

UPSC Civil Services Examination

UPSC Notes [GS-I]

Topic: Our Country-India [Geography Notes for UPSC]

OUR COUNTRY – INDIA

India's Geographical Expanse

India is a country of massive geographical area.

It is bound by-

- The lofty Himalayas in the North;
- The Arabian Sea in the West;
- The Bay of Bengal in the East; and
- The Indian Ocean in the South

India has an area of about 3, 28 million sq. km.

- The north-south extent from Kashmir to Kanyakumari measures about 3,200 km.
- The east-west extent from Arunachal Pradesh to Kucchi measures about 2,900 km.

Location Setting

India is located in the Northern Hemisphere

The Tropic of Cancer (23°30' N) passes almost halfway through the country.

Latitude and Longitude of India

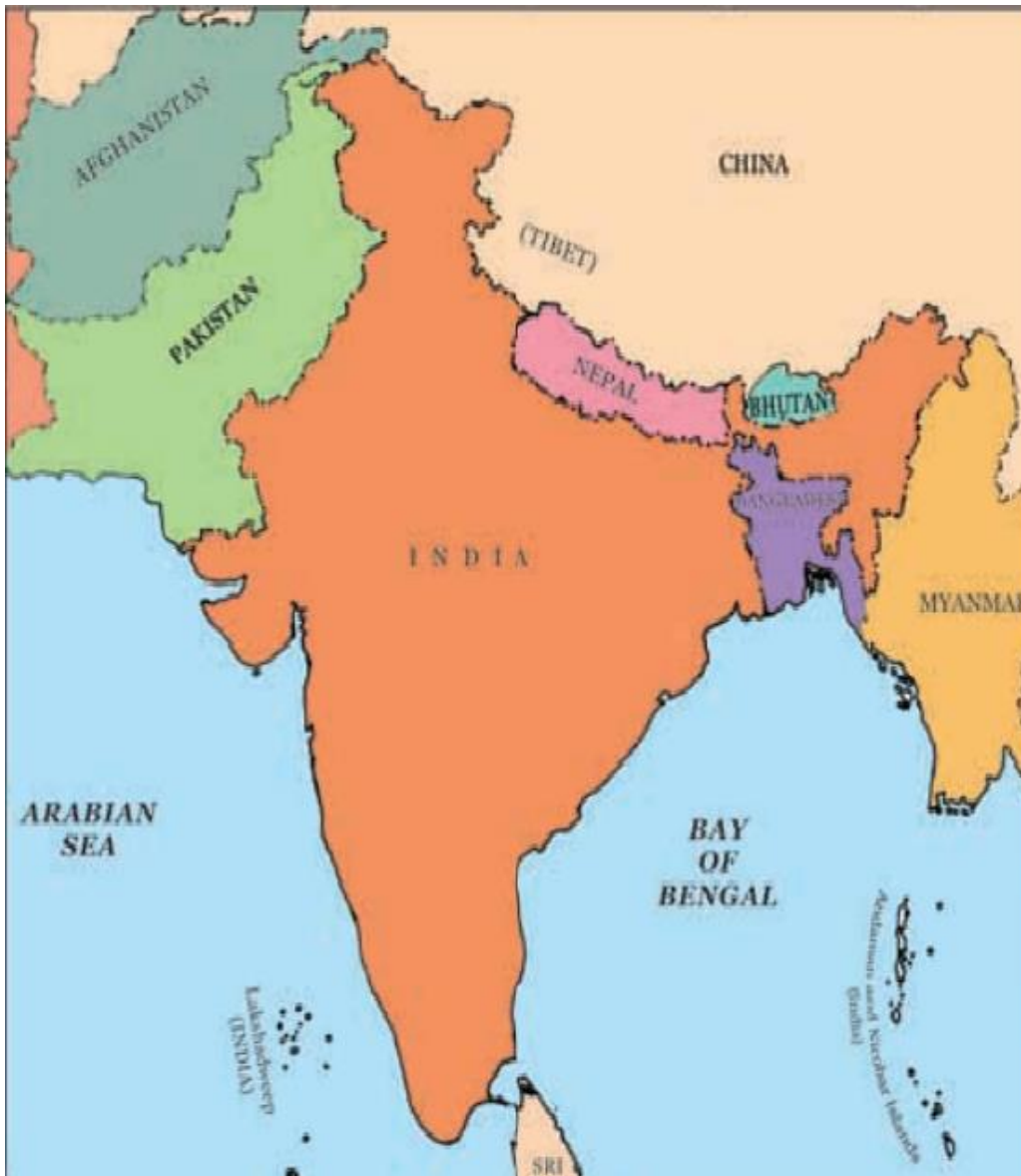
Latitude: 8°4' N and 37°6' N, from south to north.

Longitudes: 68°7' E and 97°25' E, from west to east.

India's Neighbours

- There are seven countries that share land boundaries with India.

- Sri Lanka is separated from India by the Palk Strait.



Political and Administrative Divisions

India is a vast country. For administrative purposes, the country is divided into 29 states and 7 Union Territories. Telangana became the 29th state of India on 2 June 2014.

Our Country India Physical Features

Physical Divisions

- The Himalayan mountains- They are divided into three main parallel ranges. The northernmost is the Great Himalaya or Himadri. The world's highest peaks are located in this range. Middle Himalaya or Himachal lies to the south of Himadri. The Shiwalik is the southernmost range.
- Northern Indian plains- They lie to the south of the Himalayas. They are generally level and flat.
- Great Indian desert- They lie in the western part of India. It is a dry, hot and sandy stretch of land. It has very little vegetation.
- Peninsular plateau- It lies to the south of northern plains. It is triangular in shape. The relief is highly uneven. This is a region with numerous hill ranges and valleys.
- The Vindhyas and the Satpuras are the important ranges. The rivers Narmada and Tapi flow through these ranges. These are west-flowing rivers that drain into the Arabian Sea. In the west, the Western Ghats or Sahyadris border the plateau and the Eastern Ghats provide the eastern boundary.
- Coastal plains – They lie to the West of the Western Ghats and the East of Eastern Ghats. Western coastal plains are very narrow. The eastern Coastal plains are much broader.
- Islands -Two groups of islands also form part of India. Lakshadweep Islands are located in the Arabian Sea. These are coral islands located off the coast of Kerala. The Andaman and the Nicobar Islands lie to the southeast of the Indian mainland in the Bay of Bengal.

