

Unit - 1

India – Location, Relief and Drainage



Learning Objectives

- To understand the strategic importance of India's absolute and relative location in the world
- To know the distinct characteristics of major physiographic divisions of India
- To compare the regions of Great Indian plains
- To understand the drainage system of India
- To differentiate the Himalayan and peninsular rivers



Introduction

India is the seventh largest country in the world and second largest country in Asia. It is separated by the Himalayas from the rest of the continent. India accounts for about 2.4 % of the total area of the world with an area of 32,87,263 sq.km. many of the India states are larger than several countries of the world.

India's Land and Water Frontiers

India shares its 15,200 km long land frontier with Pakistan and Afghanistan in the north-west, China, Nepal and Bhutan in the north and Bangladesh and Myanmar in the east.

India's longest border is with Bangladesh (4156 km) while the shortest border is with Afghanistan. (106 km)

About 6,100 km long coastline of India is washed on three sides of the country by the Indian Ocean and its two arms namely the Arabian sea in the west and the Bay of Bengal in the east. The total length of the coast line of India including the islands is 7,516.6 km. India and Sri Lanka are separated by a narrow and shallow sea called Palk Strait.

India and the World

The Indian land mass has a central location between, the East and the West Asia and the southward extension of the Asian continent. The trans Indian ocean routes which connect the countries of Europe in the west and the countries of East Asia provide a strategic central location to India. Thus it helps India to establish close trade contact with West Asia, Africa and Europe from the western coast and with South East, east Asia from the eastern coast.

India: A Subcontinent

India along with the countries of Myanmar, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan and Sri Lanka is called a subcontinent.

This region possesses a distinct continental characteristics in physiography, climate, natural vegetation, minerals, human resources etc. Hence India is known as 'subcontinent'.

1.1 Location and Extent

India extends from 8°4'N to 37°6'N latitudes and 68°7'E to 97°25'E longitudes. Hence India is located in the north Eastern hemisphere