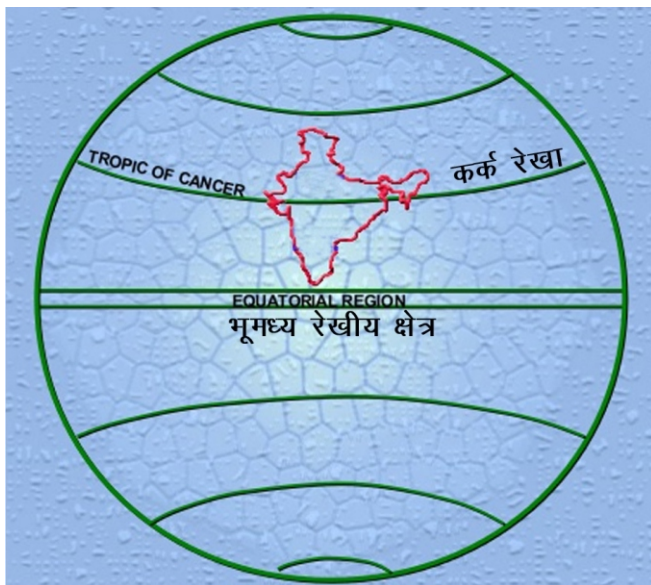


Lesson - 1

Location, Extent & Situation of Bharat

Our country was named Bharat on the basis of the great man **Bharat** or an important branch of Aryans, which was also known as Bharat. Formerly, Bharat was also known as Aryavarta, the land of Aryans. Iranians called the inhabitants of Sindhu coastal region as **Hindus** and the land was named as **Hindustan**. Romans named Sindhu River as **Indus** and Greeks called it as **Indos** and this land was known as **India**. Today our country is famous as Bharat in the world.



Civilization and culture in our country had developed long ago, while at that time most of the countries of the world were either uncivilised or semicivilised. The credit of spreading the light of knowledge and culture across the world goes to our country. Bharat is a great, prosperous and a highly

cultured country. Our old culture bestows on our country the boon of unity. Geographical personality had special contribution towards this glorious history of Bharat. Foreign attacks, plunders and occupations during middle ages had impeded the progress and blurred the prestige of our country. Later on, fortunately the awareness among the people of Bharat and unparalleled path of peace and non-violence under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, our country got freedom. Our country is regularly and speedily progressing after achieving independence. But at present we are facing the

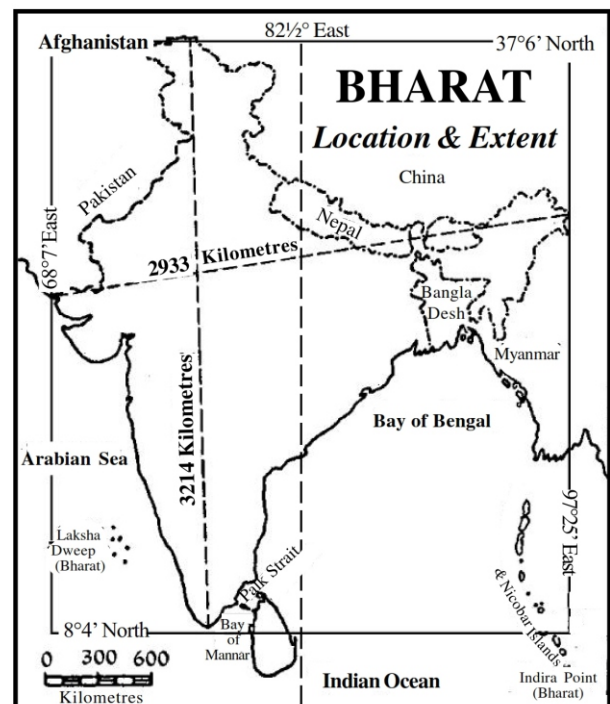


Fig. 1.1 : Bharat : Location & Extent

transitional problems, related to economic exploitation by foreign powers during long pre-independence period, pressure of increasing population and the admixture of various religious philosophies into our indigenous culture and national mainstream. The past of Bharat was golden, present is in transition but we can regain our lost pride and become prosperous by developing love for the nation, religious meakness, wisdom, honesty and hardwork, and can make homogeneous well cultured society. Again, the intensive efforts for all round development, the geographical personality of Bharat offers the prospect of bright future.

Location & Extent

Bharat extends to the north of equator from 8°4' to 37°6' latitudes and from 68°7' to 97°25' east longitudes. Tropic of Cancer or 23½°N latitude passes through the middle of our country. This line divides Bharat into two halves – (1) **Northern Bharat**, extending in the **temperate zone** and (2) **Southern Bharat**, extending in the **torrid zone**. The northern most point of Bharat is part of the snow capped Himalayan Mountain System. The area known as the **Roof of the World**, lies in the heart of Asian Continent and spreads upto the south of Pameer. Kanyakumari is its southern most tip. Both these tips are located at the distance of 30° latitudes. This distance is one-third of the total spread between equator and the north pole. Bharat is located in the northern hemisphere. Equator lies at the distance of only 876 kms. south of Kanyakumari. At this point Sri Lanka is separated from Bharat by Bay of Mannar and Palk Strait. Peninsular Bharat tapers off towards the south of the tropic of Cancer up to Cape Comorin. Peninsular Bharat divides Indian Ocean into two parts. Its western part is known as Arabian Sea and its eastern part is known as Bay of Bengal (Fig. 1.1).

The far western point lies in the Rann of Kutch, which is a marshy area. The mountainous region, covered with virgin forests, lie in the eastern most part of our country. At this point our country's boundary touches Myanmar (Burma) and China. The longitudinal distance between these two extreme points of Bharat is also approximately 30°. This longitudinal spread is almost 1/12th of the total

longitudinal spread of the globe. Because of such a large longitudinal extension, sun is seen two hours late in Kathiawar as compared to Arunachal Pradesh. To avoid discrepancies of time, local time of 82½° east longitude has been determined as **Indian Standard Time**. This line passes through Allahabad (Prayagraj).

The maximum length of Bharat from north to south is 3214 Kms. and the maximum width from east to west is 2933 kms. Total area of Bharat is approximately 32.88 lakh square kms. In terms of area, Bharat occupies seventh place in the world after Russia, Canada, China, U.S.A., Brazil and Australia. Bharat is nine times larger than Japan and 14 times larger than England. Its total area is approximately 1/46th of the world. Its land boundary is 15,200 kms. long and the coastline is 6100 kms. long.

Coast Line

The length of the coastline of Bharat is insufficient as compared to its total area. Our coastline extends only 6100 kms. in length. This coastline is almost straight and unindented. It is for this reason that there are very few natural and good ports. There are very few islands near the coast. Important islands on the eastern coast are Haire islands, Pamban islands and Harikota islands and Lakshyadweep and Trombay are important islands on the western coast. Andaman and Nikobar islands have a long spread in the Bay of Bengal. Mumbai is situated on Salset island near Elephanta island. Parikud islands are found between Lake Chilka and Bay of Bengal.

The coastline of Bharat can be divided into two parts-

(1) **Eastern Coast** - It spreads from Ganga Delta to Cape Comorin. Its northern section is known as **Northern Sarkar Coast** and its southern section is known as **Coromandel Coast**. Northern Sarkar Coast extends between the deltas of Ganga and Krishna rivers. It is a shallow coast. Kolkata is situated here on the shallow coast. Therefore, the port lacks natural facilities for the movement of big ships. To overcome this problem, Haldiya port has been developed as an assisting port. Haldiya port enjoys the facility for the movement of ships with greater drought and is endowed with mechanised

docking system. The location of Vishakhapatnam and Paradip ports is good for commercial activities because of calm oceanic conditions. These ports also enjoy the facility for anchoring of big ships. Kakinada, Waltair, Vimalipattam, Gopalpur and Puri are other ports on this coast.

Coromandel coast spreads from the Delta of Krishna river in the north upto Cape Comorin in the south. It is a straight, shallow and sandy coast. Chennai is the largest artificial port on this coast. Kanyakumari, Rameshwaram, Dhanushkoti, Karikal, Pondichery, Cuddalore, Puttuchchory, Nagapattam and Tuticorin are other important ports on this coast. Setubandh and Rameshwaram are important attractions for pilgrims on this coast.

(2) Western Coast - This coast extends from Gulf of Cambay in the north to Cape Comorin in the south. It is sub-divided into three sections -

(a) Malabar Coast - It extends from Goa to Cape Comorin. There are natural ports on this coast because it has indented coastline. But because of the fast blowing winds in this section, large volume of sand accumulates on the coast. Lagoons are characteristic features of this coast. Cochin is situated on one such lagoon, and hence it is a good

natural port. It also possesses a well developed ship-building yard. Manglore, Aleppi, Kozikod, Thiruvananthapuram etc. are other ports on this coast.

(b) Konkan Coast - This coast extends from Goa to Surat. It is a straight coast backed by hard rocks. This coast remains safe from the monsoonal storms because it is protected by the dense forest found on the island and in the coastal area. Surat, Mumbai, Ratnagiri, Goa etc. are important ports of this coast.

(c) Saurashtra Coast - It spreads from Surat to Kutch. It is an indented coastline with various gulfs and bays like Kori, Kriv, Khambhat (Cambay) and Kutch. There are many islands near the coast. Porbandar, Okha Port, Kandla, Bhavnagar etc. are important ports on this coast. Kandla has been developed to provide commercial and trading facilities to the states of Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan.

Our Boundaries

Our southern boundary is fully natural, formed by Arabian Sea, Bay of Bengal and Indian Ocean. No other country situated along Indian Ocean has such a large coast line as Bharat has. The total water front of Bharat is almost equal to the radius of the earth. Besides, there are many islands of Bharat which add to the total water front of our country. These are mainly Andaman Nikobar islands, Lakshyadweep, Pamban Islands etc. Yet the total water front of Bharat is not too large in the light of the area of our country. The main reason is that its coastline is straight and unindented. Because of the increasing oceanic trade, commerce and naval activities, the importance of our water front has increased considerably in the light of the global and Indian Ocean strategy (Fig. 1.2).

Boundaries of five countries meet at the northern head of our country. These are Pakistan, Afghanistan, China and Bharat. The boundary of Tajikistan seperated from Soviet Sangh is also near to this area. Therefore, this point is of tremendous strategic importance to our country. Traditionally, Himalayas are considered as our northern guard. Hindukush, Mushtagh, Kunlun and Agril mountains



Fig. 1.2 : India and adjacent countries

meet at this strategic point. Approximately 2400 kms. long stretch of Himalayas, south-east and eastwards from this point, possess many ice-capped ranges and peaks which are our northern guard.

Mountainous states like Nepal and Bhutan lie in this region. We have deep historical and cultural relations with these countries. Mackmahon boundary spreads between Bharat and China east-



Fig. 1.3 : India : Political

wards from Bhutan and passes through the ice-capped peaks. Boundaries of three countries meet in the far eastern region. These are China, Myanmar and Bharat. Various branches of Himalayas like Mishmi, Patkoi, Naga and Mizo hills turn towards the south and form the eastern boundary between Bharat and Myanmar. These hills spread as Arakan Yoma in Myanmar further southwards. The continuation of the higher parts of these hills in Bay of Bengal appears as a long chain of Andaman-Nicobar islands. Traditionally these high mountain ranges forming our northern and eastern boundary have been considered as highly inaccessible. A few passes and river valleys were the only easy passages through them. But Chinese attack on Bharat has proved that the mountainous boundaries are no more inaccessible and safe now due to developed technology of advanced aircrafts. Therefore, the strategic importance of our northern and eastern boundaries has greatly increased in the modern period.

Our eastern boundary also meets with Bangladesh. Our five states are located along the boundary of Bangladesh. These states are - Mizoram, Tripura, Meghalaya, Assam and West Bengal.

Pakistan, which was separated from our land in the year 1947, lies on our western boundary. Mohanjodaro in Sindhu Valley bears the testimony of our cultural relations with that land. Our boundary with Pakistan is artificial and land boundary. Jammu-Kashmir, Punjab, Rajasthan and Gujarat states lie on the boundary with Pakistan. Pakistan has illegally occupied some portions of our Jammu and Kashmir state. Therefore, it is the major reason of tension between Bharat and Pakistan, whereas love for peace is the root of Bhartiya culture. Many articles recovered through excavations in some cities of central Asia, various Baudha manuscripts lying in Chinese monasteries, various temples in south-east Asian countries etc. provide proofs of our love for peace and coexistence. There are no evidences in history to the effect that Bhartiya armies ever attacked on other countries. But at the same time we are very conscious of and loyal in protecting the integrity of

our boundaries. National unity is our biggest strength.

Situation of Bharat - A Factor

Sub-continental situation – Of the three peninsulas of South Asia, Bhartiya sub-continent is the largest. There is no other area in the world so clearly defined and demarcated as Bharat. Therefore, it has been rightly designated as a **sub-continent**. China, Nepal and Bhutan lie towards its north, Sri Lanka and Indian Ocean towards south, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Bay of Bengal towards the east, and Pakistan and Arabian Sea towards the west.

Perhaps no other region and country in the world is so well defined and demarcated by nature than Bharat. That is why it has been termed as a sub-continent. The sub-continent is well demarcated by high Himalayan girdle in the north, vast desert in the west, densely forested mountain ranges and deep valleys in the east and huge expanse of water bodies elsewhere. As a matter of fact there are many natural and cultural diversities found in the Bhartiya Sub-continent. Highest mountain ranges, vast level plains, newly folded mountains, old plateaus, hot deserts, evergreen forests, most humid as well as dry areas of the world, backward agricultural practice like Jhooming, most developed mechanised agriculture, handicrafts as well as modern industrial production, horse-mule carts, bullock carts as well as the most modern means of transportation, habitations in the forested areas as well as metropolitan cultures, coexistence of indigenous and various foreign religions, diversities of languages, dresses, customs, traditions etc. are just few examples. But in the presence of these vast diversities, **Bhartiya Sub-continent is a unique geographical unit bound in a magnificent natural and cultural unity**. Therefore, the most unique feature of Bharat is its **Unity in Diversity**.

Situation with reference to neighbours – Indian ocean has played a useful role in increasing the importance of Bharat with reference to its neighbouring countries. Indian ocean also plays a unifying role in the oriental world, encompassing the countries of east Africa, west and south-east

Asia. For the last more than four thousand years, Bharat had been maintaining commercial and cultural relations as far as Babylon, Egypt etc. in the west and the countries of Indo-China and south-east Asia in the east. Before the development of oceanic trade routes, Bharat also extended its territorial relations through land routes. Although inaccessible and high Himalayan mountainous girdle makes our northern boundary, its passes and valleys facilitated the development of land routes through them. Many invaders also came through these routes while Buddhist monks went to Tibet, China, Korea and Japan through these routes and took message of peace with them. It became possible for Bharat due to its situation between West, Mid-east and South-East Asia.

Situation with reference to the World -

From global point of view, the situation of Bharat at the head of Indian ocean is extremely important in the eastern hemisphere. Because of this situation Bharat has become the meeting point of international trade routes. Suez route, Atlantic route, Cape of Good Hope route and Pacific Ocean trade routes meet in Bharat. Import and export trade has developed fast in Bharat because of its being the meeting point of these international trade routes. Not only the oceanic routes from western countries to the far East but air routes also pass through Bharat. Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata are airports of international significance. Trade, commerce and communication facilities have developed rapidly due to the meeting of international trade routes here.

Advantages due to situation

Bharat is proud of its glorious past, dignified present and prospective future. The basis of Bharat's glorious past is due to its unique geographical location. Bharat is situated in the centre of the eastern hemisphere, a location which has a specific importance -

1. Situated at the head of the Indian ocean, Bharat has become a meeting point of important trade routes. International trade routes like Suez route, Cape of Good Hope route, Atlantic route and Pacific Oceanic trade route converge here. This has contributed to the enhancement of import and export trade of our country.

2. All air routes originating from the western

countries and destined for the Far East pass through Bharat. Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata etc. are airports of international significance. Therefore, communication facilities have been developed here.

3. Because of Bharat's location in both - the torrid and temperate zones, all agricultural crops are produced in our country.

4. Because of India's location, all our sea ports remain open throughout the year.

5. Bharat's neighbours like Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Pakistan and African countries are less developed. Therefore, these countries provide good market for Bharatiya products.

6. Bharat is girdled by Himalaya mountains in the north. It protects our country from Siberian cold winds on one side and check the south-western monsoon and help providing rain in Bharat only.

7. Because of Bharat's specific location, its regional and international importance has considerably increased. Having jealousy with this situation and with the intention of increasing their undue influence in the region, some foreign powers continuously try to destabilize our country. We have to be cautious against such forces.

8. The importance of the situation of Bharat is also evident from the fact that its neighbouring ocean has been named as Indian Ocean on the basis of the name of our country.

9. The unique situation of Bharat in Indian Ocean makes it a unique Bhartiya **Sub-continent**.

Important Points

1. The past of Bharat had been glorious.
2. Future of Bharat is also bright depending upon the unique formula of **Unity in Diversity**.
3. Location - Bharat is located between 8°4' to 37°6' north latitudes and 68°7' to 97°25' east longitudes.
4. Tropic of Cancer passes almost through the middle of our country.
5. The local time of 82½° east longitude has been determined as the standard time of our country.
6. The maximum length of Bharat from north to south is 3214 kms. and maximum width from east to west is 2933 kms. and the total area is 32.88 lakh square kms.

7. Bharat is the seventh largest country in the world in terms of area after Russia, Canada, China, U.S.A. Brazil and Australia.
8. Land boundary of our country is 15,200 kms. and water front is 6100 kms. long.
9. Eastern coast - Northern Sarkar Coast and Coromandel coast.
10. Western coast - Malabar coast, Konkan coast and Saurashtra coast.
11. Situation of Bharat is very important as a resource factor.
12. Bharat enjoys various advantages due to its location and situation.

Exercise

Multiple Choice Questions

1. The coast between Kanyakumari and Goa is known as –
 (A) Konkan (B) Malabar
 (C) Saurashtra (D) Coromandel
2. The state of Bharat, whose boundary does not meet with any other country, is -
 (A) Punjab (B) Meghalaya
 (C) Tripura (D) Haryana
3. Out of the following groups of countries, select smaller group than Bharat in terms of area -
 (A) Pakistan, Australia, Myanmar & Afghanistan
 (B) China, Australia, Cuba & Brazil
 (C) France, Canada, Afghanistan & Iraq
 (D) Myanmar, Pakistan, Afghanistan & Iraq

Very Short Answer Type

4. Local time of which longitude is determined as standard time of Bharat?
5. Which is the main latitude that divides Bharat into two halves?
6. Why is our water front shorter considering the total area of our country?

Short Answer Type

7. Boundaries of which three countries meet in north-eastern Bharat?
8. Why is our northern head strategically very

important?

9. What are the characteristic features of Bhartiya water front?
10. What are the characteristic features of the situation of the Bharat with reference to its neighbouring countries?

Essay Type

11. What is meant by sub-continent? What is the relevance of designating Bharat as a sub-continent?
12. Describe the importance of location and situation of Bharat.

Skill

13. Draw a map of Bharat showing its situation with reference to its neighbouring countries.
14. Draw an outline map of Bharat and show in it latitudinal and longitudinal extensions and also name its coasts.

Answer Key

1. (B), 2. (D), 3. (D).