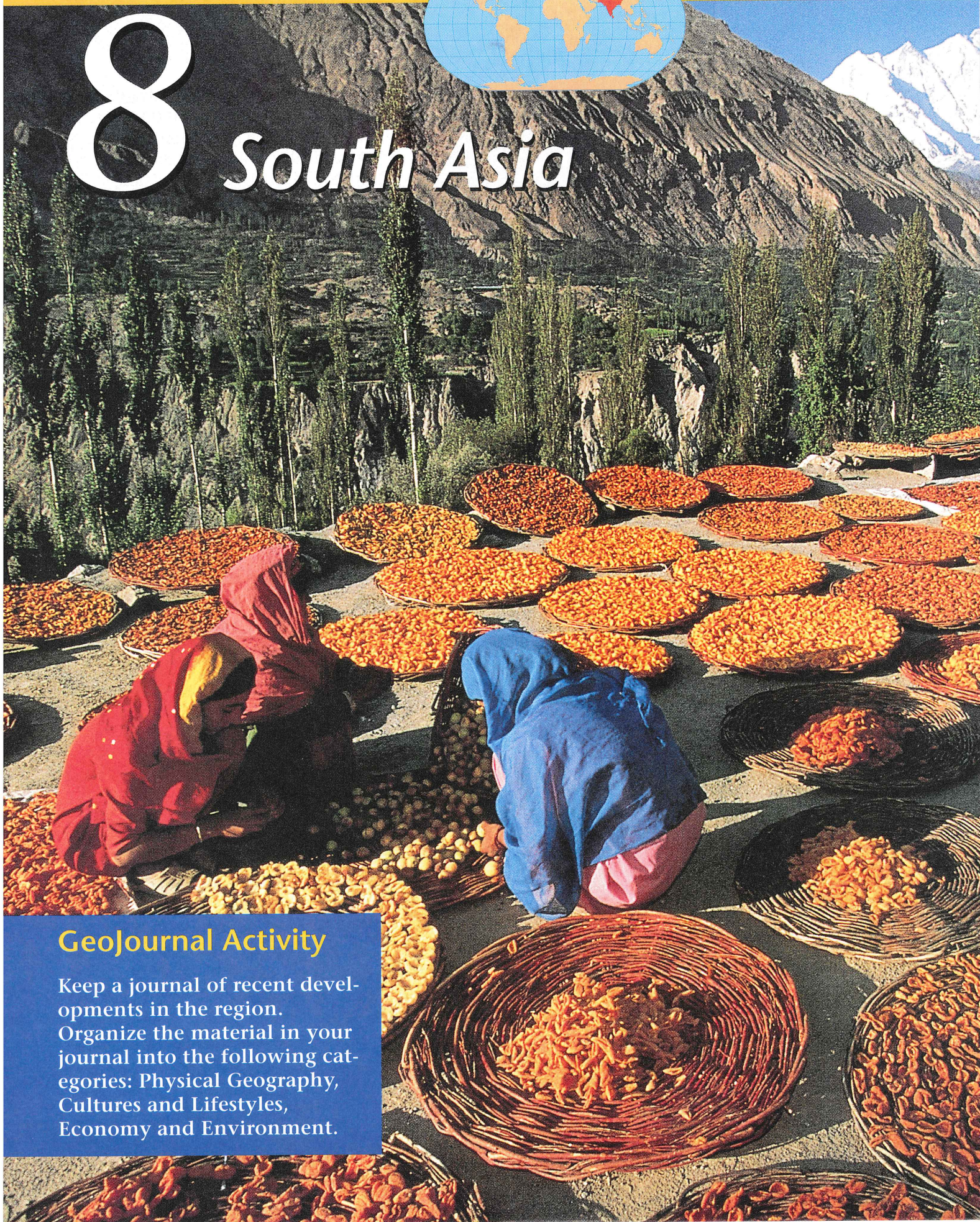
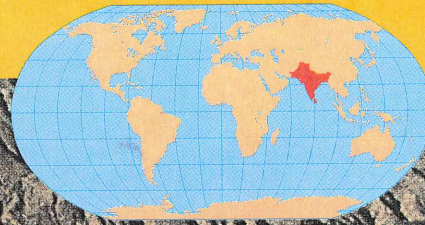


**UNIT**

# 8

## *South Asia*



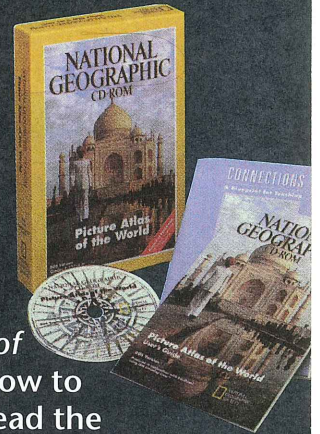
### **GeoJournal Activity**

Keep a journal of recent developments in the region. Organize the material in your journal into the following categories: Physical Geography, Cultures and Lifestyles, Economy and Environment.



## Picture Atlas of the World CD-ROM

South Asia has one of the highest concentrations of people and one of the most diverse populations in the world. Create a file on the religions and languages of the six countries in South Asia. (See the *Picture Atlas of the World User's Guide* on how to use the Collector button.) Read the essays, research the vital statistics and listen to the spoken languages. Gather items from many parts of the CD-ROM and create an electronic report to explain the complex ethnic patterns of South Asia.



## interNET CONNECTION

For more information about South Asia visit the National Geographic Society's Web site.  
[www.nationalgeographic.com](http://www.nationalgeographic.com)

For a unit-based activity visit the Glencoe Social Studies Web site.  
[www.glencoe.com](http://www.glencoe.com)

Skilled hands sort apricots for rooftop drying in Pakistan's Hunza.

◀ These boys concentrate hard to learn Buddhist prayers in a school in Nepal.



# Cultural Geography

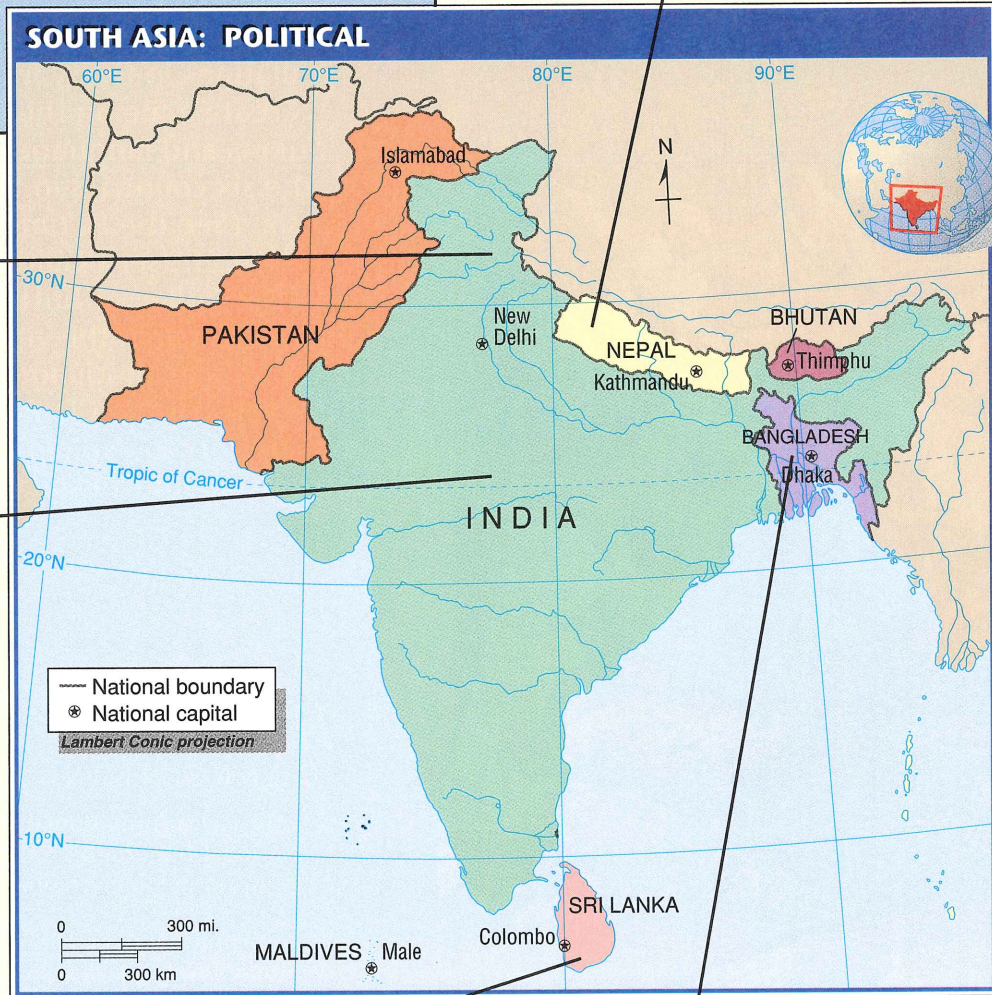
## EXPLORING CULTURAL DIVERSITY

1. What areas of South Asia are most heavily populated? Most sparsely populated?
2. What nations make up South Asia?

A well-known myth of the **Himalayas** tells of the Abominable Snowman, a beast with a large apelike body and a human face.

The state of **Kashmir** has been the scene of a Muslim-Hindu struggle since 1947.

**India's** people speak 14 major languages and hundreds of regional dialects.

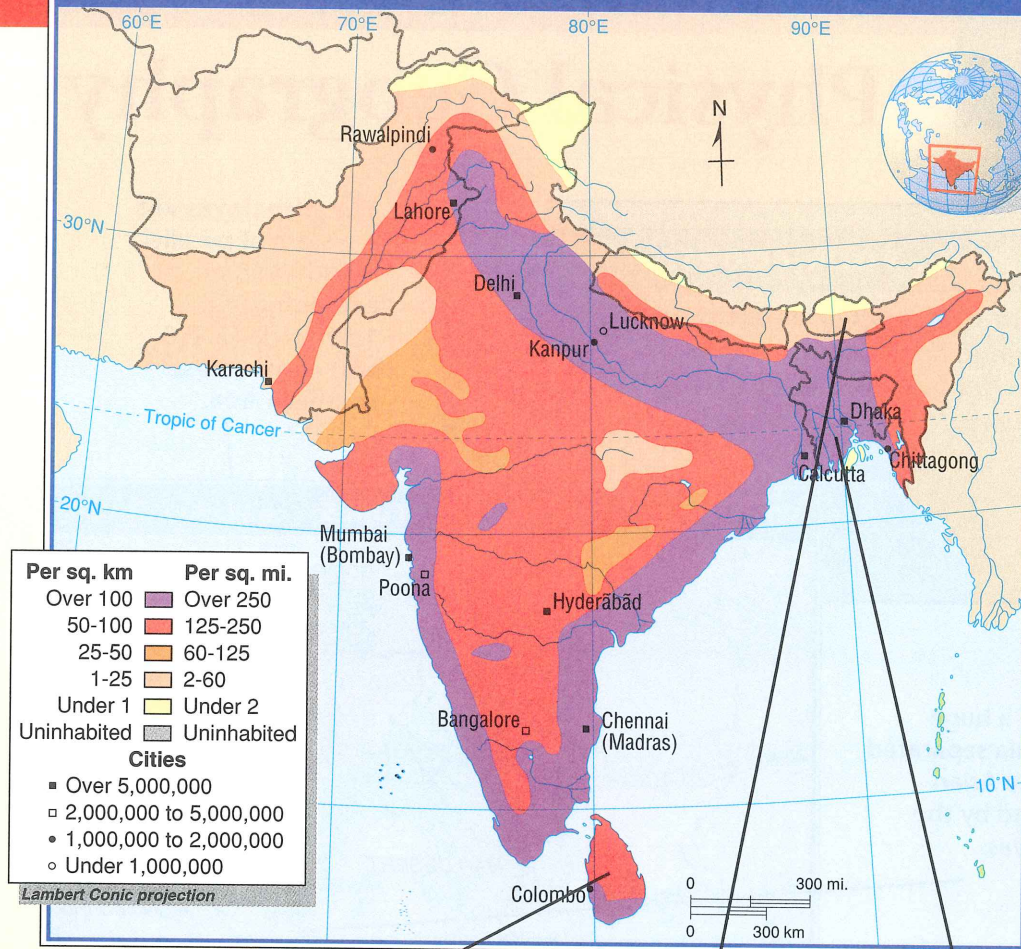


**Sri Lanka**, which means "resplendent land," is home to Buddhist Sinhalese and Hindu Tamils. Continuing bitter relations between the two groups have caused much turmoil on the beautiful island.

Until 1971 **Bangladesh** was the eastern part of Pakistan. Following a short civil war, the nation declared its independence and changed its name.



## SOUTH ASIA: POPULATION DENSITY



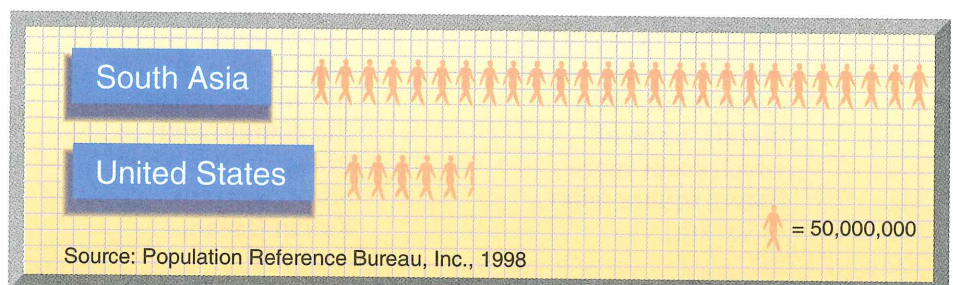
Since the 1970s, **India's** population has increased by about 14 million every year. Overpopulation has caused serious overcrowding.

About three-fourths of all **Sri Lankans** live in rural agricultural villages.

Most of **Bhutan's** population live in the fertile valleys that run north and south among the country's mountain ranges.

**Bangladesh** has a high birthrate and a relatively small area, resulting in a population density of about 2,454 per square mile (948/sq. km). More than 85 percent of the people are rural farmers.

## Population: South Asia and the United States



South Asia has more than five times as many people as the United States.



# Physical Geography

## CHARTING YOUR COURSE

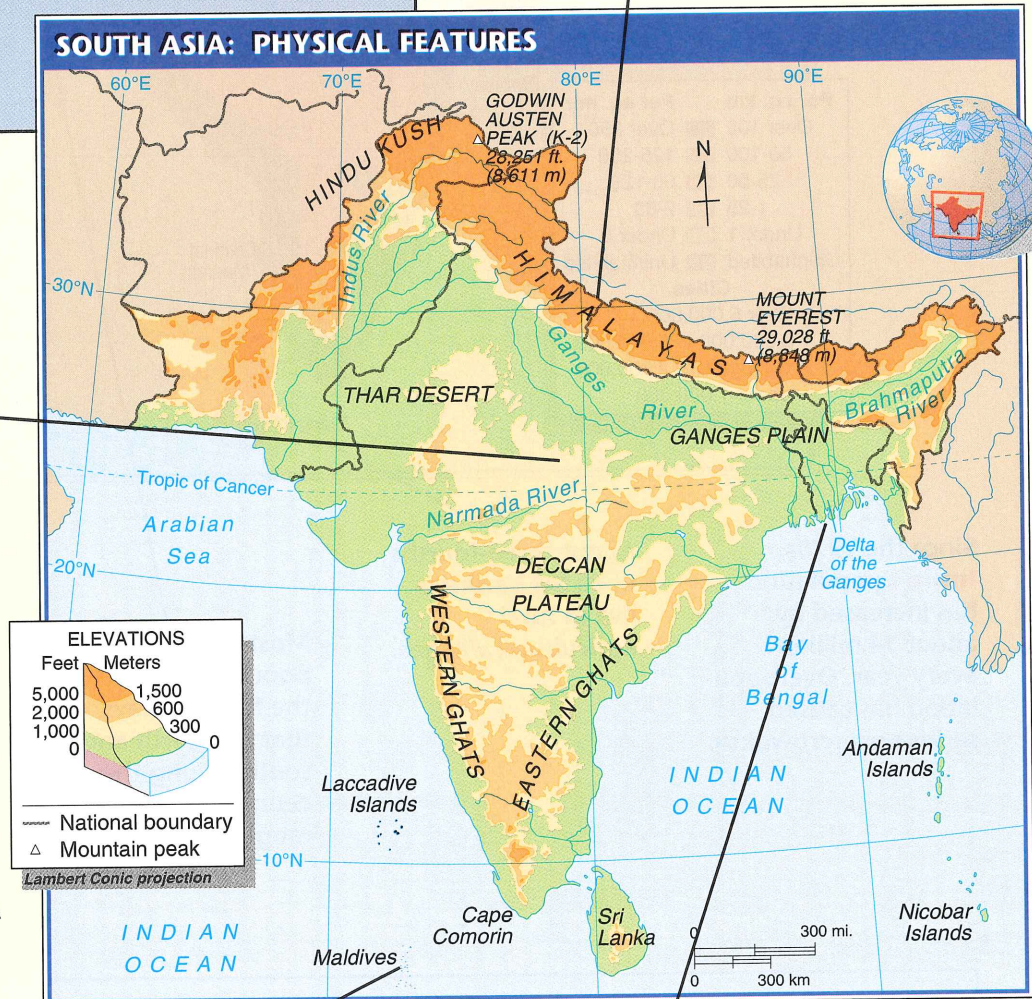
1. What two high mountain peaks are found in South Asia?
2. What large island is located east of Cape Comorin?

The **Himalayas** are a system of parallel mountain ranges extending in a 1,500-mile (2,410-km) curve across southern Asia.

**India** is a huge peninsula separated from the Asian mainland by the Himalayas.

The continental USA is about one and a half times larger than **South Asia**.

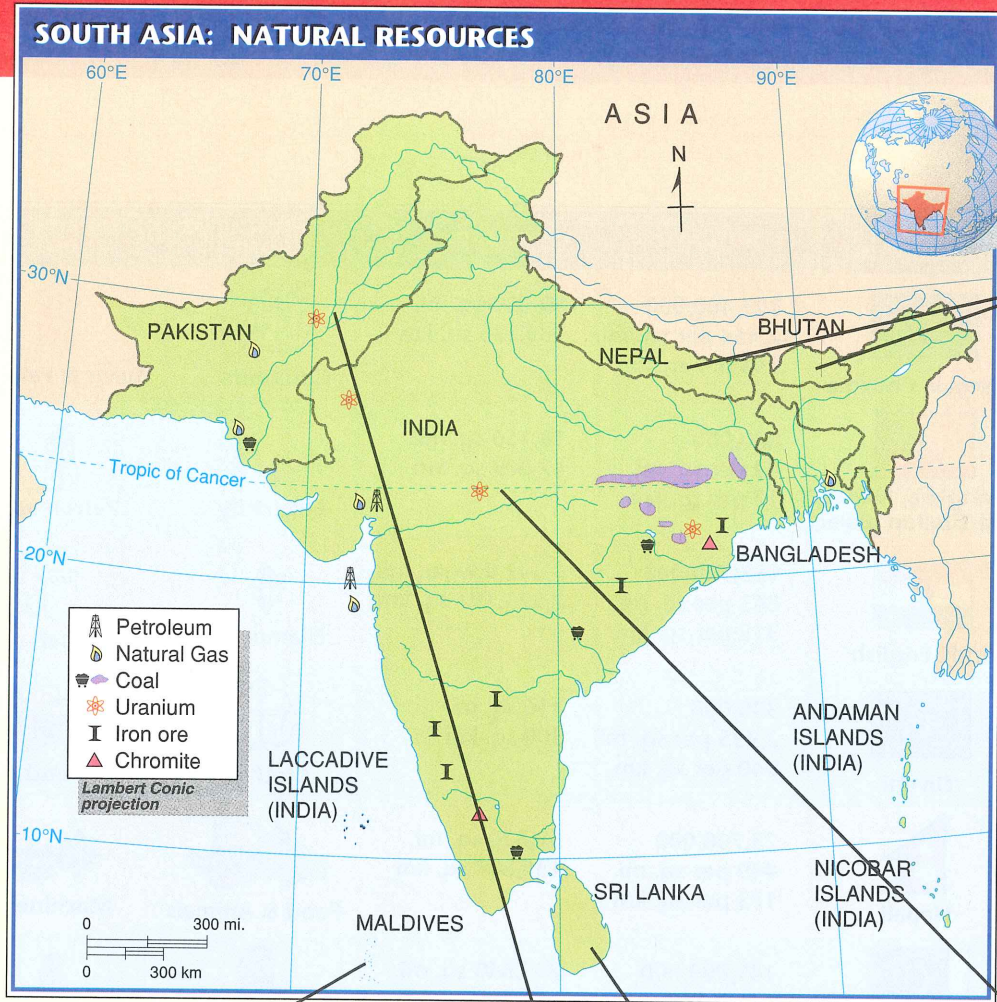
### SOUTH ASIA: PHYSICAL FEATURES



The country of the **Maldives** consists of about 1,200 coral islands, none of which cover more than 5 square miles (3 sq. km).

**Bangladesh** has the largest river delta in the world, where the Ganges and Brahmaputra rivers empty into the Indian Ocean.





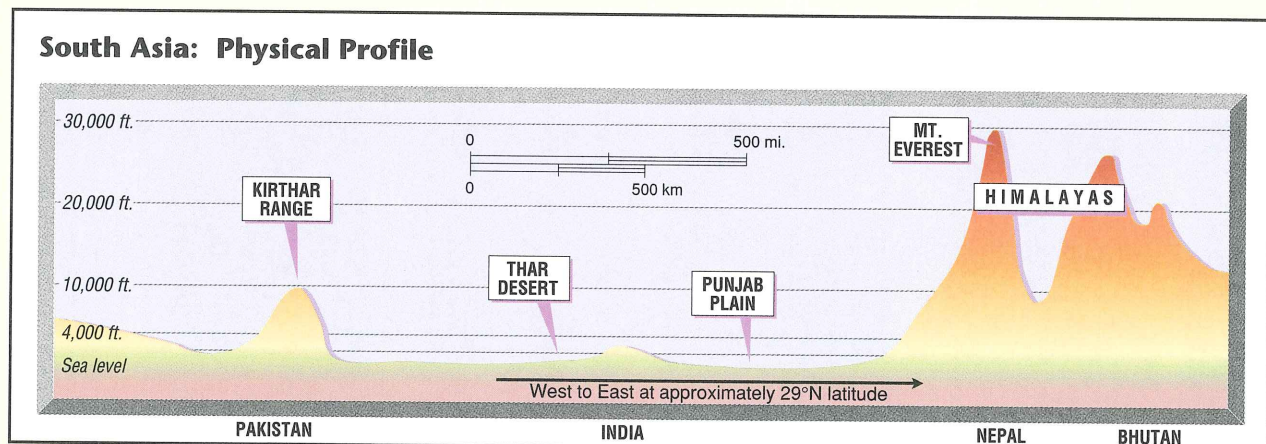
**Nepal and Bhutan** are both heavily forested. Nepal exports small amounts of timber from pine, oak, walnut, and poplar trees. Poplars also grow in Bhutan's forests, as do ash, oak, and willow.

The dazzling array of tropical fish and coral formations in the clear, deep blue lagoons of the **Maldives** draw tourists from all over the world.




















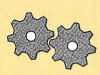
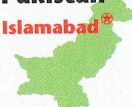






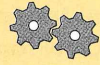
The **Indus** and its four tributaries are Pakistan's greatest natural resource, depositing fertile soil on the Punjab and Sind plains.

**Sri Lanka** is a leading rubber producer.

**India's** mica mines produce much of the world's supply.

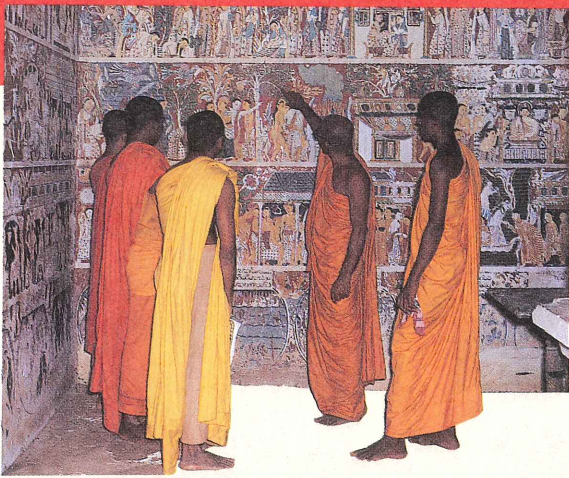




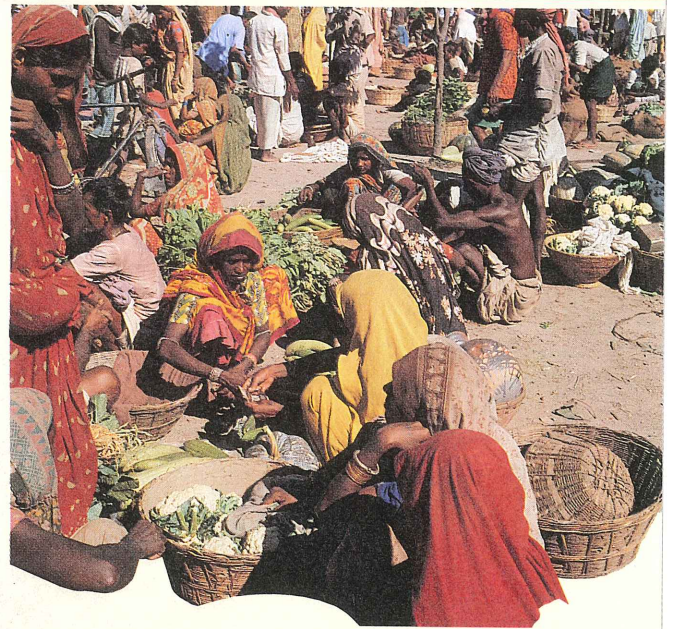
COUNTRY* AND CAPITAL	FLAG AND LANGUAGES	POPULATION	LANDMASS	PRINCIPAL EXPORT	PRINCIPAL IMPORT
<b>Bangladesh</b> 	 Bengali, Chakma	123,400,000 2,454 per sq. mi. 948 per sq. km	50,260 sq. mi. 130,173 sq. km	 Garments	 Yarns & Fabrics
<b>Bhutan</b> 	 Dzongkha, Nepali and Tibetan dialects	800,000 44 per sq. mi. 17 per sq. km	18,150 sq. mi. 47,009 sq. km	 Electricity	 Petroleum
<b>India</b> 	 Hindi, English	988,700,000 861 per sq. mi. 332 per sq. km	1,147,950 sq. mi. 2,973,191 sq. km	 Diamonds	 Fuels
<b>Maldives</b> 	 Divehi	300,000 2,435 per sq. mi. 940 per sq. km	116 sq. mi. 300 sq. km	 Clothing	 Food
<b>Nepal</b> 	 Nepali	23,700,000 449 per sq. mi. 173 per sq. km	52,820 sq. mi. 136,804 sq. km	 Food & Animals	 Machinery
<b>Pakistan</b> 	 Urdu, Punjabi, Sindhi, Pushtu	141,900,000 477 per sq. mi. 184 per sq. km	297,640 sq. mi. 770,888 sq. km	 Textiles	 Petroleum
<b>Sri Lanka</b> 	 Sinhalese, Tamil	18,900,000 757 per sq. mi. 292 per sq. km	24,950 sq. mi. 64,621 sq. km	 Food & Animals	 Machinery

\*Country maps not drawn to scale.





◀ Beautiful frescoes line the walls of a Buddhist temple in Sri Lanka.

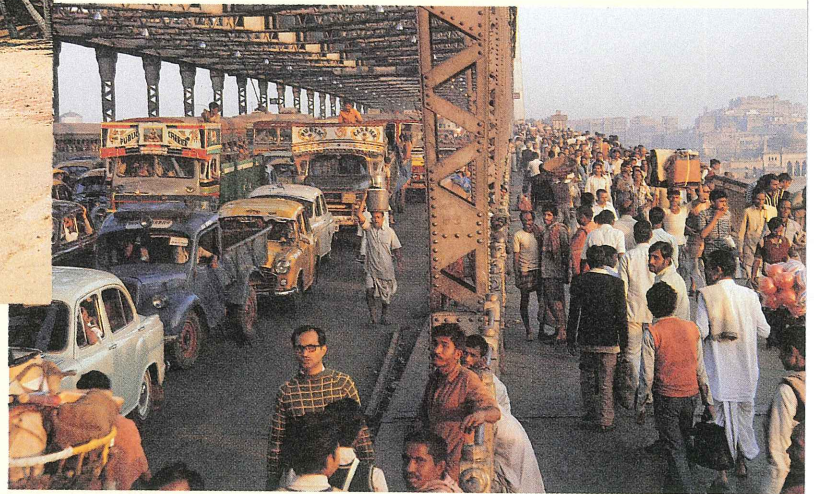


▲ Nepal's capital of Kathmandu has many outdoor markets in its traditional neighborhoods.

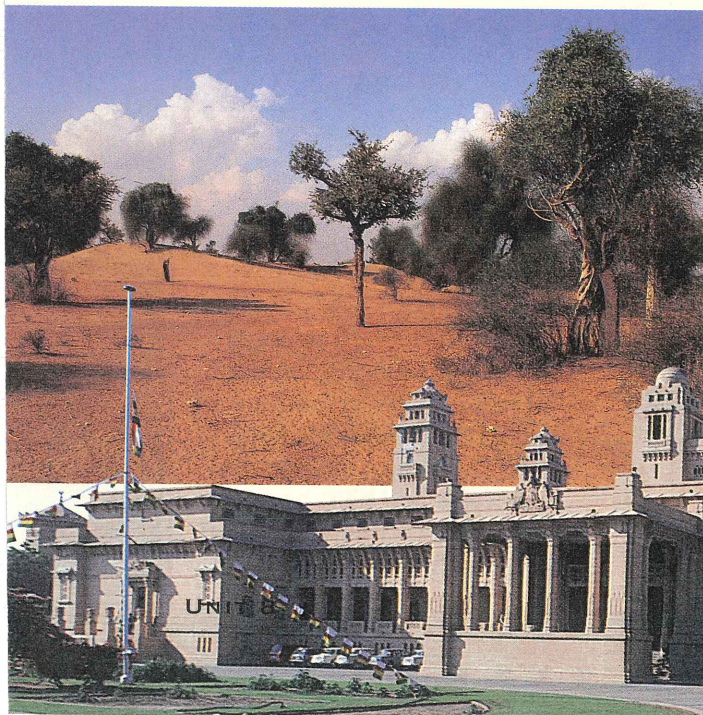
▼ The coasts of southern India and Sri Lanka are lined with beautiful beaches and tropical vegetation.



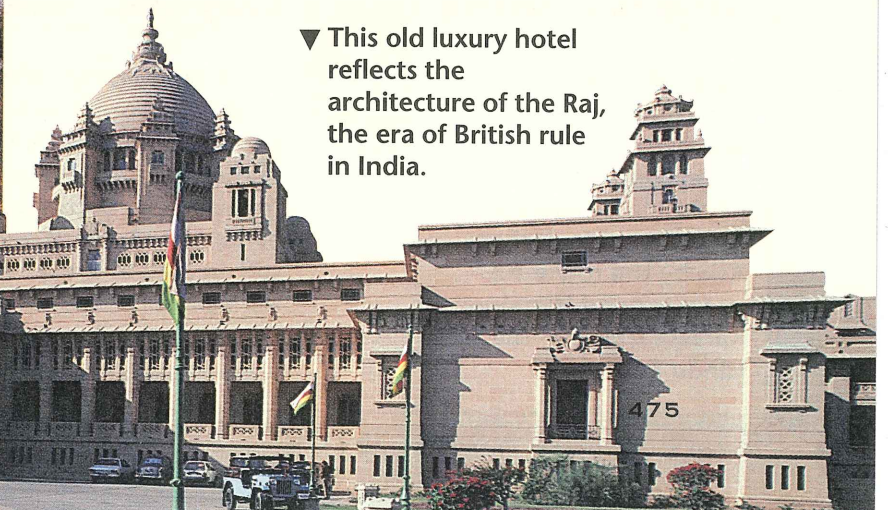
▼ India's Thar Desert receives about 10 inches (25 cm) of rain each year.



▲ Calcutta, India, is one of the busiest and most important port cities in Asia.

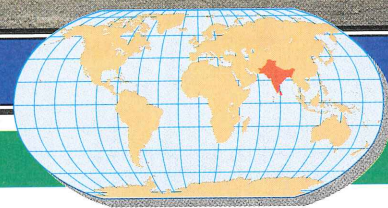
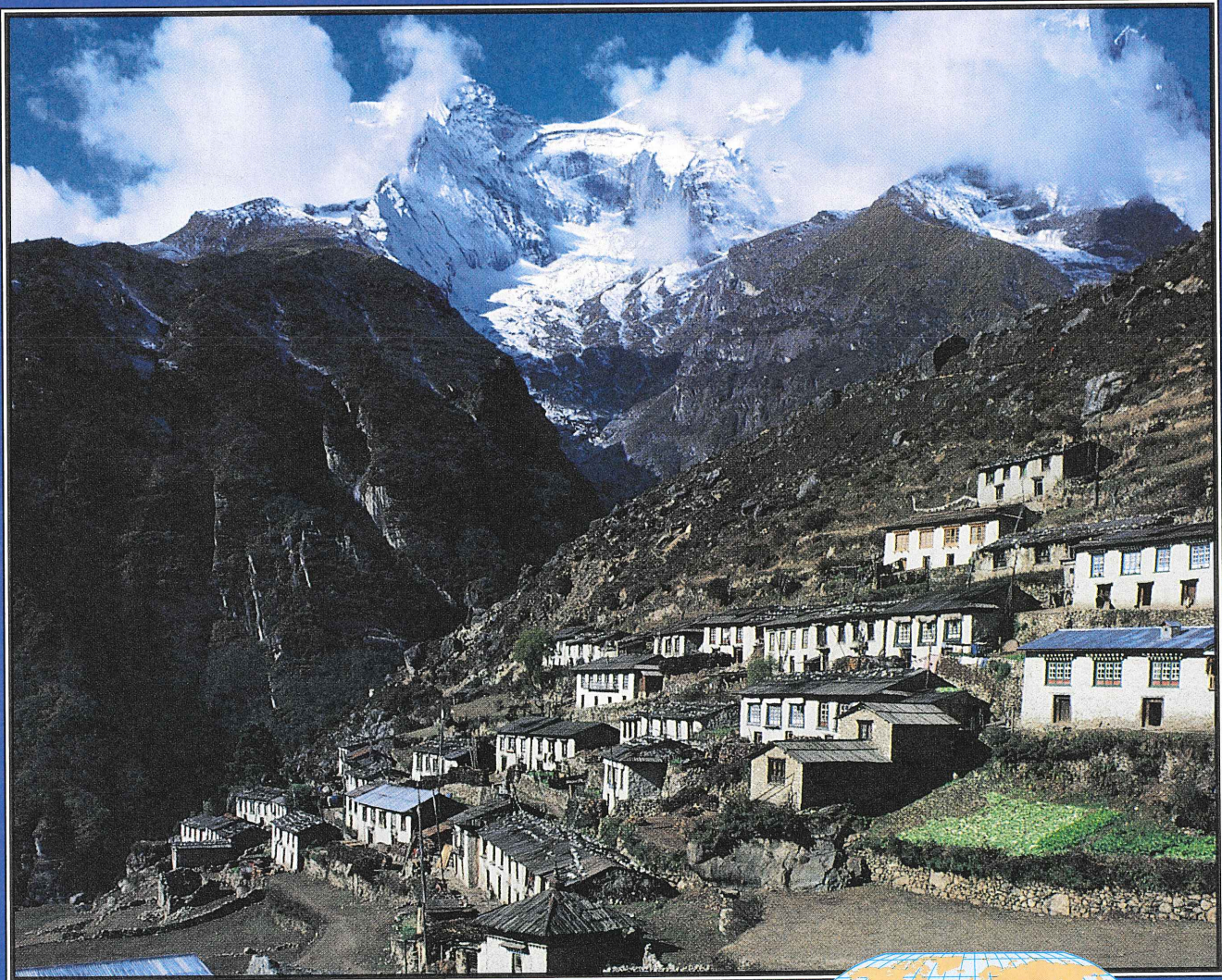


▼ This old luxury hotel reflects the architecture of the Raj, the era of British rule in India.





# The Physical Geography of South Asia



## CHAPTER FOCUS

### Geographic Setting

South Asia includes the large, diamond-shaped peninsula that forms the southern part of the Asian continent. This peninsula is separated from the main part of Asia by the towering, snow-capped Himalayas, Karakorams, and the Hindu Kush.



### Geographic Themes

#### Section 1 The Land

**PLACE** The river systems of South Asia form the world's largest continuous floodplain. These fertile valleys were home to one of the world's earliest civilizations and are still an area of great agricultural abundance.

▲ **Photograph:** Mountain village in the Himalayas, Nepal

#### Section 2 The Climate and Vegetation

**LOCATION** South Asia's climate and vegetation are strongly affected by seasonal winds. These winds bring the rains on which the region's farmers depend. Landforms, such as mountains and hills, have a powerful effect on where and how heavily the rains fall.



## SETTING THE SCENE

## Read to Discover . . .

- the mountains, plateaus, and plains of South Asia.
- the importance of the region's great river systems.
- the seasons of South Asia.
- the natural resources of South Asia.

## Key Terms

- subcontinent
- alluvial plain
- mica

## Identify and Locate

Himalayas, Vindhya Mountains, Western Ghats, Eastern Ghats, Deccan Plateau, Chota Nagpur Plateau, Ganges River, Indus River, Brahmaputra River

Laxmi chamari, Bangladesh

Assalamu-alaikum.  
I am spending my vacation in the tiny village of Laxmi chamari. Now it is rainy season and the many rivers and marshy areas are filled to the brim. Every day I go out in a boat to enjoy the vast green paddy fields. The plants waver gracefully when the wind blows over them.

Md. Afzar Ali



**A**fsar Ali writes from Bangladesh, one of the seven countries that make up the culture region of South Asia. Separated by mountains from the rest of Asia, South Asia is often called a **subcontinent**, a landmass like a continent, only smaller. It is rimmed by three large bodies of water—the Arabian Sea to the west, the Indian Ocean to the south, and the Bay of Bengal to the east. The peninsula is about 1.7 million square miles (4.4 million sq. km), and almost 75 percent of this land belongs to India. The other nations of South Asia include Pakistan, which is located along the northwest edge of the peninsula, and the small kingdoms of Nepal and Bhutan, which are in the mountains of the northeast. Bangladesh lies at the head of the Bay of Bengal, and Sri Lanka and the Maldives are island nations south of the Indian subcontinent.

## PLACE

## Mountains and Plateaus

**M**ountains and plateaus dominate the far northern landscape of South Asia. They include some of the highest mountain ranges in the world.


## The Himalayas

About 60 million years ago, when the earth's continents were still forming, a part of east Africa broke loose and began to drift slowly northward. When it rammed into Asia, the force of the collision caused the land to crumple up into a vast mountain range—the Himalayas. More than 1,000 miles (1,609 km) long and hundreds of miles wide, this range






contains some of the highest mountains in the world, including jagged peaks on which the snow never melts. The most famous of these is Mount Everest, the world's highest peak, which rises to 29,028 feet (8,848 m) above sea level. A writer describes the awesome sight of the Himalayas in the following way:

— — — — —  — — — — —

*To the north a deep tumult of swirling gray was all that could be seen of the Himalaya. At dusk, white egrets [birds] flapped across the sunken clouds, now black with rain; on earth, the dark had come. Then, 4 miles above these mud streets of the lowlands, at a point so high as to seem overhead, a luminous whiteness shown—the light of snows. Glaciers loomed. . . .*

— — — — —  — — — — —

### Other Northern Ranges

The Himalayas meet the Karakoram Mountains in the northernmost part of South Asia. Farther west, the mountains of the Hindu Kush complete the chain. Together, these northern ranges create a formidable barrier between the Indian subcontinent and the rest of Asia. In the past, invaders from the north could only enter the region through a few narrow passes. The mountain kingdoms of Bhutan and Nepal managed to remain isolated from the outside world until well into this century.

### Vindhya Mountains

The Vindhya Mountains lie across the center of the Indian subcontinent. These moun-

tains were also created by the shock of the collision between South Asia and the rest of the Asian continent. Although the Vindhya are not as lofty as the Himalayas, they separated the people of northern and southern India and contributed to the development of two very different cultures.

### The Ghats and the Deccan Plateau

Forming a triangle at the base of the Indian peninsula are two chains of rugged hills and eroded mountains called the Eastern Ghats and the Western Ghats. Sandwiched between the Eastern and Western Ghats is the main tableland of South Asia—the Deccan Plateau. Here the hills are flat-topped and steep-sided. In the past, lava flowed over the plateau, creating rich, black soil. Because the coastal ranges keep the moisture-laden seasonal winds from reaching the interior, the Deccan Plateau is relatively arid.

### Other Plateaus

In the northeastern part of the peninsula lies the Chota Nagpur Plateau, where the rounded hills are covered with forests of bamboo and teak. The other plateaus of South Asia include the stony tablelands that border the northwestern deserts and the humid Karnataka Plateau in the southwest, where herds of wild elephants range through dense rain forests.

### Plains

Spreading between the Himalayas and the Deccan Plateau are South Asia's northern plains. Much of this vast lowland area is fertile farmland, watered by the region's three great river systems. As a result, most of South Asia's population lives on these plains.

### PLACE

## Major River Systems

High in the Himalayas are the sources of South Asia's three great river systems: the Indus, the Brahmaputra, and the Ganges. The





## SOUTH ASIA: PHYSICAL-POLITICAL



### FOCUS ON GEOGRAPHIC THEMES



- Place:** What city is the capital of Sri Lanka?
- Movement:** Into what sea does the Indus River empty?
- Location:** Where is the highest elevation in South Asia?
- Region:** What ranges extend along the coasts of southern India?





Indus flows mostly through Pakistan and empties into the Arabian Sea. The Brahmaputra and the Ganges flow east and eventually join to form a broad delta along the Bay of Bengal.

As the rivers roll southward, they carry fertile soil washed down from the mountains. When the seasonal rains strike, the rivers overflow, and rich silt, or alluvial soil, is deposited in the floodplains. The **alluvial plain** that has been created by the flooding of the Indus and Ganges rivers is often referred to as the Indo-Gangetic (IN•duh•gan•JET•ik) Plain. It is the largest continuous alluvial plain in the world, and it supports a huge population. Along the eastern Ganges, densities reach more than 1,000 people per square mile.

#### HUMAN/ENVIRONMENT INTERACTION

## Natural Resources

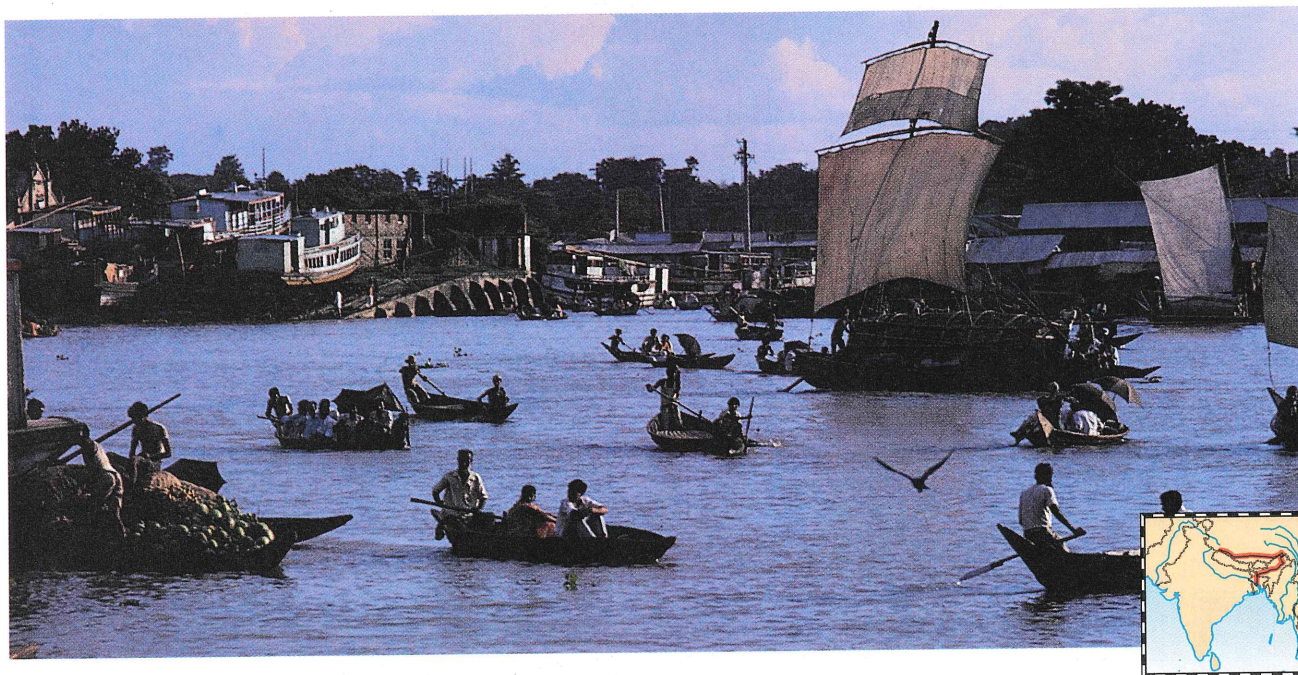
South Asia has a variety of natural resources on which the peoples of the region depend for their economic livelihood.

## Soil and Water

The rich soil of the Indo-Gangetic Plain is one of South Asia's greatest natural resources. The rivers also are great natural resources, providing drinking water and transportation for the region's enormous population.

Today a number of dam-building projects are underway in South Asia's river valleys. The goal is to harness the rivers' potential for hydroelectric power and to create more farmland through irrigation. Pakistan already has one of the world's largest hydroelectric plants. Recently another such project was completed in Bhutan. The government of India supplied Bhutan with the money needed to construct the Chukha hydroelectric project along the Wong Chu River. In return, India will receive some of the surplus energy that is generated. Mountainous Nepal, with its many waterfalls, is another nation with the potential for creating large amounts of hydroelectricity.

Fish thrive in the many inland waterways and coastal waters of South Asia. The people of the region catch large quantities of fish for their own use and for export. In Pakistan, herring, mackerel, sardines, sharks, and other fish



### Geographic Themes

#### Movement: Bangladesh

Many rivers and streams flow through Bangladesh and serve as the country's chief transportation routes. *What two rivers form a broad delta along the Bay of Bengal?*





are caught in the Arabian Sea. India is also a major fishing nation. A variety of fish—mackerel, sardines, shrimp, and shark—are caught in the surrounding seas. Indians catch *Bombay duck*, a small fish that is dried and used as a relish. The rivers of India yield carp and catfish.

## Energy Resources

South Asia has few significant oil reserves. Some known reserves are located along India's northwestern coast and near the Ganges Delta. There are also petroleum reserves in northern Pakistan, and offshore exploration is taking place in the Arabian Sea.

Natural gas fields are found in southern Pakistan and in the Ganges Delta area of India. Central and eastern India and southern Pakistan have some coal deposits. A major uranium deposit is located in India, north of the Eastern Ghats. Bangladesh has few energy resources other than several small deposits of natural gas and some low-grade coal.

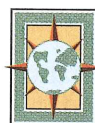
## Minerals

Minerals are scattered throughout the region. Large iron-ore deposits are found in the eastern part of the Deccan Plateau. India is one of the world's leading iron-ore exporters. South Asia also has deposits of manganese, chromite, coal, iron ore, and gypsum. Many of these resources still await development. India provides nine-tenths of the world's supply of mica, which is needed to manufacture electrical equipment. Nepal is another producer of mica. Small amounts of copper and gold are found in the Himalayas.

Sri Lanka is one of the world's largest producers of graphite. It is also famous for its beautiful gemstones. More than 40 different varieties of precious and semiprecious stones are mined on the island. The most valuable of these are sapphires and rubies. Sri Lanka has no known deposits of coal, oil, copper, or other resources that can be used for fuel or in industry.

## Timber

Another important resource of South Asia is timber. India's rain forests produce woods



### Geographic Themes

#### Human/Environment Interaction: Sri Lanka

Sapphires and rubies come from the same mineral—corundum. Corundum with chromium oxide produces rubies. A trace of iron and titanium results in blue sapphires. *What other mineral does Sri Lanka produce?*

such as sal and teak. India also produces a prized, sweet-smelling timber called sandalwood. Forests cover much of Bhutan, and the government of Bhutan is doing its best to protect this precious natural resource. Nepal's forests, also an important resource, have been severely reduced by overcutting. To protect Sri Lanka's forests, the export of timber from that country has been banned since 1977.

## SECTION 1 ASSESSMENT

### Checking for Understanding

- 1. Define** subcontinent, alluvial plain, mica.
- 2. Locating Places** What three bodies of water surround South Asia?
- 3. Place** What is the major mountain range along South Asia's northern border?
- 4. Human/Environment Interaction** What are three mineral resources of South Asia?

### Critical Thinking

- 5. Understanding Cause and Effect** Why are population densities so high in the Indo-Gangetic Plain?





# The Climate and Vegetation

## SETTING THE SCENE

### Read to Discover . . .

- the climate regions of South Asia.
- the importance of the seasonal rains.

### Key Terms

- monsoon
- cyclone

### Identify and Locate

Climate regions: highland, desert, steppe, tropical rain forest, tropical savanna

**S**outh Asia lies at about the same distance from the Equator as the Sahara and the other great deserts of the world. South Asia has a hot climate and a number of deserts, yet it also contains rain forests full of exotic orchids, fields of golden sunflowers, and mountainsides covered with birch trees and flowering shrubs.

### REGION

## South Asia's Climate Regions

**S**outh Asia is divided into five major climate regions: highland, desert, steppe, tropical rain forest, and tropical savanna.

### Highland Climate

The coldest climates of South Asia are found at the northern edge of the subcontinent, in the snowy Himalayan peaks along the border of Tibet. At lower elevations of the Himalayas, the climate is mild, or temperate. In the Himalayan foothills, temperatures are actually quite warm.

### Desert and Steppe Climates

A desert climate region is found along the Indus River. The land to the east of the Indus River is called the Thar Desert, or the Great Indian Desert.

A steppe climate region, made up of semi-arid grasslands, surrounds the desert climate region, except along the coast. There is also a narrow strip of steppe that runs north and south through the center of the peninsula, between the Western Ghats and Eastern Ghats.

### Tropical Climates

Tropical rain forest climate regions, with a variety of trees, are found along the western coast of the Indian subcontinent, near the Ganges Delta, and in the southwestern part of Sri Lanka. Tropical savanna regions, grasslands with both wet and dry seasons, surround the steppe climate area between the Ghats and are found in the remainder of Sri Lanka.

### Monsoons

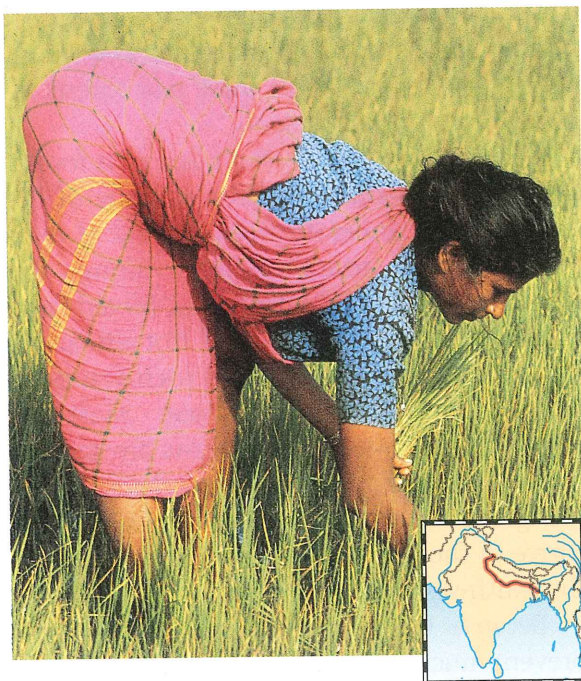
The climate of South Asia is greatly affected by **monsoons**, or seasonal winds. Between October and May, the winter winds blow from the north and northeast and are dry. As summer nears, temperatures gradually rise. The heated air also rises. As the air rises, a change in the wind direction is triggered. Moist air from the ocean replaces the rising air over the land. Winds blow from the Indian Ocean in the south and southwest between June and September, carrying warm, moist air. During this time, heavy rains provide the region with the largest portion of its yearly precipitation. The map on page 520 shows the difference between the winter and summer monsoons.





The rainfall is heaviest in the eastern part of South Asia as the winds sweep up the eastern side of the peninsula. One spot in the northeast of India near Shillong receives an average of 450 inches (1,140 cm) of rain each year. Once the wind reaches the Himalayas, it is forced west across the region. Most of the precipitation falls near the mountains. The rain decreases as the winds cross the region to the west.

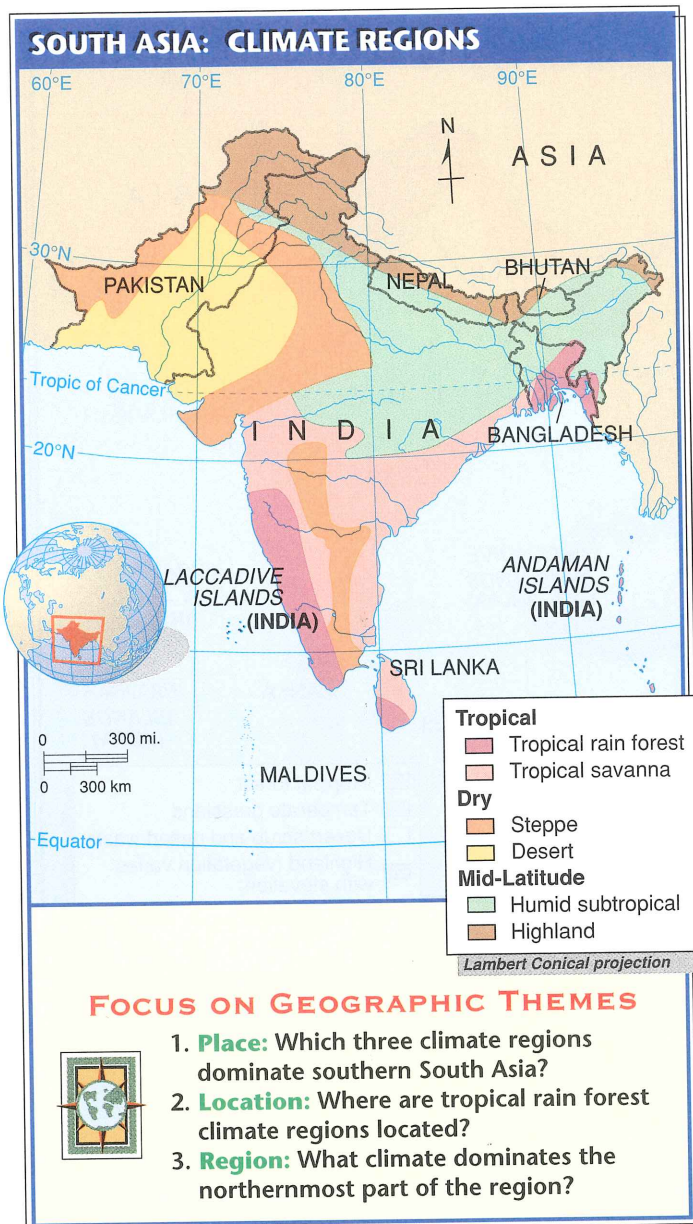
With a large number of South Asia's population dependent on the land, rainfall crucially affects lives. Each year millions anxiously wait and watch for the monsoon crossing the subcontinent. Most parts of South Asia receive only one spell of rain yearly, and the early part of the year is dry in most places. January is the coldest month, with temperatures below 60°F (15.6°C) in northern India. The temperature, however, rises sharply in the early spring, and by May, it often exceeds 100°F (37.8°C) in the Indo-Gangetic Plain. Thus, the people yearn for the rains.



### Geographic Themes

#### Region: India

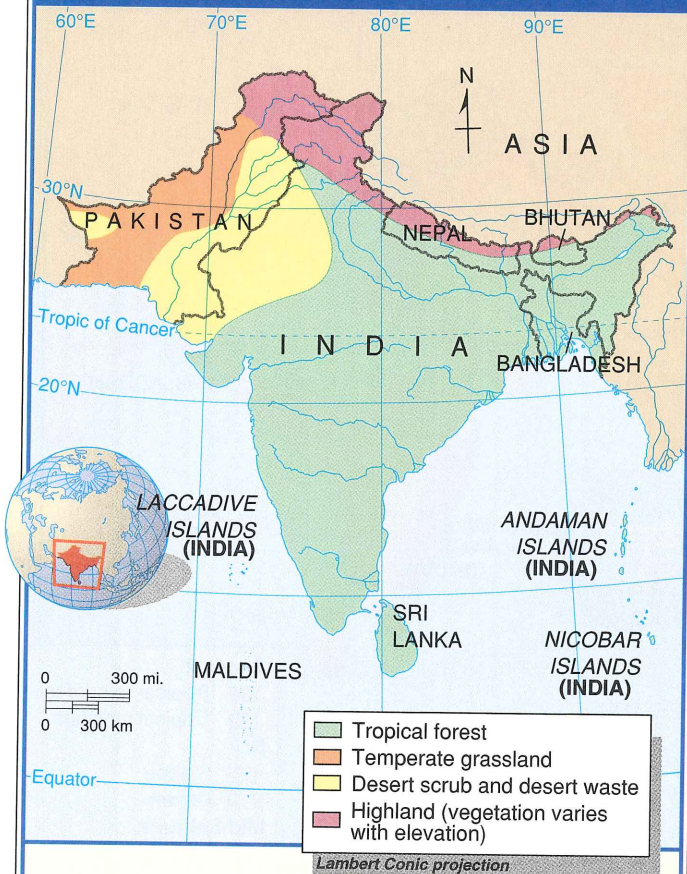
Farms cover more than half of India. Rice is the major crop, making India the world's second-largest rice producer after China. *How do monsoons affect the growing of rice?*



When the monsoon arrives, it is greeted with joyous song and dance. In southwestern India, forests of teak and bamboo turn green again. In Bangladesh, farmers plant their rice. The monsoon, unfortunately, does not benefit all South Asians equally. The dry Deccan Plateau receives little rain, even in monsoon season. Parts of western Pakistan may receive no rain at all for several years in a row. In low-lying Bangladesh, the monsoon rains frequently cause disastrous floods that ruin crops and kill livestock and people. Yet without the monsoons, farming in South Asia would suffer greatly.



## SOUTH ASIA: NATURAL VEGETATION



### FOCUS ON GEOGRAPHIC THEMES



- 1. Place:** What is the major type of vegetation in western South Asia?
- 2. Place:** What part of the region has temperate grasslands?
- 3. Region:** What type of vegetation is found in the northern part of the region?

## Cyclones

Bangladesh is also dramatically affected by cyclones. A cyclone is a storm marked by high winds and heavy rains. Because Bangladesh is a low-lying coastal region, the violent surges of seawater typical of cyclones often cause major disasters by submerging productive farmland and causing rivers to overflow into villages and fields. In 1991, a cyclone roaring in from the Bay of Bengal pounded the country's southern coast, killing at least 131,000 people and causing losses amounting to \$1.7 billion.

## HUMAN/ENVIRONMENT INTERACTION

## Vegetation

The natural vegetation of South Asia varies from one climate region to another, depending on rainfall and temperature. Long ago most of the region was probably covered with forests. Over the centuries, however, trees have been cut down for firewood and shelter and to create cropland and fields for grazing. Today only about one-sixth of the subcontinent is forested. Of this land much is covered with low, thorny scrub rather than tall trees.

## Forests

When the southwestern monsoons sweep along India's west coast, they encounter the Western Ghats and drop much of their moisture. This plentiful rainfall produces a band of rain forest, dense with coconut palms and teak. Rain forests full of towering ebony trees and magnificent orchids cover much of Sri Lanka, and similar forests grow on a small section of India's southeastern coast and along the Bay of Bengal. All of these rain forests lie in the path of the monsoon.

Surrounding India's west coast rain forests are woodlands that contain a mixture of deciduous and coniferous trees. A band of temperate mixed forest extends along the northern border of the peninsula. Mixed tropical forests thrive in the damp, hot climate of Bangladesh. Bamboo and trees, such as mango and palm, grow throughout most of Bangladesh. Valuable teak forests are located in the Chittagong Hills in the southeast, while mangrove trees and other tropical plants thrive in the Sundarbans, a swampy region in the southwest.

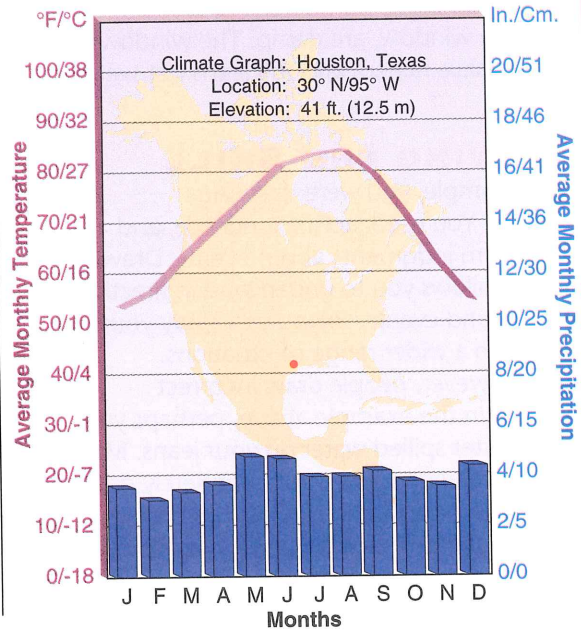
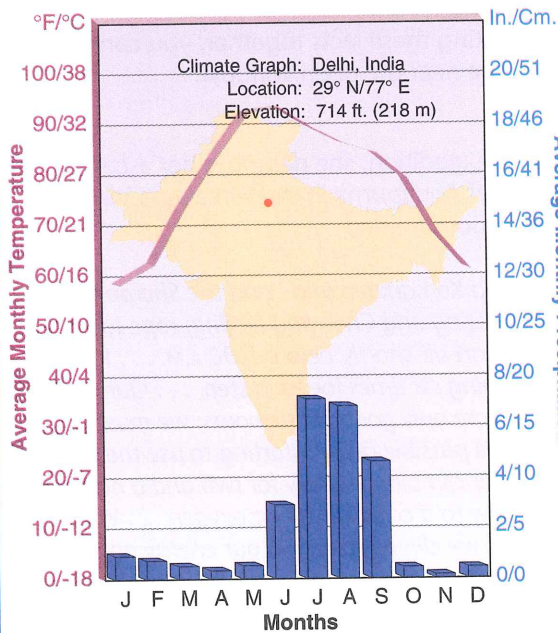
Because the Western and Eastern Ghats prevent much rain from reaching the center of India, the climate of the Deccan Plateau and the northern plains is drier than that of the coastal regions. As a result, the natural vegetation of India's interior is tropical dry deciduous forest, rather than a type of woodland that requires more rainfall.





## COMPARING CLIMATE REGIONS

### India and the United States



Source: World Weather Guide, 1990

\*lines measure temperature/bars measure precipitation



#### GRAPH STUDY

The climate graphs show the average monthly temperature and the average monthly precipitation in Delhi, India, and Houston, Texas. *What is the average December temperature and precipitation in each city?*

## Scrub and Grassland

The northwestern part of the Indian peninsula is extremely arid. Annual rainfall is less than 20 inches (51 cm) a year. The natural vegetation of this region is desert scrub—a mix of low trees and grasses. Some parts of this region can be used for grazing livestock, while other areas are wasteland. Irrigation projects, however, have made some parts of this desert area near the Indus River suitable for growing grains.

Grasslands and thick stands of bamboo are found in the foothills of the Himalayas. At higher elevations there are lovely alpine meadows, blooming with pink and blue flowers in spring. At the highest elevations of the mountains, however, there is little or no vegetation.

## SECTION 2 ASSESSMENT

### Checking for Understanding

- 1. Define** monsoon, cyclone.
- 2. Locating Places** In which climate region is Sri Lanka located?
- 3. Place** Why does the Deccan Plateau receive little of the monsoon rains?
- 4. Place** Why does the monsoon often cause flooding in Bangladesh?

### Critical Thinking

- 5. Making Comparisons** How does the vegetation of northwestern India and western Pakistan compare with that of Bangladesh?





# CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

## Drawing Conclusions

Suppose you come home from school and decide to put on your favorite jeans. But your jeans, which lie near an open window, are damp. The windowsill is wet, too. Putting these facts together, you conclude that it must have rained, and the jeans got wet because they were near the open window.

### REVIEWING THE SKILL

In this example, you were **drawing conclusions**. You used facts, experience, and insight to form judgments about events. Drawing conclusions allows you to understand indirectly stated ideas and events, so you can apply your knowledge to a wider range of situations.

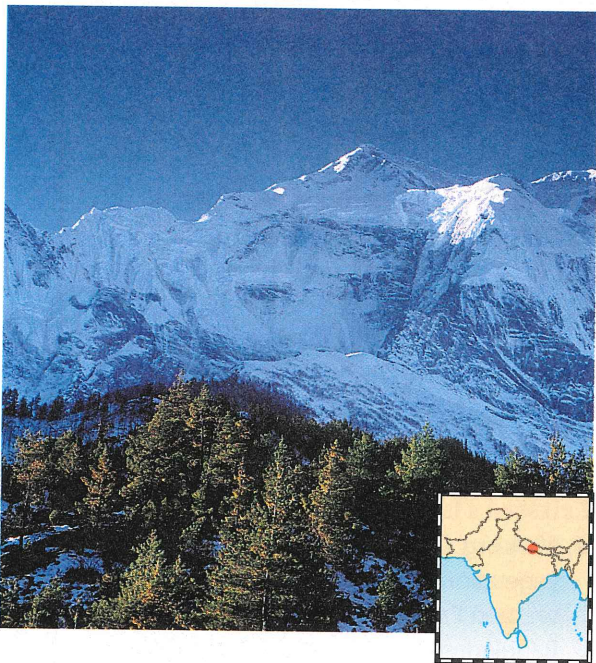
Often, however, people draw incorrect conclusions. In the example above, perhaps your brother or sister spilled water on your jeans. Maybe the jeans were washed, but not completely dried. To determine the accuracy of your conclusion, gather information that will prove or disprove it.

When drawing conclusions:

- Review the facts that are stated directly.
- Use your own knowledge, experience, and insight to form conclusions about them.
- Find information that proves or disproves your conclusions.

### PRACTICING THE SKILL

Read this excerpt from the diary of a mountain climber. A member of an all-



woman expedition, she describes her ascent to the summit of Annapurna in the Himalayas. Answer the questions below.

*Vera Komarkova and I and the Sherpas Mingma Tsering and Chewang Rinjing, rope together and start off shortly before 7:00 A.M. . . . I am breathing six times for each step. . . . Our oxygen tanks are only good for six hours; we must get as high as possible before starting to use them.*

*After climbing steadily for two and a half hours, we slow to a crawl. Time for oxygen . . . We don't talk as we climb higher. All our energy and concentration go into the steady, monotonous plod that is taking us toward our goal. There is still no wind, but we can see plumes of snow blowing off the summit in the winter gale. . . . Just below the summit pyramid the snow is again very deep, and our pace drags. But soon there is less snow, and the walking gets easier. . . . We traverse three or four bumps, and finally there we are. . . . The summit of Annapurna I at last! At 3:30 P.M. on October 15, 1978, we are at 26,504 feet on top of the world's tenth highest mountain — on top of the world.<sup>1</sup>*

1. What conclusion can you draw about the weather conditions on this day?
2. What evidence do you have to support this conclusion?
3. Why did the climbers walk so slowly?
4. What evidence do you have to support this conclusion?

For additional practice in drawing conclusions, see **Practicing Skills** on page 488 of the **Chapter 23 Assessment**.



The **Glencoe Skillbuilder Interactive Workbook, Level 2** provides instruction and practice in key social studies skills.

<sup>1</sup> Source: *Annapurna, A Woman's Place*, Arlene Blum. Sierra Club Books, San Francisco, 1980, pp. 213–214.



**1** SECTION  
**The Land**

KEY TERMS

SUMMARY

subcontinent (p. 477)  
alluvial plain (p. 480)  
mica (p. 481)

- South Asia consists of a large peninsula with an island near its southern tip. The peninsula is also known as a subcontinent, a large landmass smaller than a continent.
- South Asia is bordered by the Himalayas in the north, the Arabian Sea on the west, the Indian Ocean on the south, and the Bay of Bengal on the east.
- Most of the region's people live on the northern plains, an agriculturally rich area.
- South Asia has three great river systems and the world's largest alluvial plain.
- South Asia has few significant oil reserves, but some natural gas, coal, and uranium. The region also has a number of substantial mineral deposits, including iron ore and mica.



Brahmaputra River  
Delta in Bangladesh

**2** SECTION  
**The Climate and  
Vegetation**

KEY TERMS

SUMMARY

monsoon (p. 482)  
cyclone (p. 484)

- South Asia has highland, desert, steppe, and tropical climates.
- The monsoon is a seasonal change in wind direction that brings heavy rains to much of South Asia between June and September.
- South Asia's vegetation is affected by altitude, rainfall, and human activity.
- South Asia was once largely covered by forests. Today only a small portion of the land is forested.



Indian farmer planting  
rice





### Reviewing Key Terms

Choose the vocabulary term that best completes each of the sentences below. Write your answers on a separate sheet of paper.

subcontinent (p. 477)      monsoon (p. 482)  
alluvial plain (p. 480)      cyclone (p. 484)  
mica (p. 481)

#### SECTION 1

1. Silt from a flooding river is deposited in the \_\_\_\_\_.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ is a mineral used in the manufacture of electrical equipment.
3. The Indian peninsula is often called a \_\_\_\_\_.

#### SECTION 2

4. A severe storm marked by heavy rains and strong winds is a \_\_\_\_\_.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ refers to seasonal reversals in wind direction.

### Reviewing Facts

#### SECTION 1

6. In what mountain range is Mount Everest located?
7. What are the names of the two mountain ranges that form a triangle at the base of the Indian peninsula?
8. Where are the sources of the Indus, the Ganges, and the Brahmaputra rivers?
9. What are the two goals of the dam-building projects in South Asia?
10. Which country in South Asia is known for its gemstones?

#### SECTION 2

11. Where are the coldest climates of South Asia found?
12. Name two locations in South Asia where tropical rain forests exist.
13. From which direction do winds blow during the June-to-September monsoon season?

14. Why have many of South Asia's forests disappeared?
15. In what part of Nepal are grains cultivated?

### Critical Thinking

16. **Understanding Cause and Effect** In what way are the Himalayas responsible for the richness of the soil in the Indian subcontinent's northern plains?
17. **Making Comparisons** State the advantages and disadvantages the monsoon brings to the people of South Asia.



### Geographic Themes

18. **Human/Environment Interaction** How have the inhabitants of the arid regions of western Pakistan adapted their lifestyle in response to the climate and vegetation?
19. **Location** Where do the monsoon rains strike hardest?



### Practicing Skills

#### Drawing Conclusions

Refer to the skills feature on page 486.

20. What equipment did Vera bring on her mountain climb?
21. What conclusion can you draw about her physical reaction to the climb?
22. What evidence do you have to support this conclusion?

### Using the Unit Atlas

Refer to the physical geography section of the Unit Atlas on pages 472–473.

23. Where is the world's largest river delta? What two rivers form this delta?
24. What is a major natural resource of Sri Lanka?



**Projects**

**Individual Activity**

Choose one of the seven nations of South Asia and research the interrelationships among its physical features, climate, and vegetation.

**Cooperative Learning Activity**

Working in a small group, trace the path of a typical monsoon across South Asia. Research when and where the monsoon rains fall, and how they affect the different regions along their path. Present your findings to the class using maps and other visual aids as well as written descriptions.

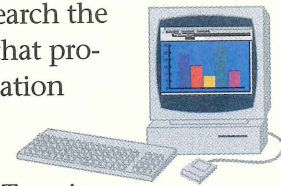
**Writing About Geography**

**Description** Imagine that you are a tourist visiting the plains of northern India for the

first time. It is May, and the land is hot and dry. Describe the dust, the heat, and the vegetation. Then describe the coming of the monsoon rains and their effect on the rivers, vegetation, and people of the area. Use your journal record and other references in writing your description.

**Technology Activity**

**Using the Internet** Search the Internet for a Web site that provides additional information about the Himalayas. Use a search engine to help focus your search. Type in words such as *himalayas*, *nepal*, and *trekking*. Write a short story based on your findings.



**Locating Places**

**SOUTH ASIA:  
PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY**

Match the letters on the map with the places and physical features of South Asia. Write your answers on a separate sheet of paper.

1. Deccan Plateau
2. Himalayas
3. Arabian Sea
4. Nepal
5. Indus River
6. Pakistan
7. Thar Desert
8. Ganges River
9. Bay of Bengal
10. Brahmaputra River

