

**OFFICIAL NAME:** Republic of India

**CAPITAL:** New Delhi

**SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT:** Multiparty Federal Republic

**AREA:** 3,166,692 Sq Km (1,222,720 Sq Mi)

**ESTIMATED 2000 POPULATION** 1,096,695,000

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**LOCATION & GEOGRAPHY:** India is located on the Indian sub-continent in South Asia. It is bound by Pakistan to the northwest, China, Bhutan and Nepal to the north, Myanmar and Bangladesh to the east, the Bay of Bengal to the southeast and the Arabian Sea to the southwest. It is the second largest country in Asia and the territory also includes the Andaman, Nicobar and the Lakshadweep Islands. The mainland of India can be divided into four topographical regions. (1.) The northern mountains or Himalayan region which comprises three parallel ranges mixed with large plateaux and valleys. (2.) The Indo-Gangetic Plain which is formed by the basins of the Ganges, Indus and Brahmaputra Rivers. (3.) The desert region which is divided into the Great and Little Deserts. (4.) The southern region which includes a narrow coastal plain along the Arabian Sea and a broader one along the Bay of Bengal. The southern region is separated from the Indo-Gangetic Plain by a mass of mountain ranges and plateaux on the Indian or Deccan Peninsula, which are flanked by the Western and Eastern Ghats. The rivers of India are generally divided into the Himalayan and peninsula rivers, and the principal rivers include the Ganges with its tributaries, the Jumna, Yamuna, Ghaghra, Gandak, Kosi, Chambli, Betwa, Son, Mahanadi, Godavari, Krishna, Cauvery, Narbada and Tapti. Major Cities (pop. est.); Mumbai (Bombay) 9,925,900, Delhi 7,206,700, Calcutta 4,399,800, Madras 3,841,400, Bangalore 3,302,300, Hyderabad 3,145,900, Ahmadabad 2,954,500, Kanpur 1,879,400, Nagpur 1,624,800, Lucknow 1,619,100, Pune 1,566,700, New Delhi 301,300 (1991). Land Use; forested 23%, pastures 4%, agricultural-cultivated 57%, other 16% (1993).

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**CLIMATE:** India has a tropical climate that is dominated by the Asiatic monsoons with four fairly distinct seasons which are common to all six or seven climatic regions. (1.) A relatively cool winter monsoon season. (2.) A hot and rainless transitional season. (3.) A rainy monsoon season and (4.) a humid season. Tropical hurricanes and cyclones are common between April to June and September to December. Average temperature ranges in New Delhi are from 7 to 21 degrees Celsius (45 to 70 degrees Fahrenheit) in January to 26 to 41 degrees Celsius (79 to 106 degrees Fahrenheit) in May.

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**PEOPLE:** India's racial diversity is extremely complex, but generally can be divided into the following ethnic groups. The Indo-Aryan who represent 72% of the population while the Dravidian account for 25% and the Mongoloid with others account for 3%. There are also three alien ethnic groups which include the Parsis, Jews and the Anglo-Indians of mixed European and Indian descent.

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**DEMOGRAPHIC/VITAL STATISTICS:** Density; 275 persons per sq km (712 persons per sq mi) (1991). Urban-Rural; 25.7% urban, 74.3% rural (1991). Sex Distribution; 51.9% male, 48.1% female (1991). Life Expectancy at Birth; 58.1 years male, 59.1 years female (1986-90). Age Breakdown; 37% under 15, 27% 15 to 29, 18% 30 to 44, 11% 45 to 59, 6% 60 to 74, 1% 75 and over (1990). Birth Rate; 32.5 per 1,000 (1991). Death Rate; 11.4 per 1,000 (1991). Increase Rate; 21.1 per 1,000 (1991). Infant Mortality Rate; 80.0 per 1,000 live births (1990).

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**RELIGIONS:** Around 83% of the population are Hindu, 11.4% are Muslim, 3% are Christian, 2% are Sikh while just under 1% are Buddhist and .5% are Jain.

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**LANGUAGES:** The official languages are Hindi and English, with Hindi including its associated languages and dialects accounting for 84% of the population while English is used for national, political and commerce purposes. Over 1,600 languages and dialects are spoken throughout India with over 15 constitutionally recognized.

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**EDUCATION:** Aged 25 or over and having attained: no formal schooling 65.8%, incomplete primary 7.1%, primary 10.9%, incomplete secondary 6.2%, secondary 7.1%, higher 2.9% (1981). Literacy; literate population aged 15 or over 261,200,000 or 48.2% (1990).

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**MODERN HISTORY - WWII TO 1993:** On Aug. 15, 1947 India gained independence from Britain and the next day Pakistan was created while Jawaharlal Nehru became India's first Prime Minister. From 1948 to 1949 India and Pakistan fought over Kashmir which ended when the UN divided the Kashmir between the two countries. In 1948 Mohandas Gandhi who led India to independence was assassinated. In 1950 India adopted a new constitution which made it a republic. In 1962 a border dispute erupted with China, in which China invaded the northeastern border section of India. In May 1964 Prime Minister Nehru died after being at the forefront of Indian politics since its independence. In 1965 a second war broke out between India and Pakistan over Kashmir which resulted in Soviet mediation and a peace agreement in Jan. 1966. In Mar. 1971 Indira Gandhi, became India's first woman Prime Minister. In Dec. 1971 India assisted East Pakistan in a war against West Pakistan which resulted in East Pakistan becoming the independent nation of Bangladesh. In 1977 Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and her party were defeated in parliamentary elections, however, in 1980 she won the elections and became Prime Minister again. In 1983 serious unrest developed with the Sikhs wanting more regional autonomy for Punjab state and in 1984 the Indian Army launched a massive offensive and as many as 1,000 people were killed in the two day battle. On Oct. 31, 1984 two Sikh bodyguards assassinated Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi her son, succeeded her as Prime Minister in December after parliamentary elections. In July 1985 Rajiv Gandhi signed a peace accord with the Sikh leader, however, the

violence continued and in May 1987 the Punjab state government was dismissed and the state was placed under central control. Additionally, since 1983 there has been a Sri Lankan Tamil separatist insurgency and in 1987 under an agreement with the Sri Lankan government India occupied the northern regions of the island. On Mar. 6, 1991 Prime Minister Chandra Shekar resigned and Pres. Ramaswamy Venkataraman dissolved the lower house of Parliament on Mar. 13, 1991. The elections were set for May 20, 23 and 26, 1991, and were a three way contest between the Indian National Congress (I), the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and a National Front and leftist parties combination. On May 21, 1991 Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated by the Tamil "Tiger" guerrilla group in a human bomb attack that also killed 14 others while he was preparing to give a campaign address in Sriperumbudur. Elections due for May 23 and 26 were postponed until June 12 and 15, and resulted in the Congress (I) forming another government and Pamulaparti Venkata Narasihma Rao being sworn in as Prime Minister on June 21, 1991. On Sept. 24, 1991 the government announced its intention to adopt the Mandal Commission's recommendation that 27% of public jobs be reserved for "socially and educationally backward classes". On Oct. 20, 1991 a massive earthquake in the Himalayan region of Uttar Pradesh killed some 1,600 people while during 1991 there was an insurgency in violence and assassinations from militant groups in Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, and Assam that climaxed on Dec. 26, 1991 with Sikh separatists killing 49 Hindu passengers and wounding a further 20 on a train in Punjab. In Jan. 1992 some 91 Bombay slum dwellers lost their lives after drinking impurely mixed alcohol during New Years celebrations while in May 1992 some 210 also lost their lives in Orissa through similar circumstances. In Feb. 1992 some 47 people died as a result of a stampede during the ritual bathing in Kumbakonam. In April 1992 a massive stock swindle known as the scam where a group of bankers and brokers collaborated to manipulate stock market operations resulted in the arrest of prominent brokers and the executives of several foreign and Indian banks and institutions. On July 25, 1992 Pres. R. Venkataraman was succeeded by Shankar Dayal Sharma after presidential elections. During 1992 separatist militant activities continued in the regions of Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir and Telingana region. On Dec. 6, 1992 Hindu-Muslim riots erupted throughout the country after the demolition of the Muslim Babri Mosque in Ayodhya by Hindu militants and thousands of supporters. The Hindus had claimed the site was the birthplace of Lord Rama and that they were going to build their own temple. On the same day and in response the government dismissed the BJP-run state government of Uttar Pradesh and imposed direct Presidential rule on the state while on Dec. 7, 1992 Hindu and Muslim fundamentalist parties were outlawed. On Dec. 8, 1992 the BJP leaders were arrested and on Dec. 15, 1992 other BJP-run state governments were dismissed. By Dec. 12, 1992 the death toll from the religious clashes had climbed to 1,150. On Jan. 6, 1993 Hindu-Muslim riots broke out in Bombay claiming some 560 lives in the first week. On Jan. 7, 1993 Pres. Sharma issued an ordinance, that was later ratified by the Parliament, to acquire 67.7 acres (27.4 hectares) around the temple site and the intention to construct two temples on the site, one for the Muslims and the other for the Hindus. On Jan. 10, 1993 the BJP leaders arrested in Dec. 1992 were released. In March and April, 1993 there were politically motivated bombings in Calcutta and Bombay with 60 and 33 people respectively losing their lives. During 1993 the government established a human rights commission to investigate claims of violations and abuse at the hands of police and security forces while clashes between the government forces and the various militant separatists

continued throughout the year. Also in 1993 the government appointed a joint parliamentary committee to investigate the 1992 stock market scandal, which had allegedly lost Rs 40,242,000,000 and the country also experienced its worst earthquake in 50 years in the Maharashtra state on Sept. 20, 1993 with some 10,000 people officially losing their lives, although unofficial reports claimed the death toll to be as high as 35,000 with some 140,000 rendered homeless.

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**CURRENCY:** The official currency is the Rupee (Re) divided into 100 Paisa.

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**ECONOMY:** Gross National Product; USD \$262,810,000,000 (1993). Public Debt; USD \$80,985,000,000 (1993). Imports; Re 728,060,000,000 (1994). Exports; Re 695,470,000,000 (1994). Tourism Receipts; USD \$1,487,000,000 (1993). Balance of Trade; Re 38,134,000,000 (1994). Economically Active Population; 314,131,370 or 37.5% of total population (1991). Unemployed; 13.1% (1990).

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**MAIN TRADING PARTNERS:** Its main trading partners are the USA, the UK, the former USSR, Japan, Iran and Iraq.

**MAIN PRIMARY PRODUCTS:** Barley, Bauxite, Chromium, Coal, Cotton, Copper, Fruit, Gemstones, Ground Nuts, Iron Ore, Jute, Limestone, Manganese, Mica, Millet, Oil and Gas, Potatoes, Pulses, Rice, Sorghum, Sugar Cane, Tea, Vegetables, Wheat.

**MAJOR INDUSTRIES:** Agriculture, Beverages, Cement, Chemicals, Coke, Fertilizers, Food Processing, Iron and Steel, Machinery, Oil Refining, Software Development, Textiles, Transport Equipment.

**MAIN EXPORTS:** Fish, Food, Gemstones, Handicrafts, Iron Ore, Leather, Machinery, Software, Tea, Textiles.

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**TRANSPORT:** Railroads; route length 61,975 km (38,509 mi) (1990), passenger-km 284,800,000,000 (176,966,000,000 passenger-mi) (1990), cargo ton-km 233,900,000,000 (160,198,000,000 short ton-mi) (1990). Roads; length 2,000,000 km (1,242,742 mi) (1989). Vehicles; cars 2,284,000 (1989), trucks and buses 1,433,000 (1989). Merchant Marine; vessels 855 (1990), deadweight tonnage 10,497,191 (1990). Air Transport; passenger-km 16,518,000,000 (10,264,000,000 passenger-mi) (1990), cargo ton-km 662,832,000 (453,974,000 short ton-mi) (1990).

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**COMMUNICATIONS:** Daily Newspapers; total of 3,805 with a total circulation of 18,800,000 (1993). Radio; receivers 65,000,000 (1994). Television; receivers 20,000,000 (1994). Telephones; units 8,037,400 (1993).

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**MILITARY:** 1,145,000 (1992) total active duty personnel with 85.6% army, 4.8% navy and 9.6% air force while military expenditure accounts for 3.3% (1993) of the Gross National Product (GNP).