

Based on **Exploring Society : India and Beyond**
New NCERT Textbook

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Social Science

**EXPLORING SOCIETY :
INDIA AND BEYOND**

For the Student of Class 7

*By :
Vinisha Nakra*



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THEME A – India and the World : Land and the People

1

Geographical Diversity of India

Summary

Introduction

- Rakesh Sharma was the first Indian astronaut to go into space.
- India is the seventh-largest country in the world, and a part of Asia.
- Along with India's neighbours—Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Srilanka, and Myanmar—forms the region known as the Indian Subcontinent.
- India's distinct geography influence its climate, culture and way of life. The country is divided into five main regions :
 - (a) The Mountain Zone (The Himalayas)
 - (b) The Plains of the Ganga and Indus
 - (c) The Desert Region (The Thar Desert)
 - (d) The Southern Peninsula
 - (e) The Islands

The Himalayas



Do you know

The Himalayas grow approximately 2.5 cm per year. The current height of Mount Everest (highest peak in Himalayas) is 8,848.86 meters.

- The Himalayas mountain range stands as a natural barrier in the north of India.
- The Himalayas are sometimes called the 'Water Tower of Asia'.

- Many of Himalayan peaks are over 8000 metres in height and are together called the ‘Eight Thousanders’.
- Himalayan mountain range stretches across six countries in Asia : India, Nepal, Bhutan, China, Pakistan and Afghanistan.
- The Himalayas are broadly categorised into three main ranges.
 - (a) The Himadri or the Greater Himalayas—These are the highest and most rugged part of the range.
 - (b) The Himachal or the Lower Himalayas—These are situated to the south of the Greater Himalayas.
 - (c) The Shivalik Hills or the Outer Himalayas—These form the outermost and lowest range of Himalayas.

The cold desert of India

- This region gets very little rainfall, with rocky terrain, deep valleys and lakes like Pangong Tso.
- The land here looks like the surface of the moon, so its called ‘moonland’.
- Despite harsh conditions, Ladakh has unique wildlife like snow leopards, ibex and Tibetan antelopes.
- Yaks are important animal here. It is used for milk, meat, wool, dung and transport.
- The Ladakhi people live simple life and celebrate colourful festivals like Losar and Hemis Festival.
- The region has ancient monasteries and a unique culture.



The Gangetic Plains

- The Gangetic Plains are very vast and fertile.
- These plains are formed by three Himalayan rivers : the Ganga, the Indus, and the Brahmaputra.
- The Gangetic Plains are also known as the Northern Plains.
- A large proportion of India’s population lives in these plains.
- Rivers are named after goddesses like Ganga, Yamuna and Kaveri but Brahmaputra means “Son of Brahma” and it grows bigger in summer due to melting Himalayan snow.

The Great Indian Desert or Thar Desert

- The Thar is a vast arid region. Most of it lies within India spanning the states of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Punjab and Haryana.

- The desert has harsh climate with very high day time temperature and cold nights.
- Sand dunes are formed when the wind shifts and shapes the sand into hill like formations.
- Jaisalmer, the 'Golden City', is located in the middle of the Thar Desert in India.



The Aravalli Hills

- The Aravallis are among the oldest mountains in the world.
- The Aravallis play a vital role in shaping the geography and climate of north-western India.
- It prevents the Thar Desert from expanding further eastward.
- Historic forts, such as Chittorgarh, Kumbhalgarh and Ranthambore are located here.



The Peninsular Plateau

- The peninsular plateau is a triangular area in central and southern India.
- It is a peninsula, surrounded by water on all three sides by the Arabian sea, the Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean.
- The plateau is bordered by two mountain ranges, the Western Ghats and Eastern Ghats.
- Rivers like the Godavari, Krishna and Kaveri flow across the plateau from west to east.
- Dense forests on the plateau are home to tribal communities such as—Santhals, Gond, Baiga, Bhil and Korku.

India's Amazing Coastlines

- India's coastline is dotted with beautiful beaches, rocky cliffs and lush green forests.
- Some beaches have golden sand while others have black rocks.
- The Indian coastline is over 7500 km long.

(a) The West Coast of India

- The West Coast of India stretches from Gujarat to Kerala passing through Maharashtra, Goa and Karnataka.
- Rivers from the Western Ghats form estuaries. The Narmada and Tapi estuaries are the largest.
- The West Coast has many important ports and cities.

(b) The East Coast

- The East Coast lies between the Eastern Ghats and the Bay of Bengal, stretching from the Ganga delta to Kanyakumari.
- Important water bodies like Chilika Lake and Pulicat Lake are found here.
- Deltas and landforms formed at the mouth of a river when it deposits sediments into a larger body of water such as an ocean, a lake or another river. These sediments build up forming a triangular or fan shaped area.
- The Godavari, Krishna, Kaveri and Mahanadi rivers creates fertile deltas, making the land ideal for farming.

Indian Islands

- The Indian Islands refers to the groups of islands scattered across the Indian Ocean, the Arabian Sea, and the Bay of Bengal, which form part of India's territory.
- India has two major island groups—Lakshadweep in the Arabian Sea and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the Bay of Bengal.
- These islands have unique wildlife, beautiful beaches, coral reefs and volcanoes.

(a) Lakshadweep Islands

- Lakshadweep is an archipelago (a group of islands) located in the Arabian Sea, close to the Malabar Coast of Kerala.
- It is made up of 36 islands made of coral.
- India controls a vast marine area, allowing for fishing resource exploration and environmental protection.

(b) Andaman and Nicobar Islands

- This archipelago comprises more than 500 large and small volcanic islands, divided into two distinct groups—the Andaman and the Nicobar Islands.
- They are like the Outposts of India keeping an eye on the ocean.
- It is home to a variety of flora and fauna.
- The Andaman Islands are also significant from a



historical point of view—many of our freedom fighters were jailed there under the most severe conditions in a prison complex called 'Cellular Jail'.