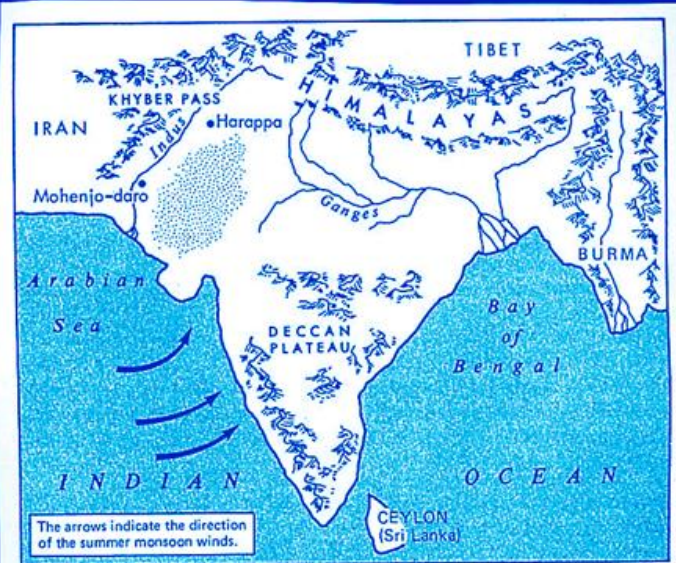


# Ancient India

# Geographic Factors Influencing Ancient India

1. Location and Size:
2. India (today constituting 3 nations, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh) is a landmass located in southern Asia.
  - a. 2,000 miles north to south
  - b. north of equator but lower region within tropical zone; warm tropical climate
  - c. triangular peninsula—sometimes referred to as subcontinent





**Ancient India: Geographic Factors**



**The Empire of Asoka**

## 2. Boundaries:

\*geographically isolated and therefore largely protected from invasion

a. from the east, west and south by Bay of Bengal, the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean;

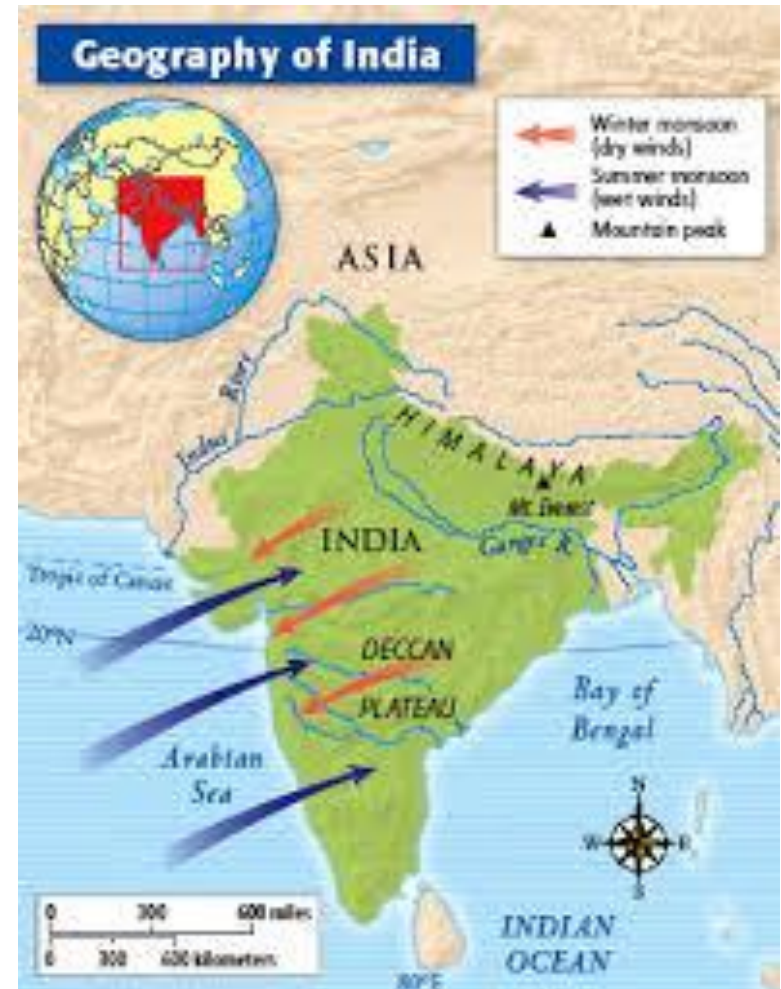
b. from the north by towering mountain ranges, chiefly the Himalayas;

Nevertheless, a few mountain passes on the northwest border, such as the Khyber Pass, enabled invaders to enter northern India.

3. Monsoons – winds that blow, with regularity, over India;

a. summer monsoons – June to October – come from the southwest, absorbing moisture from the Indian Ocean and depositing rain inland. This rainfall is essential for farming.

If summer monsoons late – hurts crops and even causes famine;



4. Topography: India contains two major regions:
- a. North: the Plain of the Indus and Ganges fertile, Indus to Arabian Sea, and Ganges to the Bay of Bengal;
  - b. South: Deccan Plateau-inhospitable-mountain ranges, tropical forests and rocky soil;

\*Little unity existed between north and south;  
Mountain ranges isolated population groups;  
Regionalism-a feeling of regional loyalty;

# History of Ancient India

1. The early Indus River Valley Civilization(3000-1500 B.C.)  
Indus River fostered the development of civilization;  
ancient cities: Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro:
  - a. well-planned cities containing extensive  
extensive drainage systems and brick buildings with  
bathrooms;
  - b. highly productive farms with irrigation canals and  
domesticated animals,
  - c. Pictographic writing(still undeciphered)on clay seals,
  - d. Cloth, jewelry, pottery and copper and bronze tools;

\*similarities with Sumerian pottery

This civilization ends abruptly, perhaps destroyed by invading Aryans.

## 2. The Aryan Conquests: 2000-600 B.C.

A.) Indo-European-speaking Aryans, probably related to Persians, crossed the northwest mountain passes and invaded the Indus Plain.

Conquered darker-skinned inhabitants-the Dravidians;

By 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C., the Aryans had subjugated the Ganges Valley and occupied entire northern plain;  
Formed small states that frequently warred among themselves;



2B. Aryan History and culture are revealed chiefly by their religious writings, the Vedas.

During this Vedic Age, India's civilization began to assume its important characteristics.

1. spoke Sanskrit, later the literary language of India;
2. teachings of Vedas later became part of Hindu religion;
3. to prevent inter-marriage and maintain supremacy, the Aryans placed the Dravidians into a separate, inferior class. This division was possibly the forerunner of the caste system;