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PREFACE

Rapid changes have been taking place in India in recent years and there are many within the country and abroad who require authentic information on the diverse aspects of our national life. In order to meet their needs *INDIA: A Reference Annual* was first brought out by the Publications Division of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in 1953. Its success encouraged the publishers to widen the scope of the publication in response to the readers' suggestions. *INDIA 1957*, the fifth issue of the *Annual*, includes many new sections, namely, *Union Government and Administration*, *State Governments and Administration*, *Local Self-Government* and *India and International Organisations*. The *Appendices* have been enlarged by the addition of data on the area and population of all the districts and taluks, recent General Elections and important irrigation and power projects in the country.

The *Annual* contains factual and statistical information compiled from official and other authoritative sources. It does not, however, claim to be comprehensive. Readers requiring additional or more detailed information are referred to the *Statistical Abstract—India*, and other official publications and works of reference.

We take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the distinguished scholars, economists and others who have helped us with advice and suggestions for the improvement of the book.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

India, also known by the ancient name Bharat, is well marked off from the rest of Asia by mountains and the sea which give the country an unmistakable geographical unity. Protected by the Himalayas in the north, the country stretches southwards and, at the Tropic of Cancer, tapers off into the Indian Ocean between the Bay of Bengal on the east and the Arabian Sea on the west. Lying entirely to the north of the Equator between latitudes 8° and 37° north and longitudes 68° and 98° east, it measures about 2,000 miles from north to south and about 1,700 miles from east to west and covers an area of 12,66,900 sq. miles[1]. Measured by the extent of its territory, India is the seventh largest country in the world. It has a land frontier 9,309 miles long and a coastline of about 3,535 miles.

THE PHYSICAL BACKGROUND

The formidable Himalayas form India's northern boundary, along which lie China, Tibet and Nepal. Sikkim and Bhutan are two states in this region which are attached to India by special Treaties. A series of mountain ranges in the east separate India from Burma. To the north-east lies East Pakistan between the States of West Bengal and Assam. In the north-west, West Pakistan borders on India. In the south, the Gulf of Mannar and the Palk Strait separate India from Ceylon. The Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the Bay of Bengal and the Laccadive, Minicoy and Amindivi Islands in the Arabian Sea form part of the Indian Union.

Physical Features

The country comprises three well-defined regions: (i) the great mountain zone of the Himalayas, (ii) the Indo-Gangetic Plain, and (iii) the southern Peninsula.

The Himalayas comprise three almost parallel ranges interspersed with large plateaus and valleys some of which, like the Kashmir and Kulu valleys, are fertile, extensive and of great scenic beauty. Some of the highest peaks in the world are to be found in these ranges, e.g., Mt. Everest (29,028 ft.) , Kanchanjunga (28,146 ft.), Dhaulagiri (26,826 ft.), and Nanda Devi (25,661 ft.). The high altitudes limit travel only to a few passes, notably the Jelep La and Natu La on the main Indo-Tibet trade route through the Chumby valley, north-east of Darjeeling. The mountain wall extends over a distance of about 1,500 miles with a varying depth of 150 to 200 miles. In the east, between India and Burma and India and Pakistan, the hill ranges are much lower. The Garo, Khasi, Jaintia and Naga hills running almost east-west join the chain of the Lushai and Arakan hills running north-south.

The Indo-Gangetic plain, 1,500 miles long and 150 to 200 miles broad, is watered by the Ganga and its tributaries, the Yamuna, the Gomti the Son, the Gogra, the Gandak and the Kosi. The Brahmaputra rises beyond the Himalayas and enters India at its eastern extremity. Flowing through Assam and East Pakistan, it joins the Ganga before the latter falls into the Bay of Bengal. The Punjab is watered by three tributaries of the Indus, namely the Ravi, the Beas and the Sutlej.

1. Provisional.

The Peninsular plateau is marked off from the Indo-Gangetic plain by a mass of mountain and hill ranges, varying from 1,500 to 4,000 ft. in height. The more prominent among these are the Aravalli, Vindhya, Satpura, Maikal and Ajanta. The Peninsula is flanked on one side by the Eastern Ghats, where the elevation is 1,500 ft., and on the other by the Western Ghats where it is 3,000 ft., but rises in places to as much as 9,000 ft. Between the Western Ghats and the Arabian Sea lies a narrow coastal strip, while between the Eastern Ghats and the Bay of Bengal there is a broader coastal area. The southern point of the plateau is formed by the Nilgiri hills where the Eastern and Western Ghats meet. The Cardamom hills lying beyond may be regarded as the continuation of the Western Ghats. The plateau is traversed by the rivers Narmada and Tapti which fall into the Arabian Sea and the Mahanadi, the Godavari, the Krishna and the Kaveri which drain their waters into the Bay of Bengal.

Geological Structure

Geologically also, India consists of the same three distinct units, namely, the ancient block of the Peninsula, the Himalayas and their associated group of young fold-mountains flanking either side, and the Indo-Gangetic plain lying between these two.

The Peninsula is a region of great geological stability and is remarkably immune from seismic disturbances of any intensity. The basal complex of the larger part of the Peninsula consists of highly metamorphosed rocks of the earliest periods.

The geological sequence in the Himalayas has been almost entirely marine and there is little doubt that the area now occupied by the great mountains was a deep sea until late in the second geological period. Much of the area is still very imperfectly known geologically, especially in the east, and many phases of its history are still very controversial. The outermost Himalayan foothills—the Siwaliks—represent a late buckling of the erosion products of the mountains themselves. These deposits are not essentially different from some of those now forming.

The Indo-Gangetic plain is a macro-region of alluvium covering 3,00,000 square miles. The thickness of the alluvial deposits has never been ascertained though borings to a depth of 1,300 feet have not revealed a rocky bottom. The filling is of very unequal depth having been replenished in the east by alluvial deposits brought down from the mountains by the rivers and in the west by windblown materials. Topographically the plains are remarkably homogeneous with little relief for hundreds of miles.

Climate

The climate of India is essentially monsoon-tropical and this description is valid notwithstanding local variations such as the winter rains in the north-west, which are entirely subsidiary to the main summer rainfall regime. The seasonal rhythm can be broadly classified as follows: (i) the Cold Weather from October to the end of February ; (ii) the Hot Weather from the beginning of March to the beginning or middle of June ; and (iii) the Rainy Season from the beginning or middle of June to the end of September or October. The Indian Meteorological Department recognises four seasons: (i) The Cold Weather Season (December-March) ; (ii) The Hot Weather Season (April-May) ; (iii) the Rainy Season (June-September) ; and (iv) the season of the retreating south-west monsoon (October-November).

The south-west monsoon usually breaks about the beginning of June in the West Coast and arrives elsewhere later. With the exception of the Madras Coast, India receives the major share of its rainfall between

June and September from the south-west monsoon. As it retreats there is a spell of dry weather in north India and widespread rainfall in the coastal districts of Madras and Orissa where October and November are often the rainiest months of the year. The South-West Coast of India, bypassed by the Bay current earlier in the year, receives most of its rain during November and December.

The climatic regions of India, based on the dominant factor of rainfall, may be arranged thus: (i) regions with more than 80 inches of annual rainfall such as the West Coast (with a long dry season in the north and a short dry season in the south), Bengal and Assam ; (ii) regions with 40 to 80 inches of rainfall such as the north-east plateau and the middle Ganga Valley ; (iii) regions with 20 to 40 inches of rainfall, such as Madras (in which the wettest months are November and December), southern and north-western Deccan (with mean January temperatures of 65°-75°) and the upper Ganga plain (with lower January temperatures and higher July ones). To these may be added the Himalayan regions with very heavy rainfall.

POWER RESOURCES

A large proportion of domestic energy in India is obtained from fuel-wood, dung and agricultural wastes, while the main sources of commercial energy are coal and hydro-electricity. New primary sources of fuel and power such as solar radiation and nuclear energy are still at an experimental stage. Efforts are also being made to develop wind power at suitable places.

Coal

India ranks seventh among the coal-producing countries of the world and her reserves are not inconsiderable. About 90 per cent of the supplies come from the Damodar Valley, mainly from the two fields of Jharia and Raniganj. Outside the peninsula, the most important producer is Assam. Large deposits of lignite have recently been reported in Kutch and those on the Madras coastal plain are now under active investigation. About a third of the country's coal output is used by the railways, 10 per cent each in the steel and textile industries, 7 per cent each for bunker and export and for the generation of electricity. The coal output during 1955 was 382 lakh tons valued at Rs. 56.03 crore. More than half of the country's mine-workers are employed in collieries.

Oil and Industrial Alcohol

The country is deficient in oil resources, the only known fields of some importance being around Digboi in Assam. The annual output of 650-700 lakh gallons is less than a tenth of the current consumption of petroleum. It has, however, been estimated that apart from coastal areas coming under the continental shelf, some 5,00,000 sq. miles of territory are potentially oil-yielding.

The country produces about 180 lakh gallons of power and industrial alcohol from molasses which were largely wasted previously. An increase of 90 lakh tons in the present installed capacity of 270 lakh tons has been proposed in the second Five Year Plan.

Water-power

India's hydro-electric resources are potentially large, though they have not yet been surveyed in their entirety. The current estimate of the total hydro-electric potential, which it might be possible to develop is about 350 lakh kw. The main zones of hydro-electric potential are: (i) a belt along the Himalayas from Himachal Pradesh to Assam, (ii) the Western Ghats and

(iii) the southern hills in Madras. Apart from the multipurpose river valley projects, there are several power projects under consideration or execution in various States. The total installed capacity which stood at 23 lakh kw. in 1951-52 and 34 lakh kw. in 1955-56 is expected to rise to 69 lakh kw. at the end of the second Plan.

MINERAL RESOURCES

India is richly endowed with mineral resources required for heavy metallurgy. Apart from reserves of high-grade iron ore, amongst the best in the world, she possesses good resources of alloy-minerals, fluxes and refractories. She is the most important producer of block mica in the world, and her position in some rare or strategic minerals and chemicals is also strong. In non-ferrous metals, however, she is not so fortunate though some useful deposits, especially those of bauxite await investigation. The most important mining area is the region comprising south Bihar, south-west Bengal and north Orissa. Most of the country's iron ore, mica, copper, fire-clay, chromite and kyanite come from this region.

Iron Ore

India possesses in the Dharwar and Cuddapah regions some of the world's largest reserves of iron ore, mainly haematites and magnetites with iron content ranging between 60 and 70 per cent. Important sites await exploitation in the northern Orissa hills and in the Singhbhum district of Bihar. This iron field extends southwards into Chhattisgarh, Bastar and southern Madhya Pradesh. Together these sites are estimated to hold about 450 crore tons of high-grade ore. Middle and Lower-grade ores with a 25 per cent to 65 per cent iron content are found in the Damodar Valley, Salem, Mysore, Ratnagiri and Kumaon. India's total reserves may reasonably be reckoned at 1,000 crore tons and at the current rate of production may be regarded as inexhaustible. The production of iron ore reached a new peak of 46.5 lakh tons in 1955 . This was 27 per cent higher than in 1951.

Manganese

India ranks third in the world in manganese deposits. Reserves of good ore containing 50 per cent of the metal are estimated at 150-200 lakh tons. About two-third of the production is from Madhya Pradesh. Next in importance come Keonjhar and Bonai, the hills of Andhra-Orissa border, Singhbhum, northern Bombay, Udaipur and Mysore. The Indian ore is mostly non-friable and, therefore, easy to transport. The current output of manganese ore is 15.8 lakh tons valued at Rs. 18.32 crore.

Chromite

Chromite, used for chemical purposes and as an alloy and refractory, comes again mainly from Keonjhar, Singhbhum and Mysore. Small reserves of low-grade ore are found in Salem, Ratnagiri and Vijayawada.

Other Ferro-Alloys and Refractories

Singhbhum and Mayurbhanj hold unexploited reserves of 20 to 30 lakh tons of vanadium. Rich reserves of magnesite ore, of high quality, lie in Salem and Mysore; there are deposits also on the Bombay-Rajasthan border. Fire-clays of good quality occur in the Damodar coalfields, Rajmahal hills and near Kolar. The total reserves of kyanite and sillimanite used in glass and electrical industries are estimated at about 5 lakh tons. A large proportion of the world's output of kyanite is supplied by Kharsawan near Jamshedpur. The Travancore beaches constitute one of the principal sources of zirconia in the world. Corundum, an important abrasive, is found in southern Madras and Mysore, though there are also deposits in Rewa, Singhbhum, Khasi hills and Kashmir.

Non-ferrous Metals

India is as poor in non-ferrous metals as she is rich in the ferrous ones. Some metals like nickel, cobalt, tungsten and tin are almost non-existent. Gold, copper and aluminium are the only non-ferrous metals which are produced in any quantity. Gold is mined in Kolar and Hatti (Mysore), the current output being 2,11,000 oz. Copper ore is mainly worked in the 80-mile copper belt along the Subarnarekha, south-east of Jamshedpur ; copper ores are also found in north Rajasthan and in Sikkim, Garhwal and Kulu in the Himalayas. Its current annual output is 3,53,000 tons. The prospects for aluminium are more promising ; many of the laterites of the peninsula contain 50-60 per cent aluminium and those of sub-Himalayan Kashmir contain 60-80 per cent. The total reserves of bauxite are estimated at 25 crore tons, the best quality bauxite coming from Madhya Pradesh. The output in 1955 was 81,172 tons.

Mica

India produces 70-80 per cent of the world's supply of mica, about three-quarters of which come from the Hazaribagh district and the rest from Nellore (Andhra) and Rajasthan. The output of mica stood at about 4.19 lakh cwt. in 1955.

Salt

Good quality salt comes from Lake Sambhar and the Pachbhadra pits in Rajasthan which accounts for nearly one-sixth of the total production. Much of the remainder of the output is inferior in quality and is obtained by the evaporation of sea-water on the coastal areas of Bombay and Madras. There are reserves of rock-salt in Mandi (Himachal Pradesh). The estimated output of salt during 1955 was 25.2 lakh tons.

Miscellaneous Non-ferrous Minerals

The beryls of Rajasthan and the monazite of Kerala are the two strategic minerals which are used in atomic fission. The Gaya district of Bihar has sites which may prove a workable source of uranium. Among other strategic minerals may be mentioned ilmenite and zircons associated with monazite in Travancore.

Mention may also be made of minor minerals like alum, apatite, arsenic, asbestos, barytes, felspar, fuller's earth, garnets, graphite, quartz, saltpetre and steatite, many of which are worked locally on a small scale. Of these, the outlook for apatite (rock-phosphate) is promising, in view of its use as fertiliser. There are deposits of this mineral in Mussoorie, Hazaribagh, Singhbhum and Tiruchirapalli. In Rajasthan, Madras and northern Bombay there are large reserves of gypsum which is used in the manufacture of cement as well as fertilisers.

THE DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

Racial Composition

The population of the Indian sub-continent represents a large variety of racial elements. The following five principal types, according to physical appearence, may be distinguished.

(*i*) The Negritos, of whom the Andaman Islanders are good examples, are dwarfish in stature but perfectly well-proportioned with very dark skin, slightly roundish head, short and broad face with flat broad nose. They have short hair spiralled into small cones looking like pepper corns. They are related to the Asian and Oceanic peoples like the Semangs of Malaya and the Papuans of New Guinea, and not to the African Negroes and Negritos. Traces of the race have also been found among the Kadars and the Palayans

of Cochin and the Travancore hills, the Irulas of Wynad, the Angami Nagas of Assam and some of the Rajmahal hill tribes in Eastern Bihar.

(*ii*) The Veddids (from Sanskrit *vyadha* or hunter) or Proto-Australoids, to which category belong the majority of the tribal peoples of central and southern India, such as the Mundas and Santhals. In varying mixtures, they also constitute the underlying strain of the lower castes or sections of the Indian people. They have short stature, stocky body, round face with steep forehead and child-like snub-nose with wide nostrils and small retreating chin.

(*iii*) The Mediterraneans (so-called because of probable origin in that region) or Melanids (from Greek "melanos" or black) are mostly found in the plains of south India and are of medium height and possess steeply ascending foreheads, narrow noses with nostrils of medium breadth, lips, straight and full, dark skin and wavy hair. They are found largely in the Kannada, Tamil and Malayalam tracts.

(*iv*) The Indids are numerically the most important group. They are found mainly in north India, central Deccan and the west coast. They have long heads, small long faces, not very prominent chins, light brown skin and black hair. Genetically as well as physically they form part of the south European stocks. The north Indids, a sub-type of this race, found in the north-west have coarser bones, lighter skin and marked growth of body hair.

(*v*) The Mongoloids are found in the mountainous regions of north and north-east India. Their physical characteristics are short and broad face with high cheek bones, a skin fold from the upper eye-lid (Mongolian fold) covering usually the inner eye corner (thus giving the eye a slit and oblique appearance), scanty hair on face and body , and light brown skin with yellowish tint.

These various groups have mixed with one another resulting in a large harmonised Indian population with elements from several, if not all the above-mentioned, races. Broadly speaking, however, the Indid type predominates in north India and the Melanid (or Mediterranean) in south India, while more or less pure groups are to be found only in some very secluded areas.

Census

India is the world's second most populous country. According to the 1951 census, which covered Sikkim but did not cover the State of Jammu and Kashmir and the Part B tribal areas of Assam, the country's population was 35,68,79,394. The area and population of India and the component States and Territories are given in table VII, while the area and population of districts, tehsils and taluks are given in the *Appendices*.

The following table shows the mid-year estimated population for the years 1952-56, based on the mean growth rate obtained during 1941-50. The figures include the population of Sikkim and Jammu and Kashmir.

Year		*Crores of persons*
1952	..	36.74
1953	..	37.20
1954	..	37.68
1955	..	38.17
1956	..	38.65

The growth of population since 1891 is indicated below:

TABLE I

GROWTH OF POPULATION (1891-1951)

Census year	Population (in lakhs)	Increase (+) or Decrease (—) since preceding decade (in lakhs)
1891	2,359	..
1901	2,355	— 4
1911	2,490	+135
1921	2,481	— 9
1931	2,755	+274
1941	3,128	+373
1951	3,569	+441

During the thirty years since 1921, there has been an increase of about 11 crores in the population. The pattern of growth subsequent to 1921 has been entirely different from that before the year. Before 1921, the growth of population was repeatedly checked by famine and pestilence and cultivation had more than kept pace with the growth of population. Since 1921, however, it has lagged far behind the growth of population.

Birth and Death Rates

Since many births and deaths go unregistered, there is a difference in the figures of births and deaths based on the registration data and those provided by the census data. The following table gives India's birth and death rates per thousand for the last fifty years in decennial averages:

TABLE II

Decade	Registered		Estimated by Reverse Survival Method	
	Birth rate	Death rate	Birth rate	Death rate
1901-10	37	—	48.1	42.6
1911-20	37	34	49.2	48.6
1921-30	33	26	46.4	36.3
1931-40	34	23	45.2	31.2
1941-50	28	20	39.9	27.4

The following table shows the birth and mortality rates since 1947 based on the registration data:

TABLE III

Year	Per thousand of population		Per thousand live births
	Birth rate	Death rate	Infant mortality
1947	26.6	19.7	146
1948	25.2	17.0	130
1949	26.4	15.8	123
1950	24.9	16.1	127
1951	24.9	14.4	124
1952	24.8	13.6	116
1953	24.8(*a*)	13.5(*a*)	118
1954	25.5(*a*)	13.0(*a*)	113(*a*)

(*a*) Provisional.

The Indian birth rate is one of the highest in the world and it has shown only a small decline during the last fifty years. The death rate is similarly high. During the last half century the infant mortality rate has ranged between 113 per thousand live births, the lowest recorded (in 1954) and 261, the highest recorded (in 1918). It has, however, more than halved from 232 in 1900 to 113 in 1954.

Fertility Trends

Fertility rates and reproduction rates are more helpful in estimating the trends of growth than the crude birth rate. The fertility rate represents the number of female children born each year per 1,000 women between 15 and 45 years of age. The specific fertility rates represent the number of such children born to women of different age levels. The gross reproduction rate which consists of the sum total of all the specific fertility rates represents the number of children a woman can expect during her child-bearing period.

Statistics for all these categories for India as a whole are not available. Making use of the ' local option ' given to them, certain State Governments for the first time collected valuable information on these matters at the 1951 census. The following table shows the indices of child birth, child survival and child loss in respect of completed maternity experience for the former States of Travancore-Cochin and Madhya Pradesh:

TABLE IV

Natural Division/State	Child birth index	Child survival index	Child loss index
East Madhya Pradesh ..	6.1	3.6	2.5
North-West Madhya Pradesh ..	6.3	3.6	2.7
South-West Madhya Pradesh ..	6.6	3.6	3.0
Travancore-Cochin ..	6.6	4.6	2.0

For want of relevant figures it is not possible to calculate the net reproduction rate for India, which would be a better index of fertility trends in the country. Before 1931 the great female mortality had an adverse effect on this rate. Since that census, however, there has been a gradual improvement in the proportion of females (15-24, the most important reproductive period) living through the reproductive period and this goes far to explain the increase in population between 1931—51.

Age Structure

Table VI gives the breakdown of the population according to age, sex and marital status. The following table shows the percentage of different age-groups to the total population. In India the proportion of juveniles is very high and the proportion of people who live beyond middle age is very low. India's high juvenile proportion (38.3 per cent) is exceeded only by the countries of Africa (39.1 per cent), South and Central America (40.1 per cent), South-West Asia (40.6 per cent) and South-East Asia (40.9 per cent) while the proportion for European and North American countries ranges between 21.8 and 27.6 per cent. The proportion of people aged 55 and above is only 8.3 per cent in India as compared to 21.4 per cent in France and 21.1 per cent in the UK.

TABLE V

	Age group	Percentage to total population
Infants and young children ..	0 to 4	13.5
Boys and girls ..	5 to 14	24.8
Young men and women ..	15 to 24	17.4
	25 to 34	15.6
Middle-aged men and women ..	35 to 44	11.9
	45 to 54	8.5
Elderly persons ..	55 to 64	5.1
	65 to 74	2.2
	75 and over	1.0
		100.0

Sex Ratio

India has 18.3 crore males and 17.4 crore females. The sex ratio has varied as follows:

Year	*Number of females per 1000 males*
1921	956
1931	951
1941	946
1951	947

The proportion of females per thousand males was the lowest in North-West India (883) and the highest in South India (999) where practically there was an equality of sexes. In general, the sex ratio is smaller in towns than in villages. For the country as a whole, the figure for villages is 966 and for towns 860 for every 1000 males. The difference between the rural and urban ratios is the largest in East India (258) and the smallest in South India (27).

The number of females for every 1000 males for the ten largest cities are: Greater Calcutta (602), Greater Bombay (596), Madras (921), Delhi (750), Hyderabad (989), Ahmedabad (764), Bangalore (883), Kanpur (699), Poona (833) and Lucknow (783).

TABLE VI

DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION ACCORDING TO AGE, SEX AND CIVIL CONDITION

Age group	Total		Unmarried		Married		Widowed or divorced	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Below 1 year ..	5,821	5,668	5,821	5,668	..	..	..	..
1 — 4 years ..	17,939	17,908	17,939	17,908	..	..	..	..
5 —14 ,, ..	44,703	41,989	41,804	35,737	2,833	6,118	66	134
15—24 ,, ..	30,672	30,052	16,627	5,184	13,660	24,041	384	827
25—34 ,, ..	27,875	26,633	3,701	773	23,122	23,731	1,052	2,129
35—44 ,, ..	22,032	19,528	1,150	304	19,323	15,346	1,559	3,778
45—54 ,, ..	15,719	13,898	604	173	13,076	8,314	2,038	5,412
55—64 ,, ..	9,064	8,624	299	89	6,777	3,334	1,989	5,201
65—74 ,, ..	3,867	3,976	104	37	2,533	1,092	1,230	2,847
75 and over ..	1,630	1,756	46	18	883	370	701	1,367
Age not stated ..	111	117	51	60	46	42	14	15
TOTAL POPULATION (EXCLUDING DISPLACED PERSONS)	1,79,433	1,70,149	88,146	65,951	82,253	82,388	9,033	21,810