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India Location

India is located in the south-central part of the continent of Asia, bordered by the Indian Ocean and its two arms, the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea. The country extends from Kashmir in the north to Kanyakumari in the south, and from Arunachal Pradesh in the east to Gujarat in the west. The southern boundary reaches up to $6^{\circ} 45'$ N latitude in the Bay of Bengal. The standard meridian of India is at $82^{\circ} 30'$ E longitude, which determines Indian Standard Time (IST), 5 hours and 30 minutes ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT).

India covers an area of approximately 3.28 million square kilometers, accounting for about 2.4% of the world's land surface, making it the seventh largest country globally. The mainland coastline along the Indian Ocean is about 6,100 km, and including the island groups of Andaman and Nicobar in the Bay of Bengal and Lakshadweep in the Arabian Sea, the total geographical coastline extends to 7,517 km.

India's geographical extent results in a latitudinal variation of about 30 degrees, causing a time difference of nearly two hours between the easternmost and westernmost parts of the country. The southern part lies within the tropics, while the northern part is in the sub-tropical or warm temperate zone.

India's physical diversity includes the lofty Himalayas in the north, large rivers such as the Ganga, Brahmaputra, Mahanadi, Krishna, Godavari, and Kaveri, forested hills in the

northeast and south, and the vast sandy expanse of the Marusthali desert. The country is bounded by the Himalayas in the north, the Hindukush and Sulaiman ranges in the northwest, the Purvachal hills in the northeast, and the Indian Ocean in the south, forming the Indian subcontinent along with Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, and Bangladesh.

The Himalayas and other mountain ranges have historically acted as formidable physical barriers, with only a few passes such as Khyber, Bolan, Shipkila, Nathula, and Bomdila allowing passage.

India's peninsular region extends into the Indian Ocean, providing strategic maritime links to neighboring regions through sea and air routes. Island neighbors include Sri Lanka, separated by the Gulf of Mannar and Palk Strait, and the Maldives.

Extent of India

India stretches from Kashmir in the north to Kanyakumari in the south, and from Arunachal Pradesh in the east to Gujarat in the west. The southernmost point of India is Indira Point, located in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Exam Question

Q: What are the northernmost and southernmost points of India?

A: The northernmost point of India is in Kashmir, and the southernmost point is Indira Point in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Size of India

India covers an area of about 3.28 million square kilometers, making it the seventh largest country in the world. It accounts for 2.4% of the world's land surface area. The mainland coastline is 6,100 km long, and including islands, the total coastline is 7,517 km.

Exam Question

Q: How does India's size and coastline contribute to its geographical diversity?

A: India's large size and extensive coastline contribute to its physical diversity, including mountains, rivers, forests, deserts, and maritime connections.

Neighbours of India

India shares land borders with Pakistan to the northwest, China and Nepal to the north, Bhutan and Bangladesh to the northeast and east, Myanmar to the far east, and Afghanistan in the northeast region. Island neighbors include Sri Lanka and the Maldives in the Indian Ocean.

Exam Question

Q: Name the countries that share land and maritime borders with India.

A: Land neighbors are Pakistan, China, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, and Afghanistan. Maritime neighbors include Sri Lanka and the Maldives.

Know the Terms

Indira Point: The southernmost point of India, located in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Subcontinent: A large landmass that is part of a continent but distinct due to its size and geographical features, comprising several countries.

Exam Question

Q: What is meant by the term 'subcontinent' in the context of India?

A: The term 'subcontinent' refers to the large landmass of India and its neighboring countries that form a distinct geographical and cultural region within the continent of Asia.

Solved Examples

Example 1: Calculate the approximate time difference between the easternmost and westernmost points of India.

Solution: India extends about 30 degrees in longitude. Since each 15 degrees corresponds to one hour, 30 degrees corresponds to 2 hours. Therefore, the time difference between the easternmost and westernmost points is approximately 2 hours.

Example 2: Identify the significance of the standard meridian of India.

Solution: The standard meridian of India is at $82^{\circ} 30'$ E longitude. It is used to calculate Indian Standard Time (IST), which is 5 hours and 30 minutes ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT), providing a uniform time across the country despite its wide longitudinal extent.

Practice Set

Easy

- What is the total area of India?
- Name the two island neighbors of India.

Moderate

- Explain the significance of the Himalayas as a physical barrier.
- Describe the latitudinal and longitudinal extent of India.

Challenging

- Discuss how India's peninsular location influences its maritime connections.
- Analyze the impact of India's geographical diversity on its climate and culture.

Answer Key

- India covers an area of about 3.28 million square kilometers.
- Sri Lanka and the Maldives are the two island neighbors of India.
- The Himalayas act as a formidable physical barrier, limiting invasions and influencing climate.
- India extends roughly 30 degrees in latitude and longitude, from Kashmir to Kanyakumari and Arunachal Pradesh to Gujarat.
- India's peninsular location provides strategic maritime routes connecting it to neighboring countries and facilitates trade and cultural exchange.
- Geographical diversity leads to varied climates, from tropical in the south to temperate in the north, and influences diverse cultural practices.

Quick Reference

- **Location:** South-central Asia, between 6°45' N and 37°6' N latitude, and 68°7' E and 97°25' E longitude.
- **Area:** Approximately 3.28 million sq. km.
- **Coastline:** 6,100 km mainland; 7,517 km including islands.
- **Neighbours:** Pakistan, China, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Maldives.
- **Standard Meridian:** 82° 30' E longitude.

Glossary

Indira Point

The southernmost point of India, located in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Subcontinent

A large, distinct landmass forming part of a continent, comprising multiple countries.

Standard Meridian

The longitude selected as the reference for standard time in a country.

Latitude

The angular distance north or south of the equator.

Longitude

The angular distance east or west of the prime meridian.

Peninsula

A landform surrounded by water on three sides but connected to the mainland.

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