



Families of India

Teacher's Guide

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Table of Contents

Script to Families of the World	2
Glossary	8
Questions to Families of the World	9
Answers to Families of the World	10
Quiz on Some of Things We Learned	13
Introduction	14
The Land and the Climate	14
Plant and Animal Life	15
The People	15
Daily Life	15
Religion	17
The Arts	18
Economy	19
Government, Education & Health	20
History	22
Appendix	
India Factbook	26
Websites related to India	34
Recipes from India	34
Activities	36

Families of India ---- Raja 9 Years Old

It's early morning and peacocks near our house are just waking up. The whole city is waking. People are going to their jobs. Merchants get ready for their customers. Women clean the streets. This is the street in front of our apartment house.

I've just gotten up too, and I'm having some milk before I go to school. My name is Raja Dave and I live in Jamnagar, India.

It's winter here, and morning days are so cold that I have to wear my cap until it gets a little warmer in the day.

Our school was started by Maharata Saheba, wife of the former ruler of Jamnagar. It's on the grounds of her estate. Our school day opens with a morning prayer. We ask God to give us knowledge and strength for the day and thank God for our parents for giving us the opportunity to go to school. We pray several times a day.

Our school teaches that it's important to take care of our bodies, so we do Yoga exercises every morning. This is the prayer to the sun.

Fourteen languages are spoken in India, but Hindi is the official, so we all learn that. We also study English; it's used for things like science and government. Most of our classes are taught in Gujarati, which is the language of our area. Here our teacher is talking about how butterflies and insects pollinate plants in the garden. This is part of our English class. We learn English mostly by reading and writing it.

Our teacher says, "As I've explained to you, there are different plants that you have grown in the garden that are right for this environment. You learned an English poem about a garden. Would you like to sing it?" (They sing "Here we go 'round the mulberry bush....")

About 10 o'clock we have a snack that we bring from home.

The school wants us to learn to be good citizens and to know right from wrong. These ideas are often taught as stories and parables. This parable, about strength in unity, is especially important. India has so many different

peoples and languages; we must always remember that we're first Indians, then citizens of Gujarat.

We're taking a spelling test, and we'll get a list of words to study for tomorrow. We do lots of copying. Our school has desks. Lots of village schools don't have desks, and kids sit on mats on the floor. We buy our own schoolbooks and paper. Our teacher checks each student's work in class while the rest of us work. We get out of school at about noon. Some kids ride the school bus, some walk or ride bikes, and some parents pick up their kids. I'm lucky . . . our apartment is right across the street from school.

We always remove our shoes when we come in the house. It's a sign of respect for the gods or goddesses that we have in our home. It also helps keep the house clean, which is important because we often sit and work on the floor.

We eat our main meal at noon, usually a soup called dal, and vegetables like potatoes or eggplant. We break off pieces of bread to help scoop up the vegetables.

It's warm now and a fan feels good.

Mother washes my school uniform every day. She's getting water from our underground tank. The city delivers water each morning, and it's stored by each family. This area doesn't get much rain, and the city saves water by turning it off several hours each day. It's rained this year, but the three years before this we had a terrible drought. It was so bad that farmers had to choose whether to give water to their animals or their families. Nearly half of the animals around here died.

I usually study for an hour or two after school. It's hard to get accepted as a student at our school, and we have to keep up our grades to stay there. Also, India has lots of educated people, and there aren't enough jobs to go around. Even people like scientist and engineers can have trouble finding work. My friends are studying too.

Chess was first played in India, but it used to be played only by men.

One of India's favorite games is cricket. Everybody is crazy about it. Professional games last for several days and everyone keeps listening to the radio or TV to see what's happening.

That's my father. He works at a bank. Our family is just father, mother and me. My grandparents live in another part of India. Most kids have brothers and sisters, and they usually live in the same house as their grandparents and aunts and uncles.

Everyone drinks tea in the afternoon.

Mother's making tomato soup for supper. We're telling her that the boys on the other team were bigger than us and that they weren't playing fair.

When we take food or water from a big pot, we're careful not to put the cup or spoon we've used into the big container.

Mother uses a mortar and pestle to grind spices.

We put our dishes in the back, where mother washes clothes, and a woman comes to wash them after we eat.

Indians eat lots of different kinds of flat breads. These are paratas. Chapatis are also roasted in a pan, but you don't put any oil on them.

We say a prayer before we eat to the Lord Ram and Ganesh, the elephant-headed god.

We usually take a walk after supper. We stop at the Hindu Temple. Religion is very important in India. Most people in India are called Hindus. We believe in a supreme spiritual force called Brahma, which controls all life and exists in each person. We believe in reincarnation, that a person can have many lives, and that people can come back in animal form in the future lives. That's why most Hindus are vegetarians.

One of our favorite things to do at night is to play a game where we watch for license plates that have double numbers. The first person to see a double number gets to tag another person. If they're wrong, the person tags them back.

Our couch folds down into a bed. People here sleep with a mosquito net around the bed, because mosquitoes can carry malaria.

Good Night.

Families of India ---- Bavika 5 Years Old

My name is Bavika and this is my cousin Pushpa. My mother and aunts have decorated our hands with Mendi. We do this for special occasions, especially for brides at their wedding.

Pushpa's mother is arranging her sari.

I live with my mother, father and two brothers in a big compound like an apartment house. My grandmother and my father's brothers and sisters and their children live here too.

This is the courtyard of our house. Since my grandfather has died and my father is the oldest man, he is the head of our family.

Two of his sisters aren't married yet, so he is in charge of finding husbands for them.

Our house is in the city, but we own a farm. My father inherited the farm from his father. Most of the men in India go into their fathers' businesses. (The most important duty of a son is to take care of his parents when they get old.)

We use these buffalo for pulling wagons and plows. Buffalo also give milk. This buffalo is chewing its cud.

My father has a caretaker that lives on the farm with his family. Here he's milking a cow. Grown-ups usually drink buffalo milk; kids drink cows milk because it is easier to digest.

The caretaker's wife is rolling chapatis for breakfast. This is another bread called rotla.

These bullocks seem to know just what to do. They are going to put on the yoke. You can see houses of other farms in the distance. Farms in India have gotten smaller and smaller as land is divided between sons in the family. Here we're plowing before we plant. We grow grain and vegetables, but other farmers in India grow tea, cotton and all kinds of fruit.

All the work on our farm is done by people and animals. Some farms have tractors, but ours is too small. My father says farmers can grow more food now than when he was a boy. He says we have to be careful not to wear out our land.

We water our fields with well water that runs into ditches between each row. Some people are worried that this area will run out of ground water if farmers use it for crops.

In a village near our farm, people raise goats.

Indian homes don't have much furniture, but most families have a bed that is used to sit on during the day

It's early in the morning, so it's still cold.

These girls probably won't ever learn to read or write and they will be married before they are 15.

After the caretaker has finished milking, the milk is brought to our compound. We jump on the cart to ride the last block home.

Dividing the milk is one of the most important jobs at home.

Cleanliness is an important part of Hindu religion. We believe water has sacred properties. We bathe every morning, wear clean clothes each day, and we wash our hands before and after eating or preparing food and we say prayers while we do each of these things.

My grandmother carefully divides the milk between her sons' wives. Grandmother is given this job because she is the oldest woman and is in charge. We respect grandmother and all do whatever she says.

My mother and aunt are cutting vegetables for dinner. We eat a lot of potatoes in this area of India. Most people also eat rice at every meal.

My aunt is making a special kind of rotla that's hard to make because it cracks apart easily. You can tell she is not married because she's not wearing a sari.

And she doesn't have red in the part of her hair or a red dot on her forehead. Married women also wear a necklace of black beads that they never take off while their husband is alive.

The women work as a team. Everyone helps cook, clean and wash clothes together rather than each taking a different job.

We like to use different spices for different foods. We don't eat food till it's blessed. So women learn to cook by smelling food instead of tasting it.

We have a snack while we wait for dinner. Everyone loves movies and there are lots of movies on TV. India makes more films than any other country in the world.

Spices are used in every dish but only some make food taste hot. India grows lots of spices. It is what Columbus was looking for when he ran into America. A papod is a spicy bread that is toasted till it's crisp.

It's time for my cousin and me to eat. My mother is making butter from cream. She gives us rotla, potatoes, rice, yogurt and tomatoes and buttermilk.

The women bring food to the men and eat in the kitchen after the men have finished. Grandmother offers her son more food but he's full. If this were a special meal we would have more food and mother would make sweet food with milk and sugar.

After we've eaten, we girls get ready for bed and our aunts tuck us in.

Good Night!

Glossary

curry: A mixture of spices, usually associated with Asian cooking.

drought: A long period with little or no rain.

Gujarat: A northwestern Indian state within which Jamnagar is located.

Hindu: A member of a religion that has the belief that there is a supreme spiritual force called Brahma that controls all life and exists in each person.

malaria: A disease causing weakness and fever. Once contracted it's difficult to treat.

mendi: Intricate patterns painted onto hands and feet, usually done for a bride at her wedding.

mortar and pestle: A heavy dish in which substances are crushed or ground with a pestle.

Muslim: A member of a religion, also called Islam..About 10% of the population of India are Muslims.

parable: A simple story illustrating a moral or a religious lesson.

parati, papod, rotla, chapati: Various kinds of Indian flat breads, all cooked on stove top.

reincarnation: The belief that a person can have many lives and that people can come back as other forms, such as animals in future life.

rupee: The official basic currency of India.

sari: An Indian dress made by wrapping many yards of cloth around the body.

yoga: A Hindu system of exercises practiced to promote control of the body and mind.

Discussion and Activities After Viewing

1. Ask the children to draw a picture, make a list or write a paragraph telling how their lives and school are different from those they saw in India. How are they similar?
2. What did they see in the video that shows the importance of religion in India?
3. Ask the class what they think would be the advantages and disadvantages of living in the city of Jamnagar versus on the farm?
4. What are some things that the families in the video could make or grow for themselves instead of buying them?
5. Discuss what things in the video show that the Jamnagar area is hot and dry?
6. Have the class describe the roles of men and women in the video. How are they similar and different from those in the children's families?
7. If children have friends or relatives from India, ask the children to interview them and bring in items, photos, and stories about them.
8. Invite someone from India to talk with the class about growing up in India, play a traditional instrument, or tell an Indian story.
9. Ask the children to draw or name various ways people travel in India and to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each.
10. Discuss the meaning of the parable about how a bundle of sticks is stronger than one stick.
11. Ask the class why English is widely spoken in India. If no one knows, have them research English colonialism in India.

Questions

1. Why are so many languages spoken in India?
2. What is yoga?
3. Who is the Hindu God?
4. Why are many Indians vegetarians?
5. What is the game of cricket?
6. Why do some farmer grow wheat while others grow tea?
7. Why do some children not go to school in India?
8. Why are farms getting smaller and smaller in India?

Answers to Questions

1. Why are so many languages spoken in India?

India is a very large country with a very long history. There are more people living in India than in Europe. Many different peoples have migrated to India and many had their own language.

2. What is yoga?

Yoga is rooted in Hindu religious principles some 5,000 years old. Derived from the Sanskrit word for "union," the term yoga refers to far more than exercise. In fact, it encompasses a variety of disciplines designed to ultimately bring its practitioners closer to God. It includes breathing exercises, body postures, and meditation.

3. Who is the Hindu God?

The Hindu god is an all encompassing entity which can take many forms, such as the God of creation, and the God of destruction. Hindus generally accept the belief of rebirth and the complementary belief in karma, or previous acts as the factor that determines the condition into which a being is reborn in one form or another.

4. Why are many Indians vegetarians?

Many Hindus believe in the sanctity of life and will not take the life of living things to eat them. Thus they eat cereals, pulses, vegetables, fruits and dairy products.

5. What is the game of cricket?

Cricket is a sport invented by the English and played in many of its former colonies. There are 2 teams which have 11 players each. One team goes in to bat and the other team fields (bowls). The aim of the batsmen is to score runs by hitting the ball out of the field and running between wickets. The other team tries to tag him out, catch the ball or throw the batsman out.

6. Why do some farmers grow wheat while others grow tea?

What farmers grow depend on what will give him the most return for his work. Some of this depends on the conditions of his land and some on demand of the market. Tea grows well in hilly areas, while wheat grows best in flat land with lots of water.

7. Why do some children not go to school in India?

There may be many reasons. Some parents would like to send their children to school but may not be able to afford it. Some parents may need their children to work to support the family. For other parents the reasons are that they don't see why the children need to go to school. They expect their children to be like themselves shepherds, farmers, and laborers as dictated by their destiny. Other families see daughters as a burden, for when a girl marries money has to be given to the family of the girl's husband.

8. Why are farms getting smaller and smaller in India?

India's population quadrupled during the last hundred years. People used to have many children because few would live to adulthood. Now with better medicine, sanitation, most children are living to adulthood. As people have realized this, the number of children per family in India is getting smaller and smaller. Farmers realize that they can not keep dividing the land among many sons or soon there won't be enough land to support each family. For even though better seeds, fertilizer and management will increase the amount of crop for every acre of land, it will only increase slowly.

Quiz on Some Things We've Learned About India

(Circle the correct answer).

1. T F A sari is worn by Indian men.
2. T F Most people in India are Hindus.
3. T F India is a tropical country completely covered with rain forests.
4. T F Chess was first played in India.
5. T F In India it's bad manners to eat with your hands.
6. India has _____ official languages.
7. The rupee is India's official _____.
8. Raj has no brother or sisters. Is this typical in India? Yes No
9. What do should you remember to do when you enter an Indian home?_____
10. Draw pictures of the different parts of Raj's or Bavika's story. In each picture try to include as many details as you can remember.

Introduction

India is famous for her ancient civilizations and religions, her huge and diverse population and her many distinctive cuisines. She is the home of the beautiful Taj Mahal, the rare Bengal tigers, and millions of sacred cows. This is the land of Gandhi and Buddha.

The Land and the Climate

India is about a third of the size of the United States. It is a triangular peninsula jutting out of the Asian continent. On the northern border with China and Tibet are the tallest mountain ranges in the world, the Himalayas. South of the Himalayas, lies the great and fertile Indo-Gangetic plain so called because of the great rivers, the Indus and the Ganges, that run through the plain. South of the plain there is a plateau that reaches all the way to the bottom of the peninsula. The plateau is bounded by the coast as well as by a range of hills that generally run parallel to the coast. The ranges of hills on the west are called the Western Ghats, while those on the eastern side of the country are called the Eastern Ghats.

India's climate is characterized by the monsoon. There is a cool and dry late fall and winter, and hot and dry weather during the spring, and a hot and wet weather during the summer monsoon months. Fierce tropical cyclones occur in India around the monsoon periods. Originating in both the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea, tropical cyclones often attain velocities of more than 100 miles per hour and are notorious for causing intense rain and tidal waves as they cross the coast of India.

Plant and Animal Life

The diversity of climate and terrain support a great variety of animal and plant species. Coniferous forests exist in the Himalayas, and a great variety of deciduous and evergreens exist in the rest of India. Some of the most famous trees are the sandalwood, the teak and the rosewood trees. The fauna is similarly diverse. India is home to tigers, the last remaining Asian lions, elephants, rhinoceros and giant river crocodiles. Many species of primates, birds, reptiles are endemic only to India.

The People

Humans have been in India for tens of thousands of years. Many waves of invaders and settlers arrived over time. For example in the historical period, among the invaders who have added significantly to the Indian ethnic mix include the Persians, Scythians, Arabs, Mongols, Turks, and Afghans. They have mixed to some degree over time

Broadly speaking, the peoples of north-central and northwestern India tend to be physically more similar with Indo-European peoples from southern Europe, the Caucasus region, and Southwest and Central Asia. In northeastern India and the higher reaches of the western Himalayan region, much of the population more closely resembles East Asian peoples to the north and east— notably Tibetans and Burmans. Many tribal groups in northeastern peninsular India have affinities to the peoples of mainland Southeast Asia. Much less numerous are southern groups who appear to be descended from a population commonly designated as Negrito, now represented by numerous small and widely dispersed peoples from the Andaman Islands, the Philippines, New Guinea, and other areas.

Daily Life

Life in India is changing rapidly as the economy is growing. More people are leaving the villages for the towns and cities. A third of its people can aspire to live with modern amenities such as air conditioning, personal computers and cars, and this number is growing rapidly. Another 30% of the population do not have enough to eat on a daily basis.

Life for many is still to some extent determined by the caste system. People born in a caste are expected to marry within the caste as well as follow rules for proper behavior as dictated by the caste. There are four major castes, which are in turn divided into many smaller castes. At the top is the Brahmin or priests class, and then follows the warrior class, the merchants and farmers, and then the servants. Outside of the caste and with lowest status are the untouchables. Also outside of the caste system are the Tribals, aboriginal peoples who mostly live in the hills. With the coming of democracy the Untouchables and Tribals who make up one sixth and one-twelfth of the population respectively have been given quotas in the educational system and government jobs. In the large urban areas, there is some relaxation of the rules barring interactions between castes.

About fifty percent of India's population depends on agriculture for a living. Most make a bare subsistence living by growing cereals and legumes. The 70% of the population that is rural live in thousands of villages, each of which is divided by caste into different sections. Many villages have a grove of trees, a large well as well as an open space with a post office, some shops and maybe a village council hall. Most village houses tend to be small, one story mud or mud and thatch structures. The more affluent households live in more spacious and sturdier homes made of brick, stone or timber. There is typically an interior compound where much of the harvest will be stored.

A great amount and diversity of foods are grown in India. Huge quantities of cereals, legumes, vegetable and fruits are grown as well as sugar, tea, and oil-bearing seeds and nuts. India is also a major producer of cotton, jute and coconut husks. India has the largest cow population in the world

As India has developed its economy, its cities and towns have increased. More thirty percent of her people live in urban areas. The cities have a huge diversity of dwellings, from congested pre-colonial era cities of narrow streets and bazaars, to colonial era bungalows and spacious residential areas and office buildings, to mass-produced apartments for the workers, and shantytowns for the poor. A population explosion in India commencing in the early 20th century quadrupled the population from 250 million to 1 billion.

For almost all Indians the family is the most important social unit. There is a strong preference for parents to live with their married children, who share finances and a common kitchen. Marriage is virtually universal, and divorce rare. Most marriages are still arranged by family elders on the basis of caste, economic status, education, and astrology. Among the college educated elite, however, nonarranged "love marriages" are increasingly common.

Within families the senior male typically is the recognized family head, and his wife is the person who regulates the tasks assigned to female family members. Males enjoy higher status than females; boys are often pampered while girls are relatively neglected. This pattern of preference is largely connected to the institution of dowry since the family's obligation to provide a suitable dowry to the bride's new family represents a major financial liability. Traditionally, women were expected to obey their husbands unquestioningly.

Although there is considerable regional variation in Indian cuisine, the day-to-day diet of most Indians lacks variety. Depending on income, two or three meals generally are consumed. The bulk of almost all meals is whatever the regional staple might be: rice throughout most of the east and south, flat wheat bread (chapati) in the north and northwest, or bread made from pearl millet (bajra) in Maharashtra. This is usually supplemented with the puree of a legume (called dal), a few vegetables, and, for those who can afford it, a small bowl of yogurt. Chilies and other spices add zest to this simple fare. For most Indians, meat is a rarity, except on festive occasions; fish, fresh milk, and fruits and vegetables, however, are more widely consumed, subject to regional and seasonal availability. In general, tea is the preferred beverage in northern and eastern India, while coffee is more common in the south.

Clothing for most Indians is also quite simple and typically untailored. Men frequently still wear a cloth dhoti, a strip of cloth wrapped around the waist and between the legs. The body remains bare above the waist, except in cooler weather, when a shawl also may be worn, or in hot weather, when the head may be protected by a turban. The trend is toward Western style clothing. Muslims, Sikhs, and urban dwellers generally are more inclined to wear tailored clothing. Western-style school uniforms are worn by both sexes in many schools, even in rural India

Most Indian women wear saris and short blouses. Saris are long length of cloth that is worn half draped across the shoulder and half wrapped around the waist. The ways in which the saris are wrapped vary greatly from one region to another. In Punjab, as well as among older female students and many city dwellers, the characteristic dress is the *shalwar-kamiz*, a combination of pajamas and a long-tailed shirt. Billowing, ankle-length skirts and blouses are the typical female dress of Rajasthan and parts of Gujarat. Most rural Indians, especially females, do not wear shoes and, when footwear is necessary, prefer sandals. The modes of dress of tribal Indians are exceedingly varied and can be quite ornate.

Indian sports run a wide gamut and include both traditional activities—such as *kabaddi* (a kind of tag), kite flying, wrestling, and (among the elite) hunting and polo—as well as those introduced by the British, especially cricket, football (soccer), field hockey, and track-and-field events. Popular games include those developed in India, such as chess and pachisi, and many modern innovations, including bridge. Family outings to parks are a common form of weekend recreation for urban dwellers.

Religion and Festivals

Hinduism is a system of beliefs; its beginnings are unknown; it has neither a central authority nor an organization. It has several common characteristics of belief and practice.

Perhaps the defining characteristic of Hindu belief is the recognition of the Veda as an absolute authority revealing the fundamental truth. As bearers and teachers of the Veda, the priestly class, the Brahmins, are considered to possess spiritual supremacy by birth. Brahmins are considered to represent the ideal of ritual purity and social prestige.

Hindus believe in brahman, an eternal, infinite and all-embracing principle as the sole reality, source, and goal of all existence. This fundamental belief in and the essentially religious search for ultimate reality has been the focus of India's spiritual life. Another facet of Hinduism is the ideal of ahimsa, “non-injury” or the absence of the desire to harm, as one of the keystones of their ethics.

Hindus generally accept the belief of rebirth and the complementary belief in karma, or previous acts as the factor that determines the condition into which a being is reborn in one form or another. Such doctrines encourage the view that mundane life is not the only existence and that one's life should be directed toward a permanent interruption of the cycle of rebirth. The only possible solution consists in the realization that the human personality really is *brahman* and that it is their attachment to worldly objects that prevents people from reaching salvation.

Virtually all regions of India have their distinctive places of pilgrimage, local saints and folk heroes, religious festivals. And associated fairs. There are also innumerable festivals associated with individual villages or temples or with specific castes and cults. The most popular of the religious festivals celebrated over the greater part of India are Vasantpanchami (generally in February, the exact date determined by the Hindu lunar calendar), in honor of Sarasvatī, the goddess of learning; Holi (in February–March), a time when traditional hierarchical relationships are forgotten and celebrants throw colored water and powder at one another; Dussehra (in September–October), when the story of the *Ramayana* is reenacted; and Dīvalī; (in October–November), a time for lighting lamps and exchanging gifts. The major secular holidays are Independence Day (August 15) and Republic Day (January 26).

The arts

The artistic heritage of India developed over more than four thousand years is copious, diverse and inspiring. In architecture, some of the famous monuments are cave temples such as Ajanta, the temple complexes such as Bhubaneshwar, and Mughal masterpieces such as the Taj Mahal.

Other traditional art forms in India include painting, embroidery, pottery, ornamental woodworking and metalworking, sculpture, lacquer ware, and jewelry. The folk traditions have a very long history, as witnessed by the ancient rock paintings found in scores of caves across India.

The performing arts also have a long tradition. There are numerous classical dance forms as well as regional folk dance traditions. The sitar has gained world renown as an expression of Indian music.

In literature, the great Hindu epics, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* are well known around the world. There is a tremendous amount of Indian literature in religion and philosophy. The roots of Indian literary tradition are found in the Vedas, a collection of religious hymns probably dating from the mid-2nd millennium BC but not written down until many centuries later. Many of the ancient texts still provide core elements of Hindu rituals. More recently, a number of Indian authors have gained worldwide fame. These include the Bengali novelist, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, the popular Hindi novelist Prem Chand, the Bengali poet and playwright Rabindranath Tagore. Other Indian authors—such as the modern novelists Mulk Raj Anand and R.K. Narayan and the essayist Nirad C. Chaudhuri—have achieved fame while writing in English.

Economy

Since independence, India has promoted a mixed economic system in which the government plays a major role. Large corporate undertakings dominate many spheres of modern economic activity, while tens of millions of generally small agricultural holdings and petty commercial, service, and craft enterprises account for the great bulk of employment. The range of technology runs the gamut from the most primitive to the most sophisticated. In the late twentieth century the government has put into place reforms to promote freer trade, investment and corporate activity. This has meant reducing tariff barriers, and reducing regulations. Only one-fifth of India's labor force works in the modern sector of the economy. The rest are agricultural or low skilled

urban service workers. The government is making slow progress in improving the literacy rate. In the early twenty-first century male literacy rate was about 75% while the female literacy rate was under 50%. Faster economic growth since the end of the twentieth century has also helped raise the standard of living of the 30% of the population which do not have enough to eat.

India's manufacturing industry is highly diversified. It is one of the ten largest industrial economies in the world. A substantial majority of all industrial workers are employed in the millions of small-scale household handicraft enterprises—such as spinning, weaving, pottery making, metalworking, and woodworking—that largely serve the local needs of villages where they are situated.

Many factories in heavy industries such as basic metals, machinery, fertilizers, and other heavy chemicals are publicly owned and operated by either the central or the state governments. There also are thousands of private producers, including a number of large and diversified industrial conglomerates. These private firms have now been given the freedom to operate as they would like, unfettered by rules to limit competition.

Among the most important industries are textile, construction, consumer goods, agricultural processing, heavy industry, including chemical and engineering enterprises, heavy transportation equipment, such as locomotives and trucks and energy production.

India is well served with railroads, highways, ports and airports. It has the sixth longest railways in the world, over 600,000 miles of hard surfaced roads and the same number of miles of dirt roads. The national highway connects all Indian cities. India's most important ports are Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras. All large and most medium-size cities now have regular air service.

Government, Education and Health

India's constitution is heavily influenced by the British model of parliamentary democracy. In addition, a number of principles were adopted from the U.S. Constitution, including the separation of powers among three branches of government.

The constitution details the areas in which the national and state governments may legislate. The national government has exclusive authority in foreign policy, defense, communications, and currency, taxation on corporations and

nonagricultural income, and railroads. The three branches of government include the executive, the legislative and the judicial. State governments have the sole power to legislate on such subjects as law and order, public health and sanitation, local government, betting and gambling, and taxation on agricultural income, entertainment, and alcoholic beverages. There are also areas where both may legislate. An important power of the national government is that of creating new states, combining states, changing state boundaries, and terminating a state's existence.

The national government

India's head of state is the president who is elected by the elected members of both houses of Parliament and the elected members of the legislative assemblies of all the states. The powers of the president are largely nominal and ceremonial, except in times of emergency. The president may impose direct presidential rule at the state level when it is thought that a particular state legislative assembly has become incapable of functioning effectively. The president may also dissolve the Lok Sabha and call for new parliamentary elections after a prime minister loses a vote of confidence.

Effective executive power rests with the prime minister, who is chosen by the majority party or coalition in the lower House of Parliament, the Lok Sabha and is formally appointed by the president. The prime minister chooses the Council of Ministers to help him run the country. The prime minister and the Council of Ministers remain in power throughout the term of the Lok Sabha, unless they lose a vote of confidence.

Of the two houses of Parliament, the more powerful is the Lok Sabha. The members are elected from each state based on population. Membership in the upper house, or Rajya Sabha include 12 nominated by the president to represent literature, science, art, and social service, and the balance are proportionally elected by the state Legislative Assemblies. The Rajya Sabha can not be dissolved, but one-third of its members retire at the end of every second year. Legislative bills may originate in either house and require passage by simple majorities in both houses in order to become law.

India has a tradition of an independent judiciary. The Supreme Court, whose presidentially appointed judges may serve until the age of 65, determines the constitutional validity of national government legislation and is the final

arbiter in the judicial process. Each state has a High Court and a number of lower courts.

Education

A stated goal of the Indian constitution is the provision of free and compulsory education for all children up to age 14. Even so, among persons aged 15 and over, illiterates still constitute about a quarter of the total population and roughly half of all females. Attempts to promote adult education have met with little success. More than 90 percent of all children of primary-school age are enrolled, though many, especially girls, may not attend regularly. Enrollment thereafter falls off precipitously, to about half of all children aged 11 to 14, despite the fact that education is free in most states for students of both sexes at least until about the 10th grade. Dropout rates are specially high for children from lower castes and tribal areas.

A large share of India's total educational budget goes toward higher education. There are a great many universities and equivalent institutions. India's pool of scientists and engineers is one of the largest in the world.

India's medical and public health services have improved dramatically since independence. As a result, average life expectancy at birth has risen by some 25 years since World War II, although it still lags far behind expectancies in the world's more affluent societies. Major problems include malnutrition, tuberculosis, diseases due to poor sanitation and tropical diseases. In 2007, 2 million children under the age of 5 died of preventable causes, such as disease, malnutrition and neglect.

Welfare services have proliferated in number and type since independence.. The resources for such services are strained by the growing population and a large proportion of the budgets go toward maintaining the service staff and their generally meager facilities. Pension plans for retirees exist only for government workers and a portion of the organized sector of the economy.

History

Humans have lived in India for thousands of years. Rock art dating back tens of thousands of years have been found. As long as ten thousand years ago, people in the Indus valley region were growing wheat and barley and rising

domesticated sheep and goats. There is evidence for the use of mud bricks in the construction of housing. Two thousand years later, there are remains of granaries and massive brick walls suggesting monumental architecture and city life. Between six thousand and five thousand years ago, the number of villages increases and a number of cities are established.

By 2500 BCE, there exists a mature civilization stretching from present day Afghanistan to northern India. The cities have granaries, large pools, sophisticated drainage all built of brick. The use of copper and bronze was well known. A large trading system using a common currency and weights is apparent. There is evidence of trade with Mesopotamia. Two major cities Harapan and Mohenjo-daro have fortified citadels and each measured a mile square. The writings are still undeciphered and by 1700 BCE the civilization seems to have gone into decline.

Sometime during the late 3rd and 2nd millennia BCE, an Indo-European speaking people arrived in India from Iran. It is possible that these Aryans actually conquered some of the Indus cities and established hegemony over the local population. It is known that by the end of the 2nd millennium, the Aryans must have found a need to express their separate Aryan ethnicity in the Rigveda hymns.

Toward the end of the 2nd millennium there appears to have been a further deterioration in the environment throughout the Indus system, the larger cities were abandoned and there is evidence of a shift toward pastoralism. The Aryans were a pastoral people who had brought horses and counted their wealth in cattle. Their many tribes often warred on each other and on their neighbors. Slowly they became more settled into farming and urban life again arose on the plains of the Ganges. Tribal chiefs who were originally war leaders, evolved into kings and tribal lands into small states. There was also a supporting structure of priests that provided magical incantations and memorized the great epic hymns of the Aryans.

After the 6th century BCE, there are historical texts, which chronicle the rise of Buddhism, Jainism and during the 4th century BCE, the campaigns of Alexander the Great, and the rise of the first Indian empire, the Mauryan. It was during the Mauryan Empire that the mathematical concept of zero was invented in India.

After the decline of the Mauryan Empire, smaller states arose in India. Except for the emergence of the Gupta Empire in the 4th century CE that controlled northern India, no other empires arose to control as much of India. The next centuries saw conflicts between the various Hindu states, invasions by Huns in the 6th century, Arabs in the 8th century and the Turks in the 12th century. The Muslim Turks came to stay and established the Delhi sultanate. . The Delhi sultanate only briefly controlled the entire peninsula. Crippled by an invasion in 1398 by the Mongol Tamurlane, the Delhi sultanate declined. The breakup of the Delhi sultanate was followed by an erosion of central power, an interlude of Afghan invasion, and finally in the 16th century by the invasion and conquest of most of northern and central India by the Central Asian Mughals, the descendents of Tamurlane.

The Mughal Empire at its peak ruled almost the entire subcontinent. From 1556 to 1707, during the heyday of its glory, the Mughal Empire was a fairly efficient and centralized organization. Much of the empire's expansion during this period was attributable to India's growing commercial and cultural contact with the outside world. The 16th and 17th centuries brought the establishment and expansion of European and non-European trading organizations in the subcontinent. Indian regions drew close to each other by means of a dense overland and coastal trading network.

By the early 18th century Mughal central power had been dissipated, real power were held by regional lords who accepted the nominal authority of the Mughal emperor. Into this situation the British, with their superior military technology and organization, were able to slowly control the entire continent by 1818.

The British brought with them all the science and technology of the Industrial Revolution- steamships, railroads, telegraphs, modern medicine. They established colleges that taught in English the ideas and methods of the West. But their introduction of land as property, taxes and the importation of textiles and manufactures caused great economic dislocation.

As commerce developed, more Indian sought an English education to further their careers. The beginning of Indian nationalism began with people who were in close contact with the modern world. They began to see themselves as Indians first. By the middle of the twentieth century, the British found their position untenable and acceded to the wishes of peoples of India for independence.

The early years of independence were turbulent as the two nations grew out of British India, one predominantly Muslim, Pakistan and one Hindu, India. There were border disputes with Pakistan, and China. There were four wars with Pakistan. There were insurgencies of tribal peoples of the Northeast, communal violence between Hindus and Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs, landowning castes against the lowest castes. But through it all India has preserved her democracy and independence.



India Fact Book



Introduction

Background: Nonviolent resistance to British colonialism under Mohandas GANDHI and Jawaharlal NEHRU led to independence in 1947. The subcontinent was divided into the secular state of India and the smaller Muslim state of Pakistan. A third war between the two countries in 1971 resulted in East Pakistan becoming the separate nation of Bangladesh. Fundamental concerns in India include the ongoing dispute with Pakistan over Kashmir, massive overpopulation, environmental degradation, extensive poverty, and ethnic strife, all this despite impressive gains in economic investment and output.

Geography

Location: Southern Asia, bordering the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal, between Burma and Pakistan

Geographic coordinates: 20 00 N, 77 00 E

Map references: Asia

Area:

total: 3,287,590 sq km

land: 2,973,190 sq km

water: 314,400 sq km

Area - comparative: slightly more than one-third the size of the US

Land boundaries:

total: 14,103 km

border countries: Bangladesh 4,053 km, Bhutan 605 km, Burma 1,463 km, China 3,380 km, Nepal 1,690 km, Pakistan 2,912 km

Coastline: 7,000 km

Maritime claims:

contiguous zone: 24 nm

continental shelf: 200 nm or to the edge of the continental margin

exclusive economic zone: 200 nm

territorial sea: 12 nm

Climate: varies from tropical monsoon in south to temperate in north

Terrain: upland plain (Deccan Plateau) in south, flat to rolling plain along the Ganges, deserts in west, Himalayas in north

Elevation extremes:

lowest point: Indian Ocean 0 m

highest point: Kanchenjunga 8,598 m

Natural resources: coal (fourth-largest reserves in the world), iron ore, manganese, mica, bauxite, titanium ore, chromite, natural gas, diamonds, petroleum, limestone, arable land

Land use:

arable land: 48%

permanent crops: 2.8%

permanent pastures: 4%

forests and woodland: 23%

other: 16% (2005 est.)

Irrigated land: 558,000 sq km (2003 est.)

Natural hazards: droughts, flash floods, severe thunderstorms common; earthquakes

Environment - current issues: deforestation; soil erosion; overgrazing; desertification; air pollution from industrial effluents and vehicle emissions;

water pollution from raw sewage and runoff of agricultural pesticides; tap water is not potable throughout the country; huge and growing population is overstraining natural resources

Environment - international agreements:

party to: Antarctic-Environmental Protocol, Antarctic Treaty, Biodiversity, Climate Change, Desertification, Endangered Species, Environmental Modification, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Nuclear Test Ban, Ozone Layer Protection, Ship Pollution, Tropical Timber 83, Tropical Timber 94, Wetlands, Whaling

signed, but not ratified: none of the selected agreements

People

Population: 1,156,003,817 (July 2009 est.)

Age structure:

0-14 years: 31.5%

15-64 years: 63.2%

65 years and over: 5.3%

Population growth rate: 1.40% (2009 est.)

Birth rate: 21.72 births/1,000 population (2009 est.)

Death rate: 7.6 deaths/1,000 population (2009 est.)

Sex ratio:

total population: 1.12 male(s)/female (2009 est.)

Infant mortality rate: 50.78 deaths/1,000 live births (2009 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 66 years

male: 65 years

female: 67 years (2009 est.)

Total fertility rate: 2.68 children born/woman (2009 est.)

Nationality:

noun: Indian(s) *adjective:* Indian

Ethnic groups: Indo-Aryan 72%, Dravidian 25%, Mongoloid and other 3%

Religions: Hindu 80.5%, Muslim 13%, Christian 2.4%, Sikh 2%, Buddhist 0.7%, Jains 0.5%, other 0.4%

Languages: English enjoys associate status but is the most important language for national, political, and commercial communication, Hindi the national language and primary tongue of 30% of the people, Bengali (official),

Telugu (official), Marathi (official), Tamil (official), Urdu (official), Gujarati (official), Malayalam (official), Kannada (official), Oriya (official), Punjabi (official), Assamese (official), Kashmiri (official), Sindhi (official), Sanskrit (official), Hindustani (a popular variant of Hindi/Urdu spoken widely throughout northern India)

note: 24 languages each spoken by a million or more persons; numerous other languages and dialects, for the most part mutually unintelligible

Literacy:

definition: age 15 and over can read and write

total population: 61%

male: 75%

female: 50% (2008 est.)

Government

Country name:

conventional long form: Republic of India

Government type: federal republic

Capital: New Delhi

Administrative divisions: 25 states and 7 union territories*; Andaman and Nicobar Islands*, Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chandigarh*, Dadra and Nagar Haveli*, Daman and Diu*, Delhi*, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Karnataka, Kerala, Lakshadweep*, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Orissa, Pondicherry*, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal

Independence: 15 August 1947 (from UK)

National holiday: Anniversary of the Proclamation of the Republic, 26 January (1950)

Constitution: 26 January 1950

Legal system: based on English common law; limited judicial review of legislative acts; accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction, with reservations

Suffrage: 18 years of age; universal

Executive branch:

chief of state: President

head of government: Prime Minister Manmohan SINGH (since 22 May 2004)

Legislative branch: bicameral Parliament or Sansad consists of the Council of States or Rajya Sabha (a body consisting of not more than 250 members, up to 12 of which are appointed by the president, the remainder are chosen by the

elected members of the state and territorial assemblies; members serve six-year terms) and the People's Assembly or Lok Sabha (545 seats; 543 elected by popular vote, 2 appointed by the president; members serve five-year terms)

)

Judicial branch: Supreme Court, judges are appointed by the president and remain in office until they reach the age of 65

Political parties: Akali Dal (representing Sikh religious community in Punjab), All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam or AIADMK. All India Forward Bloc or AIFB; Asom Gana Parishad ; Bahujan Samaj Party or BSP; Bharatiya Janata Party or BJP; Bihar Peoples Party; Biju Janata Dal or BJD; Communist Party of India or CPI; Communist Party of India/Marxist or CPI/M; Communist Party of India/Marxist-Leninist or CPI/ML; Congress (I) Party; Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam or DMK (a regional party in Tamil Nadu); Indian National League; Janata Dal (Ajit); Janata Dal United Party or JDU; Kerala Congress; Muslim League; National Conference or NC (a regional party in Jammu and Kashmir; Revolutionary Socialist Party; Samajwadi Party or SP; Samata Party or SAP (formerly Janata Dal members); Shiv Sena or SHS; Tamil Maanila Congress; Telugu Desam (a regional party in Andhra Pradesh); Trinamool Congress

Political pressure groups and leaders: numerous religious or militant/chauvinistic organizations, including Vishwa Hindu Parishad, and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh; various separatist groups seeking greater communal and/or regional autonomy

International organization participation: AfDB, AsDB, BIS, C, CCC, CP, ESCAP, FAO, G- 6, G-15, G-19, G-24, G-77, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICC, ICFTU, ICRM, IDA, IEA (observer), IFAD, IFC, IFRC, IHO, ILO, IMF, IMO, Inmarsat, Intelsat, Interpol, IOC, IOM (observer), ISO, ITU, MINURSO, MIPONUH, MONUC, NAM, OAS (observer), OPCW, PCA, SAARC, UN, UNAMSIL, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNIFIL, UNIKOM, UNMIBH, UNMIK, UNU, UPU, WFTU, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WToO, WTrO

Diplomatic representation in the US:

chief of mission: Ambassador

chancery: 2107 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20008; note -

Embassy located at 2536 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20008

telephone: [1] (202) 939-7000

FAX: [1] (202) 483-3972

consulate(s) general: Chicago, Houston, New York, and San Francisco

Diplomatic representation from the US:

chief of mission: Ambassador

embassy: Shanti Path, Chanakyapuri 110021, New Delhi

mailing address: use embassy street address

telephone: [91] (11) 688-9033, 611-3033

FAX: [91] (11) 419-0017

consulate(s) general: Calcutta, Chennai (Madras), Mumbai (Bombay)

Flag description: three equal horizontal bands of orange (top), white, and green with a blue chakra (24-spoked wheel) centered in the white band; similar to the flag of Niger, which has a small orange disk centered in the white band

Economy

Economy - overview: India's diverse economy encompasses traditional village farming, modern agriculture, handicrafts, a wide range of modern industries, and a multitude of services. Services are the major source of economic growth, accounting for more than half of India's output with less than one third of its labor force. About three-fifths of the work force is in agriculture, leading the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government to articulate an economic reform program that includes developing basic infrastructure to improve the lives of the rural poor and boost economic performance. The government has reduced controls on foreign trade and investment. Higher limits on foreign direct investment were permitted in a few key sectors, such as telecommunications. However, tariff spikes in sensitive categories, including agriculture, and incremental progress on economic reforms still hinder foreign access to India's vast and growing market. Privatization of government-owned industries remains stalled and continues to generate political debate; populist pressure from within the UPA government and from its Left Front allies continues to restrain needed initiatives. The economy has posted an average growth rate of more than 7% since 1997, reducing poverty by about 10 percentage points. India significantly expanded production of manufactures. India is capitalizing on its large numbers of well-

educated people skilled in the English language to become a major exporter of software services and software workers. Economic expansion has helped New Delhi continue to make progress in reducing its federal fiscal deficit. However, strong growth combined with easy consumer credit and a real estate boom fueled inflation concerns since 2006, leading to a series of central bank interest rate hikes that have slowed credit growth and eased inflation concerns. The worldwide financial crisis only slowed the economy a little to 6.8% in 2009. The huge and growing population is the fundamental social, economic, and environmental problem.

GDP: purchasing power parity - \$3.548 trillion (2009 est.)

GDP - real growth rate: 6.9% (2009 est.)

GDP - per capita: purchasing power parity - \$3100 (2009 est.)

GDP - composition by sector:

agriculture: 17%

industry: 20%

services: 63% (2009)

Population below poverty line: 25% (2007 est.)

Household income or consumption by percentage share:

lowest 10%: 3.6%

highest 10%: 31% (2007)

Inflation rate (consumer prices): 6.4% (2007 est.)

Labor force - by occupation: agriculture 60%, services 28%, industry 12% (2007 est.)

Unemployment rate: 25%

Industries: textiles, chemicals, food processing, steel, transportation equipment, cement, mining, petroleum, machinery

Industrial production growth rate: 5.2% (2009 est.)

Electricity - production: 762 billion kWh (2007 est.)

Agriculture - products: rice, wheat, oilseed, cotton, jute, tea, sugarcane, potatoes; cattle, water buffalo, sheep, goats, poultry; fish

Exports: \$150 billion (f.o.b., 2009 est.)

Exports - commodities: textile goods, gems and jewelry, engineering goods, chemicals, leather manufactures

Exports - partners: US 12%, UAE 9%, China 9%, UK (2009)

Imports: \$232.2 billion (f.o.b., 2009 est.)

Imports - commodities: crude oil and petroleum products, machinery, gems, fertilizer, chemicals

Imports - partners: China 11%, Saudi Arabia 7%, US 6.6%, Germany, Singapore, Australia (2006)

Currency: 1 Indian rupee (Re) = 100 paise

Exchange rates: Indian rupees (Rs) per US\$1 – 48.76 (2009) 41.487 (2007), 44.101 (2005), 43.552 (2000), 32.427 (1995)

Fiscal year: 1 April - 31 March

Communications

Telephones - main lines in use: 37 million (2009)

Telephones - mobile cellular: 427 million (2009)

Transportation

Railways:

total: 63200 km

Highways:

total: 3,380,644 km

paved: 1,617,077 km

Waterways: 14580 km; 3,631 km navigable by large vessels

Ports and harbors: Kolkata (Calcutta), Chennai (Madras), Cochin, Jawaharlal Nehru, Kandla, Mumbai (Bombay), Vishakhapatnam

Airports: 349 (2009.)

Airports - with paved runways: 250

Transnational Issues

Disputes - international: boundary with China in dispute; status of Kashmir with Pakistan; water-sharing problems with Pakistan over the Indus River (Wular Barrage); a portion of the boundary with Bangladesh is indefinite; dispute with Bangladesh over New Moore/South Talpatty Island

Websites

travel.yahoo.com/t/Asia/India/

search.gallery.yahoo.com/search/corbis?p=India

in.yahoo.com/

Recipes

Sweet Potato Dal

1 1/2 tablespoons canola oil	1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
1 medium onion, finely chopped	1 cup brown or red lentils, rinsed
2 cloves garlic, minced	4 cups water
1/2 teaspoon ground turmeric	2 cups peeled, diced sweet potatoes or butternut squash
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin	1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon ground coriander or garam masala	

Servings: 4 - 6

Heat the oil in a saucepan and add the onion and garlic. Sauté for 5 minutes. (For a little more spice, add a minced chile pepper when sautéing the onion and garlic.) Stir in the turmeric, cumin, coriander and pepper. Cook for 1 minute more. Stir in the lentils and water and cook over medium-low heat for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in the potatoes and cook for about 30 minutes more, stirring occasionally, until the lentils are tender. Stir in the salt. It is important to cook the dal until it reaches a smooth, melt-in-your-mouth consistency. Transfer to a large serving bowl. Serve with an Indian flat bread (nan) or flour tortillas.

Chapatis

Flat bread (makes 20)

Ingredients

4 c. whole wheat flour
2 T. margarine or butter, melted
pinch of salt
1 cup (or more if needed) lukewarm water

Combine flour, butter and salt in a large bowl. While stirring, gradually add water until mixture begins to form a ball in the bowl. Put dough on a floured surface. Knead until dough is soft and elastic (about 10 minutes). Cover with damp cloth and let rest 1 hour. (The mixing and kneading can be done in a bread machine). Keeping surface and rolling pin covered with flour, divide dough into 20 pieces and roll each piece into a 4-inch circle.

Heat a heavy, ungreased pan or griddle. Cook each chapati over medium heat until it starts to bubble on the bottom. Turn and bake other side. The chapati should look dry, but not browned. Remove and stack in a kitchen towel to keep warm.

Mango Shake

(About 8 half- cup servings)

1 cup vanilla yogurt
1 med. banana
1 med mango or 1 cup canned, pureed mango
½ t. cumin (optional)

Combine yogurt, banana, mango, and cumin in a blender or food processor. Puree until smooth. Serve as is, or serve over ice cubes.

Activity

Indian Elephant

Things You Need:

Brown paper lunch bag
Old newspaper
Transparent Tape
Assorted markers
Wiggly eyes (optional)
Brown and white construction paper
Glue stick
Child safety scissors

Instructions

1. Loosely stuff the bag with crumpled newspaper. Fold over the top and tape
2. Use a marker to draw elephant's face onto the bag.
3. Use markers to outline the ears and trunk on brown construction paper. Cut out the elephant's trunk and ears from the brown paper. Cut out the tusks from the white paper.
4. Glue the ears, trunk and tusks to the elephant.