

Chapter 14

Republic of India

Chapter Preview

People

Vasco da Gama, Mother Teresa, Mohandas Gandhi, Lord Louis Mountbatten, Indira Gandhi

Places

Himalayan Mountains, Arabian Sea, Bay of Bengal, Indian Ocean, Indus River, Ganges River, Deccan Plateau, Ganges Plain, New Delhi, Mumbai, Bangladesh, Thar Desert, Amritsar, West Pakistan, East Pakistan

Terms

subcontinent, monsoon, respiratory disease, Ganges Action Plan, nationalism, Indian National Congress, Muslim League, Rowlatt Act, civil disobedience, Government of India Act, dominion, partition, prime minister, Parliament of India, Supreme Court, republic, secular, Green Revolution, rupee, microcredit industry, US-India Strategic and Commercial Dialogue

Top: This tea plantation in Munnar is one of many that support India's large tea industry. India is the world's top exporter of tea. **Background:** The Taj Mahal is one of India's best-known landmarks. It is made of white marble and was commissioned in 1632 by Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan as a mausoleum for his late wife Mumtaz Mahal.

Bottom: The powerful Bengal tiger is the national animal of India.

The subcontinent of India stretches south from the Himalayan Mountains in central Asia into the Indian Ocean. The peninsula teems with unusual plant and animal life and is home to over a billion people. Here lies the country of India with its ancient past and modern vision. India is a contrast of old and new, wild and tame, nature and man.

The history of India stretches back more than 4,000 years. In those ancient times, society was in three groups: commoners for daily work, warriors for defense and protection, and priests for spiritual work. Over time, the number of groups expanded. When Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama arrived in India in 1498, the society was rigidly set into five levels, or castes. These levels were determined at birth, and Indians remained in their social group level for life. The castes determined the type of job available to a person and the choice of a person to marry. This ancient system, though now illegal, still has influence on modern India.

India is known for its large population, close to 1.3 billion. This number is larger than the population of all countries in the western hemisphere combined. India's population is increasing at a rate that will allow India to pass China as the world's most populous country. This large population provides a huge workforce for Indian businesses. However, the population puts a strain on the country's resources.

India is the largest democracy in the world and one of the world's rising stars. India's people have adapted to many changes in their long history. Their future will depend on how they adapt to the modern world. Read on to continue your exploration of this amazing country.

“

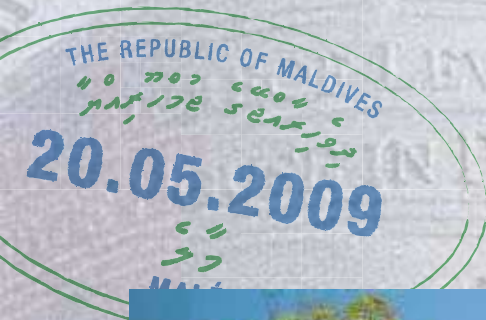
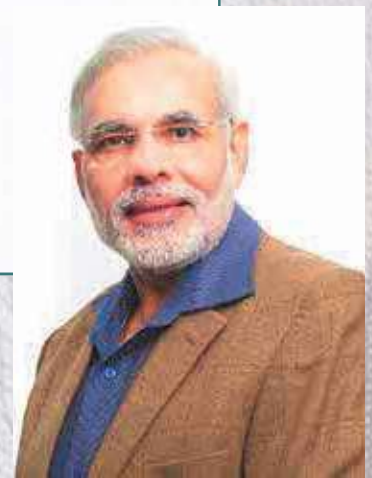
Non-violence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction devised by the ingenuity of man.

- Mahatma Gandhi,
leader of the independence
movement

PASSPORT



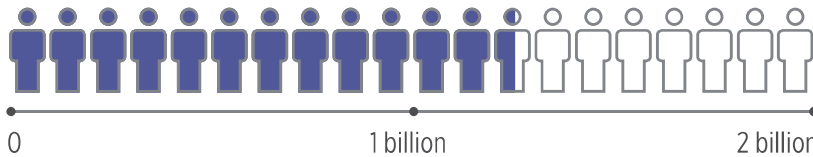
Official Name: Republic of India
Capital: New Delhi
Form of Government: federal parliamentary republic
Head of Government: Prime Minister
Head of State: President
Suffrage: 18 years of age; universal
Currency: rupee



Top: Flag of the Republic of India.
Middle Left: The Parliament of India meets in the capital city of New Delhi.
Middle Right: Narendra Modi became prime minister of India in 2014. **Right:** Indian rupee banknotes.

CULTURE CONNECTION

POPULATION

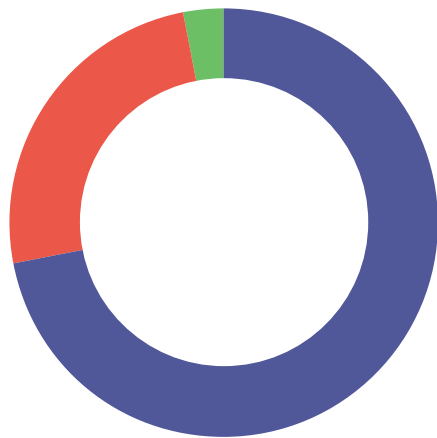


India
1,266,883,598 (est. July 2016)
Population Rank 2

United States
324,386,000 (est. 2017)
Population Rank 3

ETHNIC GROUPS

- Indo-Aryan 72%
- Dravidian 25%
- Mongoloid and other 3%



FUN FACTS

India has a spa just for elephants. They receive baths, massages, and even food at the Punnathoor Cotta Elephant Yard Rejuvenation Centre in Kerala.

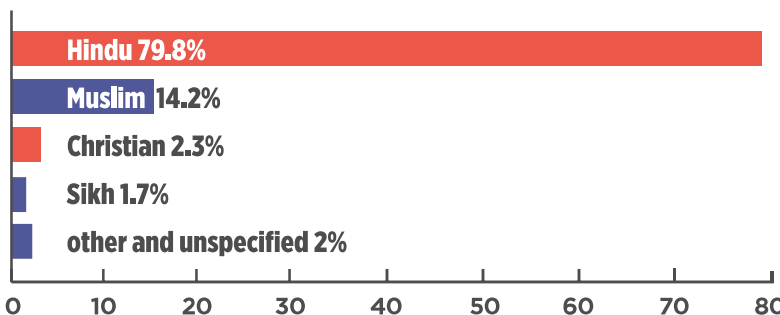
Official Language:

English enjoys the status of subsidiary official language but is the most important language for national, political, and commercial communication; **Hindi** is the most widely spoken language and primary tongue of 41% of the people.

Phrases in Hindi

- Hello** – नमस्ते – Namaste
- Goodbye** – अलवदिदा – Alavida
- Good morning** – शुभ प्रभात – Shubh prabhaat
- Good afternoon** – नमस्कार – Namaskaar
- Thank you** – धन्यवाद – Dhanyavaad
- You're welcome** – आपका स्वागत है – Aapaka svaagat hai
- Yes** – हाँ – Haan
- No** – नहीं – Nahin

RELIGION



LIFE EXPECTANCY

Average 68.5 years
Male 67.3 years
Female 69.8 years

EDUCATION

Literacy total population 71.2%;
male 81.3% / female 60.6%

Top Left: In 1498, Vasco da Gama of Portugal reached the shores of India.

Top Right: Britain began direct rule of India in 1858. Queen Victoria was named Empress of India in 1876.

Bottom Left: Indian troops marched with the Allies in France during World War I.

Bottom Right: In June 2017, India used its Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) Mark III to successfully put a satellite in Earth orbit. **Background:** The Taj Mahal was completed in 1654.

TIMELINE OF INDIA HISTORY



Figure 14.1

1400

1498 Vasco da Gama reached India

1800

1869 Mohandas Gandhi born

1885 Indian National Congress organized

1900

1906 Muslim League organized

1910 Mother Teresa born in Macedonia

1913 First Indian film released

1914 Mohandas Gandhi returned to India

1919 Massacre at Amritsar

1935 British government passed the Government of India Act to give India some self-government

1947 British rule of India came to an end on August 15
Independent countries of India, West Pakistan, and East Pakistan created; millions of people moved to the country of their religion

1948 Mohandas Gandhi assassinated

1950 Indian constitution adopted

Mother Teresa founded the Missionaries of Charity

1966 Indira Gandhi became the first woman prime minister of India

1979 Mother Teresa won the Nobel Peace Prize

1984 Indira Gandhi assassinated

1985 Ganges Action Plan began

2000

1997 Mother Teresa died

2009 US-India Strategic Dialogue launched

2015 First meeting of US-India Strategic and Commercial Dialogue

2016 Flooding affected over 1.6 million people in India
Mother Teresa made a saint in the Catholic Church

2017 India labeled as the world's fastest-growing economy





Area: 1,269,219 square miles

Rank: 7

Natural Resources:
 coal (fourth-largest reserves in the world), iron ore, manganese, mica, bauxite, rare earth elements, titanium ore, chromite, natural gas, diamonds, petroleum, limestone, arable land

Environmental Issues:
 deforestation; soil erosion; overgrazing; desertification; air pollution from industrial effluents and vehicle emissions; water pollution from raw sewage and runoff of agricultural pesticides; tap water is not potable throughout the country; huge and growing population is overstraining natural resources

Map 14.1
India

Map Skill: What country is almost completely surrounded by India?

Section 1

The Geography of India


 Setting a Purpose

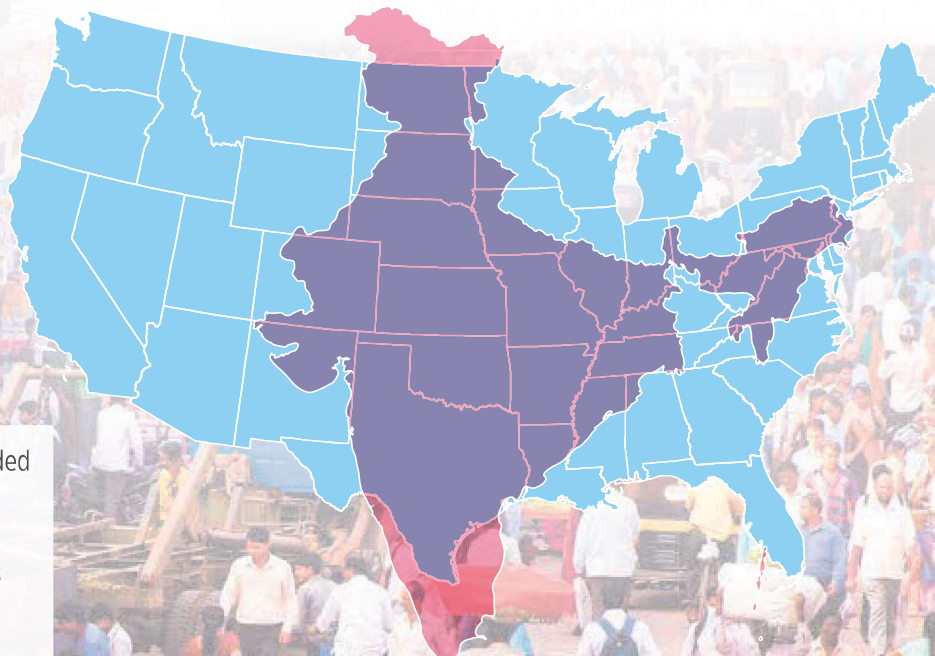
As you read, look for

- ▶ population distribution in India;
- ▶ how the Himalayas have impacted the development of India;
- ▶ the impact of monsoons on India;
- ▶ causes and effects of environmental problems in India;
- ▶ **terms: subcontinent, monsoon, respiratory disease, Ganges Action Plan.**

Location and Size of India

India is the largest country on the Indian subcontinent. It is located in southern Asia on the southern side of the Himalayan Mountains. India is located in the northern and eastern hemispheres and is crossed by the Tropic of Cancer. Along India's land border are six countries: Afghanistan (disputed by Pakistan), Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Myanmar (Burma), Nepal, and Pakistan. The island republic of Sri Lanka lies off the southern coast of India. India covers a large peninsula. Its 4,300 miles of coastline are on the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal, all part of the Indian Ocean.

While India has one of the largest populations in the world, it is only the seventh-largest country in the world at about 1.2 million square miles. It is about one-third as large as the United States.



Bottom: This Mumbai street is crowded with shoppers. Mumbai (formerly Bombay) is the most populous city in the world's second most populous country.

Physical Features of India

India is separated from the rest of Asia by three ranges of mountains: the Hindu Kush, the Himalayan, and the Karakoram ranges. Geographically, the country of India is on a **subcontinent** (a division of a continent) with features that make it unique from the rest of Asia. Just south of the large mountain ranges, most of India is made up of a broad plain between the Indus River and the Ganges River. The land in this plain is very fertile because the rivers provide tons of silt to enrich the soil. South of this great plain is an area of higher plateau called the Deccan Plateau. Even farther south, the land gives way to a narrow tropical strip along the coast of the Indian Ocean.

India's mountains, the Himalayas, have sometimes stopped invaders from the north who wanted access to India's fertile river valleys to the south. As a result, the culture of India has developed differently than the rest of Asia. At other times, however, invaders have been able to use natural passes through the mountains to make their way into the heart of India and establish new rulers and customs.

Most of India's people rely on farming and other agricultural work, so most of the people live along the great rivers and in the fertile river valleys.



Some of India's largest cities are located along the Ganges River or near the coast. The rivers provide transportation, trade routes, water for irrigation, and water to supply the people living in the cities. People are moving into cities from rural areas in large numbers looking for work and better opportunities for their families. The rivers have also become the easiest means of disposing of human, animal, and industrial waste. As a result, nearly all of India's large cities have problems with overcrowding and air and water pollution.

Some of India's largest cities are located along the Ganges River or near the coast. The rivers provide transportation, trade routes, water for irrigation, and water to supply the people living in the cities. People are moving into cities from rural areas in large numbers looking for work and better opportunities for their families. The rivers have also become the easiest means of

DID YOU KNOW ?

Millions of years ago, India was an island. It is on a different continental plate than the rest of Asia. The meeting of these continental plates has created the Himalayan Mountains.

Top: The Khardung Pass in the Himalayas has been a route into India since ancient times and was part of historic caravan trails from Central Asia.

Left: The land and access to water make the paddy fields in India very productive. The country is among the world's top producers of rice.

Climate

India has many types of climate. Snow and ice are in the northern mountains, hot dry plains are in the central plateau, and steamy tropical climate is along the southern coast. Along the mountain ranges to the



north, the temperatures are like those in other high altitude locations. Some of the highest peaks are covered with glaciers and snow. A large desert area borders Pakistan, while the Ganges Plain is humid and almost tropical. The Deccan Plateau in the center of the country is more moderate, with a subtropical coastal plain along the Indian Ocean.

The climate of India is shaped by seasonal winds known as **monsoons**. These winds blow hot, dry air across the continent from the northeast during the winter. In the spring and summer, the winds come from the opposite direction and bring heavy rains from the ocean. These monsoon winds can be a blessing when they bring much-needed rain. On the other hand, monsoon rains can cause destructive flooding. The monsoons are very unpredictable. The people of India have to live their lives around these seasonal winds and rains. When the shifts in the weather are moderate, the Indian people are able to farm the rich river valley soil and use the rivers for transportation and trade.

DID YOU KNOW ?

India has one of the largest and fastest-growing diamond cutting and polishing industries in the world.

Natural Resources of India

India has many natural resources, a number of which are minerals. It is the fourth-largest producer of coal in the world. Some of India's other valuable mineral deposits include iron ore, manganese, bauxite, titanium, and diamonds. India also has deposits of natural gas and oil, which help supply their growing industries. Finally, India also has vast amounts of arable land.

Environmental Issues

The large and densely populated parts of India create many environmental problems for India's people. There is the need for food and water, but there is also a need for clean ways to dispose of waste. Many of the industries and vehicles used by the people create pollution. The health of India's people will depend on good decisions on how to address these problems.



Top: A houseboat motors through the waters of Kerala, a tropical region known for monkeys, elephants, and tigers. **Right:** Productive coal mines make India the fourth-largest supplier of the world's coal.

Air Pollution

Although well known for its problems with air pollution, China's cities do not have the worst air pollution. That title goes to cities in India. New Delhi is the most polluted city in the world. An enormous and growing population along with the rapid growth of cities (urban areas) and the development of industry have left many parts of India with some of the heaviest air pollution in the world. In fact, about half of the twenty most polluted cities in the world are in India. Indians living in several major cities have some of the world's highest rates of **respiratory disease** (diseases of the lungs, bronchial tubes, and trachea). Breathing unfiltered air in Mumbai for one day can have the equivalent damage to lungs as smoking 100 cigarettes. In addition to industrial smoke, the growing number of automobiles and trucks in India contributes to the poor air quality. Some estimates say that automobile emissions (carbons and other chemicals that come from a car's engine) are responsible for almost 70 percent of the air pollution in some urban areas of India.

Poverty is declining in India. About one in five Indians live on less than \$1.90 per day. This number, though high, is declining, and the government does not want to take any action to slow economic growth. For this reason, it has been difficult for the Indian government to enforce many of the laws on industry and transportation that might improve the country's air quality. In rural areas, many families cook over open fires, using wood, animal dung, or coal as fuel. These fuel sources send carbon monoxide, soot, and many different chemicals into the air as well. The air inside the home is often as bad as the air outside. This pollution can form brown clouds (haze of pollution), which affect rainfall levels and temperature.

Water Pollution

The Ganges River is India's most important river. It begins in the Himalayan Mountains and flows 1,600 miles southeast through India and Bangladesh (formerly East Pakistan) before emptying into the Bay of Bengal. The water of the Ganges carries tons of rich sediment (topsoil, silt, and minerals from the mountains) that is gradually spread along its path, enriching the farmland and creating a large, fertile delta at the mouth of the river. Human waste from the large population living and working near its banks has caused the Ganges to become heavily polluted.

DID YOU KNOW ?

Poor sanitation, lack of access to clean water, and inadequate personal hygiene are responsible for high incidents of diarrhea in India. In 2010, an estimated 300,000 children under five died from the illness.



Above: The Ganges is important for many reasons to the people of India. Human activity in the river has made it very polluted. **Bottom:** Severe air pollution in New Delhi put the Air Quality Index over 500 – in the Hazardous zone – in December 2016.

In spite of the river's importance and its place in the spiritual lives of Indians, the quality of the water has become poor. Chemicals used in fertilizer and industries are washed into the river every day. Human and animal waste also pollutes the river. The bodies of dead animals and the cremated remains of human beings (bodies that are burned after death and whose ashes are scattered in the river) regularly float down the river. In spite of this, many Indians bathe in the Ganges. They also use the water for drinking and cooking. Cities along the Ganges have the highest rates of water-borne diseases (diseases found in drinking water) of any who live in India. Still, these cities pour millions of gallons of sewage (water that contains waste products) into the river to be carried to cities and villages farther south. Outbreaks of such diseases as cholera, dysentery, typhoid, and hepatitis are common. Most officials say polluted river water is part of the reason.

India began a program called the **Ganges Action Plan** in 1985 to clean the river. Many sewage and water treatment plants have been built along the river. However, the growing population of India and the runoff from industrial and farm production have meant that cleanup efforts fall short of what is needed.

Flooding

Flooding can be a serious and sometimes deadly problem for the people of India. The most common cause of floods in India is the monsoon, the seasonal winds that bring heavy rains in the summer months.

Since so many people live along the banks of the Ganges and other rivers, when the rivers flood, the effects are often devastating and deadly. In 2016, flooding affected over 1.6 million people in India, forcing thousands of people into 300 relief camps. In some parts of India, flooding has become an annual event. As flooding is becoming a regular occurrence, the Indian government is under pressure to find ways to prevent or reduce its impact.

Impact of Location

The geography of India has had a significant impact on where people live. Deserts in the northwest, including the

Thar Desert, and the mountain fringe in the north, are sparsely populated. However, a very high population density exists throughout most of the country. The core of the population is in the north along the banks of the Ganges, with other river valleys and southern coastal areas also having large population concentrations of people. Living near these sources of water allows people access to water for drinking and irrigation, as well as a route for trade and transportation.



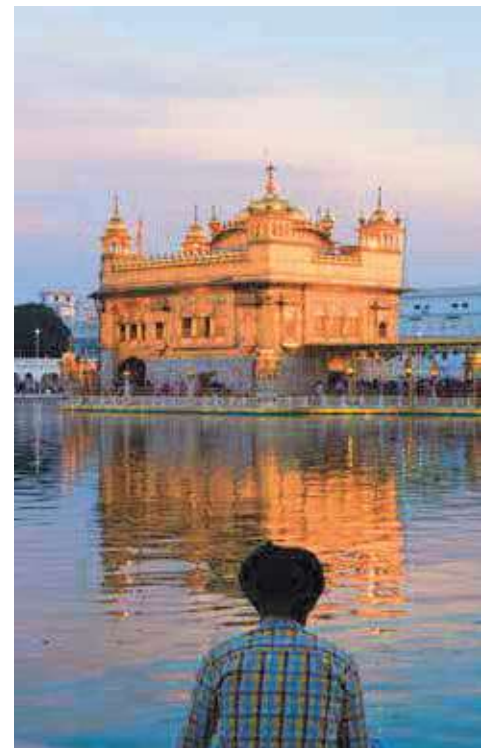
Top: A man leads his camels across a dune in the Thar Desert of western India. **Above:** Flooding of the Ganges stranded Hindu pilgrims after a monsoon storm in 2011.

The majority of Indians live in rural areas with only about one-third of the population living in cities. However, India has one of the fastest-growing populations in the world. Cities in India are growing at a fast pace as people choose to leave rural areas for the opportunity of better, high-paying jobs. The cities in India have made themselves attractive for workers by expanding the number of their businesses. The country has invested in expanding seaports, highways, railroads, and airports to create a more modern transportation network to link people and goods.

People of India

With India’s large population comes incredible diversity. Hindi is one of the official languages and is the most common language with over 40 percent of the population speaking it. There are thirteen other official languages that are commonly spoken in different regions of the country including Bengali, Marathi, Telugu, Tamil, and Urdu. English is commonly spoken as a second language and is often used for business. The majority of the population practices Hinduism. There are also large groups of Muslims, Christians, and Sikhs in India.

The overall population density of India is about 1,043 people per square mile. The United States has more land and fewer people. That puts US density at about 85 people per square mile. The state of Georgia is a bit more crowded at about 168 people per square mile in 2016. The population densities for cities tell a more complete story about India. Cities average 27,400 people per square mile. Mumbai tops the list of most crowded in India with 73,837 people per square mile and over 12 million residents. Delhi follows with about 11 million residents at about 66,000 people per square mile.



Reviewing the Section

1. What is a subcontinent?
2. Where do most people live in India? Why?
3. How have the Himalayas affected the development of India?
4. What effect do monsoons have on India?
5. Copy the chart on your paper and then complete it.

Environmental Issue	Cause	Effects	Solution
Air Pollution			
Water Pollution			
Flooding			

Top: This train station sign in Udagamandalam (or Ooty) is written in three languages: Tamil (top), Hindi (middle), and English (bottom). **Above:** The Golden Temple (Sri Harimandir Sahib Amritsar) in northwest India is an important religious site for Sikhs, one of the country’s religious minorities with about 1.7 percent of the population.