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INDIAN GEOGRAPHY		
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INTRODUCTION

- It is the seventh-largest country by area, the second-most populous country with over 1.2 billion people, and the most populous democracy in the world. Bounded by the Indian Ocean on the south, the Arabian Sea on the south-west, and the Bay of Bengal on the south-east, it shares land borders with Pakistan to the west; China, Nepal, and Bhutan to the north-east; and Burma and Bangladesh to the east.
- In the Indian Ocean, India is in the vicinity of Sri Lanka and the Maldives; in addition, India's Andaman and Nicobar Islands share a maritime border with Thailand and Indonesia.
- Home to the ancient Indus Valley Civilization and a region of historic trade routes and vast empires, the Indian subcontinent was identified with its commercial and cultural wealth for much of its long history. Four world religions—Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism originated here, whereas Zoroastrianism, Christianity, and Islam arrived helped shape the region's diverse culture. Gradually annexed by and brought under the administration of the British East India Company from the early 18th century and administered directly by the United Kingdom from the mid-19th century, India became an independent nation in 1947.
- According to World Bank, the Indian economy is the world's tenth-largest by nominal GDP and third-largest by purchasing power parity (PPP). Following market-based economic reforms in 1991, India became one of the fastest-growing major economies; it is considered a newly industrialised country.
- However, it continues to face the challenges of poverty, illiteracy, corruption, malnutrition, and inadequate public healthcare. A nuclear weapons state and a regional power, it has the third-largest standing army in the world and ranks ninth in military expenditure among nations. India is a federal constitutional republic governed under a parliamentary system consisting of 28 states and 7 union territories. India is a pluralistic, multilingual, and multiethnic society. It is also home to a diversity of wildlife in a variety of protected habitats.

ETYMOLOGY

- The name India is derived from Indus, which originates from the Old Persian word Hindu. The latter term stems from the Sanskrit word Sindhu, which was the historical local appellation for the Indus River. The ancient Greeks referred to the Indians as Indoi, which translates as "the people of the Indus".
- The geographical term Bharat, which is recognised by the Constitution of India as an official name for the country, is used by many Indian languages in various subtle guises. The eponym of Bharat is Bharata, a mythological figure that Hindu scriptures describe as a legendary emperor of ancient India. Hindustan was originally a Persian word that meant "Land of the Hindus"; prior to 1947, it referred to a region that encompassed northern India and Pakistan. It is occasionally used to solely denote India in its entirety.

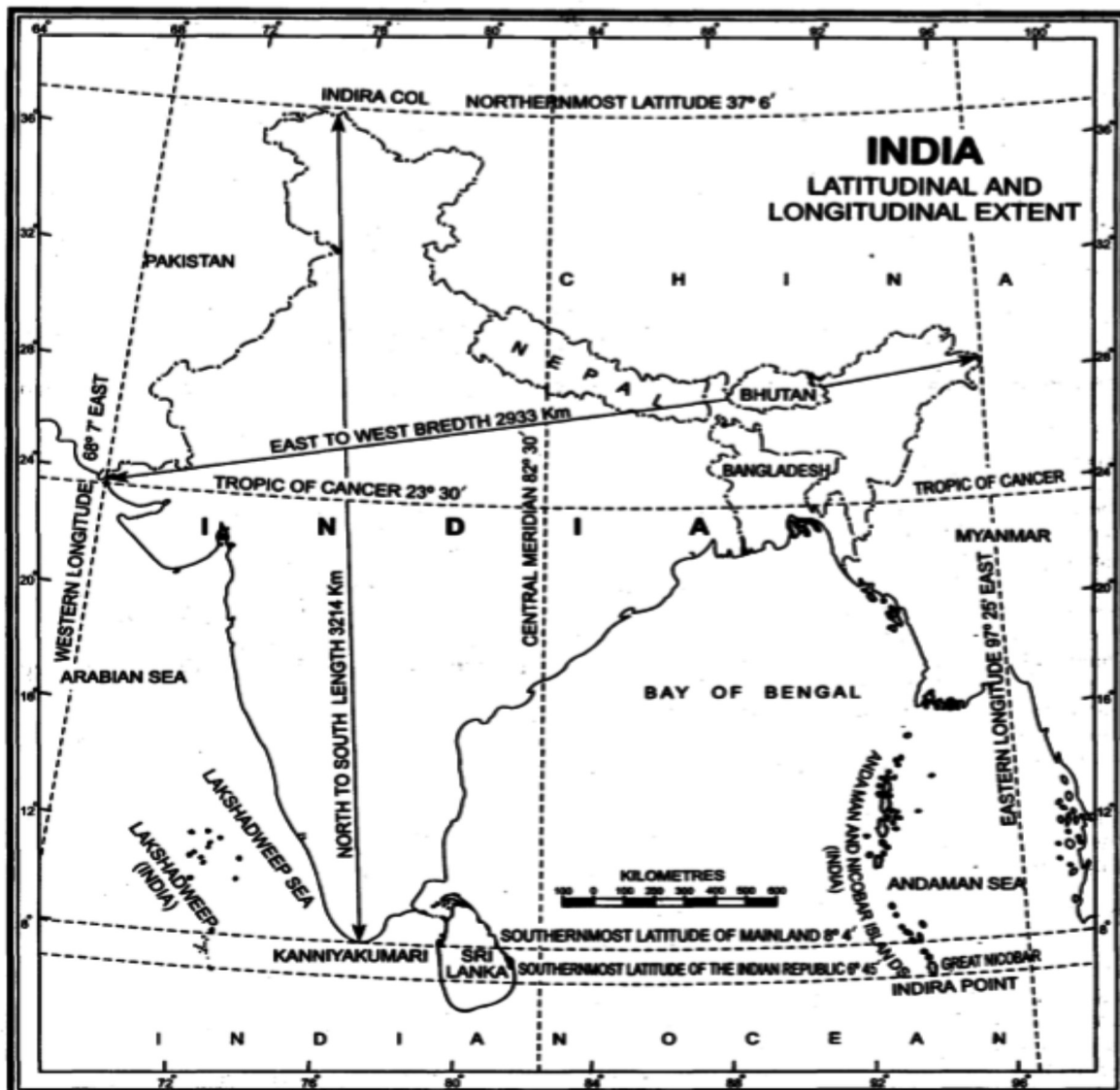
LOCATION OF INDIA

- The Union of India is the seventh largest country in the world covering an area of 32,87,590 square kilometers and it is an important country of South Asia.
- South Asia has a total area of about 4.488 million sq. km out of which India has the largest area (3.287 sq. km). It occupies 73.2 % of total area.

INSIGHT GENERAL STUDIES

- It is 4 times larger than Pakistan which is second largest in South Asia. India is 12 times larger than UK and 8 times larger than Japan.
- The mainland stretches from latitude $8^{\circ}4' N$ to $37^{\circ}6' N$ and from longitude $68^{\circ}7' E$ to $97^{\circ}25' E$ of Greenwich. The latitudinal and longitudinal extent of the country is almost same in degrees i.e. about 30 degrees.
- **The southernmost point in Indian Territory, (in Great Nicobar Islands) is the Indira Point ($6^{\circ}45' S$),** while Kanyakumari, also known as Cape Comorin, is the southernmost point of Indian mainland.
- The country thus lies wholly in the northern and eastern hemispheres.
- **The $82^{\circ}30' E$ longitude is taken as Standard Time Meridian of India,** as it passes through the middle of India (from Naini, near Allahabad.) Hence Mirzapur, Near Allahabad is the Standard Time of India.
- The country is of a vast size and measures about 3,214 kilometers from north to south and about 2,933 kilometers from west to east.
- Indian Standard Time:- GMT +05:30
- Telephone Country Code:- +91
- Coastline:- 7,516.6 km encompassing the mainland, Lakshadweep Islands, and the Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

LONGITUDE AND LATITUDE



INSIGHT GENERAL STUDIES

OCEAN

- India lies midway between the Far East and the Middle East. The trans-Indian Ocean routes connecting the industrially developed countries of Europe in the west and the underdeveloped countries of east Asia pass close by.
- India being centrally located in South Asia, she enjoys an advantageous position for doing trade with Australia and the countries of Africa, the Middle East and the Far East. Thus, India dominates the Indian Ocean and commands an important strategic position. Her land frontier is 15,200 kilometers long.
- Her northern borderland, being mountainous, is very difficult to cross and it offers very few transport facilities for trade with the arid, almost barren and very sparsely populated regions of Central Asia.
- India has a coastline of 6,100 kilometers in the main land and she depends on the Indian Ocean for bulk of her foreign trade. The total length of the coastline of the mainland, Lakshadweep group of Islands and Andaman and Nicobar group of Islands is 7,519.5 km.

UNIQUE FACTS ABOUT INDIA	
Total Area	32,87,263 sq Km
Territorial Sea	12 nm (nautical miles)
Contiguous Zone	24 nm
Exclusive economic Zone	200 nm
Continental Shelf	200 nm or to the edge of the continental margin
Longest River	Ganga
Largest Lake	Lake Chilka
Highest Point	Mt. K ² (8611 m)
Highest Point of Himalaya	Kanchen Junga (8,598 m)
Lowest Point	Kuttanad (-2.2 m)
Northernmost Point	Indira col, Siachen Glacier near Karakoram
Southernmost Point	Indira Point, Great Nicobar, Andaman & Nicobar Islands
Southernmost Point of India (Mainland)	Cape Comorin (Kanya Kumari)
Westernmost Point	West of Ghuar Mota, Gujarat
Easternmost Point	Kibithu, Arunachal Pradesh
Highest Altitude	Kanchenjunga, Sikkim
Lowest Altitude	Kuttanad (Kerala)
Latitude	8 ⁰ 4'N to 37 ⁰ 6'N
Longitude	68 ⁰ 7'E to 97 ⁰ 25'E
Main Land Coastline	6100 Km
Total Coastline	7516 Km
Land Frontier	15,200 km

SIZE AND LOCATION

India with its area of 3.28 million sq. km accounts for 2.4 per cent of the world's land surface area and stands as the seventh largest country in the world. It is twelve times larger than U.K and eight times larger than Japan. With the population of more than 1 billion, the country is the second most populous nation in the world after China. In terms of area, the country ranks seventh in the world after Russia, Canada, U.S, China, Australia and Brazil. Although the country is home to about one-sixth of the world population, the land area of India amounts to only about 2.4% of the world landmass.

INSIGHT GENERAL STUDIES

The southernmost point of Indian mainland is Kanyakumari. However, the island territories of the country extend still further south and the southernmost point of the country lies in the Andaman and Nicobar island of Bay of Bengal. The latitude of this point is $6^{\circ}30'N$. The southernmost point of India in the Nicobar Island was formerly called the Pigmalion Point and now it is known as the Indira Point. The northern most point of the country lies in the state of Jammu and Kashmir and it is known as Indira Col (Col refers to the lowest point on a mountain ridge between two peaks, also called a saddle).

EXTENT

- The territorial limits of Indian mainland extend between $8^{\circ}4'N$ and $37^{\circ}6'N$ latitude and $68^{\circ}7'$ and $97^{\circ}25'E$ longitude. The latitudinal and longitudinal extent of India, they are roughly about 30 degrees, whereas the actual distance measured from north to south extremity is 3,214 km, and that from east to west is only 2,933 km. This difference is based on the fact that the distance between two longitudes decreases towards the poles whereas the distance between two latitudes remains the same everywhere.
- There is a general understanding among the countries of the world to select the standard meridian in multiples of $7^{\circ}30'$ of longitude. **That is why $82^{\circ}30' E$ has been selected as the 'standard meridian' of India. Indian Standard Time is ahead of Greenwich Mean Time by 5 hours and 30 minutes.** There are some countries where there are more than one standard meridian due to their vast east-to-west extent. For example, the USA has seven time zones.
- From the values of latitude, **it is understood that the southern part of the country lies within the tropics and the northern part lies in the sub-tropical zone or the warm temperate zone.** This location is responsible for large variations in land forms, climate, soil types and natural vegetation in the country. **The variation of nearly 30 degrees, which causes a time difference of nearly two hours between the easternmost and the westernmost parts of our country.**
- The Tropic of Cancer passes through its middle part. The size of India has endowed her with great physical diversity. The presence of lofty mountains in the north; large rivers such as Ganga, Brahmaputra, Mahanadi, Krishna, Godavari and Kaveri; green forested hills in northeast and south India; and the vast sandy expanse of **Marusthali**. It is bounded by the Himalayas in the north, Hindukush and Sulaiman ranges in the northwest, Purvachal hills in the north-east and by the large expanse of the Indian Ocean in the south, it forms a great geographic entity known as the **Indian subcontinent**.
- It includes the countries namely Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh Maldives, Sri Lanka and India. The Himalayas, together with other ranges, have acted as a formidable physical barrier in the past. Few of the mountain passes such as the Khyber, the Bolan, the Shipkila, the Nathula, the Bomdila, etc. are worth mentioning. It has contributed towards evolving of a unique regional identity of the Indian subcontinent.
- Peninsular part of India extends towards the Indian Ocean. This has provided the country with a **coastline of 6,100 km in the mainland and 7,517 km in the entire geographical coast** of the mainland plus the island groups Andaman and Nicobar located in the Bay of Bengal and the Lakshadweep in the Arabian Sea. The Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea are its two northward extensions. Thus India, as a country, is a physically diverse land providing occurrence of varied resources.

COASTLINE OF STATES	
State	Km
Gujarat	1214.70
Tamilnadu	906.90
Kerala	569.70
Karnataka	208.00
Goa	101.00
Andhra Pradesh	973.70
Maharashtra	652.60
Odisha	476.70
West Bengal	157.50



INSIGHT GENERAL STUDIES

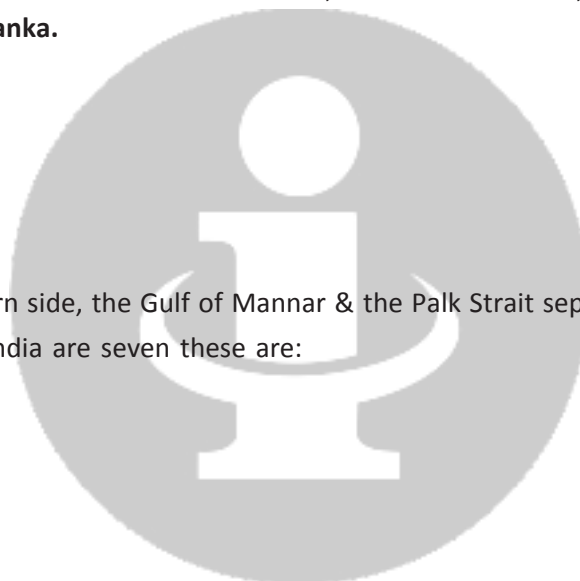
PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

India is located in the south-central part of the continent of Asia, bordering the Indian Ocean and its two arms extending in the form of Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea. This maritime location of Peninsular India has provided links to its neighbouring regions through the sea and air routes. Sri Lanka and Maldives are the two island countries located in the Indian Ocean, which are our neighbours.

India shares her borders with China (Chinese Tibetan Autonomous Region), Nepal and Bhutan in the north. **The boundary between India and China is called the Mac Mohan Line.** To the North West India shares a boundary mainly with Pakistan and in the east with Myanmar, **the boundary between India and Pakistan is known as Radcliffe Line.** Another neighbouring country to the northwest is Afghanistan. India and its neighbours Pakistan, Nepal and Bhutan are known as the **Indian sub-continent.** This region is insulated from the rest of the continent by the mountains in the north and north east and the sea in the south.

The Himalayas and other lofty mountains Muztagh Ata, Aghil Kunlun mountains to the north of Kashmir and south eastern portion of Zaskar mountains to east of Himachal Pradesh form India's northern boundary except in the Nepal region. A series of mountain ranges in the east separate India from Burma. In the east lies Bangladesh bounded by the Indian states of West Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram. In the northwest lies Afghanistan and Pakistan. In the south, on the eastern side, the **Gulf of Mannar and the Palk Strait separate from Sri Lanka.**

- In India, total land mass is
 - Plains : - 43.3 %
 - Plateaus :- 27.7 %
 - Hills :- 18.6 %
 - Mountains:- 10.7 %
- In the south, on the eastern side, the Gulf of Mannar & the Palk Strait separate India from Sri Lanka.
- Total land neighbours of India are seven these are:
 - Pakistan
 - Afghanistan
 - China
 - Nepal
 - Sri Lanka
 - Bhutan
 - Bangladesh and
 - Myanmar
- India's Islands include the Andaman & Nicobar Islands in Bay of Bengal & Lakshadweep, Minicoy & Amindivi Islands in the Arabian Sea



INDIA AND THE WORLD

India in South Asia

India is a giant among South Asia where other members are Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives, a total of seven countries encompassing a total area of about 4.488 million sq Km. Out of this India has the largest area and occupies 73.2% of the total area. It is 4 times larger than Pakistan which is 2nd largest in South Asia and 11 thousand times larger than the tiniest Maldives. The subcontinent is often referred to as the Indian subcontinent since India occupies major part of it. Pakistan, Afghanistan, China, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar and Bangladesh form components of India's land frontiers.

INSIGHT GENERAL STUDIES

STATE SHARING INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARIES

Bordering Pakistan	Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Rajasthan and Gujarat
Bordering China	Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh
Bordering Nepal	Bihar, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Sikkim and West Bengal
Bordering Bangladesh	West Bengal, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Tripura and Assam
Bordering Bhutan	West Bengal, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh and Assam
Bordering Myanmar	Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram
Bordering Afghanistan	Jammu and Kashmir (Pakistan-Occupied Area).

INDIA IN THE EASTERN WORLD

India lies mid-way between West Asia and East Asia. The trans-oceanic routes connecting Africa, industrially advanced Europe and Petroleum rich West Asia to South East Asian countries, China and industrially developed Japan, Australia and western coast of the USA pass through India. Sea has played an important role in India's external relations particularly with its neighbour in South East Asia, West Asia and East Africa. To the West of India are West Asian countries of Oman, Iran, United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia and East African countries of Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Mauritius to the north of India bordering with the state of Jammu and Kashmir is the Sinkiang (Xianjiang) region of China. It contains the Tarim basin where once flourished a very rich civilization of K'ashi and Hotan (Khotan). Across the Himalayas lies Tibet, now an autonomous province of China and the Mansarovar Lake still attract the Indian Pilgrims.

LOCATIONAL ADVANTAGE

India is a unique country as it is easily accessible to other parts of Asia, Africa, Europe and Americas. Its cultural influences have crossed its border from time immemorial and reached far off lands. It acts as a bridge head between developed and developing countries of the world and between the East and the West. India's strength lies in its geography as much as in its culture. Since the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 the distance between India and Europe has been reduced by 7000 kms. India enjoys a favourable ocean routes from East and South-East Asia and Australia to Africa and Europe pass through Indian Ocean. India is connected with the Cape of Good Hope and the Suez Canal. India can also reach Canada and the USA through the Strait of Malacca after crossing the Pacific Ocean.

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION

- Due to her large size the country is divided into a large number of administrative units and efficient administration of the large country also require this division of the country into several states and union territories. Such are division of India into smaller territorial units is also a historical fact.
- At the time of Independence in 1947, the country was divided into hundreds of small states and principalities. These states were united to form fewer states of large size and finally organized in 1956 to form 14 states and six union territories.
- **In 1956, under the States Reorganisation Act, states were reorganised on a linguistic basis.** Since then, their structure has remained largely unchanged. Each state or union territory is further divided into administrative districts. The districts in turn are further divided into tehsils and ultimately into villages.
- India is a federation composed of 28 states and 7 union territories. All states, as well as the union territories of Pondicherry and the National Capital Territory of Delhi, have elected legislatures and governments, both patterned on the Westminster model. The remaining five union territories are directly ruled by the centre through appointed administrators.

INSIGHT GENERAL STUDIES

INDIAN STATES			
1. Andhra Pradesh	2. Arunachal Pradesh	3. Assam	4. Bihar
5. Chhattisgarh	6. Goa	7. Gujarat	8. Haryana
9. Himachal Pradesh	10. Jammu and Kashmir	11. Jharkhand	12. Karnataka
13. Kerala	14. Madhya Pradesh	15. Maharashtra	16. Manipur
17. Meghalaya	18. Mizoram	19. Nagaland	20. Orissa
21. Punjab	22. Rajasthan	23. Sikkim	24. Tamil Nadu
25. Tripura	26. Uttar Pradesh	27. Uttarakhand	28. West Bengal
29. Telangana			

UNION TERRITORIES

(1) Andaman and Nicobar Islands

(2) Chandigarh

(3) Dadra and Nagar Haveli

(4) Daman and Diu

(5) Lakshadweep

(6) National Capital Territory of Delhi

(7) Pondicherry

- **The states that lie completely in the Himalayas:** Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand.
- **The states and Union territories that cover large portion of the Great Northern Plain:** Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Assam **Union Territories:** Chandigarh, Delhi
- **A Large area of the state of Rajasthan covers the Great Indian Desert.**
- **The states that make up the Great Peninsular Plateau:** Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh.
- **The states that are made up of hills in north east India. Geography was a major consideration in making up these states:** Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram.
- **The states that form the coast of India:** Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, West Bengal.

The Union Territories of Andaman and Nicobar Island and the Lakshwadeep are made up of islands.

S.No.	Name of the State	Capital	Area	Shares Border with
1.	Andhra Pradesh *	Hyderabad	275,608 km ²	Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh and Orissa in the north, the Bay of Bengal in the east, Tamil Nadu in south and Karnataka in west
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	Itanagar	83,743 Km ²	Assam in the south, Nagaland in the southeast, Burma/Myanmar in the east and Bhutan in the west
3.	Assam	Dispur	78,550 Km ²	Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura and Meghalaya
4.	Bihar	Patna	99,200 Km ²	Nepal in the north and Jharkhand in the south

INSIGHT GENERAL STUDIES

S.No.	Name of the State	Capital	Area	Shares Border with
5.	Chhattisgarh	Raipur	135,194 Km ²	Madhya Pradesh in northwest, Maharashtra in the west, Andhra Pradesh in the south, Orissa in the east, Jharkhand in the northeast and Uttar Pradesh in the north
6.	Goa	Panaji	3,702 Km ²	Maharashtra in the north, Karnataka in the east and south, and Arabian Sea forms its western coast.
7.	Gujarat	Gandhinagar	196,024 Km ²	Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra
8.	Haryana	Chandigarh	44,212 Km ²	Punjab, Himachal Pradesh in the north, and Rajasthan in the west and south
9.	Himachal Pradesh	Shimla	56,019 Km ²	Jammu and Kashmir on north, Punjab on west and south-west, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh on south, Uttarakhand on south-east and Tibet, China on the east
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	Jammu (winter) Srinagar (summer)	222,236 Km ²	China in the north and east, Himachal Pradesh and Punjab in the south and the Pakistani-administered territories of Azad Kashmir in the west and Northern Areas in the northwest
11.	Jharkhand	Ranchi	74,677 Km ²	Bihar in the north, Uttar Pradesh and Chhattisgarh in the west, Orissa in the south, and West Bengal in the east
12.	Karnataka	Bangalore	191,976 Km ²	Arabian Sea in the west, Goa in the northwest, Maharashtra in the north, Andhra Pradesh in the east, Tamil Nadu to the southeast, and Kerala to the southwest
13.	Kerala	Thiruvananthapuram (Trivandrum)	38,863 Km ²	Karnataka in the north and Tamil Nadu in the south and east, and the Arabian sea in to the west
14.	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal	308,252 Km ²	Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Rajasthan
15.	Maharashtra	Mumbai	307,731 Km ²	Arabian Sea in the west, Gujarat and Dadra and Nagar Haveli in the northwest, Madhya Pradesh to the northeast, Chhattisgarh in the east, Karnataka to the south, Andhra Pradesh in the southeast, and Goa in the southwest
16.	Manipur	Imphal	22,347 Km ²	Nagaland in the north, Mizoram in the south and Assam in the west and Myanmar in the east
17.	Meghalaya	Shillong	22,720 Km ²	Assam in the north and Bangladesh in the south
18.	Mizoram	Aizawal	22,081 Km ²	Tripura, Assam, Manipur, Bangladesh and Myanmar
19.	Nagaland	Kohima	16,579 Km ²	Assam in the west, Arunachal Pradesh and part of Assam in the north, Burma in the east and Manipur in the south