

## India



### Facts

- **Population:** 1.37 billion people live in India (2019)
- **Capital city:** New Delhi with about 29 million inhabitants
- **Name:** Republic of India or *Bharat Ganrajya* (in Hindi)
- **Government:** Democracy
- **Languages:** 22 official languages: Hindi is the most commonly spoken language and is spoken by more than half of the Indians.
- **Religion:** mainly Hindus (80.5%), but also Muslims (13.4%) and other faiths.

- **Currency:** 1 Indian Rupee (INR) = 100 Paise
- **History:** Around 7000 BCE the first settlements were built in the area. The Indus Valley civilisation developed as the first urban culture in South Asia. In the 18th century, several European countries set up outposts in the region and the English East India company established many settlements along the coast and trading centres. 1857 saw a rebellion of the Indians against the British governors, after which Queen Victoria of England took over the crown rule of India and between 1858 and 1947, the British Raj (kingdom) was established in India. In 1947, India was divided into India and Pakistan. 15 August is celebrated in India as Independence Day.
- **National Days:** India has three national days: Republic Day, Independence Day and Gandhi's Birthday! India celebrates the anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's birthday on 2 October as India's 'Father of the Nation' was born on this day in 1869. Gandhi led the Indian people into independence from the British rule. He inspired many people in other countries with his peaceful protest movement.
- **National Symbols:** Lotus (national flower), tiger (national animal) and peacock (national bird).



- **Climate:** Mainly tropical. Mostly high temperatures and dry winters, tropical monsoon season from June to September.
- **Prime Minister:** Narendra Modi

### Geography

India is the seventh largest country in the world. India is slightly bigger than one third of the USA. The country is located on the Asian continent.

The Himalayan mountains are located in the North of the country while the country on the peninsula is surrounded by the Indian Ocean.

India borders seven countries: Afghanistan, Pakistan, China, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar and Bangladesh.

It takes an 8.5-hour flight from London/England to Delhi/India, 14 hours from

New York/USA and 13 hours from Sydney/Australia.

India has some of the world's highest mountains and a large high-lying area in the southern part of the country, the Deccan plateau.

The highest mountain in India is the Kangchen junga. This is also the third highest mountain in the world with 8 586 m/28 169 ft.

The Thar Desert is a large region in the north west of the country and forms a natural border between India and Pakistan. About three quarters of the desert are located in India.



The longest river in India is the Ganges River. This is the most sacred river to the Hindus.

Did you know that the name 'India' is derived from the River Indus which also flows through India?

## Animals

India is home to many large mammals such as the snow leopard, the Indian rhinoceros, the Bengal tiger or the Asian elephant.



There are also water buffalos and many different antelope species. Some species are endangered and threatened due to the rising population and settlements moving closer to wildlife habitats.

Cows are considered as sacred by the Hindus and thus these animals are highly respected and honoured as they symbolise strength and provide life-giving milk. So do not wonder when you see cows wandering in the middle of the roads or somebody starts bowing to a cow!

## People

India is the second most populous country in the world and thus has also many big cities. However, about two thirds of the population still live in rural areas.

Most of the people in India live in the country's northern regions along the fertile banks of the Ganges River and the southern coastal regions.

India's biggest cities are:

- Delhi: 29 million
- Mumbai: 22 million
- Kolkata: 15 million
- Bangalore: 12 million

Tradition and social classes or 'castes' are still part of the society, although there are laws in place that make 'Untouchability' illegal and fortunately discrimination due to the caste-system is becoming less in the Indian society.

Family values are important in traditional families and arranged marriage still play a big part especially in rural regions.

Did you know that in India, cars drive on the left side of the road as they do in the UK and Australia?

Road signs on national highways are in English and Hindi.

## Food

As India is a large and very diverse country, also the agricultural products are very different. Thus the food and cooking styles are different from region to region.

Indian staple foods are rice, lentils, breads and spices. Further, fish and seafood at the coast and chicken, pork, beef and game meats depending on the region. Many dishes contain vegetables such as spinach, peas or mustard greens as well as fruit such as mango, pineapple or bananas.

Indian food is generally spiced a lot and some regions are known for extremely hot and spicy food. Commonly used spices are chilli and ginger, cardamon, cinnamon, cumin (jeera), coriander (dhania) and cloves. Many dishes also use yoghurt, cottage cheese or paneer (white unsalted cheese)

Typical Indian food:



- **curry:** curries come in all guises and are made with lots of spices. The ingredients of the curries are chosen according to season and regional availability of products, so there will be fish curries in the southern state of Kerala, while the lamb curry, called Rogan Josh, is popular in the northern Kashmir region.
- **butter chicken:** rich and creamy chicken stew with tomatoes, onions and spices
- **vindaloo:** spicy meat (pork, lamb or chicken) marinated in vinegar mixed with potatoes
- **samosas:** crispy fried parcels filled with spicy meat or vegetables. They are often served with a mint sauce.
- **biryani:** rice dish with chicken and vegetables, herbs and spices
- **roti:** a flat bread that filled with meat or vegetables. Rotis are also used with many dishes to scoop the sauces
- **jalebi:** deep-fried batter that is dipped in sweet sugary coating
- **lassi:** yoghurt-based drink, often spiced with cardamon or cumin and flavoured with fruit such as mango

Indians eat meat but remember that different faiths do not allow their followers to eat certain types of meat. Cows are considered holy by the Hindu, thus many Indians will not eat beef. Beef is even banned in several states!

Muslims do not eat pork, so in the northern regions where most Indian muslims live, pork will not be served.

Food is eaten by Indians traditionally with the right hand, the left hand is only used for serving oneself. However, many Indians today also use cutlery such as forks and spoons.

## Famous Landmarks in India



Mumbai Gateway to India



Taj Mahal in Agra



Red Fort in Delhi



Rajiv Gandhi Sea Link in Mumbai

## Home Learning

Read the knowledge organiser with your family.

Carry out some further research on :

- India and Partition
- Schools in India
- The Weather and Climate
- Life In Villages and Cities
- Rivers and Mountains

## Home Learning Project

Write a non-chronological report about India.

Use all the features we have learned [Title, subheadings, paragraphs, pictures with captions, present tense, bullet points, technical vocabulary] You can choose your subheadings. We will make a book of all your reports for the book corner, so stick to A4 size, please !

Bring the report to school on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

## Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers, we need your help !! We need your knowledge and experience of India !

- Can you help by speaking about your life in India ?
- Can you support by helping us with preparing some Indian dishes ?
- Can you help by sharing some photographs or other artefacts from India with us ?

If there are any parents who can help in 5 Willow or 5 Maple, please let the teachers know. We may ask you to share your stories and knowledge with us via Zoom/Google Meet.