

An Introduction to India



National Flag



Called 'Tiranga' (tri colored.)

Saffron represents spirituality,
White symbolizes peace,
Green represents agriculture, and
the blue emblem symbolizes the 24
hours of a day. Like a spinning wheel,
always in motion, it spins thread
from cotton.

National Emblem



The original Lion Capital of Ashoka from Sarnath;
The Buddha's sermons 'roar' like a lion in all directions



सत्यमेव जयते

(Truth Alone Triumphs)

National Days

National holidays are observed in all states and union territories.

India has three national days:

26 January - Republic Day

15 August - Independence Day

2 October - Mahatma Gandhi's Birthday



Soldiers of the Madras Regiment during the annual Republic Day Parade in 2004

National Holidays

India celebrates various holidays and festivals; states and regions have local festivals depending on prevalent religious and linguistic demographics. Popular religious festivals/holidays include:

- 1) Hindu festivals of Diwali, Ganesh Chaturthi, Holi, Dussehra
- 2) Islamic festivals of Eid ul-Fitr, Eid al-Adha, Mawlid an-Nabī, Muharram
- 3) Christian festivals/observance of Christmas and Good Friday
- 4) Sikh celebration of Guru Nanak Jayanti and the Baisakhi festival
- 5) Jain festivals like Mahavir Jayanti and Paryushan
- 6) Buddhist celebration of Buddha Purnima
- 7) Parsee new year Nowruz

National Anthem

Jana-Gana-Mana (Thou Art the Ruler of All Minds)

The Indian National anthem was originally composed in Bengali by Rabindranath Tagore, and was adopted in its Hindi version by the Constituent Assembly as the National Anthem of India on 24 January 1950.

“Jana Gana Mana Adhinayaka Jaya He
Bharat Bhagya Vidhata
Punjab Sindh Gujarat Maratha
Dravida Utkala Banga
Vindhya Himachal Yamuna Ganga
Ucchala Jaladhi Taranga
Tubh Shubha Name Jage
Tubh Shubha Ashisha Mange
Gahe Tubh Jaya Gata
Jan Gan Mangaldayak Jay He
Bharat Bhagya Vidhata
Jaye He ! Jaye He ! Jaye He !
Jaye,Jaye,Jaye,Jaye He ”

Translation of The national anthem in English:
Thou are the ruler of the minds of all people,
dispenser of India's destiny.
The name rouses the hearts of Punjab, Sind,
Gujarat and Maratha.
Of the Dravid and Orissa and Bengal.
It Echoes in the hills of Vindhyas and Himalayas,
mingles in the music of Yamuna and Ganga and
is chanted by the waves of the Indian Sea.
They pray for your blessing and sing thy praise.
The salvation of all people is thy hand,
thou dispenser of India's destiny.
Victory, Victory, Victory to thee.

The Nobel Prize in Literature 1913
Rabindranath Tagore



National Bird - Peacock



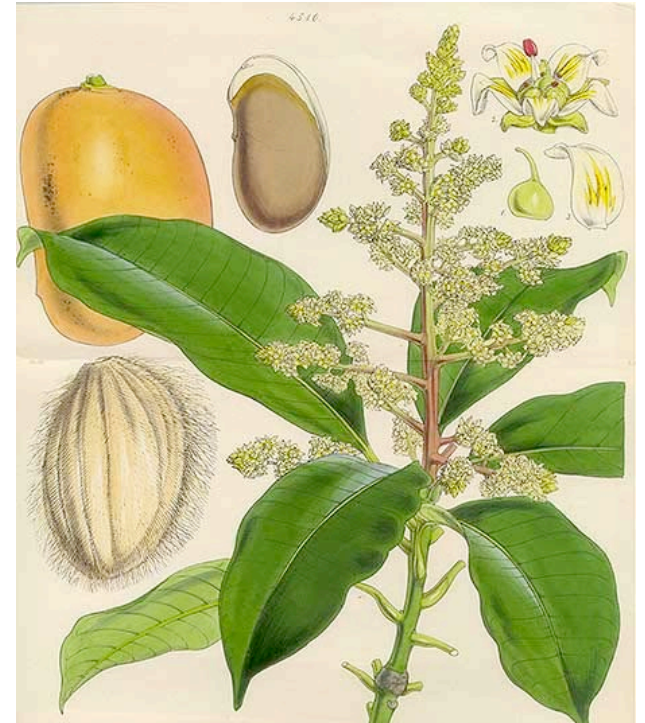
National Animal - Tiger



National Flower - Lotus



National Fruit - Mango



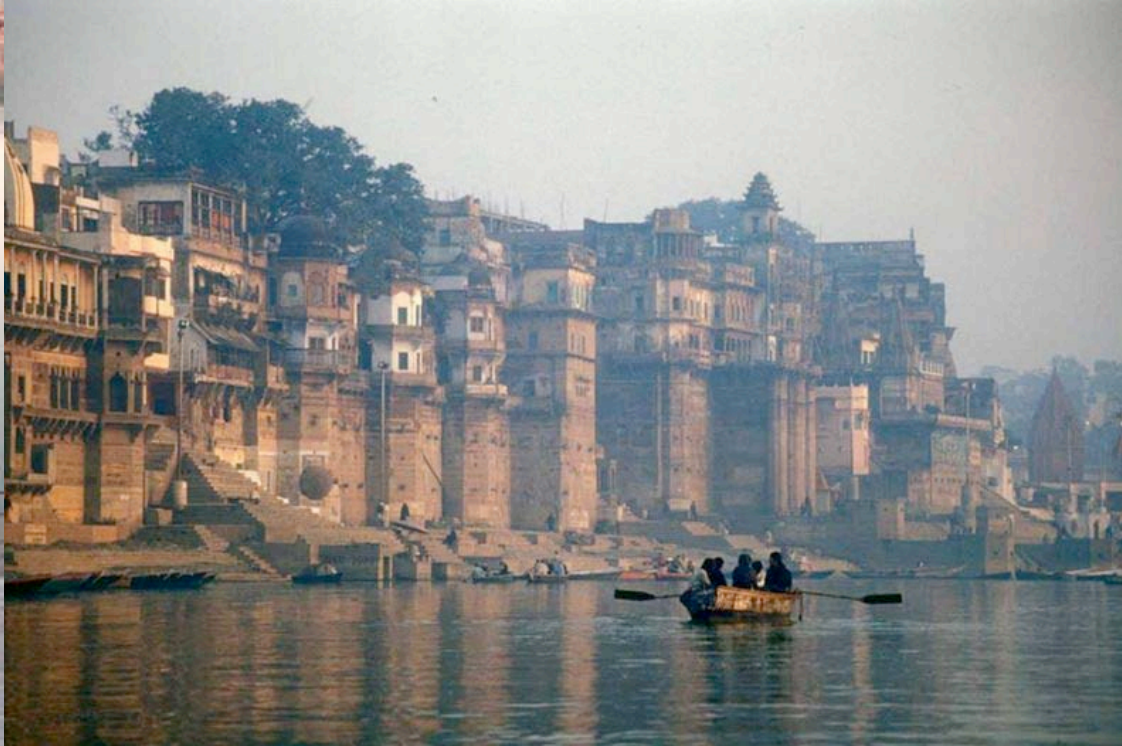
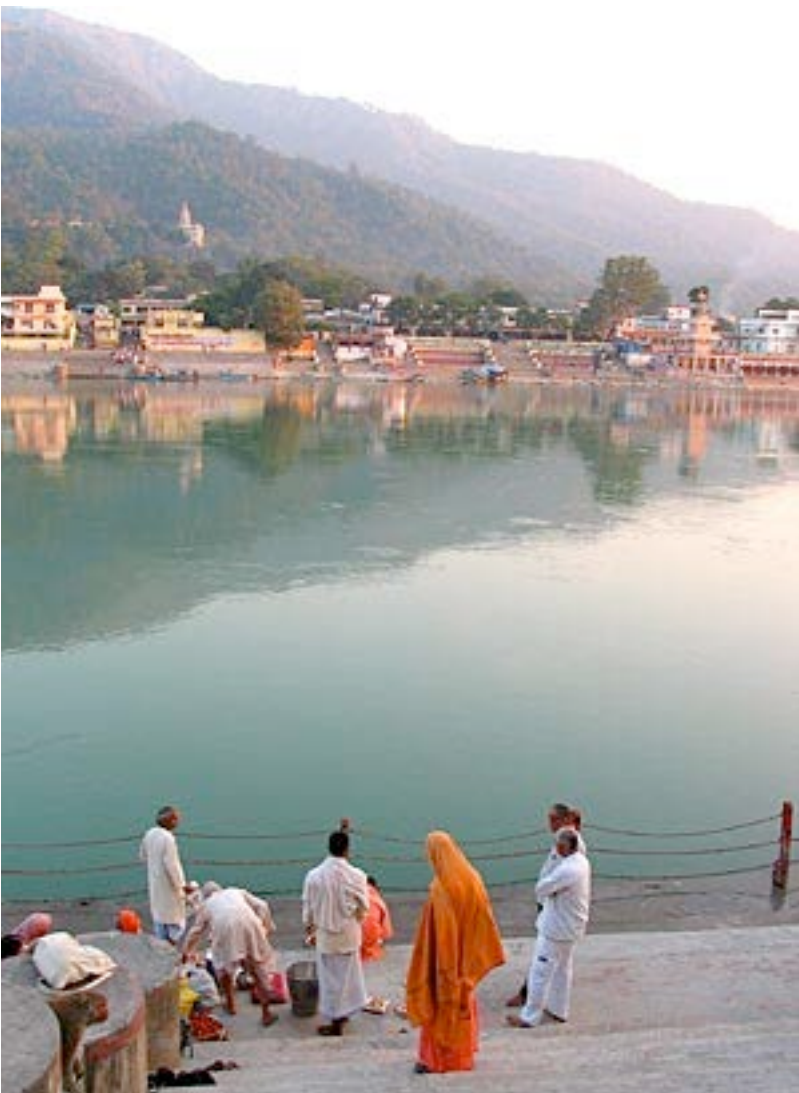
National Tree - Banyan



Indian plants from the collection of
Sir J. G. Cunningham. Recd from Mr. J. C. Cunningham
17 July, 1919.

Ficus bengalensis Linn.

Holiest River - Ganges



Sacredness of the River Ganges



Chromolithograph, "Indian woman floating lamps on the Ganges," by William Simpson, 1867.

Geography

Area: 3.29 million sq. km. (1.27 million sq. mi.); about one-third the size of the U.S.

Cities: Capital--New Delhi (pop. 12.8 million, 2001 census). Other major cities--Mumbai, formerly Bombay (16.4 million); Kolkata, formerly Calcutta (13.2 million); Chennai, formerly Madras (6.4 million); Bangalore (5.7 million); Hyderabad (5.5 million); Ahmedabad (5 million); Pune (4 million).

Terrain: Varies from Himalayas to flat river valleys and deserts in the west.

Climate: Alpine to temperate to subtropical monsoon.

People

Nationality: Noun and adjective--Indian(s).

Population (2012 est.): 1.21 billion; urban 29%.

Annual population growth rate (2012 est.): 1.312%.

Density: 324/sq. km.

Ethnic groups: Indo-Aryan 72%, Dravidian 25%, others 3%. While the national census does not recognize racial or ethnic groups, it is estimated that there are more than 2,000 ethnic groups in India.

Religions (2001 census): Hindu 80.5%; Muslim 13.4%; Christian 2.3%; Sikh 1.9%; other groups including Buddhist, Jain, Parsi within 1.8%; unspecified 0.1%.

Languages: Hindi, English, and 16 other official languages.

Education: Years compulsory--K-10. Literacy--61%.

Health: Infant mortality rate--46.07/1,000. Life expectancy--67.14 years (2012 est.).

Work force (est.): 467 million. Agriculture--52%; industry and commerce--14%; services and government--34%.

States and Union Territories

States

- | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| * Andhra Pradesh | * Arunachal Pradesh | * Assam | * Bihar |
| * Chhattisgarh | * Goa | * Gujarat | * Haryana |
| * Himachal Pradesh | * Jammu and Kashmir | * Jharkhand | * Karnataka |
| * Kerala | * Madhya Pradesh | * Maharashtra | * Manipur |
| * Meghalaya | * Mizoram | * Nagaland | * Orissa |
| * Punjab | * Rajasthan | * Sikkim | * Tamil Nadu |
| * Tripura | * Uttarakhand | * Uttar Pradesh | * West Bengal |

Union Territories

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| * Andaman and Nicobar Islands | * Chandigarh | * The Government of NCT of Delhi |
| * Dadra and Nagar Haveli | * Daman and Diu | * Lakshadweep |
| * Pondicherry | | |

Government

Type: Federal republic.

Independence: August 15, 1947.

Constitution: January 26, 1950.

Branches: Executive--president (chief of state), prime minister (head of government), Council of Ministers (cabinet). Legislative--bicameral parliament (Rajya Sabha or Council of States, and Lok Sabha or House of the People). Judicial--Supreme Court.

Political parties: Indian National Congress (INC), Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Communist Party of India-Marxist, and numerous regional and small national parties.

Political subdivisions: 28 states,* 7 union territories (including National Capital Territory of Delhi).

Suffrage: Universal over 18.

Economy

GDP (FY 2011 est.): \$1.843 trillion.

Real growth rate (2011 est.): 7.8%.

Per capita GDP (PPP, FY 2011 est.): \$3,700.

Natural resources: Coal, iron ore, manganese, mica, bauxite, chromite, thorium, limestone, barite, titanium ore, diamonds, crude oil.

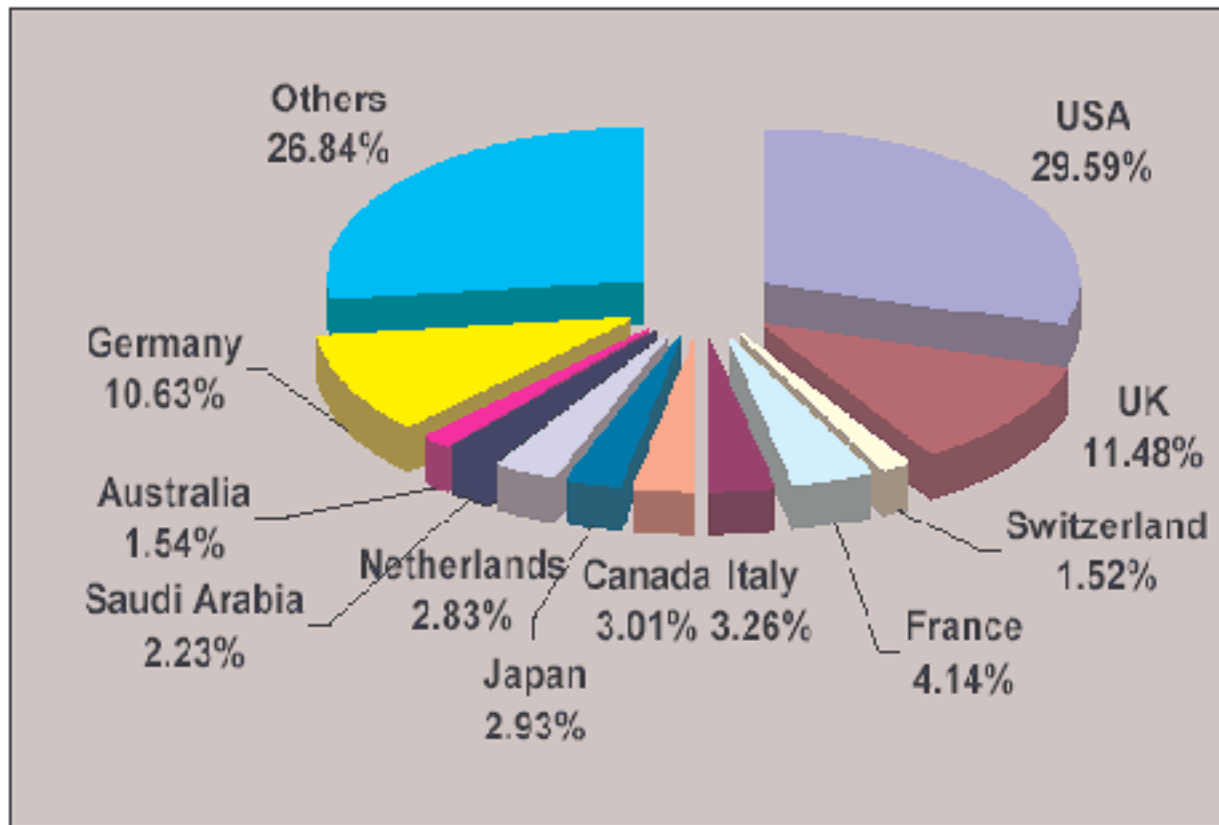
Agriculture: 18.1% of GDP. Products--wheat, rice, coarse grains, oilseeds, sugar, cotton, jute, tea.

Industry: 26.3% of GDP. Products--textiles, jute, processed food, steel, machinery, transport equipment, cement, aluminum, fertilizers, mining, petroleum, chemicals, and computer software.

Services and transportation: 55.6% of GDP.

Trade: Exports (FY 2011 est.)--\$298.2 billion; engineering goods, petroleum products, precious stones, cotton apparel and fabrics, gems and jewelry, handicrafts, tea. Services exports (\$101.2 billion in 2008-2009) represent more than one-third of India's total exports. Software exports (FY 2009)--\$35.76 billion. Imports (FY 2011 est.)--\$451 billion; petroleum, machinery and transport equipment, electronic goods, edible oils, fertilizers, chemicals, gold, textiles, iron and steel. Major trade partners--U.S., China, U.A.E., EU, Russia, Japan.

India Exports



India's Contribution to the World

Albert Einstein said: We owe a lot to the Indians, who taught us how to count, without which no worthwhile scientific discovery could have been made.

Mark Twain said: India is the cradle of the human race, the birthplace of human speech, the mother of history, the grandmother of legend, and the great grand mother of tradition. Our most valuable and most constructive materials in the history of man are treasured up in India only.

French scholar Romaine Rolland said: If there is one place on the face of earth where all the dreams of living men have found a home from the very earliest days when man began the dream of existence, it is India.

Hu Shih, former Ambassador of China to USA said: India conquered and dominated China culturally for 20 centuries without ever having to send a single soldier across her border.

Grant Duff, British Historian of India, "Many of the advances in the sciences that we consider today to have been made in Europe were in fact made in India centuries ago."

India's Contribution to the World

- "India was the motherland of our race
and Sanskrit the mother of Europe's languages.
India was the mother of our philosophy,
of much of our mathematics, of the ideals embodied in Christianity... of self-government and
democracy.
In many ways, Mother India is the mother of us all."
- Will Durant, American Historian 1885-1981
 - Kung Fu is a derivation of Yoga, taught to the Chinese by an Indian Buddhist Monk known as Bodhidharma.
 - India invented the Number System. Zero was invented by Aryabhatta.
 - The World's first university was established in Takshila in 700BC. more than 10,500 students from all over the world studied more than 60 subjects. The University of Nalanda built in the 4th century BC was one of the greatest achievements of ancient India in the field of education.

India's Contribution to the World

- Ayurveda is the earliest school of medicine known to humans. Charaka, the father of medicine, consolidated Ayurveda 2500 years ago.
- Chess (Shataranja or AshtaPada) was invented in India.
- Religions: Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Sikhism
- Sanskrit is the mother of all the European languages. Sanskrit is the most suitable language for computer software reported in Forbes magazine, July 1987.
- There are 3.22 Million Indians in America. 38% of Doctors in America are Indians. 12% of Scientists in America are Indians. 36% of NASA employees are Indians. 34% of MICROSOFT employees are Indians 28% of IBM employees are Indians 17% of INTEL employees are Indians 13% of XEROX employees are Indians.

A Brief History of India's Settlements

Continuous civilization:

- From 2500 BCE the Indus River valley “Harappan” civilization developed an urban culture based on commerce and sustained by agricultural trade until its decline around 1500 B.C.E.
- During the second millennium B.C.E., pastoral, Aryan-speaking tribes migrated from the northwest into the subcontinent, settled in the middle Ganges River valley, and adapted to antecedent cultures.
- Alexander the Great expanded across Central Asia during the 4th century B.C.E., exposing India to Grecian influences.
- During the 2nd century C.E., the Kushan Empire, originating in ancient Bactria, conquered north India and the trans-Indus region ushering in a period of trade and prosperity. In the 4th and 5th centuries C.E., northern India was unified under the Gupta Dynasty, the Golden Age of India.

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A Brief History of India's Settlements

- Islam spread across the subcontinent over a period of 700 years. In the 10th and 11th centuries, Turks and Afghans invaded India and established the Delhi Sultanate. In the early 16th century, Babur, a Turkish-Mongol adventurer and distant relative of Timurlane and Genghis Khan, established the Mughal Dynasty, which lasted for 200 years.

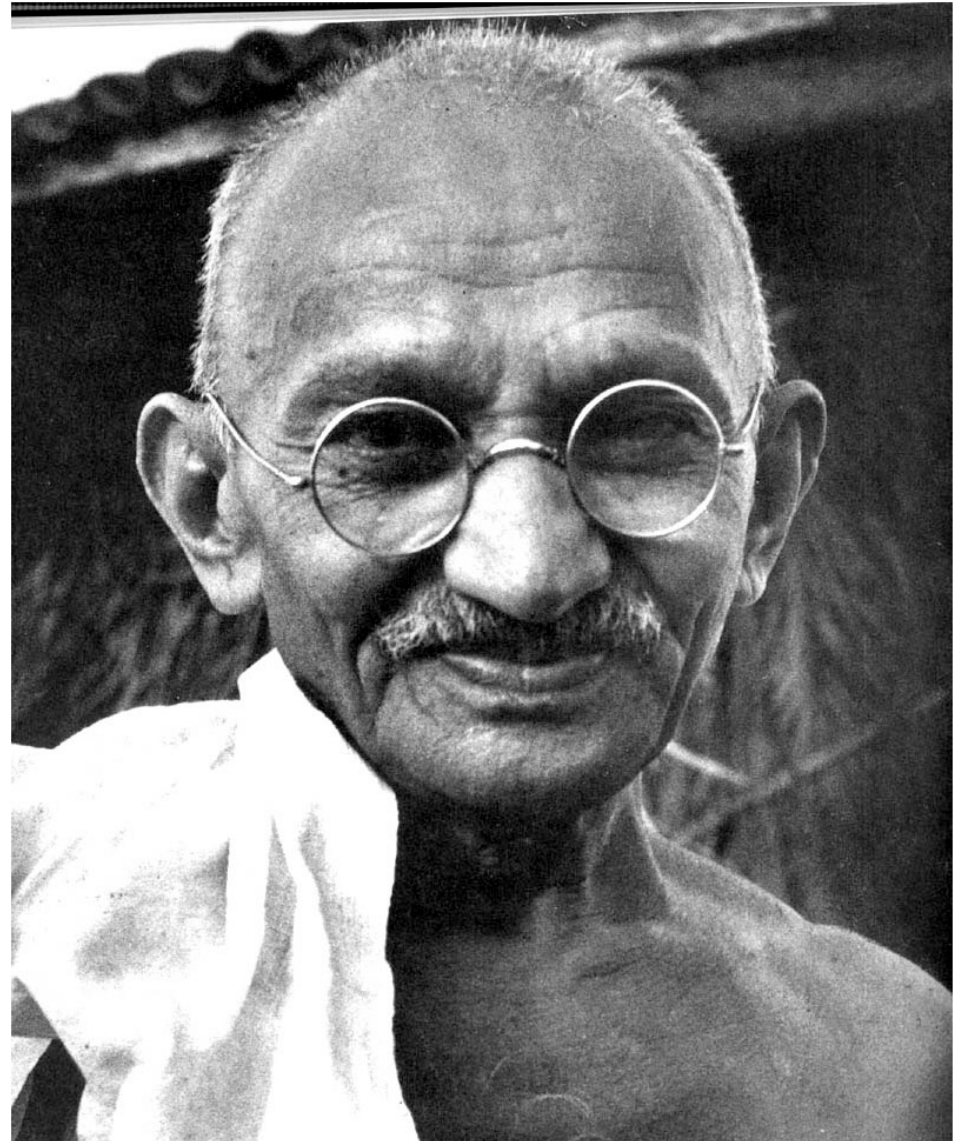
- Colonial India:

Dutch (Netherlands) India	1605–1825
Danish (Denmark) India	1620–1869
French India	1759–1954
Portuguese India	1510–1961 (Casa da India: 1434–1833; Portuguese East India Company: 1628–1633)
British India	1613–1947 (East India Company: 1612–1757; Company rule in India: 1757–1857; British Raj: 1858–1947)

Father of the Nation

United India to employ non-violence
in getting independence from Britain

Mahatma Gandhi's birthday, October 2,
is marked as Dry Day in India (a day of no
alcohol.)



10 Must-See Places in India



#1: Delhi

The capital of India: Red Fort, India Gate and the Bahai Lotus Temple



#2: Agra

A day trip from Delhi, the city of Agra is home to India's most iconic building, the Taj Mahal.

10 Must-See Places in India

#3: Jaisalmer

In western Rajasthan and the Thar Desert, Jaisalmer is set in the desert. Amazing sunsets, handicrafts, and camel treks!



#4: Rishikesh

Home to the sacred Ganga, hundreds of temples and ashrams, sadhus (holy men) and the Gangotri glacier.

10 Must-See Places in India

#5: Dharamsala

Nestled in the Himalayas, and home to the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Government in exile. Head up hill to McLeod Ganj to the Tibetan temples.



#6: Goa

Coastline and beaches; go as far south as possible, avoiding Palolem – unless you want to party - and look for Half Moon Beach as you head into Karnataka.

10 Must-See Places in India

#7: Hampi

Visit the remains of the 15th century village of Vijayanagar.



#8: Kochin

Take a ferry taxi, watch a traditional kathakali dancing, see Chinese fishing nets and British cricket greens.

10 Must-See Places in India

#9: Nilgiri Hills

The summer retreat for the British Raj, with KodaiKanal and Ooty at its heart, an original narrow gauge railway, elephant reserves and vast plantations of coffee and tea.



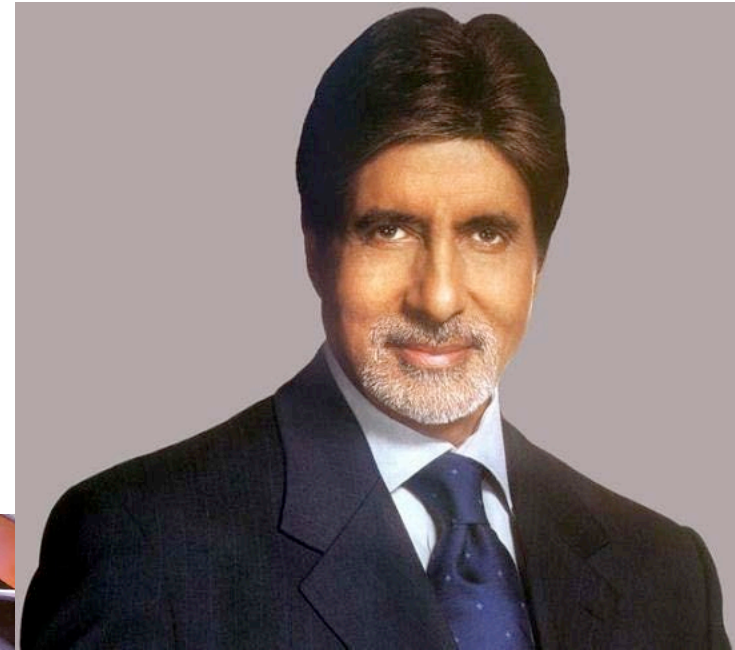
#10: Khajuraho

Khajuraho is the second most visited place by foreign tourists in India after the Taj Mahal. There are many Hindu and Jain temples in Khajuraho, famous for their erotic sculpture. The Khajuraho group of monuments is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, located in Chhatarpur District of Madhya Pradesh State.

Famous faces



Mother Teresa,
humanitarian



Amitabh Bachchan, actor



Sachin Tendulkar, Cricket player

Sources

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