cultural heritage of Bihar is reflected in its many ancient monuments. Kumhrar and Agam Kuan are the sites of the ruins of the Ashokan Pataliputra. Didarganj Yakshi remains as an example of Mauryan art. Takht Sri Patna Sahib is one of the Five Takhts of Sikhism and consecrates the birthplace of the tenth Guru of the Sikhs, Gobind Singh. There are five other Gurdwaras in Patna that are related to different Sikh Gurus; these are Gurdwara Pahila Bara, Gurdwara Gobind Ghat, Gurdwara Guru ka Bagh, Gurdwara Bal Leela, Gurdwara Handi Sahib, and Prakash Punj. Padri Ki Haveli, High Court, Golghar, Sultan Palace, and Secretariat Building are examples of British architecture. Gandhi Maidan is a historic ground in Patna where several freedom movement rallies took place. Newly built Buddha Smriti Park near Patna Junction is also becoming a major tourist attraction. The Patna Planetarium (Indira Gandhi Planetarium) is in Patna's Indira Gandhi Science Complex. It claims to be one of the largest planetariums in Asia and to attract a large number of tourists. The Sanjay Gandhi Jaivik Udyan (Patna Zoo) is at Bailey Road, Raj Bhawan, Rajbanshi Nagar, and includes over 300 mammals, 300 birds, and 450 species of reptiles as of January 2019. In 2015, the Bihar government has built a state-of-the-art art landmark museum in Patna at a cost of approximately ₹530 crores on a site of 13.9 acres at Bailey Road. 5 firms were shortlisted for the architectural design, of which the Japanese firm Maki and Associates was chosen. It is now completed and opened for all. Completed in May 2018, the Sabhyata Dwar was built with Mauryan-style architecture. It was opened to the general public in December 2018. In 2014, the Bihar government laid the foundation of Samrat Ashok International Convention Centre. It is expected to use more steel than used in raising Eiffel Tower and Indira Gandhi International Airport. Construction of Dr. A.P.J Abdul Kalam Science City began in February 2019. The Eco Park is in Jawaharlal Nehru Marg. It has more than 3,000 varieties of plants and includes several theme parks, a restaurant, and a boat trip zone.

Education Schools in Patna are either government-run schools or private schools. The schools are affiliated to Bihar School Examination Board (BSEB), Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE), National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS), or the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) boards. A number of Bengali medium schools also thrive in Patna. Hindi and English are the primary languages of instruction. A 2012 survey found 1,574 schools: of these, 78% were private unaided schools (most of them at an affordable cost), 21% were government schools and 1% were private aided. Under the 10+2+3/4 plan, students complete ten years of schooling and then enroll in schools that have a higher secondary facility and are affiliated to the Bihar State Intermediate Board, the All-India Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE), the NIOS or the CBSE, where they select one of three streams: arts, commerce, or science. This is followed by either a general degree course in a chosen field of study or a professional degree course, such as law, engineering, and medicine. Patna has important government educational institutions like Patna University, Anugrah Narayan College, Chanakya National Law University, Aryabhatta Knowledge University, Indian Institute of Technology Patna, Bakhtiyarpur College of Engineering, National Institute of Technology, Patna, Patna Science College, Patna Women's College, Patna Law College, Bihar Veterinary College, J.D. Women's College, Birla Institute of Technology, Patna, Patna Medical College Hospital, Rajendra Memorial Research Institute of Medical Sciences, Nalanda Medical College Hospital, Indira Gandhi Institute of Medical Sciences, Mahavir Cancer Sansthan, All India Institute of Medical Sciences Patna, National Institute of Fashion Technology Patna, Chandragupta Institute of Management, Development Management Institute, National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology, Patliputra University. Patna University was established in 1917 and is the seventh oldest modern university in the Indian Sub-continent. Patna also has a variety of other universities, as well as many primary and secondary schools. Nalanda University (also known as Nalanda International University) is an established university in Rajgir, around 100 kilometres (62 mi) from Patna. The University, created as a revival of an ancient centre of learning at Nalanda, began its first academic

session on 1 September 2014. It attracts students from across the globe.

Sports As in the rest of India, cricket is popular in Patna and is played on grounds and in streets throughout the city. There are several sports grounds across the city. The Bihar Cricket Association, which regulates cricket in Bihar, is based in the city. Tournaments, especially those involving cricket, basketball, football, badminton, and table tennis, are regularly organised on an inter-locality or inter-club basis. Moin-ul-Haq Stadium, which has a capacity of 25,000, has served as the venue for two one-day international cricket matches and several national sports events. It was home to the Bihar cricket team. Due to negligence and lack of maintenance, the stadium is in a dilapidated state and no international match has been played here since 1996. In 2013, it was announced by the Chief Minister of Bihar Nitish Kumar that an international cricket stadium will be constructed at Rajgir. The Patna Golf Club was established on 21 March 1916, and is one of the oldest golf courses in India. It has 18 holes in a historic setting in and around Bailey Road, a 165-acre (67 ha) course. Patna hosted the first ever woman's Kabaddi world cup. It was held at the Patliputra Sports Complex, Kankarbagh from 1 to 4 March 2012. Hosts India won the World Cup defeating Iran in the finals. Patna also hosts the seven league matches of Pro Kabaddi League with its home team as Patna Pirates at the Patliputra Sports Complex. Other famous sports complexes of Patna are Bihar Military Police's Mithilesh Stadium, East Central Railway zone's indoor stadium at Digha etc.

Media The beginning of the 20th century was marked by a number of notable new publications. A monthly magazine named Bharat Ratna was started in Patna in 1901. It was followed by Ksahtriya Hitaishi, Aryavarta from Dinapore, Patna, Udyoga and Chaitanya Chandrika. Udyog was edited by Vijyaanand Tripathy, a famous poet of the time and Chaitanya Chandrika by Krishna Chaitanya Goswami, a literary figure of that time. The literary activity was not confined to Patna alone but to many districts of Bihar. Magahi Parishad, established in Patna in 1952, pioneered Magadhi journalism in Bihar. It started the monthly journal, Magadhi, which was later renamed Bihan. Many national media agencies, including the Press Trust of India and Doordarshan's regional offices, are based in the city. The Hindu, The Times of India, Hindustan Times, The Economic Times and The Telegraph are the five principal English-language daily newspapers which have Patna editions. The Pioneer and The Indian Express, though not printed in the city, are other English-language daily newspapers available in the city. The city's Hindi newspapers include Hindustan Dainik, Dainik Jagran, Dainik Bhaskar, Prabhat Khabar, Aaj and Rashtriya Sahara, all of which have editions from Patna. There are also daily Urdu newspapers like Qaumi Tanzeem, Farooqi Tanzeem, and Qaumi Duniya Daily published in Patna. There is also the Hindi and English mixed newspaper tabloid Inext. Patna has several AM and FM radio stations, including many state-owned channels. The city hosts several radio stations, including the state-owned All India Radio's Vividh Bharati, and FM 105. The All India Radio, Patna (officially Akashvani Patna Kendra) was established in 1948. Patna is served by several private channels.

Private FM stations Notable people See also List of cities in Bihar by population Patna Lok Sabha constituency
Largest Indian Cities by GDP

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Bhopal

Bhopal (Hindi: भोपाल, pronounced [bʱoːpaːl]) is the capital city of the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh and the administrative headquarters of both Bhopal district and Bhopal division. It is known as the City of Lakes, due to presence of various natural and artificial lakes near the city boundary. It is also one of the greenest cities in India. It is the 16th largest city in India and 131st in the world. After the formation of Madhya Pradesh, Bhopal was part of the Sehore district. It was bifurcated in 1972 and a new district, Bhopal, was formed. Flourishing around 1707, the city was the capital of the former Bhopal State, a princely state of the British ruled by the Nawabs of Bhopal until India's independence in 1947. India achieved independence on 15 August 1947. Bhopal was one of the last states to sign the 'Instrument of Accession'. The ruler of Bhopal acceded to the Indian government, and Bhopal became an Indian state on 1 May 1949. Sindhi refugees from Pakistan were accommodated in Bairagarh, a western suburb of Bhopal. Bhopal has a strong economic base with many large and medium industries. Bhopal, along with Indore, is one of the central financial and economic pillars of Madhya Pradesh. Bhopal's GDP (nominal) was estimated at INR 44,175 crores (2020-21) by the Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Madhya Pradesh. A Y-class city, Bhopal houses various educational and research institutions and installations of national importance, including ISRO's Master Control Facility, BHEL and AMPRI. Bhopal is home to a large number of institutes of National Importance in India, namely, IISER, MANIT, SPA, AIIMS, NLIU, IIFM, NIFT, NIDMP and IIIT (currently functioning from a temporary campus inside MANIT). Bhopal city also has Regional Science Centre, Bhopal, one of the constituent units of the National Council of Science Museums (NCSM). The city attracted international attention in December 1984 after the Bhopal disaster, when a Union Carbide pesticide manufacturing plant (now owned by Dow Chemical Company) leaked a mixture of deadly gases composed mainly of methyl isocyanate, leading to the worst industrial disaster in history. The Bhopal disaster continues to be a part of the socio-political debate and a logistical challenge for the people of Bhopal. Bhopal was selected as one of the first twenty Indian cities (the first phase) to be developed as a smart city the Smart Cities Mission. Bhopal was also rated as the cleanest state capital city in India for three consecutive years, 2017, 2018, and 2019. Bhopal has also been awarded a 5-star Garbage Free City (GFC) rating, making it the cleanest State capital in the country in 2023.

Etymology Bhopal is named after the legendary ancient king Raja Bhoja, with 'Bho' possibly originating from his name. Additionally, 'Pal' signifies 'dam' or 'reservoir,' reflecting the city's abundance of lakes. Therefore, Bhopal's etymology suggests it may mean 'City of Raja Bhoja' or 'City of Lakes,' owing to its historical association with the king and its numerous water bodies.

History **Early history** According to folklore, Bhopal was founded in the 11th century by the Paramara king Bhoja, who ruled from his capital at Dhar. This theory states that Bhopal was originally known as Bhojpal after a dam (pal) constructed by the king's minister. An alternative theory says that the city is named after another king called Bhupala (or Bhupal). According to yet another version, Raja Bhoj suffered from leprosy. His physician advised him to build a lake with water from 365 rivers and take daily bath in it. When such a lake was built, it was called Bhoj Tal [or Bhoj's lake]. Gradually people started calling the city Bhojpal, and finally Bhopal. In the early 17th century, Bhopal was a small village in the Gond kingdom. The modern Bhopal city was established by Dost Mohammad Khan (1660-1726), a Pashtun soldier in the Mughal army. After the death of the emperor Aurangzeb, Khan started providing mercenary services to local chieftains in the politically unstable Malwa region. In 1709, he took on the lease of Berasia estate and later annexed several territories in the region to establish the Bhopal State. Khan received the territory of Bhopal from the Gond queen Kamlapati in lieu of

payment for mercenary services and usurped her kingdom after her death. In the 1720s, he built the Fatehgarh fort in the village, which developed into the city of Bhopal over the next few decades.

Maratha rule (1737-1818) The area of Malwa which also included Bhopal and nearby regions came under Maratha control after the combined armies of Mughal-Nizam-Nawab were decisively defeated in Battle of Bhopal (1737) by the great Peshwa Bajirao I.

Bhopal state (1707-1947) The state was founded in 1707 by Dost Mohammad Khan, a Pashtun soldier in the Mughal army, who became a mercenary after the Emperor Aurangzeb's death and annexed several territories to his fiefdom. It came under the suzerainty of the Nizam of Hyderabad in 1723 shortly after its foundation. In 1737, the Marathas defeated the Mughals and the Nawab of Bhopal in the Battle of Bhopal, and started collecting tribute from the state. Bhopal became a princely state after signing a treaty (During the reign of Nazir Mohammed Khan 1816-1819) with the British East India Company in 1818. Between 1819 and 1926, the state was ruled by four women, Begums - unique in the royalty of those days - under British suzerainty. Qudsia Begum was the first woman ruler (between 1819 and 1837), who was succeeded by her granddaughter, Shah Jehan. Between the years 1844-1860, when Shah Jehan was a child, her mother Sikandar (only daughter of Qudsia) ruled as regent. Curiously during the 1857 revolt, Sikandar supported the British, for which she was rewarded by proclaiming her as king in 1858. To give her further honour, she was given a 19-gun salute and the Grand Cross of the Star of India. The latter made her equivalent to a British person, who had been granted a knighthood. Thus she became, at that time, the only female knight in the entire British Empire besides Queen Victoria. Among the relatively minor rewards, a territory was restored to her, that she had earlier lost to a neighbouring prince. Sikandar ruled until 1868, when Shah Jehan succeeded her and was Begum until 1901. In 1901, Shah Jehan's daughter Kaikhusrav Jahan became Begum, ruled until 1926, and was the last of the female line of succession. In 1926, she abdicated in favour of her son, Hamidullah Khan, who ruled until 1947, and was the last of the sovereign Nawabs. The rule of Begums gave the city its waterworks, railways, a postal system, and a municipality constituted in 1907.

Post independence Bhopal State was the second-largest Muslim-ruled princely state: the first being Hyderabad. After the independence of India in 1947, the last Nawab expressed his wish to retain Bhopal as a separate unit. Agitations against the Nawab broke out in December 1948, leading to the arrest of prominent leaders including Shankar Dayal Sharma. Later, the political detainees were released, and the Nawab signed the agreement for Bhopal's merger with the Union of India on 30 April 1949. The Bhopal state was taken over by the Union Government of India on 1 June 1949.

Bhopal in 1984 In early December 1984, a Union Carbide pesticide plant in Bhopal leaked around 32 tons of toxic gases, including methyl isocyanate (MIC) gas which led to the worst industrial disaster in the world to date. The official death toll was initially recorded as around 4,000. A Madhya Pradesh government report stated 3,787 deaths, while other estimates state the fatalities were significantly higher (15,000) from the accident and the medical complications caused by the accident in the weeks and years that followed. The higher estimates have been challenged by Union Carbide, however, medical staff in the city were not able to adequately record data due to the massive influx of patients. The impact of the disaster continues to this day in terms of psychological and neurological disabilities, blindness, skin, vision, breathing, and birth disorders. Lawyers, academics and journalists have described the disaster as an ecocide. The soil and ground water near the factory site have been contaminated by the toxic wastes. The Bhopal disaster continues to be the part of the socio-political debate; the clean-up of environmental contamination and rehabilitation of those affected continues to challenge the people of Bhopal. The centre is seeking a direction to Union Carbide and other firms

for ■78.44 billion additional amount over and above the earlier settlement amount of US\$470 million in 1989 for paying compensation to the gas tragedy victims. The site of the industrial accident is rusting since the day of the disaster and has not been cleared off completely either by DOW Chemicals or government authorities, the site is still storing large quantities of lethal chemicals in underground tanks and overground storages.

Geography Bhopal has an average elevation of 500 metres (1,401 ft) and is located in the central part of India, just north of the upper limit of the Vindhya mountain ranges. Located on the Malwa plateau, it is higher than the north Indian plains and the land rises towards the Vindhya Range to the south. The city has uneven elevation and has small hills within its boundaries. The prominent hills in Bhopal are the Idgah, Arera and Shyamala hills in the northern region, together with the Katara hills in the southern region. There are 17 lakes and 5 reservoirs biggest of them are upper lake (Bada Talab) and lower lake. The Upper Lake was built in the 11th century and has a surface area of 36 km² and catchment area of 361 km² while the Lower Lake has a surface area of 1.29 km² and catchment area of 9.6 km². Recently, Bhopal Municipal Corporation came with a resolution to involve local citizens in cleaning, conserving and maintaining the lakes. Bhopal city is divided into two parts where one part which is near the VIP road and lake is Old Bhopal (north) and the other, New Bhopal (south), where malls are mainly situated. List of pin codes from Bhopal is 462001 to 462050 which comes under Bhopal postal division (Bhopal Region).

Climate Bhopal has a humid subtropical climate (Cwa), with cool, dry winters, a hot summer and a humid monsoon season. Summers start in late March and go on until mid-June, the average temperature being around 30 C (86 F), with the peak of summer in May, when the highs regularly exceed 40 C (104 F). Extreme high in May was 46.7 C on 19 May 2016, and in June, it was 45.9 C on 7 June 2019. The monsoon starts in late June and ends in late September. These months see about 40 inches (1020 mm) of precipitation, frequent thunderstorms and flooding. The average temperature is around 25 C (77 F) and the humidity is quite high. Temperatures rise again up to early November when winter starts, which lasts up to early March. Winters in Bhopal are cool, and not very much comfortable like summers, with average daily temperatures around 18 C (64 F). The winter peaks in January when temperatures may drop close to freezing on some nights. Lowest temperature ever recorded was 0.6 C. Total annual rainfall is about 1101 mm (43.35 inches).

Bhopal has been ranked 6th best "National Clean Air City" (under Category 1 >10L Population cities) in India according to 'Swachh Vayu Survekshan 2024 Results'.

List of lakes Bhojtal (Bada Talaab/ Upper Lake) Chhota Talaab (Lower Lake) Shahpura Lake Motia Talaab (at Taj-Ui-Masajid, Shahjehanbad) Nawab Siddique Hasan Khan Talaab (First Step lake Below Motia Talaab) Munshi Hussain Khan Talaab (Second Step lake Below Motia Talaab) Lendiya Talaab (Ram Nagar Colony) Sarangpani Lake (Piplani, BHEL area) Manit Lotus Lake (Maulana Azad National Institute of Technology) Jawahar Baal Udhyaan Lake (Ravishankar Nagar, Below Char Imli) Bordi Kalan (Bhadbhada Road) Preet Nagar Lake (Vidisha Bypass Road) Nariyalkheda Golf Course Lake (SCEPTA Golf Course) Laharpur Lake Mullah Sarovar (Barkatullah University, Habibganj) Nevri Talaab (Ajgar Talav near Sanjeev Nagar) New Jail Pond (Ayodhya Bypass Road) Bairagarh Visarjan Ghat (Sant Hirdaram Nagar)

List of reservoirs Kolar Dam Kerwa Dam Kaliyasot Dam Halali Dam Bhadbhada Dam Hathaikheda Dam

Demographics According to the 2011 census, the population of the Bhopal city (the area under Bhopal Municipal Corporation) is 1,798,218, with 936,168 males and 862,050 females. The population of the Bhopal

metropolitan area (the urban agglomeration that extends beyond Bhopal city) was 1,886,100 in 2011. The total effective literacy rate (for population aged 7+ years) was 85.24%, with male and female literacy respectively at 89.2% and 80.1%.

Government and politics Bhopal is the name of the division, as well as the district and the capital city of the district. The division is headed by the commissioner and additional commissioner for the division. The division has five districts, of which Bhopal is one. Bhopal district administration is headed by the District Magistrate of Bhopal, who is the chief executive officer for the district. The city is represented in the parliament by Bhopal Lok Sabha constituency, with Alok Sharma from the BJP elected in the 2024 Indian General Election. Bhopal also houses the State Legislative Assembly, or the Vidhan Sabha, which seats 230 members of Legislative Assembly. The sixteenth (and current) Vidhan Sabha was elected in December 2023. As of June 2024, the party in the majority in Vidhan Sabha is Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) with 165 seats which is led by Mohan Yadav. Bhopal district elects 7 seats to the Assembly, and as per delimitation in 2008, Bhopal city is represented in 6 constituencies:

It is also part of the larger urban agglomeration of Bhopal, with a population of 1,883,381. The first municipal body that governed the municipal population of the city came into being in 1907 in erstwhile Bhopal estate, and was called Majlis-e-intezamia". The first city survey was conducted in 1916 after the enactment of Municipal act. Till 1956, the area under Bhopal Municipal limit was very small, after which surrounding villages were added to it. By 1975, the municipal limit reached 71.23 square km. Bhopal Municipal Council got the status of Municipal Corporation, with total of 56 wards in 1983.

Civic administration Bhopal Municipal Corporation (BMC) is the urban civic body which oversees the needs of Bhopal city. The municipal corporation follows guidelines under the Madhya Pradesh Municipal Corporation Act, 1956, as well as the Madhya Pradesh Municipalities Act, 1961. In 2015, Kolar Municipal Corporation merged with it, after having been split from it earlier. In 2019, it was announced that the corporation would be split again and a proposal was put forth to the urban administration and housing department, which was criticised by the mayor-in-council. It also proposed for indirect election of the mayor. The municipal corporation is spread over an area of 463 km² (179 sq mi) and has a population of 17,95,648. The city is divided into 14 zones and 85 wards for the purpose of administration, and each ward is represented by a councillor elected for a term of five years. The winning party elects a council of members, who are responsible for various departments. Ward committees as well as Mohalla committees have been prescribed by the corporation act. In October 2016, the Pioneer reported the meeting of one ward committee in the city. Madhya Pradesh is one of the few states in India, which uses the Mayor-in-Council (MIC) system and hence the elected representatives of the Bhopal Municipal Corporation are also organised as MIC. There are multiple municipal departments in BMC such as Health and Environment; Education, Social Justice Food and Culture; Planning and Rehabilitation; Public Relations and Library; Fire Brigade and Transport; Power; Engineering; Revenue and Project; Accounting; JnNURM; M.P.U.S.P and General Administration. Elections held for 85 wards of Bhopal Municipal Corporation on 6 July 2022 As of September 2020, the reservation of wards has been decided. The present mayor of the city is Malti Rai. In 2019, the state government changed the rules that had applied since 1988, allowing the mayor to be indirectly elected, by elected councillors. V.S.Choudhary Kolsani is the municipal commissioner of the city. Additional municipal commissioner is Shashwant Singh Meena. The municipality receives income from tax collection, assigned revenue, rental income, fees and user charges, revenue grants, income from investment funds. The budget for the year 2020-21 has been approved as ₹2,495 crore.

Civic utilities Bhopal Development Authority is the apex body for planning and co-ordination of development activities in the Mandhya Pradesh, which consists of Bhopal and its influence area, and was set up in 1976 under the Bhopal Development Authority Act, 1974. Electricity in Bhopal is distributed by the Madhya Pradesh Madhya Kshetra Vidyut Vitaran Company Limited, the central discom of the state. It is regulated by the state electricity board, the Madhya Pradesh State Electricity Board (MPSEB), which is located in Bhopal. Fire services are provided by the Bhopal Municipal Corporation. Bhopal Municipal Corporation is responsible for planning, constructing and maintaining the water supply system within the city. Natural sources of water are surface water (upper lake, kolar reservoir, narmada river), with a significant portion of the population depending on ground water (tubewells, handpumps) as well as privately owned and unaccounted for dugwells and borewells. According to a study done in 2014, piped water supply in the city covers about 6% of the population; however, irregular and bad quality of water supply is a common complaint in the city. The system of solid waste disposal in urban areas is governed by the municipality under the Municipal Solid Wastes (Management and Handling) Rules 2000. These rules have been framed under the Environment Protection Act, 1986. The city of Bhopal generates 900 tonnes of solid waste. As of 2018, only 1.5% of this waste is segregated. While the municipality website states that door-to-door collection was started by BMC at each zone and ward level from 15 August 2013, Free Press Journal has reported in 2020 that the civic body has failed in the same. Bhopal has 8 transfer stations, where the garbage collected zone wise is dumped, and without any segregation, the waste is transferred to the Adampur Chhawani landfill site. In 2018, after the National Green Tribunal (NGT) directed the BMC to clean dump at Bhanpur, which activists claim is 80 feet high and has polluted ground water up to 500 metres below, the trenching ground was shifted to Adampur. In 2019, it was announced that India's first e-waste clinic was being set up in Bhopal. BMC along with Central Pollution Control Board came together to establish this clinic which will enable segregation, processing and disposal of waste, both residential and commercial. In January 2020, the clinic was inaugurated for operations. It started initially as a three-month pilot and if the pilot is successful, the clinics will be opened in other places as well. As of 2017, the city of Bhopal produces 310 MLD of sewage per day, of which only 50 MLD is treated in the 7 Sewage treatment plants that have a capacity of 80 MLD. Most of the sewage reaches water bodies, the Upper and Lower Lake, Motia Lake, Siddique Hasan Lake, Munshi Hussain Khan Lake. There are about 800 large drains in Bhopal. About 80% sewerage water mixes with storm water drains main drains include Patra, Mandi and Hataikheda, Jatkhedi. After a gap of 25 years, the state capital's masterplan 2031 was finally released in March 2020 by the Directorate of Town and Country Planning, Madhya Pradesh. The previous masterplan of 1995 was valid until 2005; and Bhopal had no masterplan between 2005 and 2020. Bhopal Municipal Corporation was ranked 3rd out of 21 Cities for best governance and administrative practices in India in 2014. It scored 3.7 on 10 compared to the national average of 3.3.

Culture Diwali is a major festival in Bhopal. Gifts and sweets are exchanged and donation are made to the poor. Diwali is celebrated by worshipping the wealth goddess Lakshmi. During Ganesh puja and Durga Puja (Navratras), idols of Ganesh and Durga are established in jhankis throughout the city. People throng to offer prayers to their deities. At the end of Navratras, on the day of Vijayadashami (or Dussehra), huge effigies of Ravan are burnt in different parts of the city. Apart from jhankis, annual Durga puja is conducted in a huge way where large idols of mother goddess and pandals are installed and bhog is served. Several cultural programmes and other pujas like Kalipuja, Saraswati puja etc are also conducted. These festivals are majorly celebrated by the Bengali diaspora of Bhopal, the largest association being The Bengali Association, T.T. Nagar , Bhopal. Eid is also a major festival in Bhopal. Bhopal Ijtema is an annual Muslim world preachers congregation, is held at Eint khedi, 11 km from Bhopal. The annual congregation near Bhopal attracts between 5,00,000 and 10,00,000 Muslims globally.

Architecture The Nawabs of Bhopal built several structures including the Taj-ul-Masajid and Taj Mahal palace in Indo-Islamic and European styles. Bharat Bhavan is the main cultural centre of the city, and hosts many theatre and film festivals every year. It has an art gallery, an open-air amphitheatre facing the Upper Lake, two other theatres and a tribal museum. The Bharat Bhavan as well as the MP Legislative Assembly were designed by Charles Correa.

Economy Nominal GDP of Bhopal District was ₹44,175 crores for the year 2020-21 with a per-capita GDP of ₹1,40,729 as per the Directorate of Economics and Statistics (Madhya Pradesh). Bhopal's economy is primarily industrial and includes the manufacturing of pharmaceuticals, automobiles, textiles, jewellery, and electronics. Other industries include cotton and flour milling, cloth weaving and painting, as well as making matches, sealing wax, and sporting equipment. The residents of Bhopal also engage in large retail businesses. Handicrafts, like zardozi and batua (a small string purse, usually used with Indian traditional dresses) are some of the products of the Old City. Bhopal is also home to the DB Corp, informally called the Bhaskar Group (named after its major publication Dainik Bhaskar), a ₹17 billion business conglomerate with a strong presence in media. Its head office is located in Maharana Pratap Nagar. While an IT Park, near Bhopal Airport, houses various software development companies and the city is expected to further enlarge its IT presence in near future with giants like WIPRO intending to establish software development centre in the city. Other Software and IT companies established in the city include Sutherland Global Services, ISoft InfoTech, Soluzione IT Services, Netlink Software Pvt Ltd., Caresoft Inc India, Osmo IT Solution Pvt Ltd., and many more. Manjul Publishing House, located in the old city, is a major publishing house made famous by the translation of the Harry Potter series of novels into Hindi.

Industries Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited, the largest engineering and manufacturing enterprise in India, has a unit in Bhopal. It occupies a large area in the Eastern Part of the city and maintains a suburb named after it. A majority of the residents of the BHEL Suburb are employed by the unit. Govindpura Industrial Area is a huge industrial zone situated in northern limits of the city. Mandideep is an industrial suburb of Bhopal. It is located to the south of the city on the NH 12. Manufacturing units in Mandideep include HEG Limited, Procter & Gamble, Lupin Limited, Eicher Tractors, Insulators and Electricals Limited, Tafe Motors And Tractors Limited, B. S. Engineering Works, etc. Rapidly transforming industrial zones near Bhopal also include Bagroda AKVN, Tamot Plastic Park and Acharpura Industrial Area. With the state government providing conducive environment for setting up of manufacturing units, the industrial zones have seen exponential demand from the investors to purchase the land which are provided at heavily subsidised prices. Bhopal also has in its vicinity Badiyakhedi Industrial Area (Sehore), Pilukhedi Industrial Area (Rajgarh), Budhni Industrial Area (Sehore), Jamuniya Khejda (Raisen) and Mohasa Babai Industrial Area (Narmadapuram). The industrial areas have attracted huge investments with companies like Welspun Corp. Ltd, Vardhaman Industries, Trident Group, Lapp India, and Inox Air Products Pvt. Ltd. already operating manufacturing plants in various industrial belts.

Upcoming projects Bhopal also has many other mega projects lined up in its vicinity. In March 2022, Madhya Pradesh government announced the development of Bagroda Industrial Area Phase-2 after observing the immense interest of investors to set up manufacturing units near Bhopal. The government has also decided to develop Berasia Industrial Area in Bhopal district, a site close to Jaipur-Bhopal Highway and Delhi-Gwalior-Bhopal Highway. In the sphere of IT development, a mega skill park with a total investment of more than ₹1,500 crores is being built in the eastern portion of the city. The Global Skills Park, Bhopal is a highly touted project of the Central and the state government which is being funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The Park is expected to be fully commissioned at the end of 2023. While the IT Park near Bhopal Airport is eyeing investments of software companies including TCS and Wipro. IT startups of the city are already

functioning in this area. Bhopal is set to be a crucial intermediate city under the recently announced Delhi-Nagpur industrial corridor. While a multi-modal logistics park has been proposed to take shape near Mandideep. NHAI has already prepared DPR for the upcoming ring road project between Obaidullaganj and Sehore with a cost of around ₹720 crores.

Transport Air The Raja Bhoj International Airport is located near the suburb of Bairagarh (formerly known as Sant Hirdaram Nagar) and is the primary airport serving the state of Madhya Pradesh, India. There are three routes or ways to reach the airport: (1) Via Bairagad, (2) Via Panchvati, (3) Via Gandhi Nagar road (N.H 12). From within the city, VIP Road, a four-lane road takes one to the airport, which lies 15 km to the north of the city. International flights began operations in 2010. Air India, Spice Jet and Indigo operate domestic direct flight services. As of April 2023, Bhopal has non-stop flights to New Delhi, Mumbai, Jaipur, Ahmedabad, Udaipur, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Mopa, Agra, Prayagraj and Raipur. There are no international flights from Bhopal.

Roads National Highway 46 forms a ring-road around Bhopal which connects it to Jabalpur in the East (via NH 45) and Jaipur to the North west. NH 146, a branch of NH 46, connects the city to Sagar and Kanpur in the North. State Highway 18 connects the city with Indore (with Sehore and Dewas on the way). State Highway 23 connects the city to Guna and Berasia in the north. An interstate bus terminus was inaugurated in 2011, the Kushabhau Thakre Inter State Bus Terminal is located near the Habibganj railway station. In 2025, a \$2.3 million bridge project was constructed with a sharp, nearly 90-degree angle rectangular turn, leading seven engineers involved to be suspended and the construction firms blacklisted. The unusual design was due to disputes over how to share the land the bridge was constructed on.

Rail Railways started in Bhopal in 1884 when the Bhopal-Itarsi section of New Delhi-Chennai main line was opened. Bhopal Junction railway station was opened in 1884 and is a junction station on the Delhi-Chennai line and Ujjain-Bhopal section. A total of 234 trains halt/originate/terminate at the station daily. Another station within Bhopal's urban limits is Habibganj railway station (Rani Kamalapati railway station) on the Delhi-Chennai line. It is India's first private railway station and also is promoted as first world-class railway station of India. A total of 108 trains halt/originate/terminate at the station daily. Other stations within urban limits are Sant Hirdaram Nagar railway station, Misrod railway station and Nishatpura railway station. The divisional railway manager's office of Bhopal railway division is situated adjacent to Habibganj railway station. The division falls under West Central Railway zone of Indian Railways.

Urban transport Bhopal BRTS The Bus Rapid Transit System, which opened in 2013, is run by Bhopal City Link Limited (BCLL). The company has identified 4 trunk and 8 standard routes in the city on which 225 buses would be operated daily from 05:00 to 23:00. 82 bus stops are built along the 24 km long corridor. On 26 December 2023, following a meeting at the state secretariat, the Government of Madhya Pradesh led by Chief Minister Mohan Yadav made the decision to discontinue the BRTS project. The reason cited for the decision was the traffic problems arising due to the corridor.

Metro Rail The Bhoj Metro project is under construction for the city.

Education Basic education Bhopal has more than 550 state-sponsored schools, most of which are affiliated to the Madhya Pradesh Board of Secondary Education (MPBSE). In addition, there are five Kendriya Vidyalayas in the city. The city is also served by numerous other private schools affiliated to either CBSE, ICSE, MPBSE,

NIOS and CIE (Cambridge). Notable schools include Delhi Public School, Bhopal (CBSE), The Sanskaar Valley School (ICSE & Cambridge International Examinations), Carmel Convent School (CBSE), Campion School (CBSE), and St. Joseph's Convent (CBSE).

Higher education The institutes and universities headquartered in the city include:

Research Institutes Bhopal offer a number of Research institutes. Some are under central and some under state government, including CSIR AMPRI and IISER.

Sports Teams Bhopal Badshahs is a hockey team based in Bhopal that plays in World Series Hockey. The team is captained by Indian hockey player Sameer Dad and coached by Vasudevan Bhaskaran who was the captain of India's Olympic victory in 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow. Badshahs defeated Chandigarh Comets in the inaugural match of 2012 World Series Hockey 4-3. Aishbagh Stadium in Bhopal is the home ground of Bhopal Badshahs.

Stadiums Aishbagh Stadium is a field hockey stadium in Bhopal. TT Nagar Stadium is a multi-purpose stadium in Bhopal.

Places of interest World Heritage Sites Bhimbetka Caves are about 35 kilometres from Bhopal city. They have evidence of dwellings of pre-historic man during the Paleolithic era. Rock paintings in the caves are specimens of pre-historic settlements in India. There are about 600 caves, but only 12 are open for visitors. The caves are located in the midst of sal and teak forests and includes a short trail around the caves. They were discovered by Wakankar in 1957. UNESCO declared Bhimbetka Caves as a World Heritage Site in 2003. Sanchi Stupas are located about 47 kilometres from Bhopal city. The great stupa at Sanchi is probably the most iconic stupa ever built. It was initially built by the Mauryan emperor Ashoka the Great in the 3rd century BCE. Later additions were made during the Shunga Empire and Satavahana periods. There are two more stupas on the Sanchi hill along with the remains of Buddhist viharas, a Gupta period temple, etc. The site was into use till the 15th century CE.

Nature Van Vihar National Park is a national park in central India. It is located in Bhopal, the capital city of Madhya Pradesh. Declared as a national park in 1979, it covers an area of about 4.45 sq. kms. Although it has the status of a national park, Van Vihar is developed and managed as a modern zoological park, following the guidelines of the Central Zoo Authority. The animals are kept in their near natural habitat. Most of the animals are either orphaned brought from various parts of the state or those, which are exchanged from other zoos. No animal is deliberately captured from the forest. Van Vihar is unique because it allows easy access to the visitors through a road passing through the park, security of animals assured from poachers by building trenches and walls, chain-link fence and by providing natural habitat to the animals. Bhoj Wetland is a Ramsar site, declared in 2002. It is ideal for bird watching. Migratory birds from Central Asia winter here in huge numbers. Some threatened species like Sarus crane and woolly-neck inhabit here in good numbers. About 300 species of resident and migratory birds have been recorded in the area. Ratapani Tiger Reserve is located near the southern end of the municipal limits of Bhopal. It is home to more than 50 tigers. About 15 tigers are reported to be present in the urban area of Bhopal. Some tigers migrate about 100 kilometres westward to Kheoni Wildlife Sanctuary. Bhopal is the only known example of wild tigers living within the city boundaries. Halali Dam is located about 38 kilometres in the north of Bhopal. The huge backwater is home to many birds and attract many other migratory birds in winters. It is an Important Bird Area declared by Birdlife International. Apart from lakes,

Bhopal also has many water reservoirs in and around the city. These include Bhadbhada Dam, Kerwa Dam, Kaliyasot Dam and Kolar Dam. People of Bhopal mostly visit these places during weekends. The weather is pleasant during and post monsoon. These places are surrounded by greenery throughout the year.

Tourist attractions Tourist attractions in Bhopal:

Upper Lake (Bhopal) Lower Lake (Bhopal) Van Vihar National Park and Bhoj Wetland Ramsar Site Museum of Man (Manav Sangrahalaya) Tribal Museum and State Archaeological Museum Bharat Bhavan Taj-ul-Masjid Lakshmi Narayan Temple, Bhopal Taj Mahal Palace Kamlapati Palace and Kamla Park Regional Museum of Natural History and Shahpura Lake, Bhopal Shaurya Smarak Tourist attractions near Bhopal:

Sanchi - UNESCO World Heritage Site; located 47 kilometres north-east Bhojpur - 25 kilometres south-east Bhimbetka rock shelters - 40 kilometres south-east Raisen - 35 kilometres east Bijasan Mata Temple, Salkanpur - 70 km from Bhopal Jagdishpur - 15 km from the city of lakes

Activity centres The Museum of Man in Bhopal exhibits tribal and folk houses from all corners of India.

Shopping The New Market is a commercial area in Bhopal. It is characterised by offices, new businesses and trade establishments. Notable malls include DB City Mall in MP Nagar, and Aashima Anupama Mall. Apart from New Market, people can go for shopping at Chowk Bazar and Sarafa in Old City Area of Bhopal.

Notable people Politics, civil service, science Iqbal Ahmad - former Chief Information Commissioner, Madhya Pradesh Anees Ahmed - Lawyer in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and United Nations International Criminal Tribunals Mohamed Barakatullah Bhopali - Prime Minister of the Provisional Government of India Balthazar Napoleon IV de Bourbon - Head of the House of Bourbon-Bhopal Tina Dabi, civil servant Munshi Hakimuddin - Chief Secretary at Bhopal state, known for Sadr Diwani Adalat Najma Heptulla - Former Union Minister Kailash Chandra Joshi - Former Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh Abdul Qadeer Khan - Pakistani nuclear physicist Raghuram Rajan - 23rd Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, 15th Chief Economic Adviser to the Government of India Shankar Dayal Sharma - Shankar Dayal Sharma was the ninth President of India, serving from the period of 1992 to 1997, he was elected to the Legislative Assembly of Bhopal from Berasia in the elections of 1952 and became Chief Minister of Bhopal State in 1952 Paul Shrivastava - Professor of Management & Chief Sustainability Officer, The Pennsylvania State University Amit Sood - American physician, professor and author

Literature Muskan Ahirwar - librarian Manzoor Ahtesham - writer Javed Akhtar - poet, screenwriter and lyricist Bashir Badr - poet Asad Bhopali - poet and lyricist Kaif Bhopali - poet and lyricist Manzar Bhopali - poet Mohsin Bhopali - poet and travel writer Geet Chaturvedi - poet, novelist and lyricist Abdul Qavi Desnavi - writer

Sports Fatima Bano - female wrestling coach Sameer Dad - national hockey player Bhawna Dehariya - first female of Madhya Pradesh summit Mount Everest Aslam Sher Khan - national hockey player and Member of Parliament Shahryar Khan - chairman of Pakistan Cricket Board Mansoor Ali Khan Pataudi - former captain of the India national cricket team Jalaluddin Rizvi - national hockey player and Arjuna Award winner Jai Prakash Yadav - cricketer

Film, television and art Shawar Ali - Actor Jaya Bachchan - Actress Stebin Ben - Singer Shakeela Bano Bhopali - film actress and the first women Qawwal of India Shoaib Ibrahim - TV actor Annu Kapoor - Actor, TV presenter and National Film Award winner Arshi Khan - Actress, model Sara Khan - Actress Sunil Lahri - Actor Munnawar Masoom - Qawwali singer Vipul Roy - Actor Eisha Singh - Actress Saumya Tandon - Television actress Divyanka Tripathi - Actress Rajeev Verma - Actor Akanksha Puri - Actress

Military presence The Military Station Bhopal holds:

The Garrison Headquarters of the XXI Corps. The 3rd Indian Army Corps of EME (3 EME) The Indian Air Force is also present in city but the units are unknown. The city also holds the Units of NCC of all the 3 forces:

The 12 MP Battalion (Army Wing) The 4 MP Battalion (Army Wing) The 2 MP Air Squadron (Air Wing) The 1 MP Naval Unit (Naval Wing)

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Vadodara

Vadodara (Gujarati: [વડોદરા]), also known as Baroda, is a city situated on the banks of the Vishwamitri River in the Indian state of Gujarat. It serves as the administrative headquarters of the Vadodara district. The city is named for its abundance of banyan (vad) trees. Vadodara is also locally referred to as the Sanskritik Nagari (transl. 'Cultural City') and Kala Nagari (transl. 'City of Art') of India. The city is prominent for landmarks such as the Laxmi Vilas Palace, which served as the residence of the Maratha royal Gaekwad dynasty that ruled over Baroda State. It is also the home of the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda.

Etymology The city was once called Chandanavati after Raja Chandan of the Dod Parmar Rajputs. The capital was also known as Virakshetra (Land of Warriors). Later, it was known as Vadpatraka or Vadodar, and according to tradition, is a corrupt form of the Sanskrit word vatodara, meaning "in the belly of the banyan tree". It is, as of 2009, almost impossible to ascertain when the various changes in the name were made; early English travelers and merchants of the 15th century mention the town as Baroda, and it is from this, that the name Baroda is derived; in 1974 (well after independence), the official name of the city was changed to Vadodara.

History Prehistory At Akota, now a suburb of Vadodara, excavations have found rich microlith deposits, providing early evidence of habitation in the area. These prehistoric people took part in hunting and fishing and lived no later than 1000 BCE.

First millennium CE By the first centuries CE, Akota was the site of a commercial town with far-reaching trade links. Known in antiquity as A■ko■■aka, it had well-built houses made from burnt bricks. Two re-struck coins of the early Western Satraps have been found here, along with artifacts possibly of Greco-Roman origin. A Gupta-era coin has also been found here. Akota flourished under the Maitraka dynasty, although it experienced periodic severe flooding. A huge hoard of Jain bronzes, largely dating from this period, was found at Akota's old site, indicating that the city was a centre of Jainism. The bronzes include images of various tirthankaras as well as an elephant-shaped incense burner. Many of them have inscriptions that have been used to indicate when they were made. In the 6th century, the town's inhabitants shifted away from the river to a new site near Akota's modern centre. At Kothi, which also now forms part of Vadodara, evidence of habitation also first emerges during this period. An early mention of Vadodara itself is in an 812 copper-plate grant of the Rashtrakuta dynasty. It records Karka Suvar■avasha, second ruler of the Lata branch of the Rashtrakutas, giving the village of Va■apadraka, in the province of A■ko■■aka and identified with present-day Vadodara, to a Brahmin from Valabhi. Meanwhile, Akota continued to flourish during this period.

Chaulukya period: from village to city By the 11th century, under the Chaulukya dynasty, Vadodara appears to have gained in importance. A plate dated to 1077 mentions a battle on the bank of the Vishwamitri river in the vishaya of Va■apadraka, which had evidently replaced the earlier province of A■ko■■aka. The Akota bronzes continue until the 11th century but cease thereafter. The main centre of Jainism in the area shifted to Vadodara. By this period, Vadodara is referred to as a pura, or city, rather than just a village. A manuscript of the Panchavastuka written at Vadodara in 1123 indicates that the province of L■■a was then governed by Sant■ka, a minister of the Chaulukya king Jayasimha Siddharaja. At some point, Sant■ka organised a rathayatra, or chariot procession, at Va■apadraka. Several other manuscripts from Vadodara are known from

this period, including a Prakrit work composed by Chandraprabhasuri in 1128 along with two copies of Jain works made in 1156 and 1168 respectively. Another manuscript, although copied at Dabhoi, was written by a scribe named Vosari whose father was a pandit named Kesava who came from Vadodara. During this period, merchants from Vadodara contributed to the temples at the Chaulukya capital of Patan. At some point, the minister Tejpal, returning from a victory at Godhra, stopped at Vadodara for several days and renovated the local shrine of Parshvanatha. Around 1264, shrines to Mahavira and Adishvara were built at Vadodara by one Pethad Shah.

Delhi Sultanate Under the Delhi Sultanate, Vadodara was home to a group of Afghan amirs known collectively as the Amir-i Sadgan, or "the nobles of the hundred", because each one commanded a force of 100 cavalry. In 1344, during the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq, they revolted. Led by one Qazi Jalal, they defeated Muqbil, the sultan's main deputy in Gujarat, in a decisive battle near Dabhoi. They went on to occupy a large territory stretching from Kadi in the north to Bharuch in the south, and from Khambhat in the west to the hill country in the east. In 1345, Muhammad bin Tughluq led an army to Gujarat to put down the rebellion and, after initially camping at Pandu Mewas, defeated them in battle at Bharuch.

Gujarat Sultanate Muzaffar Shah I, founder of the Gujarat Sultanate, appointed his son Firuz Khan as governor of Vadodara at some point. After Muzaffar Shah's death in 1411, he was succeeded by his grandson Ahmad Shah I (Firuz's nephew). Firuz immediately laid claim to the throne. Because the sultanate's central authority in central and southern Gujarat was weak at this point, Firuz had little trouble assembling an army at Vadodara. He then marched to Nadiad and then to Bharuch, which he seized by force. Ultimately, the rebellion dissipated without a pitched battle: internal tensions had already arisen among Firuz Khan's main allies, and when Ahmad Shah offered them amnesty in return for standing down, they readily complied. Firuz Khan was forgiven and given Navsari as a jagir, thus giving up his position as governor of Vadodara. In 1451, Vadodara was sacked by troops under Mahmud Khalji, ruler of the Malwa Sultanate. Later, during the reign of Mahmud Begada, a major re-foundation of Vadodara took place. A new city called Daulatabad was built, close to the old site. The Muslim name evidently did not stick, but the city itself did, and this new foundation became the basis for the modern city of Vadodara. A later atlas by John Ogilby refers to people moving from the old town to the new one.

Mughal Empire After Akbar conquered Gujarat in 1573, he gave Vadodara to one Nawab Aurang Khan. There was an administrative reform under Akbar's reign, and Raja Todar Mal conducted a land survey of parts of Gujarat. Vadodara, however, does not seem to have been included in this survey. In the late 1600s, Gujarat was increasingly attacked by Maratha and Koli raids. One raid, by the Kolis, hit Vadodara in 1705; they looted the city for two days.

Baroda State Geography Vadodara is located at 22.30N 73.19E■ / 22.30; 73.19 in western India at an elevation of 128 ft (39 m). It is the 10th-largest city in India with an area of 400 km² (150 sq mi) and a population of 3.5 million, according to the 2010-11 census. The city sits on the banks of the Vishwamitri River, in central Gujarat. The Vishwamitri frequently dries up in the summer, leaving only a small stream of water. The city is located on the fertile plain between the Mahi and Narmada Rivers. According to the Bureau of Indian Standards, the cosmopolis falls under seismic zone-III, on a scale of I to V (in order of increasing proneness to earthquakes).

Climate Vadodara features a borderline tropical savanna climate (Kppen Aw) that despite the roughly 950 mm or 37 in of rain that the city receives annually is due to the area's high potential evapotranspiration very close to

being classified as a hot semi-arid climate (BSh). There are three main seasons: summer, monsoon and winter. Aside from the monsoon season, the climate is dry. The weather is hot during March to July, when the average maximum is 39 C or 102.2 F, and the average minimum is 24 C or 75.2 F. From November to February, the average maximum temperature is 30 C or 86 F, the average minimum is 15 C or 59 F, and the climate is extremely dry. Cold northerly winds are responsible for mildly chilly days in January. The southwest monsoon brings a humid climate from mid-June to mid-September. The average rainfall is 95 cm (37 in), but infrequent, torrential rains cause the river to flood like the 2005 Gujarat flood or the 2008 Indian floods, which were catastrophic. The highest recorded temperature was 46.7 C (116.1 F) on 11 May 1960 crossed with 48.0 C (118.4 F) on 19 May 2016, while the lowest recorded temperature was -1.1 C (30.0 F) on 15 January 1935.

Vadodara has been ranked 6th best "National Clean Air City" (under Category 1 >10L Population cities) in India.

Demographics At the time of the 2011 census of India, Vadodara Municipal Corporation and associated outgrowths had a population of 1,670,806. About 9.45% of the population was under 6 years of age. Vadodara had a sex ratio of 920 females per 1000 males and a literacy rate of 90.48%. Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes made up 6.63% and 4.07% of the population, respectively.

Hinduism was the main religion, practiced by 85.39% of the population. Islam was the second-largest religion (11.20%). Jains were 2.02%, Christians 0.82%, and Sikhs 0.45%.

At the time of the 2011 census, 71.37% of the population spoke Gujarati, 14.83% Hindi, 7.60% Marathi and 1.91% Sindhi as their first language.

Economy In Vadodara, various large-scale industries such as Gujarat Refinery of Indian Oil Corporation, Gujarat State Fertilizers & Chemicals, Vadodara Manufacturing Division (formerly IPCL) of Reliance Industries Limited, Deepak Nitrite, Parikh Industries, Linde Engineering India, and Gujarat Alkalies and Chemicals Limited have come up in the vicinity of Gujarat Refinery. Other large-scale public-sector units are Heavy Water Project, Gujarat Industries Power Company Limited (GIPCL), Oil and Natural Gas Corporation and Gas Authority of India Limited. Vadodara is also a manufacturing hub of power equipment, rail coaches, and defense aircraft, and several IT sector companies in Vadodara are rapidly growing. Vadodara is also a hub of pharmaceutical industries; many pharmaceutical companies are located within and nearby. Vadodara is home to many big pharmaceutical companies, and is a major hub of pharmaceutical industries in Gujarat. Located in Vadodara are over 35% of India's power-transmission and distribution equipment manufacturers and an estimated 800 ancillaries supporting the big players in power sector equipment manufacturing and engineering industry. Larsen & Tourbo (L&T) has established "Knowledge City" in Vadodara. This Knowledge City is the hub of several key businesses of the L&T Group. The power business, mid- and downstream Hydrocarbon, L&T Technology Services, and the engineering joint venture L&T-Sargent & Lundy operate out of the facility. It also houses manufacturing facilities for switchgear, air circuit breakers, and moulded-case circuit breakers. Bombardier Transportation, a Canadian company, has established a rail-coach manufacturing plant in Savli along with other manufacturing companies such as Alstom, Siemens, and Voltas. This plant manufactures coaches for Delhi Metro and the New Generation Rollingstock for Brisbane, Australia. The plant is also manufacturing trainsets for Delhi - Meerut RRTS. Beside this Vadodara holds a key position in Gujarat's pharmaceutical industry, as many small and big pharma companies are located in Vadodara. Tata Advanced Systems Limited, a subsidiary of Tata Group and Airbus joint venture, has set up a C-295 transport aircraft

manufacturing facility at Vadodara as part of a Rs 22,000 crore deal to supply 56 such aircraft. The C-295 will replace the Avro aircraft in service with the Indian Air Force. This project will make Vadodara a defense manufacturing hub. The first "Made in India" aircraft is expected in September 2026. The revenue for the city is generated through taxes, service provision, and state government assistance. The taxes include general taxes, conservancy taxes, and water taxes, whereas the nontax or service revenue can include water charges, rent from municipal properties, public service charges, etc. The VMC budget for the year 2020-2021 against the proposed budget of Rs 3,554 crore last year, stood at Rs 3,770 crore this year.

Petrochemicals Since the discovery of oil and natural gas in the area, Vadodara has become the site of various petrochemical industries. These are concentrated in the peri-urban areas to the northwest and south of the city proper. In 1963, construction began on Gujarat Refinery outside of Vadodara, on a 1800-acre tract surrounded by the villages of Koyali, Ranoli, Karachia, and Dhanora. Jawaharlal Nehru ceremonially laid the foundation. The refinery's first trial production was in October 1965. As of 1973 it was producing 4.3 million tonnes of various products per year and it employed some 1,450 people. It was the third public-sector refinery to be built in India. Among the refinery's products as of 1979 were gasoline, diesel fuel, kerosene, jet fuel, and various industrial materials such as benzene, toluene, and naphtha. Crude was piped in from Ankleshwar and from northern Gujarat (around Kalol and Vadagam), and condensate was also supplied from the Khambhat gas fields. In early 1978, two new petrochemical plants began operation in Vadodara: a naphtha cracking plant in March and a low-density polyethylene plant with an 80,000-tonne capacity in April. Both were operated by Indian Petrochemicals Corporation Limited (now part of Reliance Industries) and both were also the first plant of their kind in Gujarat. In March 1979, IPCL also formally commissioned a major petrochemical complex at Vadodara that included an aromatics plant (producing dimethyl terephthalate and two types of xylene), an oil refinery, and seven other downstream facilities. The 7 downstream facilities were: 1. acrylonitrile, 2. synthetic rubber, 3. low-density polyethylene, 4. polypropylene, 5. ethylene glycol, 6. detergent alkylate, and 7. acrylic fibre. There were also plans in the works for a polyester yarn plant as part of the complex with a capacity of 3,500 to 7,000 tonnes per year.

Government and politics The Vadodara city's municipal corporation or Maha Nagar Palika is a part of the Vadodara district. The district is set up in three distinct levels of administration, which are the collectorate - the district falls under the jurisdiction of a collector; the prant offices which take care of the affairs of taluka and other state government offices and the mamlatdar or taluka offices. The overall district administration has four departments: city survey, district supply office, district planning office, and district election office. The City elects one member to the Lok Sabha (parliament) and five to the Gujarat Vidhan Sabha (Assembly). All of the five assembly seats of Vadodara were won by the BJP during the legislative elections in 2017. In the 2021 VMSS/VMC elections, the BJP won 69 seats, seven seats went to the Congress.

Election wards: 19 Seats (Corporators): 76 Population per ward: 87,826 Seats reserved for women: 38 Total voters (as on 1 January 2019): 1,638,300

Civic administration According to the 2011 census, the total Urban Agglomeration (UA) population of Vadodara is 35,17,191. This is governed by the Vadodara Municipal Corporation which was founded in 1951. It was initially called the Baroda Municipal Corporation but later changed to Vadodara Municipal Corporation after the city's name was changed in the year 1974. The Bombay Municipal Corporation Act of 1951 was setup as the main legislation for the administration and governance of the Vadodara Municipal Corporation. The city limits of Vadodara have expanded since: an area of 148 km² (57 sq mi) was added in the year 2002, followed by 15 to 20 km² (5.8 to 7.7 sq mi) of additional expansion to the north of the city in 2006. The villages Sayajipura,

Bapod, Kapurai, Khatamba, Tarsal Kalali, Gorva, Chhani and Vemali were added to the VMC boundaries in 2017 and the latest expansion notice has been given to the seven villages of Sevasi, Bhayli, Vemali, Bil, Karodiya, Undera and Vadadala in the year 2020.

City governance The Bombay Provincial Municipal Corporations Act, 1949 governs the Vadodara Municipal Corporation. The Gujarat Provincial Municipal Corporations Act of 1949 which is derived from the Bombay Act No. LIX of 1949 is another legislation which most municipal corporation, including Vadodara in Gujarat function under. The highest body of power in the municipal corporation is the General Board, which is composed of elected members from each ward within the VMC. There are 19 wards under the VMC, each of which consists 4 seats of councilor which has a 50% reservation of seats for women. There are a total of 76 councilors elected for this VMC term where every councilor is appointed in various committees for a period of one year. The VMC has twelve executive committees apart from the standing committee, which look after the specialized functions of VMC. These committees include public works committee, water work committee, drainage and sewerage committee, health committee, town planning committee, estate management committee, recreation and culture committee, electric committee, and legal committee. Each committee consists of 12 councilors each. The formulation of an additional ward committee is recommended by the Gujarat Provincial Municipal Corporation Act of 1949 for a city exceeding the population of three lakhs- which is above the current population of Vadodara.

Politics Three corporators are elected from each ward, who in turn elect a mayor. Executive powers are vested in the municipal commissioner, who is an IAS officer appointed by the Gujarat state government. The mayor is responsible for the day-to-day running of the city services, municipal school board, the city bus service, the municipal hospital and the city library. The last municipal corporation election for Vadodara took place in the year 2015 where Bhartiya Janta Party won in the majority with 57 out of the total 76 seats, followed by the Indian National Congress (INC) with 14 seats. There are six sitting MLAs who have VMC under their jurisdiction and are currently part of the state ministry. Rajendrabhai Trivedi is the BJP MLA and incumbent 14th Speaker of Gujarat Legislative Assembly, who was unanimously elected on 9 February 2018. Jitendra Sukhadia is the Minister of Tourism, Non-resident Gujarati division as well as the Food, Civil Supplies, and Consumer Affairs. Saurabhbhai Patel is the incumbent Energy Minister of Gujarat while Yogeshbhai Patel heads the Ministry of State for Narmada Development. The MLA Madhubhai Shrivastav is the state appointed Gujarat Agro Industries Corporation (GAIC) chief and Manisha Vakil is BJP's Vadodara City Assembly Constituency MLA.

Law and order The Vadodara City Police are responsible for law enforcement and public safety in Vadodara, Gujarat. The Vadodara City Police is headed by a Police Commissioner, an IPS officer. They are a subdivision of the state police force of Gujarat and are headed by a commissioner. The Vadodara police force is responsible for the protection and safety of Vadodara citizens. Shri Narsimha N. Komar (IPS), is the current Police commissioner of the Vadodara.

Culture Museums Vadodara is home to notable museums like:

Sayaji Baug, Baroda Museum and Picture Gallery Maharaja Fatehsinh Museum Museum Of Archeology And Ancient History Health Museum, Sayaji Baug

Civic services Three civic service departments are under the municipal corporation - the engineering department, the health department, and the support or administration department. These departments together provide services, infrastructure, and management for the entire city. The engineering department manages infrastructure and services provided through cells or subdepartments such as bridge cell, drainage project, town development, streetlight, electrical sewerage, mechanical sewerage, building project, solid-waste management, road, storm-water drainage, water work, land, and estate. The health department takes care of public health-related issues and services through its solid-waste management, health, and ICDS subdepartments. The health department also has a subdepartment for managing birth, death, and marriage registrations. The support department handles all IT and administration-related issues and services, with cells such as IT, accounts audit, census, PRO, election, real estate (acquisition), shops and establishment, assessment, and UCD-NULM departments.

Urban planning The two main institutions involved in planning and development in Vadodara are VMSS and the Vadodara Urban Development Authority (VUDA). The responsibilities of both these agencies are demarcated clearly not only physically but also functionally. The governing acts for both institutions differ. The principal responsibility of VUDA is to ensure a holistic development of the Vadodara agglomeration covering an area of 714.56 km² (275.89 sq mi), whereas VMSS is involved in the development of area of 235 km² (91 sq mi). Vadodara's population grew the fastest during the decade between 1961 and 1971. The Vadodara Municipal Corporation drew up the first official urban plan for the city's growth in 1970, the Vadodara Development Plan. The VUDA was formed in 1980. The second Development Plan, developed in 1984, included decentralising the city's infrastructure. During the mid-late 70s early 80s, development on the city's outskirts focused on building cheap, low-income housing for industrial workers. By the 1990s, the focus had shifted to mixed-density, "self-sustainable settlements" in peri-urban areas, especially on the west and southwest sides of town. Farmland was purchased from nearby villages to provide space for these new developments, which caused a large drop in cultivated acreage and overall agricultural produce in the area. Initially, major industrial development happened on the city's north side; the east side also saw plenty of development because of its location near the old city core. The south and west were relatively less populated in comparison. Various unplanned slum areas have been formed by rapid immigration from rural areas that outpaced formal city planning. These slum areas consist largely of temporary (kachcha) structures with communal toilets or none at all. They are often found in less-desired areas along river banks and nallahs or in other low-lying spots. Sanitation in these developments is generally poor. A low of relatively lower-income, blue-collar workers live in industrial housing developments on Vadodara's outskirts. Economically Weaker Section (EWS) housing and slums are located especially on the northwest, northeast, and east sides of the city. In recent decades (as of 2021), major industrial development has taken place along the NH-8 corridor. Religious institutions like temples and ashrams have especially developed on the east side of town, while the Transport Nagar development is located on the northeast.

Solid waste management The municipal corporation under its health department provides the solid waste management for the Vadodara city. All zonal asst. municipal commissioners, zonal health officers, ward officers, sanitary inspectors are part of the solid waste management committee who need to be present during the weekly SWM coordination meetings. The department takes care of the sweeping, cleaning and maintenance along with complaint redressal. All zonal chief, assistant municipal commissioners, zonal health officers and other sanitary staff are expected to work on field between 7am to 11am on weekdays. The solid waste management also has a litter prevention system which carries out litter patrol and charges fines as administrative fees from the defaulters.

Water supply An average of 53.2 million gallon (240 million litres) of water per day, or 38 gallon (190 litres) per person per day is provided the city daily to meets its daily water requirement. The water supply is provided by the water works department of the municipal corporation along with other agencies like the Sardar Sarovar Narmada limited who directly supply water to VMC which is looked after the Gujarat Pollution Control Board, the Gujarat Water Supply and Sewerage Board, and the Water and Sanitation Management Organization. The city receives its drinking water supply from 16 high rise water tanks and one busting station located within the city. The Sardar Sarovar Dam which is one of the drinking water sources for the city, had halted supply temporarily in 2019 after receiving complains about the high sulphur content from the Narmada river, but the water supply was restarted again after a few days. The other sources of water are the Mahi River for which the water is obtained from a French well that has naturally purified water through layers of sand. The Ajwa Sarovar is another source of drinking water and is filtered at Nimeta Water Purification Plant. In January 2019, VUDA and GWSSB joined hands to reduce the acute shortage of drinking water for residential societies near close to the Vadodara city. A quantity of 3 MLD water per day for three years will be provided as a temporary measure until water from the Timbi pond and Narmada canal reaches these residences.

Drainage and sewage The drainage is provided under the Engineering department's drainage projects or the Public Health Engineering Laboratory (PHEL). The department provides planning, designing, estimating, tendering, executing and operating and maintaining the sewerage systems like the sewerage network, sewage pumping stations, sewage pumping mains, sewage treatment and effluent disposal works. The sewage as of 2001 covered 55% area and 65% of the present population when the VMC limits extended to 108.00 km² (41.70 sq mi). The Public Health Engineering Laboratory (PHEL) has been working on a comprehensive sewerage system Master Plan for 1,425 km² (550 sq mi) of sewers and nine sewage treatment works. The plan master plan is designed for the year 2021 where the project aims to increase the sewage coverage from 55% to 95% by area and 65% to 93% by population for an area of 159.31 km² (61.51 sq mi).

Electricity Madhya Gujarat Vij Company Limited (MGVCL) is the main electricity provision company for the Gujarat state and Vadodara. Hydroelectricity is additionally being generated by water from Sardar Sarovar Dam with six units of river bed power houses of 200 megawatt each.

Fire and emergency Fire and rescue operations are provided by the VMC under its fire department which is provided according to the Section 285 to 289 of the BPMC Act. VMC has fixed rates for rescue operations & fire extinguishing within the VMC limits and outside it. The VMC's fire department also provide additional services like water tanker provision for domestic, religious or marriage purposes, providing ambulance, dead body carrier.

Transport The city is on the major rail and road arteries joining Mumbai with Delhi and Mumbai with Ahmedabad.

Air Vadodara Airport (IATA: BDQ) is located north-east of the city. Vadodara has flight connections with Mumbai, New Delhi, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Pune and Goa. Air India and IndiGo are currently operating their services from the airport. A new integrated international terminal has been constructed at the Vadodara airport and was inaugurated in October 2016. Vadodara is the first Green Airport in Gujarat and Second Green Airport in India after Kochi.

Railway Vadodara was part of the historic Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway (BBCI), which arrived in the city in January 1861. On 5 November 1951 the BBCI Railway was merged with the Saurashtra, Rajputana and Jaipur railways to create the Western Railway. Vadodara Railway Station now belongs to the Western Railway zone of Indian Railways and is a major junction on the Western Railway Main Line. The under-construction Mumbai-Ahmedabad high-speed rail corridor, India's first High-speed rail line will have a stop at the existing Vadodara Junction railway station. The station is planned for renovation to accommodate the new line.

Bus Vadodara bus station is also beautifully designed as a symbol of Banyan (Vad) trees and located near by Railway Station. It also has a market, food court and multiplex facilities.

Road Vadodara has taxi services that is operational mostly around Vadodara Railway station and the Vadodara Airport, apart from this Vadodara has private cab services like Ola, Uber, etc. Vadodara also has self drive car rental services operated by private companies like Just Drive Self Drive Cars.

Sports Vadodara has a professional cricket team, the Baroda cricket team, as well as a cricket stadium called Moti Baug. The team has won the Ranji Trophy six times. Reliance Stadium, a private cricket ground owned by Reliance Industries, hosts ODIs. Some of the notable cricketer's from Baroda are Vijay Hazare, Anshuman Gaekwad, Kiran More, Nayan Mongia, Atul Bedade, Irfan Pathan, Yusuf Pathan, Hardik Pandya, Krunal Pandya, Deepak Hooda. The Baroda Cricket Association Stadium (BCA Stadium), also known as the Vadodara International Cricket Stadium or Kotambi Stadium, opened on 22 December 2024 through organized three one day international series between India and West Indies women's teams in Vadodara, Gujarat. This stadium is the home ground for Baroda Cricket Association in the domestic circle. Vadodara would also have a sports university in Desar.

Media The city has five local FM stations: Radio City (91.1 MHz), Radio Mirchi (98.3 MHz), Red FM (93.5 MHz), Big FM (92.7 MHz), and All India Radio, Vividh Bharti (93.9 MHz)(Aakashwani). Radio City (91.1 MHz) is known all over Vadodara for its Rag Rag Ma Vadodara City profile. All India Radio is broadcast on the AM band. Satellite radio was launched in nearby city of Ahmedabad by WorldSpace in 2005. Vadodara News Magazine(VNM) is a local news TV channel that covers events in the city. Sandesh News is a local news TV channel.

Education The city houses many Schools and Colleges, including Baroda High School. Higher Education Institutions across various disciplines attract international students mainly from the African countries such as Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, South Africa, and Kenya. In 1909 there were plans to open a school for the deaf.

Universities The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda Parul University Navrachana University Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya (formerly National Rail and Transportation Institute) Sumandeep Vidyapeeth ITM Vocational University

References Further reading

== External links ==

Coimbatore

Coimbatore (Tamil: கோயம்புத்தூர், IPA: [koɻjɻmbut̪t̪uɻ]), also known as Kovai (IPA: [koɻaj]), is a metropolitan city in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu. It is located on the banks of the Noyyal River and surrounded by the Western Ghats. It is the second largest city in Tamil Nadu after Chennai in terms of population and the 16th largest urban agglomeration in India as per the census 2011. It is the administrative capital of Coimbatore District and is administered by the Coimbatore Municipal Corporation which was established in 1981. The region around Coimbatore was ruled by the Cheras during the Sangam period between the 1st and the 4th centuries CE and it served as the eastern entrance to the Palakkad Gap, the principal trade route between the west coast and Tamil Nadu. Coimbatore was located along the ancient trade route Rajakesari Peruvazhi that extended from Muziris to Arikamedu in South India. The medieval Cholas conquered the Kongu Nadu in the 10th century CE. The region was ruled by Vijayanagara Empire in the 15th century followed by the Nayaks who introduced the Palayakkarar system under which Kongu Nadu region was divided into 24 Palayams. In the later part of the 18th century, the Coimbatore region came under the Kingdom of Mysore and following the defeat of Tipu Sultan in the Anglo-Mysore Wars, the British East India Company annexed Coimbatore to the Madras Presidency in 1799. The Coimbatore region played a prominent role in the Second Poligar War (1801) when it was the area of operations of Dheeran Chinnamalai. In 1804, Coimbatore was established as the capital of the newly formed Coimbatore district and in 1866, it was accorded municipality status with Robert Stanes as its chairman. The city experienced a textile boom in the early 19th century due to the decline of the cotton industry in Mumbai. Post Independence, Coimbatore has seen rapid growth due to industrialisation and is one of the largest exporters of jewellery, wet grinders, poultry and auto components. The Coimbatore Wet Grinder and the Kovai Cora Cotton are recognised as Geographical Indications by the Government of India. Being a hub of textile industry in South India, the city is referred to as the "Manchester of South India". Coimbatore was ranked the best emerging city in India by India Today in the 2014 annual survey, fourth among Indian cities in investment climate by Confederation of Indian Industry and 17th among the top global outsourcing cities by Tholons. Coimbatore has been selected as one of the Indian cities to be developed as a smart city under the Smart Cities Mission and AMRUT by Government of India. Coimbatore regularly features among the top ten best cities to live in India and is amongst the top three safest cities in India according to National Crime Records Bureau report in 2023.

Etymology According to one theory, "Coimbatore" is a derivation of Kōvanputtūr (lit. 'new town of Kovan'), after chieftain Kovan or Koyan, evolved into Kōyamputtūr and later anglicised as Coimbatore. Another theory states that the name could have been derived from Kovaïamma. The word evolved from Koyamma, the goddess worshipped by Koyan which became Koniamma and later Kovaïamma.

History The region around Coimbatore was ruled by the Cheras during Sangam period between c. 1st and the 4th centuries CE and it served as the eastern entrance to the Palakkad Gap, the principal trade route between the west coast and Tamil Nadu. The Kosar tribe mentioned in the 2nd century CE Tamil epic Silappathikaram and other poems in Sangam literature is associated with the Coimbatore region. The region was located along an ancient Roman trade route that extended from Muziris to Arikamedu. The medieval Cholas conquered the Kongu Nadu in the 10th century. A Chola highway called Rajakesari Peruvazhi ran through the region. Much of Tamil Nadu came under the rule of the Vijayanagara Empire by the 15th century. In the 1550s, Madurai Nayaks, who were the military governors of the Vijaynagara Empire, took control of the region. After the Vijayanagara Empire fell in the 17th century, the Madurai Nayaks established their state as an independent

kingdom. They introduced the Palayakkarar system under which Kongu Nadu region was divided into 24 Palayams(towns).

In the latter part of the 18th century, the region came under the Kingdom of Mysore, following a series of wars with the Madurai Nayak dynasty. After the defeat of Tipu Sultan in the Anglo-Mysore Wars, the British East India Company annexed Coimbatore to the Madras Presidency in 1799. The Coimbatore region played a prominent role in the Second Poligar War (1801), when it was the area of operations of Dheeran Chinnamalai. On 24 November 1804, Coimbatore was established as the capital of the newly formed Coimbatore district and in 1866 it was accorded municipality status. Sir Robert Stanes became the first chairman of the Coimbatore City Council. The region was hard hit during the Great Famine of 1876-78 resulting in nearly 200,000 famine related fatalities. The first three decades of the 20th century saw nearly 20,000 plague-related deaths and acute water shortage. The decline of the cotton industry in Mumbai fuelled an economic boom in Coimbatore in the 1920s and 1930s. The region played a significant role in the Indian independence movement with Mahatma Gandhi visiting the city three times. Coimbatore was the base of operations for such political figures as S. P. Narasimhalu Naidu, R. K. Shanmukham Chetty, C. S. Ratnasabhapathy Mudaliar and C. Subramaniam during the independence movement. Post independence, Coimbatore has seen rapid growth due to industrialisation and in 1981 it was constituted as a municipal corporation. On 14 February 1998, the radical Islamist group Al Ummah bombed 11 places across the city killing 58 people and injuring more than 200.

Geography Coimbatore lies at 111°6'N 76°58'21"E in south India at 427 m (1,401 ft) above sea level on the banks of the Noyyal River, in northwestern Tamil Nadu. It covers an area of 642.12 km² (247.92 sq mi). It is surrounded by the Western Ghats mountain range to the west and the north, with reserve forests of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve on the northern side. The Noyyal River forms the southern boundary of the city, which has an extensive tank system fed by the river and rainwater. The eight major tanks and wetland areas of Coimbatore are namely, Singanallur, Valankulam, Ukkadam Periyakulam, Selvampathy, Narasampathi, Krishnampathi, Selvachinthamani, and Kumaraswami. Multiple streams drain the waste water from the city.

The city is divided into two distinctive geographic regions: the dry eastern side which includes majority of the urban area of the city and the western region which borders the Nilgiris, Anaimalai and Munnar ranges. Palghat Gap, a mountain pass which connects the neighbouring state of Kerala to Tamil Nadu, lies to the west of the city. Because of its location in the biodiversity hotspot of the Western Ghats, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the city is rich in fauna and flora. The Coimbatore urban wetlands harbours around 116 species of birds, of which 66 are resident, 17 are migratory and 33 are local migrants. The spot-billed pelican, painted stork, openbill stork, ibis, Indian spot-billed duck, teal and black-winged stilt visit the Coimbatore wetlands on their migration. Apart from the species common to the plains, various threatened and endangered species such as Indian elephants, wild boars, leopards, Bengal tigers, gaurs, Nilgiri tahr, sloth bear and black-headed oriole are found in the region. The northern part of the city has a rich tropical evergreen forest with commercially significant trees such as teak, sandalwood, rosewood and bamboo. The soil is predominantly black, which is suitable for cotton cultivation, but some red loamy soil is also found. According to the Bureau of Indian Standards, Coimbatore falls under the Class III/IV Seismic Zone, having experienced an earthquake of magnitude 6.0 on the Richter scale on 8 February 1900.

Climate Under the Kppen climate classification, the city has a hot semi-arid climate (BSh), with a wet season lasting from September to November due to the northeast monsoon. The mean maximum temperature ranges from 35.9 C (96.6 F) to 29.2 C (84.6 F) and the mean minimum temperature ranges from 24.5 C (76.1 F) to 9.8 C (49.6 F). The highest temperature ever recorded is 42.6 C (108.7 F) on 22 April 1976 while the lowest is 12.2

C (54.0 F) on 12 January 1957. Coimbatore has a tropical wet and dry climate. It experiences hot and humid summers from March to June with temperatures ranging from 25 C to 38 C. The monsoon season starts from July and lasts till October. The city receives moderate rainfall from the south-west monsoon and occasional heavy rainfall from the north-east monsoon. The winter season starts from November and ends in February. The temperatures during this season range from 20 C to 30 C. Due to the south-west monsoon winds passing through the Palghat gap, elevated regions of the city receive rainfall in the months from June to August. After a warm and foggy September, the north-east monsoon starts from October, lasting until early November. The average annual rainfall is around 600 mm (23.6 in) with the northeast and the southwest monsoons contributing to 47% and 28% respectively to the total rainfall. This periodic rainfall does not satisfy the city's water requirements throughout the year and water supply schemes drawn from Siruvani and Pilloor help supplant the requirements during low rainfall months.

Demographics Coimbatore has a population of 1,601,438. As per the 2011 census based on pre-expansion city limits, Coimbatore had a population of 1,050,721 with a sex ratio of 997 females for every 1,000 males, much above the national average of 929. It is the second largest city in the state after capital Chennai and the sixteenth largest urban agglomeration in India. A total of 102,069 were under the age of six, comprising 52,275 males and 49,794 females. The average literacy of the city was 82.43%, compared to the national average of 72.99%. There were a total of 425,115 workers, comprising 1,539 cultivators, 2,908 main agricultural labourer, 11,789 in house hold industries, 385,802 other workers, 23,077 marginal workers, 531 marginal cultivators, 500 marginal agricultural labourer, 1,169 marginal workers in household industries and 20,877 other marginal workers. As per the 2001 census, Coimbatore had a population of 930,882 within the municipal corporation limits. The population of the urban agglomeration as per 2011 census is 2,136,916 with males constituting 50.08% of the population and females 49.92%. Coimbatore has an average literacy rate of 89.23%, higher than the national average of 74.04%. Male literacy is 93.17% and female literacy is 85.3% with 8.9% of the population under six years of age. The sex ratio was 964 females per 1000 males. In 2005, the crime rate in the city was 265.9 per 100,000 people, accounting for 1.2% of all crimes reported in major cities in India. It ranked 21st among 35 major cities in India in the incidence of crimes. In 2011, the population density in the city was 10,052 per km² (26,035 per mi²). Around 8% of the city's population lives in slums.

Administration and politics Coimbatore is a municipal corporation administered by the Coimbatore Municipal Corporation and is the administrative headquarters of Coimbatore district. Coimbatore was established as the capital of Coimbatore district in 1804 and in 1866, it was accorded municipality status. In 1981, Coimbatore was elevated as a municipal corporation. The city is divided into five administrative zones - East, West, North, South and Central, each further subdivided into 20 wards. Each ward is represented by a councillor who is elected by direct election and the Mayor of Coimbatore is elected by Councillors. The executive wing of the corporation is headed by a Corporation Commissioner and maintains basic services like water supply, sewage and roads. The district itself is administered by the district collector and the district court in Coimbatore is the highest court of appeal in the district. The Coimbatore City Police is headed by a Commissioner of Police and there are 18 police stations in the city. Coimbatore was ranked amongst the top three safest cities in India according to National Crime Records Bureau report in 2023. A large part of the Coimbatore urban agglomeration falls outside the municipal corporation limits. These suburbs are governed by local bodies called Village Panchayats and Town Panchayats. Besides the Coimbatore Municipal Corporation, the Coimbatore urban agglomeration comprises the Town Panchayats of Vellalur, Irugur, Pallapalayam, Kannampalayam, Veerapandi, Periyanaickenpalayam, Narasimhanaickenpalayam, Idikarai, Vedapatti, Perur, Madukkarai, Ettimadai, Thondamuthur, Uliyampalayam, Thirumalayampalayam, Othakalmandapam, Alanthurai, Pooluvapatti, Thenkarai, Karumathampatti, Sarcarsamakulam, Mopperipalayam and Gudalur, census towns of Ashokapuram, Kurudampalayam, Malumichampatti, Selvapuram, Chettipalayam, Sulus, Chinnampalayam,

Somayampalayam, Muthugoundan Pudur, Arasur, Kaniyur, Neelambur and municipalities of Kuniyamuthur, Kurichi and Goundampalayam. These local bodies are in turn split into wards each electing a councillor through direct election. The head of these local bodies are elected by the respective councillors from amongst them. Coimbatore has traditionally been a stronghold of the Dravidian parties with national parties such as the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) as well as the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI(M)) also having a significant presence. The city elects ten members to the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly and one member to the Indian Parliament. The six legislative assembly constituencies in the city are Coimbatore North, Coimbatore South, Kaundampalayam, Singanallur, Thondamuthur and Kinathukadavu which form a part of the Coimbatore Parliamentary Constituency. Part of the urban agglomeration comes under the Nilgiris and Pollachi constituencies. In the Indian general election held in 2019, CPI (M) candidate P.R. Natarajan defeated C. P. Radhakrishnan of the BJP in the Lok Sabha constituency. In the last legislative assembly election held in 2021, the AIADMK led front won in all the assembly constituencies in the city.

Economy A major hub for manufacturing, education and healthcare in Tamil Nadu, Coimbatore is among the fastest growing tier-II cities in India. As of 2020, the GDP was estimated to be US\$13.06 (equivalent to \$15.87 in 2024) billion. It houses more than 25,000 small, medium and large industries with the primary industries being engineering and textiles. Coimbatore is called the "Manchester of South India" due to its extensive textile industry, fed by the surrounding cotton fields. TIDEL Park Coimbatore in ELCOT SEZ was the first special economic zone (SEZ) set up in 2006. In 2010, Coimbatore ranked 15th in the list of most competitive (by business environment) Indian cities. Coimbatore also has a 160,000 square feet (15,000 m²) trade fair ground, built in 1999 and is owned by CODISSIA.

Coimbatore region experienced a textile boom in the 1920s and 1930s. Though, Robert Stanes had established Coimbatore's first textile mills as early as the late 19th century, it was during this period that Coimbatore emerged as a prominent industrial centre. In 2009 Coimbatore was home to around 15% of the cotton spinning capacity in India. Coimbatore has trade associations such as CODISSIA, COINDIA and COJEWEL representing the industries in the city. Coimbatore houses a number of textile mills and is the base of textile research institutes like the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International School of Textiles & Management, Central Institute for Cotton Research (CICR) and the South India Textile Research Institute (SITRA). Kovai Cora Cotton saree is a recognised Geographical Indication. The Southern India Mills' Association (SIMA) founded in 1933 caters to the interests of the various textile mills and their employees.

Coimbatore is the second largest producer of software in the state after Chennai. TIDEL Park Coimbatore and other Information technology parks in the city has aided in the growth of IT and Business process outsourcing industries in the city. It is ranked at 17th among the top global outsourcing cities by Tholons. Software exports stood at ₹7.1 billion (US\$84 million) for the financial year 2009-10 up 90% from the previous year. Coimbatore has a large and diversified manufacturing sector and a number of engineering colleges producing about 50,000 engineers annually. Coimbatore is a major center for the manufacture of automotive components in India with car manufacturers Maruti Udyog and Tata Motors sourcing up to 30%, of their automotive components from the city. G.D. Naidu developed India's first indigenous motor in 1937. India's first indigenously developed diesel engine for cars was manufactured in the city in 1972. The city is also a major centre for small auto component makers catering to the automobile industry, from personal to commercial and farm vehicles. The city contributes to about 75% of the 100,000 total monthly output of wet grinders in India. The industry employs 70,000 people and had a yearly turnover of ₹28 billion (US\$330 million) in 2015. The term "Coimbatore Wet Grinder" has been given a Geographical indication. Coimbatore is also referred to as "the Pump City" as it supplies nearly 50% of India's requirements of motors and pumps. The city is one of the largest exporters of jewellery renowned for

diamond cutting, cast and machine made jewellery. There are about 3,000 jewellery manufacturers employing over 40,000 goldsmiths. Coimbatore has a large number of poultry farms and is a major producer of chicken eggs. The city contributes to nearly 95% of processed chicken meat exports. Coimbatore has some of the country's oldest flour mills and these mills which cater to all the southern states, have a combined grinding capacity of more than 50,000 MT per month. The hospitality industry has seen a growth in the 21st century with new upscale hotels being set up.

Culture Coimbatore and its people have a reputation for entrepreneurship. Though it is generally considered a traditional city, Coimbatore is diverse and cosmopolitan. The World Classical Tamil Conference 2010 was held in Coimbatore. The heavy industrialisation of the city has also resulted in the growth of trade unions. The city is regularly features among the top 10 best cities to live in India. 24 November, the date of establishment of Coimbatore as a district is celebrated as "Coimbatore Day".

Language Tamil is the official language and Kongu Tamil (also called Kangee or Kongalam), a dialect, is predominantly spoken. As per the 2011 census, Tamil is the most spoken language with 710,326 speakers, followed by Telugu (173,136), Malayalam (76,485) and Kannada (43,629). Other languages spoken in the city include Urdu (15,484) and Hindi (13,608). During the 1970s the city witnessed a population explosion as a result of migration fuelled by increased economic growth and job opportunities.

Ethnicity and religion The population of Coimbatore consists of majority of Tamils with a significant number of Telugus, Kannadigas, Malayalis, and North Indians, mainly Gujaratis.

The city's population is predominantly Hindu with minority Muslim and Christian population. Jains, Sikhs and Buddhists are also present in small numbers. According to the religious census of 2011, Coimbatore has 83.31% Hindus, 8.63% Muslims, 7.53% Christians, 0.28% Jains, 0.05% Sikhs, 0.02% Buddhists and 0.01% Others. 0.17% of the respondents did not state their religion. The Mariamman festivals at the city's numerous Mariamman temples are major events in summer. Major Hindu temples in the city include the Perur Patteeswarar Temple, Naga Sai Mandir, Koniamman Temple, Thandu Mariamman Temple, Eachanari Vinayagar Temple, Puliakulam Temple, Marudamalai Murugan Temple, Loga Nayaga Shaniswara Temple, Ashtamsa Varadha Anjaneyar Temple, Masani Amman Temple, Karamadai Ranganathar Temple, Dhyanalinga Yogic Temple and Adiyogi Shiva. The mosques on Oppanakara Street and Big Bazaar Street date back to the 18th century CE. Christian missions date back to the 17th century when permission was granted by the Nayak rulers to set up churches in the region. Sikh Gurudwaras and Jain temples are also present in Coimbatore.

Cuisine Coimbatore cuisine is predominantly south Indian with rice as its base. Most local restaurants still retain their rural flavor, with many restaurants serving food over a banana leaf. Eating on a banana leaf is an old custom and imparts a unique flavor to the food and is considered healthy. North Indian, Chinese and continental cuisines are also available. Idly, dosa, paniyaram and appam are popular dishes. Coimbatore has an active street food culture and various cuisine options for dining. Arisi paruppu sadam and sambar sadam, made from a mixture of dal and rice, is a recipe that existed from the 4th century CE that is unique to the area. Ariseemparuppu or arisi paruppu satham (literally translated as Rice and dal) originated from Coimbatore and the people of the city celebrate January 8 as national Aruseemparuppu day, after given light by a popular influencer and food consultant. Kaalaan is a popular dish prepared by simmering deep-fried mushrooms (usually chopped) in a spicy broth until it reaches a porridge-like consistency; the dish is served sprinkled with chopped onions and coriander leaves. Chaats made from potatoes and a mix of other vegetables and spices

are also popular.

Arts Swamikannu Vincent, who had built the first cinema of south India in Coimbatore, introduced the concept of Tent Cinema in which a tent was erected on an open land to screen the films. Central Studios was set up in 1935 while S. M. Sriramulu Naidu established Pakshiraja Studios in 1945. The city conducts its own music festival every year. Art, dance and music concerts are held annually during the months of September and December (Tamil calendar month - Margazhi). Coimbatore also houses a number of museums and art galleries like G.D. Naidu Museum & Industrial Exhibition, H A Gass Forest Museum, Government Museum, Kadhi Gandhi Gallery and Kasthuri Srinivasan Art Gallery and Textile Museum.

Transport Air The city is served by the Coimbatore International Airport at Peelamedu 10 km (6.2 mi) from the city center. The airport was established in 1940 with Air India operating scheduled services in 1948. Coimbatore flying club and aviation training academy was established in 1960. In 1987, the airport underwent modernization and further expansion of the existing runway to enable handling of larger jet aircraft. On 6 June 2012, Prime Minister of India declared the government's intention to upgrade the airport to international status and the Union Cabinet granted it the status of international airport on 2 October 2012. The airport is operated by Airports Authority of India and caters to domestic flights to major Indian cities and international flights to Sharjah, and Singapore. As of 2023-24, the airport was the second largest airport in Tamil Nadu in terms of passengers handled. It has a single runway, which is 2,990 m (9,810 ft) in length and is capable of handling medium sized aircraft. Sular Air Force Station, located at Sular is an air base operated by the Indian Air Force and accommodates Antonov An-32 transport aircraft, Mil Mi-17 transport helicopters, and the HAL Dhruv helicopters of the Sarang helicopter display team. The first squadron of indigenous built HAL Tejas fighter aircraft was inducted in 2020.

Rail Train service in Coimbatore started in 1861, upon the construction of the Podanur - Madras line connecting Kerala and the west coast with the rest of India. Coimbatore lies on the Jolarpettai-Shoranur line 5 ft 6 in (1,676 mm) broad gauge railway line and the city falls under the Salem division of the Southern Railway zone of Indian Railways. The major railway station is the Coimbatore Junction which is the second-largest income generating station in the Southern Railway zone after Chennai Central and is amongst the top hundred booking stations of Indian Railways. Other major railway stations catering to the city include Coimbatore North Junction, Podanur Junction and minor stations at Peelamedu, Singanallur, Irugur Junction, Perianaikanpalayam, Madukkarai, Somanur and Sular.

Metro rail The Central Government proposed a metro rail system for 16 tier-2 cities in India including Coimbatore in 2010. In 2011, the Government of Tamil Nadu shelved the proposal in favour of a monorail. Coimbatore Railway Struggle Committee has also protested to implement metro rail project in Coimbatore. In 2013, E. Sreedharan made survey and announced metro rail as suitable transport for Coimbatore. In 2017, the Government of Tamil Nadu proposed a metro for Coimbatore. Feasibility studies were completed in 2021 and five corridors were proposed.

Road There are six major arterial roads in the city: Avinashi Road, Trichy Road, Sathy Road, Mettupalayam Road, Palakkad Road and Pollachi Road. The Coimbatore bypass is a series of bypasses connecting the various National Highways and State Highways passing through and originating from Coimbatore. The first section of the bypass, a 28-kilometre (17 mi) stretch from Neelambur to Madukkarai on National Highway 544 opened for traffic in 2000. It was the first road privatisation project to be implemented on a

build-operate-transfer model in South India. In 2008, the State Highways department came up with a proposal to create a Ring road to help de-congest the main arterial roads and the 12 km road would extend from Peelamedu to Mettupalayam road. In 2011, the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu announced the construction of two new flyovers at Ukkadam and Athupalam to help de-congest the Palakkad Road. In 2012, the Government of Tamil Nadu decided in favour of an eastern road that connected Mettupalayam Road with Avinashi Road and the existing bypass. The city municipal corporation is undertaking the construction of six rail-over-bridges in the city. There are five National Highways passing through the city:

Apart from State and National Highways, the city corporation maintains a 635.32 kilometres (394.77 miles) long road network. The city is also served by auto rickshaws and taxi services. Coimbatore has four Regional Transport Offices viz. TN 37 (South), TN 38 (North), TN 66 (Central), TN 99 (West).

Bus Town buses started operating in 1921 and serve most parts of the city, as well as other towns and villages in the district. The number of inter-city routes operated by Coimbatore division is 119 with a fleet of more than 500 buses. It also operates town buses on 257 intra-city routes. The intra-city buses operate from major bus stations in Gandhipuram Central Bus Terminus, Singanallur Bus Terminus, Ukkadam Bus Terminus and Saibaba Colony Bus Terminus to other parts across the city. Inter-city and intra-city buses that connect Coimbatore operate from different bus stands:

The Coimbatore Integrated Bus Terminus planned at Vellalore was cancelled midway in 2023 due to a lack of sufficient approach roads to the terminus and a hazardous waste dump nearby. Coimbatore BRTS is a proposed bus rapid transit project under the JNNURM scheme of the Government of India. It is planned along a 27.6 kilometres (17.1 mi) stretch connecting Avinashi road and Mettupalayam road.

Education Coimbatore is a major educational hub. The first school was established in 1831. The first college Government Arts College, was opened in 1875. The first engineering college in the city, the Arthur Hope College of Technology (now known as the Government College of Technology, Coimbatore), was started by G.D. Naidu in 1945 followed later by private engineering colleges PSG College of Technology, and Coimbatore Institute of Technology in the 1950s. The Air Force Administrative College, established in 1949, is the oldest training institute of the Indian Air Force. Coimbatore Medical College was opened in 1966 and a second Government run ESIC medical college was established in 2016. Government law college is a public law college that started functioning in 1978. The agricultural school established in 1868 was converted into Tamil Nadu Agricultural University in 1971 and the Slim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History was opened in 1990. As of 2023, the district is home to seven universities, 46 engineering colleges, 21 management schools, eight architectural schools, three medical colleges, two dental colleges, 27 polytechnics and 62 arts and science colleges. The city houses three government run universities Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Bharathiar University, Anna University Coimbatore and four private universities.

The city houses Government research institutes including the Central Institute for Cotton Research, Sugarcane Breeding Research Institute, Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding (IFGTB), Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education and Tamil Nadu Institute of Urban Studies. In 2008, Government of India announced a plan to establish a world class university in the region. Three types of schools operate in Coimbatore: government run schools, schools funded by the government but run by private trusts (aided schools) and schools funded completely by private trusts. Schools follow Tamil Nadu State Board, Matriculation, CBSE, ICSE/ISC or Tamil Nadu Anglo-Indian school board syllabus. "Samacheer Kalvi" (Tamil Nadu Uniform System

of School Education or Equitable education system) was introduced by the Tamil Nadu Uniform System of School Education Act 2010 to integrate the various school educational systems within the state. The city falls under the purview of Coimbatore education district and about 31320 students appeared for SSLC examinations in 2023.

Utility services Media Four major English newspapers The Hindu, The Times of India, Deccan Chronicle and The New Indian Express bring out editions from the city. Business Line, a business newspaper also brings out a Coimbatore edition. Tamil newspapers which have Coimbatore editions include Dinamalar, Dina Thanthi, Dinamani, Dinakaran, Tamil Murasu and Maalai Malar (both evening newspapers). Lotus News is based out of the city. A Medium wave radio station is operated by All India Radio, with programs in Tamil, English and Hindi. Five FM radio stations operate from Coimbatore - Rainbow FM, Suryan FM, Radio Mirchi, Radio City and Hello FM. All these private radio stations air exclusively Tamil-based programs, including film music. Television relay started in 1985 from Delhi Doordarshan and in 1986, after inception of the repeater tower at Kodaikanal, telecast from Madras commenced. In 2005, Doordarshan opened its studio in Coimbatore. Television services are accessible through DTH or digital cable.

Telecommunication Coimbatore has a well-connected communications infrastructure. Till the 1990s the state owned Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) was the only telecommunication service provider in the city. In the 1990s, private telecom companies too started offering their services. As of 2019, BSNL, Reliance Communications, Bharti Airtel, Tata Communications, Tata Teleservices, Reliance Jio and ACT offer broadband service and fixed line services. Cellular telephony was first introduced in 1997 and mobile telephone services available. Coimbatore is the headquarters of the Tamil Nadu circle of cellular service providers.

Healthcare As of 2010, the size of the health care industry in Coimbatore is estimated at ■1,500 crore (US\$180 million). There are around 750 hospitals in the city with an in-patient capacity of 5,000 beds. These hospitals include single speciality institutions like eye care clinics (e.g. Aravind Eye Hospitals) and also multi special hospitals. The first health care centre in the city was started in 1909. Coimbatore Medical College Hospital and ESI Hospital are government run tertiary care hospitals and provide free health care. The city corporation maintains 16 dispensaries and two maternity homes. People from nearby districts and the state of Kerala visit Coimbatore for medical tourism due to the availability of hospitals and healthcare facilities.

Sports and recreation Coimbatore is often referred to as "India's Motorsports Hub" and the "Backyard of Indian Motorsports". S.Karivardhan designed and built entry - level race cars and the Kari Motor Speedway, a Formula 3 Category circuit, is named after him. Tyre manufacturer MRF assembles Formula Ford cars in Coimbatore in association with former F3 Champion J. Anand and racing company Super Speeds designs Formula cars. Rallying is another major event with rallies conducted in closed roads around Coimbatore. Narain Karthikeyan, India's first Formula One driver hails from the city, and other motorsport drivers from Coimbatore include J. Anand and V. R. Naren Kumar. Nehru Stadium, built originally for football, also hosts athletic meets. The stadium has been renovated with Korean grass for the field and a synthetic track around it for athletics. Apart from the stadium, other sporting venues include the Coimbatore Golf Course, an 18 - hole golf course and Coimbatore Cosmopolitan Club, which is more than 100 years old. Coimbatore Flying Club is located in the Coimbatore Airport premises. The city hosts its own annual marathon called Coimbatore Marathon as an event to raise cancer awareness. Retired tennis player Nirupama Vaidyanathan, who became the first Indian woman in the modern era to feature and win a round at a main draw Grand Slam in 1998 Australian Open hails from Coimbatore. Coimbatore District Chess Association (CDCA), established in 1940, is the oldest chess association in the country.

City based teams Recreation There are several amusement parks around the city: Black Thunder water theme park near Mettupalayam, Kovai Kondattam amusement park at Perur and Maharaja Theme Park at Neelambur. Since the 1980s, the city has had a few small shopping complexes and major shopping malls include Prozone Mall, Brookefields Mall and Fun Republic Mall. The city also has a number of parks including the VOC Park, the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University Park, Race Course Children's Park and Bharathi Park in Saibaba Colony. Coimbatore Zoo houses a number of animals and birds and is located near VOC Park. The grounds are used for conducting fairs and events including the annual Independence day and Republic day celebrations. Singanallur Lake is a popular tourist place and bird watcher destination. Popular cinemas include KG Cinemas, The Cinema at Brookfields, Cinepolis at Fun Republic, INOX at Prozone, Miraj cinemas, Karpagam cinemas, Senthil Kumaran cinemas, Baba complex and Broadway cinemas.

Environmental issues Air pollution, lack of proper waste management infrastructure and degradation of water bodies are the major environmental issues in Coimbatore. There is a sewage treatment plant at Ukkadam with the capacity to process 70 million litres of sewage water per day. Garbage is collected by the corporation and sewage is pumped into the water tanks and the Noyyal River through streams. This along with garbage dumping and encroachments has led to degradation of the water bodies and depletion in the groundwater table. The tanks are renovated by the city's environmental groups with their own fund-raising and the corporation. The corporation is responsible and involved in clearing encroachment of the tanks. Siruthuli, an environmental organisation founded by the city's industrial houses, undertakes de-silting of tanks and cleaning of the Noyyal river. Environment Conservation Group based out of the city is also involved in conservation of trees and wetlands, monitoring wildlife crime and conducting awareness sessions for students.

Notable people International relations Coimbatore has a sister city relationship with Toledo, Ohio. The relation has enabled exchange in the fields of arts and education between the cities. A twin city pact with the German city of Esslingen was signed in July 2016, enabling the two cities to collaborate on areas of mutual interest, health, education, culture and social development.

Alliance Franaise de Madras, a Franco-Indian non-profit association promoting the growth of French in India, has a centre at PSG Institute of Management in Coimbatore.

See also List of neighbourhoods of Coimbatore Velliangiri Mountains Aliyar Reservoir Largest Indian cities by GDP

Notes References External links

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Agra

Agra (Hindi: अग्रा, pronounced [aˈɡɾa] AH-gra) is a city on the banks of the Yamuna river in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, about 230 kilometres (140 mi) south-east of the national capital Delhi and 330 km west of the state capital Lucknow. It is also the part of Braj region. With a population of roughly 1.6 million, Agra is the fourth-most populous city in Uttar Pradesh and twenty-third most populous city in India. Agra's notable historical period began during Sikandar Khan Lodi's reign, but the golden age of the city began with the Mughals in the early 16th century. Agra was the foremost city of the Indian subcontinent and the capital of the Mughal Empire under Mughal emperors Babur, Humayun, Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan. Under Mughal rule, Agra became a centre for learning, arts, commerce, and religion, and saw the construction of the Agra Fort, Sikandra and Agra's most prized monument, the Taj Mahal, constructed between 1632 and 1648 by Shah Jahan in remembrance of his wife Mumtaz Mahal. With the decline of the Mughal empire in the late 18th century, the city fell successively first to Marathas and later to the East India Company. After Independence, Agra has developed into an industrial town, with a booming tourism industry, along with footwear, leather and other manufacturing. The Taj Mahal and the Agra Fort are UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The city features mild winters, hot and dry summers and a monsoon season, and is famous for its Mughlai cuisine. Agra is included on the Golden Triangle tourist circuit, along with Delhi and Jaipur; and the Uttar Pradesh Heritage Arc, a tourist circuit of Uttar Pradesh, along with Lucknow and Varanasi.

Name There are several proposed derivations for the name Agra, none of which is very satisfactory. The most accepted etymon is the Hindi word agar (salt pan), a name given to it due to the region's brackish soil; salt was once made in the area by evaporation. Others derive it from Hindu mythology, claiming that the Sanskrit word agra (आग्रा) (literally 'front') means in this case the first of the many small forests where Krishna frolicked with the gopis of Vrindavan. The term Agravana hence means grove forest. In the Mughal era, Agra was also known as Akbarabad, a name coined by emperor Shah Jahan in honour of his grandfather Akbar.

History Pre-Mughal era Agra has two histories: one of the ancient city on the east, or left, bank of the river Yamuna, going back so far as to be lost in the legends of Krishna and Mahabharata and reestablished by Sikandar Khan Lodi in 1504-1505; the other of the modern city, founded by Akbar in 1558, on the right bank of the river which is associated with the Mughals, and known throughout the world as the city of the Taj. Of ancient Agra little now remains except few traces of the foundations. It was a place of importance under various Hindu dynasties previous to the Muslim invasions of India, but its history is unclear, and possess little historical interest. The 17th century chronicler named Abdullah said it was a village before the reign of Sikandar Lodi. The king of Mathura had used the Agra fort as a jail. The degradation in the status of the site was a result of the destruction brought upon it by Mahmud of Ghazni. Masud Sa'd Salman claims to have been there when Mahmud assaulted Agra, claiming the Raja Japal surrendered after seeing a nightmare. Mahmud however proceeds to pillage the city.

Agra's period of historical importance began during Sikandar Lodi's reign. In 1504-1505, Sultan Sikandar Lodi (reigned 1489-1517), the Afghan ruler of the Delhi Sultanate, rebuilt Agra and made it the seat of government. Sikandar Lodi appointed a commission which inspected and surveyed both sides of the Yamuna from Delhi to Etawah and finally chose a place on the left bank, or the east side of the Yamuna, as the site for the city. Agra on the left bank of the Yamuna grew into a large flourishing town with royal presence, officials, merchants, scholars, theologians and artists. The city became one of the most important centres of Islamic learning in

India. The sultan founded the village of Sikandra in the northern suburbs of the city and built there a Baradari of red sandstone in 1495, which was converted into a tomb by Jahangir, and now stands as the Tomb of Mariam-uz-Zamani, Akbar's empress. After the Sultan's death in 1517, the city passed on to his son, Sultan Ibrahim Lodi (reigned 1517-26). He ruled his sultanate from Agra until he was defeated and killed by Mughal Emperor Babur in the First battle of Panipat, fought in 1526.

Mughal era The golden age of the city began with the Mughals. Agra was the foremost city of the subcontinent and the capital of the Mughal Empire until 1658, when Aurangzeb shifted the entire court to Delhi. Babur (reigned 1526-30), the founder of the Mughal dynasty, acquired Agra after defeating the Lodis and the Tomaras of Gwalior in the First Battle of Panipat in 1526. Babur's connection with Agra began immediately after the battle of Panipat. He sent forward his son Humayun, who occupied the town without opposition. The Raja of Gwalior, slain at Panipat, had left his family and the heads of his clan at Agra. In gratitude to Humayun, who treated them magnanimously, and protected them from plunder, they presented to him a quantity of jewels and precious stones as a token of homage. Among these was the famous diamond Koh-i-nur. Babur went on to lay out the first formal Mughal garden in India, the Aram Bagh (or Garden of Relaxation) on the banks of the river Yamuna. Babur was determined to establish the seat of his government at Agra, but was almost dissuaded by the desolate appearance of the region, as clear from this quote from his memoir Baburnama:

It always appears to me, that one of the chief defects of Hindustan is the want of artificial watercourses. I had intended, wherever I might fix my residence, to construct water-wheels, to produce an artificial stream, and to lay out an elegant and regularly planned pleasure ground. Shortly after coming to Agra I passed the Jumna with this object in view, and examined the country to pitch upon a fit spot for a garden. The whole was so ugly and detestable that I repassed the river quite repulsed and disgusted. In consequence of the want of beauty and of the disagreeable aspect of the country, I gave up my intention of making a charbagh (garden house); but as no better situation presented itself near Agra, I was finally compelled to make the best of this same spot.... In every corner I planted suitable gardens, in every garden I sowed roses and narcissus regularly, and in beds corresponding to each other. We were annoyed by three things in Hindustan; one was its heat, another the strong winds, and the third its dust. Baths were the means of removing all three inconveniences. Very few vestiges remain of Babur's city, of his fruit and flower gardens, palaces, baths, tanks, wells and watercourses. The remnants of Babur's Charbagh can be seen today at Aram Bagh, on the east side of Yamuna. Babur was followed by his son Humayun (reigned 1530-40 and 1555-56), but he was completely defeated at Kanauj in 1539, just nine years after his ascension, by Sher Shah Suri, an Afghan nobleman, who had submitted to Babur, but revolted against his son. In this brief interruption in Mughal rule between 1540 and 1556, Sher Shah Suri, established the short lived Sur Empire, and the region was eventually reconquered by Akbar in the Second Battle of Panipat in 1556. Under Akbar (reigned 1556-1605), and followed by his grandson Shah Jahan, Agra was immortalised in the history of the world. Akbar built the modern city of Agra on the right bank of Yamuna, where the majority of its part still lies. He converted the city into a great centre of political, cultural and economic importance, connecting it with the various parts of his vast empire. Akbar raised the towering ramparts of the Agra Fort, besides making Agra a centre for learning, arts, commerce, and religion. Akbar also built a new capital city of Fatehpur Sikri, around 35 km from Agra. The new capital city was later abandoned. Before his death, Agra had become probably one of the biggest cities in the east, with huge amounts of trade and commerce happening through its bazaars. The English traveller Ralph Fitch who visited Agra in September 1585 in the life-time of Akbar, writes about the town:

Agra is a very great city, and populous, built with stone, having fair and large streets with a fair river running by it Agra and Fatehpur Sikri are two very great cities, either of them much greater than London, and very

populous. Between Agra and Fatehpur are twelve miles (kos in reality) and all the way is a market of victuals and other things as full as though a man were still in a town, and so many people as if a man were in a market. These impressions of Fitch are corroborated by another European traveller, William Finch, who remarked about Agra:

It is spacious, large, populous beyond measure, that you can hardly pass the street Agra continued to expand and flourish during Akbar's successor Jahangir's reign as he wrote in his autobiography Tuzuk-e-Jahangiri:

The habitable part of Agra extends on both sides of the river. On its west side, which has the greater population, its circumference is seven kos, and its breadth is one kos. The circumference of the inhabited part on the other side of the river, the side towards the east, is 2 1/2 kos, its length being one kos and its breadth half a kos. But in the number of its buildings it is equal to several cities of Iraq, Khurasan and Trans-Oxiana put together. Many persons have erected buildings of three or four storeys in it. The mass of the people is so great that moving about in the lanes and bazars is difficult. Akbar's successor Jahangir (reigned 1605-27) had a love of flora and fauna and laid many gardens inside the Red Fort. Akbar's mausoleum at Sikandra was completed during Jahangir's reign. The Jahangiri Mahal in Agra fort and the tomb of Itmad-ud-daulah were also constructed during the reign of Jahangir. Jahangir loved Lahore and Kashmir more than Agra, but the latter continued to be the first city of the realm. It was, however, Shah Jahan (reigned 1628-58) whose building activity raised Agra to the pinnacle of its glory. Shah Jahan, known for his keen interest in architecture, gave Agra its most prized monument, the Taj Mahal. Built in loving memory of his wife Mumtaz Mahal, the mausoleum was completed in 1653. The Jama Masjid and several other notable buildings like the Diwan-i-Am, the Diwan-i-Khas, the Moti Masjid, etc., inside the fort were planned and executed under his orders. Shah Jahan later shifted the capital to Shahjahanabad (now known as Delhi) in the year 1648, followed by his son Aurangzeb (reigned 1658-1707) moving the entire court to Delhi in 1658. With this Agra began rapidly declining. Nevertheless, the cultural and strategic importance of Agra remained unaffected and in official correspondence it continued to be referred to as the second capital of the empire.

Later periods The decline of the Mughal empire caused the emergence of several regional kingdoms, and in the late 18th century the control of the city fell successively to the Jats, the Marathas, the Mughals, the ruler of Gwalior, and finally the British East India Company. The Jats of Bharatpur, waged many wars against the Mughal Delhi and in the 17th and 18th century carried out numerous campaigns in Mughal territories including Agra. After the decline of the Mughal Empire, the city came under the influence of another post-Mughal Empire power, the Marathas, before falling into the hands of the British East India Company in 1803. In the years 1834-1836, Agra was the capital of the short-lived Presidency of Agra, administered by a Governor. It was then the capital of the North-Western Province from 1836 to 1858, governed by a Lieutenant-Governor. Agra was one of the centres of the Indian rebellion of 1857. During the Indian rebellion of 1857, when East India Company rule across many parts of India was threatened, the news of the mutiny at Meerut reached Agra on 14 May. On 30 May some companies of the 44th and 67th Native Infantry sent to Mathura to bring in the treasury mutinied and carried off the treasury to the rebels in Delhi. With the fear of the rebellion spreading to Agra as well, the rest of these native infantry battalions, which were part of the garrison at Agra, were successfully disarmed by the British on 31 May. However, when the Gwalior contingent mutinied on 15 June, all other native units followed. On 2 July the rebel force of the Nimach and Nasirabad contingents reached Fatehpur Sikri. Fearing advance of the mutineers to Agra, some 6000 Europeans and associated people moved into the Agra Fort for safety on 3 July. On 5 July, the British force stationed there attempted to attack an approaching force of Mutineers, but was defeated, and the British retreated back into the fort. The

Lieutenant-Governor, J.R. Colvin, died there, and was later buried in front of the Diwan-i-am. The mutineers, however, moved over to Delhi, it being a more important attraction for the rebels. Despite an uprising by a mob and extreme disorder in the city, the British managed to restore partial order by 8 July. Delhi, in turn, fell to the British in September, following which an infantry brigade led by Brigadier Edward Greathed arrived in Agra on 11 October without any opposition from rebels. But shortly after their arrival another force of mutineers attacked the brigade by surprise, but was defeated and routed. This minor victory for the British was named the Battle of Agra. It is to be said that, the uprising in Agra was relatively minor compared to Delhi, Jhansi, Meerut and other major rebellious cities and regions. After this British rule was again secured, and the British Raj ruled the city till the independence of India in 1947. The capital of the North Western Provinces was shifted from Agra to Allahabad in 1858. Gradually, Agra declined to the position of a mere provincial town, and its prosperity declined:

But in the economy of the administration of British India Agra is nothing more than a district town; its size, proportions and manifold activities have come down to its present requirements, and continued life in this city does not come above the average of that monotonous muffled life in India which has been so often and so vividly described by many gifted Anglo-Indian writers. Agra has become of late years a large railway centre, and its commercial prosperity seems to be reviving. Agra's role in the Indian Independence movement is not well documented. However, in the years between the mutiny and independence Agra was a major centre of Hindi and Urdu journalism. Paliwal park (formerly Hewitt park) in Agra is named after S.K.D Paliwal, who brought out the Hindi daily Sainik.

Post Independence and Mughal legacy Post India's independence, Agra has been a part of Uttar Pradesh and has gradually developed into an industrial city, with a significant contribution to Uttar Pradesh's economy. The city is now a popular tourist destination and hosts tourists from across the world. The Taj Mahal and Agra Fort received UNESCO World Heritage Sites status in 1983. The Taj Mahal witnesses tourists, photographers, historians and archaeologists in massive numbers all around the year. The Taj Mahal has become a symbol of India. Post Independence, Taj Mahal has been visited by world leaders like US Presidents Dwight D. Eisenhower (1959), Bill Clinton (2000), and Donald Trump (2020). Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom had visited Taj Mahal in 1961 on her India visit. Taj Mahal has also been visited by Russian President Vladimir Putin (1999), Chinese President Hu Jintao (2006), Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (2018) and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (2018). Agra is the birthplace of the now extinct religion known as Din-i-Ilahi, which was founded by Akbar and also of the Radhaswami Faith, which has around two million followers worldwide. Agra is included on both the Golden Triangle tourist circuit, along with Delhi and Jaipur, as well as the Uttar Pradesh Heritage Arc, a tourist circuit of Uttar Pradesh, along with Lucknow and Varanasi.

Geography and climate Geography The region around Agra consists almost entirely of a level plain, with hills in the extreme southwest. The rivers in the region include Yamuna and Chambal. The region is also watered by the Agra Canal. Millet, barley, wheat, and cotton are among the crops grown in the surrounding countryside. Both Rabi and Kharif crops are cultivated. The deserted city of Fatehpur Sikri is about 40 km southwest of Agra. The sandstone hills near Fatehpur Sikri and on the south-eastern borders of the district are offshoots from the Vindhya range of Central India. Agra is about 210 km away from the National capital of New Delhi (via Yamuna Expressway), about 336 km from state capital Lucknow (via Agra-Lucknow Expressway), and about 227 km from Kanpur (via Agra-Lucknow Expressway). The city has an average elevation of 170 metres above sea level.

Climate Broadly speaking, the climate of Agra is classified as BSh by the Kppen-Geiger climate classification system. This is the tropical and subtropical steppe climate, a major climate type of the Kppen classification that occurs primarily on the periphery of the true deserts in low-latitude regions, forming a transition between the desert climate (BW), and the more humid subtropical and tropical climates. The city features warm winters, sweltering and dry summers and a monsoon season. The Agra district, from its proximity to the sandy Thar Desert to the west, is relatively dry, and has greater extremes of temperature than districts further east. The hot west wind, Loo blows mainly during April, May, and June with great force and can cause fatal heatstrokes. The highest temperature ever registered in Agra was 48.6 C, on 28 May 2024. The monsoon rains usually begin in the first week in July; and generally end in mid-September. However, the monsoons, though substantial in Agra, are not quite as heavy as the monsoon in other parts of India. The weather moderates by the middle of October. The region around Agra, the northwest Indo-Gangetic plain is prone to extreme fog in the winter months, which is caused due to natural factors like low winds, low temperatures, availability of moisture apart from air pollution. This phenomenon often leads to big delays and sometimes cancellation of trains due to poor visibility. Agra has high levels of air pollution and one of the worst AQIs in India. In a study conducted by WHO using data from years 2010-2016, Agra ranked as the 8th most polluted city in India, along with other nearby cities including Delhi, Kanpur and Faridabad. Agra has been ranked 3rd best "National Clean Air City" (under Category 1>10L Population cities) in India according to 'Swachh Vayu Survekshan 2024 Results'

Environment The Taj Mahal has faced significant damage due to air pollution and sewage discharge into the nearby Yamuna river. The white-marble Taj Mahal is turning yellow and green because of filthy air in the world's eighth-most polluted city. The Taj Mahal flanks the garbage-strewn Yamuna river and is often enveloped by dust and smog from smokestacks and vehicles. The Yamuna River is one of the most polluted rivers in the world. Agra is the second largest contributor to River Yamuna's pollution, after Delhi. The river's pollution has caused several problems for the Taj Mahal such as 'Attacks by Bugs and their Green Slime', foul stench and corrosion of Taj Mahal's foundation. The river has as many as 90 nalas or drains opening into it. Though the municipality has claimed to stop 40 of these drains, the bigger ones, Bhairon, Mantola, Balkeshwar nalas continue to discharge huge quantities of untreated waste water without any check. Activists say that the Yamuna river bed between Itmad-ud-Daula and the Taj Mahal has become a dumping ground for pollutants. Polythene, plastic waste, leather cuttings from shoe factories, construction material, are all thrown into the river. Less than 7% of the Agra district is under forest cover. The only major wildlife sanctuary near Agra is Keetham Lake, also known as Sur Sarovar Bird Sanctuary. The lake has nearly two dozen varieties of migratory and resident birds. Within the Sur Sarovar Bird Sanctuary is the Agra Bear Rescue Facility, which is India's first sanctuary for 'dancing' bears. Operated by Wildlife SOS, Free the Bears Fund and others, the facility has rehabilitate over 620 sloth bears, which were exploited by a nomadic tribe known as the Kalandars as 'dancing bears', despite the practice being illegal since 1972. Agra has been ranked 3rd best "National Clean Air City" (under Category 1 >10L Population cities) in India according to 'Swachh Vayu Survekshan 2024 Results' https://prana.cpcb.gov.in/ncapServices/robust/fetchFilesFromDrive/Swachh_Vayu_Survekshan_2024_Result.pdf

Demographics With a population of roughly 1.6 million, Agra is the fourth-most populous city in Uttar Pradesh and twenty-third most populous city in India. As per the 2011 Census of India, Agra city has a population of 1,585,704; its metropolitan population is 1,760,285. The sex ratio of Agra city is 875 females per 1000 males, while the child sex ratio is 857 girls per 1000 boys. The average literacy rate of Agra city is 73.11% of which male and female literacy rates are 77.81% and 67.74% respectively.

Hinduism is the most followed religion in Agra city with 80.68% of its population adhering to it. Islam is second most followed religion in the city of Agra with 15.37% of the population following it. These are followed by

Jainism, Sikhism, Christianity and Buddhism at 1.04%, 0.62%, 0.42% and 0.19% respectively. Approximately 1.66% stated 'No Particular Religion'.

At the time of the 2011 Census of India, 94.80% of the population in the district spoke Hindi, 2.34% Braj Bhasha and 1.86% Urdu as their first language.

Administration and politics Administration Police administration Agra district comes under the Agra Police Zone and Agra Police Range, Agra Zone is headed by an additional director general (ADG)-ranked Indian Police Service (IPS) officer, and the Agra Range is headed by a deputy inspector general (DIG)-ranked IPS officer. The district police is headed by a senior superintendent of police (SSP), who is an IPS officer, and is assisted by six superintendents of police or additional superintendents of police for city, east, west, crime, traffic, and protocol, either from the IPS or the Provincial Police Service. Each of the several police circles is headed by a circle officer in the rank of deputy superintendent of police.

Infrastructure and civic administration Agra Municipal Corporation or Agra Nagar Nigam (AMC or ANN) is the Municipal Corporation responsible for the civic infrastructure and administration of the city of Agra. This civic administrative body administers the city's public services. The mayor and municipal councillors are elected to five-year terms. The Agra Municipal Corporation oversees four zones (Hariparvat, Lohamandi, Tajganj and Chhata) which are further subdivided into 100 wards. The AMC boundary encompasses an area of 121 square km. The Agra Development Authority (ADA), is develops new housing, infrastructure and colonies in the city.

Politics Agra district has two Lok Sabha constituencies, Agra and Fatehpur Sikri, and nine Uttar Pradesh Vidhan Sabha (Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly) constituencies. The MP for Agra constituency is SP Singh Baghel, from Bharatiya Janata Party. Ahead of the election the for 2022 Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly, it was announced that two more districts, including Agra, could become a police commissionerate before the elections.

Utilities The electricity power distribution and bill collection in Agra is the responsibility of Torrent Power, a private sector company as well as DVVNL (Dakshinanchal Vidhyut Vitran Nigam Limited), a state owned entity of UPPCL. The control of power distribution in Agra was handed over to Torrent Power from the state-owned UP Power Corporation Ltd in 2010, in an effort to move towards power reforms and cutting the massive distribution losses in the state. This was the first time power distribution was privatised in Uttar Pradesh, except for Noida-Greater Noida falling under the NCR. Agra has three primary sources for municipal water supply: water treatment plants at Sikandra and Jeoni Mandi, and groundwater using tubewells. Since a large portion of the water demand is fulfilled from the Yamuna river, which is a highly polluted river, water quality in Agra is usually poor, with unhealthy levels of chlorine required for purification. The city's groundwater is also unfit for drinking, and is saline and high in fluoride content. Both sources breach CPCB standards. To provide the city with adequate water supply, the Gangajal pipeline project has been initiated. It includes a 130 km long pipeline laid to bring Ganga water from Bulandshahr's Upper Ganga canal to Agra. The project has been launched, but has faced criticism due to frequent pipeline leakages. Though most of the city uses cylinders for cooking gas, piped natural gas is also available in many localities, including Kamla Nagar, Sikandra and others. The service is provided by Green Gas Limited.

Economy Due to the presence of the Taj Mahal and other historic monuments, Agra has a booming tourism industry as well as royal crafts like Pietra Dura, marble inlay and carpets. 40% of the population depends

largely on agriculture, and others on the leather and footwear business and iron foundries. Agra was the second most self-employed in India in 2007, behind Varanasi, followed by Bhopal, Indore and Patna. According to the National Sample Survey Organization, in 1999-2000, 431 of every 1,000 employed males were self-employed in the city, which grew to 603 per 1,000 in 2004-05. Tourism has a significant role in the economy of Agra, with upwards of 9.5 million tourists visiting Agra and surrounding monuments in 2019. The city is home to Asia's largest spa called Kaya Kalp - The Royal Spa, at the ITC Hotel Mughal in Agra. Other hotels include Taj Hotel and Convention Centre. Sanjay Place is the trade centre of Agra. There are about 12 major and medium scale industries, producing electrical goods, pipes, leather goods etc. There are about 7,200 small scale industrial units. Above 1.5 lakh pairs of shoes per day are manufactured in Agra by the various footwear units. Agra city is also known for its leather goods, the oldest and famous leather firm Taj Leather World is in Sadar bazar. The carpets, handicrafts, zari and zardozi (embroidery work), marble and stone carving and inlay work. Agra amassed a GDP of 40.21 billions / 40,210 crores as per the data released by UP Government for the year 2018-19, thus the 3rd rank in the state. In the Swachh Survekshan 2020, Agra ranked 16th nation-wide, and 2nd in the state after Lucknow, which was a big jump after 86th in 2019, 102nd in 2018, and 263rd in 2017. In the Smart city Rankings, which are pan-India rankings for 100 cities which is released by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs based on the progress/completion rate of Smart City projects, Agra ranked 1st, based on the rankings released based on work done by department concerned under the Smart City project from 1 October 2019, to 1 March 2020. As of August 2020, Industrial activity in Agra has been affected as a result of the restrictions imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic that has forced people to remain confined to their homes. The sectors worst-hit are the iron foundries, tourism, leather shoe industry in Agra. It is estimated that the loss in the tourism industry due to COVID-19 restrictions is approximately ■ 22 billions / 2,200 crores.

Monuments and architecture Taj Mahal The Taj Mahal rises above the banks of the river like a solitary tear suspended on the cheek of time. Taj Mahal is a mausoleum complex in Agra, built by the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan as a tomb for his wife Mumtaz Mahal ("Chosen One of the Palace"), who died in childbirth in 1631, having been the emperor's inseparable companion since their marriage in 1612. India's most famed building, it is situated in the eastern part of the city on the southern (right) bank of the Yamuna River, about 1.6 km east of the Agra Fort, also on the right bank of the Yamuna. The Taj Mahal is distinguished as the finest example of Mughal architecture, a blend of Indian, Persian, and Islamic styles. Other attractions include twin mosque buildings (placed symmetrically on either side of the mausoleum), pleasant gardens, and a museum. The complex was designated a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1983, and is one of the New Seven Wonders of the world. The Taj Mahal is the most visited tourist spot in the India, attracting nearly 6.9 million visitors in 2018-19. The chief architect was probably the Persian architect Ustad Ahmad Lahori. Designed as a unified entity according to the principles of Mughal architecture, the five principal elements of the complex were the main gateway, garden, mosque, jawab (literally 'answer', a building mirroring the mosque), and the mausoleum, with its four minarets. The construction commenced in 1632 with upwards of twenty thousand workers from India, Persia, the Ottoman Empire, and Europe working to complete the mausoleum itself by 1639, the adjunct buildings by 1643, with decoration work continuing until at least 1647. In total, construction of the 42 acre (17 hectare) complex spanned 22 years. It can be observed from Agra Fort from where Emperor Shah Jahan gazed at it for the last eight years of his life, a prisoner of his son Aurangzeb. Verses of the Quran are inscribed on it and at the top of the gate are 22 small domes, signifying the number of years the monument took to build. The Taj Mahal was built on a marble platform that stands above a sandstone one. The most elegant and largest dome of the Taj Mahal has a diameter of 60 feet (18 m), and has a height of 80 feet (24 m); directly under this dome is the tomb of Mumtaz Mahal. Shah Jahan's tomb was erected next to hers by his son Aurangzeb. The interiors are decorated with fine pietra dura inlay work, incorporating semi-precious stones. However, air pollution caused by emissions from foundries and other nearby factories and exhaust from motor vehicles has damaged the Taj, notably its marble facade. A number of measures have been taken to reduce the threat to the

monument, among them the closing of some foundries and the installation of pollution-control equipment at others, the creation of a parkland buffer zone around the complex, and the banning of nearby vehicular traffic, and more recently, use of 'mud pack' therapy. Perhaps most importantly, the 10,400 km² (4,000 sq mi) Taj Trapezium Zone has been created around the Taj Mahal and other nearby monuments where strict pollution restrictions are in place on industries, following a 1996 Supreme Court of India ruling. Some antique views were published in the Fisher's Drawing Room Scrap Books, namely Tj-Mahal, Agra. by Samuel Prout from a mid-distant angle (1832) and Ruins about the Taj Mahal. by S. Austin from those said ruins (1836). Both are accompanied by poetical illustrations by Letitia Elizabeth Landon.

Agra Fort The Agra Fort is a large 16th-century fortress of red sandstone located by the Yamuna River in Agra. It was first established by the Mughal Emperor Akbar and served as the seat of royal government when Agra was the capital of the Mughal empire in addition to being a military base and a royal residence. Built on the site of earlier fortifications by Islam Shah Suri (son of Sher Shah Suri), the Agra Fort lies on the right bank of the Yamuna River and is connected to the Taj Mahal (downstream, around a bend in the Yamuna), by a stretch of parkland. The fort was commissioned by Akbar in 1565, taking around eight years to build. Though much of the structure of the fort was founded by Akbar, both the interior and exterior underwent considerable changes under his son Jahangir and grandson Shah Jahan, who added many new structures, often of marble. The red sandstone walls of the roughly semi-circular structure have a perimeter of about 2.5 km, rise 21 metres high, and are surrounded by a moat. There are two entrances in the walls: the Delhi Gate facing west, the original entrance, situated nearly opposite to the Agra Fort railway station and Jama Masjid, and decorated with intricate marble inlays; and the Amar Singh Gate (also known as Hathi Pol, or Elephant Gate) facing south, presently the only means in or out of the fort complex). The complex of buildings in the fort-reminiscent of Persian and Timurid architecture, with great inspiration from Jain and Hindu architecture-forms a city within a city. Among the major attractions in the fort is Jahangiri Mahal, the largest residence in the complex, built by Akbar as a private palace for his Rajput wives. In the Diwan-i-Am (Hall of Public Audience), the emperor would listen to public petitions and meet state officials. The Diwan-i-Khas (Hall of Private Audience) was used for receiving distinguished visitors. The famous Peacock Throne was once kept there, before Aurangzeb took it to Delhi. Near the Diwan-i-Khas stands the Musamman Burj, an octagonal Tower which was the residence of Shah Jahan's favourite empress, Mumtaz Mahal. The Moti Masjid (Pearl Mosque), constructed by Shah Jahan, is a structure made entirely of white marble. The emperor's private residence was the Khas Mahal, whose marble walls were once adorned with flowers depicted by precious gems. Located to its northeast is the Sheesh Mahal (Palace of Mirrors), its walls and ceilings inlaid with thousands of small mirrors. Numerous other structures are there in the complex, including the Anguri Bagh, the Mina Bazaar etc. In addition to its other functions, the fort also served as a prison for Shah Jahan when Aurangzeb, his son and successor as emperor, had him confined there from 1658 until his death in 1666.

I'timād-ud-Daulah's tomb Nur Jahan commissioned I'timād-ud-Daulah's tomb, sometimes called the "Baby Taj", for her father, Mirza Ghiyas Beg, the Chief Minister of the Emperor Jahangir. Located on the left bank of the Yamuna river, the mausoleum is set in a large cruciform garden, crisscrossed by water courses and walkways. The area of the mausoleum itself is about 23 m² (250 sq ft), and is built on a base that is about 50 m² (540 sq ft) and about one metre (3.3 feet) high. On each corner are hexagonal towers, about thirteen metres (43 feet) tall. Small in comparison to many other Mughal-era tombs, it is sometimes described as a jewel box. Its garden layout and use of white marble, pietra dura, inlay designs, and latticework presage many elements of the Taj Mahal. The walls are white marble from Rajasthan encrusted with semi-precious stone decorations - cornelian, jasper, lapis lazuli, onyx, and topaz in images of cypress trees and wine bottles or more elaborate decorations like cut fruit or vases containing bouquets. Light penetrates the interior through delicate Jali screens of intricately carved white marble.

Akbar's Tomb, Sikandra Sikandra, the last resting place of the Mughal Emperor Akbar the Great, is on the Delhi-Agra Highway, about 13 kilometres (8.1 miles) from the Agra Fort. The four-storied tomb combines both marble and sandstone in its exterior. The construction of Sikandra was commenced in Akbar's reign and was completed by his heir and son Jahangir in 1613. The tomb is set amidst a large garden and is enclosed by four battlemented walls, each with a large gateway. The 99 names of Allah have been inscribed on the tomb. The tomb has seen some damage to its minarets and other aspects, which was inflicted by the Jats of Bharatpur. The vast gardens around Sikandra are inhabited by several Blackbucks, which are in the process of being shifted to the Etawah Safari Park. Next to Akbar's tomb, stands the Tomb of Mariam-uz-Zamani, the favourite wife of Akbar.

Other places of Interest Agra also has several other places of interest, most of them from its Mughal past. They include the Battis Khamba, Jama Masjid, Chini Ka Rauza, Aram Bagh, Mariam's Tomb, and Mehtab Bagh among others. The Jama Masjid is a large mosque attributed to Shah Jahan's daughter Jahanara Begum, built-in 1648, notable for its unusual dome and absence of minarets. The Chini Ka Rauza, notable for its Persian influenced dome of blue glazed tiles, is dedicated to the prime minister of Shah Jahan, Afzal Khan. The Aram Bagh, commonly known as Ram Bagh today, is one of the oldest Mughal garden in India, and was built by the Mughal emperor Babur in 1528 on the bank of the Yamuna. It lies about 2.3 km (1 mi) north of the Taj Mahal. The original name of the gardens was Aram Bagh, or 'Garden of Relaxation', and this was where Babur used to spend his leisure time. Tomb of Mariam-uz-Zamani is the tomb of Mariam, the favourite wife of Emperor Akbar. The tomb is within the compound of the Christian Missionary Society. The Mehtab Bagh, or 'Moonlight Garden', is on the opposite bank of the River Yamuna from the Taj Mahal. Agra also has a nearby bird sanctuary, Keetham Lake. Also known as Sur Sarovar Bird Sanctuary, it is situated within the Surdas Reserved Forest. The lake has nearly two dozen varieties of migratory and resident birds.

City Around Culture Cuisine Agra falls under Braj region and its local language is Braj Bhakha. Agra is known for its Braj cuisine and shares common culinary heritage with twin cities of Mathura and Vrindavan. Among Muslims of Agra, non vegetarian food is popular. Petha, a sweet made using ash gourd, is one of the famous dishes of Agra, and is available in many varieties. Another dish that is endemic to Agra is dalmoth, which is a dry snack made with spicy fried dal (lentils), nuts and raisins. The breakfast specialties include Bedai, which is a puffy kachori (made with all purpose flour, which is deep fried) with spicy filling inside and is generally served with spicy aloo bhaaji and dahi (curd). Equally popular as a snack is chaat, a collective term which includes snacks like dahi bhalla, raj kachori, samosas, and gol gappa, among others. Paratha, a pan fried flat wheat bread which is stuffed with potatoes, cauliflower, carrots or chhena, is also popular, and eaten accompanied with curd, pickle and chutney.

Beyond the famed Petha, Agra's cuisine is a blend of Mughal richness and local flavors. Unique street foods like: Bhalla (Dahi Aloo Tikki) from Sadar Bazaar, Bedai with Jalebi in the mornings, and Tandoori Chai in clay cups are popular among locals.

Taj Mahotsav Taj Mahotsav is a cultural festival and craft fair that was started in the year 1992 and has grown since then. The year 2019 was the 28th year of this Mahotsav. The fair is held in a big field in Shilpgram, near the eastern gate of the Taj Mahal. This festival also figures in the calendar of events of the Department of Tourism, Government of India. A large number of Indian and foreign tourists coming to Agra join this festivity. One of the objectives of this craft fair is to provide encouragement to the artisans. It also makes available works of art and craft at reasonable prices that are not inflated by high maintenance cost. The Mahotsav is hosted

from 18 to 27 February every year. The theme for the 2020 Taj Mahotsav was Sanskriti ke Rang, Taj ke Sang. For the first time since 1992, Taj Mahotsav 2021 has been cancelled, because of tourism restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Transport Air As of April 2021, Indigo operates regular flights between Agra Airport and Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Bhopal, and Bangalore. The Agra Airport at Kheria is controlled by the Indian Air Force.

Rail The city of Agra is served by 7 railway stations, viz., Agra Cantonment (major station for Delhi - Mumbai line), Raja-Ki-Mandi, Agra Fort (Major station for Jodhpur - Howrah Line), Idgah, Agra City, Jamuna Bridge, and Billochpura. It comes under the jurisdiction of the Agra Division of North Central Railways Zone of the Indian Railways. The city is served by multiple mail/express trains, as well as Rajdhani, Shatabdi, and Gatiman express. The Gatiman express is India's first semi-high train speed service, and has cut travel time between Agra and Delhi to 100 minutes. Being a major tourist destination, Agra is also served by the luxury train Maharajas' Express.

Road Inter-State Bus Terminal (I.S.B.T.), Idgah Bus Stand, Taj Depot and Fort Depot are the major bus stands in Agra, connecting Agra to most of the bigger cities in northern India. It is a major junction of highways with three national highways and two expressways (Yamuna Expressway & Agra Lucknow Expressway) originating from Agra.

From Delhi: NH 19 (old number: NH 2), a modern divided highway, connects the 200 km (124 mi) distance from Delhi to Agra. From Delhi / Noida: Yamuna Expressway, a modern access controlled highway connects the 200 km (124 mi) distance from Delhi to Agra. Yamuna Expressway (formerly Taj Expressway) is a six lane, 165 km (103 mi) long, controlled-access expressway, that connects New Delhi with Agra via Greater Noida and Mathura in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. NH 509 (old number: NH 93) connects Agra to Moradabad via Aligarh. Section of NH 44 (old number: NH 3 Agra Mumbai national highway) connects Agra to Gwalior via Dholpur. NH 21 (old number: NH 11 Agra Jaipur Highway) connects Jaipur to Bareilly via Agra. Agra Lucknow Expressway is a six lane, 302 km (188 mi) long, controlled-access expressway, that connects Lucknow with Agra via Kannauj and Etawah in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. Bus services are run by the UPSRTC(Other para-transit modes include rickshaws. Polluting vehicles are not allowed near the Taj Mahal. Within the city, Mahatma Gandhi Marg is the main artery.

Agra Metro Rail India Technical and Economic Service (RITES) had proposed 30 stations, 11 underground and 19 elevated, for two corridors of the Metro Rail in the city. The two lines are Sikandra to the Taj Mahal's east gate via Agra Fort and Agra Cantt to Kalindi Vihar. On 24 March 2017, State Chief Minister Yogi Aditya Nath approved the project. In December 2017, the cabinet of the UP Government approved the DPR as per New Metro Policy. Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of Agra Metro on 8 March 2019. As of January 2025, the Agra Metro project has made significant progress:The Priority Corridor, a 6 km stretch from Taj East Gate to Jama Masjid with 6 stations, began operations on March 6, 2024. This section includes 3 elevated stations (Taj East Gate, Basai, and Fatehabad Road) and 3 underground stations (Taj Mahal, Agra Fort, and Jama Masjid). Construction is ongoing for the remaining sections of Phase 1, which consists of two lines:

Yellow Line (Line 1) Total length: 14.25 km (6.569 km elevated, 7.681 km underground) 14 stations (6 elevated, 7 underground) Current status: 6 km operational, remaining under construction Expected completion: 2026

Blue Line (Line 2) Total length: 15.40 km (fully elevated) 15 stations (all elevated) Current status: Under construction Expected completion: December 2025

Recent developments Tunneling progress: As of January 2025, 16 breakthroughs have been achieved for the Agra Metro Phase 1 project. The final breakthrough on a 2.2 km upline tunnel was recently completed by a 6.61-m diameter Earth Pressure Balance Tunnel Boring Machine (EPBM). Civil works: Construction is progressing on the elevated viaduct and stations for both lines. For example, the AGCC-05 package, which includes a 3.725 km elevated section connecting RBS Ramp in Khandari to Sikandra, is currently underway. Contracts: Larsen & Toubro (L&T) was awarded a Rs. 1,242.79 crore contract in September 2024 for the civil construction of Line-2, which will be executed under package AGCC-07. Funding: The project is partially financed by a €450 million loan from the European Investment Bank (EIB). Environmental certification: All stations on the priority corridor have received the Platinum Rating from the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC), making Agra Metro a Green Mass Rapid Transit System (GMRTS). The entire Phase 1 project, estimated to cost ₹8,379.62 crore, is expected to be completed by 2026

Education It was during the advent of the Mughal era that Agra grew as a centre of Islamic education. In the year 1823, Agra College, one of the oldest colleges in India was formed out of a Sanskrit school established by the Scindia rulers. In the British era, Agra became a great centre of Hindi literature with people like Babu Gulab Rai at the helm.

Universities and colleges Agra University was established on 1 July 1927 and catered to colleges spread across the United Provinces, the Rajputana, the Central Provinces and almost to entire northern India. There are 10 institutes comprising various departments and around 700 Colleges are affiliated to this university. The historic Agra University was later rechristened as Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar University by the then Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Mayawati.

The Institute of Mental Health and Hospital, formerly known as Agra Lunatic Asylum, was established in September 1859 governed by the State of Uttar Pradesh. It is spread over an extensive ground of 172.8 acres (69.9 ha) land and is well-known centre for the treatment, training, and research on mental disorders in Northern India. The institute was renamed as Mental Hospital, Agra in 1925. Presently all admissions and discharges are being done under the provisions of Mental Health Act, 1987. Central Institute of Hindi (also known as Kendriya Hindi Sansthan) is an autonomous institute under Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India engaged in teaching Hindi as a foreign and second language. Apart from running residential Hindi language courses for foreign students, the institute also conducts regular training programmes for teachers of Hindi belonging to non-Hindi states of India. The institute is situated at an 11 acres (4.5 ha) campus on the outskirts of Agra city. Headquartered in Agra the institute has eight regional centres in Delhi, Hyderabad, Mysore, Shillong, Dimapur, Guwahati, Ahmedabad and Bhubneshwar. The institute is the only government-run institution in India established solely for research and teaching of Hindi as a foreign and second language. Sarojini Naidu Medical College is one of the three oldest medical colleges of India. It is located in Agra, Uttar Pradesh state. It is named after the first lady Governess of Uttar Pradesh, poet and freedom fighter, Bharat Kokila Smt. Sarojini Naidu. Agra College is one of the oldest institutions in India. Pandit Gangadhar Shastri, a noted Sanskrit scholar, founded the college in 1823. Till 1883 the institute was a government college and after that, a board of trustees and a Committee of Management managed the college. Agra College produced the first graduate in Uttar Pradesh and the first Law graduate to Northern India. St. John's College, Agra, is a college established in 1850, now part of the Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar University,

earlier known as Agra University. It is amongst the oldest Christian colleges in India. The college runs a study centre of Indira Gandhi National Open University, a central university. Raja Balwant Singh College, established in 1885, owes its existence to Raja Balwant Singh Ji of Awagarh, who enabled the institution to grow as one of the oldest and biggest colleges of Uttar Pradesh. Raja Balwant Singh College is located at Bichpuri, Agra, Uttar Pradesh, India. The college is affiliated to Uttar Pradesh Technical University, Lucknow, and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar University, Agra. Dayalbagh Educational Institute, Radha Soami Satsang Sabha, started the Radhasoami Educational Institute, as a co-educational Middle School, open to all, on 1 January 1917. It became a Degree College in 1947, affiliated to Agra University. In 1975, it formulated a programme of undergraduate studies which received approbation from the Government of Uttar Pradesh and the University Grants Commission, as a result of which in 1981 the Ministry of Education, Government of India, conferred the status of an institution deemed to be a University on the Dayalbagh Educational Institute, to implement the new scheme. Bhadawar Vidya Mandir PG College (1942)

Schools St. George's College, Agra, is one of the oldest convent schools in India. It is a Minority Anglo-Indian Christian Institution granted Minority Rights under Article 30 of the Indian Constitution. It is located near Mall Road and near to Targhar. St. Peter's College, Agra, founded in the year 1846, is one of the oldest convent schools in India. It is a Roman Catholic Institution granted Minority Rights under Article 30 of the Indian Constitution.

Media Agra is home to the Dainik Jagran newspaper, the most read Hindi newspaper in India. Other widely read papers include Amar Ujala, Rajasthan Patrika, Aaj, Hindustan, The Sea Express, daily Amar Bharti, Deepsheel Bharat, and DLA. The English dailies published are The Times of India, Hindustan Times, Economic Times, and The Pioneer. The Urdy dailies published are Prabhanjan Sanket and Inksaaf. There is also the Hindi and English mixed newspaper tabloid I-Next.

State-owned All India Radio has a local station in Agra which transmits various programs of mass interest. There are four private FM radio stations, 92.7 BIG FM (Reliance Broadcast Network Limited), 93.7 Fever FM, 94.5 Tadka FM, and Radio City 91.9 FM. There is a community Radio Station 90.4 FM.

Notable people Movies filmed in Agra Tevar Dream Girl Dream Girl 2 Luka Chuppi Mere Brother Ki Dulhan Bareilly Ki Barfi Bunty aur Babli Atrangi Re Tere Naam Phir Aayi Hasseen Dillruba 12th Fail

Sister cities Agra is twinned with:

Chengdu, Sichuan, China Petra, Jordan Tempe, Arizona Samarkand

See also Agra Graduates constituency Largest Indian cities by GDP Western Uttar Pradesh Tehsils of Agra:

Bah Etmadpur Fatehabad Kheragarh

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External links Official website of Agra district University of Washington digital collections

Varanasi

Varanasi (Hindi pronunciation: [ʋaɾənəsi], also Benares, Banaras Hindustani pronunciation: [bənəɾəs]), or Kashi, is a city on the Ganges river in northern India that has a central place in the traditions of pilgrimage, death, and mourning in the Hindu world. The city has a syncretic tradition of Islamic artisanship that underpins its religious tourism. Located in the middle-Ganges valley in the southeastern part of the state of Uttar Pradesh, Varanasi lies on the left bank of the river. It is 692 kilometres (430 mi) to the southeast of India's capital New Delhi and 320 kilometres (200 mi) to the southeast of the state capital, Lucknow. It lies 121 kilometres (75 mi) downstream of Prayagraj, where the confluence with the Yamuna river is another major Hindu pilgrimage site. Varanasi is one of the world's oldest continually inhabited cities. Kashi, its ancient name, was associated with a kingdom of the same name in the first millennium BCE. The Lion capital of Ashoka at nearby Sarnath has been interpreted to be a commemoration of the Buddha's first sermon there in the fifth century BCE. In the 8th century, Adi Shankara established the worship of Shiva as an official sect of Varanasi. Tulsidas wrote his Awadhi language epic, the *Ramcharitmanas*, a Bhakti movement reworking of the Sanskrit *Ramayana*, in Varanasi. Several other major figures of the Bhakti movement were born in Varanasi, including Kabir and Ravidas. In the 16th century, Rajput nobles in the service of the Mughal emperor Akbar, sponsored work on Hindu temples in the city in an empire-wide architectural style. In 1740, Benares Estate, a zamindari estate, was established in the vicinity of the city in the Mughal Empire's semi-autonomous province of Awadh. Under the Treaty of Faizabad, the East India Company acquired Benares city in 1775. The city became a part of the Benares Division of British India's Ceded and Conquered Provinces in 1805, the North-Western Provinces in 1836, United Provinces in 1902, and of the Republic of India's state of Uttar Pradesh in 1950. Silk weaving, carpets, crafts and tourism employ a significant number of the local population, as do the Banaras Locomotive Works and Bharat Heavy Electricals. The city is known worldwide for its many ghats-steps leading down the steep river bank to the water-where pilgrims perform rituals. Of particular note are the Dashashwamedh Ghat, the Panchganga Ghat, the Manikarnika Ghat, and the Harishchandra Ghat, the last two being where Hindus cremate their dead. The Hindu genealogy registers at Varanasi are kept here. Among the notable temples in Varanasi are the Kashi Vishwanath Temple of Shiva, the Sankat Mochan Hanuman Temple, and the Durga Temple. The city has long been an educational and musical centre: many prominent Indian philosophers, poets, writers, and musicians live or have lived in the city, and it was the place where the Benares gharana form of Hindustani classical music was developed. In the 20th century, the Hindi-Urdu writer Premchand and the shehnai player Bismillah Khan were associated with the city. India's oldest Sanskrit college, the Benares Sanskrit College, was founded by Jonathan Duncan, the resident of the East India Company in 1791. Later, education in Benares was greatly influenced by the rise of Indian nationalism in the late 19th century. Annie Besant founded the Central Hindu College in 1898. In 1916, she and Madan Mohan Malviya founded the Banaras Hindu University, India's first modern residential university. Kashi Vidyapith was established in 1921, a response to Mahatma Gandhi's non-cooperation movement.

Etymology Traditional etymology links "Varanasi" to the names of two Ganges tributaries forming the city's borders: Varuna, still flowing in northern Varanasi, and Assi, today a small stream in the southern part of the city, near Assi Ghat. The old city is located on the north shores of the Ganges, bounded by Varuna and Assi. In the *Mahabharata* and in ancient India, the city is referred to as *Kāśī* from the Sanskrit verbal root *kaś-* "to shine", making Varanasi known as "City of Light", the "luminous city as an eminent seat of learning". The name was also used by pilgrims dating from Buddha's days. Kashi is still widely popular. Hindu religious texts use many epithets in Sanskrit to refer to Varanasi, such as *Kāśīk* (transl. "the shining one"), *Avimukta* (transl. "never forsaken by Shiva"), *naḍaknana* (transl. "the forest of bliss"), *Rudraṇṣa* (transl. "the place where

Rudra resides"), and Mahāmaṇḍana (transl. "the great cremation ground").

History Mythology According to Hindu mythology, Varanasi was founded by Shiva, one of three principal deities along with Brahma and Vishnu. During a conflict between Brahma and Shiva, one of Brahma's five heads was torn off by Shiva. As was the custom, the victor carried the slain adversary's head in his hand and let it hang down from his hand as an act of ignominy, and a sign of his own bravery. A bridle was also put into the mouth. Shiva thus dishonoured Brahma's head, and kept it with him at all times. When he came to the city of Varanasi in this state, the hanging head of Brahma dropped from Shiva's hand and disappeared in the ground. Varanasi is therefore considered an extremely holy site. The Pandavas, the protagonists of the Hindu epic Mahabharata, are said to have visited the city in search of Shiva to atone for their sins of fratricide and brahmahatya that they had committed during the Kurukshetra War. It is regarded as one of seven holy cities (Sapta Puri) which can provide Moksha; Ayodhya, Mathura, Haridwar, Kashi, Kanchipuram, Avanti, and Dwarka are the seven cities known as the givers of liberation. The princesses Ambika and Ambalika of Kashi were wed to the Hastinapur ruler Vichitravirya, and they later gave birth to Pandu and Dhritarashtra. Bhima, a son of Pandu, married a Kashi princess Valandhara and their union resulted in the birth of Sarvaga, who later ruled Kashi. Dhritarashtra's eldest son Duryodhana also married a Kashi princess Bhanumati, who later bore him a son Lakshmana Kumara and a daughter Lakshmana. The Cakkavatti Sihanada Sutta text of Buddhism puts forth an idea stating that Varanasi will one day become the fabled kingdom of Ketumati in the time of Maitreya.

Ancient period Excavations in 2014 led to the discovery of artefacts dating back to 800 BCE. Further excavations at Aktha and Ramnagar, two sites in the vicinity of the city, unearthed artefacts dating back to 1800 BCE, supporting the view that the area was inhabited by this time. During the time of Gautama Buddha, Varanasi was part of the Kingdom of Kashi. The celebrated Chinese traveller Xuanzang, also known as Hiuen Tsiang, who visited the city around 635 CE, attested that the city was a centre of religious and artistic activities, and that it extended for about 5 kilometres (3.1 mi) along the western bank of the Ganges. When Xuanzang visited Varanasi in the 7th century, he named it "Polonise" (Chinese: 波羅奈; pinyin: Bōluónài; lit. 'Brahma') and wrote that the city had some 30 temples with about 30 monks. The city's religious importance continued to grow in the 8th century, when Adi Shankara established the worship of Shiva as an official sect of Varanasi.

Medieval period In 1033 CE, Varanasi faced its first Islamic incursion when Ahmad Nialtagin, a subordinate of Mahmud Ghazni, launched a sudden raid on the city. His forces plundered markets and looted gold, silver, jewels, and perfumes but retreated by mid-day due to the threat of local resistance. Although Hindu temples were partially destroyed, the damage was limited as the army stayed briefly. The following year, in 1034-35 CE, Mahmud's nephew Syed Salar Masud sought to expand Islamic influence in India. Malik Afzal Alavi led a section of his army to Varanasi but was defeated in a fierce battle near the modern-day site of Masjid-e-Ganj-e-Shahidan by local forces, possibly under the Kalachuri ruler Gangeyadeva. Despite the military leader's death, his followers were allowed to settle in the northern forests of Varanasi, creating a settlement named Alavipura (modern-day Alai Pura), inhabited by Muslim weavers and featuring shrines honouring these invaders. Chandradeva, founder of the Gahadavala dynasty made Banaras a second capital in 1090. In 1194 CE, the Ghurid conqueror Muizzuddin Muhammad Ghuri defeated the forces of Jayachandra in a battle near Jamuna and afterwards ravaged the city of Varnasi in the course of which many temples were destroyed. Varanasi remained a centre of activity for intellectuals and theologians during the Middle Ages, which further contributed to its reputation as a cultural centre of religion and education. Several major figures of the Bhakti movement were born in Varanasi, including Kabir who was born here in 1389, and Ravidas, a 15th-century socio-religious reformer, mystic, poet, traveller, and spiritual figure, who was born and lived in the city and employed in the tannery industry.

Early Modern to Modern periods (1500-1949) Numerous eminent scholars and preachers visited the city from across India and South Asia. Guru Nanak visited Varanasi for Maha Shivaratri in 1507. Kashi (Varanasi) played a large role in the founding of Sikhism. In 1567 or thereabouts, the Mughal emperor Jallaludin Muhammad Akbar sacked the city of Varanasi on his march from Allahabad (modern-day Prayagraj). However, later the Kachwaha Rajput rulers of Amber (Mughal vassals themselves) most notably under Raja Man Singh rebuilt various temples and ghats in the city. The Raja of Jaipur established the Annapurna Mandir, and the 200-metre (660 ft) Akbari Bridge was also completed during this period. The earliest tourists began arriving in the city during the 16th century. In 1665, the French traveller Jean-Baptiste Tavernier described the architectural beauty of the Vindu Madhava temple on the bank of the Ganges. The road infrastructure was also improved during this period. It was extended from Kolkata to Peshawar by Emperor Sher Shah Suri; later during the British Raj it came to be known as the famous Grand Trunk Road. In 1656, Emperor Aurangzeb ordered the destruction of many temples and the building of mosques, causing the city to experience a temporary setback. However, after Aurangzeb's death, most of India was ruled by a confederacy of pro-Hindu kings. Much of modern Varanasi was built during this time, especially during the 18th century by the Maratha and Bhumihar rulers. The kings governing Varanasi continued to wield power and importance through much of the British Raj period, including the Maharaja of Benares, or simply called by the people of Benares as Kashi Naresh. The Kingdom of Benares was given official status by the Mughals in 1737, and the kingdom started in this way and continued as a dynasty-governed area until Indian independence in 1947, during the reign of Vibhuti Narayan Singh. In the 18th century, Muhammad Shah ordered the construction of an observatory on the Ganges, attached to Man Mandir Ghat, designed to discover imperfections in the calendar in order to revise existing astronomical tables. Tourism in the city began to flourish in the 18th century. As the Mughal suzerainty weakened, the Benares zamindari estate became Banaras State, thus Balwant Singh of the Narayan dynasty regained control of the territories and declared himself Maharaja of Benares in 1740. The strong clan organisation on which they rested, brought success to the lesser known Hindu princes. There were as many as 100,000 men backing the power of the Benares rajas in what later became the districts of Benares, Gorakhpur and Azamgarh. This proved a decisive advantage when the dynasty faced a rival and the nominal suzerain, the Nawab of Oudh, in the 1750s and the 1760s.

An exhausting guerrilla war, waged by the Benares ruler against the Oudh camp, using his troops, forced the Nawab to withdraw his main force. The region was eventually ceded by the Nawab of Oudh to the Benares State, a subordinate of the East India Company, in 1775, who recognised Benares as a family dominion. In 1791 under the rule of the British, resident Jonathan Duncan founded a Sanskrit College in Varanasi. In 1867, the establishment of the Varanasi Municipal Board led to significant improvements in the city's infrastructure and basic amenities of health services, drinking water supply and sanitation. Rev. M. A. Sherring in his book *The Sacred City of Hindus: An account of Benaras in ancient and modern times* published in 1868 refers to a census conducted by James Prinsep and put the total number of temples in the city to be around 1000 during 1830s. He writes,

The history of a country is sometimes epitomised in the history of one of its principal cities. The city of Benaras represents India religiously and intellectually, just as Paris represents the political Sentiments of France. There are few cities in the world of greater antiquity, and none that have so uninterruptedly maintained their ancient celebrity and distinction. Author Mark Twain wrote in 1897 of Varanasi,

Benares is older than history, older than tradition, older even than legend, and looks twice as old as all of them put together. Benares became a princely state in 1911, with Ramnagar as its capital, but with no jurisdiction

over the city proper. The religious head, Kashi Naresh, has had his headquarters at the Ramnagar Fort since the 18th century, also a repository of the history of the kings of Varanasi, which is situated to the east of Varanasi, across the Ganges. The Kashi Naresh is deeply revered by the local people and the chief cultural patron; some devout inhabitants consider him to be the incarnation of Shiva. Annie Besant founded the Central Hindu College, which later became a foundation for the creation of Banaras Hindu University in 1916. Besant founded the college because she wanted "to bring men of all religions together under the ideal of brotherhood in order to promote Indian cultural values and to remove ill-will among different sections of the Indian population." Varanasi was ceded to the Union of India in 1947, becoming part of Uttar Pradesh after Indian independence. Vibhuti Narayan Singh incorporated his territories into the United Provinces in 1949.

21st-century Narendra Modi, prime minister of India since 2014, has represented Varanasi in the Parliament of India since 2014. Modi inaugurated the Shri Kashi Vishwanath Corridor project, which aimed to enhance the city's spiritual vibrancy by connecting many ghats to the temple of Kashi Vishwanath, in December 2021.

Geography and climate Geography Varanasi is located at an elevation of 80.71 metres (264.8 ft) in the centre of the Ganges valley of North India, in the Eastern part of the state of Uttar Pradesh, along the left crescent-shaped bank of the Ganges, averaging between 15 metres (50 ft) and 21 metres (70 ft) above the river. The city is the headquarters of Varanasi district. By road, Varanasi is located 797 kilometres (495 mi) south-east of New Delhi, 320 kilometres (200 mi) south-east of Lucknow, 121 kilometres (75 mi) east of Prayagraj, 63 kilometres (39 mi) south of Jaunpur and 51 kilometres (32 mi) north-east of Mirzapur .The "Varanasi Urban Agglomeration" - an agglomeration of seven urban sub-units - covers an area of 112 km² (43 sq mi). Neighbourhoods of the city include Adampur, Anandbagh, Bachchhaon, Bangali Tola, Bhelpura, Bulanala, Chaitganj, Chaukaghat, Chowk, Dhupchandi, Dumraon, Gandhinagar, Gautam Nagar, Giri Nagar, Gopal Vihar, Guru Nanak Nagar, Jaitpura, Kail Garh, Khanna, Kotwali, Lanka Manduadih, Luxa, Maheshpur, Mahmoorganj, Maulvibagh, Nagwar, Naipokhari, Shivala, Siddhagiribagh, and Sigra. Located in the Indo-Gangetic Plains of North India, the land is very fertile because low-level floods in the Ganges continually replenish the soil. Varanasi is situated between the Ganges confluences with two rivers: the Varuna and the Assi stream. The distance between the two confluences is around 2 miles (4 km), and serves as a sacred journeying route for Hindus, which culminates with a visit to a Sakshi Vinayak Temple.

Climate Varanasi experiences a humid subtropical climate (Kppen climate classification Cwa) with large variations between summer and winter temperatures. The dry summer starts in April and lasts until June, followed by the monsoon season from July to October. The temperature ranges between 22 and 46 C (72 and 115 F) in the summers. Winters in Varanasi see very large diurnal variations, with warm days and downright cold nights. Cold waves from the Himalayan region cause temperatures to dip across the city in the winter from December to February and temperatures below 5 C (41 F) are not uncommon. The average annual rainfall is 1,110 mm (44 in). Fog is common in the winters, while hot dry winds, called loo, blow in the summers. In recent years, the water level of the Ganges has decreased significantly; upstream dams, unregulated water extraction, and dwindling glacial sources due to global warming may be to blame.

Varanasi has been ranked 9th best "National Clean Air City" (under Category 1 >10L Population cities) in India.

Demographics According to provisional data from the 2011 census, the Varanasi urban agglomeration had a population of 1,435,113, with 761,060 men and 674,053 women. The Varanasi municipal corporation and CB had a combined population of 1,212,610 of which 642,882 were males and 569,728 in 2011. The population in

the age group of 0 to 6 years was 137,111. The population of the Varanasi urban agglomeration in 2001 was 1,371,749 with a ratio of 879 females every 1,000 males. However, the area under Varanasi Nagar Nigam has a population of 1,100,748 with a ratio of 883 females for every 1,000 males. The literacy rate in the urban agglomeration is 77% while that in the municipal corporation area is 78%. Approximately 138,000 people in the municipal area live in slums.

Religion Hinduism is predominantly followed in Varanasi with Islam being the largest minority. Nearly 70% of the population follows Hinduism. The city also agglomerate different religions such as Christianity, Sikhism, Jainism and Buddhism. The city is also a centre for Buddhist pilgrimage. At Sarnath, just northeast of Varanasi, the Buddha gave his first teaching (Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta) after attaining enlightenment. According to the Buddhavaṃsa, a hagiographical Buddhist text, Varanasi is stated to have been the birthplace of the previous Buddha, known as Kassapa Buddha. In the sacred geography of India Varanasi is known as the "microcosm of India". In addition to its 3,300 Hindu religious places, Varanasi has 12 churches, three Jain mandirs, nine Buddhist shrines, three Gurdwaras (Sikh shrines), and 1,388 Muslim holy places.

Languages At the time of the 2011 Census of India, 83.87% of the population of Varansi Municipal Corporation and Cantonment Board spoke Hindi, 9.03% Urdu, 4.81% Bhojpuri, and 0.92% Bengali as their first language.

Administration and politics Administration General administration Varanasi division which consists of four districts, and is headed by the Divisional Commissioner of Varanasi, who is an IAS officer of high seniority, the Commissioner is the head of local government institutions (including Municipal Corporations) in the division, is in charge of infrastructure development in his division, and is also responsible for maintaining law and order in the division. The District Magistrate of Varanasi reports to the Divisional Commissioner. The Commissioner is Deepak Agarwal. Varanasi district administration is headed by the District Magistrate of Varanasi, who is an IAS officer. The DM is in charge of property records and revenue collection for the central government and oversees the elections held in the city. The DM is also responsible for maintaining law and order in the city, hence the SSP of Varanasi also reports to the DM of Varanasi. The DM is assisted by a Chief Development Officer (CDO), four Additional District Magistrates (ADM) (Finance/Revenue, City, Protocol, Executive), one chief revenue officer (CRO), one City Magistrate (CM), and four Additional City Magistrates (ACM). The district has three tehsils, each headed by a Sub-Divisional Magistrate. The DM is Kaushal Raj Sharma.

Police administration Varanasi district comes under the Varanasi Police Zone and Varanasi Police Range, Varanasi Zone is headed by an Additional Director General ranked IPS officer, and the Varanasi Range is headed Inspector General ranked IPS officer. The ADG, Varanasi Zone is Biswajit Mahapatra, and IG, Varanasi Range is Vijay Singh Meena. The district police up to the date of 24 March 2021 was headed by a Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), who is an IPS officer, and is assisted by six Superintendents of Police (SP)/Additional Superintendents of Police (Addl. SP) (City, Rural Area, Crime, Traffic, Protocol and Protocol), who are either IPS officers or PPS officers. Each of the several police circles is headed by a Circle Officer (CO) in the rank of Deputy Superintendent of Police. The last SSP was Amit Pathak. On 25 March 2021 the Government of Uttar Pradesh passed an order to divide the Varanasi police into Varanasi City Police and Rural Police. Since then City Police is headed by the Commissioner of Police (CP), who is an IPS officer of ADGP rank, and is assisted by two additional commissioners of police (Addl. CP) who is of DIG rank, and two deputy commissioners of police (DCP) who are of SP rank. And Rural Police is headed by SP rank.

Infrastructure and civic administration The development of infrastructure in the city is overseen by the Varanasi Development Authority (VDA), which comes under the Housing Department of Uttar Pradesh government. The divisional commissioner of Varanasi acts as the ex-officio chairman of the VDA, whereas the vice-chairman, a government-appointed Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer, looks after the daily matters of the authority. The vice-chairman of the Varanasi Development Authority is Pulkit Khare. The Varanasi Municipal Corporation oversees civic activities in the city; the head of the corporation is the mayor, and the executive and administration of the corporation is the responsibility of the municipal commissioner, who is appointed by the government of Uttar Pradesh and is either an IAS officer or Provincial Civil Service (PCS) officer of high seniority. The mayor of Varanasi is Mridula Jaiswal, and the municipal commissioner is Nitin Bansal. Water supply and sewage system is operated by the Uttar Pradesh Jal Nigam.

Politics Varanasi is represented in the Lok Sabha by the Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi who won the Lok Sabha elections in 2014 and subsequently in 2019 by a huge margin.

Healthcare Hospitals in the city include the Sir Sunderlal Hospital, a teaching hospital in the Banaras Hindu University, Heritage Hospital, Marwari Hospital, Pitambari Hospital, Mata Anand Mai Hospital, Rajkiya Hospital, Ram Krishna Mission Hospital, Shiv Prasad Gupta Hospital, Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital (managed by the state government), and Varanasi Hospital and Medical Research Centre. The urban parts of the Varanasi district had an infant mortality rate of 70 per 1,000 live births in 2010-2011. The Railway Cancer Hospital is now being run by the Tata Memorial Centre after intervention by Prime Minister Narendra Modi who represents Varanasi. Sushruta, an ancient Indian physician known as the primary author of the treatise Sushruta Samhita, the Sanskrit text of surgery, lived in Varanasi and practised medicine and surgery sometime during the 5th century BCE. Since 1922, Ayurveda has been a subject of training in the Banaras Hindu University, and in 1927 a separate Ayurvedic College was established. There are many ayurvedic centres in Varanasi providing treatments such as Panchakarma as well as other treatments.

Public maintenance Because of the high population density of Varanasi and the increasing number of tourists, the Uttar Pradesh government and international non-governmental organisations and institutions have expressed grave concern for the pollution and pressures on infrastructure in the city, mainly the sewage, sanitation, and drainage components. Pollution of the Ganges is a particular source of worry because of the religious significance of the river, the dependence of people on it as a source of drinking water, and its prominence as a symbol of Varanasi and the city itself. The sewage problem is exacerbated by the role of the Ganges in bathing and in river traffic, which is very difficult to control. Because of the sewage, people using local untreated water have higher risk of contracting a range of water-borne stomach diseases. Parts of Varanasi are contaminated with industrial chemicals including toxic heavy metal. Studies of wastewater from Varanasi's sewage treatment plants identify that water's contamination with metals and the reuse of this water for irrigation as a way that the toxic metals come to be in the plants that people grow for food. One studied example is palak, a popular leafy vegetable which takes up heavy metal when it is in the soil, and which people then eat. Some of the polluting sludge contains minerals which are fertiliser, which could make polluted water attractive to use. Pesticides used in local farming are persistent enough to be spread through the water, to sewer treatment, then back to the farms as wastewater. Varanasi's water supply and sewage system is maintained by Jal Nigam, a subsidiary of Varanasi Nagar Nigam. Power supply is by the Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Limited. The city produces about 350,000,000 litres (77,000,000 imp gal; 92,000,000 US gal) per day of sewage and 425 tonnes (418 long tons; 468 short tons) per day of solid waste. The solid wastes are disposed in one landfill site.

Economy According to the 2006 City Development Plan for Varanasi, approximately 29% of Varanasi's population is employed. Approximately 40% are employed in manufacturing, 26% work in trade and commerce, 19% work in other services, 8% work in transport and communication, 4% work in agriculture, 2% work in construction, and 2% are marginal workers (working for less than half of the year).

Among manufacturing workers, 51% work in spinning and weaving, 15% work in metal, 6% work in printing and publishing, 5% work in electrical machinery, and the rest work in a wide variety of industry sectors. Varanasi's manufacturing industry is not well developed and is dominated by small-scale industries and household production. Silk weaving is the dominant industry in Varanasi. Muslims are the influential community in this industry with nearly half a million of them working as weavers, dyers, sari finishers, and salespersons. Weaving is typically done within the household, and most weavers are Momin Ansari Muslims. Varanasi is known throughout India for its production of very fine silk and Banarasi saris, brocades with gold and silver thread work, which are often used for weddings and special occasions. The production of silk often uses bonded child labour, though perhaps not at a higher rate than elsewhere in India. The silk weaving industry has recently been threatened by the rise of power looms and computer-generated designs and by competition from Chinese silk imports. Trade Facilitation Centre is a modern and integrated facility to support the handloom and handicraft sector in Varanasi; providing trade enhancement and facilitation to both domestic and international buyers. Hence, carrying forward the rich traditions of handlooms and handicrafts. In the metal manufacturing sector, Banaras Locomotive Works is a major employer. Bharat Heavy Electricals, a large power equipment manufacturer, also operates a heavy equipment maintenance plant. Other major commodities manufactured and traded in Varanasi include hand-knotted Mirzapur carpets, rugs, dhurries, brassware, copperware, wooden and clay toys, handicrafts, gold jewellery, and musical instruments. Important agricultural products include betel leaves (for paan), langra mangoes and khoa (solidified milk).

Tourism Tourism is Varanasi's second most important industry. Domestic tourist most commonly visit for religious purposes while foreign tourist visit for ghats along River Ganges and Sarnath. Most domestic tourists are from Bihar, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, and other parts of Uttar Pradesh, while the majority of foreign tourists are from Sri Lanka and Japan. The peak tourist season falls between October and March. In total, there are around 12,000 beds available in the city, of which about one half are in inexpensive budget hotels and one third in dharamsalas. Overall, Varanasi's tourist infrastructure is not well developed. In 2017, InterContinental Hotels Group made an agreement with the JHV group to set up Holiday Inn and Crowne Plaza hotel chains in Varanasi.

The prominent malls and multiplexes in Varanasi are JHV Mall in the Cantonment area, IP Mall in Srigra, IP Vijaya Mall in Bhelupur, Vinayak Plaza in Maldhaiya and PDR Mall in Luxa.

Notable landmarks Apart from the 19 archaeological sites identified by the Archaeological Survey of India, some of the prominent places of interest are the Aghor Peeth, the Alamgir Mosque, the Ashoka Pillar, the Bharat Kala Bhavan (Art Museum), the Bharat Mata Mandir, the Central University for Tibetan Studies, the Dhanvantari Temple, the Durga Temple, the Jantar Mantar, the Kashi Vishwanath Temple, the Sankat Mochan Hanuman Temple, the Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapith, the Shri Vishwanath Temple on the BHU campus, the Ramnagar Fort, the Riverfront Ghats, the Tulsi Manas Temple.

Jantar Mantar The Jantar Mantar observatory, constructed in 1737, is located above the ghats along the Ganges, and is adjacent to the Manmandir and Dasaswamedh Ghats and near the palace of Jai Singh II of

Jaipur. While less equipped than the observatories at Jaipur and Delhi, the Jantar Mantar has a unique equatorial sundial which is functional and allows measurements to be monitored and recorded by one person.

Ramnagar Fort The Ramnagar Fort, located near the Ganges on its eastern bank and opposite the Tulsi Ghat, was built in the 18th century by Kashi Naresh Balwant Singh with cream-coloured chunar sandstone. The fort is a typical example of the Mughal architecture with carved balconies, open courtyards, and scenic pavilions. At present, the fort is in disrepair. The fort and its museum are the repository of the history of the kings of Benares. Cited as an "eccentric" museum, it contains a rare collection of American vintage cars, bejewelled sedan chairs, an impressive weaponry hall, and a rare astrological clock. In addition, manuscripts, especially religious writings, are housed in the Saraswati Bhawan which is a part of a museum within the fort. Many books illustrated in the Mughal miniature style are also part of the collections. Because of its scenic location on the banks of the Ganges, it is frequently used as an outdoor shooting location for films.

Ghats The Ghats in Varanasi are world-renowned embankments made in steps of stone slabs along the river bank where pilgrims perform ritual ablutions. The ghats are an integral complement to the Hindu concept of divinity represented in physical, metaphysical, and supernatural elements. Varanasi has at least 84 ghats, most of which are used for bathing by pilgrims and spiritually significant Hindu puja ceremony, while a few are used exclusively as Hindu cremation sites. Steps in the ghats lead to the banks of Ganges, including the Dashashwamedh Ghat, the Manikarnika Ghat, the Panchganga Ghat, and the Harishchandra Ghat, where Hindus cremate their dead. Many ghats are associated with Hindu legends and several are now privately owned. Many of the ghats were constructed under the patronage of the Marathas like Scindias, Holkars, Bhonsles, and Peshwas. Most are bathing ghats, while others are used as cremation sites. A morning boat ride on the Ganges across the ghats is a popular tourist attraction. The extensive stretches of ghats in Varanasi enhance the riverfront with a multitude of shrines, temples, and palaces built "tier on the tier above the water's edge".

The Dashashwamedh Ghat is the main and probably the oldest ghat of Varanasi located on the Ganges, close to the Kashi Vishwanath Temple. It is believed that Brahma created this ghat to welcome Shiva and sacrificed ten horses during the Dasa-Ashwamedha yajna performed there. Above and adjacent to this ghat, there are also temples dedicated to Sulatankesvara, Brahmesvara, Varahesvara, Abhaya Vinayaka, Ganga (the Ganges), and Bandi Devi, which are all important pilgrimage sites. A group of priests performs "Agni Pooja" (Sanskrit: "Worship of Fire") daily in the evening at this ghat as a dedication to Shiva, Ganga, Surya (Sun), Agni (Fire), and the entire universe. Special aartis are held on Tuesdays and on religious festivals. The Manikarnika Ghat is the Mahasmasana, the primary site for Hindu cremation in the city. Adjoining the ghat, there are raised platforms that are used for death anniversary rituals. According to a myth, it is said that an earring of Shiva or his wife Sati fell here. Fourth-century Gupta period inscriptions mention this ghat. However, the current ghat as a permanent riverside embankment was built in 1302 and has been renovated at least three times throughout its existence. The Jain Ghat is believed to be birthplace of Suparshvanatha (7th Tirthankara) and Parshvanatha (23rd tirthankara). The Jain Ghat or Bachraj Ghat is a Jain Ghat and has three Jain Temples located on the banks of the River. It is believed that the Jain Maharajas used to own these ghats. Bachraj Ghat has three Jain temples near the river's banks, and one of them is a very ancient temple of Tirthankara Suparshwanath.

Temples Among the estimated 23,000 temples in Varanasi, the temples most popular for worship are: the Kashi Vishwanath Temple of Shiva; the Sankat Mochan Hanuman Temple; and the Durga Temple, known for monkeys that reside in the large trees nearby.

The Kashi Vishwanath Temple, on the Ganges, is one of the 12 Jyotirlinga Shiva temples in Varanasi. The temple has been destroyed and rebuilt several times throughout its existence. The Gyanvapi Mosque, which is adjacent to the temple, is the original site of the temple. The temple, which is also known as the Golden Temple, was built in 1780 by Queen Ahilyabai Holkar of Indore. The two pinnacles of the temple are covered in gold and were donated in 1839 by Ranjit Singh, the ruler of Punjab. The dome is scheduled to receive gold plating through a proposed initiative of the Ministry of Culture and Religious Affairs of Uttar Pradesh. Numerous rituals, prayers, and aartis are held daily at the temple between 02:30 and 23:00. The Sankat Mochan Hanuman Temple, which is situated by the Asi River, is one of the sacred temples of the Hindu god Hanuman. The present temple was built in the early 1900s by the educationist and Indian independence figure, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, the founder of Banaras Hindu University. According to Hindu legend the temple was built on the spot where the medieval Hindu saint Tulsidas had a vision of Hanuman. During a 7 March 2006 terrorist attack, one of three explosions hit the temple while a wedding was in progress, and resulted in injuries to 30 people apart from 23 deaths. Following the attack, a permanent police post was installed inside the temple. There are two temples dedicated to the goddess Durga in Varanasi: Durga Mandir built in the 16th century (exact date not known), and Durga Kund (Sanskrit 'kund' meaning "pond or pool") built in the 18th century. A large number of Hindu devotees visit Durga Kund during Navratri to worship the goddess Durga. The temple, built in the Nagara architectural style, has multi-tiered spires and is stained red with ochre, representing the red colour of Durga. The building has a rectangular tank of water called the Durga Kund ("Kund" meaning a pond or pool). During annual celebrations of Nag Panchami, the act of depicting the god Vishnu reclining on the serpent Shesha is recreated in the Kund. While the Annapurna Temple, located nearby to the Kashi Vishwanath Temple, is dedicated to Annapoorna devi, the goddess of food, the Sankatha Temple adjacent to the Sindhia Ghat is dedicated to Sankatha, the goddess of remedy. The Sankatha Temple has a large sculpture of a lion and a cluster of nine smaller temples dedicated to the nine planets. Parshvanath Jain temple is the temple of Jain religion dedicated to Parshvanath, the 23rd Thirthankara who was born at Bhelapur in Varanasi. The idol deified in the temple is of black colour and 75 centimetres (30 inches) in height. It is located in Bhelapur about 5 kilometres (3.1 miles) from the centre of Varanasi city and 3 kilometres (1.9 miles) from the Benares Hindu University. It belongs to the Digambar sect of Jainism and is a holy tirtha or pilgrimage centre for Jains. Other temples of note are: the Bharat Mata Mandir, dedicated to the national personification of India, which was inaugurated by Mahatma Gandhi in 1936, the Kalabhairav Temple, the Mrithyunjay Mahadev Temple, and the New Vishwanath Temple located in the campus of BHU, the Tulsi Manas Mandir.

Mosques There are 15 mosques of significant historical value in Varanasi. Of particular note are the Abdul Razzaq, Alamgir, Bibi Razia, Chaukhambha, Dhairi Kangore, Fatman, Ganje Shahada, Gyanavapi, and Hazrat Sayyed Salar Masud Dargah. Many of these mosques were constructed from the components of the Hindu shrines which were destroyed under the auspices of subsequent Muslim invaders or rulers. The two such well known mosques are the Gyanvapi Mosque and the Alamgir Mosque. The Gyanvapi Mosque was built by the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb in 1664 CE, after destroying a Hindu temple. Gyan Vapi (Sanskrit: "the well of knowledge"), the name of the mosque, is derived from a well of the same name located within the precincts of the mosque. The remains of an erstwhile temple can be seen in the foundation, the columns and at the rear part of the mosque. The facade of the mosque is modelled partially on the Taj Mahal's entrance. The mosque is administered by the Anjuman Inthazamiya Masajid (AIM). The Alamgiri Mosque was built in the 17th century by Aurangzeb over the ruins of a Hindu temple known as Bindu Madhav Temple. The temple that was destroyed was dedicated to Vishnu in the form of Bindu Madhav and had been built by Beni Madhavrao Scindia, a Maratha chieftain from Gwalior. When emperor Aurangzeb had captured Banaras, he had ordered total destruction of all Hindu temples there. Aurangzeb then built a mosque over the ruins of this temple in 1669 and named it as Alamagir Mosque in the name of his own honorific title "Alamgir" which he had adopted after becoming the emperor of Mughal empire. The mosque is located at a prominent site above the Panchganga

Ghat, which is a funerary ghat facing the Ganges. The mosque is architecturally a blend of Islamic and Hindu architecture, particularly because of the lower part of the walls of the mosque having been built fully with the remains of the Hindu temple. The mosque has high domes and minarets. Two of its minarets had been damaged; one minaret crashed killing a few people and the other minaret was officially brought down because of stability concerns. Non-Muslims are not allowed to enter the mosque. The mosque has a security cordon of a police force.

Shri Guru Ravidass Janam Asthan Shri Guru Ravidass Janam Asthan, at Sir Gobardhan is the ultimate place of pilgrimage or religious headquarters for followers of the Ravidassia religion. The foundation stone was laid on 14 June 1965 on Ashad Sankranti day at the birthplace of Ravidas. The temple was completed in 1994.

Sarnath Sarnath is located 10 kilometres north-east of Varanasi near the confluence of the Ganges and the Varuna rivers in Uttar Pradesh, India. The deer park in Sarnath is where Gautama Buddha first taught the Dharma, and where the Buddhist Sangha came into existence through the enlightenment of Kondanna, as described by the Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta. The city is mentioned by the Buddha as one of the four places of pilgrimage which his devout followers should visit.

Culture Literature Renowned Indian writers who have resided in the city were Kabir, Ravidas, and Tulsidas, who wrote much of his Ram Charit Manas here. Kulluka Bhatt wrote the best known account of Manusmriti in Varanasi in the 15th century. Later writers of the city have included Acharya Shukla, Baldev Upadhyaya, Bharatendu Harishchandra, Devaki Nandan Khatri, Premchand, Hazari Prasad Dwivedi, Jaishankar Prasad, Kshetresa Chandra Chattopadhyaya, Sudama Pandey (Dhoomil), Vagish Shastri, and Vidya Niwas Mishra. Several newspapers and journals are or were published in Varanasi such as Varanasi Chandroday and its successor Kashivartaprakashika, which became a weekly journal, first published on 1 June 1851. The main newspaper is Aj, a Hindi-language nationalist newspaper first published in 1920. The newspaper was the bulwark of the Indian National Congress and is a major newspaper of Hindi northern India.

Art Varanasi is a major centre of arts and designs. It is a producer of silks and brocades with gold and silver thread work, carpet weaving, wooden toys, bangles made of glass, ivory work, perfumes, artistic brass and copper ware and a variety of handicrafts. The cantonment graveyard of the British Raj is now the location of Varanasi's Arts and Crafts. Notable artists (musicians and dancers) and historians who are connected with the city include Thakur Jaidev Singh, Mahadev Prasad Mishra, Bismillah Khan, Ravi Shankar, Girija Devi, Gopal Shankar Misra, Gopi Krishna, Kishan Maharaj, Lalmani Misra, Premlata Sharma, N. Rajam, Siddheshwari Devi, Samta Prasad, Sitara Devi, Chhannulal Mishra, Rajan Sajan Mishra, Ritwik Sanyal, Soma Ghosh, Devashish Dey, Ramkrishna Das and Harish Tiwari.

Music Varanasi's music tradition is traced to the Pauranic days. According to ancient legend, Shiva is credited with evolving music and dance forms. During the medieval era, Vaishnavism, a Bhakti movement, grew in popularity, and Varanasi became a thriving centre for musicians such as Surdas, Kabir, Ravidas, Meera and Tulsidas. During the monarchic rule of Govind Chandra in the 16th century, the Dhrupad style of singing received royal patronage and led to other related forms of music such as Dhamar, Hori, and Chaturang. Presently the Dhrupad maestro Pandit Ritwik Sanyal from Varanasi is working for the revival of this art-music.

The legend Bollywood singer Hemant Kumar or, Hemanta Mukherjee known as "Voice Of God" was born in Benaras. In recent times, Girija Devi, the native famous classical singer of thumris, was widely appreciated and

respected for her musical renderings. Varanasi is also associated with many great instrumentalists such as Bismillah Khan and Pandit Ravi Shankar, the famous sitar player and musicologist who was given the highest civilian award of the country, the Bharat Ratna. Varanasi has joined the global bandwagon of UNESCO "Cities of Music" under the Creative Cities Network.

Festivals On Maha Shivaratri (February), a procession of Shiva proceeds from the Mahamrityunjaya Temple to the Kashi Vishwanath Temple. Dhrupad Mela is a five-day musical festival devoted to dhrupad style held at Tulsi Ghat in February-March. The Sankat Mochan Hanuman Temple celebrates Hanuman Jayanti (March-April), the birthday of Hanuman. A special puja, aarti, and a public procession is organised. Since 1923, the temple has organised a five-day classical music and dance concert festival named Sankat Mochan Sangeet Samaroh, wherein iconic artists from all parts of India are invited to perform.

The Durga Puja celebrated by bengalis of Varanasi in a large form. A centuries-old Durga idol housed in Purana Durga Bari, installed in 1767 by Kali Prasanna Mukhopadhyay. The Bharat Sevashram Sangha was founded in 1939, which is celebrating Durga Puja from decades. The famous Durga Kund Mandir was constructed by Rani Bhabani of Natore is another place for devotion of Durga. Along with several local bengali cultural clubs performs several functions like jatra (folk theatre) singing competitions, dhunuchi nach, dance programs performed by the girls along with free Bhandaras for five days in several puja pandals. Volunteers majorly helps, present in every pandal and the celebration happens grandly. The Ramlila of Ramnagar is a dramatic enactment of Rama's legend, as told in Ramacharitamanasa. The plays, sponsored by Kashi Naresh, are performed in Ramnagar every evening for 31 days. On the last day, the festivities reach a crescendo as Rama vanquishes the demon king Ravana. Kashi Naresh Udit Narayan Singh started this tradition around 1830. Chhath Puja is celebrated on the sixth day of the lunar month of Kartika (October-November). The rituals are observed over four days. They include holy bathing, fasting and abstaining from drinking water (vrata), standing in water, and offering prasad (prayer offerings) and arghya to the setting and rising sun. Some devotees also perform a prostration march as they head for the river banks. Chhath puja is dedicated to the sun god "Surya" and his sister "Chhathi Maiya". Chhath is considered as Mahaparva by the Bhojpuri people.

Nag Nathaiya is celebrated on the fourth lunar day of the dark fortnight of the Hindu month of Kartik (October-November). It commemorates the victory of Krishna over the serpent Kaliya. On this occasion, a large Kadamba tree (Neolamarckia cadamba) branch is planted on the banks of the Ganges so that a boy, playing the role of Krishna, can jump into the river on to the effigy representing Kaliya. He stands over the effigy in a dancing pose playing the flute, while an audience watches from the banks of the river or from boats. Bharat Milap celebrates the meeting of Rama and his younger brother Bharata after the return of the former after 14 years of exile. It is celebrated during October-November, a day after the festival of Vijayadashami. Kashi Naresh attends this festival in his regal attire. The festival attracts a large number of devotees. Ganga Mahotsav is a five-day music festival organised by the Uttar Pradesh Tourism Department, held in November-December. It culminates a day before Kartik Purnima, also called the Ganges festival. On this occasion the Ganges is attended by thousands of pilgrims, release lighted lamps to float in the river from the ghats. The primary Muslim festivals celebrated annually in the city are the Eid al-Fitr, Bakrid, mid-Sha'ban, Bara Wafat and Muharram. Additional festivals include Alvida and Chehlum. A non-religious festival observed by Muslims is Ghazi-Miyan-ka-byaha ("the marriage of Ghazi Miyan").

Cuisine In 2019, the sale of meat was banned within 250 meters of all Varanasi temples and heritage sites. In 2025, the sale of all meat was banned in Varanasi during Navaratri.

Education Historically, Varanasi has been a centre for education in India, attracting students and scholars from across the country. Varanasi has an overall literacy rate of 80% (male literacy: 85%, female literacy: 75%). It is home to a number of colleges and universities. Most notably, it is the site of Banaras Hindu University (BHU), which is one of the largest residential universities in Asia with over 20,000 students. The Indian Institute of Technology (BHU) Varanasi is designated an Institute of National Importance and is one of 16 Indian Institutes of Technology. Other colleges and universities in Varanasi include Jamia-e-Imania, the Institute of Integrated Management and Technology, Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapith, Nav Sadhana Kala Kendra, Sampurnanand Sanskrit University and Sri Agrasen Kanya P.G. College. Various engineering colleges have been established in the outskirts of the city. Other notable universities and colleges include Institute of Medical Sciences, Sampurnanand Sanskrit Vishwavidyalaya, Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, and Harish Chandra Postgraduate College. Some research oriented institutes were also established by the government such as International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), Indian Institute of Vegetable Research and National Seed Research and Training Centre.

Varanasi also has three Kendriya Vidyalaya. Among them Kendriya Vidyalaya BHU holds the regional office of Varanasi Region of KVS and is seat of deputy commissioner. Kendriya Vidyalaya BHU is also accredited by the British Council. Other KVs are Kendriya Vidyalaya 39 GTC and Kendriya Vidyalaya DLW. St. Joseph's Convent School, in Shivpur, Varanasi, was established by the Sisters of Our Lady of Providence of France as a Catholic (Christian) minority institution with the approval of the Government of Uttar Pradesh. It is an autonomous organisation under the diocese of the Bishop of Varanasi. It provides education not only to the Catholic Christian children, but also to others who abide by its rules. Another important institution is the Central Hindu School in Kamachha. This was established by Annie Besant in July 1898 with the objective of imparting secular education. It is affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education and is open to students of all cultures. Schools in Varanasi are affiliated with the Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE), the CBSE, or the Uttar Pradesh Board of Technical Education (U.P Board). The overall "state of education in Varanasi is ... not good." Schools in Varanasi vary widely in quality, with private schools outperforming government schools. In government schools, many teachers fail to come to class or to teach children. Some government schools lack basic equipment, such as blackboards and sufficient desks and chairs for all students. Private schools vary in quality, with the most expensive conducting lessons in English (seen as a key to children's success) and having computers in classrooms. Pupils attending the more expensive private schools, tended to come from upper-class families. Lower-cost private schools attracted children from lower-income families or those lower-income families with higher education aspirations. Government schools tend to serve lower-class children with lower education aspirations.

Media Varanasi caters a lot of shooting from different film industries in India. The temple town has emerged as a hub to Hindi film industry and South film industry. Also, a chunk of Bhojpuri movies are shot in the city. A few Bollywood movies that were shot, include Gangs of Wasseypur, Masaan, Raanjhanaa, Piku, Shubh Mangal Zyada Saavdhan and Super 30. Some parts of the Hollywood movie The Curious Case of Benjamin Button were also shot. Web series such as Mirzapur and Asur were also shot in temple town. Newspapers are widely available in Hindi and English. Aj, Hindi newspaper was established in 1920 in Varanasi. Some publishers in the city are:

The city also hosts a Doordarshan Kendra, which was established in 1984 by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. In 1998, Doordarshan studio was setup. FM/AM Stations available in the city are:

Mobile apps such as "InVaranasi", "Varanasi" and "LiveVNS" provide a wide range of information related to travel and local news.

Sport Basketball, cricket, and field hockey are popular sports in Varanasi. The main stadium in the city is the Dr Sampurnanda Stadium (Sigra Stadium), where first-class cricket matches are held. The city also caters an AstroTurf hockey stadium named, Dr. Bheemrao Ambedker National Hockey Stadium. The Department of Physical Education, Faculty of Arts of BHU offers diploma courses in Sports Management, Sports Physiotherapy, Sports Psychology and Sports Journalism. Also, BHU caters sports complexes including badminton court, tennis court, swimming pool and amphitheater. Gymnastics is also popular in Varanasi, and many Indian girls practise outdoors at the ghats in the mornings which hosts akhadas, where "morning exercise, a dip in the Ganges and a visit to Lord Hanuman" forms a daily ritual. Despite concerns regarding water quality, two swimming clubs offer swimming lessons in the Ganges. The Varanasi District Chess Sports Association (VDCSA) is based in Varanasi, affiliated to the regional Uttar Pradesh Chess Sports Association (UPCSA).

Transport Within the city mobility is provided by taxis, rickshaws, cycle rickshaws, and three-wheelers, but with certain restrictions in the old town area of the city.

Air transport Varanasi is served by Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport (IATA: VNS, ICAO: VEBN), which is approximately 26 km (16 mi) from the city centre in Babatpur. The airport's new terminal was inaugurated in 2010, and it was granted international airport status on 4 October 2012.

Railways Varanasi Junction, commonly known as Varanasi Cantt Railway Station, is the city's largest railway station. More than 360,000 passengers and 240 trains pass through each day. Banaras railway station is also a Terminal station of Varanasi. Because of huge rush at Varanasi Junction, the railway station was developed as a high facilitated terminal. Varanasi City railway station is also one of the railway stations in Varanasi district. It is located 4 kilometres (2.5 mi) north-east of Varanasi Junction railway station. It serves as Terminal station because of heavy rush at Varanasi Junction. Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Junction railway station is also the important station in Varanasi suburban. Some important express trains operating from the Varanasi Junction railway station and Banaras railway station are: Shiv Ganga Express runs between New Delhi Junction and Manduadih station while Mahamana Express runs between Varanasi junction and New Delhi Junction; the Udhna Varanasi Express that runs between Udhna (Surat) junction and Varanasi, a distance of 1,398 kilometres (869 mi); the Kashi Vishwanath Express that runs between Varanasi and New Delhi railway station; the Kanpur Varanasi InterCity express, also called Varuna express, which runs over a distance of 355 kilometres (221 mi) and connects with Lucknow (the capital city of Uttar Pradesh) and Varanasi; and the Sabarmati Express which runs between Varanasi and Ahmedabad. Vande Bharat Express, a semi-high speed train was launched in the month of February in 2019 in the Delhi-Varanasi route. The train reduced the time travel between the two cities by 15 per cent as compared to the Shatabdi Express. Varanasi has following railway stations within the city suburbs:

Ropeway Kashi ropeway is under construction since 2023. It will be 3.75 kilometres (2.33 mi) long and will have a maximum capacity of 3000 passengers per hour per direction. It will cover the cantonment area to Godowlia, which will reduce travel time from 45 minutes to around 15 minutes.

Roads Auto rickshaws and E-rickshaws are the most widely available forms of public transport in the old city. In the outer regions of the city, taxis are available. Daily commuters prefer city buses, which operate on specific routes of urban and suburban areas. The city buses are operated by Varanasi City Transport Service Limited. Nearly, 120 buses are operated by Varanasi City Transport Service Limited. The following National Highways pass through Varanasi:

The heavy traffic of the city is monitored through Integrated Traffic Management System. The smart traffic management system equips the city with automatic signal control system, separate signal system for pedestrians, traffic management centre at state level, area traffic control system, corridor management and dynamic traffic indicators for smooth movement of traffic. Varanasi Traffic Police keeps an eye through Smart Command and Control Centre.

Inland waterways National Waterway 1 passes through Varanasi. In 2018, a new inland port was established on the banks of Ganges River. The Multi-Modal Terminal is designed to handle 1.26 million metric tons of cargo every year and covers an area of 34 hectares. Nearly, ₹170 crore was invested by the government to set up an inland port. Maersk started its container service in 2019 by moving 16 containers on NW-1 from Varanasi to Kolkata. The port also catered PepsiCo, IFFCO Fertilizers, Emami Agrotech and Dabur for cargo movement.

Projects Due to growing population and industrial demands, the city is being implanted with several infrastructural projects. In fiscal year 2014-18, the city was awarded with projects worth ₹30,000 crore. The city is being invested by both private and public players in different sectors. There are many undergoing projects and many have been planned.

Road The government is executing seven road projects connecting Varanasi, the total project cost being ₹7,100 crore (US\$840 million) and the total length of the project being 524 kilometres (326 mi). Some important projects are:

Six lane Varanasi-Aurangabad section of NH-19 Six lane Varanasi-Allahabad NH-19 Four lane Varanasi-Gorakhpur NH-29 Ghagra Bridge-Varanasi section of NH-233 Four lane Varanasi-Azamgarh Section NH-233 Four lane Varanasi-Sultanpur NH-56 New four lane Varanasi-Ayodhya Highway Varanasi Ring Road Phase - 2 Ganga Expressway Phase - 2 Varanasi-Ranchi-Kolkata Greenfield Expressway Purvanchal Link Expressway

Railways In 2018, the budget reflected undergoing rail projects of worth ₹4,500 crore (US\$530 million). Some important projects are:

3rd rail line between Varanasi-Mughalsarai New Delhi-Varanasi High Speed Rail Corridor Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor (Jeonathpur Railway Station) Kashi Railway Station to be developed as Intermodal Station (IMS)

Airport Extension of runway by 1325 meters (First of its kind: National Highway under the airport runway) New terminal with passenger capacity of 4.5 million per year

Metro The Varanasi Metro is a rapid transit proposed for Varanasi. The proposed system consists of two lines, spanning from BHEL to Banaras Hindu University (19.35 kilometres (12.02 mi)) and Benia Bagh to Sarnath (9.885 kilometres (6.142 mi)). The feasibility study of the project was done by RITES and was completed in June 2015. There will be 26 stations, including 20 underground and six elevated on the two lines, which includes total length of 29.235 kilometres (18.166 mi) consisting of 23.467 kilometres (14.582 mi) underground, while 5.768 kilometres (3.584 mi) will be elevated. The total estimated completion cost for construction of Varanasi Metro is estimated to be ₹13,133 crore (US\$1.6 billion).

Commercial Rudraksha Convention Centre Kashi Vishwanath Corridor 100 acres (40 ha) freight village for multimodal terminal Film city to be developed in area of 106 acres (43 ha) Bus terminal cum shopping mall IT Park Textile Park Integrated Commissioner Complex (ICC) twin towers

Notable people List of people from Varanasi

Sister cities See also Gallery References Notes Citations General bibliography Further reading Banks, Marcus; Morphy, Howard (1999). *Rethinking Visual Anthropology*. Yale University Press. ISBN 978-0-300-07854-1. Kara, Siddharth (2010). *Sex Trafficking: Inside the Business of Modern Slavery*. Columbia University Press. ISBN 978-0-231-13961-8. Misra, Jaishree (2007). *Rani*. Penguin Books India. ISBN 978-0-14-310210-6. A work of fiction. Mukherjee, Neela (2002). *Alternative Perspectives on Livelihood, Agriculture and Air Pollution*. Concept Publishing Company. ISBN 978-81-7022-986-5. Partridge, Christopher Hugh (2005). *Introduction to World Religions*. Fortress Press. ISBN 978-0-8006-3714-9. Singh, Sarina (2009). *India*. Lonely Planet. ISBN 978-1-74179-151-8. Singh, Vipul (2007). *Longman Panorama History 7*. Pearson Education India. ISBN 978-81-317-1175-0. Trayler, Richard (2010). *Life Is Short...Compared to Eternity*. Xulon Press. ISBN 978-1-61215-343-8.

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Madurai

Madurai is a major city in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu. It is the cultural capital of Tamil Nadu and the administrative headquarters of Madurai district, which is governed by the Madurai Municipal Corporation established on 1 November 1866. As of the 2011 census, it is the third largest metropolis in Tamil Nadu after Chennai and Coimbatore in terms of population and 27th largest urban agglomeration in India. Located on the banks of Vaigai River, Madurai has been a major settlement for two millennia and has a documented history of more than 2500 years. It is often referred to as "Thoongatha Nagaram", meaning "the city that never sleeps". Madurai is one of the oldest cities in India and South Asia. The third Tamil Sangam, a major congregation of Tamil scholars, is said to have been held in the city. The recorded history of the city goes back to the 3rd century BCE, being mentioned by Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador to the Mauryan Empire, and Kautilya, a minister of the Mauryan emperor Chandragupta Maurya. Signs of human settlements and Roman trade links dating back to 300 BCE are evident from excavations by Archeological Survey of India in Manalur. The city is believed to be of significant antiquity and has been ruled, at different times, by the Pandyan Kingdom, Chola Empire, Madurai Sultanate, Vijayanagar Empire, Madurai Nayaks, Carnatic kingdom, and the British East India Company's British Raj. The city has a number of historical monuments, with the Koodal Azhagar temple, Meenakshi Temple and the Thirumalai Nayakkar Mahal being the most prominent. Madurai is an important industrial and educational hub in Tamil Nadu. The city is home to various automobile, rubber, chemical and granite manufacturing industries. Madurai has important government educational institutes such as the Madurai Medical College, Homeopathic Medical College, Madurai Law College, Agricultural College and Research Institute and All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Madurai. The city covers an area of 147.97 km² (57.13 sq mi) and had a population of 1,470,755 in 2011. The city is also the seat of a bench of the Madras High Court. It is one of the few towns and cities in List of AMRUT Smart cities in Tamil Nadu selected for AMRUT Schemes from central government and the developmental activities are taken care by government of Tamil Nadu.

Etymology According to Iravatham Mahadevan, a 2nd-century BCE Tamil-Brahmi inscription refers to the city as matiray, an Old Tamil word meaning a "walled city". Madurai is one of the many temple towns known as Kadambavanam for its historic temples in India which is named after the groves, clusters or forests dominated by a particular variety of a tree or shrub and the same variety of tree or shrub sheltering the presiding deity. The region is believed to have been covered with Kadamba forest and hence called Kadambavanam. The city is referred by various names including "Madurai", "Koodal", "Malligai Maanagar", "Naanmadakoodal" and "Thirualavai". It is believed that Madurai is the derivative of the word Marutham, which refers to the type of landscape of the Sangam age. A town in the neighbouring Dindigul district is called Vada Madurai (North Madurai) and another in Sivaganga district is called Manamadurai. The different names by which the city has been referred to historically are listed in the 7th-century poem Thiruvilayaadal Puraanam written by Paranjothi Munivar. Vaishnava texts refer to Madurai as the "southern Mathura", probably similar to Tenkasi (southern Kashi). Koodal means an assembly or congregation of scholarly people, referring to the three Tamil Sangams held at Madurai. Naanmadakoodal, meaning the junction of four towers, refers to the four major temples for which Madurai was known for. The sangam literature mentions the Koodal Azhagar temple at the centre of the city. Historians are of the opinion that Koodal Azhagar temple finds mention in Sangam literature (3rd century BCE-3rd century CE) in works like Madurai Kanchi by Mangudi Marudan, Paripatal, Kaliththokai and Silappatikaram. Madurai Kanchi details the Thiruvonam festival celebrated in the temple. Koodal Azhagar temple is revered in Nalayira Divya Prabhandam, the 5th-9th century Vaishnava canon, by Periyalvar, Thirumalisai Alvar and Thirumangai Alvar. The temple is classified as a Divya Desams, one of the 108 Vishnu temples that are mentioned in the book. During the 18th and 19th centuries, the temple finds mention in several

works like 108 Tirupathi Anthathi by Divya Kavi Pillai Perumal Aiyangar and Koodal Sthala Purana. Tevaram, the 7th- or 8th-century Tamil compositions on Shiva by the three prominent Nayanars (Saivites), namely Appar, Sundarar and Thirugnanasambandar, address the city as Thirualavai.

History The Buddhist text Mahavamsa mentions Madurai in the context of Prince Vijaya's (543-505 BCE) arrival in Sri Lanka with his 700 followers. According to the Mahavamsa, emissaries laden with precious gifts, jewels and pearls, were sent from Sri Lanka to Madurai of ancient Tamilakam. Their mission was to secure a bride for Prince Vijaya. The Pandyan King of Madurai agreed to the proposal. He not only sent his own daughter to marry Prince Vijaya but also requested other families to offer their daughters to marry the prince's ministers and retainers. So, along with the Princess and hundreds of maidens, craftsmen and a thousand families from the eighteen guilds were also sent to Sri Lanka. Madurai has been inhabited since at least the 3rd century BCE. Megasthenes may have visited Madurai during the 3rd century BCE, with the city referred as "Methora" in his accounts. The view is contested by some scholars who believe "Methora" refers to the north Indian city of Mathura, as it was a large and established city in the Mauryan Empire. Madurai is also mentioned in Kautilya's (370-283 BCE) Arthashastra. Sangam literature like Maturaikkāci records the importance of Madurai as a capital city of the Pandyan dynasty. Madurai is mentioned in the works of Roman historians Pliny the Younger (61 - c. 112 CE), Ptolemy (c. 90 - c. CE 168), those of the Greek geographer Strabo (64/63 BCE - c. 24 CE), and also in Periplus of the Erythraean Sea.

After the Sangam age, most of present-day Tamil Nadu, including Madurai, came under the rule of the Kalabhra dynasty, which was ousted by the Pandyas around 590 CE. The Pandyas were ousted from Madurai by the Chola dynasty during the early 9th century. The city was fought over between the Cholas and the Pandyas during the 12th century, changing hands several times, until the early 13th century, when the second Pandyan empire was established with Madurai as its capital. After the death of Kulasekara Pandian (1268-1308 CE), Madurai came under the rule of the Delhi Sultanate. The Madurai Sultanate then seceded from Delhi and functioned as an independent kingdom until its gradual annexation by the Vijayanagara Empire in 1378 CE. Madurai became independent from Vijayanagar in 1559 CE under the Nayaks. Nayak rule ended in 1736 CE and Madurai was repeatedly captured several times by Chanda Sahib (1740 - 1754 CE), Arcot Nawab and Muhammed Yusuf Khan (1725 - 1764 CE) in the middle of the 18th century. In 1801, Madurai came under the direct control of the British East India Company and was annexed to the Madras Presidency. The British government made donations to the Meenakshi temple and participated in the Hindu festivals during the early part of their rule. The city evolved as a political and industrial complex through the 19th and 20th centuries to become a district headquarters of a larger Madurai district. In 1837, the fortifications around the temple were demolished by the British. The moat was drained and the debris was used to construct new streets - Veli, Marat and Perumaal Mesthiri streets. The city was constituted as a municipality in 1866 under the Town Improvement Act of 1865. The British government faced initial hiccups during the earlier period of the establishment of municipality in land ceiling and tax collection in Madurai and Dindigul districts under the direct administration of the officers of the government. The city, along with the district, was resurveyed between 1880 and 1885 CE and subsequently, five municipalities were constituted in the two districts and six taluk boards were set up for local administration. Police stations were established in Madurai city, housing the headquarters of the District Superintendent. It was in Madurai, in 1921, that Mahatma Gandhi, pre-eminent leader of Indian nationalism in British-ruled India, first adopted the loin cloth as his mode of dress after seeing agricultural labourers wearing it. Leaders of the independence movement in Madurai included N. M. R. Subbaraman, Karumuttu Thiagarajan Chettiar and Mohammad Ismail Sahib. The Temple Entry Authorization and Indemnity Act passed by the government of Madras Presidency under C. Rajagopalachari in 1939 removed restrictions prohibiting Shanars and Dalits from entering Hindu temples. The temple entry movement was first led in Madurai Meenakshi temple by independence activist A. Vaidyanatha Iyer in 1939. In 1971, the municipality of Madurai was upgraded to a

Municipal Corporation. In 2011 the Corporation of Madurai expanded the area of its jurisdiction from seventy-two wards to one hundred wards, an increase in area from 51.82 square kilometres (12,810 acres) to 147.997 square kilometres (36,571 acres).

Architecture Madurai is built around the Koodal Azhagar temple and Meenakshi Temple, which acted as the geographic and ritual centre of the ancient city of Madurai. The city is divided into a number of concentric quadrangular streets around the temple. Viswanatha Nayak (1529-64 CE), the first Madurai Nayak king, redesigned the city in accordance with the principles laid out by Shilpa Shastras (Sanskrit: शिल्पा शास्त्रा, also anglicised as silpa sastra meaning rules of architecture) related to urban planning. These squares retain their traditional names of Aadi, Chittirai, Avani-moola and Masi streets, corresponding to the Tamil month names and also to the festivals associated. The temple prakarams (outer precincts of a temple) and streets accommodate an elaborate festival calendar in which dramatic processions circumambulate the shrines at varying distances from the centre. The temple chariots used in processions are progressively larger in size based on the size of the concentric streets. Ancient Tamil classics record the temple as the centre of the city and the surrounding streets appearing liken a lotus and its petals. The city's axes were aligned with the four-quarters of the compass, and the four gateways of the temple provided access to it. The wealthy and higher echelons of the society were placed in streets close to the temple, while the poorest were placed in the fringe streets. With the advent of British rule during the 19th century, Madurai became the headquarters of a large colonial political complex and an industrial town; with urbanisation, the social hierarchical classes became unified.

Geography and climate The Corporation of Madurai has an area of 147.97 square kilometres or 57.13 square miles. Madurai is located at 9.93N 78.12E / 9.93; 78.12. It has an average elevation of 134 metres. The city of Madurai lies on the flat and fertile plain of the river Vaigai, which runs in the northwest-southeast direction through the city, dividing it into two almost two equal halves. The Sirumalai and Nagamalai hills lie to the north and west of Madurai. The land in and around Madurai is utilised largely for agricultural activity, which is fostered by the Periyar Dam. Madurai lies southeast of the western ghats, and the surrounding region occupies the plains of South India and contains several mountain spurs. The soil type in central Madurai is predominantly clay loam, while red loam and black cotton types are widely prevalent in the outer fringes of the city. Paddy is the major crop, followed by pulses, millet, oil seed, cotton and sugarcane. As is typical for Tamil Nadu, Madurai has a hot semi-arid climate (BSh), although it borders closely upon a tropical savanna climate (Kppen Aw/As). Madurai is hot and dry for eight months of the year. Cold winds are experienced during February and March as in the neighbouring Dindigul. The hottest months are from March to July. The city experiences a moderate climate from August to October, tempered by heavy rain and thundershowers, and a slightly cooler climate from November to February. Fog and dew are rare, occurring only during the winter season. Being equidistant from mountains and the sea, it experiences similar monsoon pattern with Northeast monsoon and Southwest monsoon, with the former providing more rain during October to December. The average annual rainfall for the Madurai district is about 85.76 cm. Temperatures during summer generally reach a maximum of 42 C or 107.6 F and a minimum of 26.3 C or 79.3 F, although temperatures up to 43 C or 109.4 F are not uncommon. Winter temperatures range between 29.6 C or 85.3 F and 18 C or 64.4 F. A study based on the data available with the Indian Meteorological Department on Madurai over a period of 62 years indicate rising trend in atmospheric temperature over Madurai city, attributed to urbanisation, growth of vehicles and industrial activity. The maximum temperature of 42 C or 107.6 F for the decade of 2001 to 2010 was recorded in 2004 and in 2010.

Madurai has been ranked 42nd best "National Clean Air City" (under Category 1 >10L Population cities) in India.

Demographics According to 2011 census based on pre-expansion limits, the area covered under the Corporation of Madurai had a population of 1,017,865 with a sex-ratio of 999 females for every 1,000 males, much above the national average of 929. A total of 100,324 were under the age of six, constituting 51,485 males and 48,839 females. Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes accounted for 6.27% and 0.31% of the population respectively. The average literacy of the city was 81.95%, compared to the national average of 72.99%. The urban agglomeration of Madurai had a population of 1,465,625, and is the third largest in Tamil Nadu and the 31st in India. According to the religious census of 2011, Madurai had 85.83% Hindus, 8.54% Muslims, 5.18% Christians and 0.47% others. Tamil is the main language, and the standard dialect is the Madurai Tamil dialect, and is spoken by 89.0% of the population. Sourashtra, is the largest minority language which is spoken by 5.4% of the population. Other significant minority languages include Telugu (2.7%) and Urdu (1.5%). Roman Catholics in Madurai are affiliated with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Madurai, while Protestants are affiliated with the Madurai-Ramnad Diocese of the Church of South India. In 2001, Slum-dwellers comprise 32.6 per cent of the total population, much higher than the national average of 15.05 per cent. The increase in growth rate to 50 per cent from 1971 to 1981 is due to the city's upgrade to a municipal corporation in 1974 and the subsequent inclusion of 13 Panchayats into the corporation limits. The decline in the population growth rate between 1981 and 2001 is due to the bifurcation of Madurai district into two, Madurai and Dindigul in 1984, and the subsequently of part of the city into the Theni district in 1997. The compounded annual growth rate dropped from 4.10 per cent during 1971-81 to 1.27 per cent during 1991-2004.

Administration and politics The municipality of Madurai was constituted on 1 November 1866 as per the Town Improvement Act of 1865. The municipality was headed by a chairperson and elections were regularly conducted for the post except during the period 1891 to 1896, when no elections were held due to violent factionalism. During the early years of independent India, the Madurai municipality was dominated by reformists of the Indian National Congress. Madurai was upgraded to a municipal corporation on 1 May 1971 as per the Madurai City Municipal Corporation Act, 1971. It is the second oldest municipal corporation in Tamil Nadu, after Chennai. The functions of the municipality are devolved into six departments: General, Engineering, Revenue, Public Health, Town planning, and the Computer Wing. All these departments are under the control of a Municipal Commissioner, who is the supreme executive head. The legislative powers are vested in a body of 100 members, one each from the 100 wards. The legislative body is headed by an elected Mayor assisted by a Deputy Mayor. The corporation received several awards in 2008 for implementing development works. The city of Madurai is represented in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly by six elected members, one each for the Madurai East, Madurai West, Madurai North, Madurai Central, Madurai South and Thirupparankundram constituencies. Most of Madurai city comes under the Madurai Lok Sabha constituency and elects a member to the Lok Sabha, the lower house of the Parliament of India, once every five years. From 1957, the Madurai parliament seat was held by the Indian National Congress seven times in the 1962-67, 1971-77, 1977-80, 1980-84, 1984-89, 1989-91 and 1991 elections. The Communist Party of India (Marxist) won the seat three times during 1967-71, 1999-2004 and 2004-09 general elections. The Communist Party of India (1957-61), Tamil Maanila Congress (Moopanar) (1996-98), Janata Party (1998), Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (2009-2014) and All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (2014-2020) have each won once. Part of the city which falls under Thirupparankundram assembly constituency comes under the Virudhunagar Lok Sabha constituency. Law and order is enforced by the Tamil Nadu Police, which, for administrative purposes, has constituted Madurai city as a separate district. The district is divided into four sub-divisions, namely Thallakulam, Anna Nagar, Thilagar Thidal and Town, with a total of 27 police stations. The Madurai city police force is headed by a Commissioner of police, assisted by Deputy Commissioners. Enforcement of law and order in the suburban areas are handled by the Madurai district police. In 2008, the crime rate in the city was 283.2 per 100,000 people, accounting for 1.1 per cent of all crimes reported in major cities in India, and it was ranked 19th among 35 major cities in India. As of 2008, Madurai recorded the second highest SLL (Special and

Local Laws) crimes, at 22,728, among cities in Tamil Nadu. However, Madurai had the second lowest crime rate at 169.1 of all the cities in Tamil Nadu. The city is also the seat of a bench of the Madras High Court, one of only a few outside the state capitals of India. It started functioning in July 2004.

Transport The National Highways NH 7, NH 45B, NH 208 and NH 49 pass through Madurai. The state highways passing through the city are SH-32, SH-33 and SH-72, which connect various parts of Madurai district. Madurai is one of the seven circles of the Tamil Nadu State Highway network. Madurai is the headquarters of the Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation (Madurai) and provides local and inter city bus transport across four districts namely Madurai, Dindigul, Theni, and Virudhunagar. Madurai has four major bus stands, namely, M.G. Ramachandran Mattuthavani Integrated Bus Terminus (MGRMBS), Arappalayam bus Terminus, Palanganatham and Periyar Bus stand. There are 12,754 registered three-wheeled vehicles i.e., auto rickshaws which are commercially available for renting within the city. Over the government operated city buses that are used for public transport, there are 236 registered private mini-buses that support local transportation.

Madurai Junction is an important railway junction in southern Tamil Nadu and constitutes a separate division of the Southern Railway zone. There are direct trains from Madurai connecting the important cities in Tamil Nadu like Chennai, Coimbatore, Kanyakumari, Tiruchirappalli, Tirunelveli, Karaikudi, Mayiladuthurai, Rameswaram, Thanjavur, Tiruttani, Tirupathi and Virudhachalam. Madurai has rail connectivity with most important cities and towns in India. Madurai has rail connectivity with important cities and towns in India. The state government has announced the Madurai Monorail in 2011; as of 2020, it remains in planning stages.

Madurai International Airport, first used by the Royal Air Force in World War II in 1942., is located 12 kilometers from the city. The airport was declared a customs airport in 2012 allowing limited number of international flights. It offers domestic flights to some cities in India and international services to Colombo, Dubai and for Singapore on a daily basis started by Air India Express since February 2018. The carriers operating from the airport are Air India, Air India Express, SpiceJet, IndiGo and SriLankan Airlines. The airport handled 842,300 passengers between April 2015 and March 2016.

Education Madurai has been an academic centre of learning for Tamil culture, literature, art, music and dance for centuries. All three assemblies of the Tamil language, the Tamil Sangam (about the 3rd century BCE to the 3rd century CE), were said to have been held at Madurai. Tamil poets of different epochs participated in these assemblies, and their compositions are referred to as Sangam literature. During the third Tamil sangam, the comparative merit of the poets was decided by letting the works float in the lotus tank of the temple. It was believed that a divine force would cause the work of superior merit to float on the surface, while the inferior ones would sink. The American College is the oldest college in Madurai, and was established in 1881 by American Christian missionaries. The Lady Doak College, established in 1948, is the oldest women's college in Madurai. Thiagarajar College (established in 1949), Madura College (established in 1889), Fatima College is a women's general degree college (established in 1953), Sourashtra College (established in 1967) and M.S.S. Wakf Board College (established in 1964), Tamil Nadu Polytechnic College (established in 1946), are the oldest educational institutions of the city. Madurai Kamaraj University (originally called Madurai University), established in 1966, is a state-run university which has 109 affiliated arts and science colleges in Madurai and neighbouring districts. There are 47 approved institutions of the university in and around the city, consisting of autonomous colleges, aided colleges, self-financing colleges, constituent colleges, evening colleges and other approved institutions. There are seven polytechnical schools and five Industrial training institutes (ITIs) in Madurai, with the Government ITI and the Government Polytechnic for Women being the most prominent of

them all. There are two government medical institutes in Madurai, Madurai Medical College and Homoeopathic Medical College, Thirumangalam and 11 paramedical institutes. There are fifteen engineering colleges in Madurai affiliated to Anna University, with the Thiagarajar College of Engineering being the oldest. The Madurai Law College, established in 1979, is one of the seven government law colleges in the state. It is administered by the Tamil Nadu Government Department of Legal Studies, and affiliated with the Tamil Nadu Dr. Ambedkar Law University. There are three teacher training institutes, two music colleges, three management institutes and 30 arts and sciences colleges in Madurai. The agricultural college and research institute in Madurai, started in 1965 by the state government, provides agricultural education to aspirants in the southern districts of Tamil Nadu. All India Institutes of Medical Sciences, a premier medical institution, is also under construction in Madurai and will cover 224 acres (910,000 m²) of land, at an estimated cost of ₹1,264 crore (US\$150 million), and additionally allotted ₹736 crore (US\$87 million) total around ₹2,000 crore (US\$240 million) in the sub-urban Thoppur Madurai district.

Secondary schools There are a total of 369 primary, secondary and higher secondary schools in the city.

Capron Hall Higher Secondary School, Madurai

Economy The Economy of Madurai is primarily based on Textiles, Rubber and Automotive Components and Tourism. Madurai was traditionally an agrarian society, with rice paddies as the main crop. Cotton crop cultivation in the regions with black soil in Madurai district was introduced during the Nayaka rule during the 16th century to increase the revenue from agriculture. The paddy fields cultivated in the Vaigai delta across Madurai North, Melur, Nilakottai and Uthamapalayam are known as "double-crop paddy belts". Farmers in the district supplement their income with subsidiary occupations like dairy farming, poultry-farming, pottery, brick making, mat-weaving and carpentry. Madurai is famed for its jasmine plantations, called Madurai Malli, primarily carried out at the foothills of Kodaikanal hills and traded at the Madurai morning flower market. An average of 2,000 farmers sell flowers daily at the flower market. With the advent of Small Scale Industries (SSI) after 1991, the industrialisation of Madurai increased employment in the sector across the district from 63,271 in 1992-93 to 166,121 persons in 2001-02. Madurai is one of the few rubber growing areas in South India, and there are rubber-based industries in Madurai. Gloves, sporting goods, mats, other utility products and automobile rubber components are the most produced items by these industries. Automobile manufacturers are the major consumers of rubber components produced in the city. There are numerous textile, granite and chemical industries operating in Madurai. Kashmir gold granite and Kashmir white granite are the trade names of two types of granite produced in Madurai. Madurai is promoted as a tier II city for IT and Industry. Kappalur which is sub-urban of Madurai is business hub for automotive industries such as KUN BMW, Mercedes-Benz, Isuzu, Volkswagen, Toyota, Mahindra, Tata, Maruti Suzuki, Mitsubishi, Ashok Leyland, Jeep, Fiat India (FCA). The government has created Uchapatti-Thoppur satellite Township in Kappalur. Small Industries Development Corporation Kappalur has many polymer and houseware manufacturing units. Some software companies have opened their offices in Madurai. Software Technology Parks of India, an agency of the Government of India, has authorised several such companies to receive benefits under its national information technology development program. The state government proposed two IT-based Special Economic Zones (SEZ) in Madurai, and these have been fully occupied by various IT companies, HCLTech and Honeywell have their own campuses in ELCOT IT Park in Madurai.

Religious sites Meenakshi Amman Temple is a historic Hindu temple located on the south side of the Vaigai River in Madurai, which is one of the most prominent landmarks of the city. It is dedicated to Parvati known as

Meenakshi and her consort, Shiva as Sundareswarar. The complex houses 14 gopurams (gateway towers) ranging from 45-50 metres (148-164 ft) in height, the tallest being the southern tower, 51.9 metres (170 ft) high. There are also two golden sculptured vimana (shrines) over the sanctum of the main deities. The temple is a significant symbol for Tamils and has been mentioned since antiquity in Tamil literature, though the present structure was built between 1623 and 1655 CE. The temple attracts 15,000 visitors a day and around 25,000 during Fridays. There are an estimated 33,000 sculptures in the temple. Koodal Azhagar Temple is a historic Hindu temple located on the south side of the Vaigai River in Madurai, which is one of the most prominent landmarks of the city. The temple is dedicated to Maha Vishnu. It has idols of the Navagraha (nine planet deities), which are otherwise found only in Shiva temples. The temple is glorified in the Naalayira Divya Prabandham, the early medieval Tamil canon of the Alvar saints from the 6th-9th centuries CE. It is one of the 108 Divya Desams dedicated to Vishnu, who is worshipped as Viyooga Sundarajan, and his consort Lakshmi as Mathuravalli. A granite wall surrounds the temple, enclosing all its shrines. The temple has a five-tiered rajagopuram, the gateway tower. The temple is originally believed to be built by the Pandyas, with later additions by the Vijayanagara empire and Madurai Nayaks kings who commissioned pillared halls and major shrines of the temple during the 16th century. The Kallalagar temple, Alagar Koyil, is a celebrated Vishnu temple 21 kilometres (13 mi) northeast of Madurai situated at the foothills of Solaimalai. The deity, Kallazhagar, is believed to be the brother of Meenakshi and worshiped by Meenakshi, the presiding deity at the Meenakshi temple. The festival calendars of these two temples overlap during the Meenakshi Thirukalyanam festival. The temple is glorified in the Naalayira Divya Prabandham, the early medieval Tamil canon of the Alvar saints from the 5th-9th centuries CE. It is one of the 108 Divya Desams dedicated to Maha Vishnu, who is worshiped as Kallalagar, and his consort Lakshmi as Thirumagal. This temple is called as Thirumaliruncholai in Sangam literatures and Naalayira Divya Prabandham sung by Tamil Alvar saints. Pazhamudircholai, one of the other six abodes of the Hindu god Murugan, is located atop the Solaimalai hill. Thiruparankundram is a hill 8 kilometres (5.0 mi) away from Madurai, where the Hindu god Murugan is believed to have married Deivanai. The temple is the first among the six holy abodes of Murugan, the Arupadai Veedu, literally "Six Battle Camps", and one of the most visited tourist spots in Madurai. The temple has a wide range of Hindu gods carved on the walls. Kazimar Big Mosque is the first Muslim place of worship in the city. It was constructed under the supervision of Kazi Syed Tajuddin, believed to be a descendant of the prophet Muhammed. He came from Oman and received the piece of land from the Pandya ruler, Kulasekara Pandiyan during the 13th century. It is claimed to be the oldest Islamic monument in Madurai. The dargah of Madurai Hazrats called as Madurai Maqbara is located inside the mosque. Tirupparankunram Dargah is the grave of an Islamic saint who came from Jeddah; his festival is celebrated during Rajab every Hijri year. Goripalayam Mosque is located in Gorippalayam, the name of which is derived from the Persian word Gor, meaning Grave. The graves of Hazrat Sulthan Alauddin Badhusha, Hazrat Sulthan Shamsuddeen Badhusha and Hazrat Sulthan Ghaibuddeen Badhusha are found here. The urus festival of this dargah is held on 15th night of the Islamic month of Rabi al-awwal on every hijri year. St. Mary's Cathedral is the seat of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Madurai. Samanar Malai and Panchapandavar Malai are important Jain centres.

Culture and tourism Madurai is popularly called Thoonga Nagaram meaning the city that never sleeps, on account of the active night life. The city attracts a large number of tourists from within the country and abroad. About 9,100,000 tourists visited Madurai in 2010, out of which foreigners numbered 524,000. The palace complex of Thirumalai Nayak Palace was constructed in the Indo-Saracenic style by Thirumalai Nayakar in 1636 CE. It is a national monument maintained by the Tamil Nadu Archaeological Department. The daily sound and light show organized by the department explains the virtues of King Thirumalai and the features of the palace. The palace of Rani Mangamma has been renovated to house one of the five Gandhi Sanghralayas (Gandhi Memorial Museum, Madurai) in the country. It includes a part of the blood-stained garment worn by Gandhi when he was assassinated by Nathuram Godse. A visit by Martin Luther King Jr. to the museum

inspired him to lead peaceful protests against discrimination. The Eco park, situated in Tallakulam, features fountains and lighting in trees using optical fibres. Rajaji children park, maintained by the Corporation of Madurai, is situated between the Gandhi museum and the Tamukkam grounds - it has a visitor average of 5,000 per day during holidays and 2,000-3,000 on working days. MGR Race Course Stadium is an athletic stadium which has a synthetic track and a swimming pool. Several National Meets are held here. It also hosts several international and national level Kabbadi Championships. Railway grounds at Arasaradi, Medical college grounds & Madura College Grounds are the full-fledged cricket stadiums in the city.

The people of Madurai celebrate numerous festivals, which include Meenakshi Tirukkalyanam, the Chittirai Festival and the Car Festival. The annual 10 day Meenakshi Tirukalyanam festival, also called Chittirai festival, celebrated during April-May every year attracts 1 million visitors. Legend has it that Hindu god Vishnu, as Alagar, rode on a golden horse to Madurai to attend the celestial wedding of Meenakshi (Parvati) with Sundareswarar (Shiva). During the Cradle festival, the festive idols of Meenakshi and Sundareswarar are taken in procession to a mirror chamber and set on a rocking swing for nine days. Avanimoolam festival is celebrated during the month of September when the 64 sacred games of Hindu god Shiva, thiruvilayadal are recited. The Thepporchavam festival or float festival is celebrated in the month of January - February, on the full moon day of Tamil Month Thai to celebrate the birth anniversary of King Thirumalai Nayak. The decorated icons of the Meenakshi and her consort are taken out in a procession from the Meenakshi Temple to the Mariamman Teppakulam. The icons are floated in the tank on a raft decked with flowers and flickering lamps. Jallikattu is the most popular historical sport in Tamil Nadu, which is a part of the Pongal festival (harvest festival) celebrated during January. The bull taming event is held in the villages surrounding Madurai when people from the neighbouring villages throng the open grounds to watch man and bull pitting their strength against each other. Although the event was banned by the Supreme Court of India in 2014, large protests in 2017 led to the sport's reinstatement. Santhanakoodu festivals in Madurai are celebrated on various days during the Islamic calendar year to commemorate Islamic saints.

Media and utility services The city hosts several radio stations, including the state-owned All India Radio and private channels like Hello FM, Radio Mirchi, Suryan FM and Radio City. The Hindu, The New Indian Express and The Times of India are the three principal English-language daily newspapers which have Madurai editions. Deccan Chronicle, though not printed in the city, is another English-language daily newspaper available in the city. The most read Tamil-language daily morning newspapers include Dinamalar, Dina Thanthi, Dinamani and Dinakaran - all these newspapers have editions from Madurai. There are also daily Tamil evening newspapers like Tamil Murasu, Malai Murasu and Maalai Malar published in Madurai. Television broadcasting from Chennai for whole of Tamil Nadu was started on 15 August 1975. Direct-to-home cable television services are provided by DD Direct Plus and other private service providers. Electricity supply to the city is regulated and distributed by the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board (TNEB). The city is the headquarters of the Madurai region of TNEB and along with its suburbs, forms the Madurai Metro Electricity Distribution Circle, which is further divided into six divisions. Water supply is provided by the Madurai City Corporation with overhead tanks and power pumps. In the period 2010-2011, a total of 950.6 lakh litres of water was supplied to 87,091 connections for households in Madurai. About 400 metric tonnes of solid waste are collected from the city every day by door-to-door collection, and the subsequent source segregation and dumping is carried out by the sanitary department of the Corporation of Madurai. All the major channels in Madurai are linked by the corporation to receive the flood water from primary, secondary and tertiary drains constructed along the roadsides to dispose of rain water. The sewer system was first established by the British in Madurai in 1924 to cover the core city area, which covers 30 per cent of the present city area. It was further expanded in 1959 and 1983 by a corporation plan. The 2011 Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission covered 90 per cent of households with underground drainage system. Madurai comes under the Madurai telecom district of the Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited

(BSNL), India's state-owned telecom and internet services provider. Both Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) and Code division multiple access (CDMA) mobile services are available. Apart from telecom, BSNL also provides broadband internet service and Caller Line Identification (CLI) based internet service Netone. A regional passport office was opened on 17 December 2007 and caters to the needs of nine districts. The city is served by the Government Rajaji Hospital. A branch of All India Institutes of Medical Sciences in Thoppur, in the outskirts of the city, is set to be completed by 2022 as per Central government press release.

See also Madurai metropolitan area Vaigai Dam Athisayam Theme park Largest Indian cities by GDP

Footnotes References Sources External links

Official government website of Madurai District Tamil Nadu Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Madurai

Meerut

Meerut is a city that serves as the administrative headquarters of the Meerut district in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. The city lies in western Uttar Pradesh and is part of the Indian National Capital Region (NCR). Meerut is located 80 km (50 mi) northeast of the national capital, New Delhi, and 480 km (300 mi) northwest of the state capital, Lucknow. Meerut is also the second-most populous city in the NCR, after Delhi. As of 2025, Meerut's urban (metro) population is estimated at ≈ 1.875 million. The population of Meerut Municipal Corporation is projected to be about 1.907 million, while the wider Meerut metropolitan region is estimated at approximately 2.077 million. Meerut is among the most populous cities in NCR, after Delhi and Ghaziabad. In 1803, Meerut was as a significant location during the British colonial era, serving as the site of one of India's largest cantonments. Meerut was one of the first locations where the 1857 rebellion against British rule began. It has been called the "Sports City of India" due to its sports goods industry. Meerut produces large number of musical instruments in India. It is also one of Asia's largest gold markets. The city is an education hub in western Uttar Pradesh and has the third-highest per capita income after Ghaziabad and Gautam Buddha Nagar (Noida and Greater Noida). India's first Regional Rapid Transit System, Delhi Meerut RRTS, is partially operational in Meerut and serves as an inter-city high-speed metro corridor. Meerut is connected by three expressways, including the Delhi-Meerut Expressway, the Ganga Expressway, and the Meerut-Kanpur Expressway.

Origin of the name The name Meerut (Hindi: मीरूट) is believed to have evolved from Mayarashtra (मीरुश्ट्रा), the capital city of the mythological kingdom ruled by Mayasura, a legendary architect and the father of Mandodari, wife of Ravana. Over the centuries, the name underwent several transformations-such as Mairashtra, Mai-dant-ka-khera, and Mairaath-before settling into its current form, Meerut. Another tradition attributes the city's origin to King Yudhishtira, who is said to have granted the land to Mayasura in recognition of his architectural prowess. According to this account, Mayasura named the region Maharashtra (not to be confused with the modern day Indian state of Maharashtra), which eventually morphed into Meerut due to linguistic and historical evolution. An alternative version suggests, that Meerut was part of the dominions of King Mahipala, the ruler of Indraprastha, and that the city's name is derived from his association with the area.

History Ancient era Archaeological excavations conducted between 1950 and 1952 at Vidura-ka-Tila, a collection of several mounds named after Vidura 37 km (23 miles) northeast of Meerut, concluded that Meerut contains the remains of the ancient city of Hastinapur, the capital of the Kauravas and Pandavas of Mahabharata, which was washed away by floods from the Ganges. Meerut also contained a Harappan settlement known as Alamgirpur, the easternmost settlement of the Indus Valley civilisation. Meerut was a centre of Buddhism during the reign of Mauryan emperor Ashoka (r. 273 BC to 232 BC.), and remains of Buddhist structures were found near the Jama Masjid in the present day city. The Ashoka Pillar, at Delhi Ridge, was carried to Delhi from Meerut by Firuz Shah Tughluq (r. 1351-1388). It was later damaged in a 1713 explosion and restored in 1867. In Hindu mythology, Meerut has a strong connection to the Mahabharata. One of the main characters in the epic, Draupadi, is believed by the locals to have been born here.

Muslim conquests In the eleventh century AD, the region to the south-west of the city was ruled by Har Dat, the Dor Raja of Bulandshahr. He built a fort, which was long known for its strength and was mentioned in the Ain-i-Akbari. He was later defeated by Mahmud of Ghazni in 1018 and surrendered along with his forces to Mahmud. The Jama Masjid, a prominent local landmark, was said to be built by Mahmud's vizier in this period. Shortly after its capture, the city was regained by the local Hindu raja and part of his fortifications, built for the

city's defense, survived into modern times. Muhammad of Ghor's mamluk general Qutb-ud-din Aybak attacked and captured Meerut in 1193. Timur attacked and sacked Meerut in 1399. The city was held by Ilyas Afghan and his son Maula Muhammad Thaneswari, who were assisted by non-Muslims led by Safi. Timur tried to negotiate a surrender, but the inhabitants of the fort replied saying that Tarmashirin had tried to capture the city in the past, but failed. Incensed, Timur attacked the city with 10,000 cavalry. The forces scaled the walls and Safi was killed in the battle. The inhabitants were killed and their wives and children were enslaved. The fortifications and houses were razed to the ground, and the prisoners were ordered to be flayed alive. The city then came under the rule of the Mughal Empire and saw a period of relative tranquility. During the rule of Mughal Emperor Akbar (r. 1556-1605), there was a mint producing copper coins in the city. During the reign of Akbar, Meerut was listed in the Ain-i-Akbari as a pargana under Delhi Sarkar, producing a revenue of 4,391,996 dams for the imperial treasury and supplying a force of 300 infantry and 100 cavalry. A major part of Meerut was controlled by Sayyid jagirdars of Abdullapur, from 16th to late 18th century. Sayyed Mir Abdulla Naqvi Al Bukhari built Kot Fort in Abdullapur in 16th century, and it became his main residence. The descendants of Syed Sadarudin Shah Kabir Naqvi Al Kannauji Bukhari are still present in Meerut; Sadarudin was a chief advisor of Sikandar Lodi and the father of saint Shah Jewna. The famous Pakistani writer Syed Qudrat Naqvi Al Bukhari was born in Meerut. Nawab Mansab Ali Khan was one of the most influential personalities of Meerut; he built the famous Karbala and Masjid, known as Mansabiya, in 1882. The city saw Sikh and Maratha invasions in the 18th century, with interruptions by Taga Brahman and Rohillas. Walter Reinhardt, a European soldier, established himself at Sardhana, and some parts of the district came under his rule. Upon his death, these areas came into the hands of Begum Samru. During this time, the southern part of the district had remained under Maratha rule.

Colonial era In 1803, with the fall of Delhi, Daulat Rao Scindia of the Marathas ceded the territory to the British East India Company (EIC). The cantonment of Meerut was established in 1806 due to its proximity to Delhi and its location in the fertile Ganga-Yamuna Doab region. The city was made headquarters of the eponymous district in 1818.

Meerut is often associated with the 1857 rebellion against Company rule in India. The slogan "Dilli Chalo" ("Let's march to Delhi!") was first spoken in the city, and the Meerut cantonment was the place where the rebellion started. Another name for Meerut is "Kranti Dhara," or "the land of revolution," denoting the place where India's independence movement began. The revolt, which catapulted Meerut into international prominence, began in March 1857 in Barrackpore, Bengal. Indian sepoy Mangal Pandey shot at two of his commanding officers, missed, then attempted suicide. He was later executed. By April, Pandey's uprising had spread across North India and reached Meerut, which was then the second-largest East India Company garrison. Here, Europeans and native sepoys were evenly balanced, with a little more than 2,000 on each side. The European cantonment was separated from the Indian one. Sadar Bazar and Lal Kurti Bazar were close by, the latter named after the red uniforms worn by the Presidency armies. On 24 April 1857, Meerut's commander, Colonel Carmichael Smyth, paraded 90 Indian sepoys of the Bengal Cavalry, most of whom had come from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. He ordered the soldiers to fire the new Enfield cartridges they had been supplied with. The cartridges were covered with paper that had to be torn off, and Muslim soldiers believed the paper was greased with pig fat (pigs in religion) and Hindus thought it was greased with cow fat (cows in Hinduism). Thus, they refused to touch them when ordered to. All 85 soldiers were stripped of their uniforms, and court-martialed; they were all sentenced to a decade in prison. The prisoners, who were upper-class members of a cavalry regiment, were shocked at the harsh sentences handed down to them. On 10 May 1857, Kotwal Dhan Singh opened the gates of the prison. These soldiers, along with the other imprisoned soldiers, escaped prison and declared themselves free. They proceeded to mutiny, attack, and kill several Company officials in the city to bring it under their control. This marked the beginning of a widespread revolt across northern India, as the

soldiers marched towards Delhi. 10 May is celebrated as a local holiday in Meerut.

Meerut was also the venue of the Meerut Conspiracy Case in March 1929, in which several trade unionists, including three Englishmen, were arrested by the colonial authorities for organizing a railway strike action. The case quickly became the subject of attention in England, inspiring a 1932 play titled Meerut Prisoners by left-wing Manchester street theatre group the Red Megaphones, which highlighted the detrimental effects of capitalism and industrialisation. Electricity was first introduced to Meerut in 1931. In the 1940s, during the height of the Indian independence movement, cinema-goers in Meerut had an unofficial policy of refusing to stand up when God Save the King played before the film was shown. The last session of the Indian National Congress (INC) before the independence of India in 1947, was held at Victoria Park in Meerut on 26 November 1946. It was in this session that the Constitution-making committee was constituted.

Post-independence era The city and district also suffered from communal Hindu-Sikh riots in 1984 and Hindu-Muslim riots in 1982. In May 1987, the Hashimpura massacre occurred when personnel of the Provincial Armed Constabulary (PAC) shot and killed 42 Muslims; the trial of the case is still pending. In 2006, a fire at a consumer electronics "Brand India" fair in Victoria Park Stadium killed at least 100 people, with authorities confirming 45 fatalities, although a specific figure on a toll was difficult to determine and was believed to be much higher.

Geography Meerut lies between the plains of the Ganges and the Yamuna in the Doab region. By land area, Meerut district covers 2,522km² (974 sq mi), which is larger than Delhi (Delhi covers an area of 1,484km² [573 sq mi]).

Climate Meerut has a monsoon influenced humid subtropical climate characterized by hot summers and cooler winters. Summers last from early April to late June and are extremely hot, with temperatures reaching up to 49 C (120 F). The monsoon arrives in late June and continues till the middle of September. Temperatures drop slightly, with increased cloud cover and higher humidity. Temperatures rise again in October and the city then has a mild, dry winter season from November to the middle of March. The lowest temperature ever recorded is −0.4 C (31.3 F), on 6 January 2013. The rainfall averages about 845 millimetres (33 in) per annum, which is suitable for crop cultivation. Most of the rainfall is received during the monsoon. The humidity varies from 30 to 100%.

Meerut has been ranked 25th best "National Clean Air City" (under Category 1 >10 lakh population cities) in India according to 'Swachh Vayu Survekshan 2024 Results.

Administration General administration The Meerut division consists of six districts, and is headed by the Divisional Commissioner of Meerut, who is a senior IAS officer. The Commissioner is the head of local government institutions (including Municipal Corporations) in the division, and is in charge of infrastructural development in their division. The District Magistrate of Meerut reports to the Divisional Commissioner. The current Commissioner is Selva Kumari J. The Meerut district administration is headed by the District Magistrate of Meerut, who is an IAS officer. The DM is in charge of property records and revenue collection for the central government and oversees the elections held in the city. The district is subdivided into three tehsils, namely Meerut, Mawana and Sardhana, each headed by a Sub-Divisional Magistrate. The tehsils are further divided into 12 blocks. The current District Magistrate of Meerut is Dr. Vijay Kumar Singh.

Police administration The Meerut district comes under the Meerut police zone and the Meerut police range of Uttar Pradesh Police. The Meerut zone is headed by an IPS officer of the rank of Additional Director General of Police (ADG), whereas the Meerut range is headed by an IPS officer of the rank of Inspector General of Police (IG). Currently, Rajeev Sabharwal is the ADG of the Meerut Zone and Praveen Kumar is the current IG of the Meerut range. The District Police of Meerut is headed by the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) who is an IPS officer. He is assisted by four Superintendents of Police (SP)/Additional Superintendent of Police (Addl. SP) (City, Rural Area, Traffic and Crime). The Meerut district is divided into numerous police circles, each headed by a Circle Officer of the rank of Deputy Superintendent of Police. SP (Traffic) and SP (Crime) are assisted by one Circle Officer of the rank of Deputy Superintendent of Police. The current SSP is Rohit Singh Sajwan.

Infrastructure and civic administration The development of infrastructure in the city is overseen by the Meerut Development Authority (MDA), which comes under the Housing Department of Uttar Pradesh government. The Divisional Commissioner of Meerut acts as the ex-officio Chairman of MDA, whereas a vice-chairman, a government-appointed IAS officer, looks after the daily matters of the authority. The current vice-chairman of Meerut Development Authority is Sita Ram Yadav. The city is administered by Meerut Municipal Corporation, which is responsible for performing civic administrative functions administered by the Municipal Commissioner (PCS Officer) whereas the Mayor is the ceremonial head of the corporation. The current Municipal Commissioner of Meerut Municipal Corporation is Manoj Kumar Singh.

Central government offices The office of the Chief Commissioner, Customs and Central Excise, Meerut Zone, has jurisdiction over 13 districts of Uttarakhand and 14 districts of Uttar Pradesh. This jurisdiction was carved out of the Lucknow Zone. It comprises the erstwhile Customs and Central Excise Commissioners of Meerut and Noida. The Meerut Commissionerate was bifurcated into two Commissionerates, namely, 'Meerut-I and Ghaziabad' and the Noida Commissionerate was bifurcated into 'Noida and Meerut-II'. In addition, the jurisdiction of Central Excise Division Bareilly was included in the jurisdiction of Meerut-II Commissionerate. The CGHS department of Meerut provides comprehensive health care facilities for central government employees and pensioners and their dependents residing in the city.

District management The Jani Khurd block is established on 1 October 1962. The Rohta block is established on 1 October 1959. The Daurala block is established on 1 October 1962. The Rajpura block is established on 1 October 1959. The Kharkhoda block is established on 1 October 1959. The Mawana block is established on 1 April 1957. The Meerut block is established on 1 April 1957. The Hastinapur block is established on 1 April 1963. The Sardhana block is established on 26 January 1955. The Saroorpur Khurd block is established on 1 April 1959. The Machchhara block is established on 1 October 1961. The Parikshitgarh block is established on 1 April 1958.

Demand for High Court bench in Meerut Almost 54% of all cases reaching the Allahabad High Court of Uttar Pradesh originate from the 22 districts of western Uttar Pradesh, but western Uttar Pradesh does not have a High Court bench. People must travel 700km away to Allahabad for hearings. Six high courts (Shimla, Delhi, Jaipur, Chandigarh, Nainital, Jammu) from other states are closer than Allahabad from western Uttar Pradesh. Western Uttar Pradesh has been advocating to have a high court bench in Meerut so that Western Uttar Pradesh can get access to judicial services. The bench in the western part of the state was first proposed by the government in 1955.

Meerut Cantonment Meerut Cantonment was established by the British East India Company in 1803 after the Battle of Laswari. It is one of the largest cantonments of India both in land area 3,568.06 hectares (35.68 km²) and population (93,684 (civil + military) people) as per the 2011 census. The Revolt of 1857 began in "Kali Paltan" in Meerut Cantonment and Indian soldiers stationed here actively participated in the rebellion. The cantonment surrounds the old city from 3 sides - from Pallavpuram to Sainik Vihar to Ganga Nagar. It is well connected with the rest of country by roads as well as by rail. The Delhi-Niti Pass Road (State Highway No. 45) passes through Meerut Cantonment. Meerut cantonment was the divisional headquarters of the 7th (Meerut) Division of the British Indian Army from 1829 to 1920.

Economy Development Meerut is the 63rd-fastest-growing urban area in the world. It is the fastest developing city in Uttar Pradesh, after Noida and Ghaziabad. According to a June 2011 report by US financial services firm Morgan Stanley gave Meerut the 5th spot on the "vibrancy" index, ahead of Delhi and Mumbai. The city ranked second on both the financial penetration index, which measures things like the presence of ATMs and bank branches, and on the consumption index, indicating the city's transformation into an urban town. Notably, western Uttar Pradesh accounts for 51.71% of state GDP. While the city ranked in the bottom 10 in job creation, the report suggests that overall there are plenty of signs of "potential for urbanization" including future employment opportunities. The infrastructure segment of Meerut is currently going through a boom phase with many new projects like Expressways, Metro, Freight corridors coming up in and around the city. The Upper Ganga Canal Expressway development has also been completed. On the India City Competitiveness Index, the city ranked 46th in 2017. It is India's largest refined sugar producer. Meerut is a prospective Logistic Hub in western Uttar Pradesh due to projects like Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor and expressway projects like - Delhi Meerut Expressway, Ganga Expressway, Delhi Meerut RRTS.

Industry Meerut is one of the important industrial towns of western Uttar Pradesh with several traditional and modern industries. It is traditionally known for handloom works and scissors industry (Meerut scissors). Meerut was one of the first cities in northern India where publishing was set up during the 19th century. It was a major center of commercial publishing during the 1860s and 1870s. Meerut is a rich agricultural area, being in proximity of Delhi, it is ideal for industry. As of 2011, it is home to 520 micro, small, and medium-scale industries. As of August 2006, Meerut has about 23,471 industrial units, including 15,510 small-scale units and 7,922 cottage industries. Sanspareils Greenlands (SG), Sareen Sports (SS) and BDM one of India's biggest sports goods manufacturers are based out of Meerut. Existing industries in the city include tyres, textiles, transformers, sugar, distillery, chemical, engineering, paper, publishing, and sports goods manufacturing. Prospective industries include IT and ITES, Logistics. Meerut is one of two centres of sports goods manufacturing in India - the other being Jalandhar. There are numerous sports companies in the city especially for cricket namely SS, SF, SG, RM Sports, BDM, GEM etc. Players like MS Dhoni, Virender Sehwag, Yuvraj Singh, Kieron Pollard, Virat Kohli, Kumar Sangakkara and many others have used bats made in Meerut. The 40,000-capacity Kailash Prakash Stadium is located in Meerut. Uttar Pradesh State Industrial Development Corporation (UPSIDC) has two industrial estates in the city, namely Partapur and Udyog Puram.

Transport Road Meerut is well-connected by road to major cities like Delhi, Noida, Faridabad, Ghaziabad, Haridwar, Bulandshahr, etc. A large number of people commute to Delhi, Noida, Greater Noida, and Ghaziabad every day for work. Three national highways (NH-58, NH-119 & NH-235) and two expressways pass through Meerut. The Delhi-Meerut Expressway - a 90 km long controlled-access expressway connects Meerut with Delhi via Dasna in Ghaziabad district. Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for the expressway on 31 December 2015, and the expressway was completed and opened for public on 1 April 2021, also an under construction Ganga Expressway. There are two main bus terminals, namely Bhainsali bus

terminal and Sohrab Gate bus terminal from where Uttar Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (UPSRTC) buses travel to cities all over the state and all nearby cities. A JNNURM scheme was put in place. Low Floor city buses (under JNNURM), normal city buses, auto rickshaws, and rickshaws are convenient public transport options to commute within the city. Many new transport infrastructure projects like the inner ring road, outer ring road and construction of new flyovers are proposed and being made as well. The under-construction Ganga Expressway will start from Meerut till Allahabad, and in the future, it will be extended from Meerut to Haridwar. Other expressways that will pass nearby Meerut are the Upper Ganga Canal Expressway, Delhi-Saharanpur-Dehradun Expressway and Gorakhpur-Shamli Expressway.

Expressways Since Meerut has a very favourable location for industries and is suitable for being a logistics hub, it has many expressways like Delhi Meerut Expressway, Ganga Expressway. It also is nearby (within 30 miles) of other expressways like Delhi Mumbai Expressway, Yamuna Expressway, KMP Expressway, and Eastern Peripheral Expressway.

Railways Meerut lies on the Delhi-Meerut-Saharanpur line, and has four railway stations: Meerut City, Meerut Cantt., Partapur and Pabli Khas. Meerut City railway station is the busiest. The railway line between Delhi and Meerut was constructed in 1864, and the Meerut Cantt station, which serves as a secondary railway station, was founded in 1865. About 20,000 passengers travel daily to Delhi and back. Around 27 pairs of trains run between Meerut and Delhi, and four between Meerut and Khurja. Two trains are available for Lucknow daily, namely Nauchandi Express and Rajya Rani Express. A weekly train goes to Chennai and Kochuveli. Daily trains connect Meerut to Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Rajkot and many cities in other states.

Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor or Eastern DFC is a broad gauge freight corridor in India. The railway will run between Ludhiana in Punjab and Dankuni (near Kolkata) in West Bengal via Meerut and Khurja in Uttar Pradesh. Apart from this, Delhi Meerut RRTS (RapidX) will also be used for inter-city cargo movement. Vinay Kumar Singh, managing director of NCRTC said, "During non-peak hours, the ridership would be low, so we can use the time to move cargo, including perishable goods." Uttar Pradesh government has allocated land for building a large logistic hub in Modipuram region of Uttar Pradesh.

Metro project On 30 December 2014, the Uttar Pradesh Cabinet approved the proposed metro rail project in Meerut, to boost the urban mass transport infrastructure in the city. The state government nominated RITES Limited and Uttar Pradesh Metro Rail Corporation (UPMRC) to prepare the respective detailed project report (DPR) and as a coordinator, respectively. The development authorities are nodal agencies for the DPR. The metro project got approval from the divisional commissioner. It was decided in the meeting that the project would be along two corridors, by dividing the project into two phases - Phase I from Partapur to Pallavpuram, and Phase II from Rajban Market to Gokalpur village. The main stations on the first corridor in the first phase will be Partapur, Panchwati Enclave, Rithani, Rithani West, Shatabdi Nagar, Devlok, Madhavpuram, Meerut Railway Station Road, Lajpat Bazaar, Begampul, Gandhi Bagh, Lekha Nagar, Pallavpuram Dorli, Ansal City and Pallavpuram. While in the second phase, the corridor in the Partapur-Pallavpuram route will cover 20 km and will have a total number of 18 stations in between, the 10 km-long route from Rajban Market to Gokalpur village will have nine stations.

Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) The NCR Transport Plan 2021 proposed a rail-based mass transit system, called the Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) between Delhi to Meerut, with the Shahdara-Ghaziabad section scheduled for construction during 2001-11, and the Ghaziabad-Meerut section

scheduled for 2011-21. In September 2010, the RRTS was reported to be proposed between Anand Vihar and Meerut with the project in its initial stages. The cost was projected to be around ₹1,000 crore (US\$120 million) with the expected time of the journey being 45 minutes. In November 2010, the train speed was proposed to be between 130 and 160 kmph, with stations at Anand Vihar, Sahibabad, Mohan Nagar, Ghaziabad, Guldhar, Duhai, Moradnagar, Modinagar, Meerut South, Shatabdi Nagar, Meerut Centre, Begumpul, Meerut North, Pallavpuram being the stops. On 14 December 2010, the NCR Planning Board, Meerut Development Authority (MDA), and Meerut Municipal Corporation approved the project. In August 2011, it was reported that the project tender had been awarded to Delhi Integrated Multi-Modal Transit System (DIMTS). The proposed system was to have dedicated trains between Anand Vihar and Meerut, with no stops in between, and trains that will stop at stations will be constructed after a gap of 4-5 km. The reported stations were Anand Vihar, Vaishali, Mohan Nagar, Meerut Road (Airtel Cut), Merta, Duhai, Muradnagar, Gang Nahar, Modinagar, Mohiuddinpur, Meerut Bypass Cut and Pallavpuram, with completion expected in 2017. The track between Anand Vihar to Dabur was proposed to be underground with the rest of the track overhead. On 11 July 2013, the Union Cabinet of India approved the formation of the National Capital Region Transport Corporation Limited (NCRTC), with a seed capital of ₹100 crore (US\$12 million). The corporation will take up the construction of the 90 km-long Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut corridor on a priority basis (along with two other corridors) with planned completion in 2016. It was reported that the Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for the three corridors were under the process of finalisation. In December 2013, problems were reported in the proposed alignment of the Delhi-Meerut corridor. In January 2014, it was reported that the proposed alignment had to be changed due to objections by NHAI and the feasibility report had to be prepared again. The new proposed alignment increased the length from 90 km to 106 km. In March 2018, the project's construction was started after the foundation stone was laid by Prime Minister, Narendra Modi. As of 2023, the alignment is 82 km (51 mi) long, and the 17 km first stretch, as the priority corridor, from Sahibabad to Duhai is almost completed, and will be opened by March 2023, while the next stretch till Meerut South will be completed by the first quarter of 2024. The entire corridor will be completed by March 2025.

Air The nearest airport is Hindon Airport at Ghaziabad, located 64 km (40 mi) away, while the major airport, Indira Gandhi International Airport at Delhi is about 100 km (62 mi) away. The Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar Airport is located at Partapur. It was proposed by the state government that the airstrip be converted to an international airport to reduce pressure on Delhi Airport. However, plans to expand the Domestic airport were called off after protests against land acquisition started in other parts of the state. Following an accident in May 2012, the city administration barred private flights from using the airstrip. The city has long demanded an airport. However, the government has stalled the project multiple times due to land acquisition reasons and project costs. Even Ajit Singh, the minister of civil aviation announced the project, but the project was not completed. BJP MP Rajendra Agarwal met Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia minister who promised that the Ministry of Civil Aviation will begin running the airport as soon as the Uttar Pradesh government satisfied the demand for land. As of October 2023, the project is awaiting approval for land acquisition from Uttar Pradesh Government.

Demographics According to the 2011 census, the Meerut Urban Agglomeration (Meerut UA) has a population of around 1.42 million, (comparable to the kingdom of Bahrain or Trinidad and Tobago) with the municipality contributing roughly 1.31 million of it. The Meerut Urban Agglomeration consists of area falling under Meerut Municipal Corporation, Meerut Cantonment Board and four census towns of Sindhawali, Amehra Adipur, Aminagar Urf Bhurbaral and Mohiuddinpur. This makes Meerut the 33rd most populous urban agglomeration and the 28th most populous city in India. The sex ratio in Meerut UA is 897, lower than the state average of 908; while the child sex ratio is 895, lower than the state average of 899. 12.99% of the population is under six years of age. The overall literacy rate is 88.29%, higher than the state average of 69.72%. In Meerut Municipal Corporation, 83.78% of the population spoke Hindi and 15.25% Urdu as their first language. As of 2017, Meerut

ranks 328 (based on population), 189 (based on population density), 648 (based on built-up area) among the world's urban areas. According to the 2001 census, the city ranked second in terms of population in NCR and 25th in India.

Culture Many traditional Indian festivals, including Holi, Dussehra, Diwali, Eid are celebrated in Meerut. Notably, the Nauchandi Mela (Nauchandi Fair), which began in 1672, is held annually two weeks after Holi. The fair typically runs for approximately 15 days and attracts a large number of visitors. Events at the fair include poetry recitations in languages such as Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi. Meerut serves as the headquarters of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Meerut, which encompasses the districts of Meerut, Muzaffarnagar, Saharanpur, Dehradun, Haridwar, Moradabad, Rampur, Jyotiba Phule Nagar, Ghaziabad, Baghpat and the Dhampur tehsil of Bijnor district. The cuisine of Meerut reflects influences from Punjabi, Awadhi, and Mughlai traditions. Local dishes commonly associated with the city include much of the vegetarian dishes and sweets as most of the population is vegetarian.

Nauchandi Mela The Nauchandi Mela is an annual fair held at Nauchandi Ground in Meerut. The fair stretches for about a month and is organized by the Municipal Corporation of Meerut. It generally starts from the second Sunday after Holi. The main exhibits are the artistic and religious rituals followed in rustic Uttar Pradesh. The fair witnesses more than 50,000 visitors every year. The Indian Railways' Nauchandi Express train is named after this fair. The fair has a prominent history dating back several hundreds of years. It started in the year 1672 AD as a one-day cattle trading fair and has been held every year after, excluding 1858, the year after 1857 revolt, which started from Meerut. Since then, cattle trading has been replaced by many other activities. The fair features shops for Lucknow's chikan work, Moradabad's brassware, Varanasi's carpets, rugs and silk sarees, Agra's footwear, Meerut's leather items, etc. Meerut's own products like sports goods, scissors, and confections like gajaks and nan-khatai are also sold. The fair features rides, wheels, circus performances and recreational activities remain a big attraction of the fair.

Film and television Meerut is home to a film industry, which has a following in western Uttar Pradesh and Haryana. The films are usually folk tales, comedies, or localised versions of Bollywood hits. The films which have been shot here include Sonu Ke Titu Ki Sweety, Zero, and Rajma Chawal. Notable people from Meerut in the film and television industry include Bharat Bhushan, Aziz Mian, Mandakini, Achint Kaur, Kailash Kher, Chitrangada Singh, Vishal Bhardwaj, Deepti Bhatnagar and Pravesh Rana.

Education Meerut is an education hub of Western Uttar Pradesh with about four or five universities, approximately 50 engineering colleges, 23 management colleges, seven pharmacy colleges, four colleges offering hotel management, one college offering fashion design, over 150 academic colleges, and over 50 schools. The city is home to Chaudhary Charan Singh University (formerly Meerut University), Banda University of Agriculture and Technology (formerly Meerut University of Agriculture and Technology), Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel University of Agriculture and Technology, Swami Vivekanand Subharti University, Shobhit Institute of Engineering & Technology and IIMT University (the oldest engineering institute in Meerut district, established in 1997). The city has one government-run engineering college, Sir Chhotu Ram Institute of Engineering and Technology, a constituent college of Chaudhary Charan Singh University. There are schools affiliated with recognized boards such as ICSE, CBSE, IB, and the state board. St. Mary's Academy, Meerut (a Patrician Brothers school) is a nationally top-ranked boys' school. St. John's Sr. Sec School (established by Begum Samru) which is over 130 years old, also the first IB school in Uttar Pradesh was Vidya Global School. Chaudhary Charan Singh University (CCSU) is a public and state university that has many degree colleges affiliated with it. They fall into two divisions: Saharanpur and Meerut with nine districts including Saharanpur,

Meerut, Muzaffarnagar, Ghaziabad, Shamli, Gautam Budh Nagar, Bagpat, Hapur and Bulandshahr administered by Vice-Chancellor and Registrar (PCS officer). The Indian Film and Television Institute is located at the western bypass of the city. The city has three medical colleges: Lala Lajpat Rai Memorial Medical College, Subharti Medical College and Mulayam Singh Yadav Medical College & Hospital.

Notable schools St. Mary's Academy, Meerut

Media Meerut is becoming a media centre, as journalists from all over Uttar Pradesh and other Indian states are working in Meerut. Radio stations shared with Delhi are Radio City 91.1 MHz, Big FM 92.7 MHz, Red FM 93.5 MHz, Radio One 94.3 MHz, Hit 95 (95 MHz), Radio Mirchi 98.3 MHz, AIR FM Rainbow 102.6 MHz, Meow FM 104.8 MHz, AIR FM Gold 106.4 MHz. Radio IIMT (90.4 MHz) is the only radio station located in the city. The Hindi-language daily newspapers Hindustan, Rajasthan Patrika, Dainik Jagran, Amar Ujala, Dainik Janwani, The Hindu, Rashtrasewa, Dainik Jagran iNext are published from the city. The English daily Times of India, Meerut edition and the English language supplement HT City, Meerut with Hindustan Times is also published there. Moneymakers, an English daily is also published there. Asian Express, Hindi newspaper, and news magazine Citizen of the World are also published there.

Tourist destinations Tourist destinations in and around Meerut include the following: Digamber Jain Bada Mandir Hastinapur - Located on the banks of the old ravine of the Ganges, it is considered one of the holiest places on earth by Jains. It is believed to be the birthplace of three Jain Tirthankaras. There are many ancient Jain temples in Hastinapur with the Digamber Jain Mandir, Jambudweep, Kailash Parvat Rachna, and Shwetambar Jain Temple being the most well known. Apart from Jain temples, the Pandeshwar temple, the Historical Gurdwara, and the Hastinapur Sanctuary are worth being seen. Government Freedom Struggle Museum and Shaheed Smarak (Martyr's Memorial) - Government Freedom Struggle Museum, Meerut was established in 1997. It is located in the Shaheed Smarak compound on Delhi Road, about 6 km north-east of the city railway station and at a distance of about 200 meters from the Delhi Bus Station. Visitors can stay in various guesthouses, private lodges, and hotels. The museum's main aim is the collection, preservation, documentation, and exhibition of cultural property and to make it available for educational activities as well as for the creation of awareness of Meerut's history. Some postal stamps, pictures, postcards, memorial coins related to the events of 1857, and later coins are also in the collection of the museum. The museum is in the developing stages and efforts are being made to collect more specimens. The museum organises educational programs such as lectures, seminars, and competitions related to history, culture, philosophy, the freedom struggle, and religion. It also aims to coordinate with other cultural and educational organizations for disseminating Indian culture, particularly the events related to the long-drawn freedom struggle of India. Shahi Jama Masjid - The Jama Masjid was built by Hasan Mahdi, Sultan Mahmud Ghaznavi's Wazir in 1019 AD (older than the Qutb Minar). It is considered the first masjid in North India. Although it was restored by Humayun, it is one of the oldest mosques in India. Some believe that the first North Indian Mosque is Quwwat/Qubbat ul Islam in Delhi and then Adhai Din Ka Jhonpra in Ajmer. St. John's Church - This church was established by Chaplain the Reverend Henry Fisher on behalf of the East India Company in 1819 in the cantonment area and was completed in 1822. It is considered one of the oldest churches in North India. The Church was dedicated to the people by Bishop Wilson. It has a seating capacity of 10,000 people. During the War of 1857, this church was the scene of heavy fighting between Indian and British forces. Augarnath Temple - This temple (also known as Kalipaltan Mandir locally) is located at the site where the soldiers of the War of 1857 planned their operations. The temple also houses a memorial built to honour the martyrs of the Indian Rebellion of 1857. The old temple has been replaced by a modern version. Augarnath Temple is also one of Shiva's oldest temples. Other

places of interest include Mansa Devi Temple, Baleni, Basilica of Our Lady of Graces, Sardhana and the Chandi Devi Temple which was built by Holkar queen Devi Ahilyabai Holkar.

Notable people Indian Rebellion of 1857 Dhan Singh Kadam Singh, a leader of who fought against the British East India Company during the Indian Rebellion of 1857

Films and music Deepti Bhatnagar Bharat Bhushan Ayananka Bose Arun Govil Achint Kaur Kailash Kher Mitakshara Kumar Mandakini Popular Meeruthi Aziz Mian Pravesh Rana Chitrangada Singh Sanjeev Tyagi

Politics Rajendra Agrawal, Member of Parliament, for Meerut Mohammed Shahid Akhlaq Dr. Laxmikant Bajpai, Former State President, BJP, Uttar Pradesh. Ravindra Kumar Bhadana, politician Hemlata Chaudhary, politician Lakhi Ram Nagar, businessman and politician Malook Nagar, businessman and politician Rubab Sayda Pyare Lal Sharma, freedom fighter and first Education Minister of Uttar Pradesh Yashwant Singh Somendra Tomar, Member of the Legislative Assembly for Meerut South Vijaypal Singh Tomar Seema Upadhyay

Sports Scholars Sir Ziauddin Ahmed, academic and parliamentarian Satish Chandra, Indian historian Anu Garg, educationist and author K. P. S. Mahalwar, legal educationist and administrator Sheikh Abdul Aleem Siddiqui Qadri Meerathi, Islamic scholar and writer Zayn al-Abidin Sajjad Meerthi, Indian Islamic scholar and historian Aashiq Elahi Meerthi, Indian Islamic scholar, biographer, translator and writer Badre Alam Merathi, Indian hadith scholar and poet Hafeez Merathi, Indian Urdu poet, author and critic Ismail Merathi, Indian Urdu poet educationist Manu Prakash, scientist and MacArthur Fellowship awardee

See also 2006 Meerut fire Meerut Lok Sabha constituency Hapur Assembly constituency Kithore Assembly constituency Meerut Assembly constituency Meerut Cantonment Assembly constituency Meerut South Assembly constituency Largest Indian cities by GDP

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Nashik

Nashik, formerly Nasik, is a city in the northern region of the Indian state of Maharashtra situated on the banks of the river Godavari, about 165 km (103 mi) northeast of the state capital Mumbai. Nashik is one of the Hindu pilgrimage sites of the Kumbh Mela, which is held every 12 years. According to the Ramayana, Nashik is where Lakshmana cut off the nose of the demoness Shurpanakha on the banks of the Godavari River. It is also called Panchavati. It was known as "Gulshanabad" during the Mughal period.

History Mythology Nashik was known as "Padmanagar" during the Satya Yuga, "Trikantak" during the Treta Yuga, "Janasthana" during the Dvapara Yuga, and finally "Navashikh" or "Nashik" during the Kali Yuga, according to Hindu traditions. Nashik is significant in history, social life, and culture. The city is located on the banks of the Godavari River, making it a sacred site for Hindus around the world. During his 14-year exile from Ayodhya, Rama, the king of Ayodhya, is said to have made Nashik his home.

Nashik Tram The Nashik Tram was started from the Old Municipal Building on the main road to Nashik Road railway station around 1889. The tram served the people of Nashik for almost 44 years. The tram station was at the Main Road, and the tram reached the Nashik Road railway station via the present Main Road, Bhadrakali Market, Ghasbazar, and Phalke Road. It covered a distance of about eight to ten kilometres, and the stretch used to be covered with dense jungle at the time. In the article 'Nashik-then', poet Kusumagraj wrote: "If the carriages were full, the tram would leave. It would ring the bell and drive out of the village to the main road and then to the grass market.

Revolutionary activities In the 1900s, the Indian Freedom Fighter, Sri Vinayak Damodar Savarkar along with his brother founded a secret society named Abhinav Bharat in Nasik under the name "Mitra Mela" which was one among many in Maharashtra. On 21 December 1909, Anant Kanhere, a Abhinav Bharat member and student from Aurangabad, assassinated Nashik's governor A. M. T. Jackson while he was watching a play in a theatre. Kanhere was arrested on the spot, and after investigation, police arrested Vinayak Savarkar and others for conspiring against the government to instigate an armed rebellion. The case was known as the "Nasik Conspiracy Case - 1910". In the court trial in Bombay, police alleged Savarkar was the brain, moving spirit and inspiration of the conspiracy extending over many years. Bombay court sentenced him to life imprisonment, and transportation to notorious Cellular Jail at the Andaman Islands; Savarkar's elder brother, Babarao Savarkar, also received the same punishment and others received varying degrees of imprisonment. ICS officer Jackson's assassination created a sensation in Poona, Nasik and Bombay. The case and subsequent imprisonment made Savarkar famous. In 1930, the Nashik Satyagraha was launched under the leadership of B. R. Ambedkar for the entry of Dalits in Kalaram Mandir. In 1931, a meeting of the Bombay Province Charnakar Parishad was organised in Nashik to work out the Charnbhar's position concerning the Second Round Table Conference in which Ambedkar was going to participate. In 1932, he organised his temple entry movement for the abolition of untouchability in Nashik.

Geography Nashik lies in the northern part of Maharashtra state, 584 m (1,916 ft) from the mean sea level. The river Godavari originates from the Brahmagiri Mountain, Trimbakeshwar, about 24 km (15 mi) from Nashik, and flows through the old residential settlement, now in the central part of the city. Due to the high pollution created by factories in proximity to the city, the river was dying at an alarming rate. It has since been successfully

cleaned. Nashik lies on the western edge of the Deccan Plateau, an ancient volcanic formation. Trimbakeshwar is about 30 km (19 mi) from the city, it is where from river Godavari originates. The land area of the city is about 259.13 km² (100.05 sq mi).

Climate The city's tropical location and high altitude combine to give it a relatively mild version of a tropical wet and dry climate (Kppen Aw). Temperatures rise slightly in October, but this is followed by the cool season from November to February. The cool season sees warm temperatures of around 28 C or 82.4 F during the day, but cool nights, with lows averaging 10 C or 50 F, and extremely dry air.

Nashik has been ranked 19th best "National Clean Air City" (under Category 1 >10L Population cities) in India according to 'Swachh Vayu Survekshan 2024 Results'

Demographics Nashik is the fourth largest city in Maharashtra in terms of population after Mumbai, Pune, and Nagpur. According to the Census of India, 2011, Nashik had a population of 1,486,053. Males constitute 782,517 of the population, and females 703,536. The Metropolitan Nashik population was 1,561,809, in which 821,921 were males and 739,888 were females. Nashik city had an average literacy rate of 89.85%: male literacy was 93.40%, and female literacy was 85.92%. The sex ratio is 894 per 1,000 males for Nashik city. The child sex ratio is 865 girls per 1,000 boys. 11.42% of the population is under 6 years of age. In the census year 2001, the Nashik Urban Agglomeration had a population of 1,152,326. Thus, it was the fourth largest urban area of Maharashtra State after Mumbai, Pune and Nagpur. The projected population of Nashik urban agglomeration (which includes abutting urban areas like Deolali) as of 11 November 2012 is 1,562,769.

At the time of the 2011 census, 76.69% of the population spoke Marathi, 11.80% Hindi, 3.26% Urdu, 2.16% Gujarati and 1.26% Marwari as their first language.

Governance and politics Civic administration Nashik city is governed by the Nashik Municipal Corporation. Nashik is the district headquarters of the Nashik District, 185 km (115 mi) away from Mumbai. The city has developed on both banks of the Godavari, which divides the city into almost equal halves. The ward committee consists of councillors representing the electoral wards within the territorial area of the ward committee. There are six ward committees namely Nashik (E), Nashik (W), Nashik Road, Panchavati, CIDCO and Satpur. The main function of the committees is to approve the cost of works for the wards, incorporate the expenses in the budget among others.

Civic services The Nashik Municipal Corporation (NMC) is planning to start major civic projects in 2020. The municipal corporation will prioritize new smart roads, 800 CCTVs, and LED streetlights. It will also implement a smart parking system and the Goda beautification project. For water infrastructure, two new water treatment plants will be built and existing sewage treatment plants will be upgraded.

Solid waste management In the Nashik Municipal Corporation area about 225 MT of solid waste is generated per day. Unlike other Indian cities, this garbage is collected by vehicles titled 'Ghantagadi' (meaning the vehicle with a bell): a system which has resulted in smaller versions of the ghantagadi ply in the congested old city areas. A plant has been set by the Nashik Municipal Corporation near Pandav Leni (Pandavleni Caves) to process the garbage and convert it into compost.

Digital services The NMC provides an online website for various civic services like birth certificate registration, medical services, taxes, development services, etc.

Economy Agriculture In early 1925, the table grape revolution was started in Ozhar, a small town near Nashik, by Raosaheb Jairam Krishna Gaikwad. Today, table grapes are exported to Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. The total cultivatable area in Nashik district is 864,000 hectares, of which the average Kharip crop area is 663,200 hectares, and the average Rabbi crop area is 136,500 hectares. The sown area is 658,763 hectares (99%) and the forest land is 340,000 hectares (21.75%). The uncultivable area is 23,000 hectares (1.48%).

Industry The Igatpuri-Nashik-Sinnar investment region is an important node in the US\$90 billion Delhi Mumbai Industrial Corridor Project. Nashik is a defence and aerospace manufacturing hub with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited aircraft manufacturing plant located at Ozar. The Currency Note Press and India Security Press are on Nashik Road, where Indian currency and government stamp papers are printed respectively. Industrial areas in Nashik district are Satpur, Ambad, Sinnar, Igatpuri, Dindori and Vinchur. The proposed additional areas are Sinnar, Malegaon and Rajur Bahula. Industries in Nashik district include Atlas Copco, Robert Bosch GmbH, CEAT Limited, Crompton Greaves, ThyssenKrupp, Epcos, Everest Industries, GlaxoSmithKline, Hindustan Unilever Limited, Kirloskar Group, Dabur, KSB Pumps, Larsen & Toubro, Mahindra and Mahindra, United Spirits Limited, Mahindra Ugine Steel, Samsonite, Shalimar Paints, Siemens, VIP Industries, and Indian Oil Corporation. Apart from manufacturing, Nashik is an emerging investment destination for Information Technology companies. Tata Consultancy Services has invested in Nashik under the government of India BPO promotion scheme (IBPS). Also WNS, Accenture, TCS has set up Digital Impact Square, or DISQ, which is a social innovation center. Nashik has a textile industry. National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development has selected Yeola Block for development of Paithani Cluster. To facilitate exports, a container freight station was started at MIDC Ambad by the Central Government.

Wine industry Nashik has been described as "The Wine Capital of India". The Nashik region reportedly produced 10,000 tonnes of grapes per year. In 2013, there were 22 wineries in Nashik, out of 46 wineries throughout India. The largest vineyard in Nashik is the Sula Vineyards. In the harvest season, Nashik is home to several wine festivals, such as the India Grape Harvest and SulaFest.

Culture and cityscape In February 2016, The Statue of Ahimsa, a 108 ft (33 m) idol of the first Jain tirthankara Rishabhdev carved in monolithic stone was consecrated at Mangi Tungji nearly 122 km (76 mi) from Nashik city. It is recorded in the Guinness Book of World Records as the tallest Jain idol in the world.

Trirashmi Caves The Trirashmi (Pandavleni) Caves, or Nashik Caves, are a group of 24 caves carved between the 1st century BCE and the 2nd century CE, representing the Hinayana Buddhist caves.

Dams Gangapur Dam is on the river Godavari near Gangawadi village and is an earthen dam, Nashik. Chankapur dam on the Girna river is one of the big dams built by the British in the 19th century. It is 3 km (1.9 mi) from the village Abhona in Kalwan tehsil and 60 km (37 mi) from Nashik. Kashypi Dam is on the Kashypi river near Rajapur, Nashik. Girna Dam is an earth-fill dam on the Girna river near Nandgaon, Nashik District. Darna Dam is a gravity dam on the Darna river near Igatpuri, Nashik district.

Kumbh Mela The Kumbh Mela is celebrated every six years at Haridwar and Prayagraj and Maha Kumbh takes place every twelve years at four places: Prayagraj, Haridwar, Ujjain, and Nashik. According to the Puranas, it is believed that Kumbh derives its name from an immortal pot of nectar, which the devatas (Gods) and rakshasas (Demons) fought over. The four places where the nectar fell are at the banks of the river Godavari in Nashik, river Kshipra in Ujjain, river Ganges in Haridwar and at Triveni Sangam of Ganga, Yamuna and invisible Saraswati River in Prayagraj.

Gardens There are numerous gardens built and maintained by NMC throughout the city. Shivaji Garden on Main Road is one of the oldest. There were rose farms near Mumbai Naka. NMC Pushpotsav (Festival of Flowers) is celebrated every year in main building, Rajiv Gandhi Bhavan.

Library Sarvajanic Vachanalaya Nashik is one of the oldest libraries and reading rooms of India established around 1840 by Britishers. Spread across several stories and over numerous rooms, the collection of 1,75,000 books includes English, Marathi, Hindi and Sanskrit books.

Theatres Kalidas Kala Mandir and Parshuram Saykhedkar Natyagruha are drama theatres regularly visited by the public.

Transport By Air Nashik has its airport located at Ozar and an old airport at Gandhinagar which connects Nashik to Mumbai. The Gandhinagar Airport is now reserved for the military. Nashik Airport is a domestic airport and is connected to Ahmedabad, Delhi, Goa, Hyderabad, Indore, Bangalore, Jaipur(via Indore) and Nagpur.

By Rail Nashik Road railway station is city railway station along with Deolali which lies within the city boundary. Regular travellers also travel to Kasara or Igatpuri from Mumbai and take a cab or bus to reach Nasik.

By Road Nashik is served by National Highway 60. Mumbai-Nashik Expressway connects Nashik to Mumbai. India's first 10-lane expressway is going to be built between Nashik and Pune. The Surat-Nashik-Chennai expressway goes through Nashik city. The Samruddhi Mahamarg also goes 15 km (9.3 mi) from Nashik city.

Public transport Nashik Municipal Corporation (NMC) rolled out its city bus service Citilinc on 8 July 2021. The previous state government had given its nod to the NMC to take over the city bus service from the ailing Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC). **Metro [Proposed]** - Greater Nashik Metro is proposed by Maharashtra Metro Rail Corporation Limited. It was cancelled on opposition since there seemed no severe requirement with availability of wide road connectivity across city. **Trams [1889-1933]** - Nashik was the third city in India after Kolkata and Mumbai to get trams. Trams started operation in 1889. It originated from the Old Municipal Corporation building located on Main Road and terminated at the Nashik Road railway station (8-10 km). It passes through areas of Ganjamal (the now defunct bus stop was earlier a tram stop) and behind the Fame Multiplex. Brady's; a private company funded the project and later introduced India's first petrol-engine-driven tram under the aegis of Nasik Tramway Co. The tramway closed down in around 1933 owing to the successive years of famine and plague, it had run into heavy losses. **AutoRickshaws** - The city has a number of autorickshaws that work on sharing as well as direct fare basis. **OLA** - The city has OLA app working with rickshaws and cars. Earlier Uber was also serving.

Education The city has two state-run universities: the Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University and the Maharashtra University of Health Sciences.

International relations Twin towns and sister cities Budapest, Hungary (2018) Tehsils of Nashik:

Malegaon Dindori Nandgaon Igatpuri Kalwan Baglan taluka

Notable people Madhav Mantri, international cricketer Abhishek Raut, cricketer Anant Laxman Kanhere, revolutionary, freedom fighter Anjana Thamke, athlete Dadasaheb Phalke, Film director, and editor regarded as the "father of Indian cinema" Pandit Dattatreya Vishnu Paluskar, Hindustani classical vocalist Dadasaheb Gaikwad (Bhaurao Krishnaji Gaikwad), politician, social worker Vamandada Kardak, Ambedkar movement activist, Marathi poet. Baburao Bagul, Marathi author Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, renowned freedom fighter, revolutionary, right-wing ideologist, politician, poet and author Kusumagraj, Marathi poet, playwright and novelist Shivaji Tupe, painter Krishnaji Gopal Karve, Indian freedom fighter, revolutionary Tatya Tope, leader in the Indian Rebellion of 1857 Dhairya Dand, inventor, artist, designer Kavita Raut, long-distance runner Sunil Khandbahale, innovator, entrepreneur, language enthusiast Dattaraya Ramchandra Kaprekar, recreational mathematician Nazima, actress Aishwarya Narkar, actress in Marathi films, serials and plays, Hindi serials, commercials Anita Date-Kelkar, actress, known for Radhika in Mazhya Navryachi Bayko Sayali Bhagat, model/actress, Femina Miss India World 2004 Mahadev Govind Ranade, Indian scholar, social reformer and author Ramesh Raskar, computer scientist Dattu Baban Bhokanal, rower Chinmay Udgirkar, actor Vidit Gujrathi, Indian chess player Saiyami Kher, actress Anjali Patil, actress Shashank Khaitan, film writer, director, actor and producer Mrunal Dusanis, actress Lalita Pawar, actress Chhagan Bhujbal, politician Uttamrao Dhikale, politician Pradnya Gadre, badminton player

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Faridabad

Faridabad (Hindi: [fəˈriːdābād]), is the most populous city in the Indian state of Haryana and is a part of Delhi National Capital Region. It is one of the major satellite cities around Delhi and is located 284 kilometres south of the state capital, Chandigarh. The river Yamuna forms the eastern district boundary with Uttar Pradesh. The Government of India included it in the second list of Smart Cities Mission on 24 May 2016. As per the 2021 Delhi Regional Plan, Faridabad is a part of the Central National Capital Region or Delhi metropolitan area. The newly developed residential and industrial part of Faridabad (Sec. 66 to 89) between the Agra Canal and the Yamuna River is commonly referred to as Greater Faridabad (also known as Neharpar). The area is being developed as a self-sustained sub-city with wide roads, tall buildings, malls, educational institutions, and health and commercial centers. Sectors 66 to 74 are Industrial Sectors, while Sectors 75 to 89 are Residential Sectors. Faridabad is a major industrial hub of Haryana. 50% of the income tax collected in Haryana is from Faridabad and Gurgaon. Faridabad is famous for henna production from the agricultural sector, while tractors, motorcycles, switch gears, refrigerators, shoes, tyres and garments constitute its primary industrial products. In 2018, Faridabad was considered by the World Health Organization as the world's second most polluted city. Faridabad ranked 10th in the Swachh Survekshan Survey's top ten dirtiest cities in India in 2020. Faridabad has been selected as one of the hundred Indian cities to be developed as a smart city under Government of India's flagship Smart Cities Mission by Ministry of Urban Development.

History The city was founded in 1607 by Sheikh Farid, treasurer to the Mughal emperor Jahangir, to protect the Grand Trunk Road between Delhi and Agra, and lies in the cultural region of Braj and Mewat. In Independent India, Faridabad was initially a part of Gurgaon district which was later made an independent district on 15 August 1979. After partition in 1947, under the leadership of Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay, over 50000 refugees were resettled in Faridabad, reviving the economy and social life of the city. Nearby Tilpat (then "Tilprastha") was one of the five villages demanded by Pandavas to avert a disastrous war.

Geography **Climate** Faridabad has a borderline hot semi-arid climate BSh just short of a dry winter humid subtropical climate (Cwa). The city features the three typical Indian seasons - The "hot" or pre-monsoon season lasts from late March to mid-July and is typified by sweltering and arid conditions that begin very dry but later turn humid. The "wet" or monsoon season is sweltering and often dangerously humid with frequent but erratic heavy rainfall. Following the retreat of the monsoon is the "cool" or winter season with warm and sunny weather producing by far the most comfortable conditions. According to the World Air Quality Report 2024, Faridabad is one of the world's 20 most polluted city in India.

Faridabad has been ranked 17th best "National Clean Air City" (under Category 1 >10L Population cities) in India.

Demographics As of the 2011 census official report, Faridabad Municipal Corporation had 290,675 households and a population of 1,414,050. 187,639 (13.27%) were under the age of 7. Faridabad had a sex ratio of 874 females per 1000 males and a literacy rate of 83.83% for those 7 years and above. Scheduled Castes made up 133,395 (10.57%) of the population respectively.

At the time of the 2011 Census of India, 87.59% of the population spoke Hindi, 4.41% Punjabi, 1.81% Bhojpuri and 1.40% Haryanvi as their first language. The local languages are Brajbhasha and Haryanvi.

Administration There are six key administrators of Faridabad.

Faridabad, Palwal, and Nuh district jointly fall under Faridabad division of Haryana. A Division is headed by a Divisional Commissioner. Faridabad has a judiciary system headquartered at District Court in Sector 12 which came into existence on 8 December 1980 with Shri A.P. Chaudhary as first District & Sessions Judge, Faridabad. The District Court has its Bar association with more than 2000 lawyers as its members

Economy The Faridabad Small Industries Association claims that Faridabad and Gurgaon districts account for almost 56% of the income tax collected in Haryana. Faridabad has been selected as one of the hundred Indian cities to be developed as a smart city under PM Narendra Modi's flagship Smart Cities Mission. It has started growing as another technology hub in Haryana nurturing startups and innovation. Faridabad is the largest exporter of henna (Mehandi) in India. According to the Faridabad Henna Manufacturing Association, the sale of henna from Faridabad is worth an estimated ₹250 crore (US\$30 million)-₹300 crore (US\$35 million) annually. Many directorates of different union government ministries are headquartered in Faridabad including Central Ground Water Board, Department of Plant Quarantine and Central Insecticide Lab, and Union Government Offices from Haryana including the Commissioner of Central Excise within Department of Revenue, Government of India, Department of Explosives, and Department of Labour. Institute such as National Council for Cement and Building Materials, a research and development institute under the ministry of commerce, and industry has its head office in Faridabad. The Apex Central Training Institute of the Department of Revenue, Government of India, National Academy of Customs Excise & Narcotics is located at Sector 29. The National Power Training Institute, an autonomous body under Ministry of Power, Government of India has a corporate office in Faridabad. The city also hosts the National Institute of Financial Management, which serves as training academy for accounting and financial services.

Also headquartered here is NHPC Limited which is a Central PSU under the Ministry of Power, Government of India, and the largest hydropower Company in India. An office of Geological Survey of India is also located in the NIT-5 area of the city. Faridabad is the industrial capital of Haryana. As of 2013, out of a total of 11,665 registered working factories in Haryana, 2,499 were in Faridabad which was followed by Gurgaon with 2,116 factories. According to a study, the growth of Faridabad has been declining in the last 2 decades, the share of Faridabad in investment is less than 1% and 93% of investment is in the paper industry. The industrial contribution of Faridabad to Haryana's revenue was declined from 29% to 22% in 2012-13. Faridabad is home to large-scale companies like Escorts Limited, India Yamaha Motor Pvt. Ltd., Havells India Limited, JCB, Indian Oil (R&D), Larsen & Toubro (L&T), Whirlpool, ABB, Goodyear. Bata and Eicher Tractor, and Beebay Kidswear Eyewear e-tailer Lenskart and healthcare startup Lybrate have their headquarters in Faridabad. More than 5,000 units of auto parts producers are based in Faridabad. Lakhani Armaan Group has set up manufacturing facilities at Faridabad (Haryana). Faridabad has experienced growth in real estate activity, with contributions from a range of developers and property agencies.

Transportation and connectivity Rail Faridabad is on the broad gauge of the New Delhi - Mumbai Line. New Delhi and Hazrat Nizamuddin Railway Station is about 25 km away from Old Faridabad railway station. The trains for big cities like Mumbai, Hyderabad, Chennai are easily accessible from here. Local trains runs between New Delhi to Faridabad.

Metro Delhi Metro Violet Line connects Faridabad with Delhi. The extension of Violet Line to Faridabad was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 6 September 2015. There are 9 metro stations in Faridabad corridor of Delhi Metro which are all elevated. Metro has been recently elongated to Ballabhgarh with the addition of two stations- Sant Surdas Sihi and Raja Nahar Singh Ballabhgarh. The 11 metro stations are Sarai, NHPC Chowk, Mewala Maharajpur, Sector 28, Badkhal Mor, Old Faridabad, Neelam Chowk Ajrona, Bata Chowk, Escorts Mujesar, Sant Surdas (Sihi) and Raja Nahar Singh. The Delhi Metro's Violet Line is set to extend from Raja Nahar Singh (Ballabhgarh) to Palwal, covering 24 km with about 10 stations. The Haryana government approved the project, and a techno-feasibility study is underway. Estimated at ₹4,320 crore, it aims to improve NCR connectivity.

Road Faridabad is well connected with Delhi through Delhi Faridabad Skyway (Main Badarpur Flyover). Upcoming DND-Faridabad-KMP expressway It is also connected to cities of Gurgaon through Faridabad Gurugram Road (SH137) and Noida, Gautam Buddha Nagar of Uttar Pradesh through Upcoming Bridge near Manjhawali in Faridabad and Jewar in Noida and Ghaziabad through F.N.G road. It is also connected to Delhi-Mumbai Expressway.

Airways Faridabad is served by Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi, which is around 35 km from Faridabad. The airport is the busiest airport in India and provides domestic and international air connectivity.

Education Higher education There are numerous educational institutions in Faridabad that offer higher education courses. These colleges provide courses in different field like science, medicine, arts, commerce, engineering, MCA, etc. Some of the colleges that offer graduate and undergraduate courses include:

Healthcare There are many private and government hospitals in Faridabad. The city also has one Government Medical College Hospital named Employees State Insurance Corporation Medical College, Faridabad. The city had another private medical college Gold field medical college situated in Village Chainsa, Ballabhgarh which got defunct in 2016 due to financial constraints and later bought by Haryana government and planned to restart in 2020 by the name of "Atal Bihari Vajpayee government medical College". Other hospitals include:

Sports Cricket The Nahar Singh Stadium, which has approximately 25,000 seats, has hosted 8 international cricket matches and a league cricket match between Mumbai Heroes and Bhojpuri Dabang of Celebrity Cricket League. However, owing to the poor condition of the grounds, international competitions have not been held there since 2017. In 2019, a \$10.15 million (115 Crore) Haryana government project began to renovate the stadium and grounds. International matches are expected to resume in the facility by the early 2020.

Groundwater and land subsidence A study published in Nature scientific report reports that land is sinking in Faridabad due to groundwater overpumping.

Tourism Badkhal Lake Badkhal Lake was located in Badkhal village, 8 km from Delhi Border. The lake fringed by Aravalli hills was a man-made embankment which has now dried up. The lake complex, spread over 40 acres, had come up in 1969. In June 2015, Haryana government decided to revive the Badkhal lake here to once again attract tourists.

Surajkund Tourist Complex and International Crafts Fair Situated at a distance of around 8 km from South Delhi. It is a 10th-century water reservoir which believed to be built by Tomar king Surajpal. Place is known for its annual fair "Surajkund International Crafts Mela". 2015 edition of fair was visited by 1.2 million visitors including 160,000 foreigners with more than 20 countries participating in fair. The Suraj Kund Lake. D2i.in. Retrieved on 2012-01-10. here is surrounded by rock cut steps. 2016 edition of Surajkund International Crafts Mela was the 30th edition and People's Republic of China will be participating in the fair. Participation of the China will be the part of agreement signed between India and China in 2014 to celebrate year 2016 as "Year of China in India". In 2021, the international crafts fair or Surajkund Mela, as it commonly called scheduled from 1 to 15 February was cancelled for the first time in 34 years amid COVID-19 fears.

Anangpur Dam The Anagpur Dam is located close to the Anagpur village (also called Arangpur) in Faridabad district, about 2 kilometres (1.2 mi) away from Surajkund. This unique Indian hydraulic engineering structure was built during the reign of King Anangpal of the Tomar dynasty in the 8th century. It is approachable by road from Delhi from the Delhi - Mathura road. The ruins of the fortifications found in Anangpur village establish by an inference that it was built by Anangpal as part of the Lal Kot that was developed as the first city of Delhi in the 8th century.

Raja Nahar Singh Palace Raja Nahar Singh palace is located in Ballabhgarh. Now Haryana Tourism manages the palace as heritage property. The palace is now a hotel-cum-restaurant.

Baba Farid's Tomb The tomb is located in old Faridabad. Baba Farid was a popular Sufi Sant. The tomb contains 2 gigantic doors and the graves of Baba Farid and his son.

Prehistoric Stone Age site Archaeologists discovered cave paintings and tools from the Paleolithic period in the Mangar Bani hill forest, which is on the outskirts of Faridabad. The cave paintings are estimated to be one lac years old. These are believed to be the largest in the Indian subcontinent and possibly the world's oldest.

Recreation Faridabad and various shopping malls including SRS Mall in Sector 12, Crown Interiors Mall in Sarai Khawaja Village, Crown Plaza in Sector 15 A, Parasnath Mall along with several others. The city has a good network of parks in each sector with some of the major parks like Town Park in Sector 12 which also accommodates one of the Largest Flag of India. Omaxe World Street is the recent addition to the malls of Greater Faridabad.

Religious sites Utilities Faridabad has been selected as one of the 100 Smart Cities in India. A live talk show on making Faridabad 'a smart city' was organised at Municipal Corporation's Auditorium. Haryana Power Generation Corporation Ltd (HPGCL) is setting up a solar power plant at the site of a defunct thermal power plant in Faridabad. The power generator plans to set up the plant over 151.78 acres near Bata Chowk in the district that generated coal based energy in the past.

Environment A petition was filed with National Green Tribunal (NGT) for protection of Aravalli from Faridabad waste disposal.

Politics of Faridabad The Lok Sabha MP representing Faridabad Lok Sabha constituency is Krishan Pal Gurjar, who was elected in May 2019. The MLA representing Faridabad Assembly constituency is Vipul Goel, who was

elected in October 2024.

Notable people Ram Chander Bainsla - politician Avtar Singh Bhadana - politician Manu Bhaker - double Olympic medallist Manvinder Bisla - domestic cricketer Shweta Chaudhary - international shooter Rahul Dalal, b 1992 - domestic cricketer. Krishan Pal Gurjar - politician Himani Kapoor - Bollywood playback singer Ajey Nagar - YouTube content creator under the name CarryMinati Lalit Nagar - politician - former MLA from Tigaon constituency Manish Narwal - paralympic gold medallist and Khel Ratna winner Shiva Narwal - international shooter Sonu Nigam - Bollywood playback singer Dhruv Rathee - YouTuber Ajay Ratna - international cricketer Mahesh Rawat - domestic cricketer Rhythm Sangwan - Olympian Anisa Sayyed - international shooter Mohit Sharma - international cricketer Richa Sharma - Bollywood playback and devotional singer Kabir Dhan Singh - Bollywood actor Mahender Pratap Singh - Indian politician Gaurav Solanki - international boxer Rahul Tewatia - cricketer - Haryana - Gujarat Titans Vijay Yadav - international cricketer

See also Gurgaon Noida Largest Indian cities by GDP

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Rajkot

Rajkot (Hindi: [राजकोट]) is the fourth-largest city in the western Indian state of Gujarat, after Ahmedabad, Surat, and Vadodara. It is in the centre of the Saurashtra region of Gujarat. Rajkot is the 35th-largest metropolitan area in India, with a population of more than 2 million as of 2021. Rajkot is the 6th cleanest city of India, and it is the 22nd fastest-growing city in the world as of March 2021. It is located on the banks of the Aji and Nyari rivers. Rajkot was the capital of the Saurashtra State from 15 April 1948 to 31 October 1956, before its merger with Bombay State on 1 November 1956. Rajkot was reincorporated into Gujarat State on 1 May 1960.

History The name "Rajkot" is derived from two words: "Raj", meaning "king" or "royalty", and "Kot", meaning "fort"-thus, Rajkot translates to "King's Fort". The city was founded in 1612 by Thakur Sahib Vibhoji Ajoji Jadeja, a member of the Jadeja Rajput clan and grandson of Jam Sataji of Nawanagar State (present-day Jamnagar). Vibhoji received the territory as a jagir (land grant) and established Rajkot as the capital of his princely state. Over time, Rajkot developed into an important administrative and cultural center in the Saurashtra region. Under British rule, Rajkot served as the headquarters of the Kathiawar Agency and later as the capital of the Western India States Agency (WISA). The princely Rajkot state acceded to the Indian Union in 1948, following India's independence in 1947. It has had a long history and had a significant influence in the Indian independence movement. Rajkot was home to many personalities like Mahatma Gandhi. Rajkot is in a transition period of growing cultural, industrial, and economical activities. Rajkot is the 26th largest city in India and the 22nd fastest-growing urban area in the world.

Rajkot was the capital of Saurashtra state from 15 April 1948 to 31 October 1956 before merging in bilingual Bombay State on 1 November 1956. Rajkot was merged into Gujarat State from bilingual Bombay state on 1 May 1960. Thakur Saheb Pradyumansinhji died in 1973. His son, Manoharsinhji Pradyumansinhji, has carved out a political career at the provincial level, succeeded him. He served as a Member of the Gujarat Legislative Assembly for several years and as the state Minister for Health and Finance. Monoharsinhji's son, Mandattasinh Jadeja has embarked on a business career. On 26 January 2001, the 7.7Mw Gujarat earthquake shook Western India with a maximum Mercalli intensity of X (Extreme), leaving 13,805-20,023 dead and about 166,800 injured. This earthquake mainly affected the Kutch region of western Gujarat.

Geography Rajkot is located at 22.3N 70.78E / 22.3; 70.78. It has an average elevation of 128 metres (420 ft). The city is located on the bank of Aji River and Nyari River which remains dry except the monsoon months of July to September. The city is spread in the area of 170.00 km². Rajkot is situated in the region called Saurashtra in the Gujarat state of India. The significance of Rajkot's location is that it is one of the prime industrial centres of Gujarat. Rajkot has a central location in the area called the Kathiawar peninsula. The city is located within the Rajkot district in Gujarat. Rajkot city is the administrative headquarters of the district of Rajkot. The district is surrounded by Botad in the east, and Surendranagar in the north, Junagadh and Amreli in the south, Morbi in the northwest and Jamnagar in the west and Porbandar in the southwest.

Climate Rajkot has a hot semi-arid climate (Kppen BSh), with hot, dry summers from mid-March to mid-June and the wet monsoon season from mid-June to October, when the city receives 670 millimetres or 26 inches of rain on average. However, this rainfall varies greatly from year to year - for instance less than 160 millimetres or

6.3 inches fell in 1911 and 1939 but more than 1,300 millimetres or 51 inches in 1878 and over 1,450 millimetres or 57 inches in the incomplete year of 1959. The months from November to February are mild, the average temperature being around 20 C or 68 F, with low humidity. One of the most important weather phenomena that is associated with the city of Rajkot is the cyclone. The cyclones generally occur in the Arabian Sea during the months after the rainy season. The region experiences a lot of rainfall and high-speed winds during the time of the year after the monsoon season as well as the months of May and June. However, June experiences lesser amount of rainfall and winds than the post-monsoon time. Thunderstorms are another important part of the Rajkot weather in the months of June and July. During summer time, the temperature ranges between 24 and 42 C (75.2 and 107.6 F). In the months of winter, Rajkot temperature varies between 10 and 22 C (50.0 and 71.6 F) but on a whole winters are pleasant.

Rajkot has been ranked 14th best "National Clean Air City" (under Category 1 >10L Population cities) in India according to 'Swachh Vayu Survekshan 2024 Results'

Demographics As of the 2011 Census of India, Rajkot recorded a total population of 1,390,640. Rajkot city has an average literacy rate of 82.20%, higher than the national average. The population is 52.43% male and 47.47% female. Most of the population is Hindu with a Muslim and Jain minority.

Hinduism was the main religion, practiced by 89.90% of the population. Islam was the second-largest religion (7.68%). Jains were 1.90%.

At the time of the 2011 census, 94.60% of the population spoke Gujarati and 2.71% Hindi as their first language.

Culture The people in Rajkot are predominantly vegetarians. The women of Rajkot are fond of jewellery. Large chains, pendants and other heavy gold jewellery are a common sight during marriages, festivals and functions. The attire changes with the season and festivals. Rajkot is multicultural. One can find many languages, like Gujarati, Hindi, Urdu, English, Sindhi, Bengali, Tamil, Malayalam and Marathi. However, only Gujarati, Hindi, Urdu, and English are well understood. Rajkot is the part of Kathiyawad. Because of this, people of Rajkot are also known as Kathiyawadi. Rajkot is frequently referred to as Rangilu Rajkot (રંગિલુ રાજકોટ), meaning "Colourful Rajkot". Rajkot is also called as "Chitranagri" (City of Paintings).

Landmarks Rajkot has many historical landmarks. The Jubilee Garden is a large, open park in the centre of the city featuring many monuments from colonial times. Located prominently in the centre of the garden is the Connaught Hall. Other notable points of interest near the garden include the historic Mohandas Gandhi High School (Now Mahatma Gandhi Museum), Kaba Gandhi No Delo (Mohandas Gandhi's childhood residence), Rashtriya Shala, Watson Museum, Rotary Dolls Museum, Lang Library, Rotary Midtown Library and Saurashtra Cricket Association Stadium. The Rotary Dolls Museum has a collection of more than 1,400 dolls from all over the world. This museum is being managed by Rotary Club of Rajkot Midtown along with Rajkot Nagrik Sahakari Bank. The Museum has earned a place in Limca Book of Records for its unique collection of dolls. The Trimandir, a non-sectarian temple founded by Dada Bhagwan, is located at a short distance from the city.

Awards Best LAW and Order city - 2013, Best Housing & Transport City- 2015, Safe City Award for Rajkot Eye-Way Project 2018, Best city for Women Safety- 2013, Best City Cleanliness and Sanitation- 2013, National

Winner of WWF's One Planet City Challenge 2018, National Award For Implementation of Food Safety Act-2016

Performing arts Rajkot is a major regional centre for the arts, with many venues for the performing arts in the city. Hemu Gadhavi Natyagraha.

Music Rajkot has its own native music genre, called Dayro, which is used to convey folk stories and sayings.

Sports Cricket is the most popular sport in the city. One-day internationals, domestic tournaments such as the Ranji Trophy, the Duleep Trophy and many inter-school and collegiate tournaments are played at the Madhavrao Sindhia Cricket Ground. The newly constructed 2nd International Cricket Stadium situated in Rajkot, Niranjan Shah Stadium, formerly known as Saurashtra Cricket Association Stadium and Khandheri Cricket Stadium, is a cricket stadium in Khandheri, about 15 kilometers outside Rajkot. The Stadium has a capacity of 28,000 spectators. In this cricket stadium, Day/Night matches can now also be played. It hosts the Indian national cricket team and Saurashtra cricket team matches. The stadium hosted its 1st International Cricket Match played on 11 January 2013 between India and England. Till date this venue has hosted multiple international Tests, ODIs and T20Is. This stadium also hosted several IPL matches during 2016-17, when Gujarat Lions opted for Rajkot as their home base. The stadium will part of a larger sports complex that will include venues for other sports such as badminton, basketball, and volleyball. Rajkot has produced cricketers such as Karsan Ghavri and Cheteshwar Pujara who have been members of the Indian national cricket team. Rajkot has many other cricket grounds around the city, including the Railway Cricket Ground and the Rajkumar College South Ground. Apart from cricket, other sports such as hockey, football, volleyball, badminton, tennis, table-tennis, chess, swimming, and squash are rapidly growing popular in the city. There has been a significant increase in recent years in the number of private sports clubs, gymkhanas, and gymnasiums. Kathiawar Gymkhana, Veer Savarkar Indoor Stadium, Swami Vivekananda Indoor Stadium and swimming pools of Rajkot Municipal Corporation are major sports clubs in the city. Recently, the Gujarat Hockey Team (Under 14) was assembled with all 16 players coming from Rajkot. A new modernized cricket ground is even under construction at the outskirts. Rajkot Municipal Corporation also owns a 9-hole golf course at Ishwaria. It is maintained by Green Meadows Golf Club.

Festivals Garba is popular among both, men and women and is performed during the festival of Navratri. The dance starts before midnight and continues until dawn. Mata Ambe, who rides a lion, has a special reverential status with any highly religious Gujarati. The 'Janmastami Mela' is organised for five days at the Race Course grounds to celebrate Janmastami. Diwali is one of the most important festival and is usually a week long holiday. Rajkot Municipal Corporation arranges the annual Fireworks Show for the citizens of Rajkot during the Diwali festival. Holi is also celebrated with frolic and is widely enjoyed by most of the city folk. People also celebrate Makar Sankranti (Uttarayan) on 14 January by flying kites from their terraces.

Economy The city contributes to the economy of the state with heavy and small scale industries under the patronage of Gujarat Industrial Development Corporation (GIDC) and Gujarat State Financial Corporation (GSFC).

Real estate Real estate has been a key contributor to Rajkot's development in terms of economic and infrastructure development. Since early 2014, several high-rises have been built in Rajkot.

Industry Products made in Rajkot include jewellery, silk embroidery and watch parts. Industrial products include bearings, diesel engines, kitchen knives and other cutting appliances, watch parts (cases and bracelets), automotive parts, forging industry, casting industry, machine tools, share market and software development. The city is also home to several CNC machine and auto parts manufacturers. There are about 500 foundry units in Rajkot. The cluster came up mainly to cater to the casting requirements of the local diesel engine industry. The geographical spread of the cluster includes Aji Vasahat, Gondal Road, Bhavanagar Road areas, Shapar, Veraval and Metoda. The majority of foundry units in Rajkot produce grey iron castings for the domestic market. About 2% of the foundry units export castings such as electric motor castings and automobile castings. Rajkot also houses Western Region Pipelines Headquarter of Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) near Gauridad village. Also natural gas industries like GSPL and GSPC are also present. A petroleum depot of IOCL is also present. In the near future, the government of Gujarat will allocate large land areas for the development of Special Economic Zone which will be split into three areas and will include industries such as software and automobiles. As per recent market reviews, Rajkot is becoming Asia's biggest automobile zone.

Infrastructure Rajkot Greenfield Smart City The city of Rajkot involves development of a Green Field Area covering approximately 930 acres of land with an estimated project cost of Rs 2100 cr. Design planned by INI design studio, the project is envisaged to have world class, Smart physical infrastructure with utilities that are environment friendly, sustainable, functionally smart and technology driven. The Rajkot Smart City Plan achieved a perfect score of 81 out of 81 points and was awarded the highest Platinum rating by the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC), making it the first green-rated Platinum-level Smart City in India. The Rajkot Municipal Corporation (RMC) has secured the third rank in the Indian Smart Cities Awards Content (ISAC) 2022 for its project of rejuvenating Atal Sarovar in area specific development component of Smart City initiative. Rajkot's smart city plan involves a new water management system.

Law and government Rajkot is governed by many government bodies, including Jilla Seva Sadan (Rajkot District Collector Offices), Rajkot Municipal Corporation, Rajkot Urban Development Authority.

The city civic body has started a 24x7 call centre, the first of its kind in Gujarat and the second in the country to take care of all complaints relating to civic management. Citizens can now get all their complaints registered with the Rajkot Municipal Corporation by dialling a single number with an assurance that the problem would be addressed within 72 hours. The Rajkot City Police are responsible for law enforcement and public safety in Rajkot, India. They are a subdivision of the state police force of Gujarat and are headed by a commissioner. The Rajkot police force is responsible for the protection and safety of Rajkot citizens.

Transport Rajkot is well connected to major Indian cities by air, rail and road.

Roads and highways The Gujarat State Road Transport Corporation (GSRTC) runs regular buses to and from Rajkot to other cities of Gujarat and several cities of neighbouring states. More than 81000 people travel daily with GSRTC. Rajkot is very well connected with the Gujarat State Highways and the National highways of India. Rajkot is allocated the vehicle registration code GJ-03 by RTO. There are a number of private bus operators connecting the city with other cities of Gujarat and various other states of India.

Rail and internal transport Rajkot has two railway stations. Rajkot Junction railway station (station code: RJT) is the more widely used railway station for passenger trains, and has services to all the major cities of India. Its elevation is 128 m above sea level. The other, smaller, railway station is Bhaktinagar railway station (station

code: BKNB), served only by trains from Somnath, Veraval, Junagadh and Porbandar. Rajkot Municipal Corporation has restored city bus services with Public Private Partnership in 2007. RMC and a private company is providing around 80 CNG buses under 15 to 20 routes in city and suburbs. Rajkot BRTS

Rajkot BRTS was launched on 1 October 2012. This Bus rapid transit System (BRTS) currently has a 10.5-km long Blue corridor with 19 stations and a fleet of multiple electric AC buses are serving this route. The corridor is located in the west part of the city through the 150 Ft Ring road connecting Madhapar chokdi on the Jamnagar road to Gondal chokdi on the Gondal road. The fully completed project in future will have two more corridors - Green and Red from Arvind Maniyar Nagar to Saurashtra University and Greenland Chowk to Saurashtra University respectively involving 157 buses in three colours. Rajkot thus becomes the second city in Gujarat to have BRTS after Ahmedabad. After the operational success of BRT system in Ahmedabad and Rajkot, Surat too inaugurated its BRTS in 2013. Rajkot Metro GMRC, a joint venture company between the Government of India and Government of Gujarat has submitted a detailed project report (DPR) for the Rajkot Metro to the Union Government. Rajkot Metro will be 38 km long and will have two lines, predominantly elevated with some underground stations. The total estimated cost of this project is Rs 10,000 crore. Similar DPR is also submitted for the Vadodara Metro. Currently GMRC operates the Ahmedabad Metro and will inaugurate Surat Metro in 2027.

Air Rajkot International Airport (IATA: HSR, ICAO: VAHS) is located at Hirasar, along National Highway 47 (NH-8B) connecting Ahmedabad and Rajkot, about 36 km (22 mi) from the city. There are daily flights to Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru, Goa, Hyderabad, Pune and Surat served by IndiGo, Air India and Ventura AirConnect. The older Rajkot Airport (IATA: RAJ, ICAO: VARK) remains open for general aviation, including charter flights. All commercial operations were shifted to the Rajkot International Airport on 10 September 2023.

Media and communications State-owned All India Radio has a local station and has a FM channel 102.4 Vividh Bharati in Rajkot which transmits various programs of mass interest. Rajkot also has various private local news media and digital websites. Private FM stations like 98.3 Radio Mirchi, 93.5 Red FM, 92.7 Big FM and 94.3 MY FM also serve the people of Rajkot with excellent entertainment and events.

Education Rajkot is famous for providing education to Mahatma Gandhi, at the Alfred High School. A number of schools in the city are run by Rajkot Municipal Corporation. They include 20 schools and learning centres, which consist of 3 elementary schools, 7 middle schools, 4 junior high schools, 4 senior high schools, 1 education centre, and 1 special school. Rajkot is home to Rajkumar College, Rajkot, also known as RKC. RKC is the oldest of the Chiefs' schools of India similar to Mayo College at Ajmer and Daly College at Indore. Rajkot also has the Union Government HRD Ministry run Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya. It was started at the Juni Khadki school premise of Sir Lakhajiraj High School and later moved to its own building on the Jamnagar Road. It is a CBSE Board affiliated, residential school for girls and boys, providing education to those selected at the Class VI level all India entrance test. The city is home to Saurashtra University, several colleges, and other institutions of higher education, both public and private. Rajkot has three private universities, RK University (RKU), Atmiya University and Marwadi University. The city has 12 engineering colleges. It has a Performing Arts College (Vocal, Classical dance, Tabla Vadan etc.) opposite Hemu Gadhvi Natya Gruh. The Saurashtra University is the city's public university. It is spread across approximately 410 acres (1.7 km²) of green land with 28 post-graduation departments. Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Medical College is government medical college in Rajkot. It was established in 1995 and offers MBBS, MD and MS courses. AIIMS Rajkot, an AIIMS institute has started its medical college with its inaugural batch of MBBS Students in December 2020.

Healthcare Rajkot's healthcare is served by both government and private providers. Along with modern allopathic care, many residents also rely on Ayurveda and Homeopathy. Major public hospitals like Civil Hospital (PDU) and Rajkot Cancer Hospital provide affordable treatment, while private multi-specialty hospitals offer advanced medical facilities. - Civil Hospital, Rajkot (also known as Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Civil Hospital) is the largest government hospital in the city. It is located on Jamnagar Road at Hospital Chowk and provides affordable treatment to a large section of the population. The hospital is affiliated with Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Government Medical College, Rajkot, which was established in 1995 and admits around 150 MBBS students annually. - Shashwat Hospitals , Rajkot - Saurashtra's largest private single -specialty hospital chain with NABH accreditation headquartered in Rajkot , offering services in oncology, Hematology , Bone Marrow Transplant, Pediatric oncology and Hematology. It has largest team of Oncologist and Hematologist in entire Saurashtra. - Sterling Hospital, Rajkot - A multi-specialty hospital with 208 beds and one of the region's largest critical-care infrastructures. It is part of Sterling Hospitals chain and NABH-accredited. - Wockhardt Hospital, Rajkot - A super-specialty hospital founded in 2006, offering services in cardiology, orthopedics, neurology, gastroenterology, urology, and more. It operates under the Wockhardt Hospitals chain and holds NABH/NABL accreditation. - AIIMS Rajkot - The All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Rajkot is a government medical institution and part of the AIIMS network in India. It offers tertiary healthcare, medical education, and research facilities in multiple specialties including medicine, surgery, pediatrics, and more. - Synergy Superspecialty Hospital, Rajkot - A private multi-specialty hospital with NABH accreditation, offering services in cardiology, neurology, orthopedics, oncology, gastroenterology, critical care, and more.

See also List of cities in India List of million-plus cities in India List of most populous cities in India List of most populous metropolitan areas in India List of twin towns and sister cities in India Status of Indian cities Largest Indian Cities by GDP

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Guwahati

Guwahati (Assamese: [ꠠua.ꠠa.ti]) is the largest city of the Indian state of Assam, and also the largest metropolis in northeastern India. Dispur, the capital of Assam, is in the circuit city region located within Guwahati and is the seat of the Government of Assam. The Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport is the 10th busiest in India, and the busiest in the North-East of the country. A major riverine port city along with hills, and one of the fastest growing cities in India, Guwahati is situated on the south bank of the Brahmaputra. The city is known as the "gateway to North East India". The ancient cities of Pragjyotishpura and Durjaya (North Guwahati) were the capitals of the ancient state of Kamarupa. Many ancient Hindu temples like the Kamakhya Temple, Ugratara Temple, Basistha Temple, Douli Govinda Temple, Umananda Temple, Navagraha Temple, Sukreswar Temple, Rudreswar Temple, Manikarneswar Devalaya, Aswaklanta Temple, Dirgheshwari Temple, Lankeshwar Temple, Bhubaneswari Temple, Shree Ganesh Mandir, Shree Panchayatana Temple, Noonmati, and the like, are situated in the city, giving it the title of "The City of Temples". The noted Madan Kamdev is situated 30 kilometres (19 miles) from Guwahati. Guwahati lies between the banks of the Brahmaputra River and the foothills of the Shillong plateau, with LGB International Airport to the west and the town of Narengi to the east. The North Guwahati area, to the northern bank of the Brahmaputra, is being gradually incorporated into the city limits. The Guwahati Municipal Corporation, the city's local government, administers an area of 523 square kilometres (202 sq mi). At the same time, the Guwahati Metropolitan Development Authority (GMDA) is the planning and development body of Greater Guwahati Metropolitan Area. Guwahati is the largest city in Northeast India. The Guwahati region hosts diverse wildlife including rare animals such as Asian elephants, pythons, tigers, rhinoceros, gaurs, primate species, and endangered birds.

Etymology Guwahati derives its name from the Assamese word "Guwa" (Assamese: গুৱা) derived from the Sanskrit word Guvāka (Devanagari: गुवाका), meaning areca nut and its plant and "Hati" (Assamese: হাতি) meaning rows, the rows of areca nut trees.

History Ancient history Naraka, also known as Narakasura, and Bhaumasura was an asura king, the legendary progenitor of all three dynasties of Pragjyotisha-Kamarupa, and the founding ruler of the legendary Bhauma dynasty of Pragjyotisha. Though the myths about Naraka are first mentioned in the Mahabharata, later texts embellish them. According to later post-Vedic texts such as the Brahma Purana and Vishnu Purana, he was the son of Bhudevi, fathered by the Varaha incarnation of Vishnu. He is claimed as one who established Pragjyotisha. The pious Naraka became evil due to his association with an asura named Banasura of Kootapura, and hence the suffix 'asura' (demon) was added to his name. He was slain by Krishna and Satyabhama, who was the incarnate of Bhudevi. The 10th/11th-century Kalika Purana embellishes the myths further and he is claimed to have come from Mithila and said to have established the kingdom of Pragjyotisha after overthrowing the last of the Kirata kings, Ghatakasura, of the Danava dynasty. It was foretold that he would be destroyed by a later incarnation of Vishnu. His mother, the earth, sought the boon from Vishnu that her son should have a long life, and that he should be all-powerful. Vishnu granted these boons. The 10th-12th century Kalika Purana mention that Kamrup was inhabited by strong, cruel Kirata people. The legends of Naraka is important in the history of Assam, particularly Kamarupa; since Narakasura is cited as the progenitor of all three dynasties that ruled Kamarupa in historical times. A hill, to the south of Guwahati is named after him. He is also associated with the Hindu belief of the shakti goddess and place of worship Kamakhya. Narakasura's son Bhagadatta-of Mahabharata fame-succeeded him. As per the legends constructed in the Yogini Tantra, the tank Dighalipukhuri located in the heart of the city was dug by King Bhagadatta of Kamrup on

the occasion of the wedding of his daughter Bhanumati with Duryodhan. Located within Guwahati is the Shakti temple of Goddess Kamakhya in Nilachal hill (an important seat of Tantric and Vajrayana Buddhism), the ancient and unique astrological temple Navagraha in Chitrachal Hill, and archaeological remains in Basistha and other archaeological locations of mythological importance.

The Ambari excavations trace the period of the city of Guwahati between the 2nd century BCE and the 1st century CE, in the Shunga-Kushana period of Indian history. Descriptions by Xuanzang (Hiuen Tsang) reveal that during the reign of the Varman king Bhaskaravarman (7th century CE), the city stretched for about 30 li (15 km or 9.3 mi). Archaeological evidence by excavations in Ambari, and excavated brick walls and houses discovered during construction of the present Cotton College's auditorium suggest the city was of economic and strategic importance until the 9th-11th century CE.

Medieval history Koch King Parikshit had his capital at Pragjyotishpur near the Aswatirtha during the conflicts with Mughals. It came under Mughal occupation between (1633-59, 1662-69, 1679-81), their vestige was completely removed after the Battle of Itakhuli. Guwahati was the headquarters of the Borphukan, Ahom governor of Lower Assam till 1824. The Borphukan's residence was in the present Fancy Bazaar area and his council-hall, called Dopdar, was about 300 yards (270 m) to the west of the Bharalu stream. The Majindar Baruah, the personal secretary of the Borphukan, had his residence in the present-day deputy commissioner's residence. During the reign of the kingdom of Ahom, Guwahati was fortified strongly and connected with the country with a number of roads. The Dighalipukhuri was used as a boatyard during this period. During the time of splendor, since the reign of Gadadhar Singha, the Ahom rulers paid their attention to building several temples in various religious sites at Guwahati.

Colonial history On the cession of Assam to the British in 1826, it was made the seat of the British administration of Assam, and so continued until 1874, when the headquarters were removed to Shillong in the Khasi hills.

Modern history The Gauhati High Court (formerly known as the High Court of Assam) was promulgated on 1 March 1948 by the then Governor General of India, Lord Mountbatten, in accordance with the Government of India Act 1935. It became effective on 5 April 1948 and was initially established for the Province of Assam. R.F. Lodge was the inaugural Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court, taking office on 5 April 1948. The Saraighat Bridge, notable for its role in connecting Northeast India with the rest of the country, was constructed between 1959 and 1962 by the Hindustan Construction Company at a cost of approximately ₹ 106 million at the time. It was completed in September 1962, and the first engine crossed it on 23 September 1962. In 1972, due to separation of Meghalaya from Assam, the capital of Assam was moved to Dispur, a neighbourhood in Guwahati from the erstwhile capital of Shillong.

Geography The Brahmaputra river flows to the north of the metropolis. The city is bordered on the south by the foothills of the Shillong plateau and to the east by the Amchang Wildlife Sanctuary. The Bharalu River, a tributary of the Brahmaputra, flows right through the heart of the city. To the south-west of the city lies Dipor Bil, a permanent freshwater lake with no prominent inflows apart from monsoon run-off from the hills to the south of the lake. The lake drains into the Brahmaputra, 5 km (3.1 mi) to the north, and acts as a natural stormwater reservoir for the city. There are also multiple hills within the city limits.

Urban morphology Guwahati's 'urban form' radiates from a central core with growth corridors radiating and extending towards the south, east, and west. In the past few decades, southern Guwahati areas such as Ganeshguri, Beltola, Hatigaon, Six Mile, and Panjabari began forming a southern sub-center surrounding the capital complex at Dispur. The core area consists of the old city with Pan Bazaar, Paltan Bazaar, Fancy Bazaar and Uzan Bazaar, with each area facilitating unique urban activities. Among the city corridors, the most important is the corridor formed along the Guwahati-Shillong (GS) Road towards the south (almost 15 km [9.3 mi] from the city-center). The GS Road corridor is an important commercial area with retail, wholesale and commercial offices developed along the main road; it is also a densely built residential area in the inner parts. The capital complex of Assam at Dispur is situated in this corridor. This corridor has facilitated the growth of a southern city sub-center at Ganeshguri, along with other residential areas to the south developed during the past few decades. The corridor extending towards the west (around 30 km [19 mi] from the city center) contains a rail-road linking not only Guwahati but also other parts of the northeastern region east of Guwahati to western Assam and the rest of India. The corridor links residential and historically important areas such as Nilachal Hill (Kamakhya), Pandu, and Maligaon (headquarters of Northeast Frontier Railways) before it separates into two - one towards North Guwahati via the Saraighat Bridge and the other continuing west towards LGB International Airport via Gauhati University (Jalukbari). There are also many river ports/jetties along this corridor. The third major corridor extends towards the east (around 15 km [9.3 mi] from the city-center) linking Noonmati (Guwahati Refinery) and Narengi, and has facilitated residential growth along with it. Highway NH-37, which encircles the city's southern parts and links the southern corridor in Noulm to the western corridor in Jalukbari is currently supporting rapid development. Similarly, the VIP Road linking Zoo Road with the eastern corridor and recently completed Hengerabari-Narengi Road are also supporting massive residential development to the east. Guwahati is one among 98 Indian cities proposed to become Smart Cities under a project embarked on by Ministry of Urban Development, Government of India.

Climate Guwahati has a humid subtropical climate (Kppen climate classification Cwa), falling just short of a tropical savanna climate (Kppen climate classification Aw). Highest recorded temperature: 40.6 C (105.1 F) on 24 April 2014 Lowest recorded temperature: 3.0 C (37.4 F) on 30 January 1964

Guwahati has been ranked 36th best "National Clean Air City" under (Category 2 3-10L Population cities) in India.

Infrastructure The city has a comparatively high quality of life. A 2006 survey ranked Guwahati 17th among all the large and medium-sized Indian cities. The city provides competitive residential and working environments with beautiful landscapes, pleasant climate, modern shopping areas, modern apartments, and bungalows, and considerably developed social infrastructure. A centrally funded four-lane, ambitious East-West Corridor will pass through Guwahati and connect all the state capitals of Northeast India. Completion of the project will boost the vital upliftment of the whole region.

The city still needs attention to improve its infrastructure. Funding from the Asian Development Bank is providing assistance to improve Guwahati's transportation infrastructure along with a substantial amount from Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) for its development.

Administration and governance Dispur, the capital of Assam, lies in Guwahati. The passing of the Northeastern (Reorganization Areas) Act in 1971 by the Indian Parliament accorded Meghalaya the status of a full-fledged state. After the creation of Meghalaya as a separate state, Shillong continued to be the joint capital of both

Assam and Meghalaya. However, in 1972, the Government of Assam decided to shift the capital to Dispur. Accordingly, the first sitting of the Budget Session of the Assam Legislative Assembly was held at Dispur on 16 March 1973. Dispur houses the Secretariat of Assam Government, the Assam Assembly House, the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) Regional Office, the North Eastern Development Finance Corporation Ltd (NEDFi) House and the Guwahati Tea Auction Centre (GTAC). Guwahati Municipal Corporation is the local body responsible for governing, developing and managing the city. It is divided into 60 municipal wards. Guwahati Metropolitan Development Authority (GMDA) is an agency responsible for planning and development of the greater Guwahati Metropolitan Area and for revising the Guwahati Master Plan and Building Bylaws to cover an area of 3,214 square kilometres (1,241 sq mi) by 2025. Guwahati consists of four assembly constituencies: Jalukbari, Dispur, Gauhati East and Gauhati West, all of which are part of the constituency of Lok Sabha, Gauhati.

Police Guwahati is the headquarters of Assam Police. The city is under the Police Commissionerate of Guwahati headed by the Commissioner of Police, Guwahati. It is divided into three districts: East Police District, Central Police District, and West Police District, each headed by a Deputy Commissioner of Police. Each police district consists of officers, not below the rank of Assistant Commissioner of Police, functioning as executive magistrates within a said metropolitan area.

Judiciary Guwahati is the principal seat of the Gauhati High Court. It acts as the High Court of Assam and also of Nagaland, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh with their outlying benches of Kohima, Aizawl and Itanagar, respectively. Gauhati High Court came in effect from 5 April 1948. It initially had its sittings at Shillong but was shifted to Gauhati from 14 August 1948. Guwahati also houses the Court of the District and Sessions Judge, Kamrup established in 1920. It is a lower court of the district judiciary having territorial jurisdiction over the greater Guwahati area only.

Problems Increase in population In recent years, Guwahati has experienced rapid population growth due to migration for education and employment opportunities. This population increase has led to undesirable expansion of the city and has resulted in various collateral problems, such as the rise in the number of slums. It is projected that the population of Guwahati will reach 1.5 million by 2035, up from an estimated 1.1 million in 2020.

Inflation One of the economic problems that the citizens of Guwahati have to put up with is the hike in prices of many essentials, chiefly vegetables, poultry, and fish. The prices of these commodities keep escalating at an inordinate rate, so that consumers find it difficult to buy these items. Vegetables are transported into Assam from West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Maharashtra and Meghalaya and the truckers en route have to pay substantial fees as tax at various check posts. It is one of the causes of rise in prices of vegetables in the markets of Guwahati. The prices of locally available vegetables and fruits undergo large markup because of transportation expenses grounds, besides intra-State check posts taxes. In addition to these, the wholesale dealers, as well as the retail sellers, augment the prices of the commodities according to their own desires. The price of poultry, mainly chicken, that reaches the city markets from places like Chaygaon and Barpeta have been soaring rapidly because of similar factors. There has been steep rise in the price of fish as well, the prominent varieties of which being Rohu ("Rou"), Catla ("Bahu"), Walking catfish ("Magur") and Monopterus ("Kuchia") among many others. The COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated inflation, causing food prices to rise.

Flooding According to experts, urban flooding in Guwahati in the near future is expected to worsen to the point where residents of certain areas may be forced to relocate. Since the beginning of the 21st century, the alteration of drainage channels and wetlands due to rapid urbanization has exacerbated the problem of flooding. Professor Abani Kumar Bhagawati of Gauhati University stated that since before there were sufficient wetlands to absorb rainwater and channels to carry excess water to the Brahmaputra, the city did not experience floods. However, human interference has disrupted the natural topography, leading to the current situation where "just half an hour of rain" can cause flooding in the city. Encroachment and concretization, which reduce open areas for natural water absorption, are the primary causes of floods according to Bhagawati.

Pollution Guwahati was ranked the second most polluted city in the world in a 2023 report published by IQAir, behind Begusarai and ahead of Delhi, reflecting India's status as the country with the third highest level of pollution after Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Demographics Population Guwahati is one of the fastest-growing cities in India. Guwahati has a population of 962,334 as per the 2011 census. Population of Guwahati in 2021 is estimated to be 11 lakhs (approx). It is estimated that Guwahati metro will house 2.8 million residents by 2025.

Literacy and sex ratio The percentage of the child population (0-14) in Guwahati was 9.40% in 2011. The average literacy rate was stated to be 91.47% with male literacy at 94.24% and female literacy at 88.50%. The sex ratio was recorded to be 933 females per 1,000 males and child sex ratio to be 940 girls per 1,000 boys.

Languages According to the 2011 census, there were around 962,334 people living in Guwahati city, of which around 57.80% spoke Assamese, 20.40% Bengali, 12.29% Hindi, 1.92% Nepali, 1.69% Boro, 0.91% Manipuri and 0.90% Bhojpuri as their first language.

Education Guwahati is the central educational hub of Northeast India. Among the esteemed institutions is the Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (IIT), an autonomous institute dedicated in the field of technical studies in India. Cotton University, erstwhile Cotton College is yet another century-old institution in the fields of Science and Arts.

Educational institutions Gauhati University Cotton University Srimanta Sankaradeva University of Health Sciences Assam Science and Technology University S. B. Deorah College Dakshin Kamrup College Dakshin Kamrup Girls' College Gauhati Commerce College Arya Vidyapeeth College (Autonomous) K.C. Das Commerce College Handique Girls College Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati Indian Institute of Information Technology, Guwahati B. Borooah College Dispur College Regional Dental College, Guwahati National Law University and Judicial Academy Gauhati Medical College and Hospital Government Ayurvedic College, Guwahati Assam Engineering College Assam Institute of Management Assam Don Bosco University Royal Global University Lakshmibai National Institute of Physical Education Tata Institute of Social Sciences (Guwahati Campus) Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open University National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research, Guwahati Institute of Advanced Study in Science and Technology

Private schools Don Bosco School Delhi Public School Sanskriti the Gurukul Holy Child School St. Mary's English High School

Economy Pandu, located on the banks of the Brahmaputra at the western part of the city, is an ancient urban area that acted as the chief military base for the Ahoms against external invasions. Due to extensive fortification ('Gorh') surrounding Pandu, it acts as a natural river harbor and is formally called Gar-Pandu. Pandu port falls under Dhubri-Sadiya National Waterway-2 and is an important terminal and transit point for goods and cargo as well as passenger and tourist vessels. Construction of both low-level and high-level jetty of fixed terminal, capable of handling container vessels, has been completed and has further enhanced revenue generation for the city.

The manufacturing sector in Guwahati contributes a substantial share to the economy of the city. Petroleum manufacturing is an important economic activity in the city. The Guwahati Refinery is the most important manufacturing industry in the city. Located at Noonmati, the refinery was set up by the Indian Oil Corporation Limited as the first public sector refinery of India as well as the refinery of Indian Oil since 1962. It was built with an initial crude processing capacity of 0.75 million tonnes per year at the time of its commission which was gradually increased to 1.0 million tonnes per year. It produces various products and supplies them to the other northeast states and also beyond to Siliguri through the Guwahati-Siliguri pipeline. The various products produced by the refinery include Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG), Kerosene Oil, Turbine Fuel (aviation use), Motor Spirit, High-Speed Motor Diesel, Light Diesel Oil, and Raw Petroleum Coke. There is also an LPG bottling plant in the city. Tea manufacturing and processing is another important activity of Guwahati. Assam is one of the highest tea-producing areas in the world, contributing 80% of India's export and 55% of the country's total tea production. So high is the production of tea in Assam that it is the biggest industry in the state. The headquarters of the Assam Branch Indian Tea Association (ABITA) is located at Guwahati. The Guwahati Tea Auction Centre (GTAC), located adjacent to the capital complex at Dispur, is the world's largest CTC tea auction center and the second largest in terms of total tea auctioned. The inaugural sale took place on 25 September 1970 and the first lot of tea was auctioned at the price of ₹ 42.50 which, during those days, was a significant achievement. In the month of August 2019, a kilogram of Maijan Orthodox Golden tea sold for a record-setting price of ₹ 70,501 at the Guwahati Tea Auction Centre. Many centralised, private and international banks have set up their branches in the city with the Reserve Bank of India having one of its own at Pan Bazaar.

Transport Air Guwahati is served by the Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport, in Borjhar, about 20 kilometres (12 mi) west from the heart of the city.

Rail The city of Guwahati and the northeastern region falls under the Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) Zone of the Indian Railways, the headquarters of which is in Maligaon, near Nilachal Hills, in the northwest of the city. The Guwahati railway station, located in Paltan Bazaar area of Guwahati, is the busiest railway station in the city. It lies along the Barauni-Guwahati Line and Guwahati-Lumding section, categorised as an A-1 railway station under Lumding railway division. There are four more railway stations in the city - the Kamakhya Junction for passenger and freight services, the New Guwahati railway station (near Noonmati) for only freight services, Narangi railway station and Azara railway station. There are regular trains connecting Guwahati to and from other major cities of the country. Rajdhani Express, Poorvottar Sampark Kranti Express, Brahmaputra Mail, Kamrup Express, Northeast Express, Saraighat Express and Vande Bharat are some significant trains running to and from Guwahati. The train with the longest route in India, Vivek Express, which runs from Dibrugarh in Upper Assam to Kanyakumari in the southern tip of India passes through Guwahati.

Road The length of surfaced roads within the city is 218 km (135 mi). National Highway 27 connects Guwahati with the states West Bengal, Bihar and rest of India. This highway connects Guwahati with Silchar in Barak

Valley Assam and further connecting the city to the states of Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura. National Highway 17 from Sevoke in West Bengal terminates in Jalukbari and connects Guwahati with the major cities of Dhubri and Cooch Behar. National Highway 15 and its several secondary roads runs through both the banks of River Brahmaputra and connects the Guwahati with the cities of Tezpur, Jorhat, Dibrugarh in Upper Assam and the states of Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland. Public transportation is well developed in the city. Buses are the major means of public transport in Guwahati. The state-owned Assam State Urban Transport Corporation, a subsidiary of Assam State Transport Corporation (ASTC) and private operators provide the city bus services within the city. ASTC also operates the Volvo air-conditioned bus services within the city as well as to the LGBI airport. The Rupnath Brahma Inter State Bus Terminus (ISBT), located at Betkuchi on NH-37, is the most significant terminal cum transit point with regular day and night bus services from state owned ASTC and private operators plying between Guwahati and other destinations in Assam and Northeast India. The areas of Adabari and Paltan Bazaar also act as nodal points in providing bus services to towns and cities in Assam and adjoining states. A metro rail project has also been planned to relieve the hectic traffic conditions on the streets. Guwahati has also seen a rise in the usage of cycling as a mode of transport and as per some unofficial estimates, there was almost a 50% increase in the number of people who took up cycling in the wake of COVID-19. The city has an active cycling community and is amongst the few Indian cities that has a Bicycle Mayor and a Junior Bicycle Mayor. Guwahati-Panchgram Expressway, the first expressway of Northeast India is a greenfield expressway from Guwahati to Umiam Lake (Barapani) in Meghalaya and then direct to old paper mill in Panchgram, which will cut the Guwahati to Panchgram by 5 hours. It was announced in February 2025.

Water The Inland Water Transport Department is headquartered at Pandu Port in Guwahati, the largest river port in Assam. The waterways transportation services in Guwahati are used for transporting bulk goods and cargo, and for movement of passenger and tourist vessels. Ferry services are available for transportation of people from different ports along the Brahmaputra to Pandu port.

Sports Guwahati features the multi-purpose Nehru Stadium which hosts mostly football and cricket located in the R.G. Baruah Sports Complex, one of the oldest in the city. It comprises the Kanaklata Indoor Stadium (for badminton), swimming pool and tennis courts. The North-East Frontier Railway Stadium of Maligaon, the Sports Authority of India (SAI) complex of Paltan Bazaar and the Judges Field are other prominent sporting venues of the city. The sporting infrastructures especially constructed for the 33rd National Games in 2007 include Indira Gandhi Athletic Stadium -the main stadium at Arjun Bhogeswar Baruah Sports Complex, Dr. Zakir Hussain Aquatic Complex, and the Karmabir Nabin Chandra Bordoloi A.C. Indoor Stadium. Other new sports venues include Maulana Md. Tayabullah Hockey Stadium at Bhetapara, Deshbhakta Tarun Ram Phookan Indoor Stadium at Ulubari, Rajiv Gandhi Indoor Stadium at Amingaon, Chachal Tennis Complex and the Tepesia Sports Complex. The renovated sports complexes include Ganesh Mandir Indoor Stadium at Khanapara, Rudra Singha Sports Complex at Dispur and Gauhati University Sports Stadium. The Indira Gandhi Athletic Stadium was also the main venue of the 2016 South Asian Games and the Himalayan Region Games in 2017. Guwahati is home to the professional football club of Indian Super League (ISL), NorthEast United FC. They play their home matches at the Indira Gandhi Athletic Stadium. It presents one of the finest football atmospheres in India. The stadium also hosted matches of the FIFA U-17 World Cup in 2017. The international cricket venue Assam Cricket Association Stadium at Barsapara, is the home of Assam cricket team. It is the largest cricket stadium in Northeast India with seating capacity of 40,000 and 2nd largest in East India. It hosted an India vs Australia T20I match in 2017 in its international debut. The first ODI in the stadium was held in 2018 between India and West Indies.

Media and telecommunications Assamese daily newspapers published from the city are Dainik Agradoot, Asomiya Pratidin, Asomiya Khabar, Amar Asom, Dainik Janambhumi, Janasadharan, Niyomiya Barta, Dainik Asam, Dainandin Barta and Gana Adhikar. English dailies are The Assam Tribune, The Sentinel, The Telegraph, The Times of India and Eastern Chronicle. Eclectic Northeast is a leading Guwahati-based monthly Northeast magazine with an online version. G Plus is the only English weekly tabloid published from Guwahati. The state-owned television broadcaster DD Assam provides free-to-air satellite television services. Guwahati-based 24-hour regional satellite news channels include News Live, DY 365, Pratidin Time, Prag News, Assam Talks and News18 Assam North East. The Guwahati Radio Station of state-owned All India Radio was inaugurated on 1 July 1948 as Shillong-Guwahati Station. The Headquarter of the Shillong-Guwahati Station was shifted from Shillong to Guwahati in 1953. It is a full-fledged Regional broadcasting station with three channels; the Guwahati A & B Channels are AM Channels, and the CBS Channel is an FM Channel. The other FM stations include 92.7 BIG FM, Radio Gup-Shup 94.3 FM, Red FM 93.5 and Radio Mirchi. Telecom services are BSNL, Airtel, Vodafone Idea and Jio.

Notable places of worship Kamakhya Temple Rudreswar Temple Douli Govinda Temple Ugratara Devalaya Basistha Temple Sukreswar Temple Lankeshwar Temple Dirgheshwari temple Umananda Temple Navagraha temples

Notable people Nabakanta Barua, poet and academician Dipankar Bhattacharjee, Indian badminton player and Olympian Barsha Rani Bishaya, Assamese film actor Gaurav Bora. footballer Ashmita Chaliha, Indian badminton player Utpal Das, Assamese film actor Somdev Devvarman, tennis player Zubeen Garg, singer, songwriter, lyricist and actor Shrinjan Rajkumar Gohain, Indian chess player Arnab Goswami, journalist Mamoni Raisom Goswami, novelist and academician Bhupen Hazarika, singer Reema Kagti, director and screenwriter Durgabar Kayastha, medieval litterateur Abu Nechim, cricketer Nayyara Noor, singer Papon, singer and composer Riyan Parag, cricketer Subam Rabha, football coach Bhabendra Nath Saikia, novelist, short story writer and film director Himanta Biswa Sarma, current Chief Minister of Assam Jayanta Talukdar, Indian archer and Olympian Shiva Thapa, boxer and Olympian

See also Assam State Museum Brahmaputra Valley Film Festival List of colleges affiliated to Gauhati University List of people from Western Assam Saraighat Bridge Silchar Jorhat Tezpur Nagaon Dibrugarh Bongaigaon Rangia Nalbari Kamarupa Banasura Narakasura Mura (danava) Bhagadatta Usha (princess) History of Beltola Varman dynasty

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The Government of Assam The District of Kamrup Metropolitan

Chandigarh

Chandigarh is a city and union territory in northwestern India, serving as the shared capital of the states of Punjab and Haryana. Situated near the foothills of the Shivalik range of Himalayas, it borders Haryana to the east and Punjab in the remaining directions. Chandigarh constitutes the bulk of the Chandigarh Capital Region or Greater Chandigarh, which also includes the adjacent satellite cities of Panchkula in Haryana and Mohali in Punjab. It is located 260 km (162 miles) northwest of New Delhi and 229 km (143 miles) southeast of Amritsar and 104 km (64 miles) southwest of Shimla. Chandigarh is one of the earliest planned cities in post-independence India and is internationally known for its architecture and urban design. The master plan of the city was prepared by Swiss-French architect Le Corbusier, which built upon earlier plans created by the Polish architect Maciej Nowicki and the American planner Albert Mayer. Most of the government buildings and housing in the city were designed by a team headed by Le Corbusier and British architects Dame Jane Drew and Maxwell Fry. Chandigarh's Capitol Complex-as part of a global ensemble of Le Corbusier's buildings-was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO at the 40th session of the World Heritage Conference in July 2016. Chandigarh has grown greatly since its initial construction, and has also driven the development of Mohali and Panchkula; the tri-city metropolitan area has a combined population of over 1,611,770. The city has one of the highest per capita incomes in the country. The union territory has the third-highest Human Development Index among Indian states and territories. In 2015, a survey by LG Electronics ranked it as the happiest city in India on the happiness index. In 2015, an article published by the BBC identified Chandigarh as one of the few master-planned cities in the world to have succeeded in terms of combining monumental architecture, cultural growth, and modernisation.

Etymology The name Chandigarh means "fort of Chandi" and is a compound of Chandi, which refers to the Hindu goddess Chandi, a manifestation of Shakti, and Garh, meaning stronghold or fortress. The name is taken from a village where a temple dedicated to goddess Chandi stood. The temple exists today at Chandi Mandir, on the outskirts of the city, in the neighbouring district of Panchkula in Haryana. The motif or sobriquet of "The City of Beauty" was derived from the City Beautiful movement, which was a popular philosophy in North American urban planning during the 1890s and 1900s. Architect Albert Mayer, the initial planner of Chandigarh, lamented the American rejection of City Beautiful concepts and declared, "We want to create a beautiful city". The phrase was used as a logo in official publications in the 1970s and is now how the city describes itself.

History **Partition and independence** The establishment of the city of Chandigarh was the result of the crises and chaos in northwestern India in the aftermath of its independence from British colonial rule. During the partition of India in 1947, the province of Punjab was divided into two: the majority Hindu and Sikh eastern portion that remained in India and the majority Muslim western portion that became part of Pakistan. Lahore, the provincial capital of undivided Punjab, though fiercely contested during partition, was eventually ceded to Pakistan. The provincial government of independent India's East Punjab state was left without an administrative center or capital. The loss of Lahore, the need for the rehabilitation of refugees from West Pakistan and a mounting exodus of business communities from the state created a sense of urgency. Shimla, the former summer capital of both British India and the Punjab province, partially housed the government of East Punjab state. Shimla's inability to fully contain the administrative machinery resulted in government offices to be scattered at several places across the state, imposing difficulties and costs on the public as well as the government.

Conception and initial planning It was decided by representatives of the government of India and of the state of East Punjab to build a new capital for the state, because attaching capital functions to an existing city-all of which were considered inadequate and had swollen in size due to migration of refugees from West Pakistan-was considered as costly as building a new city.

The new capital needed to have enough space for government machinery, for resettlement of refugees and their businesses, for expansion, and adequate rail, road and air connectivity; it also had to assuage the psychological loss of partition, its construction supposed to stimulate the state's devastated economy, as well as being a 'symbolic gesture' of unity, stability, and an assertion of India's newfound sovereignty. India's erstwhile Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru personally endorsed the project, remarking: "Let this be a new town, symbolic of the freedom of India, unfettered by the traditions of the past ... an expression of the nation's faith in the future." The capital was to be located in the most populous part of the state, between the Doaba and Ambala districts, and projected to hold about 500,000 people. Several existing cities and towns across the state were considered for the possible development of the new capital, but all rejected for different reasons. Political lobbying also made the selection of an existing city as the new capital difficult. The absence of political consensus on the location of the new capital and the large costs involved threatened the project. In 1948, three possible sites were settled upon, one lying in the Ambala district, one in Ludhiana, and one, the most preferred of the three, being partially in Ambala and Patiala state (which was then not part of the East Punjab state). The first site, in Ambala district's Kharar tehsil, was ultimately selected to be the location of the new capital after aerial reconnaissance by Parmeshwari Lal Varma and Prem Nath Thapar. The name of the new city derived from a temple dedicated to Hindu goddess Chandi present in one of these villages. The location was praised by the later team of the city's architects for being beautiful and practical. Agricultural lands, including large mango groves, of fifty-eight villages with a population of 21,000 people were to be affected by the construction of the city, involving the displacement of many of them. The affected villagers, encouraged and supported by political parties (such as the Socialist Party and Akali Dal), began agitating against the project. Political opposition to the project also stemmed from a desire for relocation of the new capital to sites favourable to the opponents. The government reached an agreement with the affected villagers in October 1950, and established a local committee to advise on rehabilitation of displaced people, thus ending the agitation.

Masterplan Mayer plan It was decided by the state government that a town planner for Chandigarh would be selected after interviewing several of them in England. However, Nehru suggested that a town planner already present in India and familiar with it be hired instead, and recommended two such people. One of them-Albert Mayer, an American town planner-was selected in December 1949 to design the master plan of Chandigarh. Mayer's recruitment received extensive international media attention. Mayer enlisted several experts from the US to aid him in preparing the masterplan of Chandigarh, including Matthew Nowicki, a US-based Polish architect, who was to work on the city's architectural design. Mayer produced a fan-shaped plan, spreading southward between the Patiala-ki-rao and Sukhna Cho streams, with the capitol located on a promontory in Sukhna's fork at the upper margin, a university at the very north, a railway station to the east, an industrial area to the southeast and a commercial block in the center. The city was to be made up of several neighbourhood units, or superblocks, arranged in districts of various shapes roughly one-by-half kilometre in size, each containing residences, bazaar, schools, parks, health centres, theatres and meeting halls. The superblocks were to be arranged in a curvilinear street layout with adequate road space for future motor traffic. Mayer's plan was based on the ideals of the Garden City movement and the Radburn idea. While Mayer provided a masterplan and Nowicki gave a detailed draft for one neighbourhood unit, Chandigarh also required an architect to develop the architectural design of the city and its structures. Nowicki had also prepared a preliminary design for the capitol complex, and had agreed to join the city's architectural development independently of Mayer. In August 1950, Nowicki died in a plane crash, and Mayer was unlikely to be able to

execute the masterplan without his assistance. This, coupled with Mayer's extended leaves from the state and mounting expenses due to adverse USD exchange rates, resulted in Mayer—who was still keen on continuing the project—being dropped from the plan.

Corbusier plan Between November and December 1950, Thapar and Varma travelled to Europe to find replacements and recruited a four-member team headed by Swiss-French architect Le Corbusier, also including English couple-duo Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew, and Corbusier's cousin Pierre Jeanneret. Fry, Drew and Jeanneret were to work at Chandigarh for three years, while Corbusier would make two visits every year, each lasting one month. The association of the city with Corbusier catapulted it into global limelight. Corbusier came to India in February 1951, and joined Fry and Jeanneret who had arrived earlier. They were joined by Indian staff in Shimla, including a team of young Indian architects and town-planners who were to learn from them as much as assist them. Although told to adhere to Mayer's masterplan, the new team considered it inadequate and made significant modifications, much to Mayer's dismay as he tried in vain to retain it. Corbusier assumed control of the masterplan and designed buildings of the capitol complex, while the rest of the team directed construction work and designed other buildings of the city. Key components of the previous plan were incorporated into the new one—the positions of the central commercial block, the railway station, the industrial area, and the capitol complex remained roughly similar; the University was moved to the west, the superblocks were retained, but expanded, standardised and named 'sectors'. The overall density was increased by 20%. The earlier curvilinear street plan was replaced with a rectilinear grid plan, with a seven-tiered road system consisting the highway, the central axes, arterial roads, market roads, sector circulation roads, residential streets and pedestrian walkways. The new plan was quickly accepted by officials. The capitol complex was designed to contain four main buildings: the Palace of Assembly, the High Court of Justice, the Secretariat, and a fourth structure—earlier the Governor's Palace and later Museum of Knowledge—whose construction was deferred. Also included in it were several monuments, notably the Monument of the Open Hand. Initial plan envisioned the capitol complex to dominate the city, but in later plans artificial hills were used to visually separate the two. It was to be independent India's 'answer' to the British built complex in New Delhi. The city centre was designed by Corbusier to contain commercial and administrative buildings with a central pedestrian plaza.

Construction A schedule for construction was prepared soon after the takeover of the project by Corbusier's team. The first structures to be built were temporary quarters for the engineers and architects. 30 sectors were to be constructed in the first phase, and another 17 in the second phase. Several laws were passed 1952 onwards to regulate development within the city and in its 5-mile radius (expanded later to 10), and to preserve the city's planned character. By September 1953, all state government departments and staff had been shifted from Shimla to Chandigarh. The city was built to be the state's capital all year round, abandoning the British practice of moving the provincial government to Shimla during the summer. On 7 October 1953, the capital was officially inaugurated in a ceremony presided over by President Rajendra Prasad. The construction was done on a tight budget, primarily using locally available materials, extensive manual labour and minimal machinery. A committee was set up under Mohinder Singh Randhawa for landscaping of the city, and an elaborate landscaping plan was devised. In 1954, the Panjab University, which had been functioning in a widely scattered area until then, purchased over 300 acres of land in sector 14 where a self-contained permanent campus was built for it in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The 1956 merger of PEPSU with the Punjab state shot up construction costs due to requirements of extra offices and housing in the city, and caused revisions in the assembly building's design. In the 1960s, a medical research center and college of engineering were established in sector 12, two government colleges, one for men and one for women, were built in sector 11, and a polytechnic institute was created in sector 26. The Chandi Mandir military cantonment and an industrial township in Pinjore were built to the northeast of the city, despite objections from Corbusier. During excavations