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The Indian Subcontinent

Position, Extent and Physical Features Location of the Sub Continent

1. Mainland of the Indian subcontinent, comprising India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan extends between $8^{\circ}4'N$ and $37^{\circ}6'N$ latitudes and between $68^{\circ}7'E$ and $97^{\circ}25'E$ longitudes.
2. If the sixth country of this subcontinent Sri Lanka, is included, then it starts from $6^{\circ}N$ latitude.
3. The Tropic of Cancer ($23\frac{1}{2}^{\circ} N$) passes through the middle of India.

Size and Extent of Subcontinent

1. Total area of the Indian subcontinent is 44.9 lakh sq. km i.e. India 32,87,263 sq. km, Pakistan 7,96,095 sq. km, Bangladesh 1,48,393 sq. km., Nepal 1,47,181 sq km., Bhutan 46,500 sq. km. and Sri Lanka 65,610 sq. km. From North to South this subcontinent stretches over 3,200 km and from east to west it is 3,000 km. $82^{\circ}30' E$ meridian helps in calculating the Indian Standard Time (IST) which is 5 hours 30 minutes ahead of the Greenwich Mean Time (GMT).
2. This very meridian ($82\frac{1}{2}^{\circ} E$) dictates time in Sri Lanka and Nepal also.

Political Divisions of India

1. India is divided into 28 States and 7 Union Territories.

Position and Extent of India and its Locational Advantage

1. India forms part of the large continental land mass of Eurasia.
2. It is located on one of the peninsulas of Southern Asia. The country extends from Kashmir in north to Kanyakumari in the south.
3. The Arabian sea and the Bay of Bengal are situated on western and eastern side of peninsular India respectively.
4. The latitudinal extent of the country is from $8^{\circ}4' North$ to $37^{\circ}6' North$.
5. The Tropic of Cancer ($23\frac{1}{2}^{\circ} N$) which passes through the middle of the country measures from $68^{\circ} 7' E$ to $97^{\circ}25'E$. The location of the country is in the northern and the eastern hemispheres.

6. The importance of location of India is that it is located on the world's major sea routes.

7. Due to its location, India has maritime contacts with south-west Asia and Africa on the west and south-east Asia in the east. Its location has given India an advantage of the route of the Suez Canal for trade with North America and Europe.

Size of India (in terms of area and population)

1. India is the seventh largest country (in terms of area) in the world.
2. The area of India is about 3.28 million sq. km.
3. The area of India is nearly equal to the area of the continent of Europe excluding Russia.
4. India is eight times as large as Japan. India ranks as the second largest country in terms of population (next to China only).

5. No continent of the world except Asia has a largest population than that of India.

6. India contains about one-sixth of the total population of the world. Physical Divisions of the Indian Subcontinent

7. A chain of high mountains radiate out from the Pamir Knot which lies just in the north of India

8. In these mountains the Hindukush, the Sulaiman and the Kirthar in the east and the Himalayas in the west separate the Indian subcontinent from rest of Asia.

9. Indian subcontinent can be divided into following physical divisions :

- The Great Mountain Wall of the North
- The Great Northern Plains
- The Great Peninsular Plateau
- The Coastal Plains
- The Great Indian Desert
- The Island Groups.

The Great Mountain wall of the North

1. The Himalayas, the highest mountain wall of the world, are situated on the northern boundary of India like an arc.

2. From west to east the Himalayas are 2500 km long. The average breadth of the Himalayas is between 250 km to 400 km.
3. Mount Everest, the highest peak in the world, lies in these mountains in Nepal.

