



INDIA



Size: Slightly more than one-third the size of the US

Population: Second most populous country in the world with more than 1.2 billion

Primary religions: Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Sikh

Currency: Indian rupee

Languages: English is an official language and is the most important language for national, political and commercial communication *globally*.

Hindi is the most widely spoken language, but there are also 14 other official languages.

Less than one-third live in urban areas

Sixty percent are literate.

Almost 30% live below the poverty level.

More than half of workers are agricultural.

Unemployment Rate is almost 10 percent.

Climate: Tropical monsoon climate in the south to a temperate climate in the north. Generally it is very hot with summer temperatures over 113°F. The dry heat is sometimes accompanied by dusty desert winds. Most of the rain falls between July and September.

Clothing & Fashion: People in Indian cities frequently wear Western-style clothing. Women often wear the sari, which is fabric wrapped around the body. Some wear a dot on the forehead. It is called a bindi and is important in Hinduism.

Food: Varies by region and is a mix of many nationalities and cultures. Many Indian foods are cooked in oil or use clarified butter, called ghee. Indian cuisine traditionally uses many spices, which are very aromatic. Rice is important in Indian food. About one-third of Indians are vegetarians. Much of the population does not eat beef because the cow is considered a sacred animal in Hinduism.