

Unit 3 : INDIA – Its Land and People

We are acquainted with the events and the circumstances which affected many countries of the world in the beginning of the last century. The Independence Movement and the Independence of our country are among the most important events of the last century incorporating the world as a whole. We have carved out a new way by successfully overcoming the challenges created before the newly independent nations. We are determined to reformation of a new nation with a responsible administration, civil rights, independent judiciary etc.

It is almost the completion of second decade of the twenty first century. With India's progress march of six decades, it will be easier for us to view it for the planning of development.

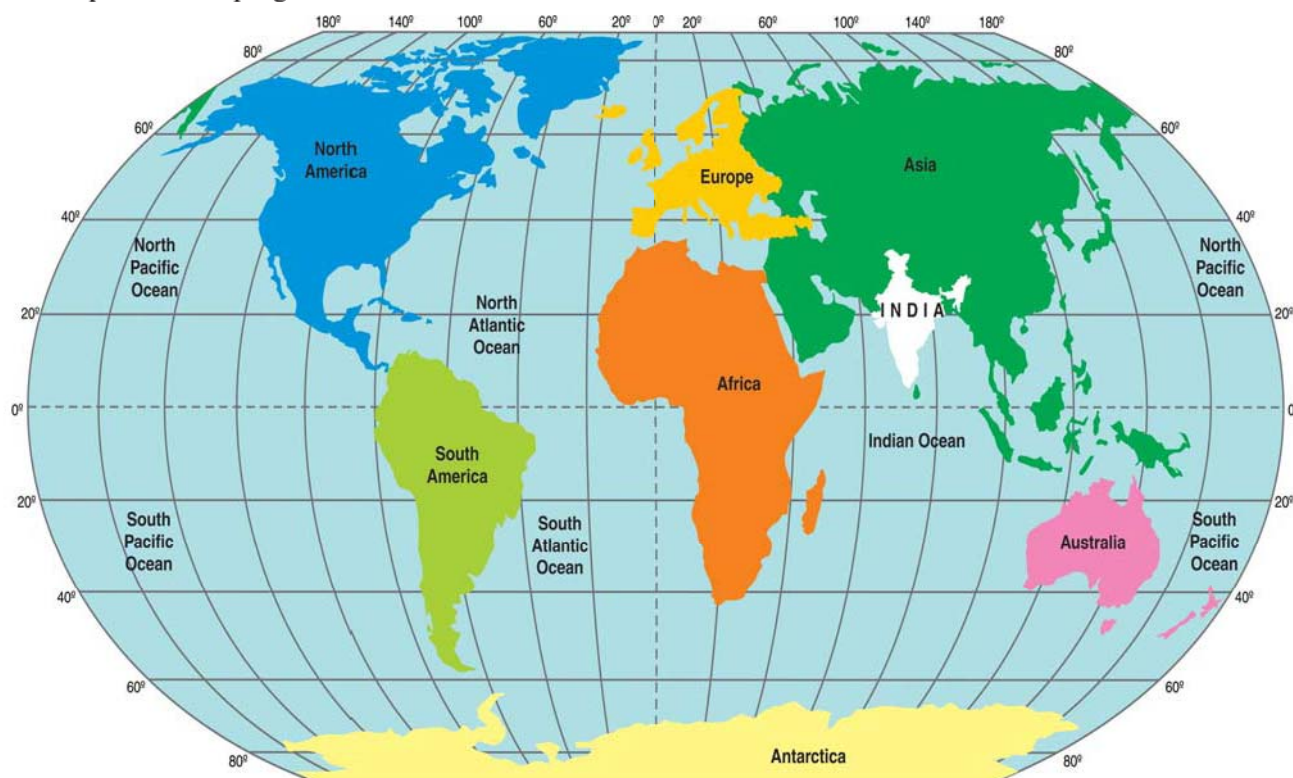
Natural resources and their location are an important base for the endless possibilities of the economic development and progress of any country. In this context, the study of physiography, drainage system, bio-diversity of our country will be of much interest. A diversity in the lifestyle, food habits, dresses or rituals etc. create an exact picture of a large nation. With the knowledge of disaster management, we can reduce the intensity of the impact of the disaster.



13 India : Location, Geological Structure And Physiography

India holds a unique position among the countries of the world. India is a country having largest democracy and its culture is one of the oldest in the world. It has the largest democracy in the world. The coordinating attitude of our culture has not discarded any religion, race or people, but has accepted them whole heartedly. Thus, impartiality towards all religions, people and races is the peculiar characteristic of India. That is why India has become a “cultural confluence.”

Even though many natural and man-induced disasters have taken place, India has consistently continued her progress. The geographical conditions have contributed immensely towards the development and progress of Indian culture.

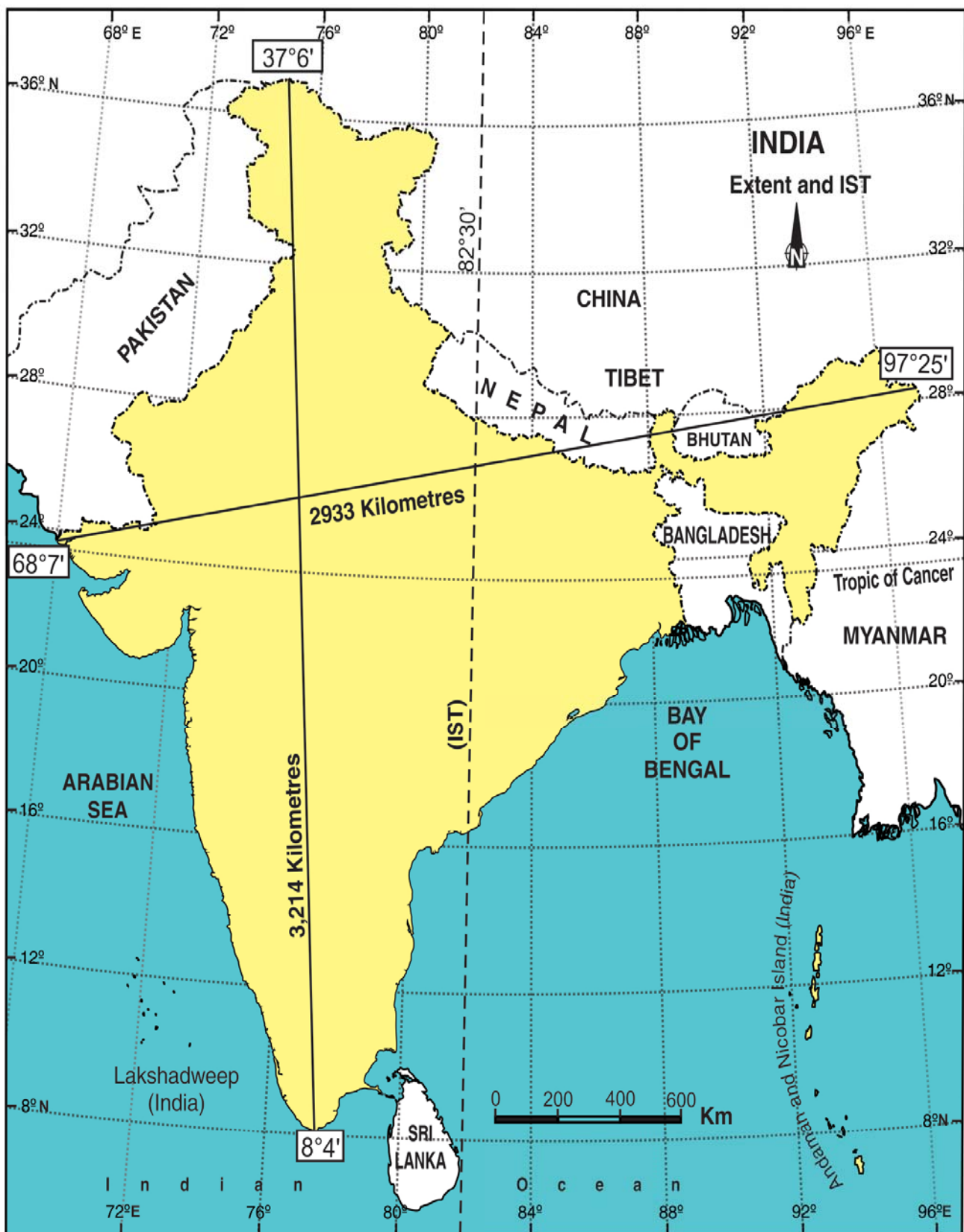


13.1 India in the World

India : Location, size and area :

Geographically, India lies in the northern hemisphere. It extends up to the southern part of Asian continent. The span of the mainland of India extends from $8^{\circ} 4'$ to $37^{\circ} 6'$ North latitudes and from $68^{\circ} 7'$ to $97^{\circ} 25'$ East longitudes. The Tropic of Cancer, which is located at $23^{\circ} 5'$ north latitude and divides the country into two parts, passes almost through the middle of India. Its northern part is spread more in the east-west direction. The great plains and the Himalayan mountain system are located in this part. The area to the south of Tropic of Cancer has a triangular shape and tapers towards the south. This is basically a part of the peninsular plateau. It includes the eastern coastal plains and the narrow western coastal plains.

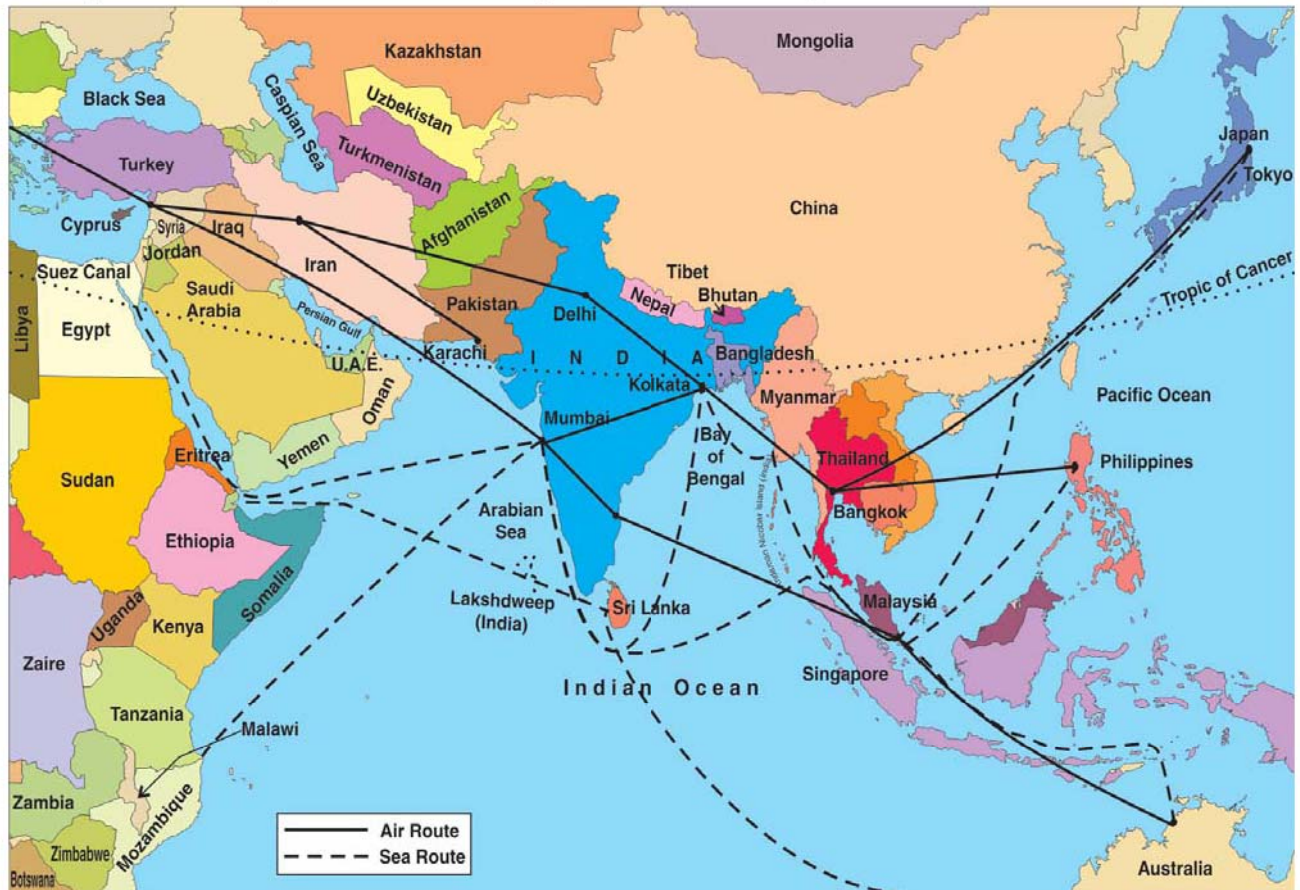
The latitudinal as well as longitudinal extents of India are almost equal, which is about 30° . The length between Ladakh to Kanyakumari is 3214 km and the width from Gujarat to Arunachal Pradesh is 2933 kilometres. There is a difference of two hours in the local times between the two extreme places starting from Gujarat in the west up to Arunachal Pradesh in the east due to the longitudinal difference. When it is sunrise in Arunachal Pradesh, it is still night time in Gujarat. The standard meridian of India is $82^{\circ} 30'$ east longitude. It passes through five states. Its local time is accepted as the standard time of India.



13.2 India : Extent and Standard Meridian

Total area of India is 32.8 lakh sq. km and India ranks seventh in the world in terms of area. Other six countries larger than India are (1) Russia (2) Canada (3) U.S. A. (4) China (5) Brazil, and (6) Australia.

The land area of India lies in South Asia. In the north, lofty mountain ranges are spread over hundreds of kilometres from west to east direction. That is why, the commuting with Tibet and China is possible only through passes located at high altitude. Bay of Bengal lies to the east, Arabian Sea to the west and Indian Ocean to the south of peninsular India. The sea is utilised as a waterway. Even though the land routes are obstructed by surrounding mountains, India has accepted all cultural elements arriving from outside, and these have merged into Indian society.



13.3 Strategic location of India

India holds a strategic location in eastern hemisphere and it has a strategic importance also. India is in the eastern hemisphere. Oceans have contributed immensely in developing mutual relations in ancient times. India had trade relations with East Africa, West Asia, South Asia and South-East Asia since ancient times. India had developed cultural and trade relations with them due to her location. No country in the Indian Ocean has a long maritime boundary as India has. Due to this strategic location, the ocean is named as **Indian Ocean**.

Location of India across the international waterways is also important. With the opening of Suez Canal in 1869, the distance between India and Europe has reduced by about 7000 kilometres. Sea routes connecting East and South-East Asia and Australia to Africa and Europe pass through the Indian Ocean. The Circum African waterway and Suez Canal waterway pass by India. Canada and U.S.A. can be reached through the same waterway via Strait of Malacca and the Pacific Ocean.

India has contacts with many countries since many centuries. Goods and ideas are being exchanged since ancient times. Similarly, concepts of Upanishads, stories of Ramayana and Panchtantra, therapeutic methods, Indian numerical figures and decimal system etc. could reach many parts of the world. India has an important location in South Asia. There are 28 States, 1 National Capital and 7 Union Territories in India.

● Like to know...

Telangana was created as a State from its mother state Andhra Pradesh on 2nd June, 2014.

Neighbouring countries of India

India has a common land boundary with Pakistan and Afghanistan in north-west, with China, Nepal, Bhutan in north-east and with Myanmar and Bangladesh in the east.



13.4 India and Adjacent countries

In the south, Sri Lanka and Maldives are our maritime neighbours. India and Sri Lanka are separated by Palk Strait and Gulf of Mannar. Lakshadweep Islands are located in the Arabian Sea, while Andaman – Nicobar Islands are located in the Bay of Bengal.

● **Like to know...**

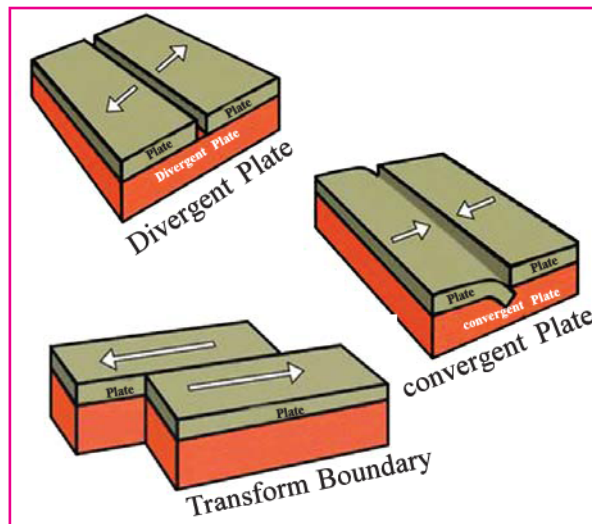
Indira Point, which was the southern most point of India, was submerged in 2004 due to tsunami. With this, few islands of Andaman – Nicobar were also submerged into the ocean.

Geological structure :

The current physiography of India is the result of tectonic and crustal movements of the earth. Both constructive as well as destructive effects of these movements can be seen.

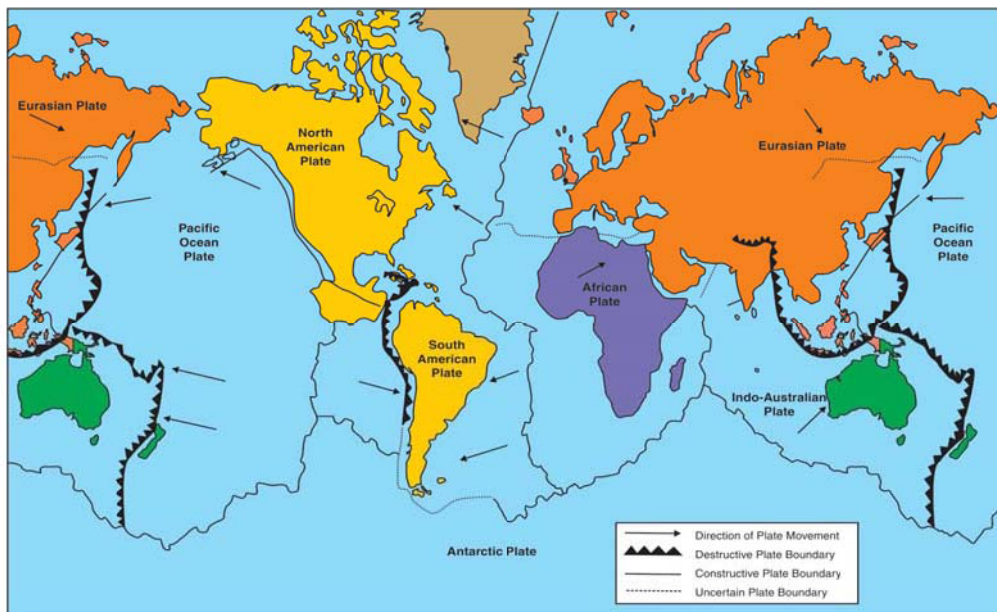
The knowledge about the interior of the earth is very interesting. The crust of the earth floats over the semi-liquid rocks of the asthenosphere. Heat is generated due to the radioactive process in the interior of the earth. It tends to reach the surface of the earth by generating convectional currents. These upward currents break the upper layers into large pieces which are known as “**lithospheric plates**” or “**tectonic plates**”. There are seven major tectonic plates. These are : (1) Pacific plate (2) North American plate (3) South American plate (4) Eurasian plate (5) African plate (6) Indo-Australian plate, and (7) Antarctic plate. At some places, these plates are drifting away from each other, which are known as divergent plates.

At some places these plates come closer to each other, which are known as convergent plates. Due to divergence and convergence processes, fold and fault take place. Due to the movements of these



13.5 Tectonic Plates

plates over millions of years, shapes of landforms as well as their locations have changed. The process of divergence is responsible for all the tectonic and volcanic activities on the earth. Wherever these drifting plates have collided with one another, it has resulted into mountain building process. Wherever these plates drift away, fissures are created within landforms and oceans. The continents situated along these fissures are drifting apart continuously. Such plates are called divergent plates.



13.6 World : Major plates

India was a part of a very vast and an ancient landmass known as the Gondwanaland. This large landmass consisted of the present South America, Africa, Australia and Antarctica. Over a period, the ‘Indo-Australian plate’ started drifting gradually towards north. It is so believed that this plate collided with the large Eurasian plate before about five crore years. Due to the collision between Indo-Australian plate and the Eurasian plate, the Himalayan mountain system emerged out of Tethys Sea.

A large valley was formed to the south of the Himalayan system, wherein alluvial sediments were deposited by the rivers flowing from north and south of it. Thus the Ganga plain between Himalayas and the southern peninsula was formed. A huge volcanic eruption took place in the north-west of the peninsular plateau as a result of which the western portion of the plateau was disintegrated and was submerged. This led to the formation of Arabian Sea. Due to this submergence the Western Ghats became more distinct.

Thus, a large diversity is seen in the Indian sub-continent. Lofty mountain ranges are seen in the north. Many plateaus, summits and passes are seen within them. Ganga, Yamuna and Brahmaputra rivers flow in the northern plains. Their alluvial deposits have formed this plain. Two edges in the form of Ghats on two sides of the plateau and coastal plains are situated on eastern and western margins. Thus, India holds a diversified physiography.

Self Study

1. Write short answers for the following questions :

- (1) India has a strategic location. Explain.
- (2) Why is the physiography of India diversified ? Explain.
- (3) Why has the international trade of India become easy ?
- (4) India has become a place of ‘cultural confluence’ – Explain.
- (5) State how many tectonic plates are there ? Which are they ?

2. Explain the concept of the following terms :

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| (1) Standard Time | (4) Divergent |
| (2) Tropic of Cancer | (5) Hemisphere |
| (3) Peninsula | (6) Circulation |

3. Answer the following questions :

- (1) Give information about the location and area of India.
- (2) How was India benefitted due to the opening of Suez Canal ? Explain.
- (3) Give a detailed account of the structure of the earth.

4. Select the correct option of the following questions and write answers :

- (1) Through which state of India, the standard meridian does not pass ?
(A) Uttar Pradesh (B) Chhattisgarh (C) Madhya Pradesh (D) Tamil Nadu
- (2) North of India : China, To the north-west of India :
(A) Bangladesh (B) Pakistan (C) Sri Lanka (D) Nepal
- (3) Arrange the following states in order from north to south :
Uttarakhand, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Delhi
(A) Uttarakhand, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala
(B) Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi, Uttarakhand
(C) Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Delhi, Kerala
(D) Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand
- (4) Which of the following countries is larger in area than India ?
(A) Canada (B) England (C) Pakistan (D) Thailand
- (5) Which of the following pairs is incorrect as a neighbour of India ?
(A) Afghanistan – North-West
(B) Nepal – North-East
(C) China – North
(D) Bangladesh – West

Activities

- Get information about the directions from your teacher and prepare a list of what is situated in which direction in your house and in the class room.
- Locate yourself with the help of Internet.
- Study an atlas and prepare a list of neighbouring countries of India and their capital cities.
- Know the names of the extreme points of India in all four directions and write them in your notebook.

