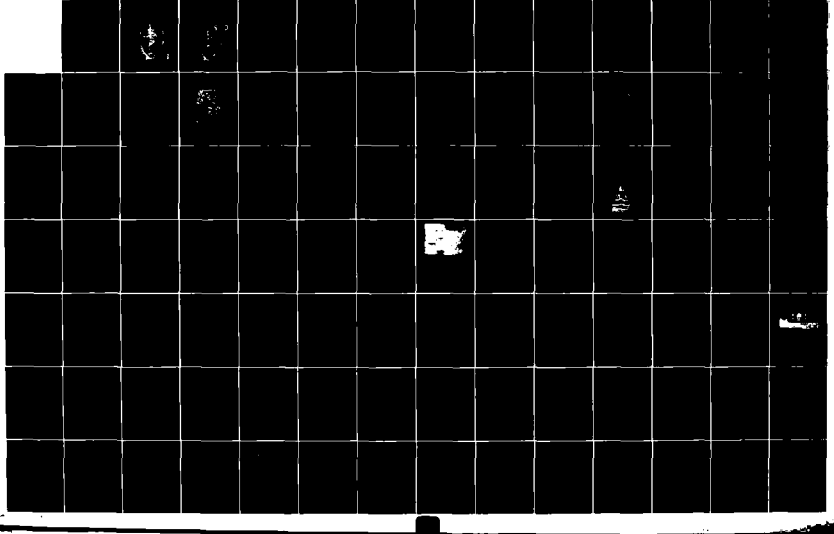
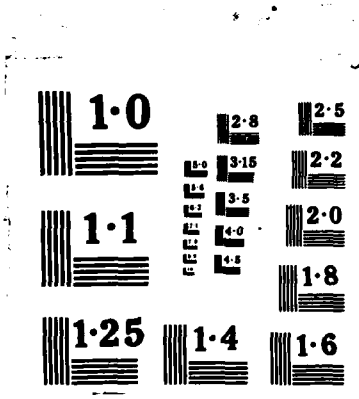
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Research completed
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Foreword

This volume is one of a continuing series of books prepared by Foreign Area Studies, The American University, under the Country Studies/Area Handbook Program. The last page of this book provides a listing of other published studies. Each book in the series deals with a particular foreign country, describing and analyzing its economic, national security, political, and social systems and institutions and examining the interrelationships of those systems and institutions and the ways that they are shaped by cultural factors. Each study is written by a multidisciplinary team of social scientists. The authors seek to provide a basic insight and understanding of the society under observation, striving for a dynamic rather than a static portrayal of it. The study focuses on historical antecedents and on the cultural, political, and socioeconomic characteristics that contribute to cohesion and cleavage within the society. Particular attention is given to the origins and traditions of the people who make up the society, their dominant beliefs and values, their community of interests and the issues on which they are divided, the nature and extent of their involvement with the national institutions, and their attitudes toward each other and toward the social system and political order within which they live.

The contents of the book represent the views, opinions, and findings of Foreign Area Studies and should not be construed as an official Department of the Army position, policy, or decision, unless so designated by other official documentation. The authors have sought to adhere to accepted standards of scholarly objectivity. Such corrections, additions, and suggestions for factual or other changes that readers may have will be welcomed for use in future new editions.

The Director
Foreign Area Studies
The American University
5010 Wisconsin Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20016

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Contents:

Foreword iii

Acknowledgments v

Preface xi

Country Profile xix

Introduction xxvii

Chapter 1. Historical Setting 1

Surjit Mansingh

THE ANTECEDENTS—EARLY EMPIRES AND NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS—THE CLASSICAL AGE—THE COMING OF ISLAM AND THE DELHI SULTANATE—THE MUGHAL ERA—The Marathas—The Sikhs—The Coming of the Europeans—COMPANY RULE AND THE BRITISH EMPIRE—The Events of 1857—The Indian National Congress—The Beginnings of Muslim Separatism—Agitation, War, and Reform, 1905–19—Gandhi, Noncooperation, and Mass Politics—The 1935 Constitution—INDEPENDENCE—Integration of the Princely States—The Constitution—The Nehru Era—The Trough of the 1960s and the Rise of Indira Gandhi to Power—The Emergency and the Janata Phase

Chapter 2. Geographic and Demographic Setting 87

P.A. Kluck

GEOGRAPHY—Principal Regions—Rivers—Climate—POPULATION—Structure and Dynamics—Population EALTH—Health Conditions—Health Care—EDUCATION—Organization of Education—Education and Society

Chapter 3. Religious Life 131

Beryl Lieff Benderly

BASIC CONCEPTS OF SOUTH ASIAN RELIGIONS—HINDUISM—Sacred Scriptures—Elements of Classical Hinduism—The Pantheon—Sectarianism—Asceticism and Monasticism—Religious Specialists—Ceremonial Observances—Hinduism in Transition—THE GREAT REFORMS—Buddhism—Jainism—ISLAM—Tenets—Internal Divisions—Worship—Conversion—The Muslim Community—SIKHISM—OTHER RELIGIONS—Christianity—Zoroastrianism—Judaism

Chapter 4. Linguistic Relations and Ethnic Minorities 177

P.A. Kluck

LINGUISTIC RELATIONS—Languages of India—The Social Context of Language—ETHNIC MINORITIES—Tribes—Descendants of Foreign Groups

Chapter 5. Social Systems 217

P.A. Kluck

CASTE—Theory of Caste—Caste in Operation—FAMILY AND KIN—Marriage—Roles and Relationships—VILLAGE INDIA—SOCIAL CHANGE—Modifications in Caste Behavior—Urbanization

Chapter 6. Character and Structure of the Economy 273

Darrel R. Eglin

PROFILE OF THE ECONOMY—ROLE OF GOVERNMENT—Planning—Budget—Public Debt—Foreign Aid—LABOR—INDUSTRY—Energy—Mining and Quarrying—Manufacturing—BANKING AND MONETARY POLICY—FOREIGN TRADE—BALANCE OF PAYMENTS

Chapter 7. Agriculture 337

Clarence Edward Pike

LAND USE—Himalayas—Indo-Gangetic Plain—Peninsula India—LAND TENURE—Landholdings—Structure at Independence—Preindependence Land Tenure—Land Reforms—AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT—Research and Education—Agricultural Extension—Irrigation—Fertilizers—Seeds—Pesticides—The Green Revolution—FINANCING AND MARKETING—Cooperatives and Credit—Price Policies and Programs—Marketing Services—External Aid—CROP PRODUCTION—Food Grains—Other Food Crops—Industrial and Export Crops—LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY—FORESTRY—FISHING

Chapter 8. Government and Politics 375

Donald M. Seekins

INDIA'S POLITICAL LEGACIES—THE CONSTITUTION AND THE EVOLUTION OF GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS—INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS—Group Rights—Press Freedom—Emergency Provisions—The Union Government—The Judiciary—State and Local Government—The Public Services and Administration—NATIONAL UNITY IN A DIVIDED SOCIETY—Politics in a "Compartmentalized" Society—Regionalism and Regional Political Crises—Religion and Politics—Occupational Interest Groups—The Crisis in Punjab—THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS AND NATIONAL LEADER-

SHIP—Indira Gandhi as a National Leader, 1966–80—Years of Crisis, 1980–85—Congress Ideology and Organization in the 1980s—Electoral Performance, 1952–84—OPPOSITION PARTIES—The Rise and Fall of Janata, 1977–79—Opposition Parties in the Mid-1980s

Chapter 9. Foreign Relations 459

Surjit Mansingh

THE FOREIGN POLICYMAKING ESTABLISHMENT—NONALIGNMENT—RELATIONS WITH PAKISTAN—RELATIONS WITH CHINA—RELATIONS WITH SMALL NEIGHBORS—RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES—RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION—INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Chapter 10. National Security 503

Melinda W. Cooke

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARMED FORCES—The British Heritage—The National Forces—THE INDIAN STRATEGIC PERSPECTIVE, 1985—THE ARMED FORCES IN PUBLIC LIFE—Missions—Personnel: Source and Quality—Defense Spending—Defense Industry—The Nuclear and Space Programs—ORGANIZATION, EQUIPMENT, AND TRAINING—The Ministry of Defence—Army—Air Force—Navy—Coast Guard—Reserves and Auxiliaries—Conditions of Service—Uniforms, Rank, and Insignia—Military Justice—FOREIGN MILITARY RELATIONS—THE INTELLIGENCE SYSTEM—PUBLIC ORDER AND INTERNAL SECURITY—Religious, Communal, Class, and Regional Differences—External Agitation and Internal Subversion—Assam and the Northeast—Sikh Agitation in the State of Punjab—Crime—LAW ENFORCEMENT—Police in 1985: A System in Crisis—National-Level Agencies—State and Other Police Services—THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM—Criminal Law and Procedure—Security Legislation—The Prison System

Appendix. Tables 577
Bibliography 607
Glossary 659
Index 663

List of Figures

1	Republic of India, 1985	xxvi
2	Harappan Culture Sites In or Near the Area That Is Now Pakistan	7
3	Mughal Empire, Late Seventeenth Century	26
4	British Indian Empire	52
5	Major Topographical Features and Rivers	94
6	Average Annual Temperature and Rainfall	98
7	Age-Sex Pyramid, 1981–84	100
8	Population Density, 1981	104
9	Contraceptive Use by Method, Selected Years, 1965–66 to 1982–83	109
10	Typical Organization of Education, Mid-1980s	118
11	States and Union Territories Reporting High Concentrations of Non-Hindu Communities, 1971	136
12	Distribution of Language Families and Major Languages	183
13	Scheduled Tribes as a Percentage of Total Population, Mid-1970s	203
14	Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by Sector of Origin, FY 1950 and FY 1982	280
15	National Highway System, Railroad System, and Major Ports and Airports, 1984	284
16	Governmental System, 1985	389
17	Indian National Congress Percentage of the Popular Vote Throughout India and in Selected Administrative Divisions, 1962–84	443
18	Evolution of Major Political Parties, 1885–1984	454
19	Area Commands of the Army, Air Force, and Navy, 1985	538
20	Officer Ranks and Insignia of the Indian Armed Forces and Their United States Equivalents, 1985	546
21	Junior Commissioned Officers and Other Ranks, 1985	547

Preface

In late December 1984 Rajiv Gandhi, who had succeeded his mother as prime minister after her assassination on October 31, 1984, led his political party to an overwhelming victory in the nationwide elections for all but a few members of the Lok Sabha (House of the People). His party's victory far exceeded any achieved when it was headed by either his illustrious mother, Indira Gandhi, or his even more illustrious grandfather, Jawaharlal Nehru. Most Indians seemed satisfied with the decision of the voters, but some expressed concern over the continuation of the "Nehru dynasty."

India: A Country Study replaces the *Area Handbook for India* published in 1975. Like its predecessor, the present book is an attempt to treat in a compact and objective manner the dominant historical, social, economic, political, and national security aspects of contemporary India. Sources of information included scholarly books, journals, and monographs; official reports and documents of governments and international organizations; foreign and domestic newspapers and periodicals; and interviews with individuals with special competence in South Asian affairs. Relatively up-to-date economic data were available from several sources, but the sources were not always in agreement. Most demographic data should be viewed as estimates.

Chapter bibliographies appear at the end of the book; brief comments on some of the more valuable sources for further reading appear at the conclusion of each chapter. Measurements are generally given in the metric system; a conversion table is provided to assist those who are unfamiliar with the system (see table 1, Appendix).

In determining the spelling of Indian place-names, the authors followed the guidance of the gazetteer for India prepared in 1952 by the United States Board on Geographic Names and the Indian government's *India: A Reference Annual*. English usage generally adhered to *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*; the spelling adopted by the Indian government was used for Indian officials and other institutions, however.

Table A. Chronology of Important Events

Period	Description
Ancient India	
ca. 3000–1500 B.C.	Harappan culture
ca. 1500–800 B.C.	Migration and spread of Aryan-speaking peoples into subcontinent
ca. 600 B.C.	Rise of Magadha
ca. 550–486 B.C.	Life of the Buddha
326–25 B.C.	Alexander of Macedon in northwest India
321-ca. 185 B.C.	Mauryan Empire
273–232 B.C.	Reign of Asoka
128 B.C.-A.D. 121	Satavahana Dynasty in Deccan
50 B.C.-A.D. 100	Sangam period in South India; trade with Rome; Tamil kings in Ceylon (present-day Sri Lanka)
A.D. 78	Beginning of new Saka era; founding of Kushan Empire in northwest
150	Sanskirt inscription of Rudradaman I; Saka king in western India
The Classical Age	
319-ca. 500	Gupta Empire
375–415	Reign of Chandragupta II
399–414	Visit of Fa-Hsien, Chinese Buddhist pilgrim
ca. 500–600	Huns in northwest India; Guptas continue in eastern India; rise of Chalukya power in Deccan; rise of Pallava power in South India
606–47	Reign of Harsha-vardhana of Kanauj
The Medieval Period	
711	Arab invasion of Sind
ca. 780–826	Life of Shankara, the philosopher
ca. 899–1300	Chola power in South India, expansion in Southeast Asia
985–1018	Reign of Rajaraja I, Chola king
998–1030	Raids of Mahmud of Ghazni in northwest
1192	Battle of Tarain, defeat of Rajputs by Muhammad of Ghor
1206	Establishment of Muslim Slave Dynasty in Delhi
1296–1316	Reign of Alauddin Khalji, expansion of Delhi sultanate
1325–51	Reign of Muhammad bin Tughla
1336–1565	Vijayanagar Empire in South India
1347	Founding of Bahmani kingdom in Deccan
1398	Invasion by Timur, sack of Delhi
ca. 1400–1526	Independent kingdoms in North India
1440–1518	Life of Kabir, bhakti saint
1469–1539	Life of Nanak Dev, founder of Sikhism
1485–1533	Life of Chitanya, bhakti saint
1510	Portuguese capture Goa

Table A. Chronology (continued)

Period	Description
The Mughal Period	
1526	First Battle of Panipat, defeat of Ibrahim Lodi by Babur
1526–30	Reign of Babur, founder of Mughal Dynasty
1530–39	Reign of Humayun, struggle for power
1539–55	Sur Dynasty in Delhi
1556–1605	Reign of Akbar, consolidation and expansion of Mughal power
1571	Foundation of Fatehpur Sikri
1579	Abolition of special tax on Hindus
1580	First Jesuit mission at Mughal court
1605–27	Reign of Jahangir
1606	Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Das
1616–18	Sir Thomas Roe obtains permission for English East India Company to trade in empire
1628–57	Reign of Shah Jahan; Taj Mahal and other great buildings constructed; Mughal expansion in Deccan
1630–80	Life of Sivaji, Maratha leader
1657–58	War of succession
1658–1707	Reign of Aurangzeb
1666–1708	Life of Guru Gobind Singh, tenth and last Sikh guru
1675	Execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur
1679	Reimposition of the special tax on Hindus
1681	Aurangzeb moves to Deccan, war with Marathas
1699	East India Company constructs Fort William at Calcutta
1707–12	Reign of Bahadur Shah followed by gradual disintegration of Mughal Empire into virtually independent provinces
1739	Nadir Shah sacks Delhi
1740–60	Struggles for power in Carnatic and Bengal involving forces of European trading company as well as indigenous forces
1761	At third Battle of Panipat, Marathas defeated by Ahmad Shah Abdali
British Period	
Company Rule	
1757	Battle of Plassey; nawab of Bengal defeated by East India Company forces led by Robert Clive
1765	Company awarded *dewani* (power to collect taxes) of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa by Mughal emperor
1767–99	Four Anglo-Mysore wars
1772–1833	Life of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, social reformer
1775–1818	Three Anglo-Maratha wars
1799–1839	Reign of Ranjit Singh in Punjab—Sikh Empire

Table A. Chronology (continued)

Period	Description
1813	East India Act
1829	Law prohibiting suttee
1835	Thomas Babington Macaulay's "Minute on Education"; English made official language
1838–42	First Afghan War
1843	Conquest of Sind by British
1845–49	Two Anglo-Sikh wars
1853	First railroad and telegraph lines opened
1856	Annexation of Oudh by company
1857	Sepoy Mutiny (or Sepoy Rebellion), also known as Great Uprising; marked formal end of Mughal Empire
Empire to Independence	
1862	Indian Penal Code introduced; India High Courts Act
1869	Suez Canal opened
1875	Arya Samaj founded; Aligarh College founded by Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817–98)
1878–80	Second Afghan War
1885	Indian National Congress (Congress) founded
1892	India Councils Act
1905	Partition of Bengal by Lord Curzon, viceroy
1906	All-India Muslim League (League) founded
1909	Morley-Minto Reforms
1911	King-emperor (George V) visits India and announces reversal of partition of Bengal; transfer of imperial capital to New Delhi from Calcutta
1916	Lucknow Pact between Congress and League
1917	British declaration on Indian self-government
1919	Massacre at Jallianwallah Bagh, Amritsar; India member of League of Nations; Third Afghan War
1920–22	Noncooperation movement under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership of Congress; Khilafat Movement
1921	Montague-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919 inaugurated as part of Government of India Act
1927–28	Simon Commission; All-Parties Conference; Nehru Report
1930	Gandhi's Salt March
1930–31	Civil disobedience movement
1930–32	Round table conferences, London
1931	Gandhi-Irwin Pact
1935	Government of India Act
1937–39	Provincial autonomy; Congress ministries
1940	Pakistan Resolution adopted by Muslim League in Lahore

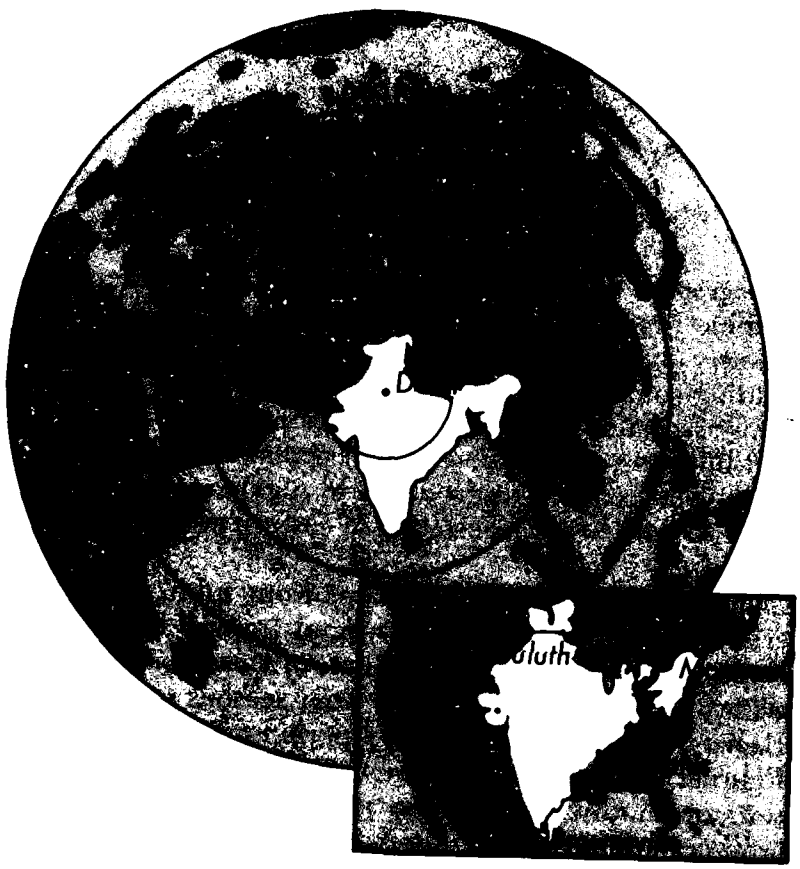
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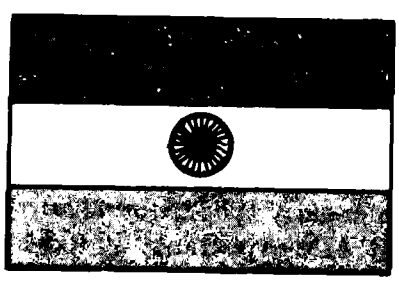
Period	Description
1942	Fall of Singapore; Sir Stafford Cripps mission; abortive "Quit India" movement; mass arrests
1942–44	Great Bengal famine
1944	Gandhi holds talks with Mohammad Ali Jinnah
1945	Labour government in Britain announces intention of early independence in India
1946	Mutiny in Royal Indian Navy; British cabinet mission to resolve political deadlock; interim government installed with Jawaharlal Nehru as prime minister; Constituent Assembly elections
Independent India	
1947	Lord Mountbatten, viceroy, announces plan to partition India (June 3); independence of India and Pakistan (August 15); raiders in Kashmir, military operation (October)
1948	Assassination of Mahatma Gandhi (January 30); police operation in and annexation of Hyderabad (August)
1950	Republic of India adopts Constitution
1951–52	First general election
1953	New state of Andhra Pradesh created
1954	French territories incorporated
1955	Afro-Asian Conference in Bandung; Hindu Marriages Act
1956	Second Five-Year Plan (FY 1956–60); reorganization of Indian states
1959	Dalai Lama enters India from Tibet for political asylum
1961	First Conference of Nonaligned States, Belgrade; India seizes Portuguese colony of Goa
1962	Border war with China
1964	Nehru dies (May 27); Lal Bahadur Shastri elected prime minister
1965	Indo-Pakistani wars in Rann of Kutch and in Kashmir
1966	Tashkent Agreement; Shastri dies (January); Indira Gandhi elected prime minister
1969	Congress splits; Indira Gandhi remains prime minister
1971	General elections (March); civil war breaks out in Pakistan (March); liberation of Bangladesh; 20-year treaty signed with Soviet Union (August)
1972	Simla Agreement between India and Pakistan (June)
1974	India detonates nuclear device in

Table A. Chronology (continued)

Period	Description
	underground test (May 18)
1975	Emergency proclaimed (June 25)
1977	General elections in March; Gandhi defeated; Morarji Desai of Janata Party elected prime minister; Emergency ends
1980	Seventh general elections; Janata Party defeated; Gandhi elected prime minister
1984	Indira Gandhi assassinated (October 31); her son Rajiv becomes prime minister

Country Profile





Country

Formal Name: Republic of India.
Short Form: India.
Term for Citizens: Indian(s).
Capital: New Delhi, located in union territory of Delhi.

Flag: Saffron, white, and green horizontal bands with blue spoked wheel in center. Saffron symbolizes courage and sacrifice; white, peace and truth; green, faith and chivalry; spoked wheel, India's ancient culture.

Geography

Size: About 3,287,590 square kilometers.

Topography: Great topographic diversity. Three main geographic regions: high Himalayan mountain wall, bounding the country on the north; flat Indo-Gangetic Plain; and Peninsula, including southern tableland of Deccan Plateau. Major river systems associated with each main region. Chains of low mountains and hills lie roughly west to east across central India and along peninsular coasts. Desert and arid regions of west-central India contrast with heavy forestation in eastern areas and elsewhere.

Climate: Wide range of climates from subfreezing, snow-covered high Himalayas to year-round tropical climate of Madras coast; and from damp, rainy climate of Assam and Bengal in east to aridity of Thar Desert in west. Four seasons recognized south of Himalayas: relatively cool, dry period from December through February; dry, hot season from March through May; rainy season, or southwest monsoon period, from June through September; and humid northeast, or retreating, monsoon period of October and November. Temperatures seldom below freezing south of Himalayas; high often reaches 40°C.

Society

Population: Probably over 746 million in early 1985. Annual rate of growth between 1.9 and 2.1 percent. Life expectancy 50 to 54 years for person born in mid-1980s.

Education and Literacy: School attendance compulsory ages six to 14, but dropout and failure rates high, especially in rural communities. Literacy rate over 36 percent in mid-1980s; only about 25 percent for women, well below that in rural areas.

Languages: 16 official languages, of which English and Hindi have all-India status. Hundreds of other languages and dialects

used; almost all languages belong to either Indo-Aryan or Dravidian language families.

Health: General state of nutrition poor, occasioning high level of minor, debilitating illnesses. Government operates numerous and constantly expanding health programs. Substantial success in controlling malaria but remained major problem in mid-1980s, as did tuberculosis, leprosy, filariasis, influenza, trachoma, cholera, and intestinal disorders. Major causes of high infant mortality rate continued to be bacillary and amoebic dysentery and typhoid fever, resulting from inadequate sanitation facilities.

Religion: Hindus accounted for over 80 percent of population, Muslims about 11 percent, Christians estimated at 2.6 percent, and Sikhs about 2 percent. Smaller communities of Buddhists, Jains, Zoroastrians (Parsis), and others.

Economy

Gross National Product (GNP): US$167 billion (provisional) in fiscal year (FY--see Glossary) 1983; about US$230 per capita (official estimate).

Agriculture: Including forestry and fishing, about 33 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in FY 1982 and employed between 67 and 75 percent of labor force. Main crops wheat and rice and other food grains, sugarcane, cotton, and jute. India nearly self-sufficient in food grains by 1984 but imported large quantities of edible oils.

Energy: Firewood and dung remained major energy sources. Large coal reserves; coal most important primary commercial energy source. Significant oil and gas deposits; domestic crude supplied about 65 percent of 1983 consumption. Large hydroelectric potential but only small part developed; in mid-1980s gas becoming important energy source. In 1983 electric power generation 140 billion kilowatt-hours, 189 kilowatt-hours per capita. Energy a constraint on industrialization in mid-1980s.

Industry: About 21 percent of GDP in FY 1982, including mining and utilities. Broad-based industrial structure capable of supplying most of country's needs except highly sophisticated items. In FY 1982 production of steel ingots, 11 million tons; cement, 23 million tons; and vehicles, 151,000.

Exports: US$9.2 billion in FY 1982, of which US$1.8 billion raw and processed agricultural products and US$4 billion manufactured goods, including machinery.

Imports: US$14.9 billion in FY 1982, of which US$5.8 billion oil products, US$2.5 billion machinery and equipment, and US$1.2 billion iron and steel products.

Major Trade Partners: Soviet Union, United States, Japan, Britain, and Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany).

Exchange Rate: Averaged 10.1 rupees per United States dollar in 1983.

Transportation and Communications

Railroads: 61,950 kilometers of track in 1981, of which 31,750 kilometers 1.676-meter broad gauge, 25,550 kilometers meter gauge, and 4,650 kilometers narrow gauge; 5,345 kilometers electrified; 12,617 kilometers double tracked. Railroads a major carrier of goods and passengers.

Roads: 540,720 kilometers of roads in 1980, of which 420,000 kilometers paved. National highway system 31,000 kilometers.

Ports: 10 major ports and 139 minor working ports.

Inland Waterways: 5,200 kilometers of major rivers and 4,300 kilometers of canals, of which about 2,000 kilometers (mostly rivers) used for motorized transport.

Airfields: 346, of which 302 usable; 187 with permanent-surface runways; two with runways over 3,659 meters and 54 with runways between 2,440 and 3,659 meters.

Telecommunications: Fair telephone and telegraph system. In 1982 over 8,500 telephone exchanges, nearly 3 million telephones (about four per 1,000 population), and nearly 24,000 telex lines with service connecting 157 cities. India had direct telephone links to 41 countries and telex links with 42 countries in 1983, using satellites, submarine cables (to Sri Lanka and Malaysia), high-frequency radio, and troposcatter communication link (to Soviet Union). Indian National Satellite (INSAT) rapidly growing system in mid-1980s.

Government and Politics

Government: Constitution, promulgated January 26, 1950, provides for parliamentary, republican, and federal system. President of India head of state; prime minister, head of government. Constitution guarantees Fundamental Rights but also gives union (central) government extensive emergency powers. Union government legislature consists of two houses: upper house, Rajya Sabha (Council of States), and lower house, Lok Sabha (House of the People). In mid-1980s Lok Sabha had maximum of 544 representatives, elected from single-member constituencies, who served for maximum of five years, though elections could be called earlier. In 1985 there were 22 states and nine union territories. State governments and some union territory governments were structurally analogous to union government, with their own executive and legislative assemblies. State governors, appointed by president of India, exercised extensive powers. Single judicial system for whole country. Most judicial procedures and both civil and penal codes follow English common-law precedents. Independent, three-tier court system: Supreme Court of India at top, high courts at state level, and lower courts at district and local level. Village panchayats (see Glossary) also had judicial functions.

Politics: In mid-1980s Indian National Congress (I), "I" standing for Indira, ruling party. Formed by Indira Gandhi in 1978, Congress (I) won 401 out of 508 seats contested in December 1984 Lok Sabha election. Gandhi assassinated October 31, 1984. Succeeded as prime minister by son Rajiv Gandhi. Opposition fragmented, consisting of regional, communist, and national opposition parties with very narrow bases of popular support. After December 1984 largest opposition group in Lok Sabha was Telugu Desam Party, regional party based in Andhra Pradesh, which had 28 seats.

Foreign Policy: India espouses nonaligned foreign policy but has enjoyed close relations with Soviet Union since 1971 Indo-Soviet treaty of friendship and cooperation. International membership: United Nations, Nonaligned Movement, Commonwealth of Nations, and others.

National Security

Armed Forces: Combined strength about 1,120,000 in early 1985, of which army, 960,000; air force, 113,000; and navy, 47,000. All three long-service, all-volunteer forces. Estimated 200,000 in reserves.

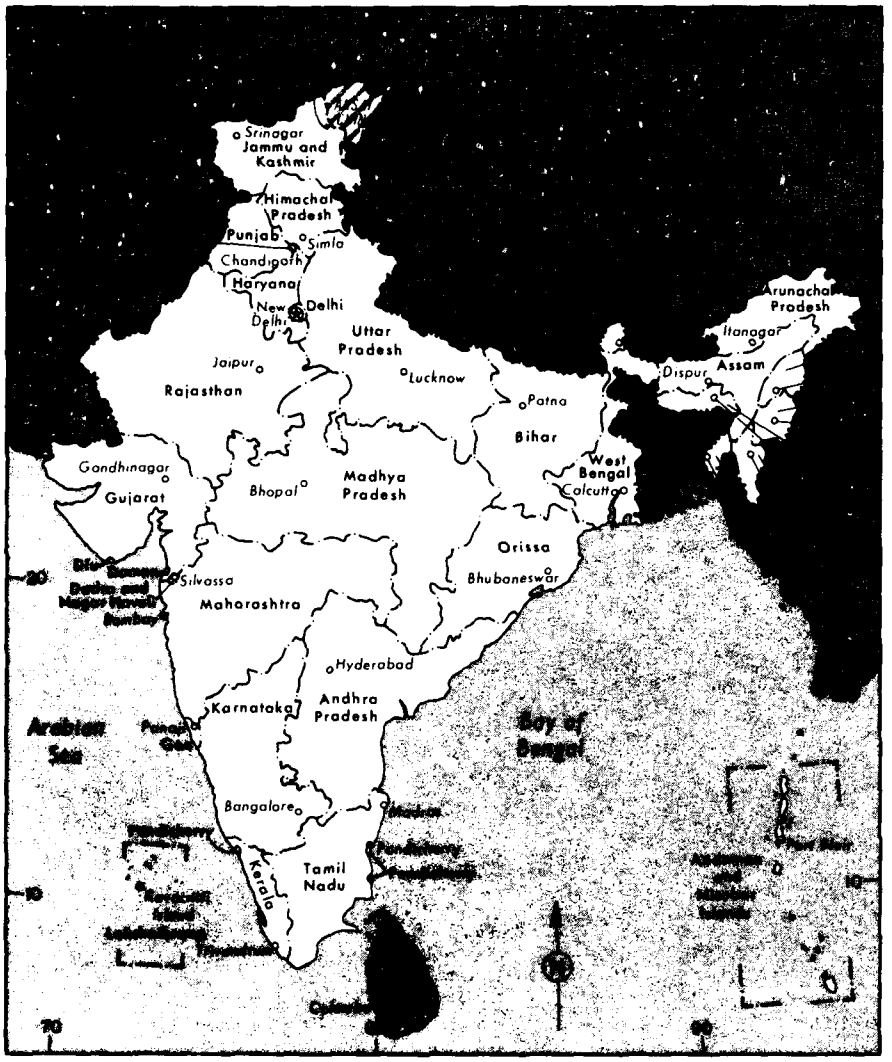
Major Tactical Military Units: In 1985 army had five area commands, eight corps headquarters, two armored divisions, one mechanized division, 18 infantry divisions, 10 mountain divisions, five independent armored brigades, seven independent infantry brigades, one parachute brigade, and 17 independent artillery brigades. Air force had five area commands, three light bomber squadrons, 15 fighter/ground attack squadrons, 21 air defense squadrons, two reconnaissance squadrons, nine transport squadrons, six transport helicopter squadrons, and eight liaison helicopter squadrons. Navy had three area commands with two fleets sharing eight submarines, one aircraft carrier, three destroyers, 23 frigates, three corvettes, 16 fast attack craft (missile), seven large patrol craft, 10 amphibious vessels, and 16 mine warfare vessels; naval air force possessed one attack squadron, one antisubmarine warfare squadron, two maritime reconnaissance squadrons, one communications squadron, and four antisubmarine warfare helicopter squadrons.

Major Equipment Suppliers: Self-sufficient in production of small arms and ammunition. Also produced Vijayanta main battle tanks, armored personnel carriers, mortars, artillery pieces, Ajeet and HF-24 Marut fighter aircraft, training aircraft, frigates, large patrol craft, and other naval vessels. Under license from foreign manufacturers in mid-1980s India produced Jaguar, MiG-21, and MiG-23 combat aircraft, HS-748 transport/liaison aircraft, and helicopters. Soviet Union major foreign source of military equipment since 1964; imports included T-72 tanks, BMP-1 mechanized infantry combat vehicles, armored personnel carriers, artillery pieces, and missiles; MiG-21/-23/-25 and Su-7 combat and reconnaissance aircraft, transport aircraft, and helicopters; submarines, destroyers, frigates, corvettes, fast attack craft (missile), and other naval vessels. Other major sources included Britain for naval aircraft and helicopters, missiles, and naval vessels; France for missiles, aircraft, and helicopters; and West Germany for submarines. United States, Canada, Poland, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia minor sources.

Defense Spending: In 1982 was Rs53.5 billion, in 1983 was Rs57.5 billion (estimated), and in 1984 was Rs 60.7 billion (budgeted). Spending for 1982 was 3.2 percent of GDP.

Paramilitary Forces: In 1985 total strength 260,000. Major elements: Central Reserve Police and Border Security Force.

Police: Responsibility shared by central and state governments. Central government elements include Indian Police Service, several paramilitary units, and police in union territories. State forces estimated to number 765,000 in early 1980s, comprising both regular and paramilitary police.



NOTE—Goa, Daman, and Diu one union territory, three locales, one capital (Panaji)
Punjab and Haryana administered from city of Chandigarh

International boundary
International boundary in dispute
State or union territory boundary
National capital
State or union territory capital

Figure 1. Republic of India, 1985

Introduction

THE KNOWN HISTORY of the Indian subcontinent is punctuated by a series of invasions and migrations from the northwest through what are now Afghanistan and Pakistan; only the last of the major conquerors—the British—entered the region from the sea. The words *India*, *Hindu*, *Hindi*, and *Sind* all stem from the ancient Sanskrit word *sindu*, which is what the Aryan-speaking migrants of the second millennium B.C. called the Indus River. Over a period of perhaps 1,000 years these Aryan-speaking tribes wandered and eventually settled throughout most of the subcontinent. In the process they merged with the earlier inhabitants, most of whom were Dravidian speakers (see Languages of India, ch. 4).

Between about 1500 B.C. and the beginning of what is known in the West as the Christian Era, Hinduism and its two major reform offshoots—Buddhism and Jainism—took form (see Hinduism, ch. 3). Although Buddhism eventually almost disappeared from the region and the adherents of Jainism declined to a small—albeit influential—group, in the mid-1980s Hinduism remained the religion of over 80 percent of the populace. Unlike the major monotheistic religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—Hinduism contains no single obligatory and unifying creed or ritual. Rather, it is a vast socio-religious system that embraces and encourages the harmonious coexistence of diverse beliefs and customs. In theory, and to a large extent in practice, the Hindu value system is based on the acceptance of an ordained order of the universe and human society and the fulfillment of the obligations and duties of one's age, sex, and status in the social hierarchy.

Hinduism provides the religious rationale and sanction for the caste system, which in turn forms the basis for the social system. Theoretically and according to myth and legend, Hindu society was originally composed of five main groups: four varnas and the untouchables, i.e., those outside caste. The varnas were ranked in terms of ritual purity and occupation. The Brahmans, the hereditary priestly caste, were positioned at the top. Ranked in descending order below them were the Kshatriyas (warriors), the Vaishyas (traders), and the Sudras (artisans). The untouchables were relegated to tasks that were ritually polluting to caste members—tasks such as those performed by butchers, tanners, sweepers, and midwives. Members of any group could till the soil.

The actual functioning of caste is vastly more subtle and complex. The most basic aspect of the caste system is that each individual is born into an endogamous kin group known as a *jati*—of which there are perhaps as many as 3,000—and remains a member of that *jati* and that *jati* only for the rest of his or her life. The *jati* determines the individual's choice of a marriage partner, place in the social hierarchy, and forms of religious observance; it also greatly influences the person's occupation. Occasional individuals may be able to achieve political power or economic success on their own, but for the mass of Indians, social status and social mobility are determined by and achieved through their *jatis* (see Caste in Operation, ch. 5). The basic assumptions of the caste system and its hierarchical ordering of society are so pervasive that even those religious communities that neither accept nor sanction caste—Buddhists, Christians, Jains, Muslims, Parsis, and Sikhs—are inevitably and inextricably involved in it.

Indian society therefore remains a mosaic of myriad social groups that are linked by numerous forms of accommodation yet are divided by intense competition for goods, services, preferment, power and, for many, existence. Distinctions of language, region, religion, and caste crosscut the society, resulting in a multitude of discrete communities, each marked by varying degrees of internal loyalty and cohesion. Groups may join forces on such issues as linguistic or regional goals only to engage in violent strife triggered by religious or caste disputes. Linguistic and regional allegiances usually coincide, and a few small groups—such as the Punjabi-speaking Sikhs—are united by distinct linguistic, regional, and religious loyalties that are reinforced by a fear of domination or absorption by the Hindu community.

The adherents of Islam—about 11 percent of the population—not only are the largest minority group but also constitute the fourth largest Muslim community in the world, exceeded only by the communities in Indonesia, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. Muslims entered the subcontinent within a century of the death of the Prophet Muhammad in A.D. 632, but the major impact of Islam began in the eleventh century with a series of raids and invasions from an area in what is now Afghanistan. Muslim influence and power reached a zenith during the Mughal Empire (1526–1857), and various aspects of Indian political and cultural life stem from that period and earlier (see The Mughal Era, ch. 1). Nevertheless, Muslims constitute a majority in only one of the republic's 22 states (Jammu and Kashmir), and the dispersed national community has been politically insignificant since indepen-

dence (see Religion and Politics, ch. 8).

By the 1920s and 1930s many Muslims, who then totaled well over 20 percent of the population of British India and the princely states, had concluded that their minority position would be untenable in a nation dominated by Hindus. In March 1940 the All-India Muslim League declared as its goal the creation of an independent Islamic state (see The Beginnings of Muslim Separatism, ch. 1). By the time independence was achieved and British India was partitioned into two states, communal clashes between Muslims and Hindus and Muslims and Sikhs had become increasingly violent. During the months immediately before and after independence, millions of Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs fled from areas in which they were a minority, and hundreds of thousands were killed.

India secured independence on August 15, 1947. The struggle for freedom, for the most part conducted by and through the Indian National Congress (see Glossary), was occasionally marred by violence but gained worldwide admiration because of its use of massive, nonviolent, civil disobedience. This form of political agitation, known in India as satyagraha, was instituted and led by Mahatma Gandhi, one of the most famous and influential individuals of the twentieth century.

Gandhi was an English-trained lawyer, and in his sociopolitical activities in South Africa and British India—what he termed his "experiments in truth"—he made use of the many channels of protest available through constitutional and English common law procedures. His most effective political tactics, however, were based on religious and cultural traditions familiar to and revered by the Indian populace. Gandhi incorporated various aspects of Judeo-Christian beliefs in his personal philosophy, but his basic social and political tenets and doctrines emerged from ancient traditions and concepts indigenous to the subcontinent (see Gandhi, Noncooperation, and Mass Politics, ch. 1; Basic Concepts of South Asian Religions, ch. 3).

Throughout the early 1900s and until his death in 1931, Motilal Nehru was a prominent and influential leader of Congress and the independence movement. At independence his son, Jawaharlal Nehru, became prime minister and foreign minister and retained those positions until his death in 1964. The younger Nehru had been a protégé of Gandhi but was in many important ways his opposite. Gandhi envisaged a nonindustrial, traditional society, whereas Nehru strove to create one that was industrialized, democratic, socialist, egalitarian, secular, and thoroughly modern. By virtue of the esteem he enjoyed among

the masses and his immense prestige within Congress, Nehru was able to shape broad domestic and foreign policies that remained central to Indian affairs in the mid-1980s.

The commitments of Nehru and his colleagues were articulated in the Constitution, which entered into force in January 1950 and, with numerous amendments, remained in force in 1985 (see The Constitution and the Evolution of Governmental Institutions, ch. 8). The governmental system established by the Constitution is federal, republican, and parliamentary. The prime minister and the ministers who form the cabinet of the union (or central) government are chosen from, and responsible to, the majority party in the popularly elected Lok Sabha (House of the People). The upper house of the bicameral Parliament is the indirectly elected Rajya Sabha (Council of States). The chief of state is the indirectly elected president. The powers assigned to the president by the Constitution are extensive, but since independence the presidents have, with rare exceptions, acted only in response to guidance from the prime minister. The Constitution also provides for an independent judiciary, the apex of which is the Supreme Court of India.

The Constitution distributes governmental powers and responsibilities in three lists. One list, known as the Union List, reserves such powers as defense and foreign affairs to the central government. A second list delegates a wide range of powers to the states, and a third identifies a number of fields in which the central and state governments have concurrent powers.

The federal experiment has not always functioned as the framers of the Constitution intended. Over the years the union government has gained power at the expense of the states in dealing with economic, political, and social issues. Because of the ease with which the Constitution can be amended, the union government has on occasion made encroachments on fundamental rights and on the presumed prerogatives of the states and has then amended the Constitution to make the actions legal. The most flagrant reversals of democratic procedures were carried out by Nehru's daughter, Indira Gandhi, who served as prime minister from 1966 to 1977 and from 1980 until her assassination on October 31, 1984. (Despite the name, Indira Gandhi was not related to the Mahatma.)

After the death in January 1966 of Nehru's successor as prime minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Gandhi was selected for the post by the party bosses—known as the Syndicate—who viewed her as a weak individual who would follow their guidance and at the same time bring electoral strength to the party by virtue of her

parentage. Within a few years she had become the dominant politician in the nation. In 1975, however, when her opponents seemed to pose a threat to her reelection and reappointment as prime minister, she forced a compliant president to declare an Emergency and persuaded a pliable Parliament to amend the Constitution to legalize her acts (see Indira Gandhi as a National Leader, 1966–80, ch. 8). She censored the press, imprisoned thousands of real or imagined opponents, and declared illegal more than a score of opposition organizations. Moreover, she granted extensive powers to her younger son and presumed successor, Sanjay, who launched numerous programs—including mass and compulsory sterilization campaigns—that shocked the nation. She politicized the courts and the civil service, and a factionalized opposition seemed impotent and useless. In 1977 Gandhi's hubris persuaded her to call the Lok Sabha elections that should have been held in 1975. The opposition coalesced temporarily, and Gandhi and her supporters were defeated. The coalition proved unable to govern effectively, however, and the president, acting on his own, called for an election in January 1980. Gandhi, who had spent a brief period in jail after she lost the 1977 election, formed a new party, Congress (I) for Indira, which gained control of the Lok Sabha, securing 351 out of the 525 seats and enabling her to reclaim the prime ministership. Her victory was marred, however, by the accidental death of Sanjay a few months later.

During the next few years she ruled in a manner that most observers described as authoritarian and despotic (see Years of Crisis, 1980–85, ch. 8). Her aides and advisers tended to be noteworthy not for their competence but for their unswerving loyalty to her. Congress (I) continued to suffer from atrophy, and the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), the senior cadre of the civil service, became increasingly demoralized, inefficient, and corrupt. In addition, she gave tacit encouragement to various forms of resurgent Hinduism and went so far as to consult astrologers—actions that would have horrified her secular father.

Shortly after Sanjay's death his mother convinced her other son, Rajiv, to abandon his apolitical career as an airline pilot and to join her in politics. Not surprisingly, he rose rapidly within the party. Friends and foes alike accepted him as his mother's annointed successor, but the succession was viewed as a distant event. On October 31, 1984, however, Indira Gandhi was assassinated by two of her bodyguards—both of whom were members of the Sikh community—and within hours Rajiv had been sworn in as her successor.

A few weeks later the new prime minister announced that Lok Sabha elections would be held in late December. Under his leadership Congress (I) won 49 percent of the popular vote and secured 401 out of the 508 contested seats, a larger majority than any achieved by either his mother or his grandfather. (Elections were not held in the states of Punjab or Assam because of political unrest.) In March 1985, however, Congress (I) candidates fared less well in legislative elections in 11 states and one union territory. Although Congress (I) won majorities in eight of 11 states—including the two largest states, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar—its victories were far from impressive. Whereas in the Lok Sabha elections Congress (I) candidates had secured 86 percent of the seats of the 12 electoral units in which elections were held in March, in the March elections Congress (I) candidates garnered only 56 percent of the legislative seats.

One of the first legislative measures that the new prime minister pushed through Parliament was known as the antidefection bill. A major complaint against Indira Gandhi's government had been that it had, through bribes and related methods, persuaded opposition party members in the union, state, and territorial legislatures to switch parties, i.e., to join Congress (I). Under the new legislation, individuals who change their party affiliation will lose their legislative seats. Observers noted that the bill, if enforced, would decrease the ease with which Congress (I) could bring about the demise of an opposition party's control of a state legislature, but the observers also pointed out that the bill also closed the door to defections from Congress (I). In other words, Prime Minister Gandhi's huge majority in the Lok Sabha should remain intact until the next election (see Electoral Performance, 1952–84, ch. 8).

Although the new prime minister enjoyed a massive majority in the Lok Sabha, the problems that he faced were equally massive. At independence the economic goals enunciated by Nehru and his associates had been to foster rapid economic growth and to reduce poverty significantly and consistently. By the mid-1980s the economy had indeed made important gains. As a result of substantial investments in irrigation systems, high-yield seeds, and related inputs, the country ranked about fourth in the world in terms of value added by agriculture (see Agricultural Development, ch. 7). In the decades since 1947, manufacturing had expanded from a very low level to perhaps fifteenth in the world. Its industrial sector, including the government-owned and -operated military defense plants, produced an impressive array of increasingly sophisticated machinery, electronics equipment, steel

and iron, and a wide range of military weapons (see Industry, ch. 6; Defense Industry, ch. 10). It was expanding its nuclear energy program and possessed the potential to become a nuclear power (see Profile of the Economy, ch. 6). Nevertheless, almost half of the society lived in conditions of extreme poverty as defined by the government of India and by United Nations (UN) standards.

As is common with many Third World countries, India's major problem was the seemingly relentless growth in its population. India accounts for less than 2.5 percent of the world's landmass but more than 15 percent of the global population. In early 1985 the population was probably in excess of 746 million—some estimates ranged several million higher—and was growing at a rate of about 2 percent per annum. Despite decades of government efforts in the fields of family planning and birth control, in the mid-1980s roughly 75 percent of the nation's reproductive-age couples did not use a modern form of contraception. Because about 49 percent of the population was less than 20 years of age and because demographers believed that in order to lower the growth of the population the regular use of contraceptives by at least 60 percent of the reproductive age group was essential, observers predicted continued rapid population growth (see Population, ch. 2). A 2-percent increase in a population of 746 million means almost 15 million individuals who have to be fed, clothed, housed, educated, cared for medically, and eventually offered employment. In the early 1980s between 4.2 and 7 million people were entering the work force annually, far more than the economy could absorb. Nearly 80 percent of the work force remained rural, and observers agreed that the rate of rural underemployment was exceptionally high (see Labor, ch. 6).

The rate of population growth would be even higher if infant mortality were not so high. In the late 1970s the infant mortality rate was nearly 130 per 1,000 live births. The death rate declined sharply after the first year of life to about 6.3 per 1,000 in the five-to-nine age-group. Nevertheless, in 1979 a sample survey in 10 states revealed that 50 to 70 percent of the children under 10 suffered from insufficient caloric intake and that 10 to 15 percent more received inadequate protein. The children therefore were particularly susceptible to numerous endemic communicable diseases (see Health, ch. 2).

The competition for scarce goods and services—described by one author as "the politics of scarcity"—frequently exacerbates the tensions between and among the numerous segments of society. The competition also contributes to corruption. In 1971 W.H. Morris-Jones, a prominent and sympathetic observer of In-

dian sociopolitical behavior, concluded that "corruption—the fact itself but even more important, the talk about it—occupies a great place in Indian politics. . . . There can be little doubt that much of the present [nontraditional] corruption . . . is the work of men not long released from one set of social bonds [and] not yet submissive to a new set. Both corruptions flourish side by side, for two social processes are contemporaneous: the intrusion of caste into new fields (mainly of regional and even national politics) and the erosion of caste as a feature of social life as a whole." The new man, whether politician, bureaucrat, or commercial-industrial entrepreneur, is subject to the claims and demands of his family and caste fellows, but he is also prey to a feeling of anomie and seeks protection and security by amassing wealth by any means available, that is, corruption.

In 1984 Morris-Jones, as emeritus director of the Institute of Commonwealth Studies at the University of London, opined that corruption had become even more pervasive. He also lamented the increasing violence of both urban and rural life and noted the Indian society's "novel contribution" to crime in the form of the killing of brides—usually by burning—when the unfortunate woman was unable to secure additional money or dowry payments from her family (see Roles and Relationships, ch. 5). Morris-Jones asserted that "the scale and brutality of village violence in some parts of North India have reached horror proportions, and there can be little doubt that a central factor is the denigration of the police, now increasingly an arm, not of the law, but the interest or whim of local political powers" (see Police in 1985: A System in Crisis, ch. 10).

Most observers note that civil strife increased during the early 1980s as elements within important minority groups engaged in violence and acts of terrorism (see Religious, Communal, Class, and Regional Differences; Assam and the Northeast, ch. 10). The agitation within the Sikh community over what many of its members perceived as injustices was not the only movement that involved an entire state—the Assamese, for example, demonstrated their sense of alienation and persecution in uprisings in which over 3,000 people were killed—but the Sikh problems and activities possessed nationwide implications. In 1985 the Sikhs accounted for only about 2 percent of the total population, but they constituted an energetic, well-educated, prosperous, and aggressive community. The president of the republic, Giani Zail Singh, was a Sikh, and Sikhs were highly visible in the armed forces, accounting for perhaps 10 to 12 percent of all army personnel, about 20 percent of the army officer corps, and

an estimated 35 percent of all air force pilots.

The unrest within the Sikh community was not a phenomenon of the 1980s. Since its founding by Guru Nanak Dev in the late fifteenth century, the relatively small congregation has on occasion suffered oppression by Muslim rulers and efforts of absorption by the Hindu majority (see The Crisis in Punjab, ch. 8). After independence a minority of the Sikhs began to agitate for an autonomous state within the union, and an even smaller minority called for an independent nation—Khalistan. By the 1960s a majority of the Sikhs were united in a demand for a state in which the Punjabi-speaking Sikhs would constitute a majority, and in 1966 the Parliament approved the formation of such a state.

In 1973 a militant Sikh minority that included numerous Sikh fundamentalists began to voice more extreme demands. Many concerned economic issues, such as water rights, but other items on their agenda focused on political issues, including increased autonomy. By the early 1980s the militants had intensified their activities, and although they still represented a minority of the Sikh community, tensions between Sikhs and Hindus increased markedly. The extremists launched a terrorist campaign against prominent Hindus and moderate, or "heterodox," Sikhs, and in October 1983 the union government imposed "President's Rule," a constitutional measure whereby the elected government was forced to yield its power to union officials under a form of martial law.

By the spring of 1984 the leaders of the extremists—prominent among them being Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale—had gathered their most fervent supporters into the Golden Temple, a complex of buildings in Amritsar and the holiest Sikh shrine and sanctuary. On June 2 the government announced that in response to a Sikh threat to block the movement of food grains and to stop the flow of water to neighboring states the Indian Army had been ordered to assume responsibility for law and order within Punjab. During the night of June 5–6 army units launched a major attack on the Golden Temple and by the evening of June 6 had seized control of what army spokesmen said had been turned into an armed fortress. Several hundred people were killed during the battle—including Bhindranwale—and extensive damage was done to the Golden Temple (see Sikh Agitation in the State of Punjab, ch. 10).

The army action met with generally enthusiastic approval by all segments of the society except the Sikhs, who were shocked and outraged by what they viewed as the desecration of the Golden Temple. An estimated 2,500 Sikh soldiers mutinied, an unpre-

cedented act by members of this warrior-oriented sect, and 55 were reportedly killed while resisting arrest. (It should be noted, however, that four of the six army generals involved in the Punjab operation—which was code-named Operation Blue Star—were Sikhs.) Throughout the summer and into the fall tensions between Sikhs and Hindus and Sikhs and the union government remained high, and on October 31 two Sikh members of Prime Minister Gandhi's bodyguard shot and killed her.

In the ensuing several days, mobs in New Delhi and other cities killed over 2,700 Sikhs, wounded thousands more, and burned and looted Sikh homes and properties. Numerous reliable witnesses reported that in New Delhi, some of the mobs were encouraged and led by well-known officials of Congress (I) and members of the Lok Sabha. To the dismay of the Sikh community and to some of his supporters, Rajiv Gandhi not only failed to bring charges against some of the leaders of the mobs but also engaged in scurrilous anti-Sikh rhetoric during the 1984 election campaign. For several months he refused to appoint a commission of inquiry into the riots, and when in March 1985 he tentatively agreed to do so, he stated that the commission would also be charged with investigating the events in Punjab in the period before the invasion of the Golden Temple.

In mid-March 1985 the union minister of home affairs, S.B. Chavan, announced the appointment of Arjun Singh, a senior and respected official who had been serving as chief minister of Madhya Pradesh, as governor of Punjab and the simultaneous release from detention of eight prominent Sikh leaders. (Despite the name, Singh is a high-caste Rajput, not a Sikh.) Chavan also announced the formation of a cabinet subcommittee to investigate the current situation in Punjab. The three-man panel—consisting of Chavan, Defense Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, and Education Minister K.C. Pant—was scheduled to tour the state, hold public and private meetings and hearings, and then report its findings and recommendations to the cabinet.

The Sikh community welcomed the release of the eight leaders, chief among whom was Sant Harchand Singh Longowal, president of the major Sikh party, the Shiromani Akali Dal. Longowal had been viewed in the past as a relative moderate, but in his postimprisonment meetings with his followers he reportedly endorsed their militant and embittered attitudes toward the union government. In early April a prominent Sikh lawyer asserted that "torture has become an instrument of government policy in the Punjab," and reliable observers reported that in rural and urban Punjab young Sikh males were wearing turbans of

bright saffron, a color that is worn rarely and symbolizes sacrifice and revolt. There was a general feeling that Gandhi and his advisers were allowing time to run out.

Gandhi was also being criticized for his handling of what became known as the "spy scandal." In early 1985 Indian newspapers exploded with a series of unconfirmed reports of some sort of "spy ring" that was transmitting government secrets to foreign powers. The first foreigner to be identified officially as having been involved was an assistant military attaché of the French embassy, and with his abrupt departure from the country various newspapers speculated that the true villain would turn out to be the United States Central Intelligence Agency, which over the years had been blamed for communal disturbances, crop failures, and the assassination of Indira Gandhi, among other things. The government confirmed that it was investigating alleged spying, and it also announced the resignation of a senior civil servant who had served for many years within the office of the prime minister. The official was well-known for his pro-Soviet views, and observers in New Delhi therefore surmised that Soviet officials might be involved. The government remained uncommunicative on the particulars of the case, but over the next few weeks Indian and foreign newspapers identified officials of the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) and Poland who had been involved in the operation.

Gandhi's government, obviously embarrassed by evidence that it had concealed information about the scandal until after the Lok Sabha election and by the involvement of East European officials, asserted that only commercial secrets had been compromised and that the nation's security had not been jeopardized. Subsequent government statements, of which there were few, stated that numerous low-level clerks had been discovered to have been providing an Indian businessman with copies of government documents, which the businessman photocopied and sold to his many foreign and domestic contacts. The businessman allegedly claimed that at the outset most of the material that he secured and sold consisted of information on the government's commercial operations but that as he secured information on the purchase of military and other equipment he began to attract a wider circle of customers.

Although the Indian government tacitly acknowledged the involvement of East European officials in the wholesale distribution of government secrets, India continued to demonstrate its close relations with the Soviet Union. In March 1985, for example, India was one of only seven countries to vote against a United

Nations Human Rights Commission report that criticized the ongoing Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. During the same week the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) reported from New Delhi that in mid-1985 the Indian Air Force would take delivery of its first consignment of MiG-29s, a high performance aircraft that had not yet been provided to the Soviet Union's allies in the Warsaw Pact (see Air Force, ch. 10). Indian officials reaffirmed that the first MiG-27s built in India would be delivered to the air force at about the same time.

India's close, businesslike, and generally profitable relations with the Soviet Union evolved slowly and incrementally. Nehru believed passionately in nonalignment in the disputes between the superpowers, and he vehemently opposed the security pacts engineered by the United States during the 1950s. Nehru's distaste for the pacts was intensified by Pakistan's being the only Asian state to belong to both the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) and the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO). By the late 1950s both the Soviet Union and India were experiencing difficulties in their relations with China, and the Soviets courted India by supporting it in its dispute with Pakistan over the state of Jammu and Kashmir (see Relations with Pakistan; Relations with China; Relations with the Soviet Union, ch. 9).

Although in the aftermath of India's brief but disastrous war with China in 1962 Britain and the United States provided immediate military aid, throughout the 1960s India turned increasingly to the Soviets as a dependable and relatively inexpensive source of sophisticated weapons. The relationship had become sufficiently strong by the fall of 1968 that India was one of the few noncommunist states that failed to condemn the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. And in 1971, as part of its preparation to intercede in the civil war occasioned by East Pakistan's attempt to secede and become Bangladesh, India concluded and signed a 20-year Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation with the Soviet Union.

The acquisition of Soviet equipment and technology and the constant expansion and modernization of India's defense industry have significantly strengthened an already large military force. By the mid-1980s most analysts listed the Indian military as the fourth most powerful in the world, exceeded only by the armed forces of the two superpowers and China. India's large army and air force made it a South Asian superpower, and its determined expansion and modernization of its fleet had made India the most powerful force on the Indian Ocean littoral.

Unlike the army officers in Bangladesh and Pakistan, the In-

dian officer corps has remained steadfastly apolitical. Because a military career continued to be highly esteemed by many segments of the society and because of limited employment opportunities in the civilian economy, the armed forces have experienced little difficulty in recruiting well-qualified individuals for the officer corps and other ranks. The three services, which are completely volunteer, have expanded substantially the extensive system of service schools, academies, and training centers that they inherited from British India, thereby constantly improving the capabilities of their personnel. Most Indian and foreign observers viewed the military as the most efficient and least corruptible sector of the government. Some analysts therefore suggested that should India be confronted with serious internal strife, the populace would welcome the temporary involvement of the military in political affairs. The observers were agreed, however, that such an involvement, no matter how temporary, would irretrievably damage the effectiveness of the military as a fighting force and would alter the nation's political system.

April 15, 1985 Richard F. Nyrop

Chapter 1. Historical Setting



IN THE WAKE of its eighth general election since independence in 1947, the Republic of India continued in early 1985 to present an almost incredible kaleidoscope to an observer. The diversity of natural settings, ethnic types, languages, religious beliefs and practices, dietary habits, and life-styles often bewilders those who come from societies that are less heterogeneous or have shorter histories. Additional puzzles are provided by the simultaneous use of space-age technologies alongside neolithic ones, by attitudes of mind that reconcile apparent contradictions, by the physical juxtaposition of great wealth with abject poverty. The achievements of modern, democratic, secular, and industrializing India are impressive indeed; the burden of unsolved problems is no less evident. More than in any other society, the concept of linear historical time appears meaningless as successive phases of Indian civilization are all present on the contemporary platter. The multiple faces of India are not a new phenomenon. They both molded and were produced by some five millennia of known history. From ancient times to the present day, therefore, people have made their own discoveries of India. The proverbial story of six blind men describing an elephant is, appropriately, of Indian origin.

If diversity is the most conspicuous feature of India, ineffable strands of unity are nonetheless unmistakable. They give it a continuity of culture comparable only to China in its long time span and persistence of traits as well as in its spatial dimension. Taking its name originally from the Indus River, the Indian subcontinent, also known as South Asia and now occupied by several independent countries, was subject in the past to mosaics of kingdoms and empires with fluid political boundaries. Attempting a historical sketch of India is akin to attempting one of Europe from Crete of the Minoan age to Norway with its offshore oil rigs of the 1980s. Moreover, problems of conceptualization, periodization, and interpretation are greater because terms carrying precise connotations in the European context are not always useful when applied to India. For example, terms such as feudalism, private property rights, and even nationalism are often used differently in contemporary South Asian historiography than in conventional British or American works. Similarly, periodization into ancient, medieval, and modern, with simple descriptions of Hindu, Muslim, and British attached also tend to be misleading. Contemporary Indian histories increasingly use the time periods of Harappa (ca. 3000–1500 B.C.), ancient (560

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B.C.–A.D. 650), early medieval (650–1210), Mughal (1526–1707), modern (1707–1947), and postindependence.

The lay of the land has shaped civilizations through settlement patterns and the movements of people and goods. What geographer O.H. Spate calls the "intelligible isolate" of the Indian subcontinent contains distinct regions within itself, but it also interacted regularly with regions outside the subcontinent. Of special significance was the attraction exerted by the fertile Indo-Gangetic Plain on the peoples inhabiting Central Asia and West Asia. Over the millennia, numerous migrants came and stayed. Coastal and Peninsula India south of the Vindhya Mountains (or Vindhya Range) established early maritime contact with lands both east and west, as legend and the chronicles of Rome and China testify. Within the subcontinent, hills, heavy forests, or deserts separated fertile zones from each other and thus slowed the process of cultural diffusion and political unification. Five major core regions are geopolitically and culturally defined as the northwest, the north central, the northeast, the western peninsula, and the southern peninsula. Connecting areas were also distinct and important. Within each core, however, similar processes appear to have been at work in extending cultivation, collecting revenue, solidifying and legitimizing social organization, and adopting the philosophical and moral values of a recognizable elite. Thus, the several "Little Traditions" of India all came within the "Great Tradition" of Indian civilization.

Certain patterns recur over time in the political relationships established by the cores among themselves and also between each core and its own peripheral region. The urge to create supraregional or Pan-India units surfaced again and again. Scholar Joseph E. Schwartzberg enumerates approximately 100 dynasties or political powers that played important roles in Indian history between 560 B.C. and independence. Nine of these, including the British, succeeded in controlling most of the subcontinent. Seven of these powers were based in the Indo-Gangetic Plain, indicating the geopolitical and cultural significance of that region. Success in terms of longevity and extent of domain depended not only on military prowess, economic base, administrative talent, and control over trade or communications lines but also on the nature of the relationships established with the hierarchies of local chieftains. The best among these powers gained acceptability and legitimacy by a judicious use of superior force combined with a tolerance of different subsystems. Problems of integrating the many into one centralized whole recurred; they continue to beset the federal structure of the Indian union in the

mid-1980s. India's "unity in diversity" is a generally accepted attitude of mind; it does not lend itself to easy political institutionalization.

Among the most important and controversial questions that engage contemporary scholars are those bearing on India's economic status and national identity. For example, what caused the poverty that stigmatized India at the time of independence and has not yet been overcome? Simplistic generalizations about traditional psyches or foreign exploitation have given way to detailed investigations into the impact of socioeconomic and political institutions on productivity, both in colonial and in precolonial times. Another pressing question relates to the connection between social, linguistic, religious, and political identity in South Asia. The different answers to that question offered by the contemporary states of South Asia illustrate that relationships have not been constant; they alter with circumstance. Historically, almost all Indian regimes exhibited an extraordinarily high level of tolerance for cultural and religious diversities among rulers and administrators as well as the common people. Perhaps they could do so because social status was ascriptive, land plentiful, and political power the concern only of the few. In the twentieth century, initially under British rule but subsequently as well, civic harmony has been less easy to sustain. Competition for scarce resources, including governmental appointments, combined with mass participation in politics and frequent demagoguery, have stimulated vigorous assertions of religious or linguistic identity as routes to political power. The partition of India in 1947 after serious riots between Muslims and Hindus was the most violent, but not the sole, episode in this phenomenon of communalism, which advances sectarian advantage at the cost of the whole.

The leaders of India's independence movement sought to ameliorate poverty and submerge differences by tangible means, not by teleological argument. Mahatma Gandhi's discipline of the spinning wheel symbolized his belief in simplicity and self-reliance as the firmest base of prosperity. His insistence on nonviolence of thought and deed in the pursuit of national freedom was not only an ethical injunction but also a recognition that discrete groups could best act together in common adherence to a high moral principle. India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, and the drafters of the Constitution adopted in 1950 initiated a unique experiment in world history. In an agricultural, largely illiterate, and overpopulated country, they introduced a system of parliamentary democracy based on universal adult suffrage, with religious freedom, individual liberty, and social equality guaran-

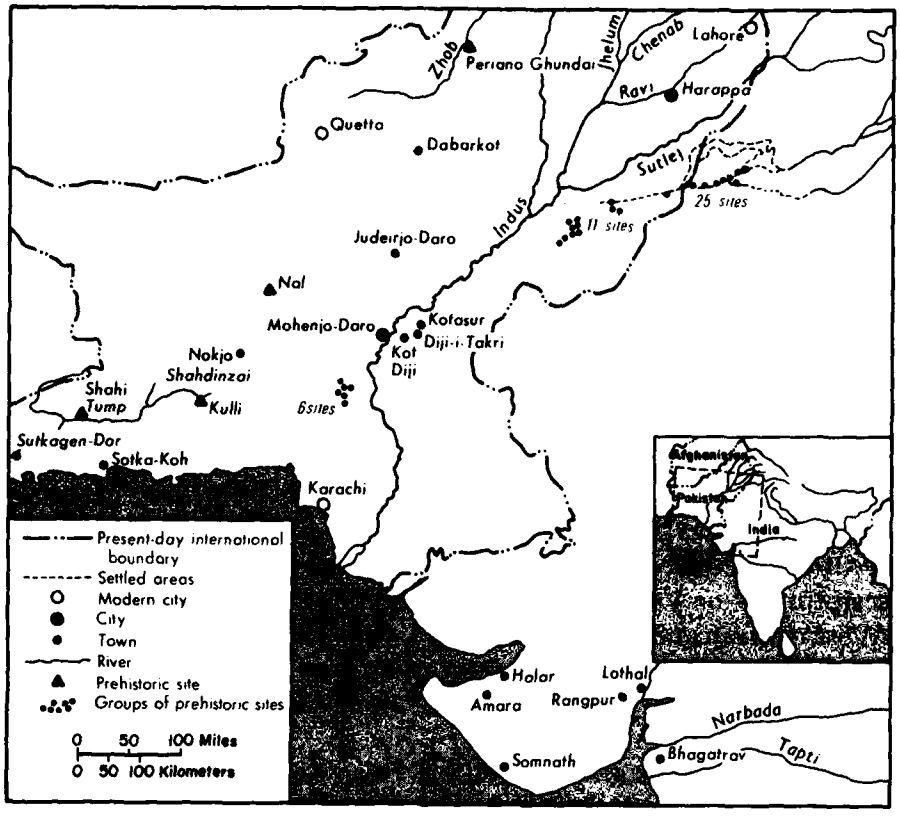
teed by law. Sights were set for social and economic transformation by consent, not coercion. Although the opposite pulls of modernization and traditionalism have taken their toll on idealism and although the democratic, secular system upheld by the rule of law has been subjected to almost unbearable pressures, as of early 1985 the ideal had not been relinquished.

The Antecedents

The earliest traces of human activity in India go back to the second interglacial period, between 400,000 and 200,000 B.C. The stone implements and cave paintings of hunting groups have been discovered in several parts of the subcontinent. Evidence of settled agriculture, permanent village sites, and wheel-turned pottery dating from the fourth millennium B.C. has been found in the northwest. From these early beginnings an urban culture of remarkable sophistication, uniformity, and continuity emerged in the Indus Valley and stretched well beyond to the south and east (see fig. 2). The remains of the two major cities of the civilization, Mohenjo-Daro in the lower Indus and Harappa on the Ravi River, were accidentally discovered in 1921–22. Excavations at both sites and subsequent extensive archaeological work in India and Pakistan at about 70 other smaller sites provide a picture of what is now called Harappan culture. Radiocarbon dating of remains gives it a time span of about 2700 to 1500 B.C.

Harappan culture was essentially a city culture sustained by surplus agricultural produce and extensive commerce, which included trade with Sumer and Mesopotamia. Copper and bronze were in use, but not iron. The cities were built on almost identical plans of well laid-out streets, elaborate drainage systems, public baths, differentiated residential areas, flat-roofed brick houses, and fortified administrative-cum-religious centers enclosing meeting halls and granaries. Weights and measures were standardized. Distinctive engraved stamp seals were used, perhaps to identify property. Cotton was spun, woven, and dyed for clothing by the Harappan people as by their successors. Wheat, rice, and other food crops were cultivated and a variety of animals domesticated. A centralized administration has been inferred from the uniformity revealed, but it remains uncertain whether authority lay with a priestly or a commercial oligarchy.

The most exciting, yet frustrating, of all the Harappan artifacts discovered are the small, exquisite steatite seals found in profusion at Mohenjo-Daro. Engraved with realistic portraits of



Source: Based on information from Mortimer Wheeler, *Early India and Pakistan to Ashoka*, New York, 1968, 95.

Figure 2. Harappan Culture Sites in or near the Area That Is Now Pakistan

animals and, less often, men or gods, the seals also carry short inscriptions in a unique pictographic script. As of the mid-1980s this script had not been deciphered despite the efforts of philologists from all parts of the world and the use of computers. Debates center on whether the script is proto-Dravidian or proto-Sanskrit, which would shed light on the originators of Indian civilization.

Implicit in the philological debate are other unanswered questions. Who were the Harappan people? How and why did Harappan culture end so abruptly in the two main cities? What replaced it? Analyses of the bones found interred at Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa indicate that people of more than one ethnic strain inhabited those cities. The basic elements of the Indian

population appear to have been set very early. A theory of racial dichotomy between the Harappan people and their successors is no longer considered credible.

Until recently, conventional wisdom decreed that the Harappan culture was destroyed by invaders from Central Asia and West Asia. This is now doubted. Only in Mohenjo-Daro is there evidence of a violent end to settlement. The more likely causes for the abandonment of the cities were such ecological changes as repeated flooding, soil salinity, and desertification. The next recrudescence of urban centers in India took place about 1,000 years later and in an entirely different region, the middle Ganges Valley. The so-called invasions were probably migrations of pastoral people from across the mountain ranges who arrived in ever increasing numbers during the second millennium B.C. They are known as Arya, or Aryan, people, from the language they used. Max Muller and other philologists of the nineteenth century discovered that the language used in the earliest Indian scriptures—or Vedas—was Indo-European and was close to the Avesta in Iran and early Greek and Latin. The existence of Harappan culture predating these migrations was not suspected in the nineteenth century, and early Indian or Hindu civilization was credited to these Aryans.

As more rigorous research has been done on archaeological and literary sources of history, the image of a sharp break between Harappan and succeeding cultures seems overdrawn. Historian H.D. Sankaia points out that the geographical region described in the early hymns contained in the Rig-Veda could easily be that covered by Harappan culture. Vedic Sanskrit is alone among the Indo-European languages to contain retroflexed sounds, typical of Dravidian languages (see Languages of India, ch. 4). Religious and social practices inferred from artifacts of Harappan culture are mentioned in the later Vedas and their commentaries. These included ritual bathing, phallus cults, regard for ascetics, sanctity of the pipal tree, and differentiated residential areas for different social classes. The historian's task is made doubly difficult by the absence of any archaeological records, to date, for the period 1500 to 600 B.C. and the impossibility of exactly dating oral compositions ascribed by convention to that period.

Although the notion of an Aryan race has been effectively debunked, the evolution and spread of Aryan culture through India is a matter of record. The record consists of four compendiums of hymns, prayers, and liturgy known as the Vedas, commentaries on them known as the Brahmanas and Upanishads, and traditional histories, or *Puranas,* which include two long epic poems, the

Ramayana and the *Mahabharata* (see Sacred Scriptures, ch. 3). Because of the unbroken oral tradition, maintained with singular purity despite some interpolations and overlays at various times, this record remains part of the living tradition of Hindu India. It shows a pastoral, pantheistic tribal people following hereditary kings or chieftains, waging wars with each other or with peoples encountered in their wanderings, and becoming a settled, agricultural people having consolidated territories and specialized occupations. Their familiarity with ironware, their use of horse-drawn chariots in warfare, and their knowledge of astronomy and mathematics gave them a technological superiority that undoubtedly made their language and social customs attractive to those they encountered. (Similar historical processes occurred in West Asia and in Greece at comparable periods.) As they settled, they adapted to the cultures that had preceded them. Cultural diffusion, therefore, was not unidirectional. The civilization that emerged in India by the end of this period came to be known as Hindu—from the Indus and India—or Brahmanic, from the social system it created (see Basic Concepts of South Asian Religions, ch. 3).

Probably the most distinctive aspect of Hindu civilization was the organization of society and human life around the principle of *varna-ashrama-dharma* (see Hinduism, ch. 3). Voluminous literature exists discussing the meaning of these three terms, which are central to an understanding of Indian culture but almost impossible to translate easily into English. The most common translations read varna—class or supercategory of castes, i.e., Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Sudra; ashrama—stages of life determining status, goals, duties, and obligations; and dharma—righteousness, duty, and sacred law. According to this theory or principle, the achievement of spiritual salvation for an individual, as well as the harmony and stability of society, lay in the pursuit of righteousness by all members of the community but in diverse ways appropriate to their ages and stations in life (see Theory of Caste, ch. 5).

The caste system has excited much investigation as well as condemnation in the modern period. At its core lie concepts of hierarchy and social separation that offend notions of equality and fraternity. Many abuses crept into the system, notably the mistreatment of those groups defined as being without caste. Nevertheless, the caste system was functional and has survived in India, even among non-Hindus, for thousands of years. It has enabled the larger society to accommodate a great variety of discrete groups without losing cultural cohesiveness and has permitted

functional mobility to these groups without jeopardizing the constancy of theory. History and anthropology show the workings of the caste system to be considerably more flexible than its codification implied (see Caste in Operation, ch. 5).

Early Empires and New Religious Movements

The literature of the sixth century B.C. describes 16 major kingdoms or tribal republics in North India that stretched from present-day Afghanistan to Bangladesh. Vast forests had been cleared by fire and had given way to agricultural land tilled with plows drawn by bullocks. Many towns had come into existence as centers of trade, industry, and luxurious living. The hold of a king on his throne, no matter how it was gained, usually was legitimized by priests through elaborate ritual sacrifices to the Vedic gods. The popular horse sacrifice spectacularly endorsed the claim of the king to his domains and dependencies. Over time, hereditary kingship tended to replace tribal councils in most states, and although there were many non-Kshatriya ruling dynasties, kings and Brahmans worked together. They found ways of appropriating revenue, often through efficient administration or the use of Sudra labor in clearing and tilling lands. The consolidation of states led also to a hardening of the caste system.

Out of the intellectual and social ferment of the sixth century B.C. grew two major reform movements, Jainism and Buddhism (see The Great Reforms, ch. 3). Both were rooted in the philosophical soil of Hinduism and retained a belief in a cycle of birth and life, caused by karma (see Glossary), until an individual soul is liberated from the cycle by union with the universal. But Jainism and Buddhism offered the common man paths to liberation other than the sacrificial rituals enjoined by the Brahmans. Each stressed ethical behavior, especially the practice of nonviolence, or ahimsa. The influence of these teachings on Mahatma Gandhi in the modern age is unmistakable.

The historical scene of the fourth century B.C. and after is illuminated by evidence from many sources, not least by Buddhist chronicles and Greek accounts. Alexander the Great continued marching eastward after his defeat of the Archaemenid Empire. He crossed the Indus in 326 B.C., sailed downstream, and then returned to Babylon, where he died before consolidating his military victories. The Hellenistic kingdoms established by his generals in Bactria and Sogdiana became links between Indic and Greek cultures. Coins and sculptures, philosophy and art, all tes-

tify to the fruitfulness of those links for the entire region.

The political picture of North India was simplified by the expansion of Magadha, a kingdom on the middle Ganges River, to a vast empire covering three-quarters of the subcontinent from Kashmir to Mysore, Afghanistan to Bangladesh, in the reign of Asoka (273–232 B.C.). Magadha benefited from its location in an alluvial plain that was close to rich iron deposits and at the center of major trade routes. The military skill and administrative acumen of successive rulers converted those assets into pillars of a centralized empire.

Chandragupta, who founded the Mauryan Dynasty, had his capital at Pataliputra, near present-day Patna in Bihar (see fig. 1). His administration was described in the *Arthasastra*, a treatise on government and economics ascribed to his chief Brahman adviser, Kautilya, who is sometimes described as the intellectual precursor of Niccolò Machiavelli. The Mauryan state supervised and taxed cultivation, irrigation, mining, crafts, textiles, and trade. A large standing army was maintained at royal expense, as was a well-developed espionage system. Administrative officers were assisted by large staffs; cash salaries were specified. Provinces, districts, and villages were governed by a hierarchy of officials, mostly drawn from the local notables but under the supervision of central governors and inspectors. Cities and towns also had their own officials responsible for cleanliness, fire protection, the welfare of foreigners, the registration of births and deaths, and the collection of taxes. The systems of land revenue adopted by later centralized empires, including the Mughal, harked back to the Mauryan model.

Military expansion was called to a halt by Asoka, grandson of Chandragupta, once he had subdued the powerful kingdom of Kalinga in the southeast. Thereafter, Asoka expounded a new theory of social responsibility, or *dhamma*, as the basis for his empire. *Dhamma* owed much to Buddhism, which the emperor embraced as his personal religion and which he encouraged through his patronage of the monastic orders and his designation of Buddhist monks as missionaries-cum-ambassadors to feudatories and neighboring states. Asoka's political philosophy and laws were epitomized in his edicts, which were inscribed on pillars and rock surfaces located at the nodal points and outer reaches of his empire. The edicts spelled out moral principles of humanitarianism in conduct, including nonviolence and the tolerance of differences, to which all people could and should subscribe. They also proclaimed the emperor's decision to renounce force and to rule his domains through compassion and *dhamma*.

Asoka's intentions were noble; they were also realistic in a heterodox empire where fanaticisms could be fatal. But he provided no institutions capable of carrying on a centralized administration. Recruitment of officials was not placed on a meritocratic or examination system, as in China. Loyalty was focused on the emperor's person and was quickly supplanted after his death. Strains on the treasury were heavy, and currency became debased in the later Mauryan times. Within 100 years of his death, Asoka's empire had dwindled back to Magadha.

The political map of the subcontinent again became a mosaic of kingdoms with fluctuating boundaries. Yet the same centuries bridging the change of millennium saw enormous growth and syncreticism in intellectual, artistic, and economic life. Organizations of trade guilds, merchant and banking houses, and caste tribunals gained privilege, autonomy, and wealth. Undoubtedly, they provided the social stability and institutional continuity that allowed cultural and economic blossoming to take place despite political fragmentation. Moreover, during these centuries interaction with other parts of the world was high and trade correspondingly lucrative. The Hindu social system was flexible enough in practice to accommodate within itself both new immigrants and older tribes without a change of theory.

The most important kingdoms and dynasties of the period 200 B.C. to A.D. 300 embodied these qualities. Without enumerating them, mention must be made of the Indo-Greeks of the northwest, especially for their contributions to numismatics. They were followed by the Sakas, who established themselves in western India as well and may have been the progenitors of the Rajputs (see table A). Another Central Asian tribe took hold in the Peshawar area and founded the Kushan Dynasty. At its height the Kushan Empire extended from the Oxus (present-day Amu Darya River) to the Ganges, from Khorasan to Benares (Varanasi). It was a crucible of trade between the Indian, Iranian, Chinese, and Roman empires and controlled the famous Silk Road—reopened by Pakistan and China in the 1970s. Kushan rulers were patrons of Buddhism, Gandharan art, and Sanskrit literature. They initiated a new Saka era in A.D. 78, and their calendar was officially adopted by India after independence in 1947.

An indigenous power rose in the Deccan (present-day Andhra Pradesh) and ousted the Sakas from western and central India. This Satavahana Dynasty called itself Brahman, and its rulers upheld the *varna-ashrama-dharma* of the Hindu scriptures. They also extended patronage to Buddhists, and the famous rock temples and stupas of Ellora, Amravati, and Nagarajunakinda are



Ghats in Benares (Varanasi)
Courtesy Air-India Library

Satavahana legacies.

South of the Deccan and the Krishna River, Peninsula India formed another macroregion in which three Tamil-speaking kingdoms jostled with each other (see fig. 5). Tamil is a Dravidian language that is comparable in age and complexity to Sanskrit. The Chola, Chera, and Pandya dynasties are referred to in Greek and Asokan sources as lying outside Mauryan control. Nevertheless, they adopted the principles of Brahmanic supremacy as well as Vedic rites and received Asoka's monk-ambassadors. The South Indian equivalent of the Ganges as a nodal core of civilization was the Cauvery Basin. Some of the social customs bespoke a matrilineal origin, and the ranking of castes was, and is, different from North Indian ranking. For example, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas seldom appear, and the large body of Sudra castes was divided into left-handed and right-handed sects (see Sectarianism, ch. 3). The agricultural economy of the south depended on irrigation based on small-scale tanks and wells that were locally controlled. The gulf between Sudra labor and landowning Brahman

overlords probably emerged early and contributed to the violence of anti-Brahman feeling in contemporary South India.

From about 50 B.C. to A.D. 100 South India experienced a great literary and artistic flowering, which in Tamil literature is referred to as the Sangam period. The polity was stable and decentralized. Regular concourses of scholars and poets were held at Madurai under royal patronage. Texts were compiled. The cultural importance of Madurai, epitomized in the Meenakshi Temple, came early.

The Classical Age

The classical age refers to the two centuries after about A.D. 320 when North India was reunified under the Gupta Dynasty. Writers of the early twentieth century looked on this period as some kind of utopia and fitted the reign of Harsha-vardhana of Kanauj (A.D. 606–47) in the same mold. More realistic assessments have been made in recent decades, and attention has shifted to the plentiful source materials of the post-Gupta period. If not utopian, the Gupta age was certainly a golden one, in which Hindu culture and polity matured and prosperity was widespread. When displacement occurred at the core, peripheral regions perpetuated the classical Hindu model, especially in South India.

The rise and expansion of the Gupta Dynasty from their home base in Magadha was similar to that of the Mauryas. The victorious campaigns of Samudragupta from Kashmir to the Deccan, which are commemorated on an Asokan pillar at Allahabad, and the matrimonial alliances of his son, Chandragupta II, show that the kings and local chieftains of the entire subcontinent were either uprooted, made tributary, or won to friendly compliance by the Gupta emperors, who assumed exalted imperial titles. Their direct control, however, was confined to the Ganges Valley, and their relationships with other kings and chieftains had a feudal cast. The Gupta style of administration was less centralized than the Mauryan and was carried out through provincial, district, subdivisional, and village officials rather than by centrally appointed personnel.

It is evident from excavations and from the contemporary literature that the standard of living in Gupta India was high for most people. The Chinese pilgrim Fa-Hsien, who visited India between A.D. 399 and 414, remarked on the prosperity of the people, the smoothness of administration, and the leniency of

punishment compared with China. Another Chinese pilgrim, Hsuan-Tsang, who traveled in the area in the seventh century, made similar comments, but he also reported on the existence of landless labor and the practice of untouchability.

The concentration of formal education was on grammar, rhetoric and composition, logic and metaphysics, medicine, mathematics, and astronomy. Aryabhata's expositions on astronomy in A.D. 499 give calculations of the solar year and the shape and movement of astral bodies with an accuracy anticipating modern science. Astronomy and its unscientific but popular cousin, astrology, were based on an active study of mathematics. The numerals and decimal system routinely used in classical India were borrowed by the Arabs and so passed on to the European world, where they supplanted the Roman system.

Lexicons of the Sanskrit language introduced by Panini and Patanjali in the first century of the Christian Era continued. The great literary genius of Gupta times, however, was Kalidasa. His dramas also throw light on emerging social practices. For example, there was a difference between aristocratic males, women, and servants, not only in behavior and speech patterns but also in actual language. The former spoke Sanskrit, the language of the elite. The latter two categories spoke Prakrits, the vernacular of the common people. Prakrits were less rigid and developed rich regional varieties that grew into the many different languages of North India. Kalidasa and other religious writers of the period indicate that the status of women was being lowered. Early marriage for girls and perpetual celibacy for widows was advocated. Sanction was given to the voluntary immolation of a widow as a pious act; the first record of the practice is a pillar inscription of 510. Women who opted out of family life by becoming courtesans, performing in theaters, or joining Buddhist nunneries enjoyed a larger measure of freedom than their married sisters.

The last of the imperial Guptas was Skandagupta (455–67), grandson of Chandragupta II. Skandagupta was preoccupied with warding off the predatory Huns on the northwest borders of the subcontinent. Subsequent Hun invasions shattered the unity of North India, which was only briefly restored by Harsha-vardhana of Kanauj. The Huns were gradually absorbed by the same process of legitimization and Hinduization as the Sakas had been, and their descendants gave rise to the Rajputs. The classical patterns of civilization realized under the Guptas were sustained by their successors in the middle Ganges Valley and in the kingdoms that emerged from the breakup of the Gupta Empire. Thus the decline and fall of the Gupta Empire coincided with considerable

progress and prosperity in the outlying regions. South India, particularly, was in ascendance.

South India had its own territorial and interdynastic conflicts, some of which had significance for a wider area. For example, the Chalukyas of the western Deccan played an important connecting role between south and north for more than two centuries. Their main rivals for supremacy in the strategic and prosperous area of the Krishna-Tungabhadra doab were the Pallavas of Kanchi (near present-day Madras). Both the Chalukyas and the Pallavas were orthodox in their performance of Vedic sacrifices and their support of Brahmans. Both dynasties left innumerable and enduring architectural monuments in beautifully carved stone temples. Perhaps the most accessible monuments dating to the seventh century stand on the sandy shore of Mahaballipuram, near Madras.

The Pallavas maintained the maritime traditions of their Pandya predecessors and enjoyed close trading and cultural relations with Southeast Asia. The art, architecture, literature, and social customs of the kingdoms of Kamboja and Champa (present-day Indochina), Pegu and Moulmein (Burma), and Srivijaya (Malaysia and Indonesia) show the strong influence of the Sanskrit language, Brahman teachers, and Buddhist beliefs. Angkor Wat in Kampuchea and Borobudur in Indonesia immortalize Hindu-Buddhist mythology and the skill of stone craftsmen. The nature of the relationship between India and what some European scholars deemed "Greater India" has not been precisely determined. Colonization, in the modern sense of that term, seems unlikely. The peoples of Southeast Asia appear to have been attracted to specific aspects of Indian civilization and to have borrowed heavily from it, but they did so in accordance with their own cultural and social needs.

A more assertive outward thrust was made by the Chola Dynasty, which overthrew the Pallavas in the ninth century and proceeded to overrun most of Peninsula India. Chola rulers Rajaraja (985–1014) and Rajendra I (1018–44) also invaded and annexed parts of Sri Lanka and Maldives. They sent several naval expeditions against the Srivijaya Empire, which controlled the sea route to China. Chola trade with China is well documented, although it was characteristically referred to in Chinese chronicles as "tribute." The Chola navy was the strongest fleet in the region for some time, and the Bay of Bengal became a Chola lake, lauded by Tamil bards. The Chola armies were large, usually consisting of one wing each of elephants, horse cavalry, and infantry. They fought incessantly on the Peninsula, sacking, plundering,

and massacring where they conquered. Thereafter, Chola ascendancy was maintained less by force than by a system of legitimizing local chieftains in their domains in return for recognition of Chola ritual sovereignty.

The Chola Empire flourished through the thirteenth century. The rich Cauvery Basin formed its core. The rest of the empire was divided into semiautonomous provinces and districts. These were connected by royal roads and watered by well-designed irrigation systems. Taxes were high, amounting to one-third of the produce, but appear to have been spent mostly within the area taxed instead of being siphoned off to a central treasury. Officials were usually paid with grants of land carrying revenue, not in cash.

The center of Chola social and economic life was the temple. Large temples, such as those at Tanjore and Srirangam, took many years to build and enjoyed huge annual incomes from land, commerce, and the offerings of devotees. Temples were run then, as today, as multipurpose institutions. They provided schooling, employment, and assembly halls. They acted as moneylenders to the cultivators and often financed commercial enterprises abroad. Temples maintained large male and female staffs. *Devadasis* (female servants of the deity) were originally venerated as dedicated dancers of the Bharata Natyam, akin to the vestal virgins of Greece or Rome. But the system was abused, and in many temples *devadasis* were reduced to prostitution. In Chola and post-Chola times, a distinctive style of temple architecture evolved. This was characterized by a series of stories built above the shrine of the chief deity, a pillared hall placed in front of the main sanctum, and an enclosed courtyard in which the complex stood. Later, the sculptured tiers constructed over the gateways, called *gopuram*, came to dominate the entire structure. The stone decoration of temples became more and more elaborate as their size and functions increased, until they came to resemble palaces housed in miniature cities. Chola sculptures, in bronze and in stone, are among the artistic masterpieces of the world. The image of the dancing Siva, Nataraja, is world famous.

Sanskrit was the language of theology and learning in South India, as it was in North India. At the same time, a flourishing popular literature was growing in the Dravidian languages, often borrowing Sanskrit themes and vocabulary. The classic Tamil *Ramayana* of Kamban was composed in the twelfth century. Devotional hymns composed in Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, and Kannada—the four Dravidian languages of South India—gained wide circulation as the bhakti movement filtered northward. By

the early medieval period an all-India cultural synthesis had taken place, notwithstanding political fragmentation.

The Coming of Islam and the Delhi Sultanate

Islam is a revealed religion propagated by the Prophet Muhammad in the early seventh century (see Islam, ch. 3). Islam gave the Arab tribes unity and zeal for moral purpose in a burst of military expansion. By the end of the eighth century the Arabs had extended their sway westward into North Africa and Spain and eastward into Iran and Central Asia. An Arab expedition entered Sind and Baluchistan (in present-day Pakistan) in 711 and gained a potential foothold, but this had slight effect elsewhere on the subcontinent. Arab traders, who had long been familiar on the west coast, were now supplemented by Muslim teachers and saints, known as Sufis, whose influence was to grow over the centuries. Only at the end of the tenth century did Muslim forces enter northwest India and find a base for the thirteenth-century conquest of Delhi and the Indo-Gangetic Plain.

Coming into India over a period of 500 years in different guises and at different places, therefore, Islam had a varied impact. This depended as much on local conditions as on the character of its bearers. It is not surprising then that no uniform or simple answer can be given to the question most often posed in the twentieth century about Islam in India, i.e., were Muslims Indian or alien? On the one hand, Islam gave the Central Asian and Afghan tribes a faith radically different from the beliefs of the Hindu-Buddhist world and thus prevented them from being assimilated, as had all previous invaders or immigrants. Indeed, members of the Muslim aristocracy underlined their foreign lineage. On the other hand, they quickly became part of a typically Indian checkerboard where religious identity was only one factor in the politico-military game. The new ruling class was sustained in India by Indians, both Muslim and Hindu. The majority of the Muslim population— which was never more than a fraction of the total—consisted of converts from Hinduism and Buddhism and their descendants. A cultural synthesis working in both directions was clearly visible by the fourteenth century and flowered in the Mughal Empire. During the thousand years dominated by the Rajputs, Turks, Afghans, and Mughals, there was no concept of India as a single political entity. Earlier patterns of interregional and supraregional ambition and interaction with Central Asian neighbors continued to prevail.

The death of Harsha-vardhana in 647 ended the age of imperial unity in North India. Many dynasties jostled for status and territory. Most of them were Rajputs, whose legendary origins, heroism, and chivalry gave rise to a romantic body of literature and folklore. Rajput propensities for warfare led to the construction of impressive fortresses. Rajputs, men and women alike, treated war as a grand pageant or a seasonal sport. Death on the battlefield was the highest honor for a warrior; women preferred immolation by fire to dishonor or capture. Rajput rulers paid scant attention to commerce, which declined, or to agriculture. They were maintained by a quasi-feudal system of distributing agricultural produce that increased the number of beneficiaries at the expense of the peasant-cultivator. Neither the Rajputs nor their Brahman advisers were interested in the world beyond the circle of their dynastic rivalries. Al Biruni, a brilliant Arab visitor of the eleventh century, summed up his impressions thus: "The Indians believe that there is no country but theirs, no nation like theirs, no king like theirs, no religion like theirs, no science like theirs."

Cultural introversion was united with geopolitical and strategic unawareness. The Rajputs failed to comprehend the revolutionary significance of Islamic advances that were slowly but steadily pushing eastward. Ultimately, a small chieftain in the Punjab was left alone to face a new and formidable power based in Ghazni (in contemporary Afghanistan) without benefit of allies. Mahmud of Ghazni (979–1030) was lured by the proverbial wealth of India to lead a series of destructive raids against Hindu temples. Having replenished his treasury, he campaigned in Central Asia with equal brilliance, but he turned again to India for gold, slaves, and builders. Mahmud's attacks on the temples of Mathura, Thanaswar, Kanauj, and the renowned Somnath fused iconoclasm with greed and left a permanent imprint of terror on the Hindu psyche. Although a patron of learning, he was remembered only as a symbol of the unclean barbarian (*mlechcha*). Historically, Ghazni's conquest of the Punjab provided a base for the more serious efforts of Muhammad of Ghor two centuries later. The Rajput rulers meanwhile appeared to have learned nothing. Their military tactics were unchanged, and they succumbed to the swift horsemanship of the Afghans and Turks.

A new Muslim sultanate was established at Delhi by Iltutmish (1206–36). Delhi commanded a strategic spur in the North Indian plains. The urge to conquer outward from Delhi was strong, and within 100 years the sultanate had extended its sway east to Bengal and south to the Deccan. It was subject to con-

tinued pressure from the northwest, however, as well as from displaced rulers and independent-minded nobles.

The sultanate period was one of continuous flux. There were five dynasties: Slave (1206–90); Khalji (1290–1320); Tughlaq (1320–1413); Sayyid (1414–51); and Lodi (1451–1526). Each gained the throne by violence. The territories controlled by the sultans expanded and contracted. The sultans of Delhi based their laws on the Quran and sharia (Islamic law) and demanded payment of a special protection tax from their non-Muslim subjects, but they did not attempt to change or abolish Hindu law or to interfere with customary social practices. The centers of their rule were urban; military camps and trading posts provided the nuclei for towns.

The rural countryside saw little of the new rulers save in military campaigns, but the peasants were required to sustain yet another set of revenue collectors. One sultan made an attempt to systematize and unify the land tax as well as urban taxes and to institute a centralized bureaucracy over his domains, but his effort was abortive. Agriculture in North India had improved as a result of new irrigation methods— including what came to be known as the Persian wheel—and a few canals were constructed. Prolonged political instability and the brutalization of the peasantry were not conducive to prosperity, however. The depletion of the land became a conspicuous feature of nineteenth-century India. In partial compensation, perhaps, the sultanate period saw an impetus given to trade and industry by the free-spending habits of the new aristocracy and their links with the larger Islamic world. Native artisans skilled in metalwork and stonework, as well as textiles, took to the new patronage with alacrity. Entire *jatis* (see Glossary) of craftsmen sometimes converted to Islam in the process of being employed in state factories. Coins from this period are plentiful and indicate a remonetarization of the economy.

One historic achievement of the sultanate was to protect the Indian subcontinent from the devastations of the Mongols. Through the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the western marches of the sultanate held firm against the progeny of Genghiz Khan. The sack of Delhi in 1398 by Timur (Tamerlane) provided the one bitter taste of what was suffered in large parts of Asia and Eastern Europe. The Mongols, for their part, provided an indirect service to the subcontinent by cutting off the flow of Central Asian and Afghan freebooters. Thereafter, an increasing number of the nobility were of Indian birth. This facilitated a cultural renaissance—a cross-fertilization of Rajput and Muslim arts. The results are visible today in architecture, as at the Quwwat-ul-

Islam Mosque in Delhi; in Hindustani classical music, both vocal and instrumental, as performed in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh; in language, as Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, and Bengali literature testify; and in painting, as the introduction of paper and illuminated manuscripts from Persia transformed Rajput and Jain depictions.

Popular religions were also influenced by the uncompromising monotheism, the simple rituals, the devout faith, and the social equality of Islam. Bhakti cults originating with the Tamil saints gained followers in the north. Sufi *pirs*, or teachers, merged into the prevailing pattern of itinerant holy men. Certain individual Sufis, such as Nizamuddin Auliya, who tried to perform the service of conscience to the crown, continued to be venerated in the twentieth century. A number of casteless sects arose, notably those named after Kabir and Nanak Dev. If not self-consciously syncretists, both men expressed a profound cultural trend when they asserted that God is One, irrespective of whether He is addressed as Allah by Muslims or Ram by Hindus.

Generally speaking, however, Islamic ideology was posited as being in irreconcilable conflict with Brahmanic thought. The evangelical and intolerant attitudes of the ulama led them to advocate far more harshness in dealing with feudatories, merchants, and cultivators—who were usually Hindu—than the sultan might find politically expedient. No political science evolved to enable a sultan simultaneously to obey Quranic injunctions, to be equally just to all his subjects, and to administer a settled population efficiently. He was bound to antagonize one or another section of those on whose loyalty his rule depended. Equally important, no system of peaceful succession or legitimization of force evolved. Every strong man was a potential ruler or rebel. By the early sixteenth century, North India was once again a congeries of kingdoms, ruled by Turks, Afghans, and Rajputs. The Muslim ruling class looked down on its infidel subjects, and the old Hindu ruling class despised the new conquerors as barbarians.

A similarly multifaceted interaction between new and old, Muslim and Hindu, took place in South India. Ambitious sultans of Delhi waged war in the Deccan and briefly established superiority. In 1347 a military governor broke away to create the Bahmani kingdom, which subsequently devolved into five states that had mixed Turkish and Indian Muslim ruling classes. They initiated a process of cultural synthesis visible today in the city of Hyderabad. (The state of Hyderabad was the residual successor of the Bahmani kingdom and continued to exist as a princely state in subordinate alliance with the British until 1948, when it was an-

nexed by India.) Cultural flowering in the medieval period was expressed in vigorous schools of Deccani architecture and painting. The military and revenue-collecting institutions of the Bahmani kingdom were similar to those of the sultanate. Efforts to gain more booty or territory led to constant disputes with the powerful Vijayanagar Empire to the south over control of the fertile Doab between the Krishna and Tungabhadra rivers.

Vijayanagar was founded in northern Karnataka by two Andhra princes in 1336. They rapidly expanded their domains southward to include Madurai and westward to include the port of Goa. They were unable to control the whole of the east coast or the extreme southwest coast, both of which were dotted with Hindu and Muslim principalities. The Vijayanagar Empire encouraged trade. Its capacity to wage war depended on a constant supply of horses imported from abroad and the maintenance of internal roads and communications. Its merchant guilds enjoyed a wide sphere of operation and counterbalanced the power of landowners and Brahmans in court politics. Among the most enterprising of the merchant castes were the Chettis, whose operations throughout South India and Southeast Asia carried forward a tradition from Chola times that is noticeable today. But India 's commerce and shipping eventually passed largely into the hands of foreigners, and special facilities for foreign traders were provided by the emperor. Arabs and Portuguese jostled for influence and control of Indian ports, and in 1510 Goa passed into Portuguese hands.

The rulers of Vijayanagar were also great temple builders. Scholars estimate that over 2,000 temples dedicated to a variety of deities were constructed in Peninsula India between 1300 and 1700. The greatest among them was the Sri Venkateshwara Temple at Tirupati, which in the mid-1980s continued its wide-ranging activities. Temples received shares of revenue from villages as well as gifts of money and kind. Temples invested their funds in irrigation works, trade, and even in foreign enterprises. They became major landowning and land-managing institutions and were partially responsible for the considerable extension of cultivation in new lands that took place. Socially and intellectually, however, the temples were a conservative force. They sponsored no debate with the vital new religion, Islam. Nor were temples the initiators of the bhakti movement, which attracted adherents all over India. It was not the South Indian temples but the seven sacred sites of Hindu pilgrimage that served to diffuse common beliefs and common life-styles throughout the subcontinent (see Ceremonial Observances, ch. 3).

Less by design than by circumstance, the Vijayanagar Empire became a bridge between south and north, old and new, Hindu and Muslim. Its methods of recruiting armies, administering districts, and collecting revenues through sets of intermediaries were similar to those of the Bahmani kingdoms and the sultanate. That is, they all had institutions of a feudal nature supporting garrison states. Military rivalry between the Vijayanagar and Bahmani states long absorbed their energies. When the five Muslim kingdoms united to defeat Vijayanagar at the decisive Battle of Talikota in 1565, the Peninsula was opened to the new power of the north—the Mughals.

The Mughal Era

In the early sixteenth century India was fragmented among numerous quarrelsome Hindu and Muslim rulers presiding over regional states. The rulers of Delhi and the Punjab looked to the northwest for allies and became vulnerable to events in Central Asia. Shifts of power there pushed Babur of Ferghana (in present-day Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic) southward, first to Kabul and thence to Delhi, where he founded a dynasty that lent its name to the next 200 years and became a synonym for wealth, power, and opulence.

Babur was descended from both Genghiz Khan and Timur. He combined physical strength and courage with chivalry, military ability and ardor with a sophisticated appreciation of nature and the arts. Babur had a vivid personality that enabled him to become ruler of Hindustan and to generate a following sufficient to sustain his son Humayun through vicissitudes and to place his grandson Akbar firmly in the seat of power. Babur gained control of northwest India after defeating Ibrahim Lodi in 1526 at the first Battle of Panipat. Having decided to stay on in India, Babur had to overcome the powerful Rajput confederacy to the west, led by Rana Sangha, in a hard-fought battle. Superior Mughal cavalry and artillery prevailed over the larger armies of the Rajputs. Babur next subdued Afghan contenders to the Lodi throne from the east. He died in 1530 before he could consolidate his conquests, but he left as legacies his memoirs *(Babur-Nama)*, gardens in Kabul, Lahore, and Agra, and descendants who inherited his qualities, albeit in different combinations. At his request he was buried in Kabul.

Historians often compare the early empire of the Mughals to the contemporaneous Safavid Empire in Iran, Ottoman Empire

in Turkey, and Manchu Empire in China. Territories were similarly vast, administrative records detailed, written accounts by residents and foreign visitors plentiful, and ultimate subordination to one form or another of European control comparable. Diaries and paintings add personal depth to valuable source materials. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Mughal era has stimulated a considerable body of research, commentary, and fictional writing. Some key questions recur in such writings but receive inconclusive answers. Who was the greatest of the six great Mughals? Why did the Mughal Empire disintegrate so rapidly after the death of Aurangzeb in 1707? And, most challenging of all, why was the Mughal Empire, despite its high volume of trade, sophisticated products, immense wealth, and constant economic activity, unable to generate industrialization and general prosperity?

Individuals in contemporary India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh incline differently toward each of the great Mughals. Some are attracted to the pioneer, Babur. Others lean to his great-great-grandson, Shah Jahan (1628–57), who left to posterity such imperishable monuments as the Taj Mahal in Agra and the Jama Masjid in Delhi, among numerous others. Shah Jahan's father, Jahangir (1605–27), ruled through the empress Nur Jahan for much of his reign but is remembered for his encouragement of painting and the construction of the Badshah Masjid in Lahore and the gardens of Srinagar. Nevertheless, the two towering figures of the Mughal era were Akbar (1556–1605) and Aurangzeb (1658–1707). Each expanded the empire by hundreds of thousands of square kilometers. Both were able and meticulous administrators with genuine concern for the welfare of their subjects. But they represented opposite qualities of leadership and are often evaluated according to the religious preferences of the observer. Akbar stood forth as father of all his subjects, the vast majority of whom were Hindu. Aurangzeb was a pious Muslim who attempted to restore the edge of orthodox Islam in an alien and heterodox environment. Moreover, Akbar was the consolidator of Mughal power and Aurangzeb the inheritor of 100 years of the Pax Mughali; the circumstances they faced as rulers were different. Both excite admiration and criticism. Akbar fit the mold of a classical Indian emperor spreading patronage among all faiths and sections of the population. This offended orthodox Muslims, who viewed it as apostasy. Aurangzeb was admired for his military ability and his single-minded zeal but has been much criticized for pursuing a debilitating war for 20 years in the Deccan and for profoundly alienating his Hindu subjects.

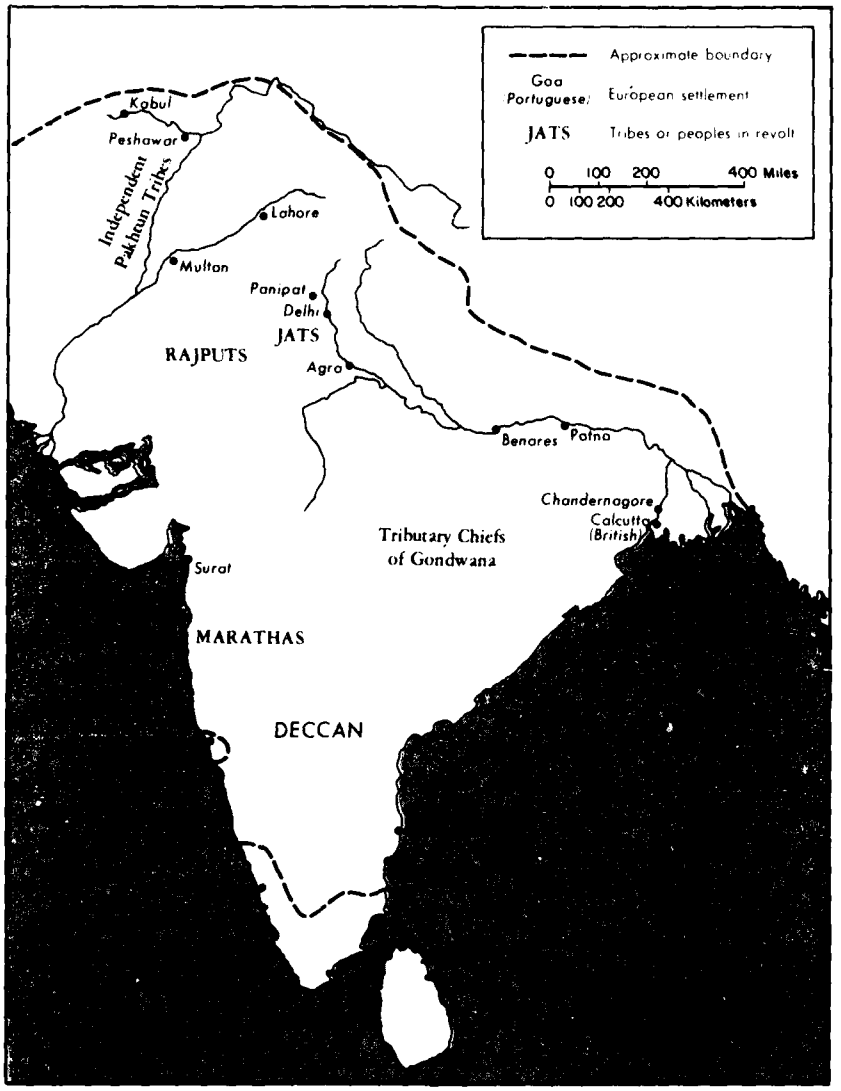
Akbar's qualities surfaced early and lasted his lifetime. As a

soldier he was noted for his lightning marches and physical stamina. Although relentless against those who did not submit, he chose not to carry on an endless war of attrition against Rajput strongholds in the desert. Instead, he treated Rajput chieftains with respect and contracted matrimonial alliances with some. Rajput generals went on to lead Mughal armies to victory elsewhere, enjoying special privileges and joining the existing aristocracy of Persian, Turk, and Afghan Muslims. Rajput princesses became mothers to future emperors and enjoyed considerable freedom of belief within the women's quarters of the palace.

Akbar was a statesman with large views who was also a brilliant administrator. He had a rare capacity of inspiring work and dedication in others and coordinating that work. Hindu advisers, such as Raja Todar Mal, helped to draw up uniform laws and efficient schemes of revenue collection and assessment that reflected the inherited custom of India and were so accepted. Akbar delighted in intellectual interchange, encouraging debate around him and engaging in theological argument and philosophical discussion with scholars and priests of different denominations—Muslim, Hindu, and Christian. He possessed a personal magnetism that drew the best men in the empire to his service. And Akbar's empire was large, taking in Gujarat, Bengal, Qandahar, Orissa, Sind, Baluchistan, and parts of the Deccan (see fig. 3).

Akbar administered his empire on the basis of partnership with the Rajputs, the integration or reconciliation of communities within it, and the organization of government around a loyal and graded imperial service. In 1564 Akbar lifted existing bans on temple building by Hindus and in 1579 abolished the special tax paid by non-Muslims. Faced with criticism from the ulama, Akbar declared himself to be the final arbiter in any disputes of law derived from the Quran and sharia. He backed his claim to authority in Islam with his unquestioned authority as head of the state. In 1580 he initiated a syncretic court religion called the Din-i-Ilahi (Divine Faith), which might have bolstered a god-king cult. In theory, the new cult demanded only loyalty to the emperor and was compatible with any religion. In practice, its rituals and its content offended Muslims in the aristocracy. Their support went to the orthodox against the eclectic in the seventeenth century.

The details of Akbar's administration have been recorded in the monumental work by Abul Fazl, the *Ain-i-Akbari*. Its several volumes, supplemented with muster and revenue records from the different provinces of the Mughal Empire under later rulers, give a fairly complete picture of Mughal administration and



Source: Based on information from R.C. Majumdar, H.C. Raychaudhuri, and K. Datta, *An Advanced History of India*, New York, 1956, 489; Michael Edwards, *A History of India: From the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, Bombay, 1961, 183; and C. Collin Davies, *An Historical Atlas of the Indian Peninsula*, London, 1959, 511.

Figure 3. Mughal Empire, Late Seventeenth Century

economic history. Akbar created a graded imperial service in which remuneration was rendered in cash, not in land grants. Its members were called *mansabdars*, holding appointment from the emperor. They provided and maintained cavalry and foot soldiers in accordance with their rank and served in whatever place or capacity the emperor ordered. The empire was divided for administrative purposes into provinces and districts similar in configuration to earlier and later divisions. The military-political functions of administration *(nawabi)* were separated from the financial *(dewani)*; the supremacy of the imperial treasury was always upheld. By giving officials high status and high salaries but no heritable land, Akbar was able to recruit to the service of the empire men possessing exceptional ability but lacking the wherewithal to revolt.

The *mansabdari* system was the backbone of the Mughal Empire. It suffered from certain institutional drawbacks, however, which surfaced in the latter half of the seventeenth century and contributed to the administrative and economic decline of the empire. The main drawbacks were the lack of objective or uniform standards of recruitment; the personal focus of loyalty; the gradual substitution of *jagirs* (land revenue grants) for cash salaries; and the clash between a natural hereditary tendency and the right of the emperor to resume the title and property of a dead nobleman and make fresh appointments. The nobility, which included the higher ranks of *mansabdars*, became factionalized. They supported different contenders to the throne in a fratricidal war of succession in 1657–58 and did not act as a unifying force during the court wrangles of the eighteenth century. More important over the long run, the Mughal nobility not only failed to identify with the land or the people—except in the case of the Rajputs, who were traditionally confirmed in their hereditary chieftainships—but also became an additional burden.

The empire was financed primarily by land revenue; fresh conquests and other taxes supplemented this main source of income. Under Akbar, Todar Mal systematized an equitable method of land assessment according to soil and productivity, specified the percentages to be paid to the state in fixed settlements, and regulated the places and means of collection. Economic historians have looked at the effects of the Mughal systems of revenue collection in the context of their administrative practices for answers to questions on economic growth or its absence. The multiplicity of food and cash crops in India, aristocratic interest in horticulture and irrigation, a plentiful supply of land, and the Pax Mughali ensured prosperity in the seventeenth cen-

tury. Against these facts are set the coercive and rapacious aspects of Mughal rule. Revenue was usually collected in cash, so that increases in demand, combined with monetization of the economy and changes in price structure, put heavier and heavier burdens on the cultivator. Cultivation of the land and the payment of revenue to the state were defined as duties, and refusal was treated as rebellion. Sometimes whole villages were abandoned when the pressure became too great.

Pressures increased when the practice of cash salaries gave way to the allotment of *jagirs*. Scholars estimate that in the seventeenth century more than 50 percent of the empire lay with *jagirs* allotted to a few hundred noblemen. *Jagirs*, however, were neither alienable nor heritable, and the officers were subject to frequent and abrupt transfers and reallocation of *jagirs*. Therefore, the highest ranking had no regard for the long-term prospects of the land to restrain them in their immediate extractions from it. Their demands had a multiplier effect all down the line of intermediaries who had rights to some share of produce. The actual cultivator was left with little or no surplus to reinvest in the land. Productivity remained static or declined. Famines were not unknown. The pressure of the ruling class inhibited the very extension of cultivation they sought and created conflict between the Mughal nobility and their collaborators on the one hand and the traditional Indian landowners and peasants on the other. Rebellions of the latter sometimes took on a regional or religious complexion, but the Jat and Sikh uprisings during the reign of Aurangzeb reflected economic problems.

Equally critical accounts are rendered of the nonagricultural sectors of the Mughal economy. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, India was a leading country in manufactures, at the least on a par with preindustrial Europe and China. The flow of commodities by land and sea increased substantially and was stimulated by the public works and private opulence of the period. Merchants and shipbuilders, both Hindu and Muslim, were exceedingly wealthy. Their influence in the courts of coastal provinces, such as Gujarat, was considerable. Different regions specialized in the production of a variety of textiles, including silk, which found markets throughout the world. Fruits, dyestuffs, sugar, spices, saltpeter, and stonework, metalwork, and woodwork formed the bulk of other exports. Artisans were marvelously skilled, and although they worked with rudimentary tools, they could produce virtually any article on demand, from European-style ships to cannon to chiseled marble. The markets for Indian goods were expanding, especially in Europe, from

which continent came merchants, shippers, and adventurers to carve out footholds within the domain. New ideas were in circulation.

Various explanations have been offered for the failure of these factors to produce economic change and growth in India. Historian Tapan Raychaudhuri points to the extreme specialization of function, frozen in *jati* or caste, as a disincentive to artisan mobility. Labor-intensive technology did not give way to machine technology in a land with a plentiful supply of skilled and cheap labor. Moreover, the intellectual curiosity of the Mughal nobility so evident in philosophy, literature, and the arts did not extend to mechanics. The gentleman tinker or farmer did not exist. Professor Barrington Moore stresses the economically depressing effects of the emperor's claims on land and goods on the death of their owner. Conscious of the risk of forfeiture, the Mughal nobility engaged in conspicuous consumption. Extreme frugality and nondisclosure of assets was the usual practice of Hindu merchants. In neither case did wealth translate into capital. The indifference of the Mughal court to events in the Indian Ocean and the maintenance of an adequate navy to protect India's traditional shipping rights inevitably led to a decline in the ability of Indians to participate in transoceanic trade and to adopt the new organizational techniques of European companies. Further, the political instability and fragmentation of the eighteenth century was not conducive to economic growth, nor did traditional-style military campaigns stimulate new production. Indeed, as Raychaudhuri and historian Irfan Habib document, despite the magnificence of Mughal India, the overall picture was not one of an impending industrial revolution.

The decline and ultimate disintegration of the Mughal Empire was set in train by Aurangzeb. Although inspiring awe, he lacked both the warmth of personality to attract outstanding lieutenants and the trust to delegate power. His very long reign aged his son and successor. An austere and orthodox Sunni Muslim, Aurangzeb sought to correct what he considered to be earlier excesses of heterodoxy and to enforce a clear and coherent policy throughout his empire. He forbade the building of new temples and sometimes ordered the destruction of old ones. In 1679 he reimposed the special tax on Hindu males of arms-bearing age. This seems to have been more of a symbolic gesture than an income-gaining one and was not accompanied by any general persecution of Hindus. It won Aurangzeb the support of the ulama, but it cost him the sympathy of vital partners in the empire—the Rajputs—and provoked the antagonism of other groups, who rebel-

led. Rebellions usually had several causes— economic, political, territorial, and religious—so that it is difficult to affirm a subcontinental-wide Hindu revival movement as portrayed by some writers. What is certain is that the last decades of Aurangzeb's reign were marked by campaigns against rebellious Rajputs in the west, Ahoms in the Northeast, Jats in the Doab, Sikhs in the Punjab and, most debilitating of all, Marathas in the Deccan.

The Marathas

One of the most intriguing and romantic stories of the late Mughal era is that of the Marathas. From an inchoate mass of Sudras and Brahmans scattered through the Deccan, they were welded into a superbly mobile fighting force that first broke Aurangzeb's power and subsequently established overlordship in the southern and western parts of the subcontinent and extending as far north as Delhi. The Marathas became, for a time, chief contenders for the mantle of the Mughal emperor, who was quiescent under their protection. They fell prey to disputes among their chieftains and finally succumbed to the rising power of the East India Company in the early nineteenth century.

Maratha chieftains were in the service of the sultan of Bijapur—one of the Bahmani kingdoms—when Mughal armies were subduing the Deccan. A brilliant and charismatic Maratha leader, Sivaji, took advantage of conflicts between the Mughals and the Deccani sultanates to carve out a Maratha principality around Poona (present-day Pune). By capturing strategic fortresses, he gained control of territory. In the 1660s Sivaji led a series of successful attacks on other Mughal strongholds, including the port of Surat. In 1674 he assumed the title of Chatrapati at an elaborate coronation ceremony during which he received the blessings of his guru (see Glossary), Brahmans, and the leaders of the old families, seeking thereby to revive the idea of a Hindu kingdom in Maharashtra. Thereafter, he consolidated his administration, reinforced his army, and extended his reach through the Peninsula. Taxes of 25 percent and an additional 10 percent were levied on all conquered lands. Sivaji remains a legendary hero in twentieth-century Maharashtra.

Sivaji's death in 1680 did not interrupt Maratha expansion, and Aurangzeb was occupied for the last two decades of his reign in attempts to defeat them. The huge and cumbersome imperial armies with their long supply lines were at a disadvantage against the lightly equipped Maratha guerrillas living off the land and avoiding pitched battle. In 1717 a Mughal emissary signed a treaty

with the Marathas confirming them in their overlordship of the Deccan in return for acknowledging the (token) sovereignty of Delhi. The Marathas continued to expand their domains on the west coast, however, and moved east into Orissa and Bengal and over the entire Peninsula. They also made inroads into Rajput territory and the Punjab as Mughal power contracted.

The Marathas, notwithstanding their fine leaders, were not equipped for administration or socioeconomic innovation. They acted as predators. Their levies alienated landowners and cultivators regardless of religious affiliation. They failed to form any Pan-India Hindu confederation to replace the Mughals, in part because the legitimacy of the Mughal emperor was an established fact irrespective of attempts on all sides to gain autonomy of regional power. The Marathas were left virtually alone to face the invading force of an Afghan, Ahmad Shah Abdali, and in 1761 they were decisively defeated on the historic battlefield of Panipat. Although Maratha princes continued to play important roles in eighteenth-century wars and politics and fielded impressive armies, they were not united. By that time European trading companies were equally embroiled in the politics of succession to the Mughals. Between 1775 and 1818 three wars were fought between Maratha forces and those of the East India Company. The latter prevailed, and Maratha princes became pensioners, or subsidiary allies, of the British.

The Sikhs

The defeat of the Maratha and Mughal armies by Abdali in 1761 facilitated the independence of the Punjab from Delhi. It also helped the establishment of Sikh political dominance in northwestern India.

The Sikh religion is rooted in the bhakti movement and is often described as being the offspring of a union between Hinduism and Islam. Its founder, Nanak Dev, sang the praises of the One God and asserted always, "there is no Hindu, there is no Mussalman." His devotional, monotheistic, and egalitarian message appealed to many, especially to Punjabi peasants, already familiar with Sufi saints. Their sense of community was strengthened by Nanak's organizational innovations among his followers. They sang his hymns in their mother tongue, Punjabi; they ate together from one kitchen in a casteless fraternity; they accepted the importance of the guru to their salvation and served Nanak's successors (see Sikhism, ch. 3).

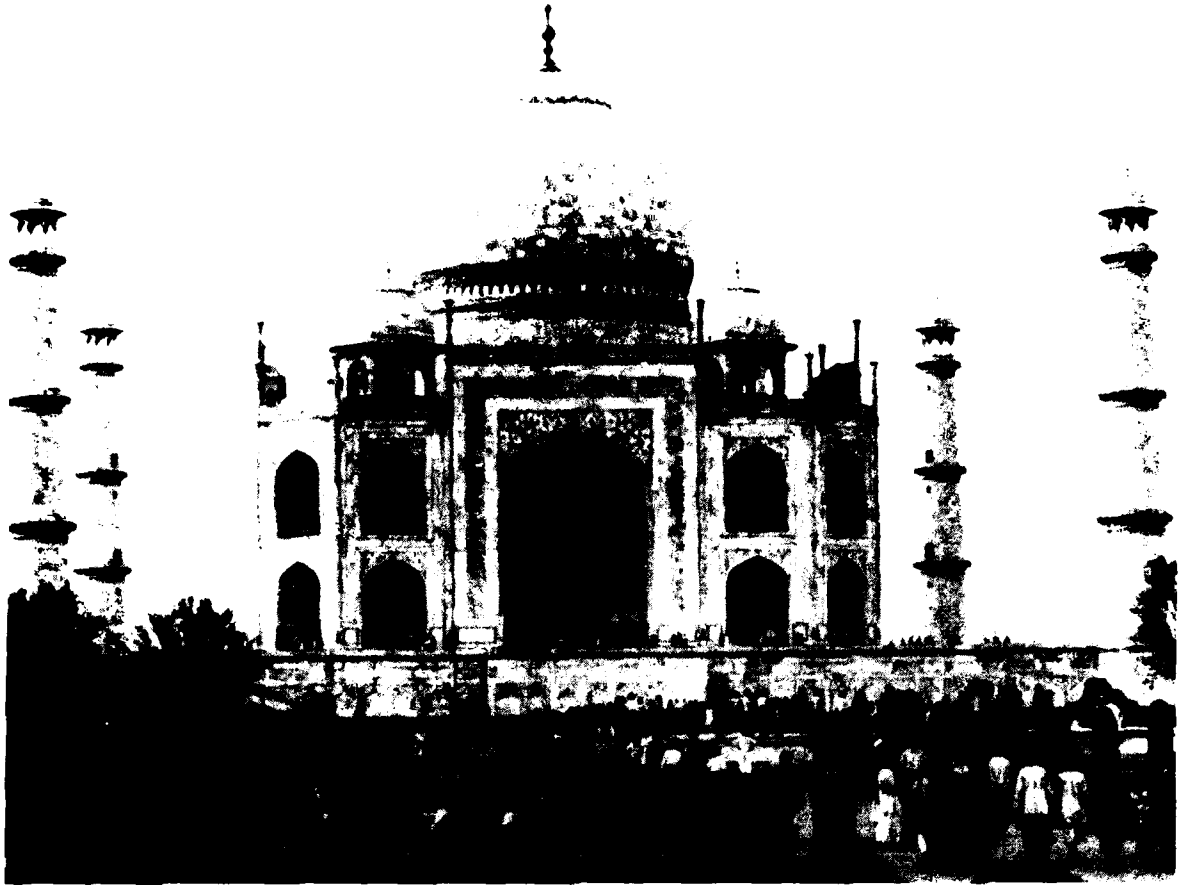
The fifth guru, Arjan Das, compiled an anthology of sacred

teachings and poems in a holy scripture, the Guru Granth Sahib. This was installed in a newly constructed temple at Amritsar that was architecturally and functionally open to all. Emperor Akbar was impressed by the guru's work, but his son Jahangir had Arjan Das tortured to death in 1606. The martyrdom of the fifth guru was a turning point for the Sikhs. Thereafter, spiritual and temporal authority became united in the person of the guru, and emphasis shifted from propagation of the faith peaceably to defending the faith by arms when necessary. This process was accelerated when Mughal authorities ordered the execution of the ninth guru in 1675. The tenth guru, Gobind Singh (1666–1708), molded his followers into a sect of warrior-saints called the Khalsa. At a ceremony in 1699 he enjoined them to wear the distinctive symbols of unshorn hair, comb, drawers, steel bracelet, and steel sword; to take a common last name of Singh (signifying courage of the lion); and to uphold the Guru Granth Sahib as the only guru after him.

The Khalsa were recruited mainly from the Jat peasantry who rose up against economic and political repression in the Punjab in the last decades of Aurangzeb's reign. Neither the mass executions nor the religious persecution carried out by Aurangzeb's successors destroyed the Khalsa. They deployed themselves in small bands of marauders and took advantage of Persian and Afghan raids on a weakening Delhi to enrich themselves and establish control over the territory. By the 1770s Sikh sway extended from the Indus River in the west to the Yamuna (Jumna) River in the east, from the town of Multan in the south to Jammu in the north. But the Sikhs were a loose, disunited, and quarrelsome confederacy of 12 *misls* (kin-groups).

The man who liquidated the warring *misls* and forged a unified Punjabi kingdom in which Sikhs, Hindus, and Muslims lived together in equality and increasing prosperity was the one-eyed Ranjit Singh (1780–1839). He established his capital at Lahore and extended his frontiers into Afghanistan, Kashmir, and Ladakh. In 1809 Ranjit Singh signed a treaty with the East India Company declaring the Sutlej River as the frontier between their territories. British expansion into Sind and Afghanistan came into conflict with independent Sikh power, however, and Ranjit Singh's successors lacked his diplomatic and administrative acumen. Two Anglo-Sikh wars resulted in the annexation and demilitarization of the Punjab by the British in 1849.

Beginning with the Lawrence brothers, Henry and John, in the 1850s, some of the best Britons in India served in the Punjab. They gave top priority to defense and recruited large numbers of Sikh soldiers to the army, who helped to quell the uprisings of



Taj Mahal, Agra
Courtesy Air-India Library

1857 in Northern India and served with distinction elsewhere through the twentieth century. Public works were also constructed, especially large irrigation canals that initially raised agricultural productivity. At the same time, the Sikhs were exposed to the proselytizing activities of Christian missionaries and Hindu Arya Samajists in the late nineteenth century. They reacted with reforms of their own, led by the Singh Sabha movement, which asserted the separate identity of the Sikh faith and struggled to regain control over Sikh shrines, some of which enjoyed considerable revenue.

In the first part of the twentieth century, agrarian discontent and nationalist feeling produced the revolutionary Ghadr Party among the Sikhs. A spate of disturbances in the Punjab called down repressive action by the British government after World War I. A newly formed Sikh organization, the Shiromani Akali Dal party, established a committee for the management of shrines

known as the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) and launched a nonviolent noncooperation movement against the British in 1921. Their most important demands were finally met in 1924 with the Sikh Gurdwaras Act, and thereafter the SGPC managed the shrines and also served as a kind of parliament for the Sikh community (see The Crisis in Punjab, ch. 8).

The Coming of the Europeans

India's trade with Europe, by both land and sea, was a constant fact of history from ancient times. Changes in modern Europe—ushered in by the Renaissance, the Reformation, and tremendous commercial expansion—eventually revolutionized the situation in India, as elsewhere in the world. The Europeans became part of the Indian scene after the Portuguese voyager Vasco da Gama sailed into the port of Calicut in 1498 and captured Goa in 1510. As part of Portugal's vigorous imperialism, which was supported by the pope, Portuguese galleons successfully challenged Arab power in the Indian Ocean, and Jesuits came to convert, converse, and make observations on their new encounters in India.

The Protestant countries of Europe challenged Portugal's monopoly, and Dutch and English trading companies were founded at the turn of the seventeenth century to take advantage of the growing European market for Asian goods and spices. Coastal potentates in India, trying to play off Muslim, Roman Catholic, and Protestant foreigners against each other, granted concessions to the newcomers, and the Europeans also secured permission from the Mughal emperor to establish trading stations (factories). The chief ports of the Mughal Empire—Surat on the west coast and Hugli in the Ganges delta on the east—were the main centers of European interest, as were also southern ports for the collection of textiles and spices. The Dutch East Indies Company expanded rapidly but concentrated on the spice trade from present-day Indonesia and Sri Lanka. The English entered the lucrative inland commerce and shipping within India instead. English factors, or agents of the East India Company that had been formed in London, became familiar with Indian customs and languages, including Persian, which was the unifying and official language of the Mughal Empire. They adapted to Indian clothes and life-

styles. The knowledge of the country so gained and the cooperative ties they enjoyed with various groups of Indian traders gave them a competitive edge over other Europeans. The French East India Company came to the subcontinent only in 1670. It too was given permission to establish factories and enjoyed the support of the French government as well. Innumerable European wars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries heightened the competition in India between the different trading companies.

During the eighteenth century there were changes in trade routes and internal markets resulting from the devolution of power from Delhi to virtually independent regions. Although recent research shows that an overall decline in economic activity probably did not take place, security of trade suffered. In these circumstances, the European trading posts began to serve not only as collecting and transshipping points for goods but also as fortified places of refuge for foreigners and Indians alike. The factories at Surat, Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta gradually came to apply English laws to disputes within their boundaries. They grew in size and population. Armed servants of the company were usually protectors of trade at the time, and company armies—composed mostly of Indian troops led by European officers—acquitted themselves well (see The British Heritage, ch. 10). Their assistance came to be requested by rival contenders to provincial power. At the same time, European adventurers or mercenaries served with various princely and private armies around the country, especially as drillmasters and directors of artillery. The English and French companies became part of the shifting political chessboard of India in the twilight of the Mughals.

In South India rivals for ascendancy were the nizam (ruler) of Hyderabad, the sultan of Mysore, and the Marathas. The French and English companies invariably supported opposite sides in any conflict. Despite brilliant leadership under Joseph François Dupleix, the French were unable to sustain a strong position. After three wars in the Carnatic, their control was reduced to Pondicherry by the end of the century. In Bengal, too, the French and the English supported different factions in the succession struggles of the Mughal viceroys. Politics in the fabulously rich province of Bengal were complicated by a strong regional culture, the absence of firm group loyalties, the economic power of a new class of Hindu banking and trading families, and the inability of

the nawabs (local rulers) to control a changing situation. Plots and counterplots climaxed when English East India Company forces led by Robert Clive defeated the larger but undisciplined armies of Nawab Siraj-ud-daula at Plassey in 1757.

Company Rule and the British Empire

It is customary to date the beginning of British rule in India from the Battle of Plassey. Company rule came to an end a century later with the millenarian uprisings of 1857 and was replaced by the direct rule of the British crown. But it was in the first 100 years that Britain expanded its territories most, indulged in its utmost economic rapacity, and made the greatest cultural impact on India.

The territorial expansion took place in waves, reaching inward from the seacoasts. South India and the Ganges Valley were taken by the end of the eighteenth century. Central India, Northeast India into the sub-Himalayan region, and Lower Burma were conquered by 1830. Sind fell next, and the way opened for war with the Sikh Empire and the annexation of the Punjab in 1849. Two more Maratha states, as well as Oudh, were absorbed in the 1850s. Although wars accompanied each wave, the company used two other methods of extending its control that were as effective as conquest. The first included penetration through trade and serving as the appointed *dewan* (revenue collector) of the Mughal emperor. The *dewani* of Bengal was won in 1765 and then extended into the Ganges Valley, which was the lifeline of inland trade. The second method was by treaty. The company signed "subsidiary alliances" with princes who were given the protection of the company's arms in return for annual tribute, cession of territory, and acknowledgment of the company as the paramount power in India. As the Rajput, Maratha, and South Indian princes discovered, their spheres of activity soon were severely limited. There is little doubt that this early imperial history strongly influenced the attitudes of leaders in independent India, especially Jawaharlal Nehru, against military alliances and multinational corporations in the post-World War II period.

The motivations behind British expansion were many, as were the arguments used by the company to justify its military expenditures and its request for loans or grants from the British Parliament. Three sets of motivation were prominent and have generated a considerable body of discursive and analytical literature on imperialism. One was trade—expectation of trade, extension

of trade to new markets, introduction of new items, and protection of trade and trading routes. After the company lost its trading monopoly to other British firms and once trade with China was opened, the number of British groups having vested interests in controlling India increased. Indeed, much of the documentation for early twentieth-century theories of economic imperialism was based on the British experience in India. In recent years, however, historians have shown that British economic motivations for penetration were matched by those of certain Indian groups who invited such penetration. Hindu bankers and merchants with intricate networks of credit eagerly collaborated with the company for their own material advancement. Without these intermediary groups linking town and country, British rule through the country would hardly have been possible.

Another prominent argument used for expansion was security. Wars were fought and justified on the basis of a Napoleonic threat in South India, a Russian threat in Afghanistan, or a "native" threat to stability and communications, as in Burma. As historian Percival Spear puts it, "security in the minds of people both expansive and nervous can weave strange fantasies." After the loss of the North American colonies, the British Parliament was reluctant to finance wars on the subcontinent and forbade the company to pursue schemes of conquest without the express authority of London. But by 1841 opinion had changed, and Parliament was instructing that "no just and honorable accession should be abandoned." For most of the period the British public and most members of Parliament were ignorant of events in India. When their indifference was broken by debate on the justification or cost of war, security arguments usually secured their acquiescence to military operations.

A third set of arguments was propounded by the Evangelicals and the Utilitarians in the first half of the nineteenth century. Their sense of moral superiority ripened into the smug belief of Victorian Englishmen that they were obliged to spread "the inestimable blessings of civilization." Carrying "the White Man's Burden" became the justification for forward moves of all kinds, from social legislation to outright annexation. The equation of civilization with Europe led to the toleration of other European possessions in India as nonthreatening to the British. French and Portuguese colonial enclaves were left untouched until after Indian independence. The more immediate results of this moral attitude were to open India to Christian missionaries and to substitute English for Persian as the language of administration and public education. These were to have a profound cultural impact on the

people of India.

Long and learned controversies on the cumulative effect of British rule on the Indian economy sometimes obscure a unanimous verdict on early company behavior in Bengal—rapacity and greed exceeding all previous records of looting and corruption. After Plassey, company servants led by Clive enriched themselves by taking enormous gifts of money, by acquiring landed estates or *jagirs*, and most of all by carrying on private trade duty free while their competitors paid tax. In the words of historian Edward Thompson, they "shook the Pagoda Tree" and made fortunes with which they returned to Britain. There, these "nabobs" helped finance the urban and industrial revolution, as did their counterparts enriched by the slave and ivory trade of Africa. Revulsion against them and the equally greedy company directors in London sparked parliamentary demand for reform, restraint, and a sharing of the profits. These were expressed in William Pitt's India Act of 1784.

The man sent to implement the new legislation was Lord Cornwallis, who had served in a losing cause in the American colonies. He professionalized, bureaucratized, and Europeanized the administration. Private trade was outlawed, and company servants were remunerated with generous graduated salaries. Commercial and administrative functions were separated. A judicial system was established, including district courts and courts of appeal. The basis of the highly reputable Indian Civil Service (ICS) was laid by selecting young Britons of promise and giving them some training in Indian languages and customs. Parliament had taken a place in the control of company policy, although not in its routine functioning, and was led to assume responsibility for government in India.

At the same time, an attempt was made to ease the plight of the Indian cultivator by systematizing revenue collection and landownership along patterns that had evolved in England under English common law. The Permanent Settlement imposed by Cornwallis in Bengal stands as a monument to the good intentions of that effort and to its disastrous consequences. As a prominent British official later wrote: "Our dealings with the land have been more destructive of all ancient property rights than were the old methods . . . . Our rigid and revolutionary methods of exacting land revenue have reduced the peasantry to the lowest extreme of poverty and wretchedness, and the procedure of our settlement courts have been the means of laying upon them burdens heavier than any they endured in former times." Famines followed in quick succession. The land settlement in Bengal—which covered

a much larger area than present-day West Bengal—came to be known as the zamindari system, because it was contracted with men assumed to be landowners (zamindars). In fact, they were absentee rent collectors who had paid government a fixed amount and extracted as much as possible for their own use from the cultivators. Significantly, the zamindari system was not adopted by the British either in Madras or in Bombay—the two other major administrative units, often called presidencies—where settlements were reached with traditional units, such as the village, or with the cultivator himself. Nor was it put into force in territories acquired later, such as the Punjab. Agrarian conditions in British India varied according to place and crop.

In the long run, conditions deteriorated not only because of the kind of revenue settlement in force but also because of India's integration into an international economic and pricing system over which it had no control and because of the increasing number of people subsisting on agriculture for lack of other employment. Millions of Indian spinners, weavers, and dyers working in a vast cottage industry lost their markets and their work to the cheaper textiles produced in Lancashire's textile mills. The traditional patronage extended by Indian rulers to artistes, artisans, and producers of various goods disappeared with company rule. As Britain became the industrial heart of the world, India's relatively self-sufficient economy was reduced to that of a precariously dependent market producing raw materials only. The new fortunes that were made in indigo, jute, sugar, tea, and opium did not accrue to peasant cultivators.

Cross-cultural contact between Europe and Asia generated an encounter in civilizations that had far-reaching effects. Asian influences on European languages, philosophy, manners, arts, and decorative styles are fruitful and ongoing topics of study. European influences in Asia became more visible and forceful when a political relationship of ruler and ruled was established. Initially, the British refrained from interfering with Indian customs and institutions. Administrators were concerned with survival and stability, not with transformation of society. Oriental scholars, such as Sir William Jones, who founded the Royal Asiatic Society in 1784, were attracted to Indian civilization and felt that Indians would do well to study it in Sanskrit and Persian. The view of these Orientalists was challenged by the Evangelicals and the Utilitarians, who became politically influential in Britain.

The Evangelicals offered Christianity as the path to moral and material salvation of "heathens." Missionaries translated the Bible into several Indian languages, taught company officials local

languages, and in 1813 gained permission to proselytize. Although actual conversion to Christianity was not widespread, mission schools, mission hospitals and dispensaries, and the example of dedication, energy, and personal faith set by individual missionaries exerted a powerful influence on numerous Indians. Whether in open imitation or in deliberate reaction against evangelism, the Hindu and Muslim reformers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries who endeavored to transform their societies paid tribute to Christian missionaries.

The nonreligious Utilitarians believed passionately in the superiority of Western enlightenment and the possibility of social engineering. Philosopher Jeremy Bentham's theories of the greatest good of the greatest number were factored into pragmatic considerations on how best to administer the new Indian dominions without inciting revolt. A generation of capable company officials made bold changes with the approval and support of many Indians assisting them. John Malcolm and Mountstuart Elphinstone in western India, Thomas Munro in Madras, and Charles Metcalfe in the north stood out in this respect. Bolder experiments were undertaken in Bengal under the governor generalship of Lord Bentinck (1828–35). He reformed the judicial system and initiated codification of Indian civil and criminal law in the light of British legal principles. Laws were passed forbidding practices most repugnant to the British, especially *thugee* (ritualistic murder and robbery in the name of the goddess Kali) and suttee (immolation of a Hindu widow on the funeral pyre of her husband). In all these matters certain groups of Indians were offended, while others found them advantageous or praiseworthy and supported them.

Perhaps the most far-reaching decision of Bentinck's administration was to spend the company's small annual allocation of funds for education to teach young Indians Western learning in the English language rather than Indian learning in Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, or modern Indian languages. Indians were already learning English more rapidly than company servants could learn Indian languages. This process gave substance to Thomas Babington Macaulay's famous statement of intent, which was "to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and color, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect." That class undoubtedly helped the British rule India. Its members also found in English a common language to express criticisms of that rule and to demand the civic and political rights and the constitutional means to expel and replace the British.

Company activism was a challenge to India's capacity for cultural synthesis. Students at Calcutta's Hindu College or Bombay's Elphinstone Institution became rebels against Hindu society and religion, condemning them as weak and degenerate. Some high-caste Hindus became followers of social reformers, such as Raja Ram Mohan Roy, who in 1828 founded the Brahmo Samaj. Widely read in Hindu, Muslim, and Christian scriptures, Roy tried to amalgamate the best of all three traditions. He also led the campaign against suttee that culminated in the legislative prohibition of 1829. Although the Brahmo Samaj appealed only to a small, high-caste, Westernized elite, it inspired social protest and social reform all over India. In particular, it began the crusade for the emancipation of Hindu women that became the hallmark of social reform movements. Social reformers met regularly—taking advantage of new roads and railroads—and initiated secular as well as religious organizations. They debated the evils they wished to eradicate, such as caste restriction, and the goals to which they aspired, notably dignity and respected status. Many lobbied for and obtained legislative action and administrative implementation of social change already in train. Others vigorously denied the right of an alien government to interfere in intimate details of family life, such as the age of marriage, or in religious customs; they advocated self-government before social reform. Some, such as Dayananda Saraswati, who founded the Arya Samaj in 1875, preached religious revivalism. In all cases these men and women used modern methods of organization and stood essentially for a modernization of Indian society. The social reform movement led directly into the nationalist movement of the latter part of the nineteenth century, and both were part of the British impact on India.

The Events of 1857

The uprisings of 1857 are called the Sepoy Mutiny (or Sepoy Rebellion) by British historians in deliberate understatement and are exaggeratedly called the first war of independence by Indian nationalists. A series of uprisings throughout the Ganges Valley from Bengal to Meerut and in parts of central India resulted in a full-scale war in 1857 and 1858. It was a reaction to the many changes—territorial, technological, and social—brought about by the British. It was also the last effort of a displaced ruling class to reclaim its position. Members of this group were supported by their traditional followers, as in newly annexed Oudh and other princely states, as well as by those who feared and resented the

British. One hundred years after Plassey, the psychological tinder was ready for ignition.

The spark that ignited revolt was the introduction of a new Enfield rifle that used cartridges allegedly greased with cow and/or pig fat, the tips of which had to be bitten off before loading. Both Hindu and Muslim soldiers (sepoys) were outraged at this offense to their religious scruples. Sepoys mutinied at Meerut, near Delhi, on May 10, 1857. They marched to Delhi and offered their services to the Mughal emperor. Other mutinies followed; left untouched were the Madras army, parts of the Bombay army, and the newly acquired northwest and Punjab, where the Lawrence brothers had won over the loyalty of the Sikhs and Pathans (Pakhtuns). The war was fought with great ferocity, and reprisals on both sides were brutal. The highlights of the war were the sieges—particularly of Delhi, Kanpur, and Lucknow—and the central Indian campaigns of Tantia Topi and the Rani of Jhansi. British ranks were thin, but reinforcements arrived from Britain and from other provinces of India. After the fall of Gwalior on June 20, 1858, the Indian forces surrendered. Their lack of good leadership, unity, forward-looking goals, or modern methods of communication and organization left them incapable of capitalizing on early successes or mobilizing mass support. The British sense of security and complacency was shocked, but their sense of superiority remained strong.

The uprising was the "Great Divide" in the history of British India. It brought about the formal termination of the Mughal Empire; Emperor Bahadur Shah II was exiled to Burma, where he died in obscurity. Company rule was replaced by direct rule, and the governor general received the additional title of viceroy. In 1877 Queen Victoria was proclaimed empress of India. And the British cabinet was expanded to include a secretary of state for India responsible to the British Parliament.

The apex of government in India was the viceroy, who was assisted by an executive and a legislative council but who was responsible only to London. British India was divided into provinces, each headed by a governor. Provinces were divided into divisions and these into districts, the basic units for the collection of revenue, administration of justice, and gathering of census data. Each district comprised substantial territory and population. The district officer (or collector) was the linchpin of the entire system (see State and Local Government, ch. 8). His paternalism became legendary, and the obligatory touring gave it a personal touch. He was usually drawn from the ICS, the "steel frame" that held the entire edifice together. A strenuous service, the ICS was the best

rewarded in the world at the time in terms of power, prestige, and remuneration. Recruited by competition, it drew the best products of British schools and universities, young men possessed of a classical education, a taste for adventure, and an imperial zeal. Exclusively British to begin with, the ICS eventually and reluctantly was forced to open its doors, slightly, to Indians. Despite an obligation to keep in touch with public opinion and the establishment of district boards and municipal councils to help them, most ICS officials from district officer to viceroy believed that only they could rule India, that they knew what was best for India—indeed, that they were India.

In 1858 the viceroy announced changes in policy with respect to the Indian princes. He promised to uphold treaties and renounced Lord Dalhousie's policy of annexing a state in cases when a ruler died without a male heir. He offered protection against internal and external enemies and nonintervention in their internal administration in return for the loyalty of the princes to the British crown and their surrender of all rights to conduct war or foreign relations. In this way the British hoped to prevent a recurrence of the 1857 uprisings. As Indian reformers and nationalists pressed for elective institutions and Indianization, the British found the princely states a pleasant backwater of feudalism and flattery, of pomp and circumstance. In 1858 the political boundaries within the subcontinent were frozen. Some 562 princely states of varying size and status were interspersed among the provinces of British India, which covered three-fifths of the subcontinent. The elusive doctrine of "paramountcy" guaranteed the British as much control over princely India as they cared to exercise while leaving the princes with an illusion of magnificence and sovereignty. That doctrine became highly controversial at the time of Indian independence, when independent India claimed to have inherited all paramount powers as successor to the British, whereas some British officials, the nizam of Hyderabad, and others claimed that paramountcy had lapsed and that the states were legally entitled to independence.

Probably the most pervasive impact of the war was the wall of racial distrust built between the white-skinned rulers and their darker-skinned subjects, called "natives" in pejorative accents. The easy camaraderie of early days was gone forever and was replaced by memories of atrocity on both sides. Physically, the British families and their servants lived in new "civil lines" or cantonments at a distance from the towns and bazaars. New telegraph facilities and the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 enabled the rulers to maintain closer contact with Britain. Their brides

came from there, and their children were sent to school there, at high cost. The British "clubs" emerged as the nuclei of European society and retained a peculiar snobbism in India long after it had been swept away in Britain. The ruling class maintained that the wall of color was unbreachable, even by the highborn and educated among Indians. Race relations formed the subject of many works of literature and psychological analysis, including E.M. Forster's *A Passage to India*. In political terms, it may well have been the single most potent fillip to nationalism. Denied social equality, Western-educated Indians soon demanded political equality.

Racial criteria were also used in a dramatic overhaul of the British Indian Army. The ratio of Indian to British troops was reduced, the total manpower in 1863 being 140,000 Indian and 65,000 British troops. Only the British were recruited to artillery and other technical services. Indians were excluded from the officer corps. The recruitment of Indians from areas that had participated in the 1857 uprisings ceased for all intents and purposes, eliminating Bengalis, Biharis, Marathas, and UP Muslims (Muslims from the United Provinces, now Uttar Pradesh). In contrast, recruitment was accelerated from those areas that had proved their support to the British, especially the Punjab, the Northwest Frontier, and Nepal. Rationalizing this policy was the new doctrine of "martial races" into which category were placed Sikhs, Pakhtuns, Gurkhas, Rajputs, and Punjabi Muslims (PMs). As Philip Mason points out, these minority groups did develop strong martial traditions after several generations of service in the armed forces, but the two world wars proved the martial capabilities of other so-called races as well.

After 1858 the British Raj was socially and politically conservative. It generally avoided questions of caste, religion, or marriage. Its codifications of law, completed in the 1860s without drama, sometimes ossified a practice that was passing. But by the economic changes it wrought and by putting in place a unified legal system and easy means of communication throughout the country, the British Raj was the instrument of profound change. For example, in the matrilineal society of the southwest, young men were able to escape the control of their maternal uncles and win rights to paternal property by invoking British Indian law, which was patrilineal (see Family and Kin, ch. 5). On the Indian Railways, which covered about 40,000 kilometers by the end of the century, caste restrictions on interdining were modified, and all accepted water from the same source. Because entry to the ICS and success in the legal profession depended on education in

Britain, young men were obliged to travel abroad. The customary purification rites on return so as to permit readmission to high-caste Hindu society began to appear increasingly irksome and stimulated desire for reform. Indians made many adjustments for the sake of upward mobility in British India while retaining their roots in traditional culture. Revival of traditional culture was also used as a means to inculcate vigorous and modern standards of behavior (see Hinduism in Transition, ch. 3; Social Change, ch. 5). As Indians regained their self-respect, they demanded more autonomy from their British rulers.

The economic changes initiated by the British after 1857 were not inspired by compassion but by the needs of security, stability, and British finance and industry. For strategic, administrative, and commercial reasons, the British improved transport and communications and laid down railroad lines. Coal mines were opened up in Bengal to fuel the steam engines. All track, locomotive, and mining equipment was designed and manufactured in Britain, however, resulting in limited technological impact on India. The Public Works Department prepared an ambitious program of extending irrigation on borrowed money. Canals were built in the Ganges Valley, the Punjab, and Sind. They are commonly regarded as benefits despite their inflexibility of use, some injurious side effects, the neglect of hydroelectric potential, and the continuing recurrence of famine and low food production. New plantations of tea and coffee were established in the hills. Indian currency was unified by the Paper Currency Act of 1861, but the monetary standard of exchange was shuffled several times between silver, gold, and the pound sterling. A substantial part of the economy remained nonorganized and nonmonetized. Tariffs were set to suit the owners of British industry and not to protect the new cotton mills and nascent industrialists of western India. Economic discontent inevitably turned Indian thoughts to political nationalism. At a less articulate level in tribal groups and among peasants, discontent resulted in occasional violent rebellion, as of the Santals; antimoneylender riots; or no-revenue movements, as in the 1890s. The enforcement of law and order was swift and brutal; the British never forgot the events of 1857.

The Indian National Congress

The Indian National Congress (see Glossary) was founded in December 1885 and became the preeminent organized expression of nationalism on an all-India scale. Its predecessors were associations formed in various cities, including Poona, Calcutta,

Madras, Bombay, and London, to discuss social and political issues of concern to their members. Hopes of liberalization of British rule had been raised by some governmental measures, especially the Ilbert Bill of 1884, which proposed to put Indian judges on the same level as Europeans in dealing with all cases. Withdrawal of that bill by the governor general, Lord Rippon, as a result of agitation by Europeans dashed these hopes and stimulated self-help measures among Indians.

The 73 delegates to the first Congress meeting were mostly high-caste Hindus and Parsis who were Anglicized in their personal life and successful in their professions of law, journalism, or business but dedicated to political reform. Two Britons, Alan Octavian Hume, who had retired from the ICS, and William Wedderburn, who was twice elected Congress president, provided contrast to the official British disapproval. There were no princes or big zamindars among the Congress delegates and only a few Muslims. The nucleus of leadership was given by such illustrious men as Surendranath Banerjea, W. C. Bonnerje, Pherozeshah Mehta, Dadabhai Naoroji, and Badruddin Tyabji. All proclaimed their loyalty to the queen-empress, but everybody expressed some grievance with the government of British India. Congress president Banerjea summed up their initial desire: "that the basis of government should be widened and that the people should have their proper and legitimate share in it."

Resolutions and debates of the early annual Congress meetings revealed that their demands were moderate, their programs limited, and their methods peaceful. Congress asked for gradual constitutional reform through expansion of the legislative councils, inclusion of elected representatives on those councils, and an increment of power to discuss and ultimately control the public purse. Congress leaders of the time appeared to accept at face value professions of the British government that India was held in trust for Indians. Their efforts, therefore, were directed toward educating public opinion in Britain and in India on the desirability of increased political participation of Indians as a fulfillment of that trust. The moderate wing of Congress continued to exert verbal pressure for orderly evolution in the direction of self-government. Britain responded with the India Councils Act of 1892, which introduced the elective principle in the nomination of legislative councils. But the British response in constitutional change was always limited and late. As a consequence, moderate methods and moderate goals were challenged by another wing of Congress, called extremist, as well as by more radical movements, especially after the turn of the century. When it appeared

impossible to transform British rule, the alternate goal of ending it became more appealing.

The goal of Congress with respect to administration was mainly to secure Indianization of the ICS and higher administrative posts. Congress argued for this on grounds of expense (European officials were too highly paid, and they took out of India a large part of their salaries and pensions); on grounds of morality (the existing exclusive system stunted Indian manhood); and on grounds of political wisdom (administration by Indians would be more responsive to the needs of the people). Behind these rationalizations lay the self-interest of gaining access to the ICS as a group. Congress lobbied hard to raise the age limit for taking competitive examinations from 19 to 22 and to open examination centers in India.

A large part of the Congress platform was devoted to civil rights: freedom of the press and speech, separation of judicial from executive power, greater use of juries, and safeguards against arbitrary arrest and detention without trial. These ideas were propagated in the patriotic press, and patriotic literature became a potent stimulus to nationalism. Most influential of all were the novels of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee (1838–94) and Banerjea's newspaper, the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, in Bengal; Bal Gangadhar Tilak's Marathi-language newspaper, *Kesari*, in Bombay; and the *Hindu* in Madras.

British laws on sedition were strict and executive powers wide. All stages of the nationalist movement were marked by frequent arrests, detentions, and deportations of those who exercised freedom of speech beyond the narrow limits of British tolerance. Patriotic writers often circumvented sedition laws by writing about the past and glorifying historical heroes, only indirectly conveying their negative feelings about the British Raj. An unforeseen and divisive result of this habit was to intensify local group identities at the expense of all-India nationalism and to legitimize linguistic nationalism at the expense of a common all-India language. Although some writers revealed the plight of the peasant and although Congress delegates spoke movingly on the need for welfare activities and the amelioration of working conditions, the practical commitment to helping the Indian masses at this stage of the national movement was minimal.

Congress came into existence at a time when the government was pursuing an aggressive expansionist policy—known as the forward policy—beyond the Indus River into Afghanistan and when the Liberal and Conservative parties in Britain were debating grand issues of foreign policy. Congress early developed an

ideology on those subjects that lasted beyond independence. It opposed military adventures and demanded reductions in the defense budget, which then accounted for about 50 percent of India's total annual revenue. Most Congress delegates were more interested in internal power sharing than in external relations. Excluded from all services and councils that considered security matters, they dismissed governmental concerns with the subject as irrelevant to India's needs. Dismayed by the financial burden of large armies and foreign military expeditions, Congress developed a strong bias against them.

Expressions of concern about the economic plight of the middle class crystallized into an economic critique of British rule, however. Summarized first by Dadabhai Naoroji as Congress president and expanded in R.C. Dutt's *Economic History of India*, this theory became best known by the phrase "drain of wealth." Congress directly related the abysmal and growing poverty of the Indian people to deliberate policies by the British, i.e., destruction of handicrafts, hindrances to modern Indian industry, excessive land revenue demands, and an artificial export surplus. Contemporary economic historians sometimes dispute these points, and analyst Morris G. Morris has pointed out other reasons for the low level of industrialization in late nineteenth-century India. But the drain of wealth theory was appealing to Indian nationalists.

The acceptance by Congress of the drain of wealth critique was significant for other reasons. First, it was accompanied by a belief that the British did not intend to impoverish India and that, therefore, exposing the effects of their economic policies would persuade them to reversal. The leaders of Congress overlooked the role of private British capital and the total imperial economy in maintaining a system that pressed so heavily on the dependencies and on the poor. Congress was unable to win even a modicum of tariff protection or fiscal reform for India until after World War I. By that time faith in the good intentions of the British government was openly questioned and the moderate approach discredited. Second, the drain of wealth theory slurred over the tensions within Indian society and the exploitation of the peasants by Indian zamindars, moneylenders, shopkeepers, and labor contractors. Congress took up the cause of Indian labor indentured in near slave conditions to British plantations in other colonies, but it failed to champion Indian workers in Indian-owned factories where conditions were almost equally bad. The most cogent modern criticisms of Congress come from those who posit a class antagonism between the middle classes represented in Congress

and the peasants and workers, whose consciousness was raised by Congress movements and declarations but whose material well-being was not improved.

Recent research shows peasant and tribal rebellion to have been a more frequent occurrence in British India than hitherto had been supposed. Uprisings remained localized and specific, however. They lacked an ideology or an all-India organization to transform them into a revolutionary movement. Some peasant and tribal movements took on a religious complexion, others adopted Gandhian terminology; none was at the heart of the national movement. Congress leaders both early and late tried to create a united front among many groups by watering down the demands of any one. They appealed for harmony between landlords and peasants and provided only lip service to the latter's grievances. Nevertheless, peasants and landless labor were slow to organize. Congress was not challenged from the left until the time of independence, when the Communist Party of India led movements for agrarian rights. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the main challenges to moderate Congress leadership came from militancy and communalism, both Hindu and Muslim.

The Beginnings of Muslim Separatism

The partition of British India in 1947 in order to create Pakistan as a separate "Muslim nation" provokes questions about the inevitability of this momentous event. Why did a Muslim separatist movement develop under British rule? What were its beginnings? Which Muslims promoted and organized separatist politics and which Muslims opposed them? How and why did separatism succeed? Most contemporary scholarly explanations are a blend of three main approaches.

First, Muslims organized themselves as a community in response to British rule and in an attempt to avoid falling behind in competition. The introduction of a decennial census in 1871 and its categorization of groups and individuals by religion and caste made it advantageous for Indians to identify themselves with those categories. The introduction of elective politics reinforced community identification. As a minority amounting to only one-fifth of the population in 1881, Muslims began to develop a strong sense of community.

Second, the British played politics by the maxim of divide and rule. They deliberately used a dependent Muslim elite as a check on Indian populist and nationalist aspirations in the same

way that they used the princes. After 1870 the British wooed the Muslims, first through Sayyid Ahmad Khan, who founded the Muhammaden Oriental College at Aligarh in 1875, and then through the Agha Khan, the leader of the worldwide Ismaili community, who founded the All-India Muslim League (League) in 1906. Most important of all, the British fractured the emerging power of elected representatives by introducing separate communal electorates in 1909. Not surprisingly, this explanation is most often found in Indian nationalist writings and is well documented for the period 1876–1909. Thereafter, British intentions and the effects of British policies are more difficult to gauge in isolation from Indian politics.

Third, Muslim separatism was the result of Hindu intolerance and the failure of a Hindu-dominated Congress to live up to its secular all-India ethos. Events of the period 1916–39 are usually cited in support of this approach, as is the career of Mohammad Ali Jinnah (1876–1948). An ardent advocate of Hindu-Muslim solidarity in the cause of Indian independence for most of his life, Jinnah is remembered as the almost single-handed creator of Pakistan.

A fourth explanation, that the Muslims of India were, in fact, a separate nation, is found in some Pakistani nationalist writings and in prepartition polemical tracts. It assumes that all Muslims in India supported separatism, which proved not to be true.

The demise of the Mughal Empire in 1857 and the earlier annexation of the princely state of Oudh deprived the Muslim aristocracy of North India of their pride and their prestige. British mistrust of the aristocracy was openly expressed in the aftermath of the 1857 uprisings. The replacement of Persian by English as the administrative and court language displaced the Muslim professional classes. Muslim merchants had been ruined by the East India Company and did not enter the fray again until the late nineteenth century. Islamic theologians were yet to respond to the implicit challenges posed by alien rule, Christian missionaries, and revivalist Hindu sects attempting reconversion of Muslims.

After the 1860s Muslim responses to British rule paralleled those of Hindus. One response came to be known as the Deoband Movement. It was led by ulama who expanded *madrasah* (Muslim schools and colleges) education, promoted the teaching and application of sharia, and encouraged Urdu-language publications. Their work was organized on modern, all-India lines, although its content was traditional.

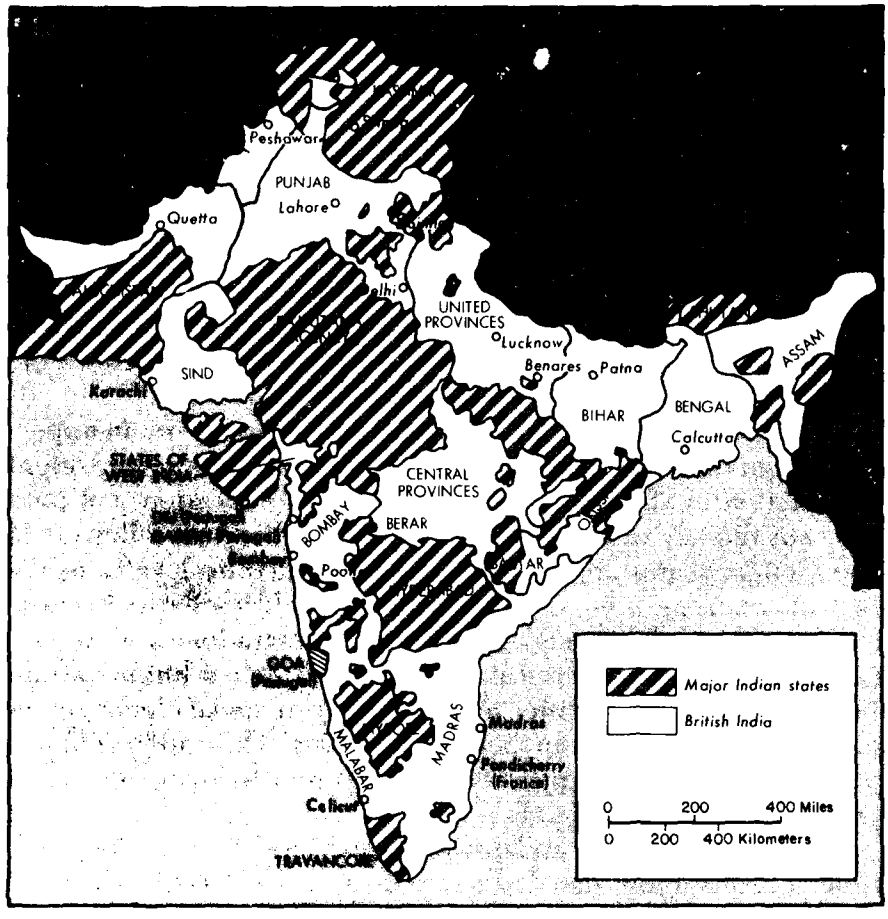
Another response came to be known as the Aligarh Move-

ment and was led by Ahmad Khan. He placed his faith in English education and English teachers at a residential institution to give status and mobility to the sons of the Muslim landed gentry. The college at Aligarh aspired to be an Indian Cambridge, i.e., carrying forward liberal values. The role of Muslims as defined by Ahmad Khan was one of loyal and supportive participation in British administration. He joined the Viceroy's Legislative Council in 1878 and spoke in favor of increased Indian representation, of duties and privilege for Indian officials and judges equal to those for Europeans, and of expanded recruitment of Indians to the ICS. Nevertheless, he remained conspicuously aloof from the Indian National Congress when it was formed in 1885.

Sir Sayyid—who was knighted in 1887—spoke out in opposition when Badruddin Tyabji, another Muslim, became president of Congress in 1887. Sir Sayyid argued that education, not politics, was the key to Muslim progress. He forbade his followers to join Congress and enjoined them to demonstrate loyalty to the British. In his opinion, democratization would spell ruin because majority rule would mean Hindu rule. The graduates of Aligarh gained in prestige and became pillars of British administration. Few of them chose to enter municipal or provincial elective politics when they were launched in the 1890s. This indifference to politics ended with the mass agitations in Bengal following its first partition in 1905 (see fig. 4).

Bengal was a large and unwieldy province. The viceroy of the time, Lord Curzon, decided to create a new administrative division of Assam and East Bengal with a Muslim majority. Curzon's line of partition, which dismembered the linguistic and cultural entity of Bengal, immediately inflamed passions. A massive, largely terrorist antipartition campaign was launched against the British. Constitutional means of protest were also used by Congress. Constant antipartition pressure resulted in annulment in 1911. The lessons of political activism were not lost on ambitious Muslims.

In October 1906 the Agha Khan and 35 Indian Muslims of high birth met formally with Lord Minto, Curzon's successor as viceroy, to present an address pleading for special consideration of Muslim hopes and contributions in the ensuing era of representative institutions. They wanted special reservations in the services, separate constituencies in all elections, and representation greater than mere numbers warranted on all institutions. They requested these in recognition of their special—and greater—contribution to the British Empire. In the same year the All-India Muslim League was founded to promote loyalty to the



Source: Based on information from Geoffrey Barraclough, ed., *The Times Atlas of World History*. Maplewood, New Jersey, 1979, 235; Richard L. Park and Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, *India's Political System*, Englewood Cliffs, 1979, 15; and C. Collin Davies, *An Historical Atlas of the Indian Peninsula*, London, 1959, 47.

Figure 4. British Indian Empire

British crown and "to protect and advance the political rights of the Muslims of India." The India Councils Act of 1909 passed by the Liberal government in Britain slightly widened the property qualifications of franchise and increased the number of elective offices, which continued to have limited powers. It also incorporated the principle of communal representation in separate electorates and reserved seats for Muslims. These provisions were to remain part of all subsequent British constitutional advances in

India. They were a bitterly disputed issue between Congress and the Muslim League.

Agitation, War, and Reform, 1905–19

The viceroyalty of Lord Curzon (1899–1905) marked an apogee of internal centralization of administration and external extension of influence. Military control was consolidated in the border areas of Upper Burma, Assam, and Manipur in the east and in Gilgit and Chitral to the northwest. The "Great Game" of Rudyard Kipling's stories was enthusiastically played in Central Asia. Curzon saw India as the spearhead of British domination over Asia. With London's support, he asserted British interests in a "Sphere of Influence" in Afghanistan, Iran, and throughout the Persian Gulf in the west and in Tibet to the north. Within India, officialdom improved its efficiency but remained impervious to petitions and mounting discontent. Beneath the neo-Mughal panoply of power lay a bleak economic reality. Exchange-rate fluctuations devalued the rupee while external charges on the Indian exchequer augmented the public debt. A series of monsoon failures, famines, and epidemics caused an absolute decline in India's population between 1895 and 1905.

Curzon's decision to partition Bengal, which was arrived at without public discussion, grossly underestimated the strength of opposition to it in Bengal as a whole, not merely among the Hindu elite, or *bhadralok*, of Calcutta. An explosion of agitation ensued. Although directed primarily against the British, the agitation also reflected disappointment with the constitutional verbalizations of the moderates in Congress. Extremism, as an alternate strategy, was on the upswing. It was expressed through calls for national volunteers, individual violence, goddess cults, and Brahmanic revivalism. The newspaper *Yugantar*, which in 1908 had a circulation of 10,000, openly preached revolutionary action and emulation of the Russian anarchists. British goods were boycotted, causing a drop in imports of 25 percent. A swadeshi movement (indigenous production of handicrafts and boycott of foreign goods) was stimulated. As antipartition passions rose, the government retaliated with police force. Confrontations between agitators and police became commonplace.

Extremist cults attracted young men in all walks of life, but most especially high-caste Hindus from Maharashtra, Bengal, and the Punjab. Their heroes were Bal Gangadhar Tilak of Poona, Bipin Chandra Pal of Calcutta, and Lala Lajpat Rai of Lahore. Tilak was best known for his passionate cry: "Swaraj [self-govern-

ment] is my birthright and I will have it." This trio of Lal, Bal, and Pal, whose rhythmic names were chanted in the streets, formed a new party in Congress that challenged the leadership of that embodiment of liberal constitutionalism, Gopal Krishna Gokhale. The Surat meeting of Congress in 1907 saw a traumatic division in Congress ranks that was to last almost a decade.

Extremism brought reprisals. Tilak was imprisoned in Burma; Chandra Pal moved to London and Lajpat Rai to New York. The British appealed to moderate opinion by appointing three apolitical men to the council of the secretary of state for India in London and by passing the India Councils Act of 1909. Although officials continued to outnumber and outweigh nonofficials in the legislative councils, the elective principle had been introduced. A few Indians were also appointed to the executive councils of the viceroy and the governors. In 1910, after the first elections were held on the basis of separate communal electorates, 135 Indian representatives took their seats. They included leaders of the past—Banerjea and Gokhale—and leaders of the future—Motilal Nehru and Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

In 1911 the British government made further acts of reconciliation. King George V and his queen visited India and held a formal durbar (reception) outside Delhi. He announced the reversal of the Bengal partition and the transfer of the capital from Calcutta to Delhi. Sir Edward Luytens and Sir Herbert Baker were commissioned to design the imperial capital of New Delhi. It sits adjacent to the site of many previous capitals of Indian empires and remains the capital of India.

World War I began with a remarkable outpouring of loyalty and goodwill for Britain all over India. India's financial contribution to the war effort was generous. About 1.3 million Indian soldiers fought in Europe and the Middle East. But disillusionment set in early. The unnecessary loss of lives in Mesopotamia, the high attrition rate in Europe, and the squalid conditions of a brutal war between nearly equal European powers shattered forever the illusion of British moral superiority. High taxes, rising prices, and disruption of trade exacerbated economic distress in India. Tribal outbreaks, antirevenue riots, and an anti-Brahman movement in South India were symptoms. The opportunity to develop India's industrial capacity was but slightly used; the Tata Iron and Steel Company was one small producer of steel. Recruiting agents resorted to virtual impressment in the absence of willing volunteers for the army. The loyalty of Indian Muslims was strained when the Ottoman Empire joined the Central Powers against Britain, because the caliph in Turkey was the acknow-

ledged temporal leader of all Muslims.

The war stimulated both revolutionary and constitutional activity in India. In Bengal and the Punjab a wave of violence spread. It was fueled in part by such overseas groups as the Sikh Ghadr Party in California and the Indian Independence Committee in Germany. The British used a formidable battery of repressive measures to control this threat, including executions, deportations, detention without trial, life sentences, and censorship of the press. The Defence of India Act of 1915 set a standard often invoked in the future.

At the same time, loyalists saw an opportunity to press demands for reform on the grounds that Britain must reward India's contributions to the war effort. In December 1915 both Congress and the Muslim League held their annual sessions within walking distance of each other in Bombay. Their aim was to facilitate the drafting of a single nationalist platform agreeable to all political factions and communities. Tilak, the returned leader of Congress, and Jinnah, new leader of the League, put together the Lucknow Pact and obtained its approval by their respective parties. The essence of the alliance was the endorsement by the League of demands for democratization in representation, Indianization of administration, racial equality throughout the British Empire, and self-government for India in return for acceptance by Congress of separate Muslim electorates, a reserved quota of seats, and the Muslim community's right to review any social legislation affecting them. The Lucknow Pact was a high-water mark of unity in the nationalist cause. It was presented to the viceroy in December 1916.

In August 1917 Secretary of State for India Edwin Montague announced in Parliament a bipartisan policy for India of "increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire." Indians ignored the many qualifications that set the Indian case apart from what was promised other units of empire, such as Canada and Australia, and looked forward to dominion status. Montague toured India in the winter of 1917 preparing with the viceroy what became known as the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919.

These were incorporated in the Government of India Act of 1921, which took a substantial step beyond the 1909 act. About 5 million Indians were enfranchised. There was devolution of some financial and legislative responsibility from the center to the provinces. The center retained control of customs, income tax, post

and telegraph, salt, and railroads and also retained a veto on legislation. The provinces assumed control of the land tax, excise, irrigation, and stamps. The central Legislative Council was made bicameral, and an elected majority was created in the lower house. In the provinces a new concept of dyarchy was introduced; the key powers of law enforcement and revenue collection were reserved to the governor; local government, public works, and agriculture were entrusted to the control of elected members of the legislative councils. The reforms fell short of nationalist aspirations and were denounced by Congress. Indeed, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, Congress did not cooperate with the working of dyarchy. Nevertheless, many Indians, including Congress members, gained first-hand experience of elections, parliamentary procedures, and actual administration, albeit with limited powers. Simultaneously, a delegation from India as a founding member sat in the League of Nations and its agencies. Its Indian members participated in international diplomacy with attendant frustrations.

Gandhi, Noncooperation, and Mass Politics

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869–1948), known in his lifetime and since as the Mahatma (Great Soul), made contributions to the world that transcend his leadership of the Indian independence movement for more than two decades. A complex man who revealed himself in public writings, Gandhi is the subject of many biographies and analyses of his life, his achievements, and his failures. He brought together in his own philosophy different strands: an orthodox Hindu background of a bania (merchant, moneylender) caste in a princely state; the Jain commitment to asceticism and ahimsa; youthful rebellion; the study and practice of law in Britain and South Africa; the teachings of Christ; the philosophy of the Society of Friends; theories of civil disobedience and individual resistance set out by Henry Thoreau and Leo Tolstoy; and the injunctions of the *Bhagavad- Gita* on disinterested action.

Gandhi constructed solutions to his personal dilemmas during his sojourn in South Africa (1893–1915), and he also forged an instrument of political action for Indians chafing under the grossly discriminatory laws that prevailed. He won the respect of General Jan Smuts and secured a compromise agreement in the Indian Relief Bill, which was passed in 1914. Shortly thereafter Gandhi returned to India and within a few years became the leader of Congress when Tilak died. Gandhi transformed Con-

gress from an elite club of lawyers into a mass organization that was disciplined, had ample funds, and subscribed to a moral commitment that went beyond mere political independence of India.

Gandhi's goals of swaraj and *sarvodaya* have passed into the political vocabulary of India and contain intangible and ethical ingredients that are often forgotten. By swaraj, Gandhi meant not only technical self-government but also self-reliance, which demanded courage and the capacity to refrain from consuming British—or machine-made—goods or from depending on British arms and government. By *sarvodaya*, Gandhi meant the uplift of all. Toward that end, he exhorted the rich and the powerful to act as "trustees" and implored the oppressed to make only minimal demands.

The premier technique Gandhi forged in pursuit of his goals he called satyagraha, in his words "the Force which is born of Truth and Love or nonviolence." Outwardly, this technique resembled other coercive techniques of direct action employing propaganda, agitation, demonstration, boycott, noncooperation, parallel government, and strikes. Inwardly, Gandhi's insistence on ahimsa, acceptance of self-suffering in lieu of inflicting injury on others, and constant reiteration that good ends do not justify bad means set satyagraha in a category apart. For Gandhi, constructive work and the unending course of spiritual discipline that he followed were of greater importance than political power. His political leadership was not derived from formal office but from his force of personality and the adulation offered by the masses to a saintly man. His political instructions—issued in a weekly newspaper and in thousands of letters and postcards sent to hundreds of individuals of diverse persuasions—were often confusing and contradictory.

The first nationwide satyagraha campaign was launched in March-April 1919 to protest the post-World War I repressive measures culminating in the Rowlatt Bills. Mass response was so overwhelming that it got out of control. When violence occurred, Gandhi called off the movement, calling it a "Himalayan miscalculation." Meanwhile, Brigadier R.E.H. Dyer used a detachment of troops to fire continuously into a large crowd assembled in a walled garden—Jallianwallah Bagh—adjoining the Golden Temple in Amritsar. Some 300 were killed and 1,200 wounded. Dyer was forced to resign, but on returning to Britain he received sympathy and gifts of £30,000. This episode is recognized as the beginning of a more intense phase of confrontation between British rule and Indian nationalist opposition.

During 1920 Congress reached the decision not to cooperate

in implementing the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms, but not without debate. Gandhi emerged as the undisputed leader of Congress by the time of its annual session in December 1920 at Nagpur. The goal of swaraj was made explicit, and noncooperation was affirmed. A representative party organization was created with units at every level, from village committees to the 15-member Congress Working Committee (CWC), which functioned as an executive. Annual subscription for members was lowered to one-quarter of a rupee. Membership figures leapt upward thereafter. Gandhi also gave full support and endorsement to the Khilafat Movement launched by the brothers Mohammad and Shaukat Ali to champion the cause of the deposed caliph. Gandhi, the Ali brothers, and other Hindu and Muslim leaders worked closely together in causes that appealed to them and served to mobilize mass support as well. Gandhi toured incessantly; the use of spinning wheels and the boycott of foreign goods increased. His following also included the wives and families of men who did not wholly approve of him. Although noncooperation with the British was not total, the Prince of Wales arrived for a visit in November 1921 to find, in his words, "empty streets, shuttered windows, brooding silence." Events seemed to be moving to a climax as Gandhi's promise to win swaraj in a year was remembered.

But the moment passed. Gandhi was arrested in 1922; the Ali brothers were already in prison. Gandhi called off the civil disobedience movement when he heard of atrocities against policemen. The rejection of the caliph by the new secular leader of Turkey, Kemal Atatürk, deflated the Khilafat Movement. The Moplah Rebellion in Malabar in 1921 was interpreted as a communal riot, despite its economic undertones. Hindu-Muslim unity seemed fractured. Jinnah resigned from Congress but remained president of the Muslim League after 1924; the two parties discontinued their practice of joint sessions.

The politicization of the Indian people, extending to the princely states and the uneducated masses, set up multiple trends. Other communities imitated the League and demanded separate electorates and reserved representation. The Sikhs sent numerous delegations to London to argue their case for special consideration in view of their loyalty to the British Raj and their vital role in its armed forces. In the Punjab, the Akali Dal party launched a struggle to gain control of the Sikh temples, or *gurdwaras*, from the government and Hindu *mahants* (priests). The success of the Akali Dal was embodied in the Sikh Gurdwaras Act of 1924. It set up the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Com-

mittee (SGPC) to manage temples and shrines. The SGPC became a de facto parliament of the Sikhs, having authority to enforce decisions on the community.

In South India a powerful anti-Brahman movement was under way. Its roots went deep into the social and economic history of the Peninsula, but in the 1920s it was politically organized under the banner of the Justice Party. Through the newspaper *Justice* and direct contact, the party agitated for separate representation of non-Brahman Hindus. The Justice Party was frankly loyal to the British and effectively implemented dyarchy in Madras Province.

In Maharashtra, an autonomous movement of the Mahar untouchables was led by the first untouchable university graduate, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. The untouchables also demanded separate political representation as well as the social rights so long denied them by caste Hindus.

In 1921 the Akhil Bharat Hindu Mahasabha was founded. This was a militant organization composed largely of high-caste Hindus that aimed at readmitting to the fold of Hinduism all those lost through conversion to other religions or through the practice of untouchability. In 1923 some 450,000 Malkana Rajputs, who were Muslims, were ceremoniously welcomed as Hindus. Similar efforts were made to raise the depressed classes of untouchables to the rights and behavior patterns of caste Hindus. The Mahasabha and its auxiliary bodies propagated the idea of one culture, one language, and one flag for the single nation of India. It exerted a powerful appeal to some, but it repelled others.

India felt also the intellectual and organizational impact of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia in November 1917. Revolutionary groups intensified activity. A prominent Indian communist theorist, M.N. Roy, debated with Lenin the proper strategy for precapitalist Asian countries. The Communist Party of India (CPI) was formed in 1925. The British in panic overestimated its significance, but a leftist tinge to new labor and farm organizations became evident. Socialist ideas appealed to many young Congress intellectuals, notably Subhas Chandra Bose, Jayaprakash (J.P.) Narayan, and Jawaharlal Nehru.

At the same time, Congress was expanding its activities into rural areas and princely states, setting up new units that could function as a parallel government under the command of the CWC in case of another noncooperation movement. Gandhi's personal efforts were devoted mainly to what he called a "constructive program" of integrated village uplift through cottage industry, active involvement of women, and equal treatment of un-

touchables. One of his most successful satyagraha campaigns, and one that in large part measured up to his ideas, took place in 1924 and 1925 in the southern princely state of Travancore (roughly coterminous with present-day Kerala). The specific issue at stake was the right of untouchables to use a temple road. They won that right and several others at this turning point in the fight against untouchability. In Gandhi's terminology, untouchables were harijans (children of God) and must be treated as such.

Partly as a result of Gandhi's personal style, partly because it was the original nationalist party, but largely because of the realities of all-India political action, Congress evolved a pluralistic, multireligious, multilinguistic, Pan-Indian ethos. It was an umbrella organization claiming to represent all of India and all shades of opinion in opposition to British rule. The British denied this claim, which challenged their legitimacy, but they were not united in opinion on how to combat it. Some sections of British parliamentary and public opinion favored speedier reform and Indianization of the British Raj. A hard core of Conservatives was determined to hold on to power indefinitely. In 1927 a Conservative government appointed a commission headed by Sir John Simon to inquire into the working of the 1921 Government of India Act and to formulate the next step of reform. There were no Indian members on the commission, which was confronted throughout India with mass black flag demonstrations, boycotts of hearings, and placards inscribed "Simon, Go Back!" An all-party conference was called by Congress in 1928 to draft a constitution preferable to the Simon Commission Report. The resulting Nehru Report embodied ideas of a centralized and democratic federal union that found their way into India's 1950 Constitution; the ideas were not liked, however, by such parties and groups as were seeking special privileges for class or community.

The 1929 session of Congress under the presidency of Motilal Nehru called for *purna swaraj* (full independence); unfurled the Indian tricolor of saffron, white, and green; and declared January 26, 1930, independence day. To raise mass consciousness and mobilize mass support for this momentous decision, Gandhi chose the issue of salt. Salt was indispensable in the diet, but its production and distribution were a heavily taxed government monopoly. A well-publicized 400-kilometer walk to the seashore led by Gandhi opened a year-long civil disobedience movement. This salt satyagraha was carefully planned, organized, and executed. An estimated 100,000 men and women were imprisoned, including the entire CWC. The first Round Table Conference to discuss constitutional reform was held in London, without Con-

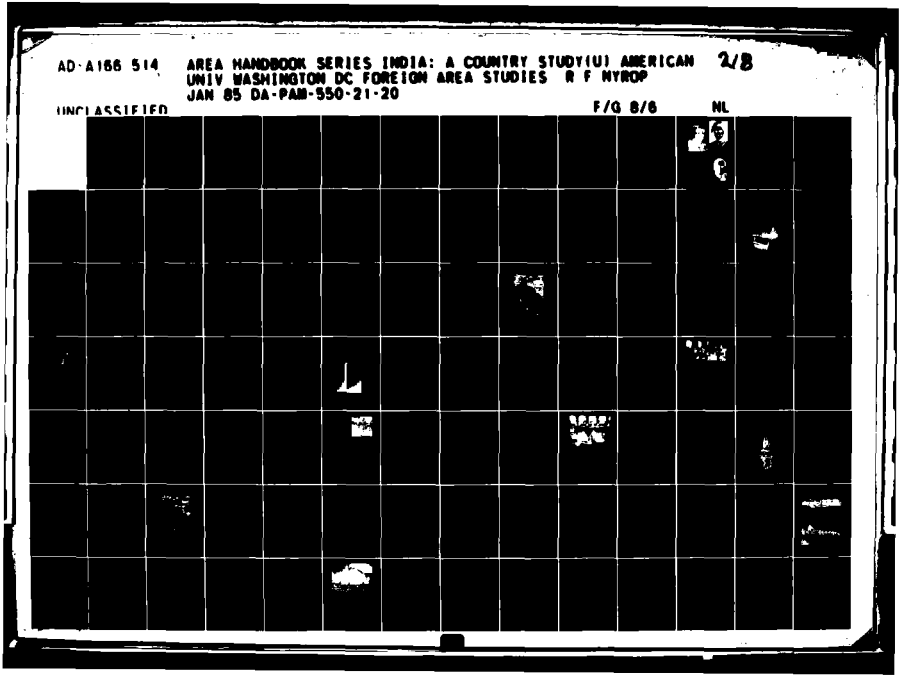
gress participation. As political scientist Stanley Wolpert puts it, "this was like trying to stage *Hamlet* without the Prince of Denmark."

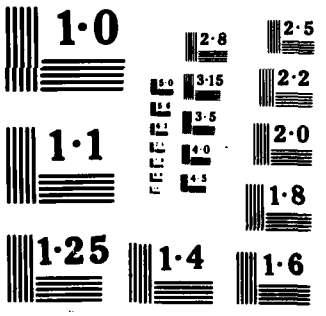
In 1931 Gandhi was released and held extensive talks with the viceroy, Lord Irwin. A compromise pact led to Gandhi's attendance at the second Round Table Conference. There, however, he was outmaneuvered. The Communal Award announced by the British prime minister, Ramsay Macdonald, effectively rejected the claim of Congress to represent India. Instead, the award recognized special claims of minority communities, including untouchables. Gandhi went on a fast of penance and protest. Ambedkar compromised, and untouchables were not given separate representation in the 1935 Government of India Act, which was the ultimate product of the round table conferences. In other respects, the constitutional legislation incorporated the directions in which the Conservatives in Britain wished to steer the course toward Indian independence.

The 1935 Constitution

The basic principles of the 1935 constitution were federalism, provincial autonomy, and the allotment of communal reserved seats slanted in favor of minorities. Powers were divided between the central government and the provinces; some concurrent powers were set forth, but emergency provisions were reserved to the central government. The provinces became legally autonomous. Provincial ministers were responsible to elected legislatures, but the governors enjoyed reserve powers. The franchise was widened to include 8 million more voters. The distribution of reserved seats gave Muslims more than their numerical share in the United Provinces but less in the Punjab. The federal provisions were designed to unite princely India with British India at the center. They were not implemented despite prolonged negotiations with the princes.

The 1935 act, though a prelude to the Independence of India Act of 1947 and a substantial improvement over the 1921 act, had several major weaknesses. It looked to the princes as a dominant ingredient of the new system, and it created a federal structure which, had it been implemented, would have been too weak to endure for long. It granted provincial autonomy but placed restrictions on the power of elected governments that proved frustrating to Congress. It provided safeguards to minorities but could neither ensure indefinite protection against social and political change nor assuage psychological anxiety. It accelerated the


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process of Indianization of administration but left vague the prospects of full independence.

Provincial elections were held in February 1937. Out of 11 provinces Congress won a clear majority in five, won with help in Bombay, and rejoiced in the victory of its ally in the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP). (The NWFP was raised to provincial status by the 1935 act, as were Orissa and Sind. Burma was separated from India.) In the Punjab, the non-Congress Unionist Party won under the leadership of Sir Sikander Hayat Khan, and in Bengal, Fazlul Haq's Praja Party controlled a coalition government. After vacillation, Congress decided to accept ministries and drop noncooperation. The two and one-half years of Congress government in many provinces was decisive, not only in the experience they gained in governance but also in the strains put on the future unity of India and the ruptures within Congress.

The Muslim League did not fare well in the 1937 elections, though its platform was almost identical to that of Congress. Its offer to join in coalition ministries (especially in the United Provinces, where Muslims were an important minority and the League attracted the Muslim gentry) was rejected by Congress. Congress had Muslim members of its own, such as Maulana Azad, Zakir Husain, and Rafi Ahmad Kidwai; moreover, it enjoyed a clear majority in the legislature. Neither Gandhi nor Nehru would deal with Jinnah as Tilak had done; they scorned his lack of mass appeal. In response, after 1937 Jinnah turned to the masses on the issue of "Islam in danger." By 1939 the League was organized and unified as never before; Hayat Khan and Haq offered support to Jinnah; the Muslim philosopher-poet Sir Muhammad Iqbal articulated dreams of a northwest federation of autonomous Muslim provinces. The League opposed federation but assured the British of loyalty. It became a vigorous opposition in all Congress-run provinces and won ministerial positions when the Congress ministries resigned in 1939 after the viceroy had declared war on India's behalf without consulting them.

The first taste of power did not strengthen Congress. Among some, the appetite for position and the fruits of position was whetted. Among others, the actual experience of dealing with India's complex problems from above proved profoundly frustrating and disturbing. A radical program of land reform and rural uplift was severely compromised as Congress watered down its earlier proposals in order to avoid antagonizing the wielders of economic power in the provinces. Socialists left Congress, though some returned later, and Nehru remained the obvious chosen successor of Gandhi. But a conflict of personality as well as of ideology be-

tween Gandhi and Subhas Chandra Bose nearly rent Congress asunder. Bose was Congress president in 1937 and wished to stay on in 1938. The first election to the presidency in Congress history was held in 1938 at the Tripura session. Bose won against the historian Pattabhai Sitaramayya (Nehru had refused to run) but was eased out the following year by Gandhi and others. Bose then abandoned Congress; he went on to be hailed as leader (Netaji) in Bengal and worked with Germany and Japan during World War II, founding the Indian National Army (INA), which was largely composed of Indian officers and men who were prisoners of the Japanese.

Independence

The spirit of nationalism in India came to full maturity in World War II. Concomitantly, the Muslim separatist movement crystallized. At the end of the war the British shifted from the previous policy of self-government by slow degrees to a new policy of independence at one step. During the war the British Raj was preserved by stringent police measures and Muslim cooperation, but by 1947 the British were neither willing nor able to expend the effort or exercise the degree of repression that further postponement of independence would have required.

During the war India was used by the British both as a supply base and, later, as an operations base. The army was vastly expanded (from 175,000 to 2 million), the navy and air force were modernized, and all three were used effectively. Indian industry was expanded to supply these forces. The production of steel, cement, and aluminum became profitable, but India also suffered from the war. The cutting off of the Burma rice supply, compounded by administrative bungling, contributed to 2 million deaths from starvation in Bengal in the 1942–44 period.

The cardinal point, however, was that even from the beginning of the war the majority of Indian leaders were no longer prepared to lend cooperation on the basis of postponed rewards. Offended by the viceroy's declaration of war without consulting them, in October 1939 the leaders of Congress ordered the provincial ministries to resign. Jinnah welcomed their resignation by ordering a Day of Thanksgiving. He rejected Congress' claim to represent all India, putting forth the Muslim League as the representative of a second Indian nation of 100 million Muslims. In a meeting in Lahore in March 1940 the League passed a resolution calling for the creation of Pakistan.

Also in March 1940, Congress at its annual meeting resolved to follow a course of civil disobedience unless the viceroy was willing to form a "national government" at the center and India's freedom was recognized, although formal constitutional changes could wait. In early 1942 the British countered this proposal with the promise of a postwar constituent assembly and dominion status and an invitation to Indian leaders meanwhile to join the Viceroy's Legislative Council, which would be treated insofar as possible as a responsible cabinet. Most Congress leaders rallied around the obdurate Gandhi and demanded that the proposed council have the full powers of a dominion cabinet. When the British declined, Congress on August 7, 1942, resolved that the British should leave India. Congress leaders were instantly rounded up by the British and interned for the war's duration. Radical elements sought to disrupt communication, and some 60,000 arrests were made. The deadlock between Congress and the British continued until the war's end.

The British elections in July 1945 brought in a Labour government that wanted to get rid of India as fast as possible. In addition, the rapid military demobilization had by the spring of 1946 removed Britain's capability of maintaining the status quo until the League and Congress could reach agreement. In April 1946 India was visited by a British cabinet mission to present a proposal aimed at satisfying Muslim fears within a united and independent India—to be composed initially of the 11 provinces that the princely states could later join at will. The center would control only defense, foreign affairs, and communications; the provinces could form regional unions within the whole. Congress and the League accepted this long-term format, but they could not agree on distribution of cabinet seats in an interim government. Congress, claiming to represent all India, felt entitled to appoint a Muslim member, but the League, claiming to represent all Muslims, disagreed. The negotiations failed, but they did prove to Congress Britain's sincerity, promoting a closer working relationship thereafter.

There was an exchange of mutual recriminations between the League and Congress after the failure of the cabinet mission and, in its wake, widespread communal violence. Nehru's assertion to Congress at its annual meeting in July that Congress would go to the Constituent Assembly uncommitted seemed to Jinnah a reneging on Congress' earlier acceptance of the first part of the cabinet mission's proposal. Jinnah declared August 16 Direct Action Day, which brought on communal rioting and bloodshed, first in Calcutta and then in sequence in Bihar, Bengal, and the

United Provinces. It began to look as though only partition could prevent civil war. In September Congress took office, and in October Jinnah joined the government to have influence from within.

On February 20, 1947, the British government announced that power would be handed over no later than June 1948, and Lord Wavell was replaced as viceroy by Lord Mountbatten. Virtual civil war was already under way in the Punjab, and Mountbatten made a final effort at mediation, which also failed. Nehru was by now convinced that partition was inevitable and broke with Gandhi, who believed that somehow communal strife could be healed and Indian unity preserved.

On June 3 Mountbatten announced his plan for independence and partition. Power and assets would be turned over to the two states, India and Pakistan, at midnight on August 14. Each of these new states would draw up its own constitution. Princely states would be released from British paramountcy by that date, but they would be encouraged before then to accede to India or Pakistan. The provinces would join either India or Pakistan by the vote of their legislatures; in the Punjab and Bengal, however, there would be boundary commissions, and a referendum would be held in the NWFP. Congress and the League accepted the plan, as did the Sikhs, although the probable Punjab boundary would divide them.

Only a few princely states elected to join Pakistan. In a series of fast negotiations, Indian officials won most of the other states, but three—Junagadh, Kashmir, and Hyderabad—were still undecided as the deadline was reached. India persuaded the princes to give up their rule in return for keeping their titles and receiving tax-free pensions for life.

On the night of August 14, as the people were swarming in the streets, shouting *Jai Hind* (roughly, Long Live India) and rejoicing over the advent of independence, Nehru made a moving speech to the Constituent Assembly, which at the stroke of midnight legislated the new India into existence. The Dominion of India was formally inaugurated on August 15, and Mountbatten became its governor general.

For both India and Pakistan, partition was a disaster from which it took them years to recover, and it left unresolved the question of Kashmir, which still engenders mutual hostility (see Relations With Pakistan, ch. 9). Within days after independence Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh minorities were being massacred on the borders and in the interior. An estimated 12 million refugees fled from one country to the other, leaving both states with long-

term relief and rehabilitation problems. The number killed is unknown, but the conservative estimates range from 500,000 to over 1 million.

One of those killed was Gandhi. When the overflow of Hindu refugees began to take over the Muslim mosques in Delhi, Gandhi, who had been keeping communal peace in West Bengal, rushed to Delhi to ensure fair treatment for the Muslims. In January he fasted until India agreed to pay Pakistan its share of British assets, and communal peace was reached in Delhi. On January 30 he was shot by a Hindu fanatic; this was his final sacrifice, resulting in the temporary discrediting of Hindu extremists.

India's problems as it entered upon independence were formidable, and the outlook for survival, let alone progress, was grim. That it has survived, progressed, and made its mark in international affairs is a credit to the nation and its leadership, but India's success is also attributable in part to certain assets it held on August 15, 1947. The most important of these, aside from the sense of national identity and purpose, were the existence of representative and responsible government, an efficient civil service, a powerful independent judiciary, and a professional military cadre trained to leave policy to civilian leadership.

For 40 years before independence Indians had been participating in their own government (in a system where constitutional procedures were vitally important) and in an independent judiciary that had cognizance over both the government and the individual. There was a high respect for the law (despite the noncooperation movement, which also had its legacy) and for the processes by which law was developed and the procedures and manner of its enforcement. This experience was gained within institutions that the British had established, and lasting attitudes were formed in the process. Related to the foregoing was the experience of Congress and its custom of reconciling views within a disciplined organization.

During the first months and years of an independent India, as policies were being formed and new administrative personnel were being trained, it was the existing civil services that kept the machinery going, and the All-India Services still comprised the core of administration in India (see The Public Services and Administration, ch. 8). By independence nearly half the membership of the senior service, the ICS—from which were drawn all principal administrators from the district level upward—was Indian. The other great all-India service was the Indian Police Service, and it also was retained intact (see National-Level Agencies, ch. 10).

Integration of the Princely States

Among the many problems surrounding the transfer of power from British hands in August 1947 was the status of over 500 princely states of varying rank and size scattered across the subcontinent. The British position on the subject was itself dualistic. One strand emphasized the lapse of paramountcy, rendering negotiations possible "on a basis of complete freedom," as Mountbatten told representatives of the states. Hints of international status were given to some rulers. A second strand, also articulated by Mountbatten, emphasized geographic realities and the dangers of chaos or isolation for states cutting themselves off from their natural surroundings. The princes were urged to accede to either India or Pakistan by August 1. Two special departments were created to deal with the states' accession; the one for India was under Sardar Vallabhai Patel, strongman of Congress.

Briefly, Congress regarded autocratic princely rule as anachronistic and held that British paramountcy must pass directly to the successor state, India, and that negotiations on particulars could be held only on the basis of collective acceptance by the states of accession on the three primary subjects of defense, foreign affairs, and communications. With Mountbatten's backing, Patel's special emissary, V.P. Menon, conducted an energetic and largely successful campaign of collecting signatures on the draft Instrument of Accession sent to the rulers. A few recalcitrant rulers, such as the nawabs of Bhopal and Junagadh, were persuaded—or pressured—to abandon their unrealistic ambitions to join distant Pakistan in return for personal wealth and freedom. Their territories were integrated into India. Some half-dozen states opted for Pakistan. The two largest states, Hyderabad and Kashmir (officially Jammu and Kashmir), posed special problems not easily resolved.

The wealthy and eccentric nizam of Hyderabad procrastinated on the subject of accession in the hope of winning international status in alliance with Britain for his large and prestigious state in the Deccan. He was given one year to make up his mind. The internal politics of Hyderabad were volatile, factionalized, and elitist. A small Muslim ruling class presided over a large Hindu population. The nizam's government had not been able to come to terms with demands for increased political participation in the 1930s and 1940s, had not instituted the reforms in education and social welfare for which the states of Baroda, Mysore, and Travancore were famous; and could not control the rising incidence of communal violence. Terrorist groups were spawned by both Muslim and Hindu extremist organizations and spread dis-

order in 1947 and 1948. The nizam made an abortive proclamation of independence in August 1948. Indian troops entered the state on what was called a "police action," and Hyderabad became legally a part of India. Its boundaries were realigned according to linguistic preferences of the population during the reorganization of states in 1956. The city of Hyderabad became the capital of Andhra Pradesh.

Kashmir was the largest of the princely states. It was geographically and culturally composite, including as it did the Buddhist plateau of Ladakh, the Hindu majority hills of Jammu and Poonch and, at the core, the verdant, heavily populated, Muslim majority Vale of Kashmir. The huge, thinly populated area to the north was almost all Muslim. It was ruled by a descendant of the Dogra (Hindu) general to whom the British sold this portion of the Sikh Empire when they conquered the Punjab. The maharaja, like the nizam, sought to ignore the rising swell of nationalism in the shape of the National Conference led by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, who was sympathetic to Congress. Nor was the ruler tolerant of a small rival organization, the Muslim Conference, allied to the Muslim League. The maharaja signed a one-year "stand still" agreement with both India and Pakistan to maintain the status quo. He was overtaken by events outside his control.

Revolts and communal riots broke out in the south, engaging state forces in September 1947. In October Pakistan cut off supplies of food and other essentials along the only all-weather road from the Punjab into the Vale of Kashmir, and shortly thereafter armed tribesmen from Pakistan's tribal territories invaded the valley, committed atrocities, and threatened the capital, Srinagar. They were first transported by and then reinforced with regular troops from the Pakistan Army. The maharaja pleaded for assistance from the Indian armed forces and, in order to secure it, signed the Instrument of Accession on October 27, 1947. Airlifted Indian forces drove back the invaders but refrained from crossing into Pakistan to avoid a generalized war. The maharaja abdicated in favor of his son, and a popular government was installed in power under Sheikh Abdullah. Pakistan did not accept the legality of the accession, and fighting continued. In December 1947 India referred the matter to the United Nations (UN) Security Council as a threat to the peace.

The Security Council was unable to do more than order a cease-fire and appoint an observation force. Proposals and counterproposals were made in New York, while sporadic fighting continued. In January 1949 both India and Pakistan agreed to a

cease-fire along their actual positions and to resolutions calling for withdrawal of forces to be followed by an impartial plebiscite to ascertain the will of the people of Kashmir on their future. A series of UN commissions failed to win the agreement of both sides on terms of actual troop withdrawals and gradually forfeited the confidence of the Indian government. Direct negotiations between the prime ministers of India and Pakistan in 1953 nearly succeeded in deciding on a plebiscite administrator, among other subjects. But other events in that year set back the Indo-Pakistani relationship to a point where Kashmir became the symptom rather than the cause of their mutual mistrust and hostility.

The Constitution

The Constituent Assembly elected in 1946 drafted the Constitution of the Republic of India, which came into effect on January 26, 1950. The Assembly had an overwhelming Congress majority in which minority communities were well represented, usually by members of their own choosing, and in which all shades of political opinion had their spokesmen. The umbrella character of Congress was best seen in the Constituent Assembly.

The Assembly did not function in a vacuum. It acted as the nation's parliament from August 1947 to January 1950, and many of its members were ministers in state or central governments. The practical and administrative provisions of the Constitution were products of their experience. At the same time, leaders of the Assembly brought to their task the idealism of the national movement. They were determined to draft a framework that would permit fulfillment of their long-proclaimed aspirations. Their two most important goals were national unity and social revolution. Thus, the Constitution became at once a declaration of intent and an administrative blueprint. The freedom and well-being of all India's citizens were promised within a unified and orderly state.

The Assembly functioned democratically; it had long and frank discussions on all provisions, especially those on which there was dissent. The members tried, and usually succeeded, to reach decisions by consensus. They drew freely on the constitutional laws of other countries as models to be adapted to India's needs. The influence of the United States Constitution is marked in the description of fundamental rights, in making them justiciable, and in the powers, independence, and judicial review functions of the Supreme Court of India (see The Judiciary, ch. 8).

Assembly members refrained from theoretical expositions

on federalism. Drawing on the experience of other federations and also the one proposed in the Government of India Act of 1935, they distributed powers and revenues between the central government and the states in ways that, in their opinion, best suited India's unique problems. They were impelled toward creating a strong centralized system by fears of Balkanization and chaos. At the same time, they recognized the need for decentralization in such a large and diverse country. The result was a flexible framework sometimes called "cooperative federalism." It has a strong unitary bias, especially in times of external or internal emergency when enormous powers are vested in the central government. But the Indian federal system depends for its working on state governments.

Initially, the component parts of the Indian union were administrative units of four different kinds, linguistically and culturally heterogeneous. In the 1950s demands for linguistically homogeneous states grew, drawing sustenance from earlier Congress endorsements on the subject. The first and most vociferous movement for administrative separation from a state was in the Telugu-speaking districts of Madras. These were constituted into the new state of Andhra Pradesh in 1953. Prime Minister Nehru, among others, argued strongly against what he called provincialism and subnationalism, fearing deleterious effects on national unity. The government appointed a States Reorganisation Commission to examine the question, balancing regional sentiment as well as national interest. On the basis of its report, Parliament redrew the boundaries of the states in 1956 to conform to the dominant language of a region. Subsequently, and after considerable agitation in both cases, Bombay was divided into Gujarat and Maharashtra, and districts in the Punjab that claimed Hindi as their language were constituted into Haryana, leaving a Punjabi state in place. Administrative lines were also redrawn in the Northeast to satisfy the aspirations of the Nagas and other groups. Despite continuing demands for autonomy by one group or another, the administrative and cultural boundaries of most Indian states proved congruent and stable (see Languages of India, ch. 4).

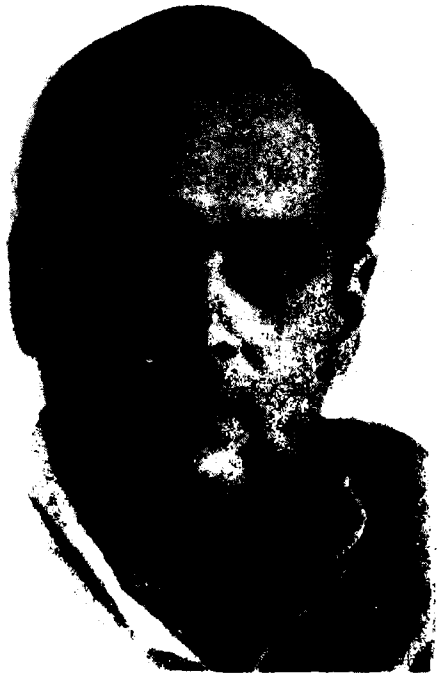
The states became the arena for dramatic increases in political participation, for expressions of popular demands, for experiments in local participatory democracy as in the panchayati raj system, and also for the growth of opposition parties (see State and Local Government, ch. 8). The central, or union, government became the source of progressive legislation that sometimes made states financially dependent on the central government. It



Jawaharlal Nehru
Courtesy Embassy of India, Washington



Indira Gandhi
Courtesy Embassy of India, Washington



Rajiv Gandhi
Courtesy Embassy of India, Washington

retained responsibility for national security, which could produce an authoritarian system legally, as happened during the emergency of the 1975–77 period (see Indira Gandhi as a National Leader, 1966–80; The Rise and Fall of Janata, 1977–79, ch. 8). A constant bargaining process between state and central governments characterized the union from the start. As long as Congress governments were in power in all states and Nehru was alive, bargaining and conciliation took place in party conclaves. As a result of the breakdown of the Congress countrywide mandate in 1967, relations between the central and state governments became subject to more public discussion and, often, acrimony.

The opening chapter of the Constitution focuses on Fundamental Rights and the Directive Principles. The former protect individuals and minority groups from arbitrary state action by guaranteeing the rights to freedom of religion, assembly, association, movement, life, liberty, property, and due process of law. The principle of equality is exalted by provisions making illegal the practice of untouchability, forbidding forced labor, and prohibiting discrimination on grounds of caste, race, sex, belief, or place of birth. The Constitution guarantees freedom of conscience and religious practice, subject only to public order, morality, and health. The constitution makers were secular and sought to remove the state from religious controversy. In practice, this has meant state patronage to all the many religions of India, rather than separation of state from religion, as well as a tendency to use religious symbols in political mobilization.

The Constituent Assembly and, subsequently, Parliament debated the possible conflicts between individual liberties and public order or national security. In fear of lawlessness, qualifications with respect to public order were introduced into the chapter on fundamental rights. And under threat of communist insurgency in Telengana, Parliament passed the Preventive Detention Act in 1950. The right to property was amended several times under the exigencies of the land reform movement, but the amendments were upheld by the courts. In India, as in other democracies, the courts and the press have constantly engaged in testing and protecting the civil rights of individuals (see The Constitution and the Evolution of Government Institutions, ch. 8).

The Nehru Era

Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime minister, projected the goals of the nationalist movement into the evolution of independent India. He believed passionately in democracy as the best,

perhaps the only, means of holding India together and of causing social and economic change to take directions beneficial to the majority of the people. In his ceaseless touring of the country, he explained issues to largely illiterate audiences and urged them to exercise their franchise with responsibility. Nehru had enormous mass appeal and could have functioned easily as a kind of plebiscitary monarch. Instead, his practice conformed to his teachings—respect for Parliament, an independent judiciary, and a free press. The standards he set became the accepted political norms for India, the largest democracy in the world.

India adopted the British parliamentary model, and in order to function as a national leader within that system, Nehru had to gain control of Congress. Congress was at once the vehicle of the national movement and the majority party in power. Challenges to Nehru's leadership were posed by the more conservative and orthodox Hindu leaders in Congress, who shared neither his secularism nor his socialist leanings. Nehru had differences with Patel, who died in December 1950, but each respected the other's sphere of activity. In 1951 Nehru clashed with the new Congress president, Purushottumdas Tandon, on the issue of nominating candidates for the forthcoming parliamentary elections. Rather than relinquish control of that process, Nehru offered to resign from the executive bodies of the party. Tandon backed down, and thereafter Nehru ruled Congress inside and outside Parliament, though not always as Congress president. Congress victories in the general elections of 1951–52 and 1957 gave India an unbroken period of one-party dominance and stability. This was reinforced by the fact that in Nehru's lifetime Congress was subordinate to the government only at the national level. At the state level it remained wide open to politicians who possessed grass-roots support. For the most part, they understood traditional society as well as modern methods of mobilization and carried with them the legacy of the national movement. They made politics their career and came to exercise considerable power free of interference from the Congress Working Committee. Members of Congress were, however, regionally diverse and not ideologically consistent with one another. Powerful state leaders and confident men in the cabinet established their individual equations with Nehru. Congress was an umbrella party with a preference for the middle way.

The middle way of ideological noncommitment and maximum consensus—which also diluted short-term effectiveness—was evident in reformist legislation passed in the 1950s that affected two sensitive issues in Indian life—land and women. A

major effort to carry forward the emancipation of women and implement constitutional provisions for equality took the form of laws collectively known as the Hindu Code Bill. (Hindu in this context referred to all communities other than those having separate personal laws, such as Muslims and Christians.) The Hindu Marriage Act and the Special Marriages Act of 1955 outlawed polygamy, conferred equal rights of divorce on men and women, enabled persons of different religions to marry, and fixed the minimum age of marriage at 18 for girls and 21 for boys. The Hindu Succession Act of 1956 gave women absolute control over their own property, recognized the equal right of daughters and sons to inherit from either parent, and gave a widow equal share with surviving children to her husband's estate. Laws passed in 1956 safeguarded a mother's right to be the natural guardian of her children and have a voice in adoption. The Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961 made illegal the practice of paying large sums to the family of a daughter's husband. Revolutionary as these laws were in the light of past social custom, in the mid-1980s their impact remained limited (see Marriage, ch. 5).

Land reform was another area in which Nehru was ideologically engaged but in which the practice of the law fell far short of its promise (see Land Reforms, ch. 7). Between 1950 and 1954 a series of abolition of zamindari acts were passed in states where absentee landlordism existed on a large scale—Assam, West Bengal, Bihar, Hyderabad, Orissa, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, and Uttar Pradesh. Intermediary rights and tenure were abolished and patterns of landownership altered in favor of the actual cultivator, provided he could document his right to occupancy. Zamindars were not expropriated; they received handsome compensation and were allowed to keep land under their occupation and cultivation; land ceilings were not always imposed. Tenant holdings were neither consolidated nor confirmed. Cultivators of smallholdings, sharecroppers, and landless laborers received no new benefits and sometimes lost traditional rights. State governments made no effort to enforce legislation or stop abuses.

The cooperative movement and the Community Development Programme were launched in the 1950s to improve agricultural techniques and spread benefits over a wider section of the population. They, like the decentralized elective institutions established at district and village levels, tended to come under the control of peasants with large or medium-sized holdings. There was no immediate transformation of agrarian relations in Nehru's lifetime, but two trends were set in motion. One was caused by increased investment in agriculture and improved technology

and came to be known as the Green Revolution. The other was caused by the pressures of rising population, unemployment, and inequity and posed the threat of violence and the potential for "red" revolution.

Nehru aimed to avert the latter danger through a systematic program of economic development planned and directed by the state. The Planning Commission was established in 1950 (see Planning, ch. 6). Although its status was advisory, it determined national policy as long as Nehru was in the chair, and its key officials were involved in central and state governments. Nehru's chosen method of development was to take the best from existing systems and, in his words, "create something suited to India's national genius," i.e., a mixed economy. His concept of a mixed economy was as difficult to describe with precision as his definition of a "socialistic pattern of society," which was adopted as the goal of planning by both Congress and Parliament in the mid-1950s. Its main ingredients were attention to distribution as well as to production; investment of public funds in the infrastructure of the economy, such as irrigation, power, transport, and communications; central government assistance to the states in developmental projects; production of such "basic things" as metals, power, and heavy machines within India to inculcate self-reliance; state dominance of the "commanding heights of the economy" in defense, heavy industry, and communications; and an enlarged sphere for the public sector while encouraging private sector expansion through import substitution. Nehru believed that the creation of a self-reliant industrial economy would solve the problem of unemployment. He hoped that rural underemployment and an expanding demand for consumer goods would be met by new and revitalized village industries.

This strategy of development was followed in five-year plans beginning in 1951. Nehru both experienced and generated an intense excitement as each new monument of the industrial age was erected in the shape of multipurpose hydroelectric projects or steel factories. He called them "India's new temples." Advances were made in the metallurgical, mechanical, chemical, power, and transport sectors in Nehru's lifetime. The basic facilities required for most branches of modern manufacture were created, as was the capacity to produce most of the items needed for conventional defense (see Defense Industry, ch. 10). National laboratories and technical institutions were established that by the 1980s gave India a huge pool of trained scientists. Nehru's friendship with two of India's leading scientists, Homi Bhabha and Vikram Sarabhai, led to the early initiation and systematic

cultivation of India's nuclear and space programs outside the military sphere. Nehru saw science as the ability to take society by rational choice to a world of progress and control of resources. Through his speeches and through public expenditures on scientific research, he tried to encourage a scientific outlook. Between 1951 and 1965 the index of industrial production in India rose by about 7 percent per year, a respectable rate (see Industry, ch. 6).

The mixed-economy model of economic development suffered from several drawbacks that had become obvious by the time of Nehru's death. Most important, agricultural production remained too low to provide either the surplus of resources and raw materials needed for industrial investment or the market for industrial goods. Such expansion of agricultural production as took place in the 1950s paled in comparison with the population growth rate of 2.3 percent annually, which was much higher than estimated by the planners. Voluntary family planning programs were inadequate to the task of reducing fertility, while health programs were lowering mortality rates (see Population, ch. 2). As a result, unemployment remained high, and poverty persisted.

In the absence of sufficient domestic capital or export earnings, India came to depend on foreign assistance (see Foreign Aid, ch. 6). During the 1950s, for a number of reasons, both the Western industrial countries and the Soviet Union found it in their interests to aid India in specific areas of its development. Soviet assistance went to heavy industry; the United States—on a scale that dwarfed that of the Soviets— transferred agricultural surplus, expertise, and funds to build up India's economic infrastructure, agriculture, and private industry. Useful as these loans and grants were, they were not sufficient for India's needs and created debts that posed problems for Nehru's successors. Moreover, their continuance depended, in part, on approval of India's domestic and foreign policies that was not always forthcoming.

Nehru's foreign policy was aimed at achieving recognition for India's independence and importance in the world. It was rooted in his humanism and dislike for militarism as well as in his conviction that India was neither threatened by nor posed a threat to others. The three main planks of Nehru's foreign policy were articulated in response to the circumstances of the post-World War II world. They included Asian solidarity on the basis of anticolonialism, antiracialism, and friendship between India and China; nonalignment or a refusal to commit India to either of the two systems of military alliances constructed during the early phases of

the Cold War; and support for the UN and multilateral efforts to maintain international peace and to tackle worldwide problems in ways beneficial to humanity. He spoke often as if he were the world's conscience. Because of his passionate sincerity and because he seemed at times to offer a middle way out of the dilemmas of confrontation, Nehru won for India a prestige far exceeding its actual power. He succeeded in convincing the post-Stalin leadership of the Soviet Union that nonalignment was tenable. And he retained friendly ties with the leaders of Britain and the United States, although many Americans were critical, if not contemptuous, of nonalignment, particularly during Nehru's silence when the Soviets invaded Hungary in 1956. India's forces and diplomatic expertise were called upon by the UN in many an international impasse, from negotiating the repatriation of prisoners of war after the Korean War ended in 1953 to carrying out the mandate of the UN Security Council in the Middle East or Africa in 1956 and 1961. Nehru's foreign policy of nonalignment was consistent with his domestic commitment to democracy and a mixed economy.

Nehru's successes abroad were diminished by two blind spots in his vision—Pakistan and China. Nehru was forced by circumstance to accept the reality of partition at the last minute; he believed, according to his most recent biographer, Sarvepalli Gopal, that it was a temporary expediency and Pakistan would be bound to gravitate back to some kind of association with India. Perhaps as a consequence of this inability to think of Pakistan in terms of foreign policy and national interest, Nehru failed to approach Pakistan's leaders in ways to which they could respond positively. His reactions to the Pakistani-American military alliance and to the 1958 military coup in Pakistan were violently negative. Although India and Pakistan early reached agreement on the practical and humane problems arising from partition, such as exchange of properties and, in 1960 with the help of the World Bank (see Glossary), on division of the waters of the Indus River system, their mutual hostility and suspicion remained strong. One year after Nehru's death, hostilities broke out first along an undefined border in the marshy Rann of Kutch and then, following Pakistan incursions in Kashmir, all along the western border. Although a cease-fire was quickly called and a truce reached at Tashkent in January 1966, Pakistan remained a burden on the conduct of Indian foreign relations.

Equally serious was Nehru's neglect of India's northern border while cultivating the friendship of China. Nehru was an ardent spokesman for the right of the People's Republic of China to

take the China seat in all UN bodies. He acquiesced in China's takeover of Tibet in 1950 despite the loss thereafter of traditional trading privileges for India. Nevertheless, China did not respond with warmth until India's mediation during the Korean War. In the next two years the slogans of "Hindi-Chini bhai bhai" (Indians and Chinese are brothers) and "peaceful coexistence" were raised as the basis of Sino-Indian friendship. This wore thin, however, when China consolidated its hold in Xinjiang (Sinkiang) and Tibet, including the portion known as the Aksai Chin, which India claimed as its territory. The Dalai Lama of Tibet fled with his entourage to India in 1959 and was given asylum. Border talks between the prime ministers and the officials of India and China in 1960 did not result in any agreement. In October 1962 Chinese forces crossed the northeastern border of India in large numbers and overwhelmed the ill-equipped and unprepared Indian forces stationed there. Although Chinese forces were subsequently withdrawn and an unofficial demilitarized zone was maintained between forward posts on both sides, India suffered a cruel blow to its prestige and self-esteem. Nehru confessed to a shattering of illusions. His health, too, was broken. He suffered a stroke in January 1964 and died on May 27, 1964.

The Trough of the 1960s and the Rise of Indira Gandhi to Power

In 1964 a group of powerful men in the Indian National Congress, informally known as the Syndicate, worked behind the scenes to secure an orderly succession to Nehru. They selected the mild and noncontroversial Lal Bahadur Shastri to be prime minister and persuaded another senior claimant to leadership, Morarji Desai, to support him. Less than two years later, when Shastri died at Tashkent, Congress president K. Kamraj sought a similar consensus behind Indira Gandhi, Nehru's daughter and only child, minister of information in Shastri's cabinet and seemingly malleable. This time Desai refused to step down, but Gandhi defeated him, 355 votes to 169, in the first contested election for Congress leadership since 1938. Subsequently, Desai accepted the position of deputy prime minister in her government.

The politics of succession revealed that the Indian political system was sufficiently mature to pass leadership from a charismatic world figure to two relatively obscure persons without political turmoil or resort to military intervention. Congress was both powerful and polycentric, and party leaders in the states as well as in Parliament played important roles in making decisions. Decentralization also brought factionalism and dissension, how-

ever. A dilemma resulted that was expressed by political scientist W. H. Morris-Jones in the words "to dominate, Congress must accommodate; yet accommodation encourages incoherence which destroys the capacity to dominate."

The central overnment too appeared weak and indecisive in the face of assertive states, rising civil violence, and deepening national problems. The sharp loss of self-confidence following the border war with China in 1962 was only partially restored by military success against Pakistan in 1965. Agitation against Hindi as a national language in Tamil Nadu and Sikh agitation for a Punjabi state rocked south and north at the same time. The economy sagged under the costs of two wars in three years, inflation, unemployment, and stagnant agricultural production. The worst droughts of the century hit India successively in 1965 and 1966, causing a shortfall in food grain production of 17 million and 15 million tons, respectively. Famine was averted by massive transfers of food grains from the United States, but the conditions imposed on this aid were viewed as humiliating by most Indian leaders. Indian sensitivity to the dangers of foreign dominance were aggravated also by Soviet heavy-handedness in the mid-1960s. The election manifestos of all political parties at the time of the 1967 general elections stressed policies of national strength.

The elections of February 1967 decisively altered the pattern of one-party dominance. Congress was left with a small working majority in the Lok Sabha (House of the People), although united opposition was not ranged against it, but it lost control of half the state legislatures. A regional party, (Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam--DMK) won in Tamil Nadu. Coalition governments succeeded Congress elsewhere; parties to the right (Swatantra and Jana Sangh) as well as the left (Samyukta Socialist Party—SSP—and two communist parties) made gains in different states (see Opposition Parties in the mid-1980s, ch. 8). In the absence of solid majorities, multiple floor crossings became routine. Defectors had leverage over the composition of governments, and principle was more easily compromised than position. The activities of legislators and officials seemed to have but little bearing on the socioeconomic problems facing the people. Incidents of agrarian unrest, communal riots, and forcible occupation of land were reported frequently throughout India in the late 1960s. In certain districts of West Bengal, a revolutionary movement sprang up, modeled on the Communist Party of China and advocating forced redistribution of land. This Naxalite movement, as it was known, split away from the two parliamentary communist parties but exercised a powerful appeal on the rural poor and the urban intel-

ligentsia. It was crushed in the early 1970s in West Bengal but emerged later elsewhere (see External Agitation and Internal Subversion, ch. 10).

Indira Gandhi developed her increasingly assertive style of leadership against a background of national frustration, despondency, and agitation. By the end of 1971 she had established her own control over party and government, overcoming challenges from major institutions—the Congress Working Committee, the Supreme Court, and the chief ministers of the states. The first test came in 1969 when she backed a different candidate for the position of India's president than the one selected by Congress stalwarts. Her candidate, V.V. Giri, won the election, and Gandhi was expelled from Congress for party indiscipline. She remained prime minister, formed her own Congress party, and dismissed Desai from her cabinet. She announced the first of a series of populist acts—nationalization of major banks (see Banking and Monetary Policy, ch. 6). This was followed in 1970 by a presidential order abolishing the privy purses and withdrawing other privileges that had been granted to the former princely rulers when they joined India. It was challenged in the Supreme Court and declared unconstitutional.

Fresh general elections were held in March 1971. Gandhi and her party, Congress (N), fought the election campaign on the radical platform of *garibi hatao* (remove poverty), charging her opponents with blocking economic and social reform. She won a sweeping victory with a two-thirds majority of seats in the Lok Sabha. This "Indira Wave," as it was called, was confirmed the following year in state elections. It was helped, no doubt, by the prime minister's insistence that the 10 million refugees from East Pakistan who had flowed into India as a consequence of Pakistan's civil war beginning in March 1971 return to their homes and by India's decisive victory in the December 1971 war with Pakistan that brought about the independence of Bangladesh (see The National Forces, ch. 10).

Parliament passed legislation to advance the populist theme of "social control." The sphere of the public sector was enlarged to include general insurance, shipping, coal, steel, textiles, and wholesale trade in wheat. Regulations restricting monopolies and expenditures of foreign exchange further antagonized powerful industrial and agricultural interests. Clashes of interest resulted in an institutional confrontation between the prime minister and Parliament on the one hand and the Supreme Court on the other, reminiscent of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's clash with the United States Supreme Court in the 1930s. When Gandhi broke the

precedent of seniority and appointed as chief justice a man sympathetic to her views, three senior justices resigned in protest.

The political pattern that emerged in the early 1970s was based on dominant central rule. Power in both party and government was highly centralized. The role of the prime minister's secretariat was expanded relative to that of other departments of the central government. Cabinet portfolios were shuffled frequently. The prime minister invoked constitutional provisions for Presidential Rule to intervene in troubled states (see The Union Government, ch. 8). New paramilitary forces were created under central government control to ensure border and industrial security; state police forces suffered declines in morale and effectiveness (see National-Level Agencies, ch. 10). New Delhi put an end to ambiguities in its relationship with Sikkim, a princely state on the northeastern border that had maintained its status as a protectorate after 1947. In 1974 Sikkim was fully integrated in the Indian union. Also in 1974 advances in India's nuclear capabilities were publicly demonstrated at Pokharan in an underground test explosion.

Within Congress (N) the role of Gandhi as leader was greatly enhanced. She arbitrated factional disputes, nominated—and changed—chief ministers in the states, and recruited new members from among youth, intellectuals, minorities, and the Scheduled Castes (see Glossary) to revitalize the party and make it an agent of social progress. The older generation of party leaders who had built up grass-roots support in the national movement had passed from the scene. The new generation often found it more expedient to cultivate New Delhi than their constituencies.

Neither the new pyramidal structure of political power nor radical rhetoric was adequate to meet the economic crises of the mid-1970s. The cumulative impact of refugees, the 1971 war, the spectacular quadrupling of oil prices in 1973, drops in industrial growth, and crop failure in 1972 caused a balance of payments crisis. Both rural and urban areas witnessed widening income gaps between those who benefited from the Green Revolution or from governmental controls and licenses and those who suffered deprivation. There was a credibility gap in governmental espousal of populist slogans when its economic policies were moving toward the right. In 1974 the government obtained a loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF—see Glossary) and pledged itself to instituting a harsh anti-inflationary program. There was no visible gain in either growth or equity.

Inchoate violence in Gujarat and Bihar grew into mass protest movements against Congress (N) misrule. These took on a na-

tional significance under the leadership of Jayaprakash (J.P.) Narayan, who symbolized the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi. He appealed to a wide section of the population when he called for "total revolution" and a nationwide civil disobedience movement. An all-India strike of railroad workers was called for in May 1974 by their socialist leader, George Fernandes. The strike was sternly suppressed by government forces, but at a high political cost. State elections in Gujarat in early 1975 resulted in the defeat of Congress (N) by a coalition of parties calling itself the Janata (Peoples') Front. On May 9 all the opposition parties in the Lok Sabha united to propose a no-confidence motion in Prime Minister Gandhi and her government. An *Indira hatao* (remove Indira) campaign in the press was heightened. The Allahabad High Court issued a writ on June 12 declaring that she had violated electoral rules in 1971 and was therefore ineligible for her seat in Parliament for six years. The Supreme Court confirmed the writ on appeal.

The Emergency and the Janata Phase

On June 25, 1975, the president, acting on the advice of the prime minister, issued the Proclamation of Emergency under Article 352 of the Constitution. About 600 opposition politicians and others were immediately arrested, including Narayan and Desai. Civil rights and resort to courts for their protection were automatically suspended. Prior censorship of the press came into effect. State governments came under the direction of the central government. The Emergency was approved for six months by a reconvened Parliament. In October 1975 Parliament amended the Maintenance of Internal Security Act and the Defence of India Rules to facilitate imprisonment of individuals without disclosure of cause or recourse to courts. The Twenty-Point Economic Programme was announced along with a general tightening of discipline. Anticorruption drives were held, and considerable sums of illegal monies were declared to have been recovered. The family planning program was accelerated by means of sterilization campaigns, including forced sterilizations. In short, the normal liberties of a democracy were suspended under the declared danger of a breakdown in law and order. The Emergency was much criticized but met with little opposition from the industrialists, the civil services, or the states, whose excesses could now pass without scrutiny by a free press. Although Gandhi and her now prominent younger son, Sanjay Gandhi, claimed stabilization and economic growth as a result of the Emergency's "social discip-

line," its positive impact diminished with every passing month.

In January 1977 fresh elections were announced for March. Opposition members were released from jail, censorship of the press was ended and, before the elections, the Emergency was lifted. The opposition parties formed a coalition and campaigned as the Janata Party. The March 1977 elections swept them into power in the Lok Sabha. Their victory was repeated in state elections later that year. Desai became prime minister.

The causes, course, and results of the Emergency have been debated at great length inside and outside India. With the passage of years, the earlier passion has abated, but in the mid-1980s the issue of suspension and jubilant restoration of democracy remained alive. Both the fragility and the deep commitment to democracy in India were vindicated by the events of 1975–77. Critics of Gandhi viewed the Emergency as an inevitable and repeatable culmination of her personal style. Others saw it as an indicator of authoritarian tendencies in the Indian polity subjected to economic strains and without benefit of a socially aware and politically active citizenry. In their opinion, an entire "intermediate" class, irrespective of political party, continued to employ the coercive instruments of the state to enrich themselves and to prevent the poor, the minorities, and the Scheduled Castes from enjoying the rights guaranteed to them by the Constitution. According to one investigative journalist, Arun Shourie, all political parties were and continue to be guilty of criminal activities and selfish factionalized politics, and all encourage sycophancy and corruption among bureaucrats, judges, and the police.

Political institutions both gained and suffered in the Janata phase from March 1977 to December 1979. Communal and caste violence became commonplace. Infighting among the leaders of the coalition gained more publicity than the constructive measures they took for decentralization of administration, food-for-work programs, dismantling of repressive legislation, and improvement in relations with neighboring states. The coalition broke apart in June 1979 when Prime Minister Desai was forced out of office, and an unseemly wrangle ensued over his successor. The aging leader of the Bharatiya Lok Dal, Chaudhury Charan Singh, was made prime minister, and new elections were scheduled for January 1980. These elections swept Janata out of the Lok Sabha, giving Gandhi and her party 351 seats out of 518.

* * *

The literature on Indian history is voluminous, but few works do justice to all phases and all regions at the same time. A balanced presentation is found in *A History of India*; Percival Spear is the author of Volume I and Romila Thapar the author of Volume II. An easily read single volume is Stanley Wolpert's *A New History of India*.

A comprehensive collection of recent scholarship on Harappan culture is Gregory Possehl's *The Harappan Civilization*. The standard work on the Vedic and classical ages remains A.L. Basham's *The Wonder That Was India*. K.A. Sastri's *History of South India from Prehistoric Times to the Fall of Vijayanagas* is unequaled but can be usefully supplemented with essays by Burton Stein in Tapan Raychaudhuri and Irfan Habib's *The Cambridge Economic History of India*. This volume provides the most complete account of life in India from the twelfth to the eighteenth centuries. The Mughal period has inspired much fine scholarship and imaginative writings. Irfan Habib's *An Atlas of the Mughal Empire* provides complete information diagramatically. Bamber Gascoigne's *The Great Moghuls* has lavish photographs and draws much of its text from primary sources.

State archives, family histories, and other sources have been used recently to depict fuller pictures of India in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries than earlier formal histories of the British period that tended to focus on the governors general. Two good examples are C.A. Bayley's *Rulers, Townsmen, and Bazaars* and Robin Jeffrey's *People, Princes, and Paramount Power*.

The nationalist movement has provoked its share of authorized histories as well as probing studies. Anil Seal's *The Emergence of Indian Nationalism: Competition and Collaboration in the Late Nineteenth Century* was followed by other publications from Cambridge University Press critically examining the background to politics. These include two volumes on Mahatma Gandhi by Judith M. Brown.

The literature on and by Mahatma Gandhi alone would fill libraries. His *Autobiography* is the best source for the first half of his life. Joan V. Bondurant's *The Conquest of Violence* admirably analyzes his satyagraha movements. Erik H. Erikson's *Gandhi's Truth* is a fascinating, if controversial, study. The entire period 1885–1947 is well summarized in Sumit Sarkar's *Modern India*, which contains perhaps the best bibliography on it. R.J. Moore's *Crisis of Indian Unity, 1917–1940* deals with the sharpening

political conflicts of the time.

Writings on postindependence India vary greatly in quality as well as in ideological approach. Good overall accounts from the perspective of prime ministers are found in Sarvepalli Gopal's *Jawaharlal Nehru*, Volumes 1 and 2, and in Zaheer Masani's *Indira Gandhi*. Biting criticism from the point of view of the common man is found in Dilip Hiro's *Inside India Today* and Arun Shourie's *Symptoms of Fascism*, dealing mainly with the mid-1970s. Probably the best writings on contemporary India are to be found in the many journals published in English, as well as in all Indian languages. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Chapter 2. Geographic and Demographic Setting



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ALTHOUGH INDIA ENCOMPASSES less than 2.5 percent of the earth's landmass, in 1985 it accounted for more than 15 percent of the world's population. The country had experienced declining death rates and relatively steady birth rates for most of the twentieth century. Demographers and policymakers alike ardently wished that India might balance its birth and death rates more closely, but there were no firm indications that this might happen in the near future.

In the interim the country suffered from one of the world's gravest population problems. The 1981 census count was significantly higher than intercensal projections had indicated. In both the 1960s and the 1970s India increased its population by roughly 25 percent. Growth in the 1970s was concentrated in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan—heavily agricultural, rural, and already overpopulated regions. Some experts were optimistic that the country's population growth curve had peaked and that, if India were able to control population more effectively in those three states, the population problem might at least be alleviated.

Government-sponsored family planning has had a lengthy history in India. Early in the 1950s policymakers recognized the need for controlling population growth. Information on family planning and contraceptives has been available (at least in cities) since the 1950s. The government has adopted a number of incentives to encourage couples to limit family size. Providing adequate family-planning services and trained personnel for the vast majority of the population—those in rural areas—remained a challenge of major proportions.

By the early 1980s there was a general consensus that couples could be effectively motivated to limit the number of children they had only if those already living had a better chance of reaching maturity. Family planning was integrated with services to improve maternal and child health care. Improvements in health care and nutrition were targeted to try to lower the staggering rate of infant and early childhood mortality.

Contraceptive use increased dramatically from the 1950s to the 1980s. By 1982 roughly one-quarter of India's reproductive-age couples were using some effective form of contraception. There was significant variation in contraceptive use among states, and some of the most populous states registered the lowest rates of coverage. Clearly, India had a way to go before it reached the 60 percent coverage rate demographers deemed essential to ef-

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fective population control. On a more basic level, researchers noted that the deeply felt need for sons to carry on the family line and provide for parents in their old age contributed to the population problem. Most couples stopped having children when they had two living sons and a total of four children.

Indians enjoyed a life expectancy of approximately 54 years in the early 1980s. The death rate had dropped since the 1920s while the birth rate had remained elevated. The infant mortality rate remained extremely high, as did the mortality rate for children in their first year of life. Although the infant mortality rate had declined throughout this century, the drop in the 1970s was of much smaller magnitude than those of previous decades. Infant mortality was much higher in rural than in urban areas.

The country as a whole continued to be subject to a number of endemic diseases. Smallpox had been eradicated, but filariasis, malaria, and leprosy were common. There were periodic cholera outbreaks. The population in a number of states suffered from goiter, and various nutritional disorders were common in other regions.

School attendance was compulsory between the ages of six and 14. Actual attendance, however, reflected a variety of factors. The educational system itself manifested considerable diversity. Those more accessible regions that the British colonized earliest had, in general, the most highly developed systems of instruction and higher rates of attendance.

Rural attendance rates were lower than those of city dwellers. Female enrollment lagged far behind that of males at every level. The lower percentage of girls attending primary school was the principal stumbling block to achieving universal school attendance among school-age children. Family enrollments were lowest in the inland and more isolated states.

The number of trained teachers, educational facilities, and students has grown dramatically since the 1950s. Particular efforts have been made to enroll the primary-school-age population. Significant progress has been made in alleviating the more glaring inequities between regions and between city and countryside. The increase in schools and teachers servicing Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes has been marked.

The number of students enrolled in institutions of higher education grew by roughly 10 times from the early 1950s through the early 1980s. The populace at large continued to regard postsecondary education primarily as an avenue of career advancement. A degree was an entrance to white-collar employment, perhaps a coveted slot in the civil service. The glut of graduates led to a gen-

eral devaluation of higher education as a meal ticket, unemployment among graduates remained a serious problem.

Higher education itself was significantly elitist. State governments ran most universities; political considerations played a role in both admissions and appointments. Caste and family background were important factors. The legacy of English as a language of instruction reinforced the elitist tendencies of Indian education. Repeated efforts at reform—attempts to upgrade vocational education, control private schools at every level, and channel money into programs more beneficial to society as a whole—continued to meet with limited success.

Geography

Principal Regions

The Indo-Pakistani subcontinent comprises three main geographic regions: the Himalayas in the north, the Indo-Gangetic Plain, and the southern tableland (see fig. 5). The Indo-Gangetic Plain and those portions of the Himalayas within India's political borders are collectively known as North India or Northern India. The tableland constitutes South India or Southern India, often simply termed the Peninsula.

The Himalayas, the highest mountain range in the world, extend along the northern frontiers of India, Pakistan, Nepal, and Bhutan. Lesser ranges jut southward from the main body of the Himalayas at both the east and the west ends. The Himalayan system, about 2,400 kilometers in length and varying in width from 240 to 330 kilometers, is made up of three parallel ranges, which are sometimes called the Great Himalaya Range. The northern range averages approximately 6,000 meters in height and contains the three highest mountains on earth: Mount Everest (8,848 meters) in Nepal, K2 (8,611 meters—also known as Mount Godwin-Austen or Dapsang) in Pakistan-controlled northern Kashmir, and Kanchenjunga (8,586 meters) on the Nepal-Sikkim border. The Lesser Himalayas are largely in the range of 1,500 to 3,600 meters in height. The Outer, or southern, Himalayas, averaging 900 to 1,200 meters in altitude, lie between the Lesser Himalayas and the Indo-Gangetic Plain.

The southern slopes of each of the Himalayan ranges are too steep to accumulate snow or support much tree life; the northern slopes generally have forests below the snow line. Between the ranges are extensive high plateaus, deep gorges, and fertile valleys, such as Kashmir and Kulu. The Himalayas serve as the

screen within which the monsoons operate and are the source of the great river systems that water the alluvial plains below. As a result of erosion, the rivers coming from the mountains carry vast quantities of silt that enrich the plains. These geologically young mountain ranges are subject to earthquakes that occasionally cause extensive damage in the densely settled, sub-Himalayan areas bordering the mountains.

At the foot of the Himalayas, extending from Assam and the Bay of Bengal in the east to the Afghan border and the Arabian Sea in the west, lies the Indo-Gangetic Plain. Covering nearly 770,000 square kilometers, it extends some 2,400 kilometers in length and varies in width from 160 to 480 kilometers. The plain is a product of the continual deposits of alluvium borne by the great river systems; the thickness of the alluvial deposits is not known for certain, but it may be as much as 3,000 meters.

Some geographers divide the plain into four approximate subdivisions: the Indus Valley (entirely in Pakistan), the Punjab (see Glossary), the middle Ganges, and the lower Ganges. These regional distinctions are based primarily on the availability of water. The Punjab (divided between India and Pakistan) is centered in the land between five rivers: the Jhelum, the Chenab, the Ravi, the Beas, and the Sutlej (the name Punjab comes from *panch ab*, meaning five waters or rivers). The middle Ganges extends from the Yamuna (Jumna) River in the west to West Bengal in the east (see fig. 1). The lower Ganges, often more lush and verdant than the middle Ganges, is centered in West Bengal. Average annual rainfall (and humidity) increase moving west to east from approximately 500 millimeters in the region of Lahore to 1,500 millimeters around the lower Ganges.

The northern and southern borders of the Indo-Gangetic Plain form natural barriers. Below the state of Punjab and extending southwest along the Pakistani border is the Thar Desert; to the southwest lies the Rann of Kutch, a region of salt flats that is submerged half the year; and to the south are the hills of central India. The hills, varying in elevation from 450 to 1,200 meters, lie on a general east-west axis. The main rivers that flow through this region delineate North India and South India.

The Peninsula proper, south of the Satpura Range and the Chota Nagpur Plateau, is an old, geologically stable region. The uplifting of the plateau and its eastward tilt formed the Western Ghats, a line of hills running from the Tapti River south to the end of the Peninsula. The Eastern Ghats mark the eastern end of the plateau; they converge with the Western Ghats at the Peninsula's southern tip.

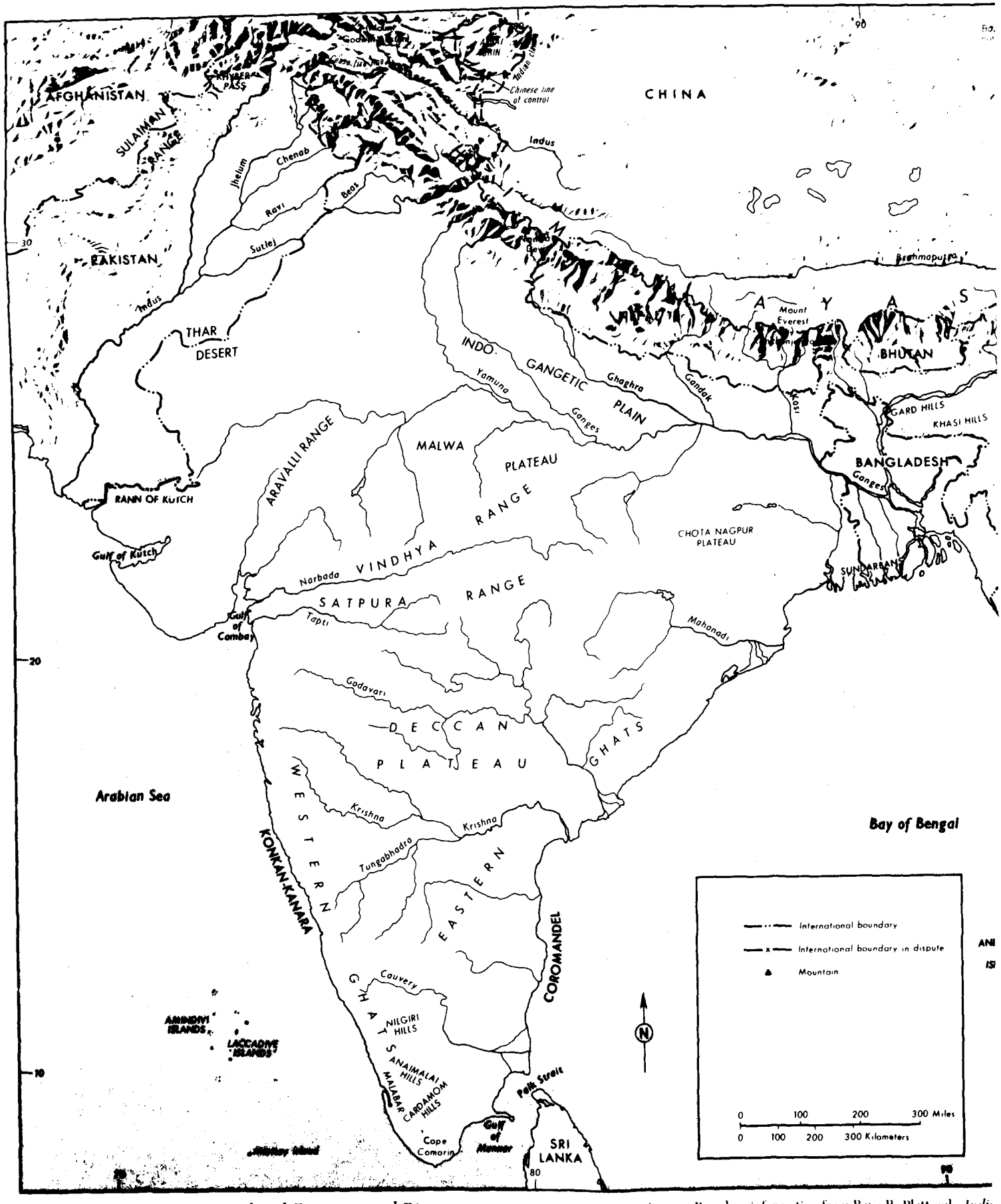
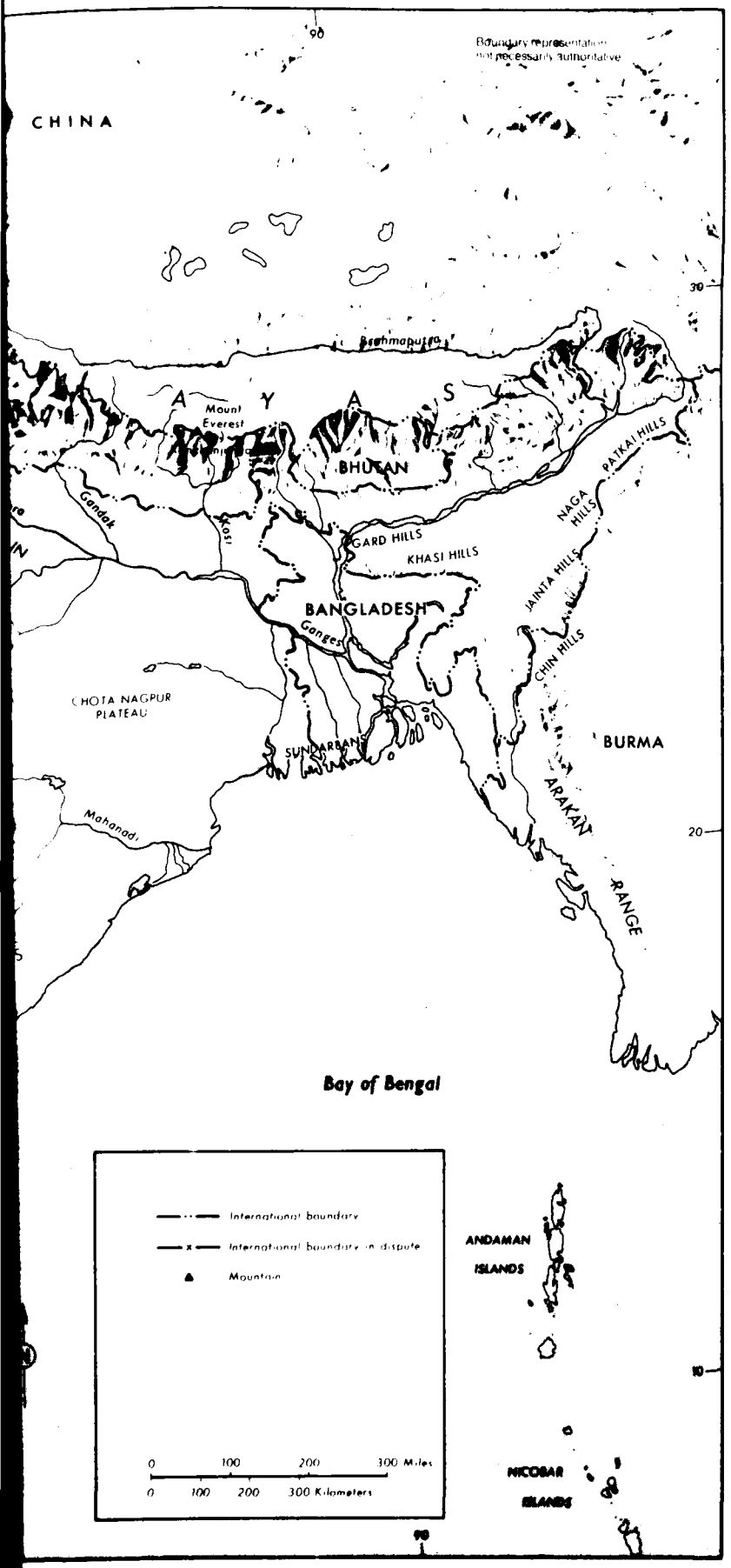


Figure 5. Major Topographical Features and Rivers

Source: Based on information from Rave R. Platt, ed., *India*, 1962, 3.



Source: Based on information from Rave R. Platt, ed., *India: A Compendium*, New York, 1962, 3.

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The interior of the Peninsula, often termed the Deccan or the Deccan Plateau, is an area of varying physical components. It is a series of plateaus topped by rolling hills and intersected by many rivers. The plateau averages roughly 300 to 750 meters in elevation. Its major rivers, the Godavari, the Krishna, and the Cauvery, rise in the hills along the western side of the Peninsula and flow eastward into the Bay of Bengal.

The coastal plain borders the plateau; on the northwestern side it is characterized by tidal marshes, drowned valleys, and estuaries and, in the south by lagoons, marshes, and beach ridges. Coasts on the eastern side are wider than those in the west; they are focused on large river deltas that serve as the centers of human settlement.

India's offshore islands, constituting roughly one-quarter of 1 percent of the country's territory, lie in two groups located off the east and west coasts. The Andaman and Nicobar Islands lie in the Bay of Bengal in a chain stretching some 800 kilometers. The western islands, located off the Malabar coast, consist of the Laccadive, Minicoy, and Amindivi islands (collectively known as the union territory of Lakshadweep).

India has some 7,500 kilometers of seacoast and shares approximately 15,200 kilometers of land frontier with six nations—Pakistan, Nepal, China, Bangladesh, Burma, and Bhutan. There are boundary disagreements with Pakistan, China, and Bangladesh; border distances are therefore approximations. The partition of British India in 1947 created the Indo-Pakistan and the Indo-Bangladesh frontiers.

Disputes over Jammu and Kashmir (Kashmir) led to hostilities between India and Pakistan in 1947. A United Nations-arranged cease-fire divided control of Kashmir; India retained the Vale of Kashmir and the capital, Srinagar, while Pakistan kept the mountainous area to the northwest. India regards as illegal the 1963 Sino-Soviet border agreement, which ceded to China a portion of Pakistani-controlled Kashmir. Further Indo-Pakistani hostilities in 1965 were settled by British negotiation and resulted in the substantial reduction of Pakistan's claim to territory in the Rann of Kutch. The boundaries with Bangladesh are essentially the same as those that preexisted with East Pakistan.

The 2,000-kilometer border with China is divided into an eastern and a western sector, separated by Nepal and Bhutan. The border regions of Kashmir have been the scene of conflicting claims since the nineteenth century. China does not accept India's definitions of the boundary and has been active in certain regions of eastern Kashmir since the 1950s. In the east India

maintains the McMahon Line, created in 1914; the line generally follows the crest of the eastern Himalayas from Bhutan to the Burmese frontier. It serves as the legal boundary, although the Chinese have never formally accepted it. China claims some 75,200 square kilometers along the eastern border and has occupied this area since 1962.

The 1,300-kilometer frontier with Burma has been delimited but not completely demarcated. On March 10, 1967, the Indian and Burmese governments signed a bilateral treaty delimiting the boundary in detail

Rivers

The country's rivers are classified as Himalayan, peninsular, coastal, or inland drainage basin rivers. Himalayan rivers are snow fed and have reasonable flow throughout the year; they are prone to flooding during the monsoon months. The volume of the rain-fed peninsular rivers varies more. Coastal streams, especially in the west, are short and episodic. Rivers of the inland system, centered in western Rajasthan, are few and frequently disappear in years of scant rainfall.

The Ganges River Basin, India's largest, includes perhaps a quarter of the country; it is bounded by the Himalayas (in the north) and the Vindhya Mountains, or Vindhya Range (in the south). A majority of the subcontinent's major rivers drain into the Bay of Bengal. Most have reached their base level and flow through broad, shallow valleys.

The Mahanadi, rising in Madhya Pradesh, is an important river in Orissa and is the source for the Hiraakud Dam Project. The Godavari has its source north of Bombay and follows a southeasterly course for 1,400 kilometers to its mouth on the Andhra Pradesh coast. Its river basin area is second only to the Ganges; its delta is one of the country's main rice-growing areas. The Cauvery, often known as the Ganges of the south, begins in Karnataka and flows irregularly southeastward. The river's waters have been a source of irrigation since ancient times; an estimated 95 percent of the Cauvery is put to use before the river empties into the Bay of Bengal.

The Narbada and the Tapti are the only two major rivers that flow into the Arabian Sea. The Narbada rises in Madhya Pradesh and crosses the state, passing swiftly through a narrow valley between the Vindhyas and spurs of the Satpuras. It flows into the Gulf of Cambay. The shorter Tapti follows a companion course, 80 to 160 kilometers to the south of the Narbada.

Climate

The Himalayas isolate the subcontinent from the rest of Asia. South of these mountains the climate, like the terrain, is highly diverse, but some geographers give it an overall, one-word characterization—violent. What geographers have in mind is the abruptness of change and the intensity of effect when change occurs—the usually abrupt onset of the monsoon rains, torrential downpours, sudden flooding, rapid erosion, extremes of temperature, force of wind, and largely unpredictable fluctuations in rainfall. Broadly speaking, agriculture in India is in constant hazard because of weather uncertainty (see fig. 6).

It is possible to identify seasons, although these do not occur uniformly throughout the subcontinent. The Indian Meteorological Service divides the year into four seasons: the relatively dry, cool winter from December through February; the dry, hot summer from March through May; the southwest monsoon from June through September; and the retreating monsoon of October and November.

The southwest, or summer, monsoon blows in from sea to land. The weaker retreating monsoon blows from land to sea. The southwest monsoon usually breaks on the Bombay coast early in June and reaches most of the subcontinent by the first week in July. Theories about why the monsoon occurs are varied. Conventionally, scientists attributed it to thermal changes in the Asian landmass. Contemporary theory cites other factors—the barrier of the Himalayas and the sun's northward tilt (which shifts the jet stream north). These circumstances set off a rush of warm, moisture-rich air from the southern seas over the subcontinent.

The beginning of the monsoon varies throughout the country as does its significance for the subcontinent's regions. During July and August the winds move west along the Gangetic Plain, gradually releasing their moisture; they begin to retreat from the Punjab toward the end of September, and they are usually gone from Northern India by late October. The retreating monsoon is usually gone from the Peninsula by the end of November.

The subcontinent is subject to a wide range of climates—from the subfreezing Himalayan winters to the tropical climate of the Madras coast and from the damp, rainy climate of Assam and Bengal to the arid Thar Desert. Based on precipitation and temperature, experts define seven climate regions: the Himalayas, Assam and West Bengal, the Indo-Gangetic Plain, the Western Ghats and coast, the peninsular interior, the Deccan, and the Eastern Ghats and coast.

In the Himalayan region climate varies with altitude. At

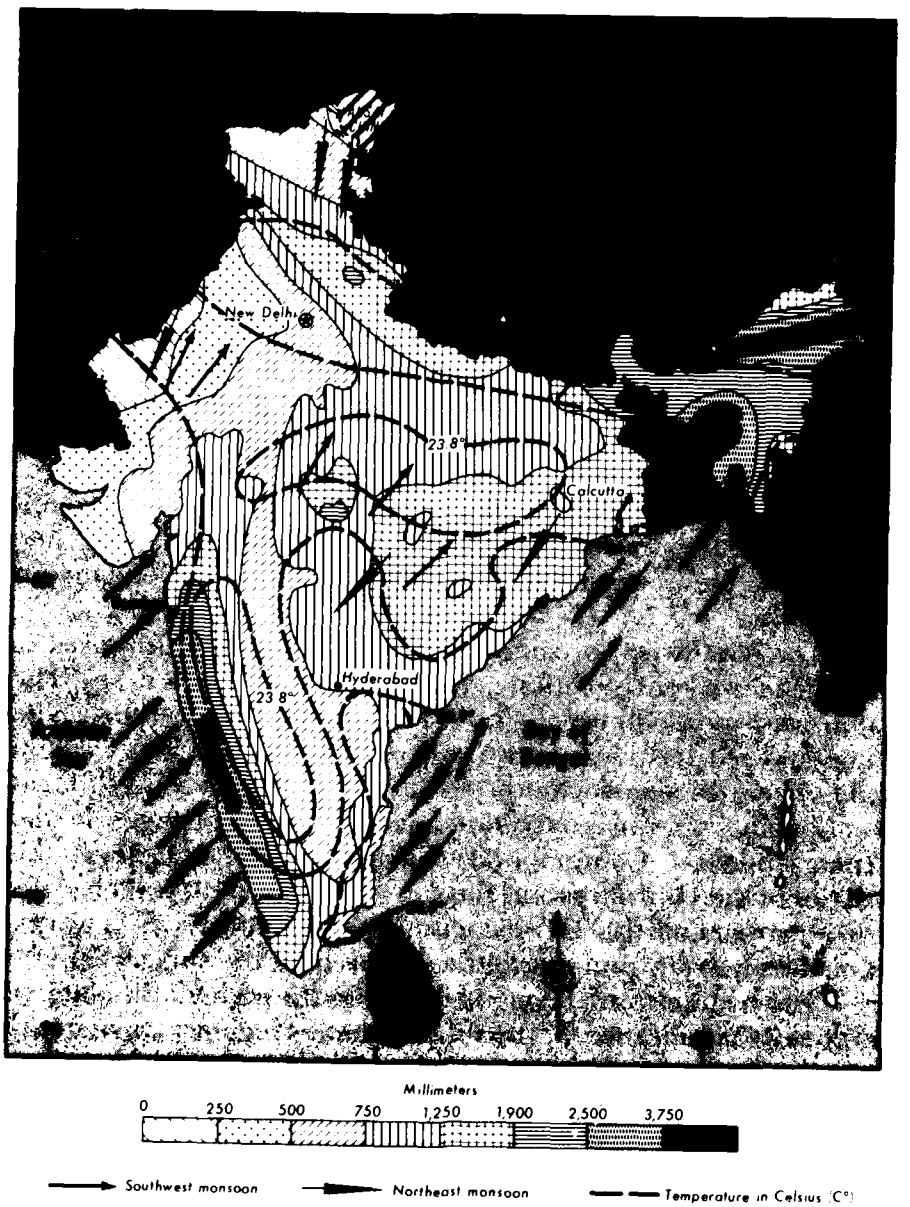


Figure 6. Average Annual Temperature and Rainfall

about 2,000 meters the average summer temperature is near 18°C; at 4,500 meters it is rarely above freezing. In the valleys summer temperatures reach 32°C to 38°C. The eastern Himalayas receive as much as 1,000 to 2,000 millimeters more rainfall than do the western, and floods are common. Assam and West Bengal are extremely wet and humid. Cherrapunji, in the state of Meghalaya, has an average annual rainfall of 10,900 millimeters—the highest in the world.

The Indo-Gangetic Plain has a graded climatic pattern; rainfall and temperature ranges vary significantly between the eastern and western extremes. The Western Ghats and the adjoining coast receive heavy rains during the southwest monsoon. Rainfall in the peninsular interior averages about 650 millimeters a year, although there is considerable variation in different localities and from year to year.

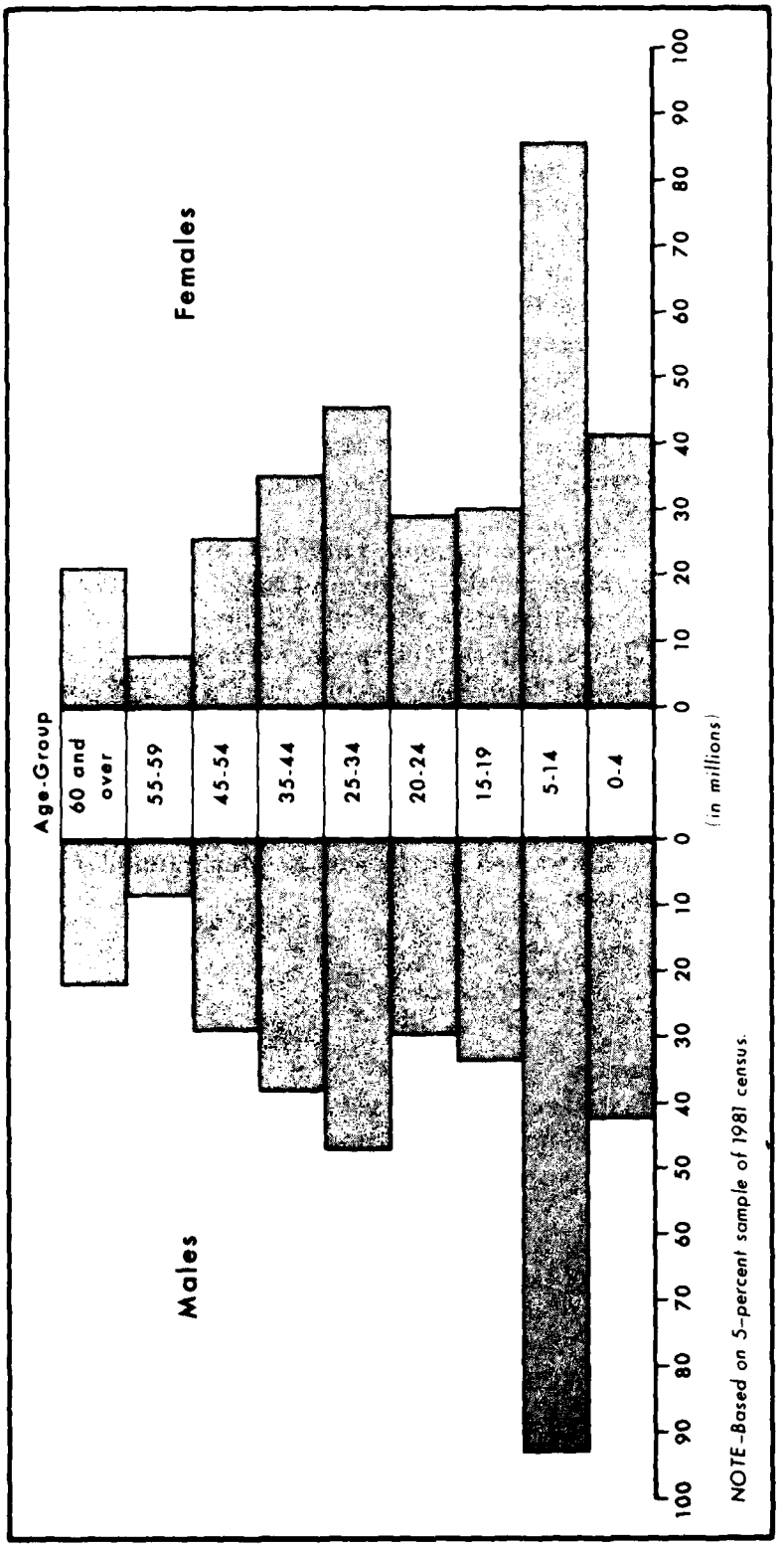
The northern Deccan region, bounded by the Western Ghats, the Satpura Range to the north, and the northeast plateau on the east, receives most of its annual rainfall during the summer monsoon season. The southern Deccan area is in a "rain shadow" and gets only 500 to 1,000 millimeters of rainfall a year. Temperature ranges are wide—from some 15°C to 38°C. The Eastern Ghats receive less rainfall than the western coast—about 900 to 1,300 millimeters annually. The northern half of the coast receives most of its precipitation during the summer monsoon months, but the southern half receives its greatest rainfall during the northeast monsoon.

Population

Structure and Dynamics

The 1981 adjusted census count gave India a total population of 685,184,692. Assuming an annual population growth rate of 2 percent the country's population in early 1985 was on the order of 740 million (see fig. 7). Most observers believed that the population exceeded 746 million, however. The subcontinent accounted for some 2.4 percent of the world's landmass, but it was home to more than 15 percent of the globe's population.

Throughout the twentieth century India has been in the midst of a demographic transition. At the beginning of the century periodic epidemics and famines kept the death rate high enough to balance out an elevated birth rate. Between 1911 and 1920 the birth and death rates were virtually equal—48.1 births and 48.6 deaths per 1,000 population. The increasing impact of



Source: Based on information from *Statistical Outline of India, 1984*, Bombay, June 1984, 38.

Figure 7. Age-Sex Pyramid, 1981–84.

curative and preventive medicine (especially mass inoculations) brought a steady decline in the death rate. By the early 1980s the estimated death rate had fallen to 12 to 14 per 1,000. The birth rate remained high; estimates ranged from 33 to 39 per 1,000. Observers expected that the death rate might decline to nine or 10 per 1,000 by the year 2000. Clearly, the future configuration of India's population (indeed the future of India itself) depends on what happens to the birth rate. Even the most optimistic projections do not suggest that the birth rate could drop below 20 per 1,000 before the end of the century.

The countrywide census of 1981 was India's eleventh decennial census; the first all-India census was completed in 1872. The 1981 census was taken from February 9 to March 5, 1981, in most of the country. Severe weather caused delays in Kashmir, and civil disturbances prevented census taking in Assam (see Assam and the Northeast, ch. 10).

India's present population spiral began in the 1920s and is reflected in intercensal growth increments. The subcontinent's population increased roughly 5 percent between 1901 and 1911; it actually declined slightly in the next decade. Population increased some 10 percent in the 1921–31 period and 13 to 14 percent in each of the next two decades. In the 1950s population rose more than 20 percent. From 1961 to 1971 the country's population increased by 24.8 percent and from 1971 to 1981 by 24.75 percent.

At first glance the results of the 1981 census were extremely discouraging. The percentage increase was about the same as (or, after adjustments, perhaps higher than) that of the previous 10 years. The 1981 census count was 12 to 13 million higher than had been projected.

The high results of the 1981 count called into question official estimates of the country's birth rate. It was almost certainly higher than the estimated 33 per 1,000; some experts would put it as high as 38 or 39 per 1,000. The lion's share of the population increase went to two states, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. These two states, India's largest, together accounted for nearly one-quarter of the total population increase of the decade. Some demographers suspected an undercount of 2 to 3 percent in 1981—a minimal amount given the enormous size of the census. If that were the case, India's population in 1981 would have already reached 700 million.

Some demographers found at least a little cause for optimism in the 1981 census results. They attributed the higher than expected results to undercounting in 1971. According to this in-

terpretation, the 1981 count was higher in part because the 1981 census takers missed proportionately fewer people than those in 1971.

There were indications that women in particular may have been undercounted in 1971. The fact that the sex ratio improved in 1981 and was more in line with historical trends lent credence to such an interpretation. If there was less undercounting in 1981 and if the official estimates of the birth rate in the mid-1970s were too low (almost certainly the case), then the 1981 census could actually show a slight drop in fertility levels for the 1971–81 decade. A fall in fertility levels was possible if the 1981 census was only 1 percent more accurate in enumerating population than that of 1971.

There were some encouraging results on the state level as well. In states where family planning programs were generally thought to be doing well, there was a decline in intercensal growth between 1971 and 1981. The evidence seemed to support a drop in fertility and population growth rates in Kerala, Gujarat, Haryana, Tamil Nadu, Orissa, and Maharashtra.

There were clear, substantial increases in population growth in Bihar, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh. The counts registered were congruent with the generally poor performance of family planning in those states, along with a number of other demographic indicators. Unfortunately for the country's efforts to control population growth, those states represented roughly one-third of the total population count. Virtually alone they explain why the country did not register a decline in the rate of growth during the 1970s. Part of the increase might be explained by particularly poor counting in 1971—a distinct possibility, especially in Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, where the sex ratio was much higher in 1981. The 1961–71 growth rate in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh was some five percentage points below the national average for that period, again a finding that supports the possibility that coverage in those states was especially poor in 1971.

Observers suggest that it is encouraging that most states either experienced a low level of growth or, if their growth rates remained high, contributed only a marginal amount to total population. Here again, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh were the exceptions. It may be that India's population growth curve has peaked. Should that be the case, the curve would presumably flatten and then decline in future censuses.

Population density has risen concomitantly with the massive increases in population. In 1901 India counted some 77 persons per square kilometer; by 1981 there were 216 persons per square

kilometer—up one-quarter from the 1971 population density (see fig. 8). India's average population density was higher than any other nation of comparable size. The highest densities were not only in heavily urbanized regions but also in those areas that were most productive agriculturally.

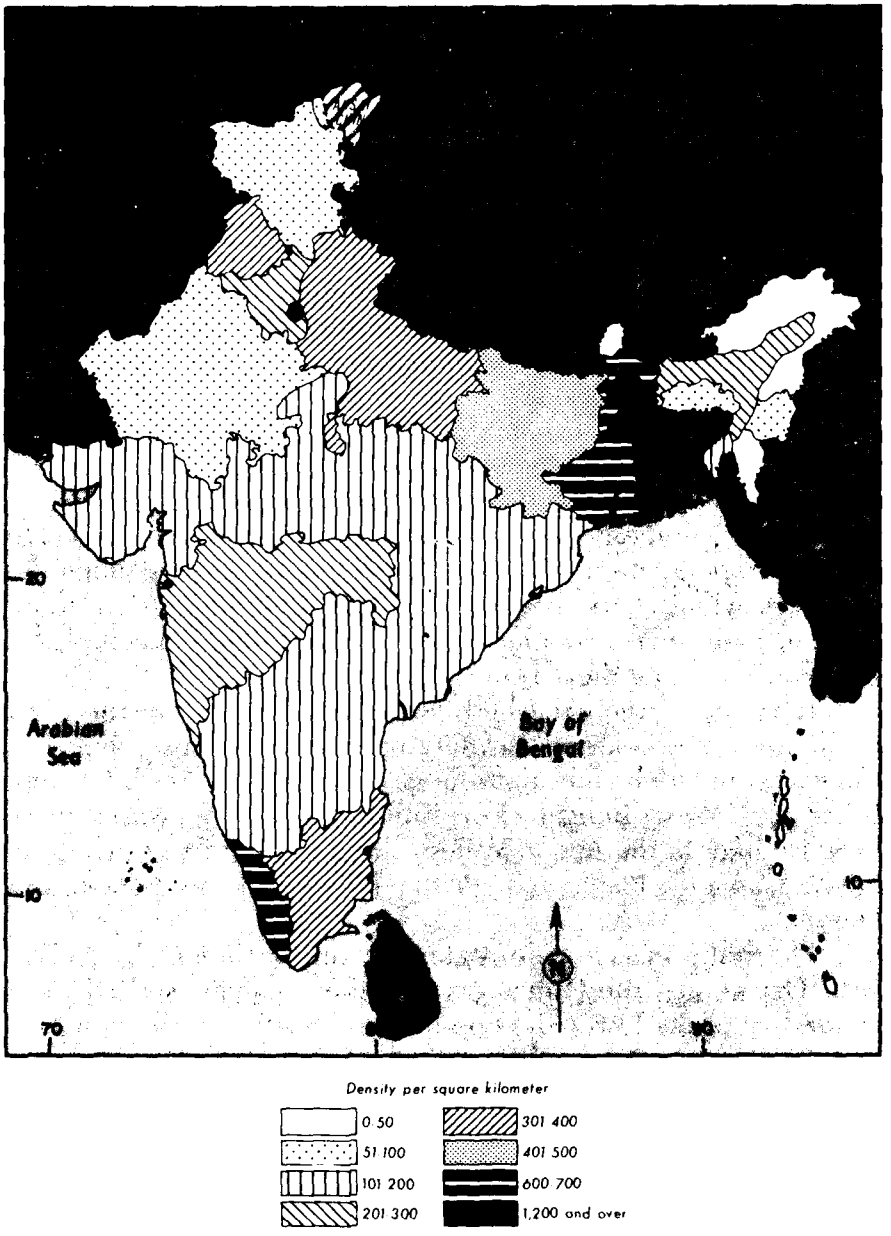
Settlement patterns and population growth in the 1950–70 period centered on areas of new irrigation schemes, those subject to refugee resettlement, and regions of urban expansion. Areas where population did not increase at a rate approaching the national average were those facing economic constraints, rural areas already overpopulated to the saturation point, and regions with low levels of urbanization.

In the mid-1980s urbanization continued to be focused along several "corridors" linking the main cities: Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi, and Madras. Growth had been most dramatic in the largest (those over 1 million) and mid-sized cities (those from 250,000 to 400,000 in population). The largest cities were located along the corridors (which also follow the principal railroad routes) between the four main urban conglomerates. Major industrial complexes were located along these routes as well.

Rural population reached its highest densities in the most productive, well-watered farming regions. Population densities were high in a belt running from eastern Uttar Pradesh through Bihar and West Bengal. For similar reasons densities were likewise high in the Assam Valley, along the Kerala coast, in the upper Gangetic Plain, and on the Indus Plain in Punjab and Haryana.

The hilly, inaccessible regions of central India, the Northeast, Orissa, and the Himalayas remained sparsely settled. As a general rule, the lower the population density and the more remote the region, the more likely it was to count a substantial portion of tribals among its population (see Tribes, ch. 4). Urbanization in some sparsely settled regions was more developed than would seem warranted at first glance at their limited natural resources. Areas of central India that were formerly princely states (Gujarat and the desert regions of Rajasthan were examples) had substantial urban centers. These cities grew as political-administrative centers and since independence have continued to exercise a sort of hegemony over their hinterlands.

Population change has been most marked in areas subject to influxes of refugees, those that were heavily urban, and those that enjoyed large-scale agricultural colonization projects. Growth in these was the more striking because expansion often began from an extremely low baseline. The semiarid regions of Haryana and



Source: Based on information from India, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Research and Reference Division, *India: A Reference Annual, 1983*, New Delhi, December 1983, 9.

Figure 8. Population Density, 1981.

Rajasthan grew in the wake of large-scale irrigation projects. Refugees from both Pakistan and Bangladesh contributed substantially to population growth in the regions in which they settled. Development schemes in the Northeast brought an increase in the population of that area. Large industrial projects expanded the population of such urban conglomerates as Delhi, Raurkela, Bhadravati, Ahmadabad, Indore, and Bhopal.

A number of government policies sought to alter the existing trends in settlement patterns. The government wished to limit urban growth and to focus increases in the urban population in small- to medium-sized towns. Specific government measures to encourage this included providing better facilities and infrastructure to smaller cities and tax incentives for businesses locating in such towns.

For much the same rationale the government assigned a high priority to rural development. Various programs aimed at reducing poverty, improving agricultural productivity, and diversifying the economic basis in specific rural areas. Both the fifth and the sixth five-year plans suggested strategies emphasizing integrated development using technologies appropriate to the Indian scene, especially those that would generate employment. Measures in the 1970s included efforts to develop isolated and exceptionally impoverished areas.

Population Policy

Population growth has long been a concern of the government, and India has a lengthy history of explicit population policy. In the 1950s the government began, in a modest way, with one of the earliest national, government-sponsored family planning efforts in the developing world. The annual population growth rate in the previous decade (1941–51) had been 1.26 percent, and government planners optimistically believed that population would continue to grow at roughly this rate.

Implicitly, the government believed that India could repeat the experience of Western nations where industrialization and a rise in the standard of living had been accompanied by a drop in the population growth rate. During the First Five-Year Plan (FY 1951–55) there were studies of reproductive behavior as well as motivation in using contraceptives. Existing hospitals and health care facilities made birth control information available, but there was no aggressive effort to encourage using contraceptives and limiting family size. By the end of the plan (1956) the government had built a few family-planning clinics, most of them in cities.

The so-called clinic approach continued to be the basis of population control efforts throughout the first two five-year plans. Family-planning advice and birth control services fell primarily within the purview of hospitals and clinics. The number of birth control clinics increased rapidly under the Second Five-Year Plan (FY 1956–60); by 1961 there were nearly 5,000. The results were discouraging, however; the 1961 census showed annual population growth running at approximately 2 percent. The fruits of rapid industrialization and increased agricultural output were dissipated by the ever increasing population.

With the Third Five-Year Plan (FY 1961–65) India initiated a more active population control policy. Family planning emphasized the "extension approach" as policymakers became more aggressive in encouraging couples to adopt contraceptive measures and limit the number of children they were having. The government increased the contraceptive methods available to couples. The birth control pill was still not readily available, but by 1966 (the end of the third plan) some 800,000 intrauterine devices (IUDs) had been inserted and 1.5 million sterilizations performed.

By the late 1960s there was substantial accord among policymakers that "the greatest obstacle in the path of overall economic development is the alarming rate of population growth." The government began a massive program to lower the birth rate from 41 per 1,000 to 20 to 25 per 1,000 by the mid-1970s. The government's operating assumptions were that the principal obstacles inhibiting effective population control were the lack of communications publicizing family planning and insufficient contraceptives and trained personnel.

Government and a number of private industries offered various financial incentives to persuade individuals to undergo sterilization—a method of population control preferred because of its relative simplicity and permanence. IUDs were seen as the best temporary and reversible method of contraception, although such side effects as bleeding and involuntary expulsion presented problems to some users. Condoms were widely distributed; private businesses helped to market condoms, receiving a commission based on the number they had sold. Use of the pill increased in the 1970s. It too had its drawbacks, because users had to remember to take one each day, and the side effects on nutritionally deprived women were negative.

Providing family-planning services to the majority of the population, i.e., those living in rural India, was a high priority. By the early 1970s there were nearly 50,000 family-planning clinics,

most of which were located in villages. Securing an adequate number of trained personnel was a perennial problem. The government offered scholarships to medical personnel willing to intern in rural areas. Private practitioners assisted, and the government provided funding.

A beefed-up communications campaign accompanied the increase in services available. Simple slogans were widely publicized. Nevertheless, this effort overall had disappointing results. The message of the mass communications blitz was primarily informative; little effort was made to increase the motivation to use contraceptives. In any event, even in the early 1970s experts estimated that the mass media reached no more than one-quarter of the population.

Much the same approach continued under the Fourth Five-Year Plan (FY 1969–73). Under the plan, official estimates of the birth rate fell from 39 per 1,000 in 1968 to 35 per 1,000 in 1974; in some observer's views the 1981 census results called into question even this decline. Family planning was dealt a blow in the late 1970s when the Indira Gandhi government undertook an aggressive sterilization campaign. State quotas for sterilizations were fixed; the incentives for undergoing the operation included forcing public employees to bring in volunteers or face loss of salary increments. There were reports of mass arrests and forced sterilizations in larger cities.

The National Population Policy adopted in 1976 reflected the growing consensus among planners that family planning would enjoy only limited success unless it was part of an integrated program aimed at improving the general populace's welfare. The policy assumed that excessive family size was part and parcel of poverty and had to be dealt with as part of a general development strategy. Education about the population problem became part of school curriculum under the fifth plan.

Under the fifth and sixth plans the government tried to make family planning an integrated part of health and welfare policies, specifically those touching mothers and children. The government sought to integrate acceptance and use of contr eptives with improvements in nutrition and education for w n and children. The reasoning was that if parents saw their children's health improving they would have fewer additional children on the presumption that those born would be more likely to survive to adulthood. In addition, the government felt that a fundamental change in fertility could not occur until parents could be assured of adequate governmental assistance in old age and sickness, because parents have traditionally relied on their children for sup-

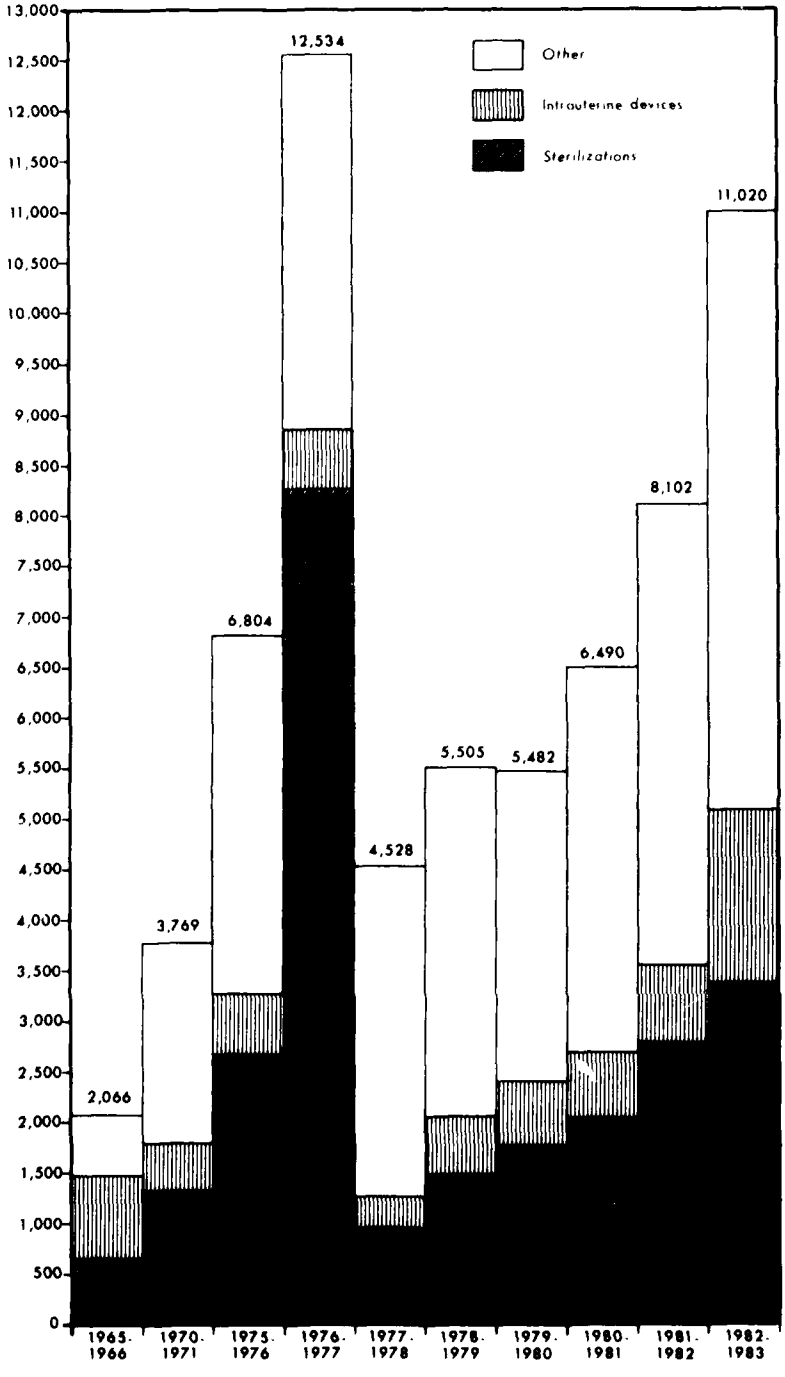
port at those times. There was a growing feeling that, far from increased productivity leading to a drop in population growth, population increases made it nearly impossible to raise significantly the standard of living of most Indians.

The Sixth Five-Year Plan (FY 1980–84) emphasized this approach. Specifically, the plan encouraged education, especially the education of women. Family-planning services were integrated with the rural health care system; in keeping with the plan's concern for general welfare, efforts focused on maternal and child health care. There were strong efforts to limit female and early childhood mortality, and at the same time there were efforts to encourage small family size.

The central government controlled the budget for family planning and made most important policy decisions. The Constitution provides that both the central and the state governments may enact legislation touching upon family planning. States bear the responsibility for implementing population planning measures. Typically, states merged this administrative function with those touching upon projects for improving agriculture and rural development. The central government's Ministry of Health and Family Welfare was charged with family planning; it coordinated its activities with other ministries, such as those for agriculture and rural development, culture, education, and works and housing. Both the Central and Family Welfare Council and the Population Advisory Council served in advisory capacities.

Despite more than 30 years of family-planning programs, in the mid-1980s India continued to have one of the most serious population problems in the world. The five-year plans had consistently failed to reach their goals. Between 1971 and 1981 the annual rate of population growth was estimated at 1.9 to 2.2 percent. The crude birth rate in 1981 was 34 per 1,000 (although some demographers estimated that it was higher), a minimal drop from the 1976 rate of 35 per 1,000. In 1981 the average 45- to 49-year-old woman—at the end of her childbearing years and having spent virtually all of her reproductive span under government-sponsored family planning programs—had borne five live children. The differences between rural and urban women were minimal. Women continued to marry young; they averaged just over 18 years at marriage. Nearly half of all rural women were married by the age of 19. By the same token, women began their reproductive lives young; in 1981 women had an average of 2.4 children by the age of 25.

Contraceptive use had, nonetheless, grown substantially in the preceding 20 years (see fig. 9). Sterilization represented a



Source: Based on information from India, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Research and Reference Division, *India: A Reference Annual, 1983*, New Delhi, December 1983, 125.

Figure 9. Contraceptive Use by Method, Selected Years, 1965–66 to 1982–83.

hefty portion of the total, roughly one-third overall from the mid-1960s through the early 1980s. The use of all contraceptive methods—especially sterilization—dropped following the 1976–77 period, reflecting public reaction against the repressive methods used to gather "volunteers" for sterilization during the Emergency rule (see Indira Gandhi as a National Leader, 1966–80, ch. 8).

The individual states showed considerable variation in the extent to which couples in their reproductive years practiced contraception. In the early 1970s Haryana ranked highest, with nearly 30 percent of couples at risk of pregnancy using some form of contraception. Punjab, Gujarat, Kerala, Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu all had some 20 to 25 percent of potentially reproductive couples using contraceptives. The lowest coverage was in Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Kashmir, and Karnataka; Uttar Pradesh was at the bottom. These trends had changed little by the early 1980s (see table 2, Appendix). Uttar Pradesh, accounting for nearly one-quarter of the country's reproductive-age couples, had one of the lowest rates of contraceptive use. Barely one in 10 Uttar Pradesh couples was using an approved means of contraception in 1982.

In early 1983 roughly 25 percent of the nation's reproductive-age couples were using some form of contraception. Demographers held that 60 percent coverage was the minimum necessary for effective population control. India could expect little substantive improvement in its population growth rate unless significantly more couples adopted effective means of contraception.

Studies found that most couples were in fact positively disposed toward family planning. The problem was that the common fertility pattern in India diverges from the two-child family that policymakers hold ideal. Those who chose to be sterilized provided an instructive look at couple's reproductive patterns. Financial inducements, although helpful, were not the principal incentives. Those accepting sterilization had, on average, four living children, of whom two were sons.

The need for sons is a deeply held cultural ideal based on solid economic roots. Sons not only assist with farm labor as they are growing up (as do daughters) but also serve as their parents' only social security in old age. It is sons who carry on the family line, according to Hindu and Muslim norms.

India's high infant mortality rate (125 per 1,000 live births) and elevated mortality in early childhood remained significant stumbling blocks to population control. The lag between any improvement in infant and childhood mortality and a change in

couples' fertility patterns was again likely to exacerbate the country's population problem. Studies of family planning in Uttar Pradesh indicated that peasants did not believe that a permanent drop in mortality had occurred. The decline in overall mortality that was the origin of India's population explosion was simply too diffuse to be perceived on the level of a single village.

A government task force recommended financial incentives to deal with the population problem in early 1984. Its report suggested that cash payments for sterilization go to couples having only two children and that persons with more than two children should be barred from holding office. Government workers were singled out for a special set of measures; the task force proposed that families with two or three children be eligible for special benefits, including cash incentives, pay raises, longer maternity leave, and higher pensions. Disincentives for larger families were also suggested; the panel recommended cutting government-paid medical benefits to a family having more than two or three children.

Health

Health Conditions

The average Indian born in the mid-1980s could expect to live roughly 50 to 54 years. Life expectancy had risen dramatically throughout the century from a scant 20 years in the 1911–20 period. Men had enjoyed a slightly longer life expectancy throughout the twentieth century, although provisional estimates for the 1970s showed the difference narrowing to less than a year. The death rate (per 1,000 of population) declined from 48.6 in the 1910s to 15 in the 1970s. Government goals were to reduce the death rate to nine per 1,000, drop infant mortality below 60 per 1,000 live births, and raise life expectancy to 64 years by the year 2000.

The country's high infant mortality rate (IMR)—129.9 per 1,000 live births in 1975-80—accounted for the high mortality rate. The death rate for the first year of life (approximately 147 per 1,000 of population) dropped rapidly to roughly 28 per 1,000 among one- to four-year-olds, some 6.3 per 1,000 in the five-to-nine age-group and, thereafter, 4.2 per 1,000 among 10- to 40-year-olds. The mortality rate of the first year was equaled only by that of the population over 75. Women had higher mortality rates than men until the age of 40. Higher female mortality was attributable to a variety of factors from differential weaning (a re-

flection of the preference for sons and the high cost of a girl's dowry) to poor maternal health care in rural India. The IMR had dropped slightly in the 1970s but remained extremely high in rural India—for urban India, 70 per 1,000 live births, for the countryside, 139.

Infant mortality declined precipitously during the twentieth century, from 204 deaths per 1,000 live births in the 1911–15 period to 129 per 1,000 in the 1961–71 period (see table 3, Appendix). The record for the 1970s was far less promising, registering an overall decline of only 3 percent in contrast to the drop of 12 percent in the previous decade. The urban population enjoyed the largest share of the decline. Although between 1970 and 1978 infant mortality in rural India remained roughly constant, in the cities it dropped from 90 to 70 deaths per 1,000 live births. Urban females between birth and four years fared particularly well, and by the end of the 1970s their mortality rate was only 6 percent higher than that of their male counterparts; girls in the countryside continued to die at a rate nearly 20 percent greater than boys.

The health status of India's children varied considerably. From the mid-1960s through the late 1970s, the number of child laborers (predominantly in agriculture) rose, while their real wages declined—factors that might be taken as indicative of a deterioration in the situation of at least rural children. Nonetheless, the actual incidence of child labor dropped, and the proportion of the rural population of school age attending classes increased—both bespeaking an improvement in children's lives.

A 1979 survey of children between the ages of one and 10 in 10 states found that 50 to 70 percent of them suffered from inadequate caloric intake and an additional 10 to 20 percent were receiving insufficient protein as well. The survey also found that the percentage of children receiving an adequate diet in terms of both protein and calories declined in most of the states during the late 1970s, while the proportion suffering from both caloric and protein deficiencies rose.

There were a number of endemic communicable diseases that continued to present a serious hazard to public health. The government has, over the years, set up a variety of national programs aimed at controlling or eradicating these diseases. The National Malaria Eradication Programme and the National Filaria Programme were examples; other programs sought to limit the incidence of cholera, diarrheal diseases, trachoma, goiter, and sexually transmitted diseases.

Smallpox, formerly a significant source of mortality, was

eradicated as part of the worldwide effort to eliminate that disease. India was declared smallpox-free in 1975. Malaria remained a serious health hazard; although its incidence declined sharply in the postindependence period, India remained the most heavily malarial country in the world. Only the Himalaya region above 1,500 meters was spared. In 1965 government sources registered only 150,000 cases, a notable drop from the 75 million cases in the early postindependence years. This success was short-lived; as the malarial parasites became increasingly resistant to the drugs and insecticides used to combat the disease, the incidence of malaria increased. By the mid-1970s there were nearly 6.5 million cases on record. A modified plan of attack improved the situation; by 1982 the number of cases had fallen by roughly two-thirds.

In the 1980s nearly half the total population was at risk to infection from filaria parasites; some 15 million showed symptoms of filariasis, and another 18 million were deemed to be hosts to the parasites. Efforts at control have focused on eliminating the filaria larvae in urban locales. There were over 170 filaria control units, which offered protection to about 24 million people.

Hanson's disease (leprosy) remained endemic, and roughly 60 percent of the population was at risk; the National Leprosy Eradication Programme covered 86 percent of those at risk. In the early 1980s there were nearly 30 million cases undergoing regular treatment. At that time Parliament was considering legislation that would repeal the Lepers Act of 1898 and accord victims of the disease better treatment.

The country was subject to continued outbreaks of cholera, although the incidence of the disease declined in the mid- to late-1970s. Trachoma, tuberculosis, and goiter were endemic. In the early 1980s there were an estimated 10 million cases of tuberculosis, of which perhaps one-quarter were infectious. The National Programme for the Control of Blindness subsumed the functions of the Trachoma Control Programme. Approximately 45 million Indians were vision impaired; roughly 9 to 10 million were blind.

The goiter belt runs through the sub-Himalayan states from Kashmir to the Northeast. Government efforts have been geared to providing iodized salt in this region. Approximately one-third of the region's population was afflicted; the incidence ranged from 10 to 60 percent of a state. There were as well a variety of diseases caused by vitamin and mineral deficiencies—beriberi, scurvy, osteomalacia, and rickets—and anemias related to poor nutrition and the high incidence of parasitic infection.

Diarrheal diseases, the primary cause of early childhood mortality, were linked to inadequate sewage disposal and safe drinking-water supplies. Roughly half of all illness was attributed to poor sanitation; in rural India perhaps 80 percent of all children were infected by parasitic worms. Estimates in the early 1980s suggested that while more than 80 percent of the urban population had access to reasonably safe water, fewer than 5 percent of rural dwellers did. Waterborne sewage systems were woefully overstressed; perhaps one-third of urban populations had adequate sewage disposal, and scarcely any of those outside cities did.

Health Care

Health care facilities and personnel have increased substantially since the early 1950s (see table 4, Appendix). By the early 1980s there were approximately seven hospital beds and four physicians per 10,000 individuals. The Constitution charges states with the responsibility for "the raising of the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people and the improvement of public health." The union government nonetheless has an impact on health policy and expenditure. The central government has influenced public health through the five-year plans, coordinated planning with the states, and sponsored major health programs. In addition, there were a number of national programs aimed at controlling or eradicating communicable diseases, and these came under the administration of the central government.

Primary health centers were the cornerstone of the rural health care system. By 1983 there were some 6,000 primary health centers and some 65,000 subcenters. They were part of a tiered health care system that funneled more difficult cases into hospitals in cities while attempting to provide at least minimal routine medical care to the vast majority in the countryside. Primary health centers and subcenters relied on trained paramedics to meet most of their needs.

Indigenous medical practitioners (*vaidyas* and *hakims*) continued to enjoy appeal and practiced throughout the country. Their profession was frequently hereditary. A variety of institutions offered training in indigenous medical systems. By the early 1980s there were more than 100 Western-style medical colleges—roughly triple the number in 1950. Student capacity had grown fivefold. There were 15 nursing colleges and nearly 300 nursing schools attached to hospitals. In addition, there were a variety of programs for training auxiliary health care personnel.

The main thrust of medical care was curative rather than pre-



Rural health center
Courtesy Embassy of India, Washington



Renal scanner in an urban hospital
Courtesy Embassy of India, Wahington

ventive. There were exceptions, however, such as nutrition programs targeted to the most vulnerable segments of the population (young children and lactating or pregnant mothers) and supplemental feeding programs offering midday meals to children. There were also efforts to organize an integrated program of child development services, including nutritional education, immunization and checkups, and provision of potable water. Primary health centers provided vitamin and mineral supplements.

Both the fifth and the sixth five-year plans oriented their efforts toward assisting preventive medicine and improving the health status of the rural population. Both aimed at increasing the participation of scheduled groups in the program for minimum needs; supplemental nutrition programs and increasing the supply of safe drinking water were high priorities. The sixth plan aimed at training more community health workers and increasing efforts to control communicable diseases. There were also efforts to improve regional imbalances in the distribution of health care resources.

The sixth plan budgeted Rs18.2 billion (for value of rupee—see Glossary) for health—an amount roughly triple the outlay of the fifth plan. Health spending as a portion of total plan outlays, however, had declined over the years since the First Five-Year Plan. The health budget was at a high of 3.3 percent of the total plan spending in 1951–56; health expenditures were projected at

1.9 percent of the total for the sixth plan.

Education

Organization of Education

The Constitution gives the states the power to legislate concerning education, although a 1976 amendment declares education to be the joint responsibility of both the central and the state governments. The states and the central government have long shared control in certain aspects of educational planning and policy implementation. The central government's preponderant role in drafting five-year plans has had an impact on education. Similarly, the union government bears the main responsibility for the education of Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes.

The central government has control of a number of universities deemed to be of "national importance." It also sets standards in research and technical institutions and those of higher education. These policies allow the union a say in entrance requirements—a significant lever, given the importance of a university education in an individual's career prospects.

The union Ministry of Education is charged with seeing to the central government's responsibilities in educational matters. The ministry coordinates planning with the states and provides funding for experimental programs. The ministry acts through the University Grants Commission and the National Council of Educational Research and Training. These organizations attempt to improve educational standards, develop and introduce instructional material, and design textbooks in the country's numerous languages. The National Council of Educational Research and Training collects data about education and conducts educational research.

State ministries of education deal with education at that level. City school boards are under the supervision of both the state education ministry and the municipal government. In rural areas either the district board or the panchayat (village council) oversees school boards. The significant role the panchayat plays in education has often meant the politicization of elementary education, because teachers' appointments and transfers often become hot political issues.

State governments provide most educational funding, although the central government has, over the years, assumed more and more of the cost of educational development as outlined under the five-year plans. The arrangement has resulted in com-

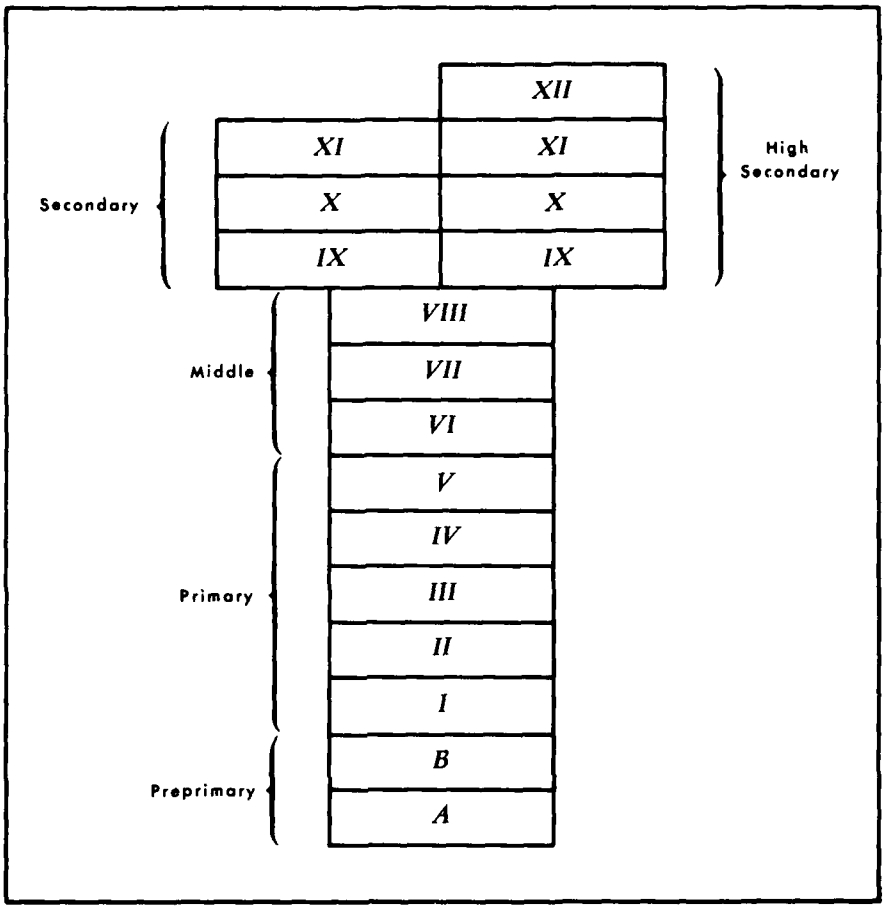
plaints by the states about the government's increasing role. The state governments have suggested that their priorities were often dictated more by the financial allocations of the central government than by their own constituents' preferences. Spending for education ranged between 4.6 and 7.7 percent of total expenditures from the 1950s through the 1970s. Some 2.6 percent of the Sixth Five-Year Plan's budget was allocated to education. In the early 1980s roughly 10 percent of central and state money went to education—well below the average of 79 other developing countries.

There were a wide variety of educational systems in India. Coastal areas such as those in Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal, which came under British rule earliest, made rapid progress in education. By contrast, inland regions or those isolated by geographic barriers—Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa, and Kashmir as examples—lagged behind. Educational history has proved a good indicator of general economic status; those states that were colonized early and have developed educational systems outrank others in per capita income.

Although there was considerable terminological confusion, in general the states in the mid-1980s continued to divide education into preprimary, primary, middle (or intermediate), and secondary levels. The primary and middle schools constituted elementary education, which was supposed to be free and compulsory. The secondary school system was sometimes further subdivided into secondary and high secondary schools; high secondary schools typically provided a college preparatory curriculum. Some states had junior colleges, but in both form and substance they were similar to high secondary schools. A number of states had two- to three-year secondary schools that provided some vocational training. The system of higher education comprised colleges and universities (see fig. 10).

In the mid-1980s education was compulsory for children between the ages of six and 14. Whether or not children actually attended school during that period depended on the region in which they lived and the individual's sex and family situation. Child labor played an important role in the rural economy. Lesser developed states, such as Bihar, Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh, had lower attendance rates. The level of poverty and the large number of small, scattered settlements made attendance difficult to enforce. Girls' enrollment in these regions was termed "almost hopeless."

Children of widely different ages entered the first grade.



Source: Based on information from India, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Research and Reference Division, *India: A Reference Annual, 1983*, New Delhi, December 1983, 49.

Figure 10. Typical Organization of Education, Mid-1980s

Dropout and repetition rates were elevated, and attrition among those who entered first grade was high—of every 100 first-grade students, only 40 could expect to reach the fifth grade, only 25 the eighth. Poverty, overcrowded classrooms, and lack of proper instructional equipment contributed to the high dropout rate.

The language of instruction was the regional language or the children's mother tongue. The curriculum in rural areas was limited to reading, writing, and basic arithmetic. Urban schools sometimes offered a wider variety of subjects. Because so few of those entering school completed the first four grades, considered

the minimum essential for permanent literacy, many who attended classes remained semiliterate. Teaching consisted mainly of lectures; there was much stress on rote learning.

Expanding educational opportunities, especially those for primary-school children, has been a major policy goal since independence. The sixth plan sought to increase the proportion of the school-age population (six to 14 years) enrolled in classes from 69 to 90 percent. Enrollments grew enormously throughout the 1950s to the mid-1980s (see table 5, Appendix). From the First Five-Year Plan until the beginning of the sixth, the percentage of the elementary school-age population attending classes more than doubled; the proportion of 14- to 17-year-olds attending some form of secondary school grew from 5 to 25 percent. In 1950 two of every 10 primary school-age children were enrolled in classes; by 1981–82 nearly five-sixths were. In 1950 there were fewer than half a million students in institutions of higher education; by the late 1970s there were more than 3 million.

The number of physical plants and teachers increased dramatically. Middle and secondary schools registered the steepest rates of growth; they grew by 8.5 and 6.5 times, respectively, between 1950–51 and 1980–81 (see table 6, Appendix). The number of primary schools more than doubled, and the number of teachers showed a similar rate of increase. At the same time the qualifications of the teaching staff improved. The percentage of trained (or certified) teachers climbed steadily throughout the 1950–80 period. The proportion of trained teachers among those working in primary and middle schools, less than 60 percent in 1950, was nearly 90 percent in 1980.

The availability of educational facilities varied between city and countryside as well as among the country's diverse regions. Nonetheless, the years since independence had seen major progress in smoothing out the most pronounced disparities between rural and urban dwellers. In 1957 about 60 percent of the rural population had a primary school (grades I through V) in their village; by 1978 nearly 80 percent did. More than 90 percent of the rural populace had a school within two kilometers. Areas populated primarily by Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes fared worse. Roughly 30 percent of the Scheduled Caste villages did not have a school located within two kilometers, and 8 percent of tribal peoples did not. Likewise, the availability of educational facilities varied considerably by region. In the late 1970s the Punjabis were the best served; 98 percent of their children lived within one kilometer of a primary-level school. The inhabitants of Arunachal Pradesh were the worst off; some 40 percent of pri-

mary-school-age children lived more than one kilometer from a school.

The trends in middle- and secondary-school expansion paralleled those of primary education. The number of middle schools grew by 8.5 times in three decades (1950s–70s); the number of middle-school teachers increased nearly tenfold. There were more than six times as many secondary schools in the early 1980s as there had been in 1950, and seven times as many teachers. The proportion of qualified middle-school teachers increased from just over half to nearly 90 percent.

In 1957 only 3 percent of all villages had a middle school; by the late 1970s more than 10 percent did. Roughly one-third of the rural populace was served by a middle school within their own villages; nearly 80 percent had one within three kilometers. Only 8 percent of rural Indians did not have a middle school within five kilometers of their habitations. In 1957 scarcely one-third of all villages had a secondary school within eight kilometers; by the late 1970s more than 70 percent of all villages (accounting for more than 80 percent of all rural inhabitants) had access to a secondary school within eight kilometers.

Enrollments have grown concomitantly with the expansion of schools and teachers. At the primary level they more than quadrupled between 1950–51 and 1984–85; middle-school classes, starting from a lower base, grew more than eightfold. During a similar period secondary-school enrollment grew nearly ninefold (see table 7, Appendix). The percentage of the school-age population attending middle school nearly doubled; by the early 1980s more than 40 percent of 11- to 14-year-olds were enrolled. By that time nearly 30 percent of all 14- to 17-year-olds were attending secondary school.

The increased presence of facilities and teachers throughout the country notwithstanding, in the mid-1980s female enrollment lagged behind that of males. Any real effort to meet the ambitious sixth-plan goal of nearly universal primary-school enrollments would entail increasing the school attendance of girls, especially those living in the countryside (see table 8, Appendix). During the first five grades nearly all school-age boys attended, while only two-thirds of girls did. Indeed, although girls' enrollment (as a percentage of the female school-age population) has increased in middle and secondary schools, in primary school their share has held steady since the early 1960s.

Low female enrollment, especially in rural areas, was the pattern for all educational levels. In the late 1970s girls accounted for roughly one-third of middle-school students and for slightly

more than one-quarter of those in villages. On the secondary level girls accounted for less than 30 percent of overall enrollment and only 22 percent in villages.

The trend among Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes ranged from roughly equal to slightly worse than that of most of India's rural areas. Certainly there were compounding factors—poverty and small scattered settlements that were less likely to have schools—that made it more difficult for children of these groups to attend classes. Among Scheduled Castes, girls represented about one-third of primary-school enrollment, a percentage that fell to one-quarter in middle school and one-fifth at the secondary level.

Female enrollment varied significantly by region. Primary-school enrollments approached parity in Meghalaya (the highest, in which 49 percent of primary students were girls); Kerala; Andaman and Nicobar Islands; Chandigarh; Delhi; Goa, Daman, and Diu; and Mizoram. Girls' participation in education was lowest in the inland and more isolated regions: Rajasthan (lowest with 24 percent), Bihar, Haryana, Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Arunachal Pradesh. Roughly the same regions reported approximately the same places for middle-school and secondary-school female enrollments.

The low enrollment of girls has been the principal stumbling block to the country's efforts to achieve full enrollment of elementary-school-age children. There were other problems; schools and teachers were generally of poorer quality in the countryside, and the degree of "wastage" (dropping out) among male and female students alike was high, especially in rural areas where child labor was an important component in family income. Any substantial progress in this area demands that India come to grips with the cultural and economic reasons lying behind nonattendance.

Various forms of private schooling were common; many schools were strictly private, whereas others enjoyed certain kinds of government grants-in-aid but were still run privately. The quality of these institutions varied greatly. The best were the English-language mission schools; others were run, in the words of one critic, simply "for exploitation and patronage."

Most primary schools were under local control, but a substantial minority were run by the union government. Approximately 10 percent of all primary schools were private; the proportion rose to more than one-third in cities. Private schools played a more prominent role the higher the educational level. More than 20 percent of middle schools were private; they accounted for ap-

proximately half of all students enrolled in that educational level.

More than 60 percent of all secondary schools were private; of those in cities, nearly 70 percent. The situation was similar in the case of higher secondary schools. Nearly two-thirds of all secondary-school students were enrolled in private institutions of some sort. Of secondary schools attached to degree-granting colleges, nearly three-fourths were private. The privileged nature of this kind of educational organization was reflected in pupil-teacher ratios, which were substantially lower in fully private schools.

Higher education, once the nearly exclusive domain of the wealthy and privileged, has since independence become the goal of virtually every student completing secondary school. In the 1950 school year there were some 360,000 students enrolled in colleges and universities; by the early 1980s the number had risen to nearly 4 million—a more than tenfold increase in three decades. There were 132 universities (more than five times the number at independence), some 500 teacher training colleges (nearly a tenfold increase), and more than 500 other colleges.

Universities originally functioned mainly to prescribe courses and textbooks, to hold exams, and to award degrees. Until early in the twentieth century, universities did no direct teaching or research. Teaching was the bailiwick of colleges run either by provincial governments or by private agencies and affiliated with the universities. By the 1960s most universities were engaged in teaching on the graduate and professional level.

In the early 1980s there continued to be a high rate of attrition among students in higher education. A substantial portion failed their examinations more than once, and substantial numbers dropped out; perhaps one in four students made it through the full course of studies. Even those students who were successful could not count on the university degree to assure them employment. In earlier years a bachelor's degree often provided entrance to the elite, but in contemporary India it serves as a chance to become a white-collar worker at a relatively modest salary. The government continues to be the principal employer of educated manpower.

The state governments played a powerful role in the running of all but the national universities, which were under the direction of the central government. Political considerations, if not outright political patronage, had a significant part in appointments. The state governor was usually the university chancellor, and the vice chancellor, who actually ran the institution, was usually a political appointee. Not only were appointments subject to



Students in a vocational school
Courtesy Embassy of India, Washington

political jockeying, but state governments also had control over grants and other forms of recognition. Caste affiliation and regional background were recognized criteria for admission and appointments in many colleges. Family influence assisted the well-connected, if academically unpromising, student to gain admission.

Education and Society

Historically, Indian education has been elitist. Hindu education was tailored to the needs of Brahman boys who were taught to read and write by a Brahman teacher. A number of schools combining the functions of judicial councils, ecclesiastical synods, and associations of the learned formed the nucleus of something akin to universities, having faculties of medicine, law, military science, philosophy, music, and mathematics.

Under the Mughals, Muslim education was similarly elitist, although its bias reflected economic factors rather than those of caste background. Beginning in the twelfth century, the Muslims introduced *maktabs*, primary schools attached to mosques. There Muslim boys learned to recite the Quran. At a more advanced level were *madrasahs* (colleges), which provided 10 to 12 years of study in Arabic language and literature as well as Islamic theology and law, history, and the sciences. As a general rule, attendance was limited to the sons of wealthy families. The *maktab* usually relied on Persian as the language of instruction; that of the *madrasah* was Arabic. Both Hindu and Muslim education deteriorated along with the decline of Mughal power in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Under British rule the precise role education should play in colonial policy was subject to debate. Proponents of the "Orientalist" view sought to preserve and foster the extant literary languages—Sanskrit, Persian, and Arabic. Anglicists, by contrast, favored English as the medium of instruction; their efforts focused on creating an Indian elite loyal to the British Empire. Still others saw the value of education in its potential to uplift the Indian masses. Supporters of this view—missionaries were virtually the only practitioners of this approach—favored the use of vernacular languages.

The Anglicists eventually triumphed. Their views were typified in Charles Grant, an early director of the East India Company. Grant was a tireless campaigner for Indian education, which he saw as a means of extending the virtues of civilization, specifically Christianity, to the subcontinent's elite. In the 1813 East India Act, Parliament stipulated an annual budget of £10,000 for the development of education.

The Anglicist-Orientalist controversy was laid to rest in Thomas Babington Macaulay's 1835 "Minute on Education." Macaulay recommended that higher education be Western in content and that the language of instruction be English in order to create "a class of persons, Indian in blood and color, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect." The governor general of India, Lord Bentinck, took up the cause. Through an Order of Council he declared, "The great object of the British government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science among the natives of India; and that all the funds appropriated for the purposes of education would be best employed on English education alone."

The decision to make English the official language of instruction fueled demand for English-language secondary schools. For Indians aspiring to prestigious employment in government, education was essential to career advancement. It was never viewed as a means of bringing about social revolution. Rather than found public schools, the British preferred to subsidize private education; grants-in-aid to private schools have remained a significant feature of contemporary Indian education.

The Educational Dispatch of 1854 called for commencing university education in India as well as more provincial control of educational institutions. In 1857 universities were started in Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras. The universities were primarily degree-granting institutions that regulated a number of affiliated colleges. As university degrees became more and more critical for entering the higher ranks of government service, preparation for

university exams came to dominate secondary and even primary education. Academic and literary curricula were emphasized to the detriment of scientific, technical, or vocational studies.

The shift to provincial control over educational institutions began with the formation of departments of public instruction in each province. Further impetus came with the Government of India acts of 1921 and 1935. These gave control of education to Indian ministers, who were in turn responsible to provincial legislatures.

British policies reinforced the preexisting elitist tendencies of South Asian education. By tying entrance and advancement in government service to academic education, colonial rule left as its legacy an educational system geared to preserving the position and prerogatives of the more privileged. Education served as a "gatekeeper," permitting an avenue of upward mobility to those few able to muster sufficient resources.

Even the efforts of the militantly nationalistic Indian National Congress (see Glossary) ran aground in the face of the entrenched interests defending the existing system of education. Early in the 1900s Congress called for national education with an emphasis on technical and vocational training. In 1920 Congress initiated a boycott of government-aided and -controlled schools; it founded several national schools and colleges, but to little avail. The rewards of an English-style education were so great that the boycott was largely ignored, and the Congress schools soon disappeared.

Secondary education has traditionally catered to the interests of the higher and upwardly mobile castes (see Caste in Operation, ch. 5). Despite substantial increases in the spread of secondary schools and growth in enrollment (roughly 20 percent of the school-age population was covered in the early 1980s), secondary schooling remained a way station for those bent on social status and mobility through acquisition of a white-collar job.

In the mid-1980s the vast majority of students making it to secondary school continued to be from twice-born (see Glossary) castes and middle- to upper-class families living in urban areas. In the nineteenth century postprimary students were disproportionately Brahmans; their traditional concern with learning and their general level of wealth gave them an advantage under British educational policies. By the early twentieth century several powerful cultivator castes had realized the advantages of education as a passport to political power and had organized to acquire formal learning. "Backward" castes (usually economically disadvantaged Sudras) who had acquired some wealth took ad-

vantage of their status to secure educational privileges (see Social Change, ch. 5). A region's three or four most powerful castes typically dominated the school system. In addition, the widespread role of private education and the payment of fees even at government-run schools discriminated against the poor.

The Sixth Five-Year Plan (FY 1980–84) sought to ameliorate the more elitist aspects of the educational system and redirect scarce educational resources in ways more beneficial to society as a whole. The plan called for increasing the funding for both primary schooling and adult education while cutting higher education's share of the pie. Postsecondary school was to be more flexible in admitting older students and in offering a greater variety of nonformal programs and job-oriented curricula. The idea behind these reforms was to allow Indians greater latitude in pursuing postsecondary studies while making these studies more relevant to the needs of working students. Such efforts had the further virtue of reducing the cost of higher education, because evening and correspondence courses were typically popular and often paid their own way. In principle, the sixth plan wanted subsidized higher education available to only a relatively few academically qualified, low-income students.

The sixth plan aimed at revising vocational education and making it more relevant to the demands of the workplace. The secondary-school curriculum was to be reoriented to the majority of secondary students, i.e., those for whom it was the final educational experience. For those students the plan called for a terminal course of studies geared to the country's need for more technically trained students.

The sixth plan also called for a two-thirds reduction in adult illiteracy; the plan made adult education part of the minimum needs program for those who fall below the poverty line. It was an extremely ambitious goal; the proportion of adult illiterates had declined only a modest 8 percent under previous five-year plans (1960–75) to a still hefty 64 to 69 percent.

Female illiteracy was much higher, some 75 percent in the early 1980s. Even this represented major gains in recent decades. At the beginning of the twentieth century only one literate in 15 was a woman; by 1981, one in four was. Increasing female literacy was an important component in efforts to reduce the staggering rate of infant mortality, because the literacy of mothers was positively correlated with a lowered infant mortality rate. Further attempts to reduce substantially adult illiteracy would certainly confront many of the same problems as have those efforts aimed at increasing female participation in the formal educational system.



Students at Red Fort, Delhi
Courtesy Air-India Library

Higher education, originally founded to provide a loyal corps of colonial administrators, has proved a mare's nest. It was part and parcel of the process that kept swelling the ranks of the civil service, because the government continued to be the main source of the coveted white-collar work that most degree holders sought. Although enrollments have swelled, many of the graduates were ill-suited to meet the country's needs.

Examinations that were given at the end of secondary school to determine admission to college and others given in college to award degrees have traditionally dominated Indian education. Because a degree remained necessary to gain even low-level white-collar employment and the examinations determined the conferral of diplomas, higher education in the mid-1980s continued to be the pursuit of a "pass." Mass copying and leaking of examination questions were frequent and were sometimes encouraged by teachers whose job security depended on the proportion of their students who pass. Nevertheless, the failure rate remained high; observers noted that the system served a

gatekeeper function, eliminating students whose family backgrounds were disadvantaged from competing with the more privileged for jobs.

A significant number of the students who have swelled post-secondary enrollments were the first in their families to go to college. These lower-caste and rural students tended to go into the less demanding liberal arts courses. The better prepared students from higher-caste or higher-class families often chose the more prestigious science courses that have more demanding entrance requirements (including knowledge of English).

Unemployment among graduates (much less the many who failed to complete a course of studies) was a growing and troublesome phenomenon. Even degree holders in technical fields were not immune. In the mid-1980s there were an estimated 150,000 unemployed engineers in the country. Indeed, although the development of a system of technical education was one of India's postindependence achievements, much of this growth occurred in higher education, leaving serious imbalances in the country's available work force. There were vastly too many engineers relative to technicians.

Repeated efforts to upgrade vocational training on the secondary level—a goal of the Sixth Five-Year Plan (among others)—met with concerted resistance. The senior civil service administrators charged with implementing the reforms were themselves products of the educational system to be reformed. Further, most secondary schools were under private control, and the government's ability to influence their curricula was limited. Even those enrolled in vocational education often used it as a stepping-stone to higher education rather than job training.

Conditions in institutions of higher education varied significantly. They were frequently bad in government-run schools and much worse in private colleges. In private institutions students often paid dearly for poorly run, substandard facilities and inadequate teaching. Licensing was the domain of the state governments, and the political pressures to provide facilities (particularly when neighboring states did so) often led to the erosion of educational standards.

In the early 1980s the government of Maharashtra announced that those interested in starting engineering colleges and polytechnic schools could apply for licenses. The number of engineering colleges increased eightfold, and the number of students in these institutions rose from 1,800 to 8,000. The number of polytechnics rose from 30 to 120; student enrollment in them increased by more than three and one-half times.

Students' success in passing the examinations essential to attaining a degree was often dismal; a 25-percent pass rate was not unusual, especially in the newer colleges. The facilities that colleges possessed were usually woefully inadequate; there were libraries without books, technical schools without laboratories or workshops, and makeshift classrooms. Despite poor facilities and a less than glowing track record for assisting students to get degrees, private colleges continued to charge "whatever the market will bear." There were numerous stratagems for subverting state regulations in the matter of fees. Observers estimated that polytechnics in some regions charged fees in the range of Rs6,000 to Rs10,000, and some colleges supplemented their earnings from students' fees by demanding "donations."

* * *

Statistical Outline of India, 1984 and the Indian government's *India: A Reference Annual, 1983* provide useful statistical background on the subject matter of this chapter. Tim Dyson's "Preliminary Demography of 1981 Census" and Rosanna Ledbetter's "Thirty Years of Family Planning in India" are useful and reasonably current. Likewise, Shanta Kohli's *Family Planning in India* and Mahendia K. Premi's *The Demographic Situation in India* provide background on population structure and control. Shiv Kumar Sain's *Development of Education in India* provides an overview of that subject. Susanne and Lloyd Rudolph's *Education and Politics in India*, although published in 1972, contains excellent background. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Chapter 3. Religious Life



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RELIGION IS THE GROUND for Indian life and culture as it has not been in the West since the great age of faith in the Middle Ages. Hinduism, the major religion of Indian civilization and the faith of over 80 percent of the population, is not, strictly speaking, a religion in the Western sense; it is neither a creed nor a church. Rather, it is the totality of the spiritual expression of the Hindu people, a profound, complex, and largely anonymous outgrowth of the South Asian world view and cosmology. To the Hindu it is an expression of the nature of the universe, a reality much different from that which molded the religious traditions of the West. To Indian society it provides, even in the final decades of the twentieth century, both the broad outline and much of the fine detail of social life.

Daily life in India, far more than in Western societies, is charged with religious meaning. Religion permeates family and personal life as well as most major social and political movements. It underlies and justifies the caste system and consequently regulates interpersonal and intergroup relations. Because Hinduism theologically is probably the most tolerant and elastic of the world's major faiths, religious practice varies tremendously by geography, social position, family custom, and personal preference. The options for religious practice open to a given individual, however, are strictly constrained by his or her social position. A body of doctrine and practice as varied as Hinduism would probably be considered, in other parts of the world, a constellation of related religions rather than a single religion.

Like the Middle East, the Indian subcontinent has been particularly fertile ground for religious speculations. Buddhism, which dominates much of Asia outside the subcontinent—as well as Jainism and Sikhism, religions largely limited to the subcontinent—grew out of the indigenous cultural tradition. Buddhism enjoyed a large initial following in India but virtually died out there or was reabsorbed into Hinduism. During the 1950s, however, Buddhism experienced a significant revival through mass conversions by untouchables, and in the mid-1980s it accounted for nearly 1 percent of the total population, but for a much larger percentage in certain areas. Jainism and Sikhism accounted for 0.5 percent and 1.9 percent of the population, respectively.

Despite the social and cultural dominance of Hinduism , religions of foreign origin have at various tims entered the subcontinent, where they exercise varying degrees of influence. Islam,

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influential from the twelfth century onward, was for centuries the religion of the rulers of large parts of India and today is the second most prevalent religion; approximately 11 percent of the population were adherents. India has the fourth largest Muslim community in the world. Despite the inherent inconsistencies between the tenets and cosmology of Hinduism and Islam, the latter has developed into a significant cultural influence and over a period of centuries has evolved a form peculiar to the subcontinent. Christians, who accounted for over 2 percent of the population in the 1980s, and the much smaller communities of Zoroastrians and Jews consist of the descendants of apostates or of immigrants seeking religious freedom. An indeterminate number of people classified as tribals adhere to various local or tribal religions that apparently predate caste Hinduism and are practiced in remote areas beyond its sway.

In general, the religious minorities tend to cluster in certain geographic regions and social positions, and these concentrations magnify their influence. In addition to their several centers of geographic concentration, however, Muslims are found in substantial numbers throughout the country, in both urban and rural areas, and everywhere they tend to cluster in specific social positions. Only in the states of Punjab, Orissa, and Nagaland did they constitute less than 2 percent of the population in the 1980s.

Although adherents of nominally different religions and sects, many Indians continue practices and beliefs that spring from the Hinduism from which most non-Hindu communities are converts. A broad stratum of common popular or folk religious custom and belief persists. Despite this similarity of forms and the tolerance of varying beliefs and practices, however, strong communal identity binds the members of each religion. The most significant communal rift divides Hindus from Muslims. Other minority sects are reeducating their adherents and reasserting their distinctive tenets in order to resist assimilation into Hinduism. The Christian sects are submerging many of their differences in order to form a more comprehensive church organization. The Sikhs, a particularly strong group, are extremely vocal and at times violent.

Despite the pervasive influence of religion on social life and despite the religious basis of the 1947 partition of British India into India and Pakistan, the Indian union has, since independence, remained officially a secular state. Not only does India reject the establishment or recognition of a state religion, but also several basic policies that the Constitution makes explicit have as their goal the ending of the ritual stratification of society into

castes having unequal rights. Despite official efforts at abolishing age-old disabilities of the lower castes and the untouchables, the religiously sanctioned conception of society and, in fact, all life as a hierarchy of inherently unequal beings appeared in early 1985 to retain its vigor and traditional influence among the vast majority of Indians (see fig. 11).

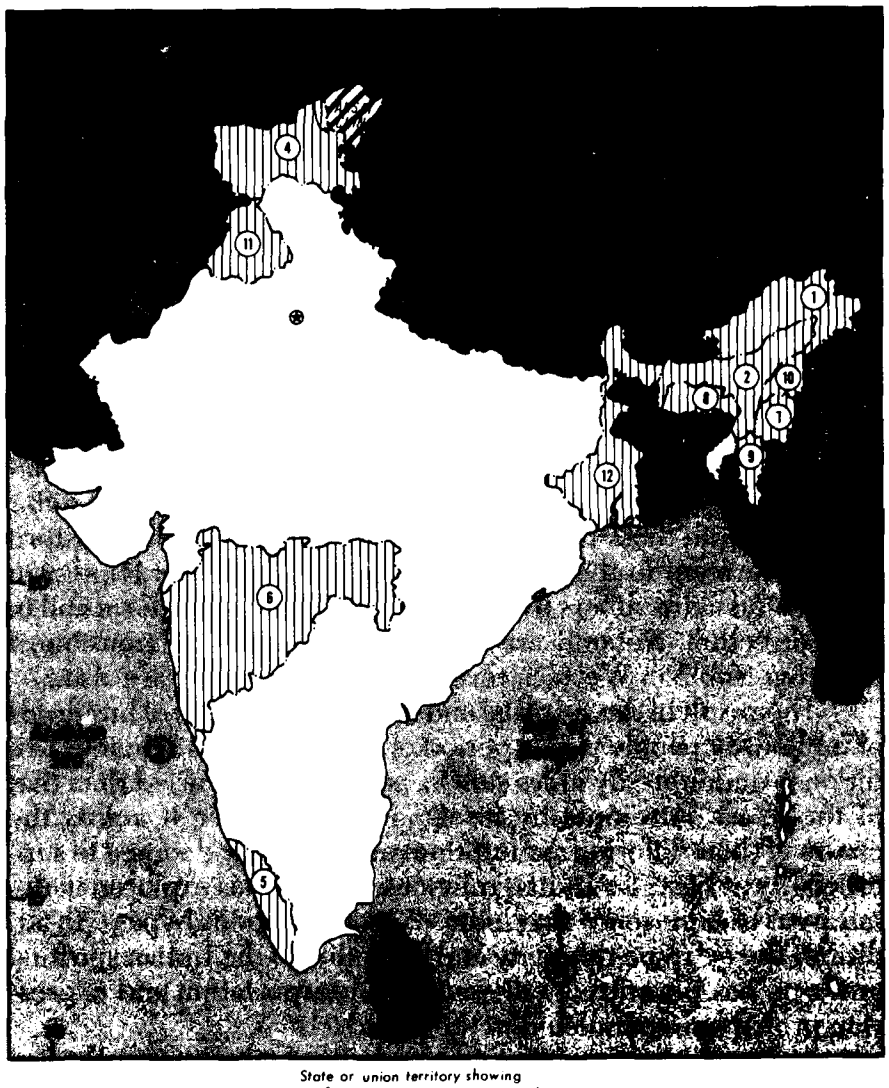
Basic Concepts of South Asian Religions

The indigenous religions of South Asia spring from an ancient and self-consistent cultural tradition that developed over a period of centuries in relative isolation from surrounding cultures. Consequently, the religions embody assumptions about the nature of reality, the universe, and man's place in it that differ markedly from those that molded the religions of Middle Eastern origin prevalent in the West. The spiritual striving of Hinduism and related faiths differs from that of the West both in form and in basic direction. Not only are the answers to man's religious quest unrecognizable in Western terms, but the questions are also.

The result of the spiritual and intellectual efforts of hundreds of millions of people over a period of millennia, this religious tradition is undoubtedly more subtle, complex, and varied than that of the West. Attempts by foreigners to perceive it across the chasm of their differing assumptions are generally doomed to superficiality at best, for Indian religious thought has explored in detail areas of experience that most Western religions bypass. In addition, the extreme relativity and flexibility of the Indian spiritual universe has permitted a diversity of interpretation and expression probably unparalleled in the world.

Nevertheless, even the most superficial grasp of South Asian religion rests on the understanding of a number of basic concepts or themes that pervade it. These can in no sense be considered basic beliefs or postulates, because there is probably no point of belief or doctrine on which all Hindus agree. Indeed, there exists neither the requirement nor the expectation that people need agree. The South Asian cosmology is far more relative and flexibly construed than that of the West. It is based on a relativism so profound as to be disorienting to those used to firmer moorings of the comparatively simple and mechanistic Western moral and ethical universe.

Much energy has been spent over the centuries on approaches to the question of what is real and how to comprehend it. The physical world of experience and the phenomena that appear



State or union territory showing
percentage of state or union territory population

1. Arunachal Pradesh (63% other*)
2. Assam (24% Muslim)
3. Goa (31% Christian)
4. Jammu and Kashmir (65% Muslim; 7% Sikh)
5. Kerala (20% Muslim, 21% Christian)
6. Maharashtra (6% Buddhist)
7. Manipur (27% Christian)
8. Meghalaya (47% Christian, 32% other*
9. Mizoram (86% Christian)
10. Nagaland (67% Christian, 21% other*)
11. Punjab (60% Sikh)
12. West Bengal (20% Muslim)

*Other than Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Buddhist, or Jain

Source: Based on information from India, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Research and Reference Division, *India: A Reference Annual, 1973*, New Delhi, 1973, 6, 12.

Figure 11. States and Union Territories Reporting High Concentrations of Non-Hindu Communities, 1971

to the unreflecting man are not absolute reality but maya (illusion, mirage, false impression, or show). Somewhere behind or within the data of daily experience lurks true reality, separated from man by the veil of his ignorance and the inadequacy of his understanding. Reality can be known only as special knowledge. The method of knowing or comprehending reality has long been a central theme of Indian spiritual endeavor. Numerous schools, sages, sects, and cults have proposed methods of piercing the veil, whether by exercise of the intellect, devotion to deities, mortification of the flesh, orgiastic expansion of the senses, ecstatic insight, disciplined meditation, heightened body control, or any of a number of other means. Using these methods, diligent, fortunate, and spiritually gifted individuals can gain *moksha* (or *mukti*), release from the false knowledge or illusory reality of the external world. Many of the religious movements in Indian history have centered on original methods or insights in the quest for release from the bondage of maya.

Only special capacities, efforts, and diligence suffice to gain release. Consequently, not all or even most individuals can aspire to reach this spiritual height; only a small minority of the spiritually advanced may hope for success and then only through rigorous effort. Although only the most elevated spirits may attain pure release, the less advanced can take part in a different but equally valid spiritual life suited to their less demanding requirements.

In South Asia devotional life is believed to match the capacities of the worshiper or aspirant; there are many ways to approach the divine, all equally suitable for the particular situation. The divine permeates the universe; it is the reality behind the illusion of sense experience, whether in the form of an abstract world soul, one or a number of personified gods, a principal or motive force of creation, a basic truth or system of truths, or any of a number of other interpretations. People perceive the divine in a form appropriate to their spiritual and temporal stations, which are often closely related, and so approach it as they believe they can and should.

People, like all beings (including animals and, for theists, gods), exist as part of a hierarchy of life arranged according to spiritual advancement or purity. Man is only one of a chain of beings that pass through multiple incarnations, occupying during their various lives numerous positions in the hierarchy. This essential equality of the souls of all creatures is the rationale for the principal of ahimsa (noninjury to living things, often taking the form of vegetarianism), which is the basis of many South Asian

ethical systems. The hierarchy is at bottom the just expression of the ethical nature of the universe, for each being occupies the position determined by the karma earned in previous lifetimes.

Karma is the mechanism that regulates the functioning of the chain of life. It is variously interpreted by several schools of thought, sometimes as a blind force like the law of gravity, sometimes as a kind of account, sometimes as a sort of cosmic grit that adheres to souls. In most general terms, however, it is the balance of the total goodness or badness of the actions of a soul. One's karma determines not only the position to be occupied for the present life but also the general tendency of that life for good or ill. In other words, good karma inclines a life to good fortune at a high point on the scale, and bad karma to bad fortune in a low position. It appears, however, to determine not particular events or decisions but merely the general tendency of events. As the individual soul interacts with his (or her) present karma, his present circumstances, and the rules governing his present existence, he not only works out his past karma but also establishes his future karma. It is possible, within the limits of any life, to live in an exemplary fashion in the terms of that life situation and so acquire the karma that will raise one's position in future lives. The rigid inequality that characterizes traditional South Asian society is therefore, in a cosmic sense, deserved.

Not only is the life of souls cyclical, but the existence of universes is also. Numerous world systems have existed in the past, will exist in the future, and probably exist at the present. The concept of life on other planets or in other solar systems is assumed in many cases. Each world system exists for the length of a *kalpa*, a period of time inconceivably long in human terms. Many poetic metaphors are traditionally used to describe this infinity of time, which in reality is only an episode in creation. Each world system ends in a cosmic disaster, after which another cycle of creation, duration, and ultimate destruction follows.

Unlike Western religions, in which the soul's single sojourn on earth and in history determines its fate for all eternity and in which every day and indeed every action is a unique and momentous opportunity for good or evil, South Asian religions generally view life on earth as merely one of many lives in the endless and tormenting cycle of existence. Spiritual salvation is escape from this dreary and futile round, and in many systems the highest goal of religious endeavor is the extinction of individuality in communion with the divine. Only the most elevated beings, with excellent karma accumulated over numerous lives, may hope for the eternal bliss of extinction or release *(moksha)*, which in many senses is

identical with breaking through to ultimate reality. Consequently, the great diversity of spiritual striving in India represents the efforts of beings at numerous positions in the spiritual hierarchy to speed their journey up the ladder of existence.

Hinduism

The panoply of spiritual activity known as Hinduism is less a single system or creed than a congeries of interwoven but loosely related traditions and cults that attempt to deal with cosmology in primarily deistic terms. Among other features of their religious belief, Hindus recognize innumerable gods. Hinduism is not a revealed religion and therefore has neither a founder nor definitive teachings. It has no exclusive creed but rather a cluster of related questions. The word *Hindu* itself was originally a geographic designation, derived from Sind, the Sanskrit name for the Indus River. Europeans rather than Hindus gave the name to the body of religious practice.

Primary among the ethical concerns of Hinduism is the cluster of ideas surrounding the concept of ritual purity. The elevation and purity of the soul of a being have both spiritual and physical correlates. Contact with impure matter—even, for some of the purest individuals, with the shadow of impure matter—defiles or pollutes the pure and necessitates cleansing that takes both physical and spiritual forms. Pure individuals must therefore eschew contact with impurity; impure individuals, who defile all that they touch by their presence, often function in society to safeguard the pure from the highly charged matter of defilement (see Theory of Caste, ch. 5). Of all the restrictions of the caste system, the prohibition of accepting food from a person of lower and therefore less pure caste is one of the strongest. The cow, the giver of milk, one of the purest of substances, therefore is revered and protected throughout India because of its great purity.

Hinduism as a religious and social system finds its form and expression partly in the caste system and partly in certain rituals; its theological rationale is found in the Vedas, a body of sacred literature. It apparently originated in the contact between the pastoral nomadic Aryan-speaking invaders of India in the second millennium B.C. and the indigenous peoples of the Indus Valley region (see The Antecedents, ch. 1). The Vedic tradition of the invaders was elaborated throughout the centuries by the priestly castes and, in combination with the epic and mythological traditions of each locality, formed the highly diverse and complex sys-

tem that is modern Hinduism.

The almost limitless frontiers of Hindu belief contain creeds ranging from monism to polytheism to atheism. Hinduism can accommodate different views of the gods and of ritual duties for different purposes or for different groups; it can be all things to all men. The deity being worshiped at a given moment is extolled above all others, and a story from the sacred myth is narrated to support the belief in his or her superiority. The favored deities vary among regions, among castes, and even among individuals. Often deities have several manifestations, each suiting the particular genius and temperament of the worshiper. The consort of the great god Siva, for instance, may appear as the bloodthirsty Kali, goddess of destruction, in the scorching plains; as the beneficent Parvati, or mountain dweller, in the cool foothills of the Himalayas; or in several other guises. Thus, it is impossible to define Hinduism, but it is not too difficult to identify a Hindu or understand some of his basic beliefs through observation of his social and ritual behavior.

The forms of worship are frequently more important than the name of the deity invoked. Rituals and taboos require a greater degree of conformity than does belief, for it is thought that there is a direct connection between proper performance and the efficacy of the rituals. The good life of the Hindu requires the performance of daily tasks in accordance with ritual prescriptions and the observation of social norms. The orthodox Hindu's name for his religion is Sanatana Dharma (Eternal Duty), the social code that guides his behavior and the cosmic law that shapes his destiny.

Sacred Scriptures

Hinduism is based on a large body of ancient Sanskrit literature: the four Vedas, their interpretations, and epic literature. The Vedas, composed between 1200 and 600 B.C., are regarded by many as revealed sacred knowledge of divine origin, as is the later Vedic literature, which may be dated between 600 and 400 B.C. The remaining literature consists of the traditions as handed down by memory from the ancient sages and holy men.

The Vedic texts form a large and varied body of works, the oldest and most important being the Rig-Veda, a collection of laudatory, lyric verses describing active gods who intervene freely in human affairs. The other three Vedas are the Yajur-Veda, consisting of liturgical formulas and sacrificial prayers; the Samava-Veda, a compilation of spells, curses, charms, and bless-

ings; and the Atharva-Veda. Vedic texts are amplified further by the sutras, or aphorisms, composed between 500 and 200 B.C., which are intended to be committed to memory by aspirants to the priesthood.

The Atharva-Veda represents the religious faith and beliefs of the mass of the people rather than the more advanced and systematized beliefs of the priestly class detailed in the first three Vedas. Of the four Vedas, it is perhaps the closest to much of present-day popular Hinduism.

The Brahmanas (interpretations by the Brahmans, or priests) are ritual textbooks consisting of prose commentaries expounding either the rites or the verbal formulas that accompany them. Each of the four Vedas has its own set of Brahmanas, but some refer to more than one Veda. Each Brahmana ends with an Upanishad. The collective Upanishads are philosophical speculations on the nature of the universe. They expound six *darshanas* (basic metaphysical viewpoints) embracing monism, dualism, theism, atheism, empiricism, and rationalism. From the various *darshanas* an individual may select whichever is most congenial to him as a viewpoint from which to understand the nature of the universal soul (Brahman).

The Upanishads represented a new phase of religion in which correctness of ritual and sacrificial ceremony, as expounded in the Brahmanas, no longer was regarded as the means of obtaining happiness. *Jnana* (correctness of knowledge) became all-important, and emphasis was placed on the identity of the atman (soul) with the Brahman, the sacred principle that animates all nature, or the world soul.

Popular religious literature consists of the two great epics, the *Mahabharata* (the Great Battle of the Descendants of Bharata) and the *Ramayana* (the Story of Rama); the *Puranas* (Vedas of the Laity); and popular mythology. The *Mahabharata* is a gigantic epic poem in which are couched the Hindu ethic, caste duties, the privileges of the Brahmans, and other basic elements of Hindu culture. This ancient and revered myth is considered to give religious sanction to Hindu social practices. The best known portion of the *Mahabharata* is the *Bhagavad-Gita* (Song of the Blessed One), the central theme of which is that salvation is achieved through nonattached, disinterested action as an expression of devotion (bhakti) to the Brahman.

The *Ramayana*, a shorter epic, forms the foundation of much of the moral tradition of Hinduism. It has become the best known and best loved scripture of modern time and, in many parts of India, is the common man's bible. The *Puranas* are religious

treatises written in the first 12 centuries A.D. They tell of pilgrimages, feast days, and the rudiments of mythology, such as the god Krishna's life story and Siva's martial, erotic, or ascetic achievements. They give detailed doctrinal expositions on religious custom and ritual.

Elements of Classical Hinduism

Although schools of thought within the classical tradition of Hinduism run the theological gamut from monism to atheism and lack an organized ecclesiastical body that determines orthodoxy, certain elements of classical Sanskritic Hinduism can be observed in present-day India. All schools and sects accept the four Vedas and their early commentaries—the Brahmanas and Upanishads—as revealed sacred knowledge *(sruti)*. Jainism and Buddhism, which rejected the sacredness of these texts, therefore stand outside Hinduism (see The Great Reforms, this ch.). The spiritual ascendancy of the Brahmans is another outstanding characteristic of classical Hinduism. Devout Hindus believe the Brahman to represent the highest human rung in the ladder of purity and spiritual endeavor. Paying respect or giving alms to Brahmans is an act of religious merit, and Brahmanicide is the most heinous of crimes. In some of the ancient myths and scriptures, the Brahmans gain power, even over the gods, through their exclusive knowledge of the sacred lore and the formulas of sacrifice.

By the end of the seventh century B.C., the system of caste, although neither sanctioned by nor essential to classical Hinduism, became an integral part of its social expression and has since exerted a powerful social influence even upon the other religions and reform movements that rejected it. The society was organized into four distinct groups based on occupational specialization, and eventually the belief that people are born unequal became firmly institutionalized. The caste stratification has been supported by elaborate codes of ritual purity and pollution that helped to perpetuate the separateness, as well as interdependence, of each group (see Caste in Operation, ch. 5).

Veneration of pure life, especially of the cow, has come to be intimately associated with orthodox Hinduism of all sects. Mahatma Gandhi called "cow protection" the "central fact of Hinduism," the one concrete practice that unites a heterogeneous multitude. The cow is regarded as, among other things, the sacred embodiment of motherhood and fruitfulness. The deliberate killing of a cow is hardly less terrible than the killing of a Brahman.

For the miscreant it results in immediate and irrevocable outcasting; even the accidental killing of a cow requires elaborate purification ceremonies.

Classical Hinduism has also given rise to a number of other beliefs that are shared by almost all Hindus concerning the nature and destiny of the soul, the basic force of the universe, and the moral imperative. Dharma, for example, is one of the basic tenets. Variously and simultaneously it means religion, duty, law, ethics, virtue, custom, and morality. In its broadest theoretical sense, it is absolute, immutable, and applicable to all. In the context of society, however, it relates to caste and status and provides the prescriptive basis for conformity with established patterns of social behavior.

For most Hindus the cycle of rebirth is caused by the blind will to be, which is an aspect of maya, the power that fosters the illusion of individual existence and the world of phenomena through self-deception and ignorance of the unitary reality underlying appearances. There is only one reality—the transcendent, impersonal, attributeless universal soul, Brahman—which is all and causes all. Appearances to the contrary are caused by maya, which obscures the soul's true nature in the illusory flux of being and becoming. When the veil of maya is rent, the individual soul realizes its union with the universal soul and ceases to be.

The reabsorption into Brahman and its concomitant effect of liberation from the wheel of rebirth are the Hindu's ultimate goal. This release is known as *moksha*. The doctrine of *moksha*, like those of dharma and karma, represents an important juncture between popular Hinduism and the great tradition of classical Brahmanism. Even the unsophisticated believe that *moksha* is more desirable than worldly life. It is believed by many villagers that the creator, Brahma, writes an individual's fate on his forehead when he is born. The acceptance of this fate is the dharma that he must fulfill to the best of his ability.

The union with the Brahman and the attainment of *moksha* are predicated upon the fulfillment of spiritual pursuits through the three paths of *jnana*, bhakti, and perfection of karma, each catering to different personal needs. They are not mutually exclusive but are intended to satisfy any person, whether his dominant motivation is thinking, feeling, or doing.

The Pantheon

The Hindu pantheon is incredibly vast. The traditional 33 Vedic deities have been expanded, according to popular account-

ing, to 330 million gods. The major deities have a number of manifestations or incarnations, each bearing a different name.

The essence of all things is Brahman, the impersonal universal soul, which is never represented by an image or picture. Among the other principal deities of the Hindu pantheon are the triple manifestations of Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver, and Siva the Destroyer. The deities of this Trimurti (triad) in turn assume innumerable forms. Siva and Vishnu each have over a thousand epithets or aspects.

Brahma has remained cold and aloof, but the other two members of the Trimurti have gained in popularity. Their rise was accompanied by the growth of an ardent personal theism that elevated these deities and their consorts to a supreme place in the Hindu cosmos.

Vishnu is pictured as a deity of pleasant countenance, with four arms, eternally sleeping on his couch, the many-headed serpent Ananta (eternity) nearby. He is occasionally disturbed in his slumbers by the supplications of lesser gods and men when the powers of evil threaten the world. It is believed that there are 10 avatars, or incarnations, of Vishnu: nine past and one yet to come. Of these, the best known are Rama and Krishna, the heroes of India's two great epics; the historical Buddha; and Kalki, the destroyer of worlds, yet to come.

Krishna is worshiped in various guises. One of these, his mature, serenely philosophical form, is depicted in the *Bhagavad-Gita*. In the *Bhagavanta Purana*, Krishna is depicted in a more erotic guise, sporting with milkmaids and acting as the lover of one of them. Another aspect of Krishna is that of a mischievous child, stealing butter from the pantry.

Vishnu's incarnation as Buddha indicates how Hinduism has incorporated other religious movements. Brahmans explain that Vishnu, as the Buddha, taught heresy so that people might go astray, thus giving greater opportunity for Brahmans to bring them back to Hinduism.

Siva apparently evolved directly from a Vedic god and may have an even older prototype in the pre-Aryan Mohenjo-Daro civilization. Siva has several guises or personalities. The most prominent are a personification of the awesome and terrifying aspects of nature, a father god, a lord of animals, a great ascetic, and a master of the arts. He is pictured as the great Yogi smeared with ashes, seated on a leopard skin deep in meditation, and also—particularly in Southern India—as the King of Dancers whose cosmic dance provides the rhythm of the universe. His functions include regeneration and procreation as well as destruction.

Other important deities include Siva's two children: Kartikeya, the leader of Siva's army of supernatural spirits, and the elephant-headed Ganesha, a fat and jovial deity invoked at the beginning of most ceremonies as a remover of obstacles. Hanuman, the monkey-god who helped Rama, is one of the most popular of village deities and often is found as a household god. As *mahabir* (great hero), Hanuman is worshiped by soldiers, wrestlers, and others as the god of physical strength. Other deities of importance are Kama, or Madan, god of love; Nandi, god of the white bull; Chandra, god of the moon; Naga, the snake-god; and Kubera, god of treasures and wealth. The Vedic deities, such as Agni (fire), Varuna (initially sky but later personified as water), Yama (god of death), and Prithvi or Charati (earth), also retain considerable significance in religious ceremonies.

The Sakti, or "personified creative energy," of each of the gods of the Trimurti is represented as his consort. The consort of Brahma is Sarawati, goddess of learning and of all creative arts. Vishnu's consort, Radha or Lakshmi, is widely worshiped as the goddess of prosperity. Siva's consort is variously known as Parvati, Gauri, Uma, Kali, Durga, Devi, and Bhavani. This goddess, who is also primarily identified with the divine mother, has different qualities, depending on the aspect under which she is represented. Gauri, Uma, and Parvati are the most pleasant and benevolent. Durga is represented as a heroic fighting goddess and is also "the inaccessible one," tutelary of village curers and miracle workers. Kali is bloodthirsty. As Bhavani, she was worshiped by a notorious secret cult, the Thugs, who practiced ritual strangulation in her name until they were suppressed in the nineteenth century.

In some Hindu sects the creative union of the male and female principles is regarded as the cosmic force behind life. Often represented as the lingam, the stylized phallus, surrounded by the yoni, the stylized vagina, this union is particularly associated with the god Siva in Southern India.

A large part of the actual folk ritual and worship in the village concerns deities whose names are unknown in the classical pantheon. The village godlings symbolize the grim problems and realities of village life: famine and disease, flood and drought, birth and death. Most villages have a guardian godling, who gives protection against such setbacks as epidemics and cattle diseases. Many of them are female and are the patronesses or personifications of specific illnesses. Female godlings are usually addressed as "Mother" and males as "Grandfather." Kali and Hanuman are often adopted as the special patrons of a village.

Many of the shrines used for worship in the countryside are memorials to deified or semideified human beings who are believed to have had some extraordinary powers for good or evil in life. In some cases the original reasons for the deification may have been forgotten, but worship is continued generation after generation because "it is the custom." There are shrines of holy men, sages, suttees (women who immolated themselves on their husbands' funeral pyres), and saintly or notorious rulers. Offerings at these shrines consist of anything the individual is believed to have appreciated in life.

There is also a belief in ghosts who must be propitiated or exorcised by special religious practitioners. The ghosts are believed to haunt the places where they met their deaths and, envious of the living, to trouble them in various ways. They are the spirits of persons who met a violent or untimely end—bachelors who died without a son to perform rites for their restless spirits, women who died in childbirth or while pregnant, suicides, or victims of accident and murder.

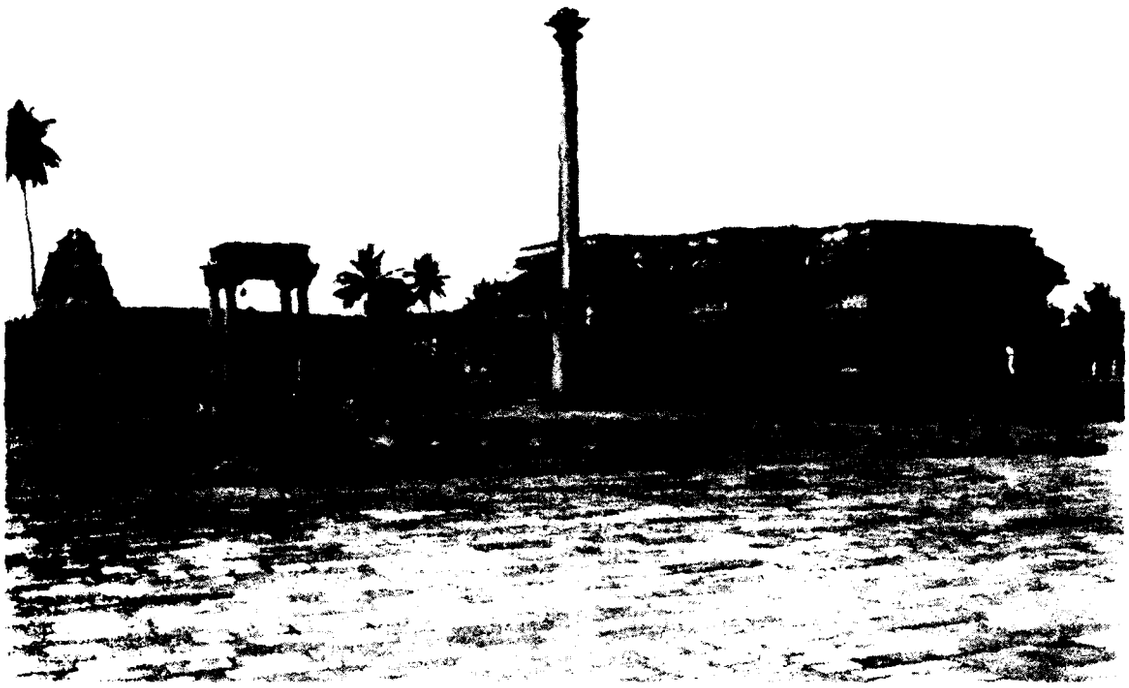
Sectarianism

A large number of sects and cults lay an equal claim to Hindu orthodoxy. The sectarian tendencies have arisen from three or four principal doctrines relating to the nature and identity of the godhead. One such doctrine is based on the worship of Siva as the supreme deity and is called Saivism.

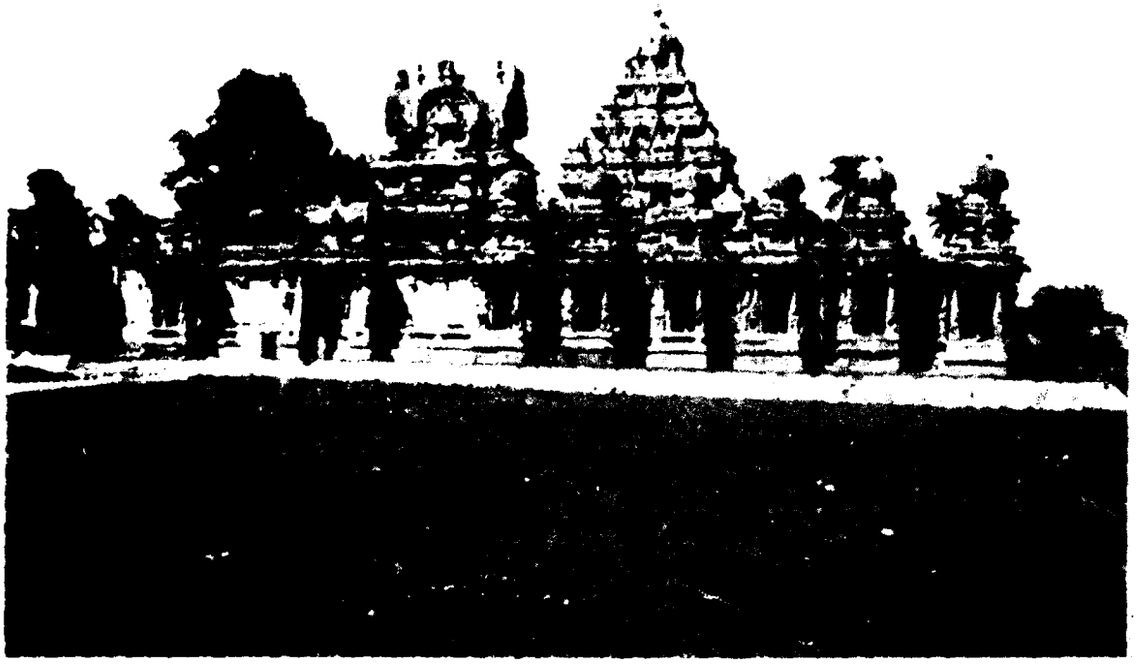
In keeping with the impersonal, ascetic nature of Siva, Saivism generally stresses *jnana-marga*, the metaphysical path of religious salvation through knowledge. It developed mainly in the south during the early centuries of the Christian Era. One of the more important sects in the Saivite tradition is that of the Lingayats, located mainly in the Kannada-speaking area of present-day Karnataka. There are over 1 million Lingayats in that area (see fig. 1).

A second major sect, based on the worship of Vishnu, is called Vaishnavism. The concept of the human incarnations of Vishnu, particularly of Rama and Krishna, is the central doctrine of this tradition.

The third is Saktism, which derives from the worship of the divine "energy" known as Sakti, the female aspect of Brahma, the creator. Most Saktas belong to the so-called right-hand sect, look upon the *Puranas* as their principal scriptures, and worship the divine mother. The philosophical approach to the goddess as the benevolent repository of the energy of nature predominates.



Medieval Hindu temple, Belur, Karnataka
Courtesy Clarence Edward Pike



Hindu temple, ca. A.D. 800 at Karchipuram
Courtesy Clarence Edward Pike

Some Saktas practice yoga as a means of achieving mystic union with the cosmic soul through breath control.

A minority of the Saktas belong to the so-called left-hand sect, often called Tantrism. They believe that progress toward the Brahman is achieved not by self-restraint but by sensation and passion. They exalt creative energy symbolized by the union of male and female; their practices are orgiastic and secretive.

The Smartars, who are for the most part Brahmans of Southern and central India, constitute the fourth major sect, which emphasizes the authority of the ancient institutions of the sacred law rather than the "revealed" scriptures. The Smartars worship Siva, Vishnu, Sakti, Surya, and Ganesha, but they may choose only one of them as their personal god. Most Smartars appear to prefer Siva.

At the highest intellectual level, Hindus have little concern for sectarian distinctions and see the gods as merely partial understandings of or emanations from the Brahman. The average villager worships Vishnu, Siva, Sakti, and other gods as need or custom dictates, without any sense of mutual exclusiveness.

Asceticism and Monasticism

The tradition of Hindu ascetism is older than the Vedic tradition and is rooted in the idea that control of the mind and body is essential to the attainment of spiritual realization or of supernatural power.

Every Hindu is expected, according to the ideal scheme of the four ashramas (stages of life), to spend the third period of his earthly existence in retirement practicing austerity and detachment. Ideally, in the fourth stage he retires further, seeking spiritual salvation in asceticism. The Hindu tradition holds that every person must marry and raise a family, but it recognizes that exceptional individuals may telescope the four ashramas and pass from youth directly into ascetic or monastic life. The sadhu (holy man) who leads the ascetic life is so familiar in India that misfits, vagrants, psychotics, and even criminals have often adopted the guise of sadhus. Historically, spies often traveled as sadhus into enemy kingdoms. Almost all sects have been founded by an ascetic (sannyasi).

The great majority of sadhus are members of monastic orders into which they have been initiated through appropriate ceremonies. A part of these rites includes a symbolic death and rebirth, the novice taking a new name and carrying out his own funeral observances. The sadhu is attached to a personal guru (see

Glossary) and observes the external and internal discipline of his order.

Each of the nearly 100 monastic orders maintains at least one and often scores of *maths* (monasteries) to which the sadhus are attached. The sadhus generally follow a routine that includes little sleep, a minimum of food (often only one meal a day), and considerable time devoted to spiritual disciplines and religious devotions. They spend much of their time on the road visiting holy sites and pilgrimage centers or practicing special disciplines of yoga in a jungle or mountain retreat.

A *math* generally consists of a collection of buildings and huts clustered around a temple dedicated to its special deity. It is financially supported by pious Hindus. The larger *maths* generally have an additional source of revenue in landed estates or moneylending activities. A *mahant* (spiritual head) runs the monastery.

Religious Specialists

Each priest is permitted to interpret religious principles and carry out ritual practices without check from established sacerdotal authority. Brahmans who wish to become religious specialists are trained formally in Brahmanic schools of religious education or informally in the family, learning from their elders. The basic distinction is between temple priests and domestic priests.

The primary center of worship is the home, and it is customary for each upper caste family to have a domestic priest who conducts regular ceremonies and another who is summoned to the house for sacramental rites connected with the life crises of birth, initiation, marriage, and death. In lower caste households the majority of festival, propitiatory, and ritual functions are carried out by the women on a family basis without benefit of a priestly intermediary or are conducted by non-Brahman practitioners.

Temple priests care for the temples or shrines and collect money in the name of the deity. Usually they anoint the worshiper by applying a mark to his forehead; the substance, color, or design depends upon the deity worshiped. Generally, they are not as highly respected as domestic priests.

The guru, or spiritual preceptor, is highly respected. He usually has a tie with a circle of upper caste families who seek his advice whenever they are in trouble or must make a momentous decision. The guru may gather around him a group of disciples he teaches and guides in the way of spiritual growth.

Other religious specialists include the *joshi* (astrologer), who

is consulted by persons wishing to know their horoscopes or propitious dates. A *patra* (kind of almanac) is published annually. It is on the basis of this almanac, or divination, that the *joshi* advises villagers when eclipses may be expected, when a festival should be celebrated, and on other matters of calendrical importance.

The exorcist, usually of low caste, is supposed to have great curative powers. He is called upon to exorcise the ghosts or the evil eye responsible for troublesome matters, such as disease, barrenness, deformity, insanity, or eccentric social behavior. There are special priests who officiate at certain death ceremonials and receive alms in the name of the deceased. Other specialists may serve as religious functionaries or purvey sacred Ganges water.

At the larger pilgrimage centers there are special hereditary priests known as Panda (shrine) Brahmans, who, besides officiating at various rites, act as a kind of tourist guide. They have mapped all India into spheres of influence, and each Panda Brahman family claims jurisdiction over pilgrims from its particular region.

Ceremonial Observances

Domestic and Temple Ritual

The common Hindu ceremony is the *yajna*,the ritual worship of the gods and invocation of their blessings. The *yajna* is accompanied by the recitation of sacred texts and involves the offering of food and other substances pleasing to the god. Domestic ceremonies differ according to their specific purpose, but there are some invariable elements. One is the offering of ghee (clarified butter), incense, wood, or grain thrown into the fire. In ordinary ceremonies the fire is only a piece of smoldering cow dung. Each deity appropriate to the occasion is worshiped in turn by bathing the image of the deity and offering it flowers, incense, a map, and food.

The worshiper, or the person on whose behalf a *yajna* is being conducted, must always purify himself for the occasion by bathing and fasting during the hours preceding the ceremony. He carries out other ritual actions symbolic of purification and consecration. At the end of the ceremony the Brahman is always given *dakshina* (payment), and *prasad* (sanctified food) is distributed to all the onlookers.

The Hindu temple is not regarded as a place for communal worship but as the abode of a deity. The devotee enters the temple for *darshana* (a view of the deity or a respected individual that confers spiritual strength and blessing) and to make an offering. A

typical village contains at least one small temple. In many cases the community celebrates an annual temple festival in which the resident god is entertained, carried in procession, and offered elaborate gifts and feasts. The temple may be one of the foci of community religious life, but it is seldom the chief one. It is the family and the home that dominate in the Hindu villager's approach to gods and the supernatural forces. Religious singing has long been important in Hindu religious life, and devotional songs are very popular among village men and women.

Daily Worship

Orthodox Hinduism recognizes five daily sacrificial obligations on behalf of gods, the ancestors, the ancient sages, guests, and animals. The exact form of daily worship differs greatly among regions, villages, and individuals. In many parts of the country the women of the family draw ceremonial designs on the floor each morning using rice flour or chalk and carry out simple offerings. A little ghee is sprinkled with some wood or incense on a burning ember as a sacred fire offering. Another common daily rite, which may take only a few seconds, consists in offering a little water to the ancestors at the time of the noon bath. This fulfills the first two daily sacrificial obligations. The third, accorded to the sages, is accomplished by reading or listening to some passages from religious literature.

The last two daily obligations are honored by almost all Hindus. Even the poorest families, before cooking each meal, try to set aside a handful of grain to be given to beggars and other needy persons. The hospitality of Hindus may be traced to their idea that any guest may be a god. The final daily offering to animals may be easily accomplished by giving a little food to the family cow or dog. Pious Hindus make special efforts to feed monkeys or other animals.

Life-Cycle Ceremonies

The *samskaras* (life-cycle ceremonies) mark the important stages of growth in the individual's life from conception to death and beyond. They have as much social as religious significance, and even one who is not meticulous about home or temple worship will observe these ceremonies on which his status as a Hindu and member of his caste depends. These rites are performed in the home by a priest retained by the family.

The birth ceremonies, six and 12 days after birth, ensure

purification from the state of ritual impurity caused by the birth process. Ceremonies, conducted by the women of the family, are held to name the baby and to mark the first feeding of cereal food, haircutting, and ear piercing. The family is usually more careful to observe childhood ceremonies for sons than for daughters.

The Upanayana is the *samskara* that endows the young man of one of the first three classes of the varna system of caste—the so-called twice-born castes—with adult religious responsibilities. He is invested at this time with the sacred thread that symbolizes his ceremonial rebirth. In orthodox families a boy is given his sacred thread between the ages of six and 11. Elsewhere, he may receive it later as a part of the marriage ceremony. A priest is essential for this ceremony. Usually the family guru officiates.

The most elaborate *samskara* is that of *vivah* (marriage). Its complicated and expensive rituals may extend through many days (see Marriage, ch. 5).

Death, like birth, is considered defiling, and the departed spirit must, like the newborn child, be purified through appropriate ceremonies. Cremation is the Hindu ideal, but probably 30 percent of all Hindu dead are disposed of otherwise. Small babies and members of many monastic orders and religious sects are buried.

The death ceremonies also have the purpose of propitiating the soul of the deceased so that it will not linger in the vicinity and will pass from the realm of Yama, god of death, to the heaven of the ancestors. It is believed that the soul, or various aspects of it, may simultaneously haunt the neighborhood as a ghost, journey to the realm of the ancestors, and be reincarnated in another being.

Pilgrimages and Religious Fairs

The custom of pilgrimages and visits to holy places is also important. Except for such trips, millions of peasants have scarcely stirred out of the village where they live. For purposes of pilgrimage, many Hindus travel the length and breadth of the country.

Religious bathing is a custom of central importance in Hinduism, and pilgrimage to a bathing place is frequent. Running water is revered as an agent, real or symbolic, of purification. Orthodox Hindus consider it impossible for running water to be polluted. Thus, when a person bathes in stagnant water or in water drawn from a well, he always pours it over himself, so that it simulates a flowing stream. The Ganges River is most important for religious bathing and is deified as Mother Ganges in the Hindu



Siva's god of the white bull, Nandi, carved from huge boulder; near Mysore
Courtesy Clarence Edward Pike

pantheon. Hundreds of temples and their associated bathing sites are located along the Ganges. Most other rivers are regarded as projections of the Ganges and are also held to be sacred. In addition, there are many wells and tanks, usually associated with a temple, whose waters are considered spiritually potent.

Benares (Varanasi) holds a unique place as a pilgrimage center. It is the location of a famous temple to Siva as Vishvanath (Lord of the World) and is especially important because of the Hindu legend that salvation is assured to anyone who dies near the Ganges at Benares. Thus, hundreds of thousands of aged persons come every year to Benares—some only a few hours from death and some to spend the remaining years of their lives in the holy center.

Allahabad, up the Ganges from Benares and located at the junction of the Ganges and Yamuna (Jumna) rivers, is still known to the devout by its ancient Hindu name, Prayag. The confluence of these rivers is a particularly auspicious place for bathing. It is at this spot that Gandhi's ashes were thrown into the Ganges. Still farther up the Ganges, at the foot of the Himalayas, is Hardwar,

here, it is believed, Siva caught the gleaming waters on his brow to break their fall.

Mathura and Brindaban, associated with the legends of Krishna, are pilgrimage centers, as is Ayodhya, the capital of Rama's kingdom. At Gaya in Bihar special priests perform the final ceremonies in honor of the pilgrims' deceased ancestors.

Today, trains speed men and women to distant pilgrimage sites. When the temple or bathing place is not so far, a number of women may travel on foot with one or two men to escort them. Women go on pilgrimages in order to fulfill vows made when a family member was ill, to ask the god to bless them with a son, to have an afflicting malevolent spirit exorcised, or simply as an expression of piety. Those who visit more distant places are usually widows and older women. Many pilgrim homes or shelters are built by well-to-do individuals as acts of religious merit.

The *mela* (religious fair) has been described as a cross between a country fair and a revival meeting. Held at pilgrimage sites, *melas* play an important role in both the religious and the social life of Indians. The biggest and most important *mela*, the Kumbh Mela, is held once every third year in one of four cities: Allahabad, Nadik, Ujjain, and Hardwar. Of several myths accounting for the origin of this festival, the most familiar is the commemoration of a battle between the gods and the demons over a pitcher filled with the ambrosia of immortality. After 12 days of fighting, Vishnu appeared on his bird-vehicle and rescued the pitcher. During his subsequent flight, drops of the precious liquid fell in four spots, the four cities of the Kumbh Mela.

Hinduism in Transition

The government's policies of secularism, planned economic development, and national integration are attempting to change the patterns and practices of traditional Hinduism. An increasing number of educated persons in both urban and rural areas question the innumerable prescriptions of custom and the ethics of caste associated with Hinduism. They criticize especially the elaborate and expensive *samskaras* that are important causes of rural indebtedness. Among some members of the upper castes, orthodox beliefs and practices are being moderated by education and social reformist ideals. Conversely, many lower castes (or *jatis*—see Glossary) are attempting in traditional Indian fashion to secure for themselves the symbols of prestige and status traditionally associated with Brahminical orthodoxy (see Caste in Operation, ch. 5). Thus, they change their names and discover a fic-

tional Brahman ancestor or identify their local or caste deities with one or another of the Brahminical gods. Some untouchables are insisting on the right to enter Brahminical temples from which they have always been excluded. In this way, some of the forms and values being discarded at one end of the social scale are being revived at the other.

The various modern reform movements that have sprung up, partially as a response to Western impact during the course of the past century, have exerted a strong impetus for religious change. The first of these, the Brahmo Samaj (Divine Society), was founded in 1828 by Ram Mohan Roy, a Bengali Brahman strongly influenced by his study of Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity, and Islam. He denounced polytheism and idolatry and instituted for the first time in Hindu worship a congregational service with hymns, sermons, and scriptural reading. As a strong advocate of social reform, he favored widow remarriage, opposed child marriage, and contributed to the official outlawing of suttee. The Brahmo Samaj appealed to Western-educated intellectuals and influenced leaders of the Bengali cultural renaissance of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but it never became popular.

A reform sect that has had greater success is the Arya Samaj (Aryan Society), founded in 1875 by Dayananda Saraswati as a "back to the Vedas" revivalist movement. It has a puritanical, anti-Western, and nationalist orientation and claims to find in the religion of the Vedas a pure monotheism, untainted by idolatry or superstition, and a purely functional organization of society into the four varnas with none of the objectionable features of the modern caste system.

The Arya Samajists are generally found in the northwestern region. They engage in educational and philanthropic activities and have an active missionary body that tries to bring back to Hinduism those who have left the fold through conversion to Islam or Christianity. In the villages in the northern part of the country, many social and religious changes, such as decline in temple attendance, abbreviation of ceremonies, rise in the age of marriage, and improved position of women, are attributed to Arya Samaj influence, even in places where the movement as an organized sect has been reabsorbed into the main body of Hinduism. Its influence has helped to lower the barriers of untouchability. In the south it has served more as a rallying standard against Muslims than as a force for religious reform.

One of the greatest reform leaders was Gandhi, almost universally known as Mahatma (the Great Soul). He worked to lead

Indian women out of purdah, to destroy caste barriers, and to elevate the position of the untouchables, whom he called harijans (children of God).

A more theological or mystical approach was taken by Ramakrishna (1834–86). His doctrine was a popularization of the tenets of Shankaryan Vedanta, the mystical path to ultimate reality. He attempted to make traditional Hinduism a universal and practical faith that could combine speculation with active social and educational work. His disciple, Swami Vivekananda, propagated his message in India and carried it to the West as well, establishing the Rama Krishna Mission centers and a monastic order.

The Great Reforms

At various times religious sages have proposed original paths to salvation while remaining within the spiritual universe and responding to the spiritual concerns of traditional South Asian religion. In two such cases, these teachings have formed the basis of monastic orders and lay communities that continue to exert influence in India today. In the case of Jainism, both the adherents and the teachings have remained limited to the territory of modern India. In the case of Buddhism, however, the teachings, often in greatly altered form, became the basis of religious movements that swept across much of Asia and took hold in countries as distant and diverse as Thailand and Japan, while essentially dying out in the native country of the founder.

Buddhism

Buddhism was developed by Siddhartha Gautama, known as the Buddha (Enlightened One), in the late sixth century B.C. as one of several attempts at reformation of the Hinduism of the day. It grew rapidly in popularity. After the founder's death, a number of conflicting schools of thought concerning his teachings developed. Two of them evolved into the Theravada Buddhism of Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia and the Mahayana Buddhism of Tibet and East Asia.

The original doctrines of the Buddha constituted a protest against the authority of the Vedas, the caste system, popular superstitions, and Brahman supremacy. The Buddha enunciated the insights he gained through lengthy meditation and ultimate enlightenment as the Four Noble Truths that he believed

explained the mystery of human existence.

The first Noble Truth is that all life is sorrow. Second, all sorrow arises from desire for and attachment to earthly persons or objects that can be destroyed or lost. Third, cessation of desire and attachment brings cessation of sorrow. Finally, this cessation can be achieved through the Noble Eightfold Path, also known as the Middle Way. This system of spiritual discipline steers a middle course between the extreme asceticism and mortification of the flesh taught by some sages, and the enjoyment of distracting sensual pleasure. The Buddha held that salvation and the release from the cycle of rebirth come not from faith, works, or rituals but from correct knowledge. He completely rejected Hinduism's emphasis on priestly ritual. The Buddha refused to address himself to the question of the existence of deities, believing them irrelevant to the truth of his system. After spending a lifetime on earth teaching his message to suffering humanity, the Buddha is believed to have gone to the state of bliss to which only the most advanced souls may aspire.

Although Buddhism is no longer a leading religious force in India, the impression it has made on Indian culture is profound. Many of the greatest ancient literary and artistic masterpieces were of Buddhist inspiration. The Buddhist Wheel of Law *(dharmachakra)* is found on the Indian flag, and the national emblem is the "lion capital" of the Buddhist emperor Asoka. The religion continues to be an important cultural bond between India and its neighbors.

As practiced today in West Bengal, Kashmir, and Assam, Buddhism does not resemble the original doctrines. It is a mixture of Tantric ritual (associated with the Hindu Sakti cults), magic, and popular accretion. Since Buddhism lacks the doctrinal exclusivity of the imported religions, such as Christianity and Islam, its converts tend to relapse into the practice of popular Hinduism.

Buddhism is also practiced by small groups in Ladakh, the border regions of Uttar Pradesh, the Darjeeling region of West Bengal, and Arunachal Pradesh. In these areas one finds prayer wheels, village gates, and monasteries in the Buddhist tradition. Religious practice is usually mixed with Hindu ritual, magic, and popular beliefs.

Since independence the number of nominal adherents to Buddhism has significantly increased. Conversion to Buddhism has been used by some untouchables to escape the disabilities of their inferior status. In 1956, under the leadership of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, an untouchable, a former cabinet member, and pres-

ident of the All-India Scheduled Castes Federation, 200,000 untouchables adopted Buddhism en masse. In 1958 another mass conversion took place in Maharashtra; as a result this state listed over 2.8 million Buddhists in 1961, out of an Indian total of nearly 3.3 million. In late 1968 some 2 million former untouchables were counted as Buddhists. The actual change in religious profession of these converts is ephemeral, and they soon relapse into Hindu practices. Their conversion is generally regarded as a show of political solidarity rather than the prelude to the formation of a new community based on the Buddhist religion.

Jainism

Jainism was founded by Mahavira (the Great Hero), the son of a king of Bihar and a contemporary of the Buddha, in the sixth century B.C. as an anti-Brahman reform movement. Historically, it has many parallels with Buddhism. They sprang up contemporaneously as protests against the caste system and the claim of the Brahman priests to spiritual supremacy. Both were originally monastic orders. Like the Buddha, Mahavira belonged to one of the warrior and ruler castes vying with the Brahmans for spiritual, social, and political hegemony. They both accepted the basic Hindu assumptions of karma, transmigration, and the desirability of escaping rebirth and rejected the monistic Absolute represented by Brahman.

While Buddha rejected extreme asceticism as a means of salvation, Mahavira advocated self-mortification to the ultimate degree. According to his belief, it was only through rigid control of the mind and passion that nirvana could be attained. After many years of severe austerity, Mahavira achieved nirvana and henceforth became a Jina (victor or savior). He and other Jinas are revered as deities.

The Jains believe in the existence of many deities, many of whom are the same as Hindu deities. These beings can bestow favors upon individuals but cannot help in the search for salvation because they, too, are subject to rebirth. Only through the example of the Jinas can salvation be achieved.

Jainism remains an essentially monastic religion. The practice of discipline and austerity is especially emphasized, and the rule of monastic life includes the Five Great Vows of nonviolence or noninjury to animals (ahimsa), truthfulness, renunciation of all forms of greed, abstention from all sexual pleasure, and renunciation of all attachments. The concept of ahimsa has had an important influence on all Hindus, as well as Jains. Fasting is important

and has been developed to a fine art through methods of gradually reducing the daily food intake. Jainism also recognizes fasting to the death as meritorious in certain circumstances. Roots, honey, and spirits are forbidden to Jains, nor may they eat after dusk. Reverence of the Jinas is carried out in beautiful temples.

The fundamental principle of noninjury to living beings is required of the laity as well as of the monks and has effectively limited the occupations open to Jains, most of whom work in banking, business, and the professions; ironically, this restriction has thus proved economically profitable for a supposedly ascetic community. Other restrictions, such as the injunctions against gambling, meat eating, drinking, adultery, and debauchery, have earned for the Jains a high degree of social respect. It is said that one rarely hears of a criminal Jain. The Jain regional monopoly of moneylending, however, has brought them considerable unpopularity in some areas.

The Jains are concentrated chiefly on the west coast, particularly in the Bombay area. Their community is viable because of their economic success and tendency to promote jobs for their own people and the respect accorded to them by Hindus, who often regard Jains as a sect within the Hindu fold. The Jain community retains the caste system.

The Jains were among the first groups to take advantage of Western education in India. Next to the Parsis they are the most prosperous and most urban community in the country. They tend to be conservative and stable politically. Their influence has been strong through their ethical values. Gandhi, for instance, was greatly influenced by the Jain doctrines of ahimsa and fasting and Jain attitudes toward sex.

There are three Jain sects. The first two, the Shvetambaras (white-clad) and Digambaras (sky-clad), represented an early split over the question of whether clothes should be worn by the monks and the laity or whether austerity should preclude them. Another difference arose between them over the question of admitting women to the monastic orders. The more liberal Shvetambaras admitted women, asserting that women could win salvation only when reborn as men. The Sthanakvasis, an offshoot of the Shvetambaras, arose in the fifteenth century in Ahmadabad as a protest against idolatry and temple worship. The Jain community is divided more or less evenly among the three sects.

A revitalization of Jainism has taken place during the twentieth century. The sects have attempted to reunite, to disseminate knowledge of Jainism throughout the country, and to adapt the ancient beliefs to modern conditions. A religious educational

system has developed to provide modern training for Jain priests; temples have been restored—the number of Jain temples is large in proportion to the number of Jains in the population—and Jain periodicals in Indian languages and in English are being published.

Islam

Like other religions of Middle Eastern origin but unlike those indigenous to South Asia, Islam is a revealed monotheistic faith. Its founder, a historically known figure, received through divine revelation a sacred scripture believed to be the literal word of God. Theoretically, therefore, Islam was complete at the moment of its inception and offered an authoritative and exclusive interpretation of the divine.

As a product of the same religious environment that produced Judaism and Christianity, Islam is anchored in the cosmology familiar in the West. It accepts the essential reality of sense data and the significance of the individual's unique earthly life. It views earth as the center of creation and man as an order of being qualitatively and essentially different from other forms of life. It accepts the cosmic significance of human action in history and seeks in it movement toward the goal of human salvation. It regards all people as equally capable of achieving salvation, equally deserving of it and, within the community of Islam, entitled to equal social treatment. Centuries in the Indian social environment and the absorption of large numbers of Hindu converts, however, have caused Indian Islam to develop along a distinctive line.

Tenets

In A.D. 610 Muhammad (later known as the Prophet), a merchant belonging to the Hashimite branch of the ruling Quraysh tribe in the Arabian town of Mecca, began to preach the first of a series of revelations granted him by God through the angel Gabriel. Muhammad denounced the polytheistic paganism of his fellow Meccans. Because the town's economy was based in part on a thriving pilgrimage business to the shrine called the Kaabah and numerous pagan shrines located there, his vigorous and continuing censure eventually earned him the bitter enmity of the town's leaders. In 622 he and a group of his followers were accepted into the town of Yathrib, which came to be known as Medina (the city)

because it was the center of Muhammad's activities. The move (hijra) known in the West as the hegira, marks the beginning of the Islamic Era and of Islam as a force on the stage of history; the Muslim calendar, based on the lunar year, begins in 622. In Medina Muhammad continued to preach, eventually defeated his detractors in battle, and consolidated both the temporal and the spiritual leadership of all Arabia in his person before his death in 632.

After Muhammad's death his followers compiled those of his words regarded as coming directly from God as the Quran, the holy scripture of Islam; others of his sayings and teachings and the precedents of his personal behavior, recalled by those who had known him during his lifetime, became the hadith.

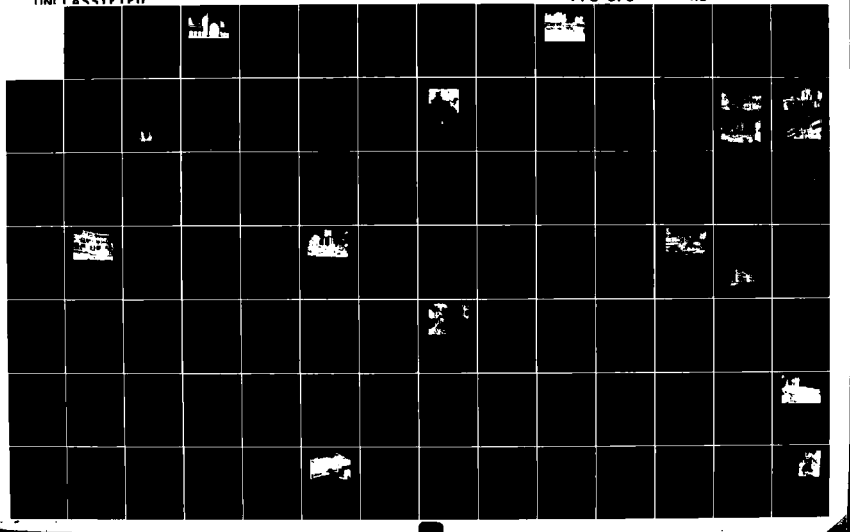
The *shahadah* (testimony) succinctly states the central belief of Islam: "There is no god but God (Allah), and Muhammad is his Prophet." This simple profession of faith is repeated on many ritual occasions, and recital in full and unquestioning sincerity designates one a Muslim. The God preached by Muhammad was not one previously unknown to his countrymen, for Allah is the Arabic for *God* rather than a particular name. Rather than introducing a new deity, Muhammad denied the existence of the many minor gods and spirits worshiped before his ministry and declared the omnipotence of the unique creator, God. God is invisible and omnipresent; to represent him in any visual symbol is a sin.

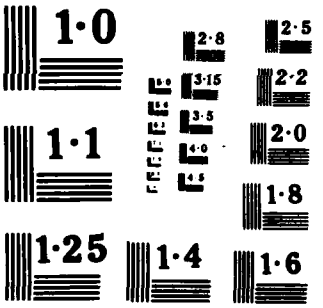
Islam means submission to God, and he who submits is a Muslim. Muhammad is the "seal of the Prophets"; his revelation is said to complete for all time the series of biblical revelations received by the Jews and the Christians. God is believed to have remained one and the same throughout time, but men had strayed from his true teachings until set aright by Muhammad. Prophets and sages of the biblical tradition, such as Abraham, Moses, and Jesus (Ibrahim, Musa, and Isa), are recognized as inspired vehicles of God's will. Islam, however, reveres as sacred only the message, rejecting Christianity's deification of the messenger. It accepts the concepts of guardian angels, the Day of Judgment, general resurrection, heaven and hell, and eternal life of the soul.

The duties of the Muslim form the five pillars of the faith. These are *shahadah* (recitation of the creed); daily prayer *(salat)*; almsgiving *(zakat)*; fasting *(sawm)*; and pilgrimage *(haj)*. The believer is to pray in a prescribed manner after purification through ritual ablutions at dawn, midday, midafternoon, sunset, and nightfall. Prescribed genuflections and prostrations are to accompany the prayers, which the worshiper recites facing toward Mecca. Whenever possible, men pray in congregation at the mos-

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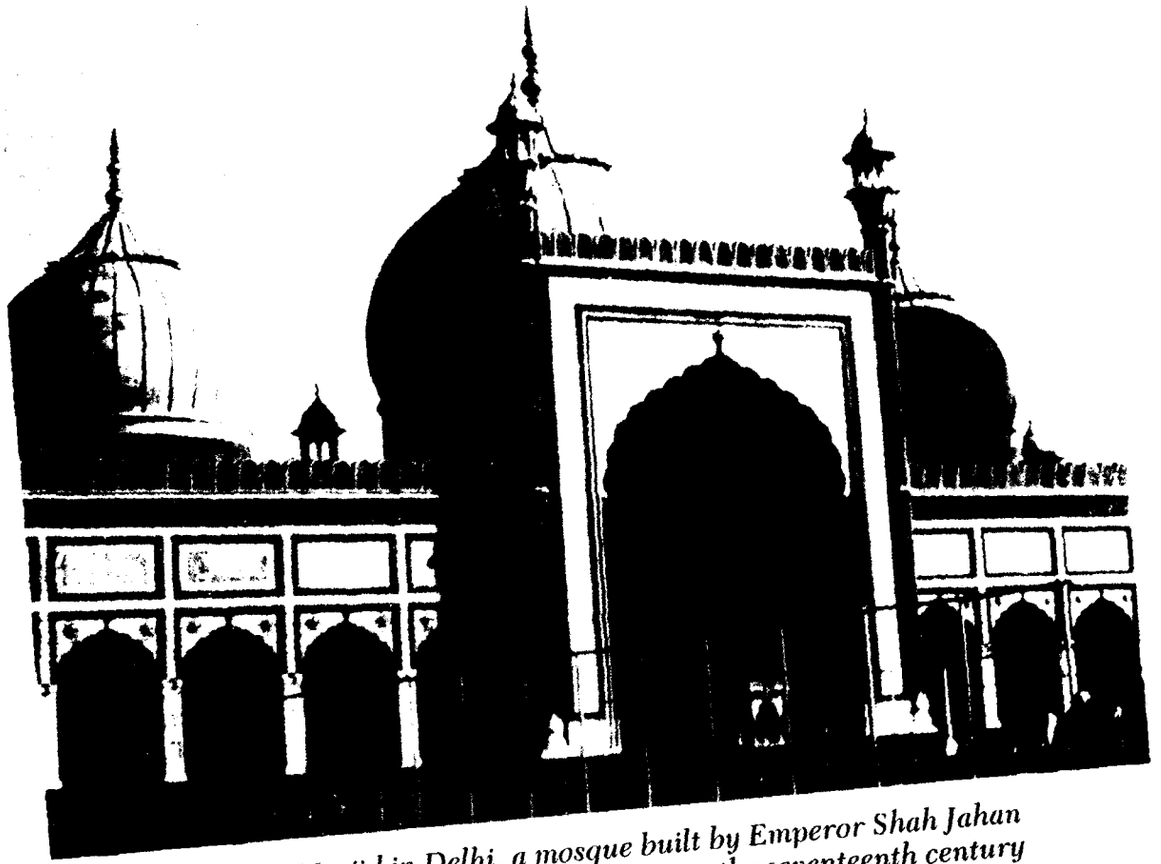
que under a prayer leader and on Fridays are obliged to do so. Women may also attend public worship at the mosque, where they are segregated from the men, although most frequently those who pray do so at home. A special functionary, the *muadhdhin*, intones a call to prayer to the entire community at the appropriate hours; those out of earshot determine the proper time from the sun.

In the early days of Islam, the authorities imposed a tax on personal property proportionate to one's wealth; this was distributed to the mosques and to the needy. In addition, free-will gifts were made. Almsgiving, however, though still a duty of the believer, has become a more private matter. Properties contributed by pious individuals to support religious activities were usually administered as religious foundations (waqfs).

The ninth month of the Muslim calendar is Ramadan, a period of obligatory fasting in commemoration of Muhammad's receipt of God's revelation, the Quran. During the month all but the sick, the weak, pregnant or nursing women, soldiers on duty, travelers on necessary journeys, and young children are enjoined from eating, drinking, smoking, and sexual intercourse during the daylight hours. The pious well-to-do usually do little or no work during this period, and some businesses close for all or part of the day. Since the months of the lunar calendar revolve through the solar year, Ramadan falls at various seasons in different years. A fast in summertime imposes considerable hardship on those who must do physical work. Id al Fitr marks the end of Ramadan.

Finally, all Muslims at least once in their lifetime should, if possible, make the *haj* to the holy city of Mecca to participate in special rites held there during the twelfth month of the lunar calendar. The Prophet instituted this requirement, modifying pre-Islamic custom to emphasize sites associated with Allah and Abraham, father of the Arabs through his son Ismail (Ishmael). The pilgrim, dressed in a white seamless garment *(ihram)*,abstains from sexual relations, shaving, haircutting, and nail paring. Highlights of the pilgrimage include kissing of the sacred black stone; circumambulation of the Kaabah, the sacred structure, reputedly built by Abraham, that houses it; running seven times between the mountains Safa and Marwa in imitation of Hagar, Ishmael's mother, during her travail in the desert; and standing in prayer on Mount Arafat. The returning pilgrim is entitled to the honorific *haji* before his name. Id al Adha marks the end of the haj month.

The permanent struggle for the triumph of the word of God on earth, the jihad, represents an additional general duty of all



Jama Masjid in Delhi, a mosque built by Emperor Shah Jahan in the seventeenth century
Courtesy Embassy of India, Washington

Muslims. Although this has in the past been used to justify holy wars, modern Muslims see it in a broader context of civic and personal action. In addition to specific duties, Islam imposes a code of ethical conduct encouraging generosity, fairness, honesty, and respect and forbidding adultery, gambling, usury, and the consumption of carrion, blood, pork, and alcohol.

A Muslim stands in a personal relationship to God; there is neither intermediary nor clergy in orthodox Islam. Those who lead prayers, preach sermons, and interpret the law do so by virtue of their superior knowledge and scholarship rather than because of any special powers or prerogatives conferred by ordination.

Internal Divisions

Shia and Sunni are the two principal branches of Islam. A majority of Muslims are Sunnis. A major difference is the belief held by the Shiites that leadership of the Muslim community rightfully descended by blood rather than by election, as main-

tained among the Sunnis. The Shiites believe that Ali, the son-in-law of the Prophet, was his rightful successor and that his descendants alone are entitled to the leadership of the Muslim community. Differences exist among the Shiites over the recognized number of Ali's descendants. Some maintain that there were 12 and others that there were seven. The more common in India are the Ismaili, or Seveners, loyal to Ismail, who would have been the seventh Imam (see Glossary) had not his father designated his younger brother.

Doctrinal and ritual differences among the various Shia groups, and even those between Shia and Sunni, are less marked in India than in most parts of the Muslim world. One reason is that in most villages the entire population is either Sunni or Shia.

At the village level, distinctions among Muslim groups are generally negligible, and even those between Hindus and Muslims frequently blur. Groups descended from Hindu converts retain many Hindu customs and beliefs. Although they acknowledge the one God in prayers, many village Muslims of lower economic status also worship and placate gods and godlings who they believe affect and control immediate destinies. When an epidemic strikes, they go to the shrine of Sitala, the smallpox goddess, with their offerings; when a son is desired, they pray at the tomb of a village saint, Hindu or Muslim. All Muslims proscribe pork and enforce the law of circumcision, but in other beliefs, practices, and rules of morality they offer slight contrast to their Hindu neighbors.

Sufism has played an important role in the development of Indian Islam. The Sufis are orders of mystics, many claiming allegiance to the Sunni form of Islam. Through devotion they strive to achieve union with their God. Both their philosophy and their religious practices reflect the strong influence of the Hindu environment.

The Sufi combination of monotheism and mysticism exerted a strong influence on the Hindu protestant movement leaders, such as Kabir and Nanak Dev (see Sikhism, this ch.). At the same time, Islam has absorbed from Hinduism a tinge of pantheism that sets it off from the orthodox Islam of the Arab world.

Worship

There is a mosque in nearly every Indian village with a Muslim population of 1,000 or more and in many much smaller villages where Muslims predominate. The mosque is built to house the worshipers, whereas the Hindu temple houses the gods. Al-

though Muslims and Hindus celebrate many public festivals together, they do not enter each other's temples.

Pilgrimages to Mecca and Medina are important annual events. Since the development of railroad, air, and steamship lines, the number of pilgrims has greatly increased. Returned pilgrims who have seen the more austere Islam of that part of the Arab world tend to become promoters of orthodoxy at home. Whereas formerly the long pilgrimage was the prerogative of the wealthy, low transportation fares make it possible for the relatively poor to set aside enough to fulfill their pious dreams. For those who cannot travel to the Arabian centers of Islam, the tombs of local Muslim saints serve as alternative sites.

There is no formal ecclesiastical organization in Islam, and theoretically every Muslim has equal access to God and his revelation, but in fact a learned priestly class known as the ulama (those possessed of religious knowledge) has grown up to interpret and administer religious law. Although the authority of this group has long received de facto recognition in India, it was not until modern times that any attempt at formal organization was made. This organization of ulama holds annual conferences to consider problems and make decisions on matters affecting the Muslim community in India.

At the lower levels are the imams of individual congregations who are attached to a mosque. The qazi is the marriage registrar and judge, and the maulvis are itinerant preachers, although the title is also applied to village Muslims learned in the scriptures. One who has received advanced training in Muslim law and theology is called maulana. A fakir, or dervish, is a religious mendicant; a *pir* is a Muslim spiritual guide.

Islam has been affected by Hindu forms of caste, and social distinctions analogous to those among the higher and lower castes are made. The descendants of the foreign conquerors and high-caste Hindu converts are referred to as *sharif* (noble); other Muslims come under the heading of *atraf* or *ajlaf* (lowborn). In some places there is even a third category, corresponding to the Hindu untouchables, known as *arzal* (lowest of all). Intermarriage between these groups is rare. *Arzals* sometimes are not permitted to enter the mosque or to use the public burial grounds. They include members of a variety of menial occupational groups that parallel the Hindu untouchable castes.

Low-caste converts are also known as "new" Muslims and remain on probationary status until they can legitimize their status through prosperity or exceptionally good conduct. It is among these new Muslims that the Hindu caste system still operates

most rigidly. Their former caste names and most of their customs and prejudices are retained. As they strive for more respectable status, they attempt to drop the signs and ceremonies and adopt the Islamic titles and honorifics.

Conversion

From the beginning Islam was a proselytizing religion. In the earliest days of Muslim rule, there was some incidence of conversion by the sword, but on the whole, forcible conversion was not pursued by later Muslim rulers. Powerful economic pressure in the form of a special tax imposed on unbelievers (*jizya*), however, occasionally brought whole areas to the Islamic fold. This tax provided a strong economic incentive to conversion.

In Bengal, where before partition more than half the population was Muslim, still another factor was at work. Bengal was the last stronghold of Buddhism. When a Buddhist dynasty was overthrown by militant Hindus in the twelfth century, Buddhists were persecuted, and the restrictions of the caste system were rigidly enforced. Both Buddhists and low-caste Hindus welcomed the Muslims as deliverers, and rapid conversion followed.

Conversion was generally collective rather than individual, although individual Hindus who were ostracized for any reason often became Muslims. Other groups were converted by the Muslim missionaries who wandered about the villages and towns from the eleventh century onward. Many of these missionaries were subsequently deified. The largest group of later converts was drawn from the mass of Hindu untouchables, for whom Islam, with its egalitarian doctrine, offered some hope of escape from the degradation of their place in the social structure.

The Muslim Community

In early 1985 over 80 million Muslims formed the second largest religious community in India. There are probably no exclusively Muslim local communities in the country; the percentage in the communities varies from under 5 percent to 50 percent or more. The Muslims generally exist peaceably and cooperatively with the Hindus, although communal disturbances occur from time to time. Their social and economic life differs little from that of the region where they live. Their family structure is similar to that of the Hindus, and only a few wealthy men have more than one wife.

Most Muslims use as their mother tongue the language of the

community in which they live. Some educated urban Muslims in all regions and most of the rural Muslims of the northwest speak Urdu as their mother tongue (see Languages of India, ch. 4).

Social distinctions within a Muslim group are less sharp than those of the Hindus, but the Muslims have a place in the social hierarchy of the locality and often concentrate on one or two occupations, complementary to those of the local Hindus. Muslims of different social class rarely intermarry, although intermingling and intermarriage are not explicitly forbidden by their religion or by rules of pollution, as they are for Hindus.

Villages with several Muslim families often have a religious leader to carry out ritual functions. Religious distinctions between Muslims and Hindus at the village level are not important aside from the prohibition against eating pork, the practice of circumcision, the willingness to eat beef (which low-caste Hindus also eat), and the ritual acknowledgment of Allah. Many Muslims join in local Hindu celebrations, and a local Hindu god whose efficacy has been proved may be worshiped by some Muslims.

The Muslim community as a whole remains a potential rallying point of communal loyalty and, in areas of relatively great Muslim concentration, conflicts between Muslims and Hindus break out from time to time on issues that have political overtones. Ill feeling between Muslims and Hindus, generated through the years of aspiration toward independence and during the period of communal clashes and resettlement after partition, was still apparent in the mid-1980s.

Sikhism

As a result of a series of cultural and social upheavals—including the military, political, and philosophical challenges posed by Muslim conquerors and missionaries—North India in the fifteenth century experienced widespread religious ferment. Numerous religious scholars and teachers secured large followings by rejecting, among other things, the validity of idol worship, the notion of divine avatars, and the religious sanctioning of caste (see Hinduism in Transition, this ch.). No doubt influenced by Muslim sufis as well as by such basic Hindu concepts as bhakti, many of the itinerant preachers—most notable of whom was a man named Kabir—focused on the themes of inward meditation and salvation by divine intervention.

Nanak Dev, the first of the 10 gurus (see Glossary) of the Sikh community, was clearly deeply influenced by these religious

questioners and seekers. He was born in 1469 in that part of the Punjab that at partition and independence in 1947 became part of Pakistan (see The Sikhs, ch. 1). After a long period of religious pilgrimages and meditation, he began to teach a new spiritual path, central to which was a belief in the unity and singleness of God. Nanak described this deity by such terms as *nirankar* (without form or "the Formless One"), *akal* (eternal), *alakh* (ineffable), and *sarab viapak* (everywhere present). He taught that an individual could overcome maya and break the cycle of birth after birth and death after death only by the salvation achieved by divine revelation. Nanak's hymns of teaching, guidance, and worship employed the terms *nam*, *shabad*, *guru*, and *hukam*. *Nam* (divine name) and *shabad* (divine word) may be thought of as essentially the two sides of one coin. The guru (divine preceptor) teaches, leads, and acts; in the words of theologian Geoffrey Parrinder, the guru does so as "the voice of God mysteriously uttered within the inward understanding of the awakened and receptive seeker." *Hukam* (divine order) refers to the order of the universe; the seeker who achieves harmony with *hukam* achieves salvation.

Shortly before his death in 1539, Guru Nanak designated his successor, thus establishing a procedure followed by all but the tenth and last guru. The third guru, Amar Das, established various forms of communal worship at the *gurdwaras* (temples), and the fifth guru, Arjan Das, supervised the compiling of hymns and teachings—most but by no means all of them by Guru Nanak—into a definitive scripture entitled Adi Granth (first volume), now generally called Guru Granth Sahib. Arjan Das also began the construction in Amritsar of a complex of buildings that eventually became known as the Golden Temple. The holiest building within this sacred area is the Harimandir Sahib, which includes the Akal Tekhat, the repository of the Guru Granth Sahib. The material in the book is written in the Gurmukhi script, which in contemporary India is used only for Punjabi (see Languages of India, ch. 4). The preservation and use of Gurmukhi continues to be of utmost importance to the Sikh community.

Although Guru Nanak was greatly influenced by Islamic theology and despite the fact that his closest associate for most of his life was a Muslim, the new religious community soon experienced persecution at the hands of various Mughal emperors. The community and its leaders suffered particular oppression during the long reign of Aurangzeb (1658–1707). In 1699 Guru Gobind Singh instituted sweeping changes that were to have a profound influence on the future and the nature of the Sikh community. He announced that he was the last guru and that the temporal leader-



Golden Temple at Amritsar
Courtesy Embassy of India, Washington

ship of the Sikhs would, at his death (which occurred in 1708), pass to the Panth, the community of the Khalsa (usually translated as brotherhood).

As established by Guru Gobind Singh, the Khalsa was and remains a highly disciplined organization whose members have undergone a formal baptism and have sworn to observe certain prohibitions, such as a ban on the use of tobacco, and to manifest their identity through five outward signs known as the "five Ks": *kesh* (uncut hair, including beard), *kangha* (comb), *kirpan* (dagger), *kara* (steel bangle), and *kachh* (shorts or breeches that reach to just above the knees). In addition, every male member of the Khalsa takes the name Singh, and every woman member takes the name Kaur. Those who wear the Sikh symbols and use the names Singh or Kaur call themselves Keshadhari Sikhs. The term Sahajdhari (meaning slow adopters) is one of the kinder phrases applied to those who do not wear the five Ks.

Early in the nineteenth century a remarkable warrior-states-

man named Ranjit Singh created a formidable kingdom that included the Punjab, Kashmir, much of what is now the North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan, and other contiguous areas (see The Sikhs, ch. 1). After Ranjit Singh's death in 1839, his kingdom began to disintegrate, and within a few years the region came under either direct or indirect British rule. During the late nineteenth century a reform movement emerged, known as the Singh Sabha, which articulated the need for the Sikhs to emphasize their distinctiveness vis-à-vis the Hindu majority. Their efforts were encouraged more or less openly by the British Indian government, which until the last days of the empire recruited observant Sikhs into the armed forces and the police and civil services in very large numbers. In addition, the vast irrigation projects that were undertaken by the British were of particular significance to the farmers of the Punjab, many of whom were Sikhs. (Although all 10 gurus had been members of the Kshatriya caste, most of the converts to Sikhism were Jat peasant farmers of the Sudra caste [see Theory of Caste, ch. 5].) At independence in 1947, the Sikhs were one of the best educated, most prosperous communities in British India, and by the mid-1980s their educational status and prosperity had increased even further.

The partitioning of British India was in the short run devastating to the Sikh community, perhaps half of whom had lived for centuries in that part of the Punjab that in 1947 became part of Pakistan. The Sikhs in that region fled to India, and most of them settled near their coreligionists in the Indian Punjab. By the 1950s activists within the community began to agitate for a Punjabi-speaking, Sikh majority state. This demand was met in 1966. During the 1970s and particularly in the early 1980s, a few people began to speak of autonomy and even of an independent nation, variously called Khalistan or Sikhistan (Land of the Khalsa or of the Sikhs).

By October 1983 Sikh agitation and terrorist acts by Sikh fringe groups prompted the Union government to replace the elected government in the state of Punjab with what is called President's Rule (see State and Local Government, ch. 8). Violence nonetheless increased, much of it carried out—or at least attributed to—followers of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, a fundamentalist extremist and a supporter of the call for Khalistan.

On June 6, 1984, Indian Army troops and units of three paramilitary forces entered the Golden Temple complex, an act never before taken. In two or three days of fighting, several hundred Sikhs were killed—including Bhindranwale—and thousands more arrested (see Sikh Agitation in the State of

Punjab, ch. 10). There were isolated instances of mutinies by Sikh soldiers (*jawans*), but the mutineers were quickly arrested. In early 1985 the state of Punjab remained under President's Rule, however, and the future of relations between the Sikhs and the Hindu majority remained uncertain (see The Crisis in Punjab, ch. 8).

About 90 percent of the Sikhs in India lived in the states of Haryana and Punjab, and another 4 or 5 percent lived in adjacent areas. The union president, Giani Zail Singh, was a Sikh, as were numerous other senior political and government officials. Although estimates varied, most observers believed that Sikhs, who totaled only about 2 percent of the population, accounted for about 10 percent of all military personnel. They were prominent in the army and air force, accounting for an estimated 12.5 to 15 percent of all ranks and perhaps 30 percent of the officer corps. They were also conspicuous in the civil and police services.

Other Religions

Like Islam, the other scriptural religions with substantial followings in India are, in anthropologist David Mandelbaum's words, "imported religions." They arose from non-Indian cultural milieus and were brought to India by immigrants. Except for Christianity, they have not spread far beyond the community of the descendants of their original adherents. In general, these communities have been assimilated into Indian society like most other foreign groups; they form distinct endogamous units in a universe of such units. Because of historical circumstances, however, the adherents of the smaller "imported" faiths have traditionally occupied relatively strategic positions in the economic life of their regions.

An indeterminate number of the 30 million people classified as tribals adhere to a variety of nonliterate and highly localized tribal religions, most of which are limited to one or a small number of closely related tribes (see Tribes, ch. 4). Because these groups are generally marginal to Indian life, their religions have had very little influence on the civilization surrounding them. In many cases vestiges of these religions remain after tribes have been absorbed into Hindu society, usually as low-caste or untouchable groups, but they do not generally affect members of other caste groups. The tenets of these religions are little known and apparently highly diverse. In general, however, they deal with patron gods or spirits and recognize neither the authority of the Brahmans nor the caste hierarchy.

Christianity

In early 1985 over 19 million Christians of various denominations were scattered over the subcontinent. The incidence of Christian conversion has depended upon the historical accidents involved in the location of centers of missionary activities, as well as on the social and religious status of the prospective converts.

Of the two main groups of Catholics in India, the older, variously known as Christians of St. Thomas, Malabar Christians, or Syrian Christians, now comprises a small minority of Indian Christians. They trace their origins back to the Apostle Thomas, who, according to tradition, landed at Malabar in A.D. 52 with a large colony of Syrians. The original converts were mostly from the upper castes, and the early missionaries did not interfere with their observance of local Hindu customs and caste distinctions. Their descendants are well educated, politically conscious, and highly respected. Later, under the Portuguese, converts to Roman Catholicism came from all social levels. Roman Catholics numbered about 8 million in the early 1980s.

A second group of Indian Christians dates from the late eighteenth century when Protestant missionary activity began in earnest. Protestants numbered about 11 million in the early 1980s. Their social origins, unlike those of the Syrian Christians, were very low. Large numbers of untouchables became Christians for much the same reason that during earlier centuries they had become Buddhists and Muslims. Other Christian converts came from the educated upper class, which adopted the religion of their British rulers from policy or conviction.

Because the missionary societies working in India have come from different countries, the various denominations have had different home churches in the past and are now independent, congregationally organized institutions with some support from foreign churches. For example, the Anglican Church of India, Burma, and Sri Lanka is now independent of the Church of England. A tendency toward the union of various Protestant denominations is illustrated by the formation in 1947 of the Church of South India, including Anglicans, Methodists, Presbyterians, Dutch Reformed, and Congregationalists. The first All-India Christian Conference on Peace met in Bombay in May 1966 to mobilize non-Roman Catholic Christians to work for secularism, social justice, and the improvement of Indo-Pakistani relations on the Kashmir issue.

Since independence the government has regulated the entry of foreign missionaries. Several India-based churches carry on missionary work in Nepal, Thailand, Indonesia, and parts of East

Africa.

The practice of Christianity and the extent to which a residue of Hindu customs and religious practices remains depend largely on the policy of the converting denomination, the social status of the converts, and the extent to which the particular Christians locally constitute a community. Upper caste Christians are more apt to carry out ritual practices in conformity with Christianity, but lower caste converts accept a nominal Christianity without changing their religious rituals to a great extent.

In the late 1960s discussions in Roman Catholic church seminars at various levels stressed the need to root the church in Indian soil; to integrate it into the ways of thinking and feeling as well as the externals of Indian life; and to employ Indian art, dance, and even incense for the benefit of the Roman Catholic community. The only reservation in advocacy of full cooperation with Indian secular organizations was in respect to family planning.

On the whole, however, Christian communities observe fewer social restrictions than do the Muslims or Hindus. In the urban middle classes they are marked by a generally higher standard of English education and comparatively greater freedom for women, a sizable number of whom enter teaching, nursing, and other professions.

The influence of Christianity, direct and indirect, has far exceeded its numerical strength. It was the vehicle of Western learning and culture for generations of Indians. As the religion of India's British rulers, it also became associated with political domination and cultural condescension. A stronger communal feeling is apparent among Christians now, including independence from foreign missionary organizations and a tendency toward the consolidation of sects and church administration.

Zoroastrianism

Zoroastrianism, the religion of pre-Islamic Iran, is practiced by the Parsis, an ethnic minority whose ancestors are thought to have come to India somewhere between the eighth and tenth centuries A.D. as refugees from Muslim oppression in Persia. The exact date of their arrival is unknown. The Parsis are concentrated in Bombay, where they are important in trade.

Zoroaster, who lived about the fifth or sixth century B.C., received a series of divine revelations and on that basis rejected the polytheism and idolatry of earlier Iranian nature worship and revered one supreme God, Ahura Mazda (the Wise Lord). He en-

visaged the universe and the soul of man as perennial battlegrounds between the forces of good and evil, the latter personified by an archdemon, Angra Mainyu, or Ahriman. There is a hierarchy of good and evil spirits, corresponding to the dualism that exists between good and evil, which belong to the kingdom of light and its opposite.

By the time of the Parsis' arrival in India, the original teachings of Zoroaster had already undergone profound modifications. The emphasis shifted from moral to ceremonial purity, and the addition of Hindu rites transformed the religion still further.

Zoroastrianism was later characterized by deification of Zoroaster himself and worship of the sacred elements, especially fire. The Parsis believe that either burial or cremation of the dead will cause defilement, in the first case to the earth and in the second to fire. Therefore, structures known as towers of silence are built on hilltops on vacant land for the disposal of the dead. Corpses are placed in the open towers and exposed to the birds of prey hovering constantly around the walls. The fire temple is an important religious structure. Because of its special sanctity and the reluctance of the Parsis to excite the curiosity of outsiders, it is generally indistinguishable from other buildings. Non-Parsis may not enter the temple, and the ceremonies are performed by a specially trained class of priests who have undergone rigorous training . There is also a hereditary priesthood that traces its descent from the ancient Persian tribe, the magi.

Since Ahriman and his demons pursue their activities everywhere, there are numerous rites that must be conducted to protect the earth, fire, and water from their powers and from defilement. Although corpses are considered to impart the most terrible defilement, great importance is attached to the performance of rites to the spirits of ancestors. The spirits are supposed to return to their descendants on ritual occasions, and there are special ceremonies of welcome before the towers of silence.

Judaism

According to the census of 1961, there were about 18,500 Jews in India, but their number has since dropped considerably because of immigration to Israel. The first group of Jews settled in Cochin on the Malabar coast around A.D. 70. They formed a semiautonomous community there that, although largely destroyed by the Portuguese in the sixteenth century, had about a hundred descendants in 1968. Another group of settlers came from Arabia in the seventh century after the victory of Islam; its

descendants are the Beni-Israelite communities of Bombay, Pune (Poona), and Ahmadabad. Iraqi Jews who came to Bombay and Calcutta in the nineteenth century gained prominence in the textile industry and in Eastern trade. The Jews are divided into two exclusive groups: the darker skinned Black Jews, descendants of servants in Jewish homes who adopted their masters' religion, and the fair-skinned White Jews, who retain a social superiority and rule of endogamous marriage.

Most Indian Jews maintain their religious identity, although many isolated communities have no rabbis. Religious education is the function largely of individual families. In some areas the Jews have adopted local religious customs.

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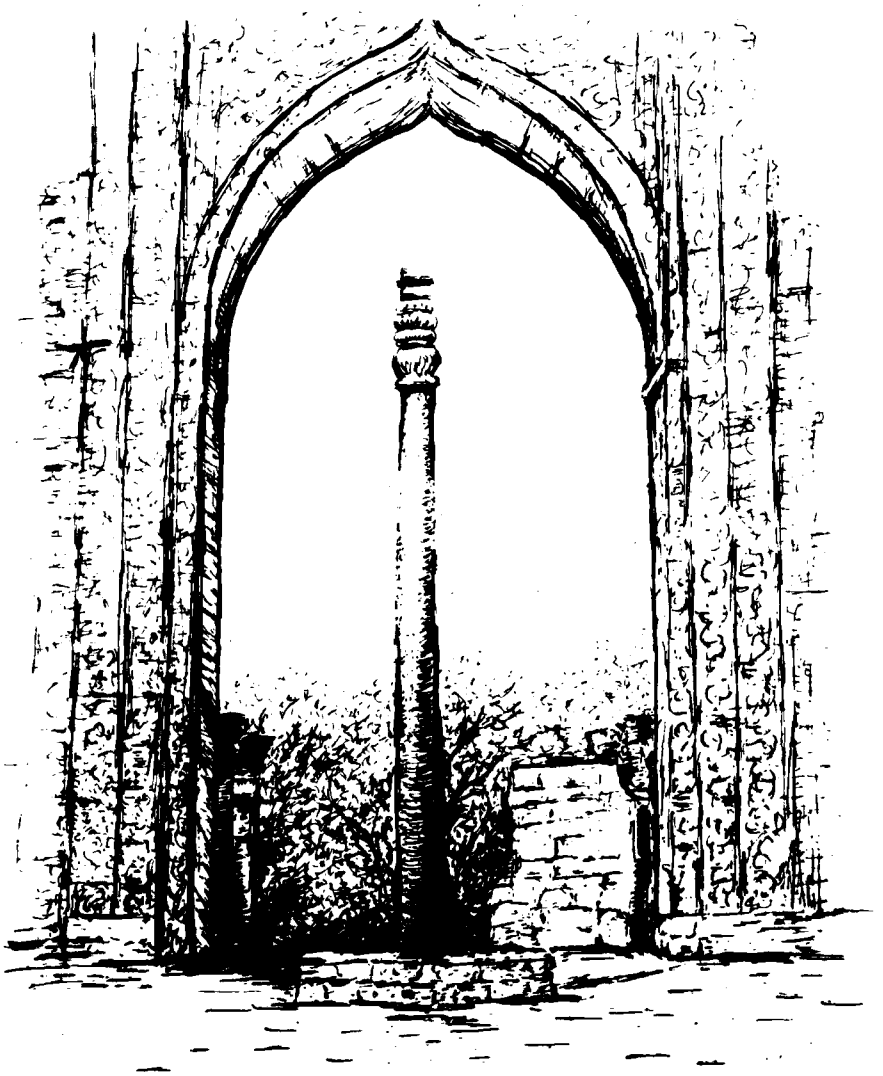
The literature on the religions of India is immense and growing. For example, a 1980 bibliography on articles and books in English published in the preceding 12 months included over 550 entries. In addition, most articles on society and culture include—in fact may be based upon—studies of India's numerous religious communities.

Overviews of these communities are set forth in Donald E. Smith's *South Asian Politics and Religion*. Classics on ancient India, the underpinning of contemporary Hindu society, are A.L. Basham's *The Wonder That Was India* and Heinrich Zimmer's *Philosophies of India*. Among the scores of studies on Hinduism that warrant review are S. Radhakrishnan's *The Hindu View of Life*, R.A. Sinari's *The Structure of Indian Thought*, and Louis Dumont's *Religion, Politics, and History in India*.

Aziz Ahmad's *An Intellectual History of Islam in India* is superb, as are other works by him. S.M. Ikram's *Muslim Civilization in India*, Imtiaz Ahmad's *Ritual and Religion among Muslims in India*, and Marcus Franda's *Fundamentalism, Nationalism, and Secularism among Muslim Indians* are among the more cogent discussions of the Muslim community.

Studies on the Sikhs—in common with the studies on other religious communities—vary from hagiographies to objective reports. The books by Gopal Singh, Khushwant Singh, and W.H. McLeod are reliable introductions to the history and belief system of this minority group. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Chapter 4. Linguistic Relations and Ethnic Minorities



INDIA 'S ETHNIC AND LINGUISTIC complexity is unparalleled in virtually any other single country in the world. To gain even a superficial understanding of the relationships governing the huge number of ethnic and linguistic groups, the country should be visualized not as a nation-state but as the seat of a major world civilization on the scale of Europe. The population is not only immense but also has been highly varied throughout recorded history; its systems of values have always encouraged certain kinds of diversity. The linguistic requirements of numerous empires, an independent country, and modern communication are superimposed on a heterogeneous sociocultural base.

The major languages of India belong to two major families, Dravidian and Indo-Aryan; they are as different in their form and construction as, for example, Indo-European and Semitic and are written in a number of unrelated scripts. Furthermore, most of the significant South Asian languages exist in a number of different forms or dialects that are distributed among the populace according to complex geographic and social patterns. Different individuals know different language forms and styles and use them in a given social context according to a number of subtle criteria.

There are a total of some 50 major regional tongues; the Constitution recognizes 15 (plus English) as official languages. In postindependence India, linguistic affinity has served as a basis for organizing interest groups; the "language question" itself has become an increasingly sensitive political issue. Efforts to reach a consensus on a single national language that transcends the myriad linguistic regions and is acceptable to diverse language communities have been largely unsuccessful. Many Indian nationalists originally intended that Hindi should replace English—the language of British imperial rule—as a medium of common communication. Both Hindi and English are extensively used, and each has its own supporters. Hindi speakers, who are concentrated in the northern part of the subcontinent, contend that English, as a hangover from the colonial past spoken by only a small fraction of the population, is hopelessly elitist and unsuitable as the nation' s official language.

Proponents of English argue, in contrast, that the use of Hindi is unfair because it is a liability for those Indians who do not speak it as their native tongue. English, they say, at least represents an equal handicap for Indians of every region. English con-

tinues to serve as the premier language of prestige. Efforts to switch to Hindi or other regional tongues encounter stiff opposition both from those who know English well and whose privileged position requires proficiency in that tongue and from those who see learning it as a means of upward mobility.

The evolution of India's multitudinous languages provides a glimpse of the subcontinent's culture, prehistory, and political history. Lacking any rationale for an overarching political authority, the belief that all the diverse tongues were derived from Sanskrit suggested a measure of cultural integration in much the same way that caste offered unity in the midst of social diversity. Linguistic analysis reveals much of the prehistory of South Asia's peoples. The rise and fall of empires has given impetus to the development of administrative lingua francas.

Linguistic diversity is apparent on a variety of levels. Major regional tongues include their stylized literary forms, often with an extensive body of literature. These differ markedly from the spoken vernaculars and village dialects that coexist with a plethora of caste idioms and regional lingua francas. Part of the reason for such linguistic diversity lies in the complex social realities of South Asia. India's languages reflect the intricate levels of social hierarchy and caste. Individuals have in their speech repertoire a variety of styles and dialects appropriate to various social situations. In general, the higher the speaker's status, the more speech forms at his or her disposal. Speech is adapted in countless ways to reflect the specific social context and the relative standing of the speakers.

Regional languages figure in the politically charged atmosphere surrounding language policy. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s attempts were made to redraw state boundaries to coincide with linguistic ones. Such efforts have had mixed results. Linguistic affinity has often failed to overcome other social and economic differences. In addition, most states have linguistic minorities, and questions surrounding the definition and use of the official language in those regions are fraught with controversy.

Beyond distinctions of language, non-Hindu religious groups and a variety of social groups outside the bound of the caste system lend further complexity to Indian society. There are tribal peoples in a number of regions; in addition, the country has several well-established groups of foreign descent occupying strategic positions in a number of locales and regions. Further distinctions along religious lines create a multidimensional mosaic of social groups.

India's tribal peoples—roughly 3 percent of the total popula-

tion—are located along the Himalayas and in the central hill region. The very definition of which groups should be officially listed as tribes is contested because to have official tribal status is to gain potential access to a variety of governmental benefits. The traits normally seen as establishing tribal identity—language, social organization, religious practices, economic patterns, and self-identification—are often diffuse; exceptions can be found to all of the conventional traits believed to define tribal (see Glossary) groups. The situation is complicated by the extent to which tribes have tended to assimilate characteristics associated with the Hindu majority.

The past century has seen a growing increase in the contacts between tribes and outsiders in most tribal regions. Under both British and postindependence rule, government policies have affected tribes' possession and use of their lands. Improved means of transportation have given Hindus and Muslims access to tribal land and labor. The exchange between tribes and the majority of rural Indians has been anything but equal.

Protective legislation has had a mixed impact; nontribals have proved more than adept at subverting laws prohibiting alienation of tribal lands. The system of forest reserves has had a more deleterious impact on tribals than on large-scale commercial interests or Indian peasants. Preference given tribals in education is diluted by the lack of elementary schools in remote areas, instructional materials in tribal tongues, and properly trained teachers.

Linguistic Relations

Languages of India

The myriad spoken and written languages on the subcontinent belong to four major language families; the vast majority of the population speaks one of two of these—Indo-Aryan or Dravidian. Perhaps three-quarters of all Indians speak an Indo-Aryan language, a family related to Indo-European, to which nearly all European languages belong. Persian and the languages of Afghanistan are closer relatives. Brought into India by migrants, the Indo-Aryan tongues spread throughout the north, gradually displacing the indigenous languages of the area. Roughly one-quarter of the populace speaks Dravidian languages. Most Dravidian speakers are in the south, where Indo-Aryan influence was muted. Only a few small islands of Dravidian speakers, such as the Brahuis in Pakistan, remain as representatives of the Dravi-

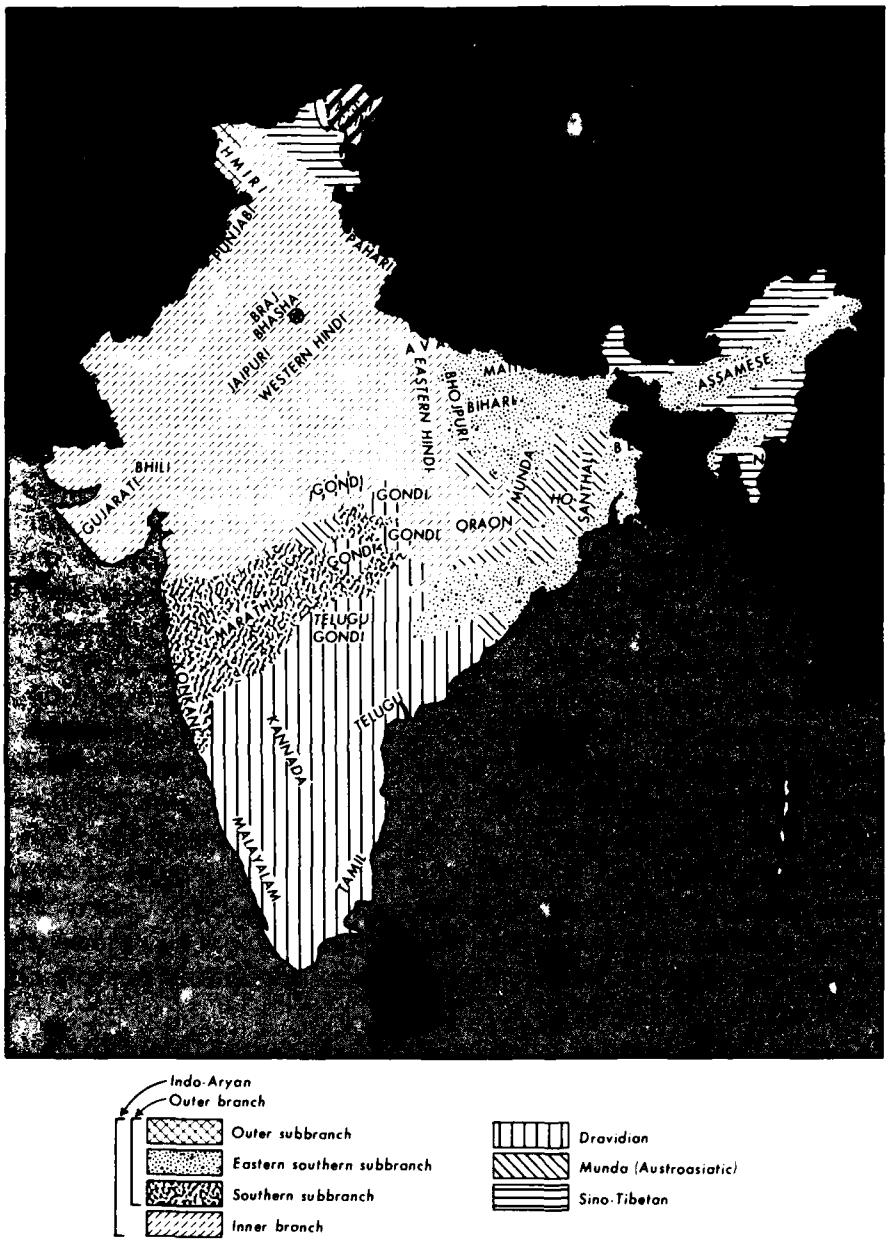
dian speakers who presumably once dominated the entire subcontinent.

In addition, there are small enclaves of tribal peoples who speak Sino-Tibetan and Austroasiatic (or Austric) languages. Sino-Tibetan speakers stretch along the Himalayan fringe from northeast Jammu and Kashmir to east Assam (see fig. 12). The Austroasiatic languages, composed of the Munda tongues and others purportedly related to them, are spoken by groups of tribal peoples from West Bengal through Bihar and Orissa into Madhya Pradesh.

All told, there are perhaps 50 major regional languages in India. The Constitution recognizes 15 as official languages: Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu, and Urdu. The 1961 census enumerated the speakers of major languages. Since then there have been only sample surveys. Extrapolating from estimates in the 1970s, observers suggest that Hindi is the mother tongue of anywhere from one-fifth to one-third of the total population; Telugu, Marathi, Bengali, and Tamil rank next, each spoken by roughly 7 to 8 percent of all Indians (see table 9, Appendix).

Both Hindi and English are used extensively in public life. Efforts to find a single national language acceptable to the subcontinent's diverse regions have made linguistic policy a highly politicized issue. For the speakers of the country's myriad tongues to function as a single administrative unit requires some medium of common communication. The choice of this tongue, known in Indian parlance as the link language, has been a point of significant controversy since independence. Central government policy on the question has been necessarily equivocal; political pressure groups have worked at crosspurposes for many years. Because the competition for jobs is intense, the choice of a national language becomes a question not only of public policy but also of individual social mobility and career prospects. The vested interests proposing any of a number of language policies have made a decisive resolution of the "language question" all but impossible.

The central issue in the link-language controversy has been and remains whether Hindi should replace English. Proponents of Hindi as the link language assert that English is a foreign tongue left over from the colonial past. It is used fluently only by a small, privileged segment of the population; its role in public life and governmental affairs constitutes an effective bar to social mobility and further democratization. Hindi, in this view, is not only



Source: Based on information from Bernard S. Cohn, *India: The Social Anthropology of a Civilization*, Englewood Cliffs, 1971, 40–45; and C. Collin Davies, *An Historical Atlas of the Indian Peninsula*, London, 1959, 82–85.

Figure 12. Distribution of Language Families and Major Languages

already spoken by a sizable minority of all Indians but also would be easier to spread and would be more congenial to the cultural habits of the people. Further, Hindi supporters add, English sets a linguistic barrier between the elite and the masses.

English continues to represent deeply entrenched vested interests. The privileged position of the elite depends, in part, on its mastery of English. Dravidian-speaking southerners in particular feel that a switch to Hindi in the well-paid, all-India civil service (the Indian Administrative Service—IAS) would give northerners an unfair advantage in government examinations. If the learning of English is burdensome, they argue, at least the burden weighs equally on Indians from all parts of the country.

The government, buffeted for decades by opposing pressures, has perforce steered a middle course on the link-language question. The Constitution and various other government documents are purposely vague in defining such terms as *national languages* and *official languages* and in distinguishing either one from officially adopted regional languages. States are free to adopt their own language of administration and educational instruction from among the country's officially recognized languages. The Constitution also guarantees the right of any citizen to petition the government for redress of grievances in any of the official languages. Further, all have the right to primary education in their mother tongue—although the Constitution does not stipulate how this is to be accomplished. The Constitution as drafted provided that Hindi and English were to be the languages of communication for the central government until 1965, when the switch to Hindi was mandated. Widespread violence in the south before that time, however, more or less indefinitely postponed the transition to Hindi.

The distribution of tribal languages in conjunction with their linguistic relationships to other tongues permits scholars to reconstruct the prehistory of the subcontinent. The presence of Sino-Tibetan speakers along the Himalayas indicates something of the long-standing connection between these peoples and those of Southeast Asia. Austroasiatic speakers—judging from the evidence from linguistics and physical anthropology—may be remnants of a prehistoric Austroasiatic culture once widespread throughout South Asia and Southeast Asia.

Dravidian, now spoken in the southern third of the Peninsula and isolated pockets in the north, was probably in use throughout the subcontinent until about 2500 B.C. Around that time Aryan-speaking people began filtering into the peninsula from the northwest. Knowledge of their language, Sanskrit,

comes to us through the sacred literature known as the Vedas, particularly the Rig-Veda (see Sacred Scriptures, ch. 3). From references in these sources, scholars deduce that the invaders were cattle-raising pastoralists who gradually migrated over the Punjabi plains and eventually settled first in the agricultural villages of the Ganges Valley and then southward into central India. Over a period of centuries Indo-Aryan languages came to predominate in the northern and central p tion of the subcontinent (see The Antecedents, ch. 1).

Despite the extensive linguistic diversity in India, many scholars treat the subcontinent as a single linguistic area because the various language families—however divergent among themselves and however widespread beyond the Peninsula itself—share a number of features not found outside South Asia. All show evidence of mutual borrowing, of influence and counterinfluence. Languages entering the subcontinent were "Indianized." Scholars cite the presence of retroflex consonants, a characteristic verb structure common to the diverse languages of India, a significant amount of Sanskrit vocabulary of Dravidian or Austric origin, and a number of other linguistic features as indications that the subcontinent constitutes a single linguistic area. Retroflex consonants, for example, which are formed with the tongue curled back to the hard palate, appear to have been incorporated into Sanskrit through the medium of borrowed Dravidian words.

Language development is intimately linked to the subcontinent's political history. Whenever a single empire held sway, its language of administration expanded and tended to supplant all others as a prestigious tongue. Whenever an empire disintegrated, the regional languages flourished in the vacuum. In the era between the Gupta Empire and the Delhi Sultanate, for example, regional kingdoms enjoyed a florescence; their languages developed along with a varied literature, architecture, and a number of other art forms (see table A). The Mughal Empire, which used Persian, followed by the British Empire, which used English, cut short the development of regional languages for centuries. Mughal rule retarded the evolution of regional tongues everywhere but in the south. The transformation was more thorough under the British. English came to serve as the language of administration, most educational institutions, and the most prestigious sectors of public life. Only since independence in 1947 and the institutionalization of linguistic states have regional languages managed something of a revival (see The Social Context of Language, this ch.).

Linguistic development reflected political ideology as well.

Linguisitic scholar Clarence Maloney notes that Indian thought lacked a rationale for a highly centralized state; for example, there was nothing comparable to the unique role of the emperor of China. In addition, although there were countless Chinese dialects, there was but one written language, which was promoted and protected by scholars and officials. By contrast, it was the ideology of caste that gave the subcontinent unity and offered legitimization to South Asia's ample social diversity. Similarly, linguistic diversity is rationalized by the fiction that all languages are derived from Sanskrit.

An analysis of the evolution of Sanskrit provides the key to the distribution of contemporary languages in North India. As Aryan-speaking invaders drifted into the Indo-Gangetic Plain, their languages experienced constant change and development. By about 500 B.C. Prakrits, or "common" forms of speech, were widespread throughout the north. By about the same time the "sacred," "polished," or "pure" tongue used in religious rites, the so-called Sanskrit, had also developed along independent lines.

In common with many ritual languages, however, Sanskrit proved an evolutionary dead end. Its use in ritual settings encouraged the retention of archaic forms; that it was above all a sacred tongue fostered a high level of interest in its purity and correctness of expression. Similar concerns gave rise to an elaborate science of grammar and phonetics and an alphabet believed by some scholars to be superior to the Roman. By the fourth century B.C. these trends had culminated in the grammar written by Panini, which set the form of Sanskrit for subsequent generations.

The Prakrits continued to evolve through everyday use. One of these dialects was Pali, spoken in the western portion of the Peninsula. Pali became the language of the religious reform movement that became Buddhism; eventually, like Sanskrit, it too came to be identified exclusively with religious contexts. By about the middle of the first millennium A.D., the Prakrits had changed further into *apabhramsas*, or the "decayed" speech; it is from these dialects that the contemporary Indo-Aryan languages of the subcontinent developed. The rudiments of modern vernaculars were in place by about A.D. 1000 to 1300.

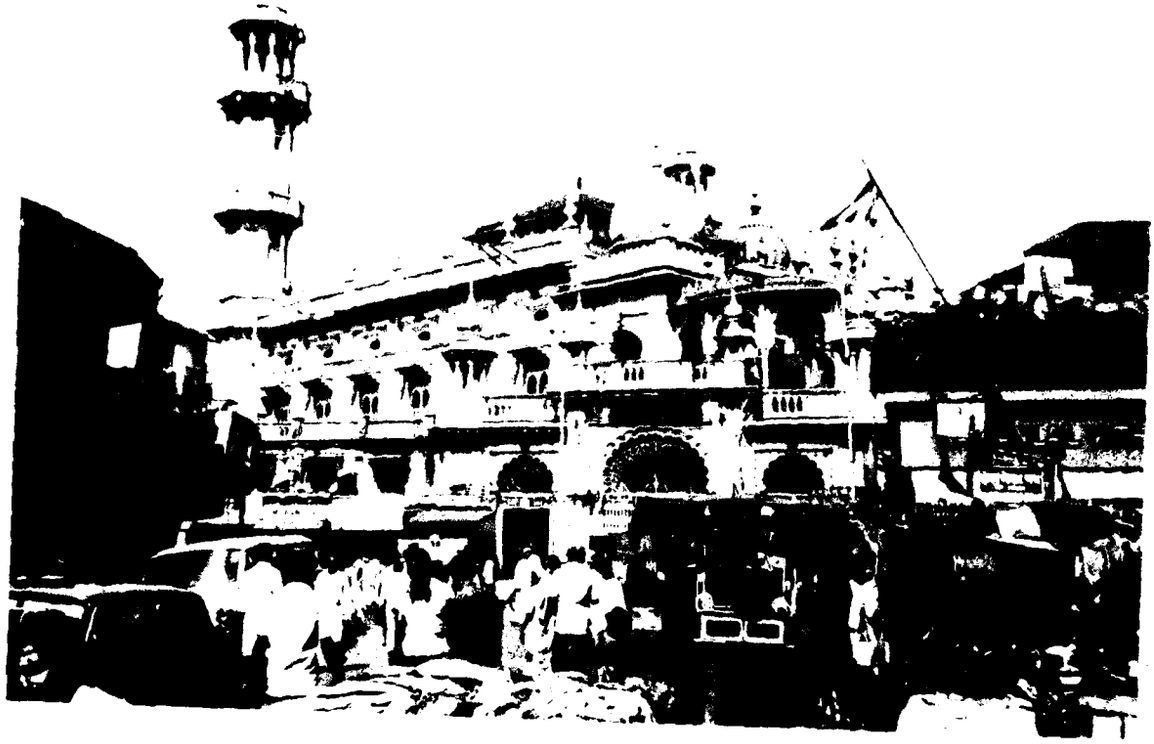
Throughout their lengthy evolution the languages of the major families continuously influenced one another. Sanskrit had without a doubt the single greatest influence on both Indo-Aryan and Dravidian languages. Among the Dravidian languages, Tamil, in which the earliest writings date from the first century A.D., shows a demonstrable Sanskrit influence that increased over the centuries. Kannada and Telugu, which emerged as liter-

ary languages in the sixth and twelfth centuries A.D., were centered closer to Indo-Aryan settlements and experienced concomitantly greater Sanskrit influence. The Sanskrit influence is seen mainly in vocabulary, giving rise to a large number of cognates in the assorted tongues and facilitating, to some extent, language learning. Dravidian languages had a notable impact on the evolution of Indo-Aryan languages, including Sanskrit.

Written scripts are another source of divergence between Dravidian and Indo-Aryan languages. Although most scripts developed from the Brahmi system that spanned the last centuries B.C. and the first A.D., there are significant differences between Dravidian and Indo-Aryan scripts. Hindi and several related language groups use Devanagari; Oriya, Gujarati, Punjabi, and several others use derivative forms of the same script. Dravidian languages typically have their own scripts. With the exception of Tamil, however, most consist of different symbols for essentially the same sounds.

Modern Indo-Aryan languages are divided into inner and outer subbranches. The outer subbranch includes Western Punjabi, Sindhi, Bengali, Assamese, Bihari, and Marathi. The inner subbranch comprises Eastern Hindi and Western Hindi, Punjabi, Pahari, Rajasthani, and Gujarati. Most share a common ancestor, Nagara, an *apabhramsa*. Hindi, the language with the most speakers, developed from the Kharibolo dialect that spread from what is now western Uttar Pradesh. Hindi predominates in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, and Delhi and its environs.

The development of Hindi and Urdu gives a glimpse of the processes at work in language evolution on the subcontinent. Urdu developed as a lingua franca in North India under the Mughal rulers. As conquerers, the Mughals had learned and adopted the regional dialect in use to the north and northeast of Delhi; in time, the language spread even into Dravidian areas because it served as a lingua franca for trade, administration, and military purposes. Urdu appropriated a significant number of words from Persian, the official language of the Mughal Empire. By the late 1600s to early 1700s, Urdu had developed into a highly stylized form written in a Persian-Arabic script and was far removed from any spoken language. In the nineteenth century Urdu began to serve as the language of administration in the lower courts in the north. Hindi developed at roughly the same time under the leadership of Hindu reformers. In essence, Hindi was Urdu using a Sanskrit-based script, Devanagri; efforts were made to purge the language of its Persian borrowings.









Street Scenes, Bombay
Courtesy Sheila L. Ross

Contemporary tongues and dialects, as they figure in the lives of most Indians, are a far cry from the stylized literary forms of Indo-Aryan or Dravidian languages. North India especially can be viewed as a continuum of village dialects, each mutually intelligible to those of surrounding villages. Spoken dialects of more distant villages will be less and less understandable and finally simply unintelligible. A variety of caste dialects and idioms coexist at the same level. In addition, there are numerous regional dialects that villagers use when doing business in nearby towns or bazaars. Many of these regional dialects have become standardized over the last two centuries and now serve as the official languages of the states in which they are centered.

Since the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, a number of regional languages—Bengali, Tamil, and Hindi, to name some of the more prominent—have developed and become relatively standardized. They are now used throughout their respective regions for most levels of administration, business, and social intercourse. Each is associated with a body of literature. Printing, which started in the eighteenth century, gave a major boost to the standardization of regional tongues because the printing process required standardized forms and usage. British rule was also an impetus; the British missionaries and colonial administrators learned and often studied regional languages, and their translations of English-language materials, such as the Bible, also encouraged the development of written, standard languages.

Such written forms often differ widely from the spoken vernaculars and village dialects. Diglossia—a situation in which a highly elaborate, formal language exists alongside a more colloquial form of the same tongue—occurs in many instances. For example, as Bengali developed as a literary language in the nineteenth century, it was heavily influenced by Sanskrit in vocabulary and grammar. The spoken regional dialect, by contrast, evolved in Calcutta and spread outward as a medium of business communication. It was so divergent from written Bengali as to be nearly another tongue. Telugu scholars waged a bitter battle in the early decades of the twentieth century over proper language style. Reformers favored a simplified prose format for written Telugu, while traditional classicists wished to continue using the classical literary poetic form. In the end the classicists won, al-

though a more colloquial written form eventually began to appear in the mass media. Diglossia reinforces social barriers, for only a fraction of the populace is sufficiently educated to master the more esoteric literary form of the language.

Hindi has spread throughout North India as a contemporary lingua franca. Its speakers range from illiterate workers in large cities to highly educated civil servants. Many city dwellers learn Hindi as a second or third language even if they speak a regional language, such as Marathi, Bengali, or Gujarati. As professionals have become more and more mobile, they have come to rely more heavily on Hindi as a means of communication. Increasingly, those aspiring to career advancement learn standard Hindi in addition to their own regional language. There is also a modified version of the standard Hindi that many city dwellers use.

A number of former literary dialects, such as Braj Bhasha, Avadhi, and Maithili, have been essentially subsumed under Hindi literature. Maithili, spoken in Bihar, has a body of literature and its own grammar. Proponents of its use insist that it is a language in its own right and that it is related more closely to eastern Indo-Aryan tongues than to Hindi. Nonetheless, efforts to revive its use have had minimal success beyond some use of Maithili in elementary education. Other regional tongues that lack literary forms, such as Marwari and Magadhi, have also come under Hindi. Some of these dialects differ from Hindi far more than does Urdu. In general, religious affiliation is the distinguishing characteristic of Hindi and Urdu speakers; Muslims claim Urdu, and Hindus, Hindi. The use of two radically different scripts is a statement of cultural identity. Hindi literature began as a reaction to Muslim domination, and Urdu writing remains strongly marked by a reaction against Hindus.

Urdu and Hindi are illustrative of more general sociolinguistic processes. Throughout the twentieth century the growth of mass communications has made language pivotal in defining ethnic differences. Radio, television, and the print media have fostered standardization of regional dialects, if only to facilitate communication. Linguistic standardization has threatened ethnic differences insofar as language has served as a cultural marker. Mass communication forces the adoption of a single standard regional tongue; typically, the choice is the dialect of the majority in the region or of the region's preeminent business center. Less

standard forms fall by the wayside because their use handicaps speakers outside their immediate home base. Mass communication makes choice of language a political issue in a way not previously known and further defines the linguistic geography of the subcontinent.

The Social Context of Language

Listing the names and relationships among the great language families and tracing the evolution of contemporary standard forms tend to give the misleading impression that the speech forms associated with major linguistic designations play a major role in the daily life of the average Indian. In fact, however, standard tongues, such as Hindi or Bengali, represent merely one aspect of a complex and subtle linguistic pattern. India's languages, far more than those in most other countries, exist in a series of complementary and overlapping levels mirroring the complex levels of social hierarchy and caste interaction.

Even as printing and modern communications have favored the development of standardized regional tongues, these continue to coexist with myriad village dialects. The distinctions between the numerous levels of language are by no means clear and fixed; there is neither scholarly nor official consensus. Village speech is understood by neighbors from surrounding hamlets, and change—in the form of a dialect that is unintelligible—is apparent to the villager only as he or she travels farther afield. There is a saying that language changes every 60 to 80 kilometers; villagers themselves often do not even name their own tongue, being content simply to believe that it is the correct way of speaking. The names of dialects are often devised only by neighboring villagers and often are anything but complimentary.

The Indo-Aryan languages in South Asian villages form a vast continuum stretching across the northern part of the subcontinent. At any point neighboring dialects are mutually intelligible, and forms from some distance are not. The relationship between distance and mutual intelligibility holds not only within the Indo-Aryan belt but at its fringes as well. Because vocabulary in many Dravidian languages was heavily influenced by Sanskrit, Dravidian and Indo-Aryan speakers from nearby regions may understand much of one another's speech, while two Hindi speakers from distant villages find communication difficult. At marketing or administrative centers, people are normally conversant in another level of language; the dialect of the town or city serves as

the language of trade between townspeople and visiting villagers.

Regional languages exist at another level still removed from the others; they also exist in a variety of written and spoken forms, each with its own complex history. Some of the forms of regional language may be unknown to most villagers and even many city dwellers. Typically, it is the urban intelligentsia who are conversant in a regional tongue; their commitment to it is frequently a matter of rising ethnic-regional consciousness with broad sociopolitical overtones. The standard regional language may be the native tongue of only a small group of educated inhabitants of the region's major urban center. Often the predominant regional tongue is associated with a city that has long exercised politico-economic hegemony in a region. Even literate villagers may have difficulty understanding it.

Any given individual has a repertoire of languages, dialects, and styles of speech that he or she may use, depending on the appropriate context. On the basis of their social status, individuals differ in the speech forms they have available. The more socially isolated—women and untouchables—tend to be more parochial in their speech than higher caste men, who are often able to use a colloquial form of the regional dialect, the caste patois, and the regional standard dialect.

The basic realities of social life feed into the complexity of language usage. Society is hierarchical, and interaction always reflects the relative statuses of those involved; these facts are reflected in the plethora of speech forms designed for specific social situations. Social life is compartmentalized into separate spheres, each with its appropriate behavior and speech. In this sense the numerous regional and caste dialects persist because the social reality they reflect and legitimize also persists.

As a result, there are a large number of speech forms symbolizing either membership in certain specific and circumscribed groups or interaction between groups or individuals in certain contexts. In villages, for example, differences in pronunciation, grammar, and word choice often mark the various caste groups. The differences are not great enough to prevent members of various castes from understanding one another, but they do serve to mark the speaker as a member of a specific *jati*. The major split in North India is generally between the touchable and untouchable castes. In South India there is a three-way split among Brahmans, other touchable castes, and untouchables. Beyond intercaste differences in language, most village castes use their own formal and informal varieties, depending on the social setting. Also, there are varieties that only local *jati* members use in addressing one

another. Malayalam, for example, has separate terms for the word *house*, depending on the status of the house occupants.

Traditional speech has always had an elaborate vocabulary to reflect the relative status of the speakers. Language has always reflected the enduring social realities of South Asia. In traditional dramas, for example, women and low-status individuals spoke a Prakrit, while the main characters spoke Sanskrit. Scholars note that more recent changes are related to mass communication and education. Educated and illiterate persons identify themselves according to their speech patterns. In contemporary India, however, the traditional social dialects are giving way to a more straightforward distinction based on the speaker's educational background. Among Telugu speakers, for example, linguists note a dichotomy in speech forms between illiterate monolinguals and educated persons that transcends caste or regional origin. The speech of the uneducated lacks the phonemes and vocabulary borrowed from Sanskrit and English. The distinction is the more telling because the phonemes can be mastered only with great effort. At the same time, standard dialects that are used in university education are expanding their technical vocabularies at a fast rate. Mass communication, too, has facilitated the spread of standard dialects.

An educated person may master several different speech forms that are often so different as to be considered separate languages. Western-educated scholars may well use the regional standard language mixed with English vocabulary with their colleagues at work. At home a man may switch to a more colloquial vernacular, particularly if his wife is uneducated. Even the highly educated frequently communicate in their village dialects on returning home.

India's linguistic diversity has fostered considerable bilingualism, although precisely how many Indians are competent in more than one language and what those languages are remains the subject of debate. Relatively few Indians are truly fluent in both English and an Indian language. Perforce, a substantial minority are able to speak two Indian languages; even in the so-called linguistic states, there are minorities who do not speak the official language as their native tongue and must therefore learn it as a second language. Many tribal people are bilingual. Rural-urban migrants are frequently bilingual in the regional standard language as well as in their village dialect. In Bombay, for example, many migrants speak Hindi or Marathi in addition to their native tongue. Bilingualism in South Asia, however, is inextricably linked to social hierarchy. The subcontinent's long history of

foreign rule has fostered what Maloney terms "the linguistic flight of the elite." Language—either Sanskrit, Persian, or English—formed a barrier that only a few were fortunate enough to overcome. Religious celebrations, even popular festivals, typically have their own medium of communication, which may be one of the subregional languages. The issue is not so much communication as it is a cultural performance that conforms to the expectations of the faithful. Likewise, political meetings are typically carried on in the regional language; villagers follow as best they can.

On yet another level are languages that have been widely used throughout South Asian civilization at one time or another. Sanskrit has served religious purposes for some three millennia; Persian was the language of official communication and literary endeavor from the twelfth to the nineteenth centuries. Since the early nineteenth century, English has been the language of choice for the well-educated.

In contemporary India millions of students finish their secondary or higher education knowing at least how to read and understand English. It continues to be the premier prestige language. Until the 1940s English was the language of instruction, even in secondary schools. Since independence there have been periodic efforts to encourage instruction in regional standard languages on the university level. There was a big push to switch from English to these languages in the early 1950s. Such policies have encountered substantial resistance. Often the policies are simply ignored; professors trained in English continue to use their notes prepared in English, teaching "through" English. Students resist the switch from English as vigorously as teachers, for in their view education means education in English. Students' preferences are not simply a matter of prestige. Business and commerce are conducted largely in English, and government positions of high rank—regardless of stated policy—demand facility in English.

Andhra Pradesh made considerable effort to implement the use of Telugu on the university level in the 1960s and 1970s. Institutes produced Telugu texts for courses up to the university level; by the late 1970s most of the state's colleges and junior colleges had instituted a Telugu curriculum, although in many instances it was simply an alternative to the English course of studies. Students and teachers alike resisted the change, and their reasons for so doing would hold for virtually any of India's states: teachers had been educated in English, advanced degrees demanded competence in English, and students felt that a knowledge of English would give them an edge in competition for jobs. Not even the

state government gave preference to students graduating in the Telugu curriculum.

English permeates public life; commerce, business, science, many newspapers and magazines, and national television use it—exclusively, primarily, or predominantly. Although it remains the language of a small elite, its use continues to spread. Burgeoning urbanization has contributed to this process. Working-class parents, themselves rural-urban migrants and perhaps bilingual in their village dialect and the regional standard language, perceive English as the tool their children need in order to advance. Primary and secondary schools in which English is the medium of instruction are a "growth industry." Facility in English enhances a young woman's chances in the marriage market—no small advantage in the often protracted marriage negotiations between families (see Marriage, ch. 5). The English speaker encounters more courteous responses than speakers of indigenous languages.

English as a prestige language and the tongue of first choice continues to serve as the medium of instruction in elite schools at every level. The older and more prestigious universities use it without apology. Virtually every city of any size has a number of private, English-language secondary schools. Even government schools run for the benefit of senior civil service officers are conducted in English because only that language is an acceptable medium of communication throughout the country (see Education, ch. 2).

English has replaced (or reinforced) many of the traditional barriers to social mobility. Proficiency in English serves to separate the social wheat from the chaff; perhaps 2 to 3 percent of the populace qualifies as bilingual in English. Parents strive to help their children cross the language barrier. Middle- and upper-level government personnel and business people educate their children in English virtually without exception. Not to do so is to threaten their children's future prospects for advancement. Even poor parents make every effort to send their children to English-language schools as the first step on the road to success. Indeed, English-language nurseries are proliferating.

Government attempts to limit the use of English in administration have met with varying degrees of success. The courts, heavily influenced by British jurisprudence, have found it difficult to make the change, and there has been considerable variation among the states in the extent to which they use English in the courts. In Kerala a government commission recommended the replacement of English in lower courts. By the late 1970s sig-

nificant parts of the statutory code had still not been translated into Malayalam. Even in Andhra Pradesh, the first linguistic state formed, there has been resistance to using Telugu in government. In the mid-1970s a commission cited the following reasons for failing to use Telugu in government communications: bureaucrats' lack of practice in writing in Telugu, the lack of Telugu vocabulary for English terms, a dearth of Telugu typewriters and typists, and "failure of the staff to show preference for Telugu psychologically." Businesses have been even more resistant to switching from English to Telugu.

The regional standard languages have steadily gained prominence since the nineteenth century. This trend culminated with the redrawing of state boundaries to permit a closer identification between administrative units and linguistic groups. The British imperial administrative units, based largely on historical accident and bureaucratic convenience, tended to scatter linguistic groups among several states, diluting their potential political impact and making the development of cultural institutions more difficult. The establishment of states more congruent with linguistic realities—linguistic states—was an early goal of the nationalist movement.

Before independence the Indian National Congress (see Glossary) was committed to redrawing state boundaries to correspond to linguistic states; language riots in the 1950s gave further impetus to this policy. The States Reorganisation Commission, which was formed in 1953 to study the problems involved in redrawing state boundaries, viewed language as an important, though by no means the sole, factor to be considered in redrawing state boundaries. Other factors, such as economic viability and geographic realities, had to be taken into account. In actual implementation, however, the language question generated intense popular feelings that were difficult to control. The commission issued its report in 1955; the government's request for comments from the populace generated a flood of petitions and letters. The final bill, passed in 1956 and amended several times in the 1960s, by no means resolved even the individual state's linguistic problems.

Even regions that had a long history of agitation for a linguistic state sometimes have found the actual transition less than smooth. For example, proponents began lobbying for a Telugu-speaking state in the early twentieth century. In the mid-1950s the central government formed a single state composed of the predominantly Telugu-speaking parts of what in British India had been the Madras Presidency and the nizam's dominions. Although more than 80 percent of the new state speaks Telugu,

Andhra Pradesh—like most linguistic states—has a sizable linguistic minority; in this case the minority consists of Urdu speakers centered in the state's capital, Hyderabad, where nearly 40 percent of the population speaks that language. Linguistic affinity did not form a firm basis for unity between the two regions from which the state had been formed, for they were separated by a gulf of cultural and economic differences. There were riots in the late 1960s and early 1970s that called for the formation of two separate states.

The violence that broke out in the state of Assam in the early 1980s reflected the complexities of linguistic and ethnic politics on the subcontinent (see Regionalism and Regional Political Crises, ch. 8). The state has a significant number of Bengali-speaking Muslims—immigrants and their descendants who began settling the region at the turn of the century. The Muslims came in response to a British-initiated colonization scheme to bring under cultivation land left fallow by the Assamese. By the 1931 census the Assamese had not only lost a hefty portion of their land but also had become a disadvantaged minority in their traditional homeland. They represented less than one-third of the total population, and the Muslim immigrants (who accounted for roughly one-quarter of the population) dominated commerce and the government bureaucracy.

Assamese-Bengali rioting started in 1950, and in the 1951 census many Bengali speakers listed Assamese as their native tongue in an effort to placate the Assamese. Further immigration of Bengali speakers after the formation of Bangladesh in 1971 and a resurgence of pro-Bengali feeling among earlier immigrants and their descendants reawakened Assamese fears of being outnumbered. There was renewed violence in the early 1980s (see Assam and the Northeast, ch. 10). The violence continued in the mid-1980s and was sufficiently serious for the central government to avoid holding general elections in Assam during December 1984.

Ethnic Minorities

Tribes

Tribal peoples constitute roughly 3 percent of the nation's total population. They are concentrated in the north in a belt along the Himalayas stretching from Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, and Jammu and Kashmir in the west to Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland, Meghalaya, and Assam in the Northeast. The bulk of these tribes are in the Northeast.

There is another concentration of tribal people in the hilly areas of central India (Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and, to a lesser extent, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal); in this belt, which is bounded by the Narbada River to the north and the Godavari River to the southeast, tribals occupy the slopes of the region's mountains. There are smaller numbers of tribal people in the southern part of the peninsula, principally in Tamil Nadu and Kerala, and a few in western India in Gujarat and Rajasthan.

The extent to which a state is homogeneously tribal varies considerably. In the Northeast roughly 80 to 90 percent of the population is tribal. The largest tribes are found in central India, although the tribal population there is only some 10 percent of the region's total. Many tribes in this region have a long-standing history of interaction with the surrounding Hindus. Less than 1 percent of South India's population is classified as tribal.

Tribes vary considerably in size, complexity, and social organization. There are some 400 communities listed as "Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes," i.e., recognized by the government and therefore eligible to receive special benefits and to compete for reserved seats in legislatures and schools. They range in size from the Gonds (roughly 4 million) and the Santals (approximately 3 million) to only 19 Andamanese. The tribal peoples of the central zone are a minority in those states, but they constitute the country's largest tribes and, taken as a whole, represent roughly three-quarters of the total tribal population (see fig. 13).

Apart from the use of strictly legal criteria, however, the problem of determining which groups and individuals were tribal was both subtle and complex. Because it concerned economic interests and the size and location of voting blocs, the question of who were tribals rather than "backward Hindus" was often controversial. The apparently wild fluctuation in estimates of the subcontinent's tribal population during this century gives a sense of how unclear the distinction between tribal and nontribal can be. In 1931 the census enumerated 22 million tribals, in 1941 only 10 million, but by 1961 some 30 million. Obviously, no human group could increase and decrease in such an idiosyncratic manner simply through biological reproduction; the differences between the figures reflect changing census criteria and the economic incentives individuals have to acquire or maintain classification as a tribal.

These bizarre gyrations of census data serve to underlie the complex nature of the relationship between the concepts of caste and tribe. Although in theory these are two entirely different ways of life and ideal types, in reality they stand at opposite ends

of a continuum of social groups. Those at the extremes are radically different, but the groups near the center display substantial similarity. The caste system, which is composed of a myriad of culturally distinct groups, has a nearly infinite capacity to absorb new units. Authorities believe that since at least the sixth century B.C., numerous indigenous and immigrant communities have passed from the status of independent social entities to that of castes.

In areas of substantial contact between tribes and castes, social and cultural pressures have often tended to move tribes in the direction of becoming castes. The transition often takes a number of years; because caste and tribe are ideal types, there are many groups with mixed characteristics whose classification is a matter of debate. It has been generally true that tribal peoples with ambitions for social advancement in Indian society at large have tried to gain the classification of caste for their tribe; such efforts conform to the ancient Indian traditions of caste mobility (see Caste in Operation, ch. 5). In the 1930s and 1940s tribals defected to Christianity or Hinduism in droves.

The process of assimilation from tribe to caste is a perennial feature of South Asian history, but the means and modes whereby this has taken place have varied from one era to another. Where tribal leaders prospered, they could hire a Brahman priest to contrive a credible pedigree and thereby join a reasonably high-status caste. On occasion an entire tribe or section of a tribe joined a Hindu sect and thus entered the caste system en masse. If a specific tribe engaged in practices that Hindus deem polluting, this affected the tribe's status when it was assimilated into the caste (see Theory of Caste, ch. 5).

Since independence, however, the special benefits available to Scheduled Tribes have convinced many groups, even Hindus and Muslims, that they will enjoy greater advantages if so designated. The "schedule" gives tribals an incentive to maintain their identity as such—if only to be eligible for benefits that accrue to Scheduled Tribes. By the same token, the schedule also includes a number of groups whose "tribal" status in cultural terms, is dubious at best; in various districts the list includes Muslims and a congeries of Hindu castes whose main claim seems to be their ability to deliver votes to the party that arranged their listing among the Scheduled Tribes.

A number of traits have customarily been seen as establishing tribal rather than caste identity. These include language, social organization, religious affiliation, economic patterns, geographic location, and self-identification. In specific cases particu-

lar constellations of these characteristics are present. Recognized tribes typically live in hilly regions somewhat remote from caste settlements; they generally speak a language recognized as tribal.

Unlike castes, which are part of a complex and interrelated local economic exchange system, tribes tend to form self-sufficient economic units; often they practice swidden (slash-and-burn) agriculture rather than the intensive farming typical of most of rural India. For most tribals, land-use rights traditionally derive simply from tribal membership; tribal society tends to be egalitarian, its leadership being based on ties of kinship and personality rather than on hereditary status. Tribes typically consist of segmentary lineages whose extended families provide the basis for social organization and control. Unlike caste religion, which recognizes the hegemony of Brahman priests, tribal religion recognizes no authority outside the tribe.

Any of these criteria can be called into question in specific instances. Language is not always an accurate indicator of tribal or caste status. Especially in regions of mixed population, many tribal groups have lost their mother tongues and simply speak the local or regional patois. Linguistic assimilation is an ongoing process of considerable complexity. In the highlands of Orissa, for example, the Bondos—a Munda-language tribe—use their own tongue among themselves. Oriya, however, serves as a lingua franca in dealings with their Hindu neighbors. This is not surprising, but Oriya as a prestige language (in the Bondo view) has also supplanted the native tongue as the language of ritual. The Northeast was historically divided into warring tribes and villages; it was a linguistic hodgepodge. British rule began, and Indian rule has accelerated increased contact among villagers. A pidgin Assamese developed as a common means of communication, while educated tribal members learned Hindi and, more recently, English.

Self-identification and group loyalty are not unfailing markers of tribal identity either. In the case of stratified tribes, the loyalties of clan, kin, and family may well predominate over those of tribe. Nor can tribes be viewed as people living apart; the degree of isolation of various tribes has varied tremendously. The Gonds, Santals, and Bhil traditionally dominated the regions in which they lived. Moreover, tribal society was not always more egalitarian than the rest of the rural populace; some of the larger tribes, such as the Gonds, were highly stratified.

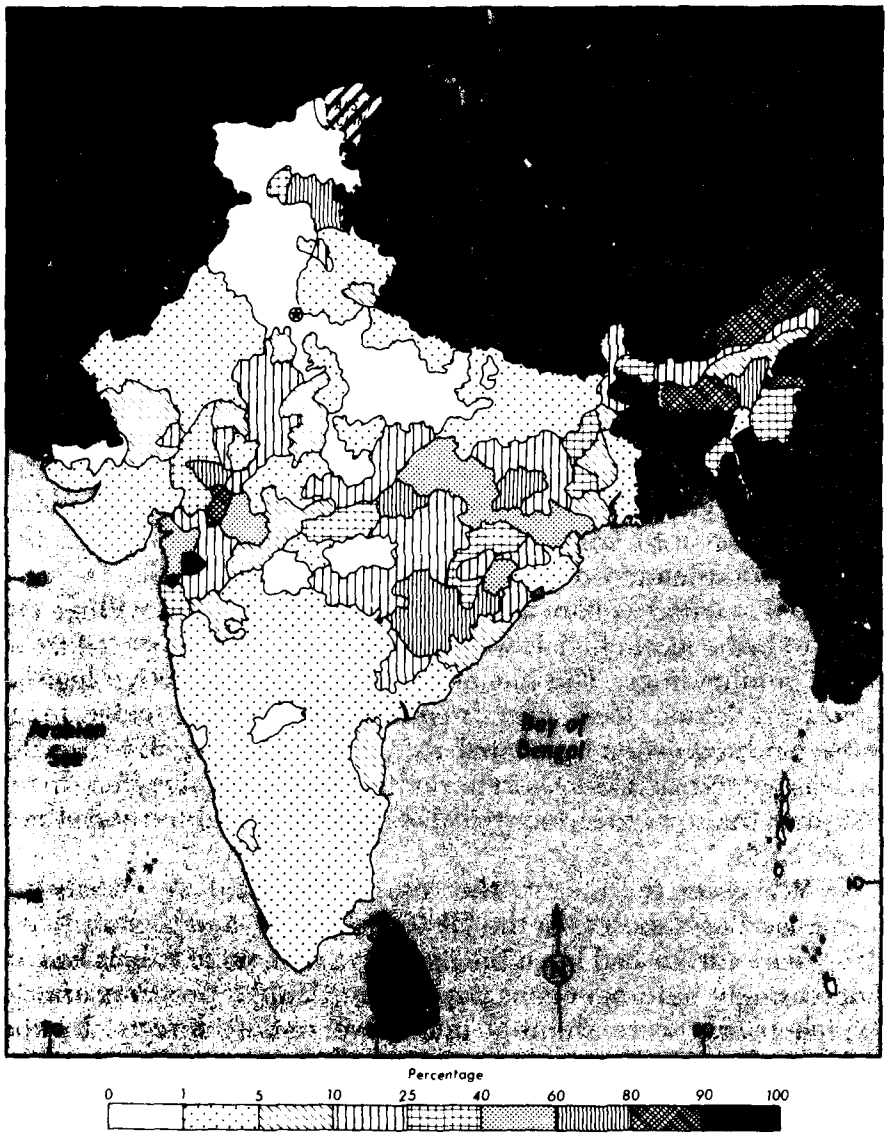
Most tribes continue to be concentrated in heavily forested areas that combine inaccessibility with limited political or economic significance. Historically, the economy of most tribes

was subsistence-oriented agriculture or hunting and gathering. Tribals traded with outsiders for the few necessities they lacked—salt and iron, for example; a few Hindu craftsmen might be in residence to provide such items as cooking utensils. The twentieth century, however, has seen far-reaching changes in the relationship between tribals and the larger society and, by extension, traditional tribal economies. Improved transport and communication have brought ever deeper intrusions into tribal lands; merchants and a variety of government policies have involved tribal peoples more thoroughly in the cash economy, though by no means on the most favorable of terms.

The subcontinent's various invaders adopted distinctive policies toward tribals. The Aryan speakers pushed most tribals onto marginal, relatively isolated land but otherwise followed a policy of noninterference. The Mughals ignored them. British efforts to institute a uniform colonial policy throughout the subcontinent sparked revolts and resistance in the northeast frontier regions and central India. The nineteenth century saw an increase in proselytizing on the part of Christian missionaries as well as a growing number of tribals adopting the characteristics of the Hindu peasantry. Contemporary tribal ethnicity ranges from "violent irredentism to hard bargaining" for a share in scarce resources.

The increased presence of outsiders in areas formerly inhabited only by tribals has meant the alienation of a significant portion of tribal lands. An agricultural regime of swidden farming—clearing a field, planting it for a number of seasons, and then abandoning it for a lengthy fallow—is a system of cultivation well suited to regions with ample forest reserves; properly instituted and followed, it can preserve levels of soil fertility and the forest itself almost indefinitely. Slash-and-burn cultivators, however, are particularly vulnerable when outsiders enter their reserves and begin claiming their land, for most of it is left fallow and only a fraction is under cultivation in any given season.

Large areas fell into the hands of nontribals at the turn of the century, when many regions were opened to homestead-style settlement. Emigrants received free land in return for cultivating it. Tribals too could apply for land titles, although even title to the portion of land they happened to be planting that season could not guarantee their ability to continue swidden cultivation. More important, the notion of permanent, individual ownership of land was foreign to most tribals; land, if seen in terms of ownership at all, was viewed as a communal resource, free to whomever needed it. By the time tribals accepted the necessity of obtaining



Source: Based on information from S.C. Dube, ed., *Tribal Heritage of India, Vol. I: Ethnicity, Identity, and Interaction*, New Delhi, 1977, frontispiece.

Figure 13. Scheduled Tribes as a Percentage of Total Population, Mid-1970s.

formal land titles, it was already too late. Generally, tribals were severely disadvantaged in dealing with the government officials who granted land titles.

Albeit belatedly, the colonial regime realized the necessity of protecting tribals from the worse predations of outsiders. Sale of tribal lands was prohibited. Although this left an important loophole in the form of land leases, tribals made some gains in the middle decades of the twentieth century. Despite considerable obstruction by local police and land officials who were slow to delineate tribal holdings and slower still to offer police protection, some land was returned to tribal peoples. Nontribals took refuge in trade, moneylending, and sharecropping while awaiting a more favorable climate for exploiting tribals.

In the 1970s the gains tribal peoples had made in earlier decades were eroded in many regions, especially in central India. Immigration into tribal lands increased dramatically, and the deadly combination of constabulary and revenue officers uninterested in tribal welfare and sophisticated nontribals willing and able to bribe local officials was enough to deprive many tribals of their landholdings. The means of subverting protective legislation were legion: local officials could be simply persuaded to ignore land acquisiton by nontribals, to alter land registry records, to lease plots of land for short periods and then simply refuse to relinquish them, or to induce tribals to become indebted and attach their lands.

Whatever the means, the result was that many tribals became landless laborers in the 1960s and 1970s, and regions that a few years earlier had been the exclusive domain of tribals had an increasingly heterogeneous population. Unlike previous eras in which tribals were shunted into more remote forests, by the 1960s relatively little unoccupied land was available. Government efforts to evict nontribals from illegal occupation have been slow going; when they occur at all, those evicted are usually untouchables or Sudras—not higher castes. In the early 1980s observers noted that efforts in many states to restore tribal lands were slowing still further.

Land occupations by nontribals follow the construction of roads suitable for motorized traffic. Roadside villages almost inevitably comprise nontribals as a significant portion of their population. Whatever the particulars of the local land registry office, nontribals are firmly in control of a good share of the cultivable land. Anthropologist Christoph von Fürer-Haimendorf describes this process in Andhra Pradesh; on average only one-quarter to one-third of the tribal families in such villages had managed to



Darjeeling
Courtesy Sheila L. Ross

keep even a portion of their holdings. Outsiders had paid perhaps 5 to 6 percent of the market value of the lands they took.

Improved communications, roads with motorized traffic, and more frequent government intervention figured in the increased contact that tribal peoples had with outsiders. Tribals fared best where there was little to induce nontribals to settle; cash crops and commercial highways frequently signaled the undoing of the tribes. Merchants have long been a link to the outside world, but in the past they were generally petty traders, and the contact they had with tribals was transient. By the 1960s and 1970s the resident nontribal shopkeeper was a permanent feature of many villages. Shopkeepers often sold liquor on credit, enticing tribals into debt and mortgaging their land. In the past, tribals made up shortages before harvest by foraging from the surrounding forest. Shopkeepers offered ready credit—with the proviso that loans be repaid in kind with 50 to 100 percent interest after harvest. Repaying a bag of millet with two set up a cycle of indebtedness from which many were simply unable to break loose.

The possibility of cultivators growing a profitable cash crop,

such as cotton or castor-oil plants, continues to draw merchants into tribal areas. Nontribal traders frequently establish an extensive network of associates beyond the village. Often a single merchant will set up relatives as shopkeepers to serve as his agents in a number of villages. Cultivators who grow a cash crop often sell to the same merchants who provide consumption credit throughout the year. The credit carries a high-interest price tag, whereas their crops are bought at a fraction of the market rate. Cash crops offer a further disadvantage in that they decrease the supply of foodstuffs available and increase tribal dependence on economic forces beyond their control. The transformation has meant a decline in both the tribal's security and their standard of living. In previous generations families might purchase silver jewelry as a form of security; contemporary tribals are more likely to buy minor consumer goods. Whereas jewelry could serve as collateral in critical emergencies, current purchases simply increase indebtedness. In areas where gathering forest products is remunerative, merchants exchange their products for the tribal's labor. Indebtedness is so extensive that although such transactions are illegal, traders sometimes "sell" their debtors to other merchants, much like indentured servants.

In some instances tribals have managed to hold their own in contacts with outsiders. Some Chenchus, a hunting and gathering tribe of the central hill regions, have continued to specialize in collecting forest products for sale. Caste Hindus living among them rent land from the Chenchus and pay a portion of the harvest. The Chenchus themselves have responded unenthusiastically to government efforts to induce them to take up farming. Their relationship to nontribals has been one of symbiosis, although there were indications in the early 1980s that nontribals were beginning to compete with the Chenchus in gathering forest products. The Chenchus have a certain advantage in dealing with caste Hindus; because of their long association with Hindu hermits and their refusal to eat beef, they are considered an unpolluted caste. Other tribes, particularly in South India, have cultural practices that are offensive to Hindus and, when assimilated, are considered untouchables.

Tribal cultivators often fare much worse. Middle-caste Hindus regard them as inferior, worthy only to be victimized. Outsiders typically have political and economic contacts that extend beyond the tribal village in which they settle, and the tribals therefore are simply unable to compete. The combination of money and well-placed friends and relatives permits caste Hindus who settle in tribal areas to circumvent protective legislation and the efforts of the

tribals to preserve their dwindling land base.

The final blow for some tribes has come when nontribals, through political jockeying, have managed to gain legal tribal status, i.e., to be listed as a Scheduled Tribe. The Gonds of Andhra Pradesh effectively lost their only advantage in trying to protect their lands when the Banjaras, a group that had been settling in Gond territory, were classified as a Scheduled Tribe in 1977. Their newly acquired tribal status made the Banjaras eligible to acquire Gond land "legally" and to compete with Gonds for reserved political seats, places in educational institutions, etc. Because the Banjaras are not scheduled in neighboring Maharashtra, there has been an influx of Banjaras emigrants from that state into Andhra Pradesh in search of greener pastures.

Tribes along the foothills of the Himalayas have not been as hard-pressed by the intrusions of nontribals. Historically, their political status was always distinct from the rest of India. Until very recently there was little effective control by any of the empires centered in Peninsula India; the region was populated by autonomous feuding tribes. The British, in efforts to protect the sensitive Northeast frontier, followed a policy dubbed the "Inner Line"; nontribals were permitted into the areas only with special permission. Postindependence governments have continued the policy, protecting the Himalayan tribes as part of the strategy to secure the border with China.

The policy has generally saved the tribes from the kind of exploitation that those elsewhere on the subcontinent have suffered. In Arunachal Pradesh (formerly part of the North-East Frontier Agency), for example, tribals control commerce and most lower-level administrative posts. Government construction projects in the region have provided tribals with a significant source of cash—both for setting up businesses and for providing paying customers. Some tribes have made rapid progress through the educational system. Instruction was begun in Assamese but was eventually changed to Hindi; by the early 1980s English was taught at most levels. Both education and the increase in ready cash from government spending have permitted tribals a significant measure of social mobility.

Government policies on forest reserves have affected tribal peoples profoundly. Virtually wherever the state has chosen to exploit forests, it has seriously undermined the tribals' way of life. Government efforts to reserve forests precipitated armed (if futile) resistance on the part of the tribal peoples involved. Intensive exploitation of forests has often meant allowing outsiders to cut large areas of trees while the original tribal inhabitants were

restricted from cutting, and ultimately replacing, mixed forests capable of sustaining tribal life with single-product plantations.

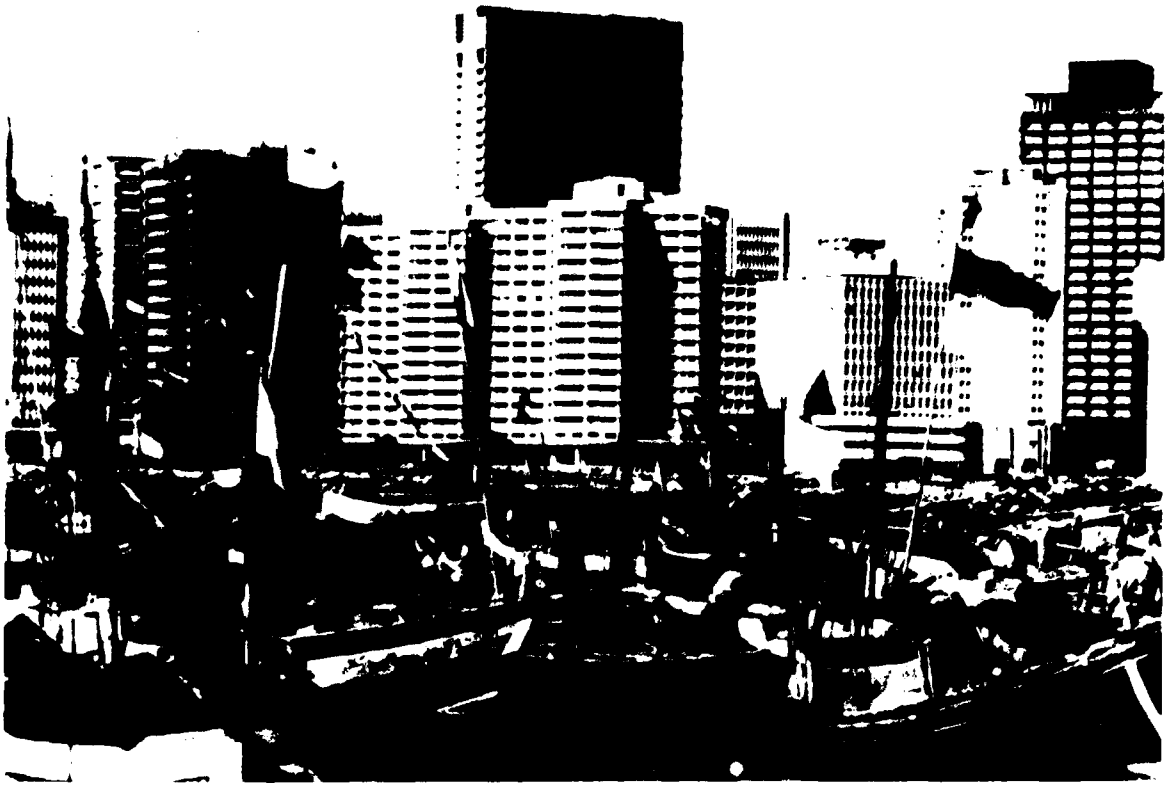
Where forests are reserved, nontribals have proved far more sophisticated than their forest counterparts at bribing the necessary local officials to secure effective (if extralegal) use of forestlands. The system of bribing local officials charged with enforcing the reserves is so well established that the rates of bribery are reasonably fixed (by the number of plows a farmer uses or the amount of grain harvested). Tribals often end up doing unpaid work for Hindus simply because a caste Hindu, who has paid the requisite bribe, can at least assure a tribal that he or she will not be evicted from forestlands.

The entire process of establishing forest reserves was disruptive to tribal life; some villages were disbanded, and others lost the fallow land necessary to maintain adequate levels of soil fertility. The final irony, notes von Fürer-Haimendorf, is that the shifting cultivation many tribals practiced had maintained the subcontinent's forests, whereas the intensive cultivation and commercial interests that replaced the tribals destroyed the forests.

The entrance of outsiders onto tribal lands and the inclusion of tribals in the cash economy on such unfavorable terms have periodically sparked violent resistance. The combination of merchants and moneylenders (often the same person) in collusion with the local authorities, coupled with hereditary debt servitude, antagonized tribals again and again. Incidents such as the Santal Rebellion (1855–56) persuaded British colonial administrators that special provision should be made for tribal peoples. A number of government measures over the years sought to protect tribals from the worst predations of the larger society but enjoyed varying degrees of success. Ironically, although tribals inevitably came out the worst in armed confrontations, the authorities typically did respond to the tribal grievances after a certain amount of bloodletting. Even in contemporary India, the tribes with a history of violent resistance fare best. Local authorities—almost regardless of the political climate in a specific state—are careful not to antagonize them too much.

Educational planning reflects the assumption that illiteracy and lack of schooling are the major handicaps for tribal peoples in dealing with sophisticated outsiders. Extending the system of primary education into tribal areas and reserving places for tribals in secondary and higher educational institutions are the cornerstones of government education policy. Efforts to improve a tribe's educational status have had mixed results (see Education, ch. 2).

In the mid-1980s many areas continued to experience dif-



Bottom of Malabar Hill, Bombay
Courtesy Air-India Library

ficulties in recruiting qualified teachers. Determining the appropriate language of instruction also remained troublesome. Commission after commission on the "language question" has called for instruction, at least at the primary level, in the students' native tongues. Individual states, however, have flip-flopped on this issue. In some regions, tribal children entering school must begin by learning the official regional language, often one completely unrelated to their tribal tongue.

The experiences of the Gonds of Andhra Pradesh provide an example. Primary schooling began in the 1940s and 1950s. The government selected a group of Gonds who had managed to become semi-literate in Telugu and taught them the basics of a script. These individuals became teachers who taught in Gondi; their efforts enjoyed a measure of success until the 1970s, when state policy demanded instruction in Telugu. The switch in the language of instruction not only made the Gond teachers superfluous because they could not teach in Telugu but also presented the government with the problem of finding reasonably qualified teachers willing to teach in outlying tribal schools.

Recruiting adequate teachers has been a perennial problem. Qualified tribals have other, more attractive employment options

open to them. Nontribals usually do not have training in the indigenous language. Their position typically reflects a bureaucratic quirk rather than the individual teacher's dedication to teaching tribal people.

The commitment of tribals to acquiring a formal education for their children varies considerably. Tribes differ in the extent to which they view education positively. Gonds and Pardhans, two groups of the subcontinent's central hill region, are a case in point. The Gonds are cultivators, and they are frequently reluctant to send their children to school, needing them, they say, to work in the fields. The Pardhans were traditionally bards and ritual specialists, and they have taken to education with enthusiasm. Likewise, the effectiveness of educational policy varies by region. In those parts of the Northeast where tribals have been generally spared the wholesale onslaught of outsiders, schooling has helped tribals secure political and economic benefits. The educational system there has provided a corps of highly trained tribals in the professions and high-ranking administrative posts.

Many tribal schools are plagued by high dropout rates. Children attend for the first three to four years of primary school and gain a smattering of knowledge, only to lapse into illiteracy later. Few who enter make it to the tenth grade; few of those who make it to the tenth form manage to obtain their secondary school certificate, and few therefore are eligible to attend institutions of higher education. The high rate of attrition continues even in college.

The influx of newcomers disinclined to follow tribal ways has had a massive impact on social relations and tribal belief systems. In many communities the immigrants have brought on nothing less than the total disintegration of the communities they entered. Even where outsiders are not residents in villages, traditional forms of social control and authority are less effective because tribals are patently dependent on politico-economic forces beyond their control.

Hunters and gatherers are particularly vulnerable to these far-reaching changes. The lack of strong authority figures in most hunting and gathering groups handicaps these tribes in organizing to negotiate with the government. In addition, these tribes are too small to offer much political leverage. Forced settlement schemes have had a deleterious impact on the tribes and their environment. The government-organized villages are typically larger than traditional hunting and gathering settlements. Forest reserves limit the amount of territory over which tribals can range freely. Larger villages and smaller territories have led in some in-

stances to an increase in crime and violence. Traditionally, hunters and gatherers "settled" their disputes by arranging for the antagonists simply to avoid one another; new, more circumscribed villages preclude this arrangement.

Some tribes have adopted the Hindu practice of having costly elaborate weddings—a custom that contributes to indebtedness (as it has in many rural Indian families) and subjects them to the cash economy on the most deleterious of terms. Some families have adapted a traditional marriage pattern—that of capturing a bride—to modern conditions by using the custom to avoid the costly outlays associated with a formal wedding.

In general, traditional headmen no longer have any official backing for their role in village affairs, although many continue to exercise considerable influence. That the headman is no longer the single link between the village and the outside world and that he has influence but no clearly defined official responsibility have made the position a difficult one. Headmen can no longer control the allocation of land or decide who has the right to settle in the village. This has had an insidious effect on village solidarity.

Some headmen have taken to leasing village land to outsiders, thus enriching themselves at the expense of other tribals. Conflict over land rights has introduced a point of cleavage into village social relations; increased factional conflict has seriously eroded the ability of tribals to ward off the intrusion of outsiders. In some villages, tribal school teachers have emerged as a new political force, a counterbalance to the traditional headman. Changes in landholding patterns have also altered the role of the joint family. More and more couples set up separate households as soon as they marry. Because land is no longer held and farmed in common and has grown more scarce, inheritance disputes have increased.

Tribal beliefs and rituals have altered in the face of increased contact with Hindus and missionaries of a variety of persuasions. Where tribals are remote or where their rituals are of a sort that do not offend Hindu sensibilities, there has been little change. Among groups in more intense contact with the Hindu majority, there have been a variety of transformations. The Gonds, for example, traditionally worshiped clan gods through elaborate rites, and the Pardhans organized and performed the necessary rituals. The increasing impoverishment of large sections of the Gond tribe has made it difficult, if not impossible, to support the Pardhans as a class of ritual specialists. At the same time, many Gonds concluded that the tribal gods were losing their power and efficacy. Gonds have tended to seek the assistance of other

deities, and thus there has been widespread Hinduization of Gondi belief and practice.

Tribal religious reform movements have often made use of Hindu themes. In Kerala, for example, tribals often imitated high-caste cultural practices—something Brahman Hindus deeply resented. Overall, however, there has been little formal effort to convert tribals to a formal allegiance to Hinduism beyond insisting that they eliminate those indigenous practices Hindus find offensive. Nonetheless, a vast majority of government officials and teachers with whom tribals come into contact are caste Hindus, and they disseminate the values of the dominant Hindu culture, albeit informally.

Christian missionaries have been active among sundry tribes since the mid-1800s. Conversion to Christianity offers a number of advantages, not the least of which is education. It was through the efforts of various Christian sects to translate the Bible into tribal languages that those tongues acquired a written script. Ironically, Christian proselytizing has served to preserve tribal lore and language in written form at the same time that it has eroded the tribe's cultural heritage and belief systems. In many instances Christianity has been a divisive social force, driving a wedge between converts and their fellow tribals who continue to adhere to traditional beliefs and practices.

Descendants of Foreign Groups

The Parsis, numbering perhaps 125,000 in the mid-1980s, are a prosperous community centered in the large cities of the west coast; almost one-half of them live in Bombay, where they are an integral part of the city. The Parsis, who are Zoroastrians, came to India in the eighth century to escape Muslim persecution in Persia. Their name, Parsis, reflects their country of origin. A woolen thread tied at the waist in four knots around a white cambric shirt is their distinguishing emblem; the dress symbolizes the universal brotherhood of men.

Originally, the Parsis were shipbuilders and traders located in the ports and towns of Gujarat. Their freedom from food or occupational restrictions based on caste affiliation enabled them to take advantage of the numerous commercial opportunities that accompanied the British expansion of trade and control. Substantial numbers moved to Bombay, which served as a base for expanding their business activities throughout India and abroad. A combination of Western commercial contacts and education in English made the Parsis perhaps the most cosmopolitan commu-

nity in the country. Socially, they were equally at home with Indians and the Western rulers; Parsi women enjoyed freedom of movement earlier than most high-caste Hindu or Muslim women. In contemporary India they are the most urban, literate, and wealthy of any of the subcontinent's religious groups. Their role in the development of trade, industry, finance, and philanthropy has earned them an important place in the country's social and economic life, and several have achieved high rank in the civil and military services.

Parsis face an uncertain future as a distinct community in contemporary India. Their birth rate is low; according to one estimate, there are 50 percent more deaths than births. Parsis tend to marry later than most Indians; indeed, some do not marry at all. Many have married outside the community, and their children tend to affiliate with the group of the non-Parsi parent. A prominent example is the orchestral conductor Zubin Mehta, whose wife and children are Roman Catholics. Parsi women, especially the highly educated, are sometimes reluctant to marry into Hindu or Muslim families and so remain single. Substantial numbers of Parsis have emigrated; the number of Parsis living abroad in the mid-1980s was estimated at approximately 25,000.

India has a tiny Jewish community whose ancestors fled to the country to escape religious persecution. The first Jews settled in Cochin on the Malabar coast in the first century A.D. They established a semiautonomous community that, although largely destroyed by the Portuguese in the sixteenth century, has some descendants today. Another group of exiles arrived from Arabia following the seventh-century victory of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula. Their descendants form the Beni-Israelite communities of Bombay, Poona, and Ahmadabad. Iraqi Jews came to Bombay and Calcutta in the nineteenth century and gained prominence in textiles and trade. The Jews are divided into two exclusive groups: the so-called Black Jews, who have intermarried with the Indian population and are more closely assimilated into it, and the White Jews, who retain a sense of social superiority and keep a rule of endogamous marriage. By the mid-1980s most members of these communities had emigrated to Israel.

There are a small number of Portuguese-Indians, commonly known as Goanese. The largest group of European-Indians, however, are descendants of British men, generally from the lower echelons of the colonial service and the military, and lower-caste Hindu or Muslim women. Both the British and the Indian societies rejected the offspring of these unions, and so the Anglo-Indians, as they became known, had little choice but to seek mar-

riage partners among other Anglo-Indians. Over time this group developed a number of caste-like features and acquired a special occupational niche in the railroad, postal, and customs services. A number of factors fostered a strong sense of community among Anglo-Indians. The school system focused on English language and culture and was virtually segregated, as were Anglo-Indian social clubs; the group's adherence to Christianity set them yet further apart from the mass of Hindu or Muslim Indians; and distinctive manners, diet, dress, and speech set them apart even more.

Like the Parsis, the Anglo-Indians continued to be essentially urban dwellers. Unlike the Parsis, relatively few have attained high levels of education or amassed great wealth. They generally achieved only subordinate government positions; social ostracism by both British and Indian society precluded advancement into the highest levels of government service. In the 1980s Anglo-Indians remained scattered throughout the country in the larger cities and those smaller towns serving as railroad junctions or communications centers.

During the independence movement most Anglo-Indians identified (or were assumed to identify) with British rule, and they therefore incurred the distrust and hostility of Indian nationalists. Their position at independence was a difficult one. They felt a loyalty to a British "home" that most had never seen and where they would gain little social acceptance. They felt insecure in an India that put a premium on participation in the independence movement as a prerequisite for important government positions. Some Anglo-Indians left the country in 1947, hoping to make a new life in Britain or one of the dominions, such as Australia or Canada. Many of these returned to India after unsuccessful attempts to find a place in "alien" societies. Most Anglo-Indians, however, opted to stay in India and made whatever adjustments they deemed necessary.

The law in 1985 continued to permit Anglo-Indians to maintain their own schools and to use English as the medium of instruction. In order to encourage the integration of the community into the larger society, the government stipulated that a certain percentage of the student body come from other Indian communities. There was no evident official discrimination against Anglo-Indians in terms of current government employment. A few had risen to high posts; some were high-ranking officers in the military, and a few were judges. In occupational terms, at least, the assimilation of Anglo-Indians into the mainstream of Indian life was well under way. Nevertheless, the group will probably re-



Pedicab in Benares (Varanasi)
Courtesy Clarence Edward Pike

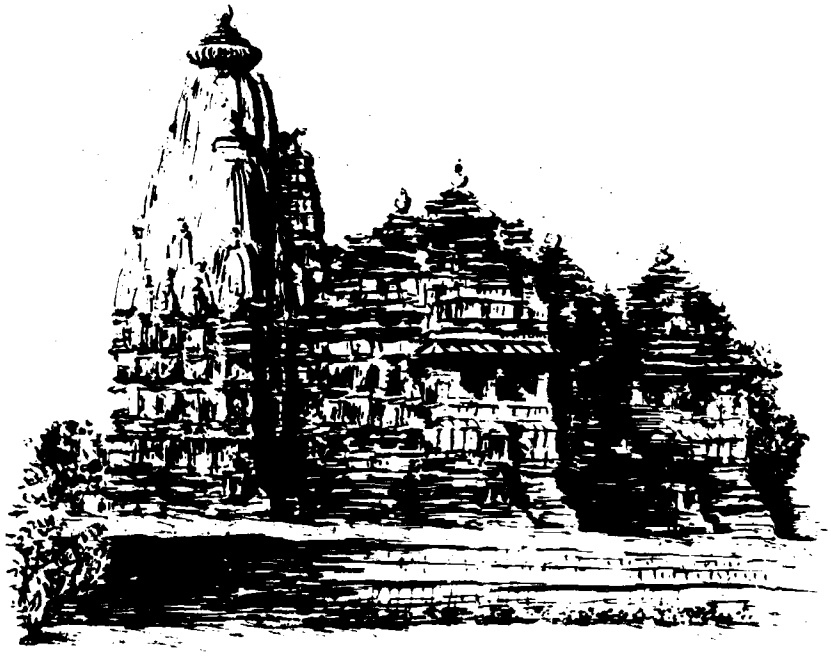
main socially distinct as long as its members marry only other Anglo-Indians and its European descent continues to be noted.

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Among the recent works on language on the subcontinent, a book edited by Clarence Maloney, *Language and Civilization in South Asia*, is very useful. The title article by the editor and B. Krishnamurti's "Language Planning and Development: The Case of Telugu" are particularly helpful.

All of Christoph von Fürer-Haimendorf's works on India's tribals are useful. His 1982 book, *Tribes of India*, provides a contemporary view of some of the country's larger tribes. Bernard S. Cohn's *India: The Social Anthropology of a Civilization* and David G. Mandelbaum's two-volume *Society in India* remain essential background works. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Chapter 5. Social Systems



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INDIAN SOCIETY OF THE MID-1980s was one of extreme contrasts and contradictions. Caste—a religio-cultural way of life with a millennia-old history—continued to be the basis of social life, but its modern permutations and adaptations made it a dynamic, changing system. As an institution it transcended the subcontinent's deep-seated religious, ethnic, and linguistic differences; it unified at the same time that it divided the country's diverse population.

At its most basic, caste provides a rationale for ranking all social groups: they are stratified in terms of their relative purity or impurity. Purity and pollution are pivotal concepts in South Asian thought; caste is a hierarchical and inegalitarian ranking of social groups—including non-Hindus— based on how pure or impure each is. At the top of the scale are Brahman priests, who as a group must maintain their purity in order to intercede with the gods; at the bottom are untouchables, who are assigned the most polluting tasks.

Maintaining the purity of caste and family is at the heart of much of traditional social relations. The numerous strictures on intercaste activities, such as commensality or marriage, are designed to keep those less pure from tainting those who are more so. Purity and pollution provide the basis for interdependence and a division of labor among the various castes. Those less pure perform essential, if polluting, tasks that those of higher rank are enjoined not to do.

Although ideas of purity and pollution are pervasive and general agreement exists about what the most defiling acts are, there is no single, Pan-Indian scale for ranking the thousands of castes. The system is regionally diverse and highly particularized. There is consensus about the upper and lower ends of the scale, but the intermediate steps vary from village to village.

Caste structures social relations, and it is inextricably interwoven with kinship as the focus of the individual's loyalties and sense of identity. Villages are conglomerates of a number of castes. All of a person's kin belong to the same caste. Traditionally, castes mediated almost all of the exchange of goods and services within the village. Caste councils debated and defined a course of caste action as the need arose.

The caste system permits some group social mobility. A group that manages to accumulate any measure of prosperity rapidly sets about improving its status in the ritual hierarchy. In-

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dependence and electoral politics have widened the arena for caste rivalries and jockeying for advantage. Elective offices and access to influential government bureaucrats are important ways of enhancing a caste's ritual standing.

Untouchables too have tried to improve their socioeconomic status. Education, political activism, and religious conversion are among the means at the untouchable caste's disposal. Since independence the government has instituted various pieces of protective and compensatory legislation designed to aid low-ranking castes. On the whole, such efforts have done little to ameliorate the situation of the most disadvantaged. Any wholesale effort on the part of untouchables to better themselves threatens all higher ranking castes, who do everything possible to thwart untouchable efforts at improvement.

Family and kin remain the center of daily life and the most basic element in the caste system. Life outside of a family, typically an extended family, is simply unimaginable for most Indians. Family roles and relationships are structured in such a way as to reflect the underlying values of caste: hierarchy, purity, and pollution. The individual owes his or her family total loyalty; the individual's position within that group is defined, with great specificity, by sex and relative age.

Most Indians continue to live in the more than 500,000 villages dotting the countryside. Even for many who live and work in cities, the village remains the focus of their social life; family and friends remain in the village long after many a rural-urban migrant has begun an urban career. Power and dominance within the village reflect the pattern of landholding. New sources of wealth are important to a family trying to play a major role in village affairs, but landownership remains basic.

Factionalism is a perennial feature of village social and political life. Factions composed of a few landowning families and their followers vie for scarce resources—votes, government aid, irrigation water, ceremonial prerogatives. Factions can have a pervasive impact on social life; any dispute, however trivial, can be escalated to a villagewide confrontation.

Forces of change have transformed many traditional mores. The growth of the cash economy, independence and political participation, massive urbanization, and modern education have offered new options to individuals and groups. Proper caste behavior has changed in the relative anonymity of urban living. Cash incomes in city and countryside alike have dramatically altered the customary intercaste exchanges. Education and a host of new occupations offer individuals opportunities undreamed of

even a generation ago.

Caste

Theory of Caste

Caste has been and remains central to South Asian history, politics, and society. Historically, the subcontinent was an agrarian economy with a small surplus of craftsmen, priests, rulers, soldiers, and bureaucrats. Political instability was chronic. There was no single overarching political authority. The prohibition against intercaste marriage meant that no single dominant caste developed over the subcontinent as a whole; there was no equivalent of a national aristocracy. Caste itself has been the unifying feature of Indian society and culture. As an institution in all of its diversity, it transcends religious, linguistic, and regional boundaries. Christians, Muslims, Jews, and Parsis on the subcontinent have retained Hindu ideas about how social groups are stratified and ranked on the basis of ritual purity. In contemporary India, although some traditional features of the caste system are changing, social relations, many economic exchanges, and political brokering take place through the medium of caste.

The Hindi term *jati* refers to a variety of linguistically and regionally distinct groups. In the anthropological literature, the word is often used to refer to the local, endogamous group that is typically rendered in English as *caste*. The word *caste* comes from the Portuguese *casta;* like *jati,* the word often refers to a wide variety of tribes, linguistic groups, and regional populations. Little unanimity in terminology exists among students of Indian social organization; the terminology is as slippery as the complex social and cultural realities of South Asia.

The Vedic scriptures offer the most ancient justification of caste in the form of a fourfold division of human society into varnas (literally, color) from which most modern castes are believed to derive (see Sacred Scriptures, ch. 3). The Rig-Veda tells of the sacrifice of a superman: from his mouth came priests (Brahmans); from his arms, rulers and warriors (Kshatriyas); from his thighs, landowners and merchants (Vaishyas); and from his feet, artisans and cultivators (Sudras—pronounced and often spelled *Shudras).* Initially, membership in the various varnas was not based on birth; rather, it described the functioning groups that made up society. The first three varnas are "twice-born"; males are initiated, and they are entitled to wear a sacred thread over their shoulders. In theory, they are to be better versed in the scriptures and to fol-

low the injunctions about purity and impurity more closely than the Sudras.

There is no mention of the untouchables (or harijans) in the ancient scriptures. The Hindu legal literature holds them to be the product of inter-varna marriage, which was held in low esteem and outside the caste ranking (hence, outcastes). The children's status reflected that of the parents; it was unions between Brahman mothers and lower varna fathers that gave rise to the untouchables. Most historians disagree with such an explanation; the rise of the untouchable castes is linked to the gradual incorporation of the tribal peoples of the subcontinent into the Hindu-based system of social stratification. The indigenous peoples were willing to do work that village Hindus held to be polluting; when these peoples settled into village society they gradually assumed the attitudes and beliefs of the Hindu majority.

Varnas, in any event, are not the operative categories in the caste system as it touches Indians' daily lives; those are *jatis*. Varnas serve as a broad classificatory scheme; they transcend the myriad regional variations in the caste system and permit individuals to relate their *jati's* rank—at least in general terms—to a single, Pan-Indian schema. This is particularly true in North India. In South India it is thought that there are no bona fide Kshatriyas or Vaishyas.

Dharma (see Glossary), one's essential nature or character and the duty one has to conform to one's essential character, provides a final rationale for the caste system. Dharma requires that the individual perform the tasks appropriate to his or her station in life. In this context, even the most polluting tasks, if they are customarily done by one's *jati*, increase the individual soul's dharma.

Castes are ranked according to their relative purity or pollution. Indeed, everything in creation is ranked according to these pervasive ideas. The right side of the body is more pure than the left; the right hand is used in eating, the left in cleansing the body after defecation and urination. Animals that scavenge, such as swine, are unclean, and swineherds and those who eat pork are polluted by their contact. Gods are ranked according to their purity and, like humans, can be defiled by contact with polluting substances or those who have been in contact with them.

Contact with substances viewed as impure renders the individual unclean. The nature of contact affects the degree to which one is polluted and the seriousness of the remedy, if any be available, the individual must undertake. Intent is irrelevant; pollution can be completely involuntary. It is mechanistic in the sense that contact with impure substances brings pollution regardless of

intent; cause and effect are as invariable as the laws of physics.

Pollution is never an individual matter. Proscriptions against intercaste contact in critical areas are followed because pollution jeopardizes the proper balance between nature and humanity's contact with the gods. Impurity is corporate in the sense that all of a *jati* will be polluted if some of its members contact impure matter. This is so because the pollution transfers to all in the course of normal social relations—eating, drinking, intermarrying. *Jati* purity demands that all contact with the polluted be severed. All *jatis* and individuals have the potential to pollute those more pure.

Most ritual lapses can be expiated by performing the requisite rituals and paying a fine. The agents of purification include water, fire, sun, the Ganges and certain other rivers and, above all, the products of the living cow. The most potent means of purification is a mixture of milk, curds, ghee, cow dung, and urine, which an individual must eat. Since being in a polluted state affects everyone with whom the individual comes into contact, simply expelling the offender is an important means of purification for his or her *jati* mates. In most cases the guilty party can perform the proper expiatory rites and resume normal social relations. Some offenses, such as a liaison between a Brahman woman and an untouchable man, are simply beyond the pale.

It is regarded as absolutely essential that sexual partners, especially sexual partners of the *jati's* women, be of the proper caste. Much of the effort that goes into arranging proper marriages for one's offspring, especially daughters, as well as the elaborate restrictions of purdah (seclusion) for high-caste women, is focused on the concern to avoid any possibility of pollution through intercourse with inappropriate sexual partners. High-caste women are to have only one sexual partner for life, and he must be of the proper caste. Castes that permit divorce or the remarriage of widows rank lower.

Eating also offers the potential for pollution. Ideally, the high-caste individual, especially the Brahman, should have a ritual bath before the principal meal of the day. Most prepared foods should be touched only by those of proper rank. The kitchen is one of the most critical areas of the household in maintaining the family's purity; only close relatives may enter it. Earthenware cooking vessels and water vessels are more subject to pollution than those of brass, which can be more thoroughly cleansed. Eating is an activity of immense social and ritual significance; commensality takes place only between social equals.

Water can transmit pollution, and boiled food is therefore more worrisome than fried food. Some foods cannot be polluted;

milk and ghee, products of the sacred cow, are invulnerable. Fried foods or unprocessed foods can be accepted from persons of lower caste. Dietary practices reflect the ritual ranking of foods, including meats. Vegetarianism is high status and a Brahman ideal. Animal flesh and by-products can be ranked in descending order of ritual purity: eggs, fish, chicken, mutton, pork, and beef.

Bodily secretions are defiling; feces, urine, menstrual flow, spittle, nail parings, and hair cuttings pollute those who come into contact with them. Birth and death are polluting; mother and child are secluded at birth until they can be purified. Likewise, at death family members must undergo ritual purification.

Purity and pollution are the foundation of caste ranking and interdependence. In the Indian view human interaction and social relations are essentially hierarchical. Whereas American society tends to emphasize equality in interaction, Indian society and etiquette emphasize subordination and superordination. Features of behavior such as seating arrangements, salutations, commensality, and stylized deference symbolize social inequality to which individuals must be constantly alert. Lower caste persons should rise when a higher caste individual passes by; they should never sit in the presence of persons of higher ranking castes. The higher caste person can claim right-of-way on any path and command any lower caste person to perform certain tasks.

There is an implicit division of labor in the caste hierarchy; by performing impure tasks, lower castes absorb pollution for those higher. This is particularly critical for Brahmans, who must be ritually pure in order to intercede with the gods for all of society. Brahmans are assumed to be more conversant with and pay greater attention to the scriptural injunctions relating to purity. The rigor with which these are followed does, in a general fashion, seem to be greater where Brahmans have greater influence. Higher castes tend to worship scriptural deities, while lower ones are more concerned with the myriad local gods. In similar fashion, the privileges and prerogatives of rulers are justified because they offer protection and goods from the largesse of their estates to the ruled.

Lower castes perform tasks that are too polluting or menial for those that rank higher. Barbers, launderers, and sweepers come into contact with defiling human by-products. Potters and carpenters provide services for those whose primary duties are intercession with the gods and the performance of the requisite rituals or the proper governance of society. Water carriers fetch water—a task deemed both menial and impossible for secluded, high-caste women. Still others collect dung for fuel for much the same reason.

Although the varnas provide a general model to which all Indians refer in ranking their *jatis*, there is no single Pan-Indian ranking of all castes. Which *jatis* are represented and how they rank relative to one another varies from village to village and region to region. A ranking in a typical village might be: Brahman, Rajput, merchant, goldsmith, genealogist, barber, water carrier, grain parcher, shepherd, Muslim Rajput, oil presser, beggar, shoemaker, Chamar (landless laborer), and sweeper.

Not all elements of caste rank can be understood in terms of ritual purity. Rajputs eat meat and drink alcohol, yet they outrank merchants who are vegetarians and teetotalers. Some elements of the hierarchy simply bear no apparent relationship to purity (e.g., why should grain parchers rank below goldsmiths?). Ritual criteria define the broad limits of *jati* rank; within those limits secular factors come into play. Part of the reason that actual caste ranking varies considerably between villages and regions is that among *jatis* of roughly comparable ritual status, wealth and political acumen play critical roles in deciding preeminence. Shortcomings in ritual purity are glossed over for wealthy *jatis* of slight ritual status; *jatis* that rise economically use their resources to improve their ritual status.

On the village level there is often considerable confusion about the actual ranking of *jatis*; where there is no single dominant group, there often will be rivalry about the precise prerogatives and privileges the middle range *jatis* are entitled to. There is general agreement about the bottom and the top of the hierarchy. Where there are many castes represented in a single village, villagers will group the *jatis* into blocks, i.e., the highest, the high, the low, the very low, and the lowest. Such classification schemes are important because they serve as the basis of relations between and among the *jatis*; they define such matters as greeting, eating, seating arrangements, and ritual prerogatives.

That there is no generally agreed upon detailed ranking of castes does not bother villagers unduly. Rivalries are generally limited to castes close in rank; absolute consensus is not necessary because the broad ranking permits villagers to decide who should be served first, seated in the best position, or whatever. Despite its amibiguities, villagers see caste rank as defined by ritual purity and adhere to the generally accepted, broadly defined *jati* hierarchy.

Caste in Operation

Caste serves not only as the keystone of the South Asian worldview but also of social relations. It structures how groups in-

teract while serving as a model of reality. Caste in operation reveals the interplay of the complex relations among the subcontinent's diverse population, changing group and individual aspirations, and profoundly held views about human nature, society, and hierarchy. Even non-Hindu groups—such as the Buddhists, Christians, Muslims, and Sikhs—are inextricably involved in the operation of caste. The discussion herein, however, focuses on the dominant Hindu society.

In the realm of social relations, caste is a large-scale descent group; membership usually is based on patrilineal descent, that is, children belong to their father's caste. *Jati* is part of an interdependent cooperative network of similar segments; in its essence as well as its functioning, the system is hierarchical and inegalitarian. Occupational specialization integrates the various castes in a village or group of villages into a coherent system. Castes are bound together and interdependent through the exchange of goods and services. Each *jati* provides something essential to the others.

On the village level kinship underlies *jati* organization; each caste is normally composed of a set of related patrilineages. Because families are required to choose their spouses from outside their lineage and their village (exogamy), a *jati* will perforce have relations with the same caste in other villages. Etiquette among fellow *jati* members is modeled on that between relatives. *Jati* members are addressed as kin; all older men are addressed by the term for father's father, father's younger brother, or father's older brother, depending on their generation relative to the individual speaking to them.

Anywhere from two to 30 *jatis* may comprise a village; a typical mix would include landowners, tenants, and priests (Brahmans); a few artisanal groups, such as carpenters and blacksmiths; service groups, such as barbers and washermen; and menials, such as sweepers and laborers. Large *jatis* may extend over whole regions and have members in hundreds of villages. How inclusively an individual defines his or her *jati* varies with education. A villager typically considers only those living within approximately 40 kilometers of his or her village to be *jati* mates. By contrast, an urban *jati* often includes seemingly disparate groups, and an educated city dweller might well consider accepting a spouse from a distant city.

Traditionally, the occupational specialization of the various castes was the basis of virtually all exchange. The *jajmani* system defined the terms under which castes exchanged their goods and services as well as the various ritual duties each owed the others.



Narrow-gauge train to Darjeeling
Courtesy Sheila L. Ross

The system's name comes from the Sanskrit *yajnya*, meaning sacrifice; the *yajman* (or *jajman*) was the person on whose behalf the Brahman offered a sacrifice.

The principal exchange underlying the *jajmani* system was between landowners and cultivators and the families that provided them with essential goods and services. The exchanges reflected not only the necessity of acquiring material goods but also the need to maintain ritual purity. The lower castes were essential to perform polluting tasks, such as washing clothes, cutting hair, delivering babies, and removing excreta. The village's servants and artisans received a fixed payment in grain for their services. The cultivator's harvest was divided up in shares according to the services the various families had performed during the year.

The payment was a right; the attitude of the high-caste landowners was ideally one of noblesse oblige. The relationship transcended the individual exchanges between cultivator and artisan; ideally, it spanned the generations. Often, the right to serve a particular family was hereditary. A carpenter's sons would divide his *jajmani* clients among them. *Jajmani* relations were to have

the same quality as those between kin, although caste distance was maintained. The closeness and trust between those in a *jajmani* relationship paralleled that between relatives; terms of address between those in a long-standing *jajmani* relationship were those used by kin.

For the landowner, maintaining good relations with his servants and artisans was a mark of prestige; they contributed to his retinue for the feasting and ostentatious displays accompanying the family's births, marriages, and deaths. The relationship was integral to village life in ways far beyond the simple exchange of goods and services. Barbers were essential as messengers and matchmakers; their wives served as midwives. So important were these supplemental services that there were barber castes even in Sikh villages in which haircutting was forbidden. For many high-caste women, their only contact with village gossip came with the visit of the sweeper woman to clean.

Relations between *jatis* were regulated through each group's headman. If a landowner was dissatisfied with a carpenter's or a blacksmith's services, he would approach the artisan's headman. Likewise, if a sweeper was discontented, his headman would approach the landowner in question. *Jati* panchayats (councils) regulated *jajmani* relations within each group; if a carpenter stole another's clients, it was to the panchayat that the aggrieved party looked for redress.

The *jati* panchayat was a powerful force for the status quo and caste solidarity. If members of a group were discontented with the terms of the agreement, they could respond by withholding essential services or payments. Landless laborers typically held the least bargaining clout. The boycott, if coordinated among various castes, could be an effective weapon to keep lower orders down. Low-caste earthworkers in a village in Senapur, for example, saw their first attempts to build a school fail. The dominant landowning caste instigated a boycott among the castes necessary to construct the school, then extended the boycott to the artisanal castes of surrounding villages. The earthworkers were forced to buy materials from Benares (Varanasi) and recruit workers from a distant village.

Although payments were stipulated by custom, there were a number of sources of flexibility in the system. It was often extremely difficult to get rid of superfluous workers or those whose sevices were inferior. Nonetheless, the quantity and quality of payments received by workers varied with supply and demand. Landowners would make various extra gifts throughout the year to ensure a ready and willing labor force at harvest time. Service

and craft castes who felt they had received niggardly gifts on ceremonial occasions could be vociferous in proclaiming their landowner's lack of generosity.

There has been a general decline in the economic components of *jajmani* relations in the twentieth century; the pace has been uneven, and many villagers still maintain them to some extent. That *jajmani* relations play such a pivotal role in ritual purity encourages many to continue them, even if the changing economic situation no longer warrants them. In addition, traditional *jajmani* relations offer landowners a more stable supply of labor for times of peak demand and a retinue of followers in village disputes.

An increase in cash crops has contributed to the decline; even where *jajmani* relations persist, cash crops are often exempt. The increase in cash cropping has also meant a decline in grains and foodstuffs in some areas, so there is less to be distributed. In the past, cultivators had few alternatives because storage facilities were such that a surplus harvest not divided would spoil. Work done with new equipment or on new crops is often done on a cash basis (see Village India, this ch.)

Even where artisans have not been driven out of business by cheaper manufactured goods, many have moved to urban centers to work for cash. Sometimes service castes will maintain *jajmani* relations alongside cash payments. In recent decades more occupations and more sources of cash income have become available. The occupational monopolies the various castes enjoyed have been eroded; for example, some *jatis* have begun doing their own shaving and carpentry, and the caste headman is no longer the exclusive mediator of *jajmani* relations with his caste.

Jatis can be riven by intense rivalries. Factionalism is perennial, but the rivals are normally the lineages of a single *jati* or closely ranked castes. Typically, a large lineage within a caste or the dominant caste in a village will divide into several factions; these often correspond to the degree of distance between the lineage mates. Close relatives who split into different rival camps are commonly brothers or patrilineal cousins who have quarreled over inheritance.

Rivalry itself is endemic because *jatis* who are close in ritual rank accept their inferiority only in the short term; every family or lineage that increases its wealth devotes uncounted resources in an effort to best its rivals and so improve its own status. This effort, of course, threatens those immediately above them and so perpetuates the rivalry.

Jati panchayats govern most relations within a village caste.

Panchayat means simply a group or council of five and as used here does not refer to the official panchayats limited to five (see State and Local Government, ch. 8). Villagers commonly use the term in a variety of contexts to refer to the process whereby matters are discussed and adjudicated; it can be called any time for any group in any situation where group consensus and action may be called for.

The issues that a given panchayat deals with depend on what social groups are involved. Lineage panchayats resolve matters touching on inheritance, land, or water rights. Lineage elders normally try to anticipate what difficulties might arise and to avert trouble before it starts. The *jati* council aims at protecting its group's rights against encroachment and deals with other social groups. Within the panchayat all men have the right to speak; the more outspoken women will offer advice from the sidelines.

Some *jatis* will join caste mates from neighboring villages to form a council that deals with major disputes affecting their *jati*—flagrant violations of rules dealing with incest or ritual purity. Multivillage panchayats often meet after weddings and funerals. They settle marital disputes (especially broken marriage contracts), plan *jati* festivals, outline strategies for dealing with government officials, and the like.

Panchayats deal with ritual lapses—a matter of critical importance, given the salient concepts of purity and pollution. Action by the panchayat is the more important because a *jati* mate's failure affects all. Anything that defiles an individual defiles, by extension, those who eat with him or her.

A panchayat judgment requires consensus; if there is serious disagreement, the meeting is adjourned. The emphasis is less on resolving a dispute than on reaching unanimity. Only if there is a reasonably firm consensus can the panchayat hope that all will abide by the decision. The use of overt coercion is rare; councils rely on the force of moral opinion. Even a deadlocked meeting is significant in that all the participants know where each other stands; it clarifies the balance of power.

Sanctions against individuals or *jatis* include measures such as boycotting by local service castes or general harassment; in extreme cases a *jati* member will be outcast. Other castes will normally follow suit and shun the outcast individual; not to do so risks a boycott by the *jati* that expelled the member in the first place, if not ritual pollution. Outcasting is reportedly not as common nor as drastic as it once was; it still represents a "social death." Ultimately, most individuals are brought to heel by the threat of it simply because it means they would be unable to find proper

mates for their children. Panchayat rulings can figure in the fission of a *jati*. If an entire caste extending over several villages is outcast, they may stonewall the ruling and form a new, distinct *jati*.

The panchayat takes careful account of who the defendant is; an individual's reputation is a powerful factor in the judgment. Wealth is important if only because the council knows that a wealthy family is better able to flaunt the panchayat's sanctions. Wealth is still no protection against serious ritual infractions, such as cow killing or incest.

Despite rivalry and factionalism, there remain powerful forces for *jati* cohesion. Annual lineage rites, the maintenance of the *jati* temple (if there is one), and the *jati's* part in communal festivals all enhance the group's cohesion. Preservation of the caste's status is a matter of common interest to all because it defines, in effect, each member's social identity. When fees are lowered for the *jati's* traditional product or service or when other castes infringe on ritual or ceremonial prerogatives, *jati* mates rally in defense against the common enemy. Members jointly handle instances of ritual infractions, plan a common strategy for dealing with government officials, and often participate jointly in village politics.

There are, in fact, few alternatives to claim the individual's loyalties. One's *jati* defines one's social identity in village affairs. Notes anthropologist David G. Mandelbaum, for the average Indian ". . . the position and practices of his *jati* mold his career, define the range of his kinsmen and his closest companions, and affect a large part of his social relations." One is always identified with a specific caste; most of one's social relations are with other *jati* members; all the significant life rituals take place within one's *jati*. Even within the same village, different *jatis* will use different dialects in the home. A highly developed and specific *jati* folklore reinforces a common ethos.

Caste rank is not immutable, and the effort to improve *jati* status absorbs an immense amount of the members' energies. Jockeying for ritual preeminence is intense between those who are close in rank. The closer two *jatis* are in rank, the less ready the inferior is to accept its status. Every increase in the family's wealth is plowed into improving the status of its *jati*.

Low castes are particularly unwilling to accept their tainted ritual status and devote endless efforts to establishing themselves slightly higher on the ritual scale. *Jati* origin myths contribute to this process; Indians are aware of the four varnas and the Vedic explanation of caste status, but each *jati* has its own explanation of the group's individual history. For low castes this almost invari-

ably includes an explanation of how the *jati* was cheated of its rightful rank by others.

A historically important means of upward mobility for castes was armed conquest or bringing unsettled land under cultivation. Historian K.M. Panikkar notes that from the fifth century B.C. until the British Raj, every known royal family on the subcontinent originated from outside the Kshatriya castes. Under the British, castes resorted to a variety of strategems to improve their standing. British censuses from 1891 through 1931 listed caste affiliation; they offered ample scope for those seeking to enhance their status. When in 1901 the census commissioner tried to rank all castes, petitions for higher varna classification poured in from *jatis*. In general, the British acted, de facto, much as Hindu rulers had earlier: they responded favorably to requests from the rich and powerful to bring their ritual status into conformity with their secular wealth.

There are a number of means by which a *jati* can improve its status. Education of some members is virtually essential; it gives the *jati* as a whole not only prestige but also more effective access to the government bureaucracy. Families whose wealth is growing will start their campaign by sending their sons to school, building more lavish houses, offering generous hospitality to guests, and arranging ostentatious weddings. These displays are the groundwork necessary to challenge those higher on the hierarchy in terms of ritual prerogatives and prestige.

Traditionally, such efforts focused almost exclusively on the displays of ritual status that were tied to *jati* rank. As such, the individual family's wealth availed it little unless it was used to improve the status of the *jati* as a whole. Regardless of the family's prosperity, other castes interacted with it in terms of its *jati* status. When several families in a caste prospered, they could pool their resources to push for a general improvement in the standing of the *jati*. Traditionally, lower castes who seized power claimed to be Kshatriya castes. British rule permitted a variety of groups to grow wealthy and/or influential and subsequently to improve their ritual status. Scribes had low standing under the Mughals; writing was a skill thought to be appropriate to merchants, not to priests who were expected to memorize the scriptures. Scribes' talents were in demand under the British administration, and their status rose concomitantly. Likewise, salt workers who built water courses prospered as the British expanded irrigation works.

Members of *jatis* in the process of self- improvement begin by pressuring their caste mates to give up polluting practices as-

sociated with their old status. Often they change the *jati* name. Some try wearing the sacred thread associated with "twice-born" status. All of this can precipitate violent opposition from higher ranking *jatis* who see their own status threatened and fear losing lower castes to perform polluting tasks.

Anthropologist M.N. Srinivas has characterized the process by which lower castes try to improve their standing as Sanskritization (see Glossary); mobility is defined in terms of the ideology and practices of the higher castes, who are supposed to be more conversant with proper ritual practices. There is an effort to conform to the Sanskritic models of proper behavior. A Brahman lifestyle is the ideal; as the lower orders acquire the necessary resources, they will practice Sanskritic rituals, give up defiling practices, become vegetarian, and cease drinking alcohol. Often they hire a Brahman to perform family rituals. The two models most commonly chosen by upwardly mobile *jatis* are the Kshatriya and the Brahman; castes emphasize the virtues of whatever varna they have chosen to emulate, i.e., the purity of the Brahmans, the honor of the Kshatriyas, or the intelligence of the Vaishyas.

Sanskritization has meant an increase in the number of *jatis*, as those attempting to improve their ritual practices split from the unregenerate branches of their own groups. Overall, the process has been one that contributes to the stability of the caste system, bringing ritual status and its prerogatives into congruence with such secular attributes as wealth. Observers credit the caste system with inhibiting the development of a unified sense of their plight among India's poor. The struggle for a slightly better ritual standing has fragmented efforts to unify the masses (see Social Change, this ch.).

Western education plays a pragmatic role; Western values do not supplant indigenous ones. Western education was a critical component in lower castes' efforts at improvement. Christian proselytizing and Hindu reform movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries often focused on establishing schools for Sudras and untouchables. Over the years the educated have changed their strategies; for some, Sanskritization gave way to conversion to Buddhism and participation in the political process.

Caste mobility is a gradual process; it is impossible to rise in ritual rank overnight. One cannot make too radical a change; untouchables do not become Brahmans. Even a dramatic rise in secular power does not ensure automatic improvement in ritual status; historically, there have even been rulers whose rise in power still did not guarantee they could find brides of good status for their sons. A true change in rank requires several generations.

Some castes can be gradually assimilated to higher rank by marrying their daughters to *jatis* of more exalted status.

Individual "passing" as a person of higher status is thought to be uncommon. Even though a person may enjoy some success in this fashion in business, the individual still needs to present a convincing family genealogy in order to obtain spouses for his children. A rise in *jati* status is validated when those who previously would not accept food from or eat with them now do so. Intermarriage is always the final test of *jati* status.

Untouchables have attempted to improve their social and ritual status throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. They face formidable obstacles. Higher castes are usually cohesive in their opposition to untouchables' acquiring land. Traditional Hindu law defined punishments in terms of caste affiliation—Brahmans were treated more leniently than members of lower *jatis*. In the British view all were equal before the law; nonetheless, the British rule reinforced the traditional order in critical ways. They were loath to intervene in caste matters; the courts would not overturn caste boycotts or outcasting. The courts awarded damages to those who had to undergo purification rites after untouchables had entered temples.

The Constitution of India legally abolished untouchability, and the Untouchability (Offenses) Act of 1955 stipulates stiff punishments for those convicted of discriminating in access to public places. The Constitution also mandates compensatory measures to aid the disadvantaged in their integration into society. This is to be accomplished by means of "protective discrimination" for the "Scheduled Castes." In 1935 the British drew up a list of untouchable castes; the Indian government has maintained and updated the list (schedule) along with supplemental lists of "Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes."

The measures to aid the Scheduled Castes include reserved places in educational institutions, legislative bodies, and government employment. There are, as well, special scholarships and welfare services for which all listed are eligible. When it became obvious that significant economic advantage could accrue to fortunate and energetic members of the Scheduled Castes, many *jatis* reversed their strategies for upward mobility. Efforts to establish the purer origins of the caste shifted to getting on the lists. Notes journalist Harold Isaacs, "In many states a great clamor arose with all kinds of groups insisting that they too should be classified as 'backward' and these included . . . . some pretty forward groups who felt that their jealously guarded ritual or social superiority should not be allowed to interfere with their right to get on the

government gravy train."

There has always been ambiguity in the precise ranking of castes, and untouchables have been no less subject to this than other groups. For example, in Orissa, washer *jatis* are considered of low status but still among the "clean" castes; in nearby localities they are classified as untouchables (see fig. 1). The benefits available to those on the scheduled lists compounded the confusion. Eventually, the government responded by setting income limits on most benefits.

Overall, these programs have failed to benefit the mass of the disadvantaged. Untouchables lag behind other segments of the population in literacy. Their participation in government employment is far below their reserved percentages. Few cases are brought to court under the Untouchability (Offenses) Act, and fewer still result in convictions. Observers note that such legislation has created the illusion that untouchables are making gains at the expense of higher caste Hindus. The untouchables' reserved seats in Parliament have contributed to their potential political power—if only because that 12.5 percent of the electorate can be a swing vote.

Untouchables have also tried to improve their lot through a change in religious affiliation; numbers have converted to Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, and Sikhism. Conversion represents a potent threat because it implies a radical break with Hinduism and the entire caste system. Other Hindus, however, continue to treat the converts as untouchables; even within the new religion, converts sometimes encounter discrimination. Feelings about purity and pollution as well as hierarchy have influenced other religions on the subcontinent; recent conversion is frequently taken as prima facie evidence of untouchable origin.

Recently, there have been massive conversions to Buddhism and Islam. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, himself an untouchable, led the Mahar untouchables in the struggle for independence and a better place in postindependence India. He converted to Buddhism in 1956 and brought hundreds of thousands of his followers with him. Conversion, in many cases, brings great psychological freedom and a sense of a new social identity. Among the Buddhist Mahars it has been a force for greater cohesion and solidarity in the face of opposition by caste Hindus. Conversion has also been divisive: it has driven a wedge between converts and their former caste mates who remain Hindus.

Caste associations—voluntary organizations of caste members—have become a commonplace means of agitating for caste improvement. Caste, especially in urban India, functions as a

welfare organization for its members. It is partially a network for resources and partially a voluntary association-cum-pressure group. Caste associations began to achieve prominence in the nineteenth century; improvements in transportation and a general rise in the availability of education facilitated their formation. A caste association's membership often includes both Western-educated city dwellers and villagers; the educated provide invaluable funding and leadership skills. Caste associations discuss discrimination against their caste and reform caste customs; they often establish scholarship funds for promising students of their caste and provide housing for those studying away from home. They frequently publish a caste newspaper. If their membership is large, they may be able to bargain effectively for political benefits and electoral representation. In general, however, their political role is circumscribed: the castes of a region may be so fragmented that there is no single numerically dominant group. Since association membership is defined exclusively in terms of caste membership, it has been difficult to form effective, large-scale alliances with other castes. Finally, even where a single caste has the majority, the opposition can undermine the caste association's political efforts by the simple expedient of nominating their own candidate from the caste in question.

Caste behavior is modified in the changing political and economic situation of contemporary India. The economic underpinning of the traditional caste exchanges in the countryside has largely changed. Independence and electoral politics have altered the arena for caste mobility; efforts that previously might have been geared exclusively toward improving the caste's ritual standing now include a pronounced political element. City living and employment in new occupations have transformed the operation of the caste system in those areas.

A conscious dichotomy between home and work is the pattern for many Indians employed in the modern sector. Behavior that would be highly inappropriate in a home setting, such as dining with members of different castes, is tolerated in the workplace. Persons of many castes from untouchables to Brahmans, mingle in business and professional life in ways that are not permitted in a village. At home, however, most people revert to a semblance of their caste customs and preserve a high degree of *jati* exclusivity in their personal and social lives.

Caste remains highly significant in personal life and social ties; through nepotism it operates in employment and business as well. City dwellers continue to contract marriage within the bounds of their *jati*, although the class standing of each family

within the *jati* is significant as well. The few untouchables who manage to acquire an education and enter the professions normally marry others of similar caste and class standing. Urban castes, therefore, are crosscut into a number of large endogamous subgroups stratified along lines of caste and class.

The upper castes have been able to parlay their caste standing into high-class status. The cities are disproportionately upper caste in composition, while the rural areas are overbalanced with the lower castes. Within cities the upper castes dominate the modern elite of professionals, technicians, modern managers, and government officials. Professionals are overwhelmingly from the twice-born castes; few Sudras or Scheduled Castes members reach that level. The educational system, though ostensibly supposed to aid the lower orders, acts to preserve the prerogatives of the upper caste and class groups. The predominance of English in the modern sector, the highly developed and prestigious system of private education, and the lack of any tradition of formal education among the lower castes all favor the upper castes. Members of influential *jatis* have at their disposal an extensive network of personal contacts. Even for the educated lower-caste person, the lack of personal connections is a severe disadvantage in a society still permeated by particularistic loyalties.

Although *jati* loyalty remains strong in cities, in many cases the *jatis* themselves have been redefined to combine both caste and class considerations. Residential neighborhoods typically reflect both a caste and a class identity. Regional origin and religious affiliation are likewise important in cities. In daily urban interaction, continual fine evaluations of relative status and social position go on. Western status symbols may have replaced Sanskritic scholarship and ritual purity, but a pervasive concern with hierarchy and particularistic loyalties nonetheless remains. Caste becomes an aspect of social identity in a mass of relative strangers.

Family and Kin

Both as the focus of individual daily life and as the basic component of the caste system, family and kin are central to Indian society. Traditionally, the extended family and its joint household performed important economic, religious, and social functions; it was the focus of its members' most deep-seated loyalties. Despite the continuous and growing impact of Westernization, urbanization, and secularization, the traditional joint household, both in ethos and in practice, remains the primary social force in the lives

of most Indians.

The organization of family and kin and their role in society reflect a number of Indian assumptions about the proper mode of social life and priorities. The most prominent of these include the primacy of the group's interest over those of the individual, the intrinsically hierarchical nature of all human relationships, and the centrality of ritual purity and pollution. A family member owes his or her kin overriding loyalty and conformity. An individual's position within the family is defined by age, sex, and relationship to others; each person occupies a specific role and enjoys rights and duties acknowledged by fellow family members and society at large.

All activities are designed to conform to these considerations. Marriage is contracted to preserve and improve the family's social status and its ritual purity. For Hindus, the individual's obligations to family and kin are a critical part of his or her dharma; religious duty conforms to the duty of kin. Kinship and the caste system are inextricably interwoven. From the individual's perspective many, if not most, of his or her caste mates are relatives. All of one's actual and potential relatives belong to the same *jati*. Home and family guard the ritual purity of the *jati*. The *jati* provides, with few exceptions, the sole acceptable marriage partners and—with the exceptions already noted—the only possible eating companions.

Descent in most of the subcontinent is traced through the male line, patrilineally. In the northeast and southwest, however, matrilineal descent (traced through the female line) is common. Genealogical lines are not traced except among the ruling castes. Families are grouped by descent into an approximately seven-generation patrilineage; all familes in the patrilineage trace descent from a common ancestor. A number of patrilineages are grouped in a sib or clan (often referred to as a *gotra*, but the terminology throughout the country is highly diverse). Clans trace descent from a putative ancestor; in turn, they form subcastes (sometimes called *jatis*), and these, in turn, compose castes.

The distinctions are not hard and fast; in practice, these groups have different functions and prerogatives in diverse regions. There is fairly unanimous agreement about the role of the family and the lineage. The domestic group eats together, bears and cares for children, constitutes the basic work team, and organizes the crucial life-cycle rites. Lineage mates are typically the family's neighbors and closest supporters. They attend their constituent families' life-cycle rituals, and share their members' birth and death pollution (see Caste, this ch.). Lineage elders arrange

marriages for the member families' youngsters. In some parts of the country, a clan may actually have a territory, a headman, and common property. Where this is the case, it is often clans that compose the region's dominant castes.

In instances of matrilineal descent, such as among the Nayars of Kerala, matrilineal joint families might contain hundreds of descendants of a common ancestress. The eldest male was traditionally vested with control of the group's resources, and he was to manage affairs for the common good. All members had a right to sustenance; they were not permitted to sever relations with the lineage and take their share of the estate or inheritance with them. Because descent was traced in the female line, a man's legal heirs were his sister's children; it was through them and not through his own children that his line was traced. By the second decade of the twentieth century, however, the system, at least in Kerala, was disintegrating under the onslaught of legislation designed to give a man's wife and children prior claim to his assets. There were frequent demands that familes be allowed to take their share of the group's wealth and set up on their own. Those eldest males charged with the stewardship of the matrilineal joint family's resources increasingly took as much as possible for their own wives and children and let their sisters' children fend for themselves.

The ideology of Indian family life, especially in the north, emphasizes the continuity and solidarity of the male line. Descent and property pass in this line, and family members are expected to subordinate their lives to its interests. The preferred family form is the patrilineal extended (or joint) household. Although individual households may diverge from this norm, the influence of the ideal is pervasive.

In its mature form the extended household consists of a senior couple, their married sons with their wives and children, any unmarried children, and possibly other miscellaneous relatives. All live in a single house, cook at a single hearth, spend from a single purse, worship at a single altar, and obey the single authority of the eldest male. In Hindu law the patrilineage holds property *in common until formally and legally dissolved.* All males are, from birth, co-owners of the lineage's assets—each with an equal share in the property regardless of age or relation to the lineage headman. Women share in the property only through receipt of a dowry at marriage. Modern laws have established equal property rights for women, though with dubious impact on customary practice.

Within the extended family, men form the skeleton of con-

tinuity. A major function of the family is to perpetuate itself through the production of male heirs; if sons are not born, boys from other families of the *jati* may be adopted as substitutes. They assume the full rights and obligations of sons born into the family. A male heir is so important that in some landowning *jatis* more than 10 percent of the male members are adopted sons. Females are a part of their birth families only until they marry, usually in their mid-teens or earlier. The bride's husband and in-laws give her her lifelong home, and her status in that home reflects her relationships to the members of the household; she is there as wife and mother. For men the relationships with patrilineal kin are preeminent; for women, those of relatives by marriage.

There is no simple, clear-cut distinction between nuclear and extended families applicable throughout the subcontinent. The Indian family is a multifaceted structure that admits of a variety of interpretations. There is no universal agreement about what criteria should be used to define an extended household, i.e., common property or commensality. The basic distinction between nuclear and extended families is often imputed to households by observers when the families involved consider themselves simply a family. Villagers do not use different terms for a nuclear or a multicouple family.

Apparent deviations from the extended family ideal may result from family demography: if the requisite family members are deceased, the complete joint household is impossible. The father's death normally signals the dissolution of the joint household; brothers rarely remain in a single household. Typically, they repeat the domestic cycle by means of each brother's family becoming a multigeneration household at the appropriate time.

Jati rules have an impact on the extended family's form. They often stipulate the correct time for the formation of separate households and whether women may remarry, live alone, head families, or initiate divorce proceedings. These and other factors influence the composition of households.

Economic resources determine the extent to which families can approach the ideal extended form. Those with substantial landholdings and relatively high incomes derived from agriculture tend to reside in joint households for a greater portion of their lives than those with lower incomes and without land. Few families of landless laborers, for example, are joint families in the classic sense. Their maximum depth is perhaps two generations. Economic pressures may call for the division of the family's meager assets. In general, the higher the cash income, the less the tendency to maintain a joint household, though there are

numerous exceptions to this rule. The situation is further complicated because some commensal households do not have joint property, while other families holding common property also maintain separate households.

Despite the fact that many households deviate from the ideal of the extended household, the majority do not, by default, reside in nuclear families. Even deviations from the ideal must be explained in terms of the ethos of the extended family rather than in intermediate forms between the extended family and the nuclear family. In many regions even the suggestion of dividing a joint household implies unseemly hostility among kin. Consequently, even people who part amicably do not consider themselves to be separate households but rather "satellites" of a single family. Those living away from their ancestral home will retain a share in the family property that reinforces their position as family members in good standing.

A nuclear family living in a city and in isolation from its kin may develop a new pattern of relationships that can supplant the old family ties. A more typical pattern, however, is for men to come to the city alone, leaving wives and children at home in the village where they can be cared for by the extended family. Such a pattern of urban migration strengthens rather than disrupts the extended family.

Household size and composition are not unfailing indications of nuclear or joint families. A family may be composed of a single couple and their children, yet the duties of kinship may be so extensive as to make that nuclear family a poor indicator of the depth and quality of the ties of close kin. Indeed, cases have been recorded of rural families gradually reconstituting themselves around an urban "satellite." Substantial wealth or economic duress may foster the formation of a joint household. Wealth means the wherewithal to conform to the cultural ideal—even in an urban environment—whereas poverty sometimes forces families to live together for want of a better alternative.

A number of factors favor the existence of the joint family, although at its most basic it usually demands a certain level of wealth. Joint families can consolidate their work force, and one's coworkers are trusted relatives. In itself it enhances its members' sense of well-being simply because social life is so thoroughly oriented to family and kin.

For a joint family to be a going concern is by no means easy, however. Everyone must be treated equally to avoid charges of favoritism and consequent ill feeling. If a man buys something for his wife or child, all must share in it. All must contribute to the

household purse and, however patently unequal the various contributions, each must be received with the same favor. The joint family requires a single, strong, effective decisionmaker along with compliant followers.

There are myriad sources of stress. Conflict exists between older and younger men. Widely disproportionate contributions of money or labor to the common purse can lead to rancor. Those earning cash incomes are prone to keep back part of their wages for their own use. Family members can disagree about spending priorities (e.g., is this the year to buy more land or send a promising youngster to college?). A frequent point of conflict is between wives of brothers. There is a saying, "A hundred mustaches can live peacefully under one roof, but not four breasts." Bickering among the household's wives, however, often serves simply as a culturally acceptable excuse for dividing the joint family's assets.

Marriage

For Indians of the proper age, the married state is the most common and respectable way of life; marriage is a quasi-obligatory sacrament in Hinduism. Marriage is central not only for the couple involved but also for their respective families; it is the most public statement of *jati* status. Of all the duties of parenthood, arranging proper marriages for one's children probably weighs heaviest.

Because of the nature of the caste system and the prevalent requirement of caste endogamy, most marriages take place between nearly equal families; where there are differences in *jati* status, they are small. The only generally acceptable deviation from the rule of absolute equality for such families is for the husband to come from a higher status family. A family is extremely reluctant to allow its daughters to marry beneath their status. *Jati* purity and ritual rank are intimately tied to women's purity; for daughters to marry down jeopardizes the rank of the entire *jati* and is, therefore, vigorously opposed by all *jati* mates. The acceptability of a given spouse involves finely calibrated distinctions between grades of standing and subtle trade-offs of one family's strengths against the other's weaknesses.

There are four major regional variations in Hindu marriage patterns. In the north, village exogamy is enforced, and marriage is usually forbidden among people between whom any traceable blood relationship exists. Many northern *jatis* even refuse to accept brides from villages to which they send their own brides, thus forming circles of villages with a one-way movement of

brides. In the south, reciprocal and repeated marriages between groups is the traditional preference. Northern marriage patterns emphasize the extension of kin ties with a number of families and places; those of the south reinforce the ties already existing between families. Postindependence legislation outlaws marriage between cousins, but such unions continue to take place, though with less frequency than in the past. Central India includes peoples who permit a variety of practices transitional between the north and the south; some *jatis* permit marriage between certain blood relations. Tribal regions fall outside the spectrum of caste-based marriages entirely (see Tribes, ch. 4). It is important to keep in mind that even the most fixed marriage and residence rules are "bent" as practical considerations dictate. Even Brahman widows occasionally remarry, and sons-in-law live with their affinal kin when necessary.

In South India the groups of families that exchange spouses in marriage are generally small; they conform closely to the ideal pattern of marriage, i.e., bride and bridegroom are of equal status. Daughters are encouraged to marry sons of their mother's brother or father's sister. Wives maintain close relations with their natal families, and marriages form alliances between families that last through generations. In North India, by contrast, wives do not necessarily maintain close ties with their natal families, and marriages do not create the fast allies common in the south. It is more common in the north, especially in the martial castes, for wives to marry into a higher caste.

Although descent is patrilineal and a person's patrilineal kin are immensely important, marriage creates a complex network of ties among in-laws. An individual's ties with his or her maternal kin are strong and enduring; it is to them that a child will run if things are too difficult at home. A man will maintain close ties with his affinal kin, i.e., the kin of his daughters' husbands, his sisters' husbands, his brothers' wives, and his wife. The ties of kinship by descent and marriage are dense and reticulate. Every family rite of passage provides an opportunity to reinforce these links. Relatives by marriage attend family marriages, funerals, and birth ceremonies. In many instances the elaborate etiquette of kinship stipulates the role that affinal relatives must play. Men bring gifts to their sisters and daughters when they give birth; a husband's sisters also have important duties to perform when their sister-in-law gives birth. It is a family disgrace if none of a bride's maternal uncles attend her wedding.

It is the parents' primary duty and ultimate goal in life to arrange good and proper marriages for all of their children. To have

done so is to be able to die fulfilled. The family's ultimate horror is to have all families within their *jati* refuse to exchange their youngsters in marriage. Marriage is a sen ve indicator of social position; in the continual struggle for upward mobility, it serves as the ultimate test of the success of the *jati*. To have one's children accepted by spouses in a *jati* that one could not oneself have married into is to have arrived. Marriage is the most public arena in which family standing is evaluated; there is no more critical barometer of reputation.

Any slur on the daughters of a household endangers family and *jati* standing. Daughters who run off, even if they are legally wed, must be formally cast out of the family (see Caste in Operation, this ch.). Even if the erring daughter is outcast, her siblings will find it difficult to obtain spouses. The opprobrium extends to the rest of the *jati;* if one village family marries outside of its proper *jati*, others may be forced to do so as well, simply because families of the desired status will boycott them. Ideally, a girl should marry before her menarche, both to prevent the premature loss of her virginity and to permit her mother-in-law to train her in the ways of that household. Although legislation has established 15 as the minimum age of marriage for girls and 18 for boys, child marriage continues to be commonplace. Experts estimate that in the late 1970s perhaps 20 percent of all married women had wed underage.

The vast majority of all marriages are arranged by the families of the prospective spouses. Because marriage touches the reputation of the entire lineage and *jati*, it has traditionally been a matter in which the lineage elders and *jati* headmen have considerable input. Companionship and affection are of minor concern; the primary obligations of marriage the spouses owe not to each other but to their respective families, especially that of the husband. Spouses may look at each other before the wedding, but even among the most educated and Westernized of the middle class, the betrothed are permitted to visit each other only briefly and then only in the presence of relatives.

The girl's parents ordinarily undertake the search for a suitable husband for their daughter; parents have greater leeway in the age at which their boys marry. Each *jati* stipulates the acceptable and unacceptable degrees of relationship between spouses. Because all patrilineal caste groups forbid marriage between members of the same lineage, the search typically begins by querying in-laws if they know of a suitable boy among their own friends and relatives.

Marriage negotiations often begin, in a preliminary way, at

other marriage ceremonies; married daughters who have returned home for wedding festivities can evaluate the eligible brides and grooms in the families and villages they have married into. In choosing a bride for their son, the groom's family is concerned that the potential bride be properly subservient and respectful; it is her ability to be a good daughter-in-law that is of issue. Brides are expected to fit into their husband's family. To marry, a girl must convince a proposed suitor's parents of her desirability as a daughter-in-law. Once a marriage has been proposed, the prospective bridegroom and his family, or at least those having the most say in the matter, visit the proposed bride and her family. The bride-to-be's decorum is important; her income-earning potential is considered. Any physical defects must be declared and discussed.

The terms of the match are the subject of prolonged negotiations. Particularly in regions where village exogamy is the rule, marriage negotiations can be extremely delicate because the respective families often do not know each other. A careful, if tactful, mutual evaluation takes place; both families weigh their own relative merit against the standing of the prospective spouse's family. Astrologers are consulted to determine the suitability of the match; an inauspicious reading can often provide a graceful means of exit from the negotiations for either party. If the negotiations proceed according to plan, the family heads strike a mutually agreed upon arrangement in which the dowry paid by the bride's family balances against the advantages each family enjoys.

The prospective groom's status and financial situation are important determinants of the amount of the dowry. In cities, young men with degrees in high income-earning fields, ranking civil servants, and professionals can demand large dowries. Holders of "green cards," which enable them to live and work in the United States, command a premium, and the matrimonial advertisements carry notices of young men returning from the United States to choose a bride. There are a few signs of change; in some circles the prospective couple is allowed a say in their marriage. Some advertisements play down the dowry in favor of the bride-to-be's merit.

The cost of a traditional wedding and dowry can literally bankrupt the bride's family. Dowries are, strictly speaking, illegal, but the laws have had minimal impact on customary practice. Indeed, the high cost of marriage for the bride's family is implicated in the remorse that often accompanies the birth of a girl. Families strapped for funds for the dowry and wedding celebrations sometimes organize special "lotteries" among their friends

and relatives. The father of the bride gets the funds necessary to marry his daughter, but he is obligated to pay his "winnings" back to the lottery participants.

Just as a daughter marrying below her *jati* jeopardizes caste rank, so also does her marriage into a family of higher standing improve it. Familial efforts to marry their daughters into families of high status inflate the cost of the dowry still further. Indeed, this "pride and purse," as the British described the subcontinent's marriage customs, was widely viewed as encouraging female infanticide, a practice the British outlawed in 1870. Even in contemporary India observers argue that the high cost of dowries contributes to the "systematic fatal neglect of female offspring." In fact, mortality rates for juvenile girls are highest where dowries are highest—in North India—especially among the upper social echelons. In South India and among lower status groups in general, juvenile mortality rates are more nearly equal for the sexes.

Roles and Relationships

Family roles reflect those values basic to Indian worldview. Hierarchically organized and male oriented, family life emphasizes the authority of the older over the younger and of males over females. There are no peers within the Indian family. Further, it emphasizes the solidarity and continuity of the male family line and the ties between siblings over those between spouses. Although strong ties of loyalty bind fathers and sons and brothers, the deepest ties of affection are those between mothers and sons and brothers and sisters.

Each family member has distinct and explicit obligations and roles. Customary practices of deference, intimacy, and avoidance structure daily interaction. Although education has blunted some of the sharpest behavioral distinctions within the joint family, the broad pattern remains unchanged in most of rural and much of urban India. In general, deference and obedience flow up the line of the sexes, including from younger to older brother. Age determines precedence, both within and between generations. Among wives who have married into the family, the relative position of their husbands determines precedence. Between the sexes the tone of relations is either of deference, avoidance or, less frequently, emotional intimacy.

Because the joint household is multigenerational, the role of child in relation to parents does not atrophy among adult men as it does in the West. A grown man owes his parents roughly the same sort of respect and deference that he did as a child. His relation-



Darjeeling
Courtesy Air-India Library

ships with his wife and children are subordinate to those with his parents; wife and children must not impinge on or interfere with the husband's (father's) duties to his parents. The etiquette of deference often requires that a man does not sit, smoke, joke, or allude to his sexual life in his father's presence. Within the joint family a man must conduct himself in a formal, detached manner when interacting with his wife and children in his own parents' presence. He may relax his demeanor only when alone with his wife and children. Because of the relatively public nature of the Indian household, in which daily activities take place primarily in a courtyard or in the lane in front of the house, formality usually prevails in parent-child and husband-wife relationships. Grandparents, by contrast, are free to fondle and joke with their grandchildren at will and even discuss sexual matters with their friends in the presence of their sons.

Deference and propriety mark the relationship between spouses. The Hindu wife's lot in life demands that she give her husband and his family obedience and respect. The husband is her lord, both temporally and spiritually; emotional intimacy often develops only years after an arranged marriage. Casual rela-

tions or ties of emotional intimacy between members of the opposite sex typically exist only between those who are ineligible to marry. A mother and son have a warm, enduring relationship; brothers and sisters are close; a man may be friendly with his older brother's wife.

For a woman the transition to adulthood, which is marriage, can be a difficult, abrupt, and bitter experience. In her natal household a girl may be sheltered and indulged; often she is her father's favorite. Upon marrying, she enters her husband's home, a move that places her among potentially hostile strangers with whom she must spend the rest of her life. Her mother-in-law, as the female head of the household, is in charge and disciplines the women of the family. The mother-in-law supervises the bride's work and her relations with the groom, who at this time is a virtual stranger to his wife. The early years of marriage, especially until a wife has produced a child, are the most difficult of a woman's life. Folklore recognizes this period as a woman's greatest trial and challenge. A young wife's situation is particularly difficult if her husband works away from the village. Men who can obtain employment away from home have a respite from the rigors of joint family life; their wives are not usually so fortunate. Mothers try to inculcate in their daughters docility, resignation, and self-reliance to withstand the inevitable strains of married life. Psychologists note that a common personality trait of Indian women is a sense of standing alone among the unfriendly forces of nature.

In the early 1980s women's groups, lawyers, jurists, and others began to speak out about the phenomena of "bride burning" and "dowry murders" and the probably related increase in the number of presumed suicides by young married women. The murders—committed by the young woman's mother-in-law, husband, and other in-laws and staged to look like accidental burning— most frequently occur when the postwedding dowry payments are not as great as the in-laws anticipated or when the woman fails to produce a son. (To return the woman to her family, if they would accept her, would require the repayment of the dowry already paid.) An article in the *Washington Post* reported that in 1983, in New Delhi alone, almost 700 women died in circumstances that social workers described as probable murders. Jurists and other observers stated that this was more than twice the number of similar incidents in 1977. Competent authorities informed Claiborne that the number of actual murders was probably higher and that the practice is becoming increasingly common, at least in part because the perpetrators are only rarely

charged and convicted. The suicides—some of which may in fact be murders and most of which are by immolation, the most common form of suicide by Hindus—presumably are carried out by young women who can no longer tolerate the physical and psychological abuse to which they are subjected yet who are too shamed or fearful to seek the assistance of their families.

Role expectations are more fluid and less formal as one moves down the social scale. Among poorer families the traditional marks of deference, such as touching the elders' feet and brides covering their faces before their older in-laws, are practiced less. Women enjoy more independence if only because their labor is essential to the family's survival. Women take part in household decisions. Divorce and widow remarriage are tolerated, however much families subscribe to the Brahman ideal in these matters.

The "daughters of the house"—the women born into it—experience a relaxing respite from the rigors of marriage when they visit their natal homes. Unmarried daughters living at home are treated much more leniently than daughters-in-law. A woman may begin to gain respect and status in her husband's household with the birth of children, especially sons. The importance of bearing children is symbolized by the practice of tekonomy, in which husbands and wives address each other as "mother of" and "father of" their oldest child or oldest son. A woman's relationship with her son is probably the most satisfying and emotionally enduring one of her life. His dependence and continued need for her demonstrate her worth.

By contrast, a son often finds his father a distant figure who is isolated from his children by his paternal dignity and his role as disciplinarian. This is particularly true in multigenerational households. Ordinarily, the mother's brother is an affectionate, approachable senior kinsman, but because of village exogamy, this uncle may visit his sister's children only intermittently. Even as an adult, a man's warmest personal relationship is likely to be with his mother.

Romantic love and intense emotional attachments between spouses, far from bolstering the joint family, might disrupt it. Many aspects of family life are structured so as to distance spouses from one another and to diminish any personal tie between them. In good weather, life goes on in the courtyard of the house, rather than in the small, close rooms surrounding it, which are used for storage, as sleeping places for women, and for sexual relations. The daily activities of men and women are both functionally and spatially separate. Adult men and women are segregated at mealtime; men dine first, women and children later. A single kitchen

serves the entire joint household, and all women contribute to food preparation in common; no woman cooks solely for her husband.

A man's strongest psychological ties are with his parents rather than with his wife. His primary duty in life is to meet the expectations of parents and kinsmen. The pressures on sons to succeed in the highly competitive world of education and employment are often severe. A son's educational and vocational success redound to his family's and parents' credit; it enhances the family's general social standing. A Hindu psychiatrist noted that, among men, psychological problems that focus on economic goals (relating to parents' expectations) far outnumber those concerned with sex (reflecting relationships with wives).

Family roles show considerable regional and caste variation, just as family form does. The relationships among family members vary considerably; children living in essentially nuclear families probably relate to their parents more informally. When women contribute significantly to the family's livelihood, as in most poorer families and in many families headed by Western-educated, middle-class city dwellers, they are less subservient. Personality development varies from *jati* to *jati*. Beyond regional variation all Indians share the certain knowledge that security lies in one's kin; it is to them that an Indian looks at every crisis and turning point of life. In the traditional family of whatever caste, the acceptable range of personal deviation from the norm was quite narrow. One accepted a predetermined slot in society, a hereditary occupation, a spouse selected by one's parents and lineage elders, and a life-style that made one a *jati* member.

The effect of widespread migration, urbanization, and industrialization on traditional family roles is by no means clear-cut. Family-based entrepreneurship and businesses often strengthen the bonds among kin, but individual wage earning can have the opposite effect. Although highly stratified internally, the joint family ideally assumes the equality of members vis-à-vis outsiders. Disparities in the cash incomes that various members contribute underscore differences in occupational standing. Patently unequal contributions to the family's joint purse undermine unity.

The mobility necessary for advancement in many careers separates individuals and often whole nuclear families from their extended families. Some observers suggest that individuals may use career advancement as an excuse to free themselves from family obligations. Although in many instances the ties with extended kin remain strong, the roles within the nuclear family almost in-

evitably change as spouses come to rely more on each other. The wife assumes a more pivotal, less dependent role as the main organizer of household activities. Children in households far removed from their extended kin rarely develop the intense ties characteristic of the joint household. Patterns of deference in educated, nuclear families rarely correspond to traditional norms. If, for example, a widowed mother joins her son's family in the city, she rarely has the hegemony she would in a joint family. Her daughter-in-law typically dominates the household.

Changes in family roles should not be overrated, however. Even among educated city dwellers, arranged marriages remain the rule. The values of the joint family and extended kin can often help the individual's career development rather than hinder it. Even those pursuing modern careers tend to "compartmentalize" their lives rather than drastically change their family behavior. Businessmen at work, for example, may wear Western clothes and even eat with those of lower castes. At home they don traditional dress and engage in traditional activities. Family rituals and hierarchies remain inviolate, and the purity of caste marriage continues to be sacrosanct (see Social Change, this ch.).

Village India

There are more than half a million villages in India and, despite the massive growth of cities since independence, most Indians (roughly three-fourths) continue to live in the countryside. The village is the primary focus of social relations; even for many urban migrants it remains the center of their loyalties. Although most villages are small—nearly 80 percent had fewer than 1,000 inhabitants according to the 1981 census—most villagers live in rural settlements having anywhere from 500 to 5,000 inhabitants. Those villages within reasonable commuting distance of a city are "peri-urban." Their inhabitants visit the city for work, business, and amusement. All villages have been affected in varying degrees by the political-economic changes of the twentieth century; all relate to the supra-village political environment. All are touched by the politics of Indian democracy, the commercialization of agriculture, and the changing patterns of employment and livelihood.

Caste is the defining feature of village social relations. The caste composition of a village determines, to a large degree, the configuration of rivalries and competition. Where a single caste controls most of the land and includes the largest landowners, its members can effectively control the local economy and politics.

To have truly decisive dominance, a caste should not only control a significant portion of the land but also have reasonably high ritual rank. Some of its leading members should have a Western education, and ideally it should be part of a larger group that is pivotal in regional politics. All of these elements are rarely present together; nonetheless, where landowners are of a single caste and maintain a unified front, they constitute a potent, nearly invincible force in village affairs.

The pattern of power and dominance varies according to landholding. There may be a single family holding sway—a pattern quite common in the princely states until the recent past. If a single family dominates landholding, village politics are distinct from those in villages where land is dispersed among a number of families within the dominant caste. Where a number of families hold land, rivalry can be intense and the dominant caste may divide into factions, each with its own following among lower ranking castes. In any event, land ownership is the key to power in rural India; it is a sensitive barometer to social relations. Regions where small peasant proprietors are the rule are distinct from those where, despite land reforms, large landholdings still dominate. The Punjab, for example, is a region of small farms; more than 70 percent of all cultivators are landowners and more than 80 percent of all farms are run by an owner-operator. It is a pattern of landholding that affords a relative measure of prosperity. In other regions, such as Bihar, large owners continue to control much of the land; social relations are nearly feudal despite decades of remedial legislation.

Anthropologist Miriam Sharma describes a village in North India under the hegemony of a single dominant caste. The caste accounted for about one-quarter of the village's total population but controlled nearly two-thirds of the land. At the other end of the scale, untouchables—again a little more than one-quarter of the village's total population—held only 2 percent of all arable land. To be truly effective, however, a dominant caste should diversify its sources of income and employment. A scattering of members in the professions, business, and the civil service is essential to the caste's continued predominance in the village. The economic advantages of diversification can hardly be overstated. In the same village, Sharma estimated the average per capita income of the dominant caste, even without agricultural production, at more than five times that of the untouchables.

Factions are an endemic feature of village life; factionalism represents, according to Sharma, the "traditional and still predominant form of political activity in rural India." Where land is dispersed among a number of families within a dominant caste,



Village street scene
Courtesy Air-India Library

that caste is typically divided into factions. Each faction is composed of a core of families of sufficient wealth to play at village power politics—it is not a poor man's game. Faction leaders must be wealthy enough to be able to loan bullocks, give emergency loans, and provide other assistance to their followers. Factions recruit their supporters from among the members of their *jati*, family servants, and followers from lower ranking castes. The individual family cannot succeed in village politics without allies and retainers; the number of lineage mates is too small to serve. Factionalism demands ties with non-kin. The tie between leader and follower is largely instrumental and transactional, and only leaders who can give real benefits can ensure their minions' loyalty. The intensity of factionalism varies regionally; it is most bitter in North India. In the south, women maintain closer ties with their kin, and both sides normally have in-laws in rival factions who can act as go-betweens.

Factions cleave closely along lines of kinship; alliances follow family and lineage lines. Where close relatives, such as brothers or patrilateral cousins, do quarrel, the cause is most commonly ***zamin***, ***zar***, or ***zanani*** (land, wealth, or women). The division of

land previously held in common is frequently the subject of contention, with the result that the disputants ally with opposing factions. At the core of a faction stand a few closely related families and their dependents. Indeed, a faction can be seen as a federation of lineages, reflecting the agreement of the heads of a few dominant families.

Even where factions do not represent a rift between close kin, they form in competition for scarce resources—land, irrigation water, labor, and political influence. Dominant castes often manage not only to maintain their grip on the traditional modes and means of power but also to control new resources and changing mens of conflict resolution. Many villagers argue that increases in resources, such as government tube-well irrigation water, merely mean more conflict among factions because there is no consensus about who has the right to allocate nontraditional means of production.

Historically, factions contended over land, prestige, women, ritual displays, and supporters; changing political and economic circumstances have added to these water, government assistance, educational opportunities, political office, and access to influential bureaucrats. Conflict is more pervasive too because, since independence, most villages have not had a single strong personage comparable to the headman under the British Raj. At the same time, new wealth has made at least some villagers less dependent on the good opinion of their fellows. Rich and poor alike in previous generations were forced to abide (more or less) by customary rules simply because alternatives outside the village were so circumscribed. New ways of making a living have meant that at least some villagers are able to stonewall the negative opinions of their neighbors.

In the villagers' view, elections and democratic processes have undermined village unity. Political parties contribute to factionalism, adding another dimension to local rivalries. Village factionalism can serve as a microcosm of the subcontinent's history: factions that were initially based on nothing more than membership in different patrilineages have fought and continue to fight on opposing sides of almost every emerging political issue.

Elections themselves, villagers say, are a source of divisiveness. The truly good and wise individual would not demean himself by seeking election, which leaves the field to representatives of differing factions. They, by definition, do not act impartially. Villagers also fear that the winner of a contested election will not be able to forget who opposed him in acting in local cases. The legislated local panchayat elections are an added dimension in local factional struggles. Unanimity in these cases often means

anything but accord. Researchers examining the actual dynamics behind nearly 100 uncontested panchayat elections found that in roughly 70 percent of the cases the village oligarchy had decided the outcome in advance and had discouraged all comers.

Factionalism can have a pervasive impact on village life. Where the divisions are serious and the lines tightly drawn, different factions will hold separate community festivals. Such a state of affairs represents a grievous decline in village solidarity; although various groups vie to play the most prestigious role in these festivals, they are meant to be times of community reconciliation. Factionalism may even disrupt women's visiting, although women are normally immune to men's rivalries.

To lead a faction requires appropriate caste position, wealth, and a forceful personality. Leaders, the so-called big men, control the resources that come into the village; they distribute favors to their followers, take chief responsibility for the form village factionalism takes, and choose the arenas where rivalries are played out. From the villagers' perspective the most desired quality in a leader is not wealth but honesty and education. This is because villagers seeking assistance are constantly subject to dishonesty. Officials demand favors before acting on petitions, government assistance is rarely distributed fairly, and politicians promise much and deliver little. Education is recognized as essential in dealing with the complex bureaucracy beyond the village. It requires education for a leader to be able to represent the village's needs to the governmental administrative apparatus properly and to manipulate the weighty bureaucracy to the village's advantage. Educated leaders act as middlemen, helping fellow villagers obtain government loans and the like.

One of a leader's most important functions is to act as a broker in dealing with powerful outsiders for villagers needing help. Outside contacts are critical to a faction leader's success; it is they, rather than wealth, that secure a man's position. Brokers are essential for villagers simply because the powers outside the village rarely act disinterestedly. The tie between leader and follower, notes one observer, "is not so much an interaction as a transaction." The effective leader should obtain for his followers anything from funds for home construction to street-paving services and scholarships and employment in the government and its projects. A faction's influence ultimately rests on its ability to marshal manpower in its support, and this in turn is ensured by the leaders' success in offering patronage and protection to their followers.

There are frequently multiple ties binding leader and fol-

lower, especially if the two are of widely divergent statuses. An untouchable is a tenant, debtor, and laborer to his landlord lender leader. The caste system itself both legitimizes and perpetuates inequality. At the same time, it offers certain advantages to poor individuals of low caste rank because, ideally, it creates a sense of moral obligation for the upper castes to fulfill their duties toward their less fortunate fellows. Historically, debt peonage served to bind laborers to landholders. Often there was little expectation that the debt itself would actually be repaid. A man's wife was expected to contribute service to the landholder's family; his sons were virtually indentured—less to pay their father's debt than to create their own and perpetuate the system.

The system in operation often bears little relationship to the ideal. Landless laborers, generally untouchables, are bound by vertical ties to leaders. But this is the only effective option they have. Although debt servitude has been legally abolished, chronic indebtedness continues to bind sons to their fathers' patrons much as always. The system rests on oppression as much as on mutually felt moral obligation. When untouchables try to alter their situation for the better, higher ranking groups are not averse to resorting to violence. Sharma notes an instance in which a landless laborer, an untouchable, scraped together enough money to invest in a rickshaw and go into business in a nearby city. The landowner to whom he was bound had his henchmen destroy the rickshaw and beat the untouchable.

Because landownership is the basic cleavage in rural society, the landlord's power is substantial, but if he is at all prosperous, land is but the basis of a diversified set of resources that permits effective control of much of the local village. Conversely, the only real option for those at the bottom of the scale—the untouchables—is to assume a position as a landless laborer and hope one's patron is fair and reasonable. The landless refer to their situation as one of "helplessness," "compulsion," and "constraint." While land is scarce and landowners have multiple opportunities to earn income, whereas labor is plentiful (during most periods of the agricultural season) and the landless typically have only their labor to sell.

If the laborer is fortunate, he can exchange his labor for a plot of land, some food, clothing, a wage, and a portion of the harvest of his plot. (Traditionally, his family could also count on receiving food from celebrations in the landlord's family.) The precise terms of the arrangement vary considerably. Numerous legal safeguards for sharecroppers have had as their principal effect the encouragement of landowners to employ wage labor rather than tenant

farmers. Tenants who claim the legal right to turn over only 25 percent of their harvest to their landlord face summary eviction. Even if landowners were inclined to obey the law, sharecroppers could still insist on their legal rights only at the expense of the traditional benefits landowners extended to them. Tenants would jeopardize their supply of much-needed credit, for example, because their landlord is also their creditor.

If a laborer is unable to work out a tenant farming agreement with a landowner, he is reduced to working at the daily wage rate, an arrangement that leaves him unemployed for perhaps half the year. In addition, it deprives the laborer of whatever security might have accrued from his landlord's felt obligation to care for dependents. Even in casual labor, untouchables are at a disadvantage: their daily wage is one-third to two-thirds that of higher-caste laborers.

From the laborer's view the situation is rife with inequity and unfairness. The wage is too low to buy enough to eat. Even when the laborer has a plot of land, he does not receive enough water or seeds at the appropriate times. Landowners conspire, in their tenants' and laborers' views, to keep them poor and oppressed. The landed fear, laborers hold, "that if we get enough food in our stomachs, we will no longer work for them." It is an assessment that the landed themselves corroborate, complaining, when laborers are not tractable enough that "they have filled their stomachs too well and that is why they dare to act this way."

Conflict is an endemic feature of village life. Conflicts between individuals, unless the principals are leading members of factions, are normally settled relatively quickly if not necessarily amicably. Such disputes escalate only if the leaders of differing factions decide to interfere in them for their own purposes. Even a dog fight can involve the whole village—if the "dogs" belong to key faction supporters. Private acts of violence can provide a certain ready redress of grievances, as when a neighbor breaks the dikes of a farmer who has taken more than his share of irrigation water. The disadvantage is that such "rough justice" is uncontrolled; it has the potential to escalate and precipitate a full-scale vendetta and a villagewide confrontation.

Intercaste rivalry is relatively infrequent, but only relatively. It takes place in villages in which the erstwhile dominant caste is numerically weak and its rival relatively close in rank and fortune. As a phenomenon it has been more common since independence, because challengers can marshal extravillage forces, such as the police and the courts, on their own behalf. When untouchables try to improve their lot, it is a different story. Feuding

high castes close ranks when their shared status is challenged by untouchable landless laborers. The response to the scheduled castes' efforts can be violent; there were numerous atrocities against untouchables in villages in the early 1980s.

Factional conflict differs from other village disputes not so much in the issues involved as in their impact on the social scene. If the participants in an altercation are major members of opposing factions, the conflict has wider ramifications. Precisely how a dispute begins bears no relation to its ultimate importance to village life. David Mandelbaum notes that "the incidents that precipitate great contests in a village can be quite trivial in themselves—an argument about a scrap of land, a disagreement about minor details of a ceremony, a question of how a cow could have strayed into a standing crop. Such small and restricted disputes can blow up into great, bitter fights because, for one reason or another, the allies of the two immediate antagonists identify thoroughly with their respective partisan. So the one who wins brings victory to his whole alliance, and the one who loses drags his whole coterie into defeat. Moreover, defeat even in a trivial matter can be taken by the victors as a sweeping ascendancy of their alliance." Nearness to a city merely shifts the arena of rivalry to include district and state politics.

Traditionally, conflicts were resolved by the village panchayat (not to be confused with contemporary official panchayats). Its configuration depended on the presence or absence of a single dominant caste. Where one group held clear sway in local affairs, its panchayat functioned in effect as the village panchayat. Where several castes were rivals for power, their elders would meet to discuss villagewide problems. As a process for resolving conflicts, the panchayat emphasized reaching an accord among the contestants. Its judgment required consensus; if a meeting was deadlocked, the panchayat would adjourn until a unanimous decision could be reached. Decisions could only be enforced if they reflected a reasonable measure of agreement among all parties (see Caste in Operation, this ch.). Where a single family was dominant, the panchayat could rely on a villager's reluctance to go against a big man. In general, villagers were uneasy about antagonizing their neighbors.

Villagers have had recourse to the courts since the British Raj; it is the alternative often preferred by the wealthy. It serves as an effective, if ruthless, means to ruin a poorer opponent. Whereas the local panchayat was invariably well informed and careful of conciliation, in the courts the powerful could hope for total victory. A number of factors have contributed to a decline in

the traditional village panchayat's effectiveness. Public opinion is a less formidable force. New sources of wealth are a part of this process both because villagers are less thoroughly dependent on their neighbors' goodwill and because more families have the wherewithal to finance interminable court battles.

Land reform has been a high priority since independence; it is so stated in every development plan, each of which notes that previous goals in terms of land redistribution have not been met. "Land to the Tiller" is the underlying principle, and it provides that tenants with lengthy tenure may have ownership. Actual land reform legislation is the domain of the states, and the laws are a maze of local variation in their drafting; implementation is even more haphazard. By the early 1980s the actual amount of land redistributed had been minimal. Roughly 600,000 of the 2.2 to 8 million hectares estimated to be eligible for distribution had gone to tenants (see Land Reforms, ch. 7).

Large landowners have managed to combat implementation of the laws on the books. Their response has been simply to evict tenants of long standing and cultivate the land themselves with seasonal labor. Landowners who own many small plots scattered over a number of districts have ample opportunity to conceal the true extent of their holdings, registering their land in the names of relatives or simply intimidating tenants who fear eviction. Indeed, one major impact of land reform laws has been a decline in the number of tenant farmers as the result of a drop in the amount of land available to rent. During the 1950s, the first full decade in which land reform legislation was in effect, the amount of leased land dropped from 36 t › 11 percent of the total.

Land reform has had a more positive impact in that it has increased the power of the middle ranks of peasant proprietor farmers relative to large landholders. Middle castes have improved their standing; adult franchise gives them political clout, and their increasing political savvy has made them effective lobbyists on their own behalf. Large estates held by absentee landlords were among the foremost victims of the reforms. Resident tenants on the holdings of maharajas and *jagirdars* (see Glossary) have benefited, becoming, in some instances, the locally dominant caste of landowners.

The increasing commercialization of agriculture in conjunction with other far-reaching economic changes has tended to undermine traditional exchange relations in the village (see Modifications in Caste Behavior, this ch.). The introduction of cash crops increased options for landholders and, occasionally, laborers. The simple presence of money bespeaks opportunities for in-

vestment so that dividing a harvest among *jajmani* relations has less appeal. Agreements relating to planting and harvesting cash crops are often explicitly removed from the sphere of traditional exchange. Commercialization deprives landless laborers of the small measure of security they might have known under traditional *jajmani* relations. They are no longer afforded the umbrella protection of a patron, nor are they guaranteed a minimal subsistence. The link between the aspiring big man and the landless follower is a poor substitute. It is less inclusive than the traditional multiple ties between landed and landless—more instrumental, less moral. Finally, the contemporary, politically ambitious big man is of less use to those on the bottom of the heap because not infrequently he is alienated from the concerns of poorer villagers.

The Green Revolution beginning in the 1960s has played a part in all these changes. The term is a blanket one commonly used to cover the high-yield varieties (HYV) of various crops and the concomitant improved technological inputs required for their successful cultivation. The process has generally operated to the benefit of large holders and at the expense of laborers and small farmers. Larger landholders are able to afford irrigation and the relatively costly inputs required. The increase in mechanization that has accompanied the HYV has adversely affected landless laborers and tenant farmers because landholders now have the prospect of higher earnings through mechanized production. There has even been a reversal of the typical land renting process; smallholders rent to large landholders who wish to expand their operations using newly purchased farm machinery. Mechanization has also meant a decline in the demand for draft animals and the laborers who attend them. These trends abated somewhat, however, with the energy crisis and the rising cost of fuel and petrochemical fertilizers. Where the new technologies encountered a moderately equitable distribution of land and other resources, as in regions such as the Punjab, their impact has been more positive. There the Green Revolution has had a multiplier effect, permitting farmers to amass capital for a variety of nonagricultural ventures, spawning a host of secondary industrial enterprises and generally increasing the options families have.

Social Change

Modifications in Caste Behavior

Caste behavior continues to be modified in the changing political and economic situation of contemporary India. The



Morabad
brassware craftsman
Courtesy
Air-India Library

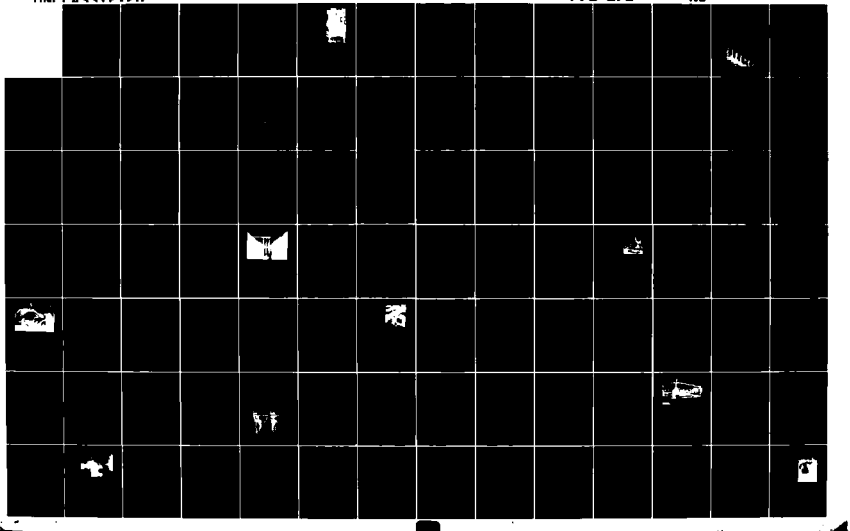
economic underpinning of traditional caste exchanges in the countryside has been largely changed. Independence and electoral politics have altered the arena for caste mobility; efforts that previously might have been geared exclusively toward improving the caste's ritual standing now include a pronounced political element. City living and employment in new occupations have transformed the operation of the caste system in those areas.

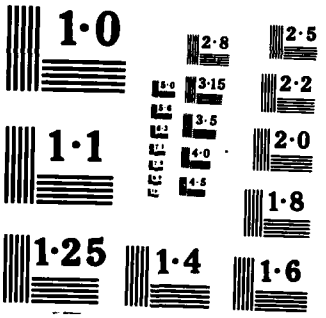
Change, of course, was historically an important feature of the caste system. Caste mobility was built into the system as a means of adjusting disparities between ritual rank and politico-economic status. Changes in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, however, have been more far-reaching in their impact. The transformation of the economy has changed the system of exchanges that unified the diverse castes into a single whole. In city and countryside alike, *jajmani* relations are far less congruent with changing patterns of livelihood.

There is no longer a holistic system integrating those of widely different status into a unified system of exchange and interdependence. In contrast with an individual caste's efforts to improve its position in the ritual hierarchy, changes in *jajmani* relations struck at the system as a whole. Unlike the instances of a caste conquering new territory and then improving its ritual status or of an unusually successful craft *jati* managing to rise a couple of notches on the hierarchy, changing economic cir-

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cumstances have been fundamental and sufficiently far-reaching to touch the lives of most villagers. Installation of hand water pumps in household courtyards makes water carriers superfluous; vast quantities of relatively cheap manufactured goods have the same effect on such craft castes as weavers and shoemakers. Even where the occupational basis of caste remains in effect, other castes often do not respect it; individuals will handle their own carpentry or shaving rather than enter a *jajmani* relationship with a carpenter or a barber. A host of new occupations have permitted former cultivators, laborers, and craftsmen a different means—one removed from the rules of the traditional system of exchange—of earning a living. Sometimes service castes themselves will circumscribe those aspects of their occupation that are subject to the customary rules of exchange. Barbers, for example, may have a number of *jajmani* clients but charge cash for a young man wishing a "city-style" haircut.

Observers have long been concerned with the extent to which feelings of class solidarity, based on common economic interests, might supplement or supplant those of caste loyalty. For many Indians, however, caste exists as a divinely ordered hierarchy, a view that inhibits the development of sentiments of class loyalty. The middle-level castes take comfort in the fact that, although they are far removed from the upper reaches of power and prestige, they still rank above the untouchables. The numerous, minute distinctions within the caste hierarchy fragment feelings of solidarity among those sharing similar economic status. Conflicts focus on matters of prestige and status as much as economics. Lower-ranking touchable castes, having a relatively small share of the total village resources, tend to see those less fortunate as competitors for a shrinking piece of the pie rather than as potential allies in a struggle against the well-to-do.

At the same time, certain trends have favored the emergence of class-like feelings. The increase in monetized transactions itself introduces an element of flexibility in the system. Intercaste conflict sometimes bears a marked resemblance to class struggles, particularly clashes between landless laborers and their landed employers. Unfortunately for the disadvantaged, the most coherent, class-like action is the united front that the privileged present when their prerogatives are threatened by those less well-endowed. Landowner opposition to efforts of untouchable laborers to improve their situation is unified and coherent and overcomes even factional divisions within the ranks of the landed.

Customary Hindu law defines punishments in terms of caste membership; Brahmans are treated more leniently than those of

lower castes. British courts refused to overturn caste boycotts or ostracisms. They maintained the right of higher castes to forbid temple entry to untouchables and awarded damages to those who had to undergo purification rites after untouchables had breached their temples. By contrast, some reverse discrimination legislation has prompted strongly anti-Brahman movements since the mid-nineteenth century; they have been strongest in the south. Laws have limited the Brahmans' share in university enrollment and government employment. Modern protective legislation has engendered a widespread feeling that the Scheduled Castes have gained an unfair advantage over the higher-ranking groups.

Caste remains highly significant in personal life; through nepotism it also operates in employment and business. City dwellers continue to contract marriage within the bounds of their *jati*, although the class standing of each family within the *jati* is significant as well. The few untouchables who manage to acquire an education and enter the professions normally marry others of similar caste and class standing. Urban castes, therefore, are cross-cut into a number of largely endogamous subgroups stratified along lines of caste and class.

Jati affiliation can serve as the basis for organizing business and commercial efforts. It is a means of bringing together capital and knowledge and a corps of trusted associates. Ties of marriage and kinship can reinforce those of caste. There are instances of a single caste taking over an occupation until it has a virtual monopoly. The Mahisyas, for example, formerly a farming caste, have moved into the engineering machine business in substantial numbers in the Calcutta environs. *Jati* members go into business together and hire their fellows as apprentices and workers.

Although *jati* loyalty remains strong in cities, in many cases the *jatis* themselves have been redefined to combine both caste and class considerations. Residential neighborhoods typically reflect both a caste and a class identity. Regional origin and religious affiliation are likewise important in cities. In daily urban interaction, continual and detailed evaluations of relative status and social position go on. Western status symbols may have replaced Sanskritic scholarship and ritual purity, but the pervasive concern with hierarchy and particularistic loyalties remains. Caste becomes an aspect of social identity in a mass of relative strangers.

The significance of caste among the modern elite is illustrated by the lengths to which educated members of the Scheduled Castes will go to hide their origin from associates and coworkers. Such strategems as legally adopting a more prestigious

personal name aid the educated untouchable in "passing" in professional life. In such persons the conflicting obligations to inform one's children of their true identity and to shield them from its adverse consequences often create considerable emotional stress.

The effect of modern institutions and urbanization has been more deeply felt along the country's coastal perimeter—an area long in contact with outside influences. By the same token, castes have been influenced differently depending on their role in the British Raj. Those who learned English and became literate early on served as assistants to the British in administering the country.

Through its manifold transformations, caste is the focus of economic competition rather than cooperation in cities. The rallying of caste associations to obtain advantage in the intense competition for bureaucratic and industrial jobs, admission to universities, and seats in legislatures places caste groups at odds with one another, a sharp departure from the economic and spiritual interdependence that was at least possible in rural communities of the past. Castes are increasingly becoming pressure groups rather than the economic components in a single, whole system.

Urbanization

According to the 1981 census, an estimated 25 percent of the population were city dwellers. The census criteria for classifying settlements as urban included population size and density as well as the means of livelihood of the inhabitants. The portion of urban dwellers in the total population had risen steadily since the turn of the century. According to the 1901 census, slightly more than 10 percent of the subcontinent's populace lived in cities. The rise in the portion of urban Indians increased more steeply in the 1960s and 1970s. The portion of the total population living in cities increased less than 1 percent from 1951–61, roughly 2 percent between 1961 and 1971, and approximately 4 percent during the next intercensal period.

Manipur registered the largest rate of increase; there the percentage of the populace classified as urban roughly doubled in the 1970s. In most states a respectable 3 to 4 percent more of the total population lived in cities by the early 1980s. The percentages might seem trifling, but only because the population itself was so massive and its growth, in absolute numbers, so immense that even relatively small percentage increments translated into substantial numbers of rural-urban migrants.

The subcontinent's urban population increased some sixfold from 1901 to 1981. It nearly doubled in the 1960s and 1970s; be-



Detail of temple sculpture
Courtesy Air-India Library

tween 1971 and 1981 alone it increased more than 40 percent. State-by-state, city dwellers increased by something on the order of one-third to two-thirds in the 1970s. This spiraling urban growth is concentrated in the largest cities (see table 10, Appendix). Cities of more than 100,000 garnered the lion's share of the postindependence urban expansion. They represented approximately 60 percent of the total urban population in the early 1980s—up from less than 40 percent 30 years earlier. All other cities lost ground to a greater or lesser degree. The most dramatic decline occurred in small cities (those having fewer than 10,000 inhabitants), which dropped both as a percentage of the total urban population and in absolute numbers.

Burgeoning urban growth in the largest cities strained urban services, housing, and employment opportunities almost beyond belief. The growth of the largest cities—those with more than 1 million inhabitants in 1981—defied easy description; it was estimated at roughly 4 percent annually, one-half of which came from rural-urban migration (see table 11, Appendix). Calcutta (the largest, with a total population of more than 9 million) grew by

nearly one-quarter in the 1960s and by another one-third in the 1970s. Greater Bombay expanded by roughly 40 percent in each of those decades, Delhi by more than one-half. Overall, the 12 cities having 1 million or more inhabitants in 1981 had grown by more than 40 percent in the 1960s and 44 percent in the 1970s.

Rainfall and soil fertility have largely determined the patterns of rural settlement. By contrast, urban centers, especially the largest cities, reflect the natural corridors of communication and transport: harbors, confluences of rivers, and combinations of river and land transport junctions. The local availability of various raw materials and/or sources of power has enhanced the appeal of such favorable locations for urban expansion. Frequently, these centers have had military as well as administrative and economic significance. Historically, the rise and fall of cities related mostly to their politico-military functions. Their location was a matter of strategic considerations, new conquests, or simply a ruler's preference.

Despite a markedly regional cast to urbanization, towns and cities on the subcontinent share certain general characteristics. Many of the smaller towns are little more than marketplaces to which a few administrative chores have been added; they have a decidedly rural aspect. More important, administrative centers bear the mark of the British, who usually created them. Typically, Indian cities are not divided into separate business and residential sections, as is common in the West. Shopkeepers live in or above their shops; neighborhoods frequently mix rich and poor alike. Traditionally, streets and quarters were segregated according to caste, trade, and religious affiliation. Larger cities often have a crowded, picturesque (if squalid) old section and an orderly, European-style "new" section. The latter was formerly the domain of the British administrators and is currently inhabited by well-to-do Indians.

Many towns gained their importance as places of pilgrimage or annual fairs; others secured a following among tourists as points of historical, scenic, or architectural interest. A typically Indian phenomenon, created by the British and perpetuated by those sufficiently prosperous to flee the plains during the summer's heat, are the "hill stations," or resort towns located at about 2,000 meters in the Himalayas. Simla and Darjeeling are among the most famous of these retreats.

India's largest cities serve as centers for the country's manufacturing, financial, or administrative needs. Calcutta, capital of West Bengal, is the center of an industrial complex, although the city proper is more of a commercial and financial clearinghouse.

Jute mills, engineering and metallurgical plants, and consumer-goods manufacturers form the backbone of the greater metropolitan region's industry. Bombay, the island capital of Maharashtra, has the reputation of being India's most cosmopolitan city. Its port is the country's busiest and is a major entrepôt for the export of cotton goods, oilseeds, and manganese as well as for the import of construction materials and consumer goods. Textile industries dominate the city's manufacturing. Employment is concentrated in the southern tip of the island.

The national capital, New Delhi, sits on the western bank of the Yamuna (Jumna) River (see fig. 5). Its location is strategically situated between the Thar Desert, the Aravalli Range, the Himalayas, and the Indo-Gangetic Plain; historically, the region was a main target for invaders. Old Delhi, formerly Shahjahanabad, is contiguous with New Delhi. Built by Mughal emperors, the city was a classic "pre-industrial city." It combined palace and fort with residential quarters for the military chiefs and their attendant courtiers, merchants, and craftsmen. The British used Old Delhi as their capital from 1911 to 1930, when the seat of government moved south to the recently built New Delhi. Although there is a certain amount of light industry and business activity, the city's preeminent function is administrative.

The capital of Tamil Nadu, Madras, is another important transportation and manufacturing center. Its port is a major one for the southeast coast; in addition, it is a center of Tamil culture. The city's focus centers on the eighteenth-century Fort Saint George and the commercial and business nucleus of Georgetown; the rest of the metropolitan area consists of scattered clusters of residential and manufacturing suburbs. In the late 1970s the city lagged in both its per capita income and its labor force participation. The labor force participation rate was an estimated 28 percent, in contrast with Calcutta's 33 percent and Bombay's 37 percent.

Postindependence urbanization has so strained city services that they frequently collapse. Cities, especially the largest, have been unable to provide potable water, sewage disposal, and electric hookups at a rate sufficient to keep pace with the influx of migrants. Conventional housing has been swamped in the mass of shantytowns and recent arrivals who simply camp on sidewalks.

City dwellers have devised a plethora of strategies to cope with the difficulties of finding food, shelter, and clothing. There are myriad voluntary associations designed to help their members in dealing with the exigencies of urban life; housing cooperatives are especially popular. Associations often gear their efforts to helping their members get a share of the government assistance

programs available. They have become a force to be reckoned with in municipal politics. Candidates court the support of association officers; the quid pro quo is the exchange of votes for political favors. The power that voluntary associations wield is so formidable that association offices are sometimes as hotly contested as formal political elections (see Occupational Interest Groups, ch. 8). Associations are a significant new development on the urban social scene, too, because they shift their appeals away from caste or factional loyalties in favor of specific goals—better housing, athletic facilities and teams, neighborhood improvement, and the like.

Massive rural-urban migration has not only changed urban social structure in recent decades but also the configuration of the migrant stream itself. During the colonial era cities doubtless had their disadvantaged elements, and recent arrivals were certainly represented in their ranks. Overall, however, city-bound migrants of a century ago were from among the village's more prosperous families. Migrants from Kerala to Madras at the turn of the century, for example, were from affluent Nayar and Pattar Brahman families. Families would set up a home in Madras for the use of those attending college or pursuing a career in the imperial administration.

Education and a career in government are options that continue to find favor among moderately prosperous farming families. A well-placed son in the civil service broadens the family's influence and enhances its prestige and power in village factional jockeying at the same time that it relieves the press on land (see Village India, this ch.). Cities remain the center of the country's middle and upper classes. India's middle class, however defined and counted, is by most conventional criteria the largest in the world. Many middle-class city dwellers are but a generation removed from the village. The urban life-style they have adopted, however, is widely disparate from that experienced by most rural Indians. It combines Western and Indian values and practices, including a strongly consumeristic bent. The middle-class life-style may well include such elements as a working wife, a two-child family, and school-aged children attending an English-language school.

Increasing population pressure on the limited arable land base, combined with the displacement of many craft and service castes, has caused shifts in the migration stream. There are more and more rural-urban migrants from middle- and lower-ranking castes. However meager the resources they arrive with and however limited their opportunities in the city, their situation there is

more promising than the one they left in the countryside. Regional differences also play a role; prosperous states draw migrants of every occupation and social stratum from their less fortunate neighbors.

There is a substantial amount of temporary labor migration and commuting to cities from peri-urban villages. Commuting offers a number of advantages; the commuter can maintain home and family in his village while gaining all the advantages of an urban livelihood. Temporary labor migration, by contrast, is frequently little better than rank exploitation. It takes the form of virtually bonded laborers delivered to employers by labor contractors. Temporary migrants are favored in large-scale construction projects and such seasonal work as agricultural harvesting. In New Delhi, for example, roughly 300,000 migrants were brought in to work on the construction associated with the 1982 Asian Games.

Transportation costs and living expenses come out of the migrant's earnings; such costs and expenses frequently are grossly overpriced and eat up whatever profit the laborer might have enjoyed. The temporary migrants themselves are severely disadvantaged; the bulk of the laborers are illiterates and tribals from distant states. They are largely unaware of protective legislation, such as the Inter-State Migrant (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act or the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, which might ameliorate their situation.

Migrants have shown a great measure of resourcefulness and resiliency in adapting to getting by on limited means. Housing, to put it mildly, has not kept pace with urban growth. Shantytowns and migrants camping on sidewalks abound in every major urban center. In Bombay some 40 percent of the populace live in slum colonies of various sorts; the greater metropolitan area has a total of perhaps 600. One colony, Dharavi, with approximately half a million inhabitants, has earned a dubious reputation as the world's largest slum. Again in Bombay, an estimated 15 percent of those who are housed in dwellings live in buildings ready to collapse, and the housing shortage grows by roughly 25,000 units annually.

Horrendous as the slums and impoverished campsites appear to outsiders, these alternatives represent an effective solution to the housing shortage for those who make use of them. Housing reflects the migrant family's relative success and length of city residence. City dwellers as a whole rank physical amenities below a number of other priorities—nearness or access to transport, work, markets, and friends and relatives, to name but a few.

Recent migrants may simply sleep on the sidewalk; eventually this arrangement may include spreading a plastic drop cloth on "their" patch of concrete. With success and a measure of financial security, a canvas tent or an enclosed shack becomes home for the migrant and his or her family. Such living arrangements are certainly rudimentary; they lack electricity, running water, and proper sewage disposal; conditions, especially during the monsoon season, are awful. Nonetheless, shantytowns and slums are an effective (if ad hoc) response to the exigencies of city living, and they have the added advantage of being nearly cost free. In that light, it is perhaps not so remarkable that these communities have shown such durability; many families are into their third generation of city living in such arrangements. The greatest fear most slum dwellers have is that their settlement might be cleared away by the police. For the self-employed this destroys their place of business and disrupts—if not eliminates—their clientele. To have their homes cleared away disturbs ties to family and friends and the myriad arrangements that they have made to eke out a living. It puts the slum dweller in the position of working out another living arrangement, one that is almost always less satisfactory.

Urban employment is a study in human resiliency and creativity. Roughly 5 million new workers enter the labor force each year, and the scramble for livelihood is intense at every level. The modern industrial sector employs only about 10 percent of the work force and provides jobs for only about 12 percent of the new workers annually (see Labor, ch. 6). Rural-urban migrants have devised a seemingly endless variety of stratagems for making do. Many of these stratagems reflect how labor-intensive the Indian economy is. There are tens of thousands of washers, pressers, rickshaw drivers, and pullers. On construction jobs workers often use a bow-and-thong arrangement for drilling rather than an electric drill. Businesses divide and subdivide jobs; retail stores employ a clerk to total the bill, another to collect payment, and still another to wrap and deliver the order to the customer.

The varieties of entrepreneurial endeavors are endless. There are ear cleaners and cotton fluffers and those who sell the Ganges sacred mud and the myriad statues of sundry deities. There are delivery services that cart lunches from suburban homes to downtown businesses. People sort the garbage for potentially recyclable or resalable items. Other entrepreneurs introduce a measure of efficiency into the often unwieldy economic system. Literates station themselves outside post offices to write letters for those unable to do so; a portable typewriter and table enables one to type documents for those in need. And the telephone

system works so erratically that companies hire women whose sole job it is to dial and redial numbers until a connection is made.

* * *

There is an extensive English-language literature on Indian society. Since independence, much of it has been written by Indian scholars and published in that country; it ranges from the superb to the polemical. Of the works readily available to the American reader, David G. Mandelbaum's two-volume *Society in India* is basic. Among the multitudinous excellent works are Kenneth Ballhatchet and John Harrison's *The City in South Asia*, Pauline M. Kolenda's *Caste in Contemporary India*, Miriam Sharma's *The Politics of Inequality*, Richard H. Day and Inderjit Singh's *Economic Development as an Adaptive Process*, J. Michael Mahar's *The Untouchables in Contemporary India*, K.C. Panchanadikar and J. Panchanadikar's *Rural Modernization in India*, and Robert G Wirsing's *Socialist Society and Free Enterprise Politics*. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Chapter 6. Character and Structure of the Economy



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INDIA'S TRANSITION FROM millennia-old forms of economic life to more modern ways was almost completely confined to the twentieth century. Progress in the first half of the century was largely in education, which produced the leaders for independence and the period after, and in health measures, which resulted in rapid growth of the population. By independence in 1947, economic life for the bulk of the population had changed little except that there was much greater pressure on the land and resources and more extensive poverty. Some modernization of transportation, communications, industry, and commerce had occurred, but it affected only a few, mainly those in urban areas. The few were important, however, because among them were the political and economic leaders, many of them educated in Britain, who set the postindependence goals.

The primary goals of independent India were rapid economic growth and reduction of poverty. After more than three decades of effort, only a moderate rate of economic growth had been achieved, although it improved in the early 1980s. By fiscal year 1983–84, gross national product amounted to the equivalent of US$167 billion, about fifteenth in the world. In terms of value added by agriculture, India ranked about fourth largest in the world, and by manufacturing India ranked perhaps fifteenth. Per capita gross national product, however, was only about US$230 in fiscal year 1983–84. About half of the population existed below the poverty line; perhaps half of the world's poor lived in India. Although poverty probably had not increased since independence, neither had it diminished significantly.

With one foot in the past and one in the future, India's economy made jerky progress. Sharp contrasts emerged. Cow dung and nuclear-fueled electricity were primary energy sources. Close to two-thirds of the population were illiterate, while the country's pool of scientific and technical manpower was the eighth largest in the world. Ardent trade unionists coexisted with large numbers of essentially indentured slaves. The country's own launcher had placed an Indian-produced satellite in orbit, only the seventh country to do so, while about 40 percent of the villages lacked electricity. Although industry produced modern cars, airplanes, electronic equipment, and military weapons, the bulk of the population used heat-wasting traditional stoves.

Modernizing India's economy has been primarily an Indian effort. Growth and transformation resulted largely from ever-

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increasing investments, financed from a high domestic saving rate in spite of the low consumption levels of nearly all of the population. Technology was imported, of course, but was "Indianized" as quickly as possible; foreign aid and other external borrowing were also resorted to when minor but important areas of investment financing were unavailable domestically. In 1985 India's public external debt was manageable. But economic growth rapid enough to reduce poverty levels through the rest of the 1980s depended largely on some increase in the level of investments as well as continued liberalization of economic controls. The main source for such investments had to come largely from increased output from existing facilities, particularly the public sector industry. Increasing savings by the low-income population was unjustifiable in terms of equity and the risk of explosive social tensions. Much larger borrowings abroad would soon constrain economic development because of balance of payments pressure. In 1985 India's economic managers confronted a challenging period; if they managed well, India could make substantial progress toward its primary economic goals, but inadequate policies threatened greater poverty and misery in the world's second most populous country.

Profile of the Economy

When Indians assumed control of the country's economic and political life at independence, they faced problems on a monumental scale. The country was poor and backward, and the population exceeded that of any other nation except China. The economy had stagnated for the half-century before independence, growing probably at a rate slightly below that of the population. Some estimates indicated a decline of average per capita income in the 50 years before partition. Under British rule, Indian industrial development had been severely restrained to preserve the area as a market for British manufacturers. The production of textiles was the most developed Indian manufacturing industry, particularly the processing of jute fibers into burlap bagging. Other industrial activity was largely small-scale to meet local needs where transportation costs from Britain made imports impractical.

At independence the economy was predominantly agrarian. In fiscal year 1950–51 (FY—see Glossary) the Indian government began to collect and publish national account data; in that year agriculture—including some fishing and forestry—accounted for 52 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) and employed around

three-quarters of the labor force. Landownership, rental, and sharecropping rights were complex, involving layers of intermediaries (see Land Reforms ch. 7). The bulk of the rural population was very poor, existing by cropping small plots and/or supplying labor to other farms. Agricultural practices were almost completely traditional. Some rural families earned an income from such cottage industries as weaving cloth.

The partition of British India resulted in about 12 to 14 million Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh refugees fleeing past each other across the new border between India and Pakistan in search of the area of their choice. This movement was accompanied by unprecedented communal violence that killed several hundred thousand people. Settlement of refugees added considerable costs to the other tasks facing the new government in each country. Partition also divided what had been complementary economic areas. Under the British, jute and cotton had been raised in the area that became Pakistan, but processing was almost completely in areas subsequently incorporated into India. India used land formerly devoted to food production to cultivate cotton and jute for its mills. Key head waters of the Indus River irrigation system were in India; more than a decade of negotiations and considerable international financial assistance were required to achieve a settlement and to establish the separate development of the Indus River and its tributaries in Pakistan and India.

India's leaders agreed that strong economic growth, combined with measures to increase incomes and consumption among the poorest groups in the society, was required even though there were some disagreements about the means of achieving these goals. Since 1950 a series of plans have guided the country's economic development (see Planning, this ch.). During the three decades to the early 1980s, the economy grew at an average rate of about 3.6 percent a year in constant prices (see table 12, Appendix). The value added (in constant prices) by industry, a major focus of development through most of the period, rose by about 5.3 percent a year compared with an average of 2.2 percent a year in agriculture. Per capita incomes rose about 1.4 percent a year during the period. These growth rates were lower than desired and less than those of many other developing countries.

These historical growth rates provide a frame of reference for evaluating more recent developments. India's economy has exhibited periods of rapid growth, but they have usually been of short duration. This partly reflected the importance of agriculture in the economy and specifically the effects of the monsoon rains. Although irrigated acreage had increased nearly threefold by

1985 and other parts of the economy had grown, favorable rainfall still strongly affected incomes and the level of activity in all economic sectors (see Agricultural Development, ch. 7).

Growth of the economy during the 1950s was substantial, but some economists estimated that the population, on average, had attained a position by the end of the 1950s that was only comparable to that at the turn of the century. In the early 1960s the situation began to deteriorate, and by the mid-1960s the economy had lost its earlier dynamism. Between 1965 and 1975 agriculture expanded at about the same rate as that of the population, which was about 2.2 percent a year. Industry grew at 3.5 percent a year, compared with a rate of 7.8 percent a year between 1955 and 1965. In the late 1960s and early 1970s manufacturing growth in most developing countries averaged 7.3 percent a year, considerably higher than the rate in India. Many factors contributed to the slowdown of the economy between the mid-1960s and mid-1970s, but economists differ over their relative importance. War with China in 1962 and with Pakistan in 1965 and 1971, a flood of refugees in 1971, severe droughts in 1965 and 1966—repeated in 1971 and 1972 with less severity—currency devaluation in 1966, and the first world oil crisis, in 1973–74, solidly jolted the economy. Longer run structural deficiencies, such as the need for institutional changes in the agricultural setting, and factors diminishing demand for industrial products also contributed to economic stagnation (see Industry, this ch.).

In the second half of the 1970s the Indian economy resumed rapid growth and achieved rates above the historical trend. Real GDP grew at an average 5.3 percent a year between FY 1975 and FY 1978, while the value added by agriculture was 3.3 percent a year and that by industry 8.1 percent a year. The higher growth resulted from policy adjustments and favorable weather, which, respectively, increased levels of investment and farm production. The expansion was halted in FY 1979, however, by a severe drought and a doubling of world oil prices. Real GDP fell by 5 percent, and value added by agriculture dropped nearly 13 percent. Shortages of many commodities contributed to the reemergence of strong inflationary pressures after several years of relative price stability. The Sixth Five-Year Plan (FY 1980–84), then being drafted, incorporated adjustments to compensate for the setbacks.

In the early 1980s the economy resumed rapid growth, achieving an average real growth of GDP of 5.4 percent a year between FY 1980 and FY 1984. Real GDP increased 7.6 percent in FY 1980 and 5.3 percent in FY 1981. In the same years value

added by agriculture increased 15 percent and 5.5 percent, respectively, and that by industry 4 percent and 8.6 percent, respectively. Another severe drought in mid-1982 reduced the growth of GDP in FY 1982 to 1.8 percent and value added by industry to 3 percent. Agricultural output fell by 4 percent. Although in early 1985 final data were unavailable for FY 1983, GDP was expected to increase by about 6.5 to 7 percent, agriculture about 9 to 10 percent, and industrial output 4.5 to 5 percent. Weather conditions were excellent in FY 1983, resulting in a record grain production of about 150 million tons (13 percent above the previous peak), which stimulated high growth throughout the economy.

Although economic growth has not been as high as the country 's leaders would like, there have been impressive changes in the structure of the economy and the life of the people. Agriculture, including forestry and fishing, was the least dynamic; its contribution to GDP (in current prices) fell from 52 percent in FY 1950 to 33 percent in FY 1982 (see fig. 14). Industry's share, including mining, utilities, and construction, increased from 20 percent to 26 percent over the same period; most of the increase was concentrated in large-scale manufacturing and energy. The contribution of services increased from 28 percent to 41 percent over the same period.

Some of the changes that occurred between independence and the early 1980s might be more easily understood in other terms. Electric generating capacity increased over twentyfold, and the number of villages with electricity increased by more than 100 times. Steel production rose from 1.5 million tons a year to 11 million tons. Cement production amounted to 23 million tons. The country produced satellites and nuclear power plants, and its scientists and engineers had produced an atomic device. India's scientific and technical manpower pool was outnumbered by only seven other countries; its manufacturing output in terms of value was exceeded by only 12 other nations. The increase of life expectancy from about 27 years in the 1940s to about 54 years in the mid-1980s was most impressive, although it did contribute to the rapid growth of population. While the number of people increased by about 350 million between 1950 and 1982, food grains per capita rose from 395 grams per day in FY 1950 to 454 grams per day in FY 1981 and even more by FY 1983 as a result of the record grain crop. By the early 1980s India had largely regained self-sufficiency in food grains, except when rainfall was well below normal.

Considerable dualism existed in the Indian economy, how-

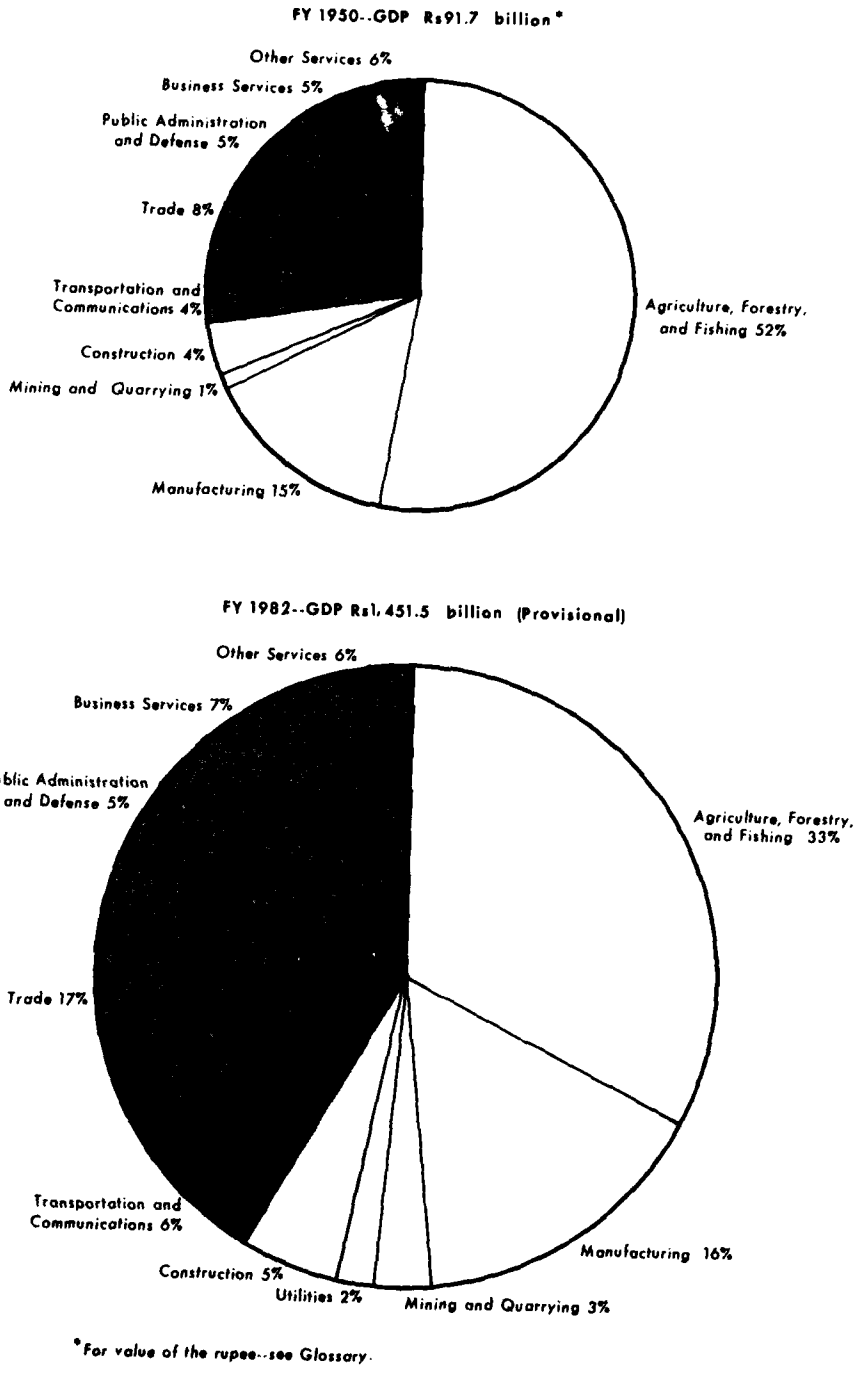


Figure 14. Gross Domestic product (GDP) by Sector of Origin, FY 1950 and FY 1982.

ever, even in the mid-1980s. One distinction often made in Indian statistics was between the organized and the unorganized economy. The latter was largely rural and encompassed farming, fishing, forestry, and cottage industries. The unorganized economy also included petty vendors and some small-scale mechanized industry in both rural and urban areas. The bulk of the population was employed in the unorganized economy, which contributed over half of GDP. The size and output of the unorganized sector was basically unknown; data concerning it were essentially educated guesses. The organized economy consisted of large units in the modern sector for which statistical data were relatively good. The modern sector included large-scale manufacturing and mining, large financial and commercial businesses, and public sector enterprises, such as railroads, telecommunications, utilities, and the government itself.

Although substantial economic advancements had been achieved, serious deficiencies remained. The transportation sector had many shortcomings in the early 1980s despite its critical importance in moving goods and passengers over large areas. The national railroad had been the major freight hauler at independence, but road transport grew rapidly after that. In the mid-1980s both modes of transport remained important. The national railroad was the government's largest public enterprise. The central (or union) and state governments shared responsibilities for roadbuilding and maintenance and some transport companies. The 10 major ports were the responsibility of the central government, although they were managed by semi-independent agencies. Only truck transport and a part of shipping were in the private sector. The public sector thus made the key decisions for much of the transport sector, although administrative control was located in an array of ministries and agencies, which made planning and policy coordination very weak.

The share of transportation investments in total public investment declined during the three decades ending in the early 1980s, and real public transportation investment also declined during much of the period because of the need for funds in the rest of the economy. As a consequence, by the early 1980s many parts of the transportation system were barely meeting current requirements, let alone preparing for future economic growth. Many roads, for example, were breaking up because of overuse and lack of sufficient maintenance, and the railroads required track renewal and the replacement of overage rolling stock. Ports needed equipment and facilities, such as that for bulk and container cargo, while the national civil airlines needed supporting

equipment, such as that for instrument landings at many airports. Planners were aware of the problems, but the transportation system's requirements far exceeded the funds available. By the mid-1980s emphasis was on meeting the most pressing needs and at the same time improving efficiency of the system that existed. Transportation bottlenecks could emerge with a period of sustained economic growth (see fig. 15).

Housing and the ancillary utilities of sewer and water systems lagged considerably behind the population's needs. Although India's urban population is large, ranking fourth in the world, it increased less than 4 percent a year in the 1970s, far less than the urbanization experienced by many other developing countries. Nonetheless, India's cities had large shantytowns built of all sorts of scrap or readily available natural materials erected on whatever space was available, including sidewalks. Needless to say, such hovels lacked piped water, sewerage, and electricity. The government has attempted to build housing facilities and utilities for urban development, but the efforts have fallen far short of demand. Administrative controls (such as those on rents) and other aspects of government policy have discouraged many private investors from constructing housing units. According to observers, the government could manage urban development far better than it had up to the mid-1980s, but the urban situation could become highly volatile if more rural residents should decide to move to the cities and towns.

The greatest disappointment of economic development was the failure to reduce substantially the widespread poverty, a fundamental goal since independence. The planners at the beginning of the 1980s estimated that 48 percent of the population, nearly 320 million people, existed below the poverty line, which was modestly defined as having monthly per capita expenditures equivalent to about US$7 in 1983 in the countryside and about US$8 in urban areas. Even most of those above the poverty line had very low levels of consumption (averaging about US$13 per month) compared with much of the world. Observers have long remarked on the poverty in India, and by the early 1980s there seemed to have been little improvement. But poverty does not appear to have increased, despite a doubling of the population since independence and far greater pressures on land and resources.

India's poor were essentially rural (over 80 percent) and primarily engaged in farming. Some owned very small amonts of land while others were field hands, seminomadic shepherds, or migrant workers. The urban poor included some construction

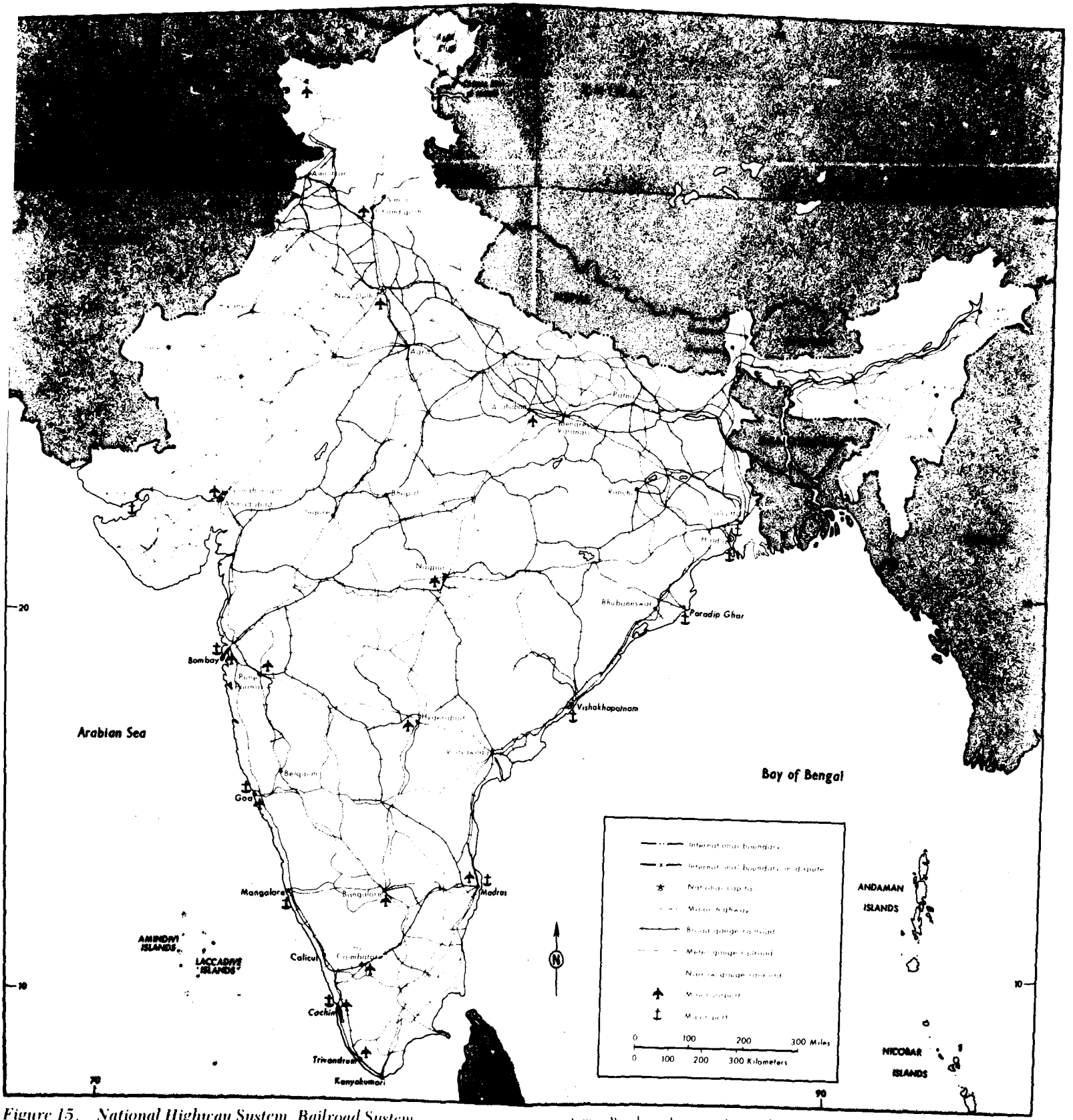


Figure 15. National Highway System, Railroad System, and Major Ports and Airports, 1984

Source: Based on information from India, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Research and Reference Division, *India: A Reference Annual, 1983*, New Delhi, December 1983.

workers and petty vendors. The bulk of the poor worked, but low productivity and intermittent employment kept incomes low—for some, exceedingly low. Although pockets of poverty existed and there were regional variations, poverty was nonetheless widespread. Studies of income distribution, although limited, showed India about average with other countries. Poverty appeared to result from slow economic growth, educational deficiencies, and other causes. Studies suggested that since independence the poor have at least matched the gains (relatively) of the better-off half of the population and perhaps improved their relative position slightly. Greater improvement in the position of the poor failed partly because of the economy's slow growth historically and the continued rapid increase in population. As long as the population maintains a high growth rate, India's leaders will confront a most difficult challenge in their attempts to alleviate poverty.

Role of Government

A number of the Indian leaders who assumed political control when the British departed were influenced by British socialism. They advocated government intervention to guide the economy, including public ownership of key industries or facilities. The objective was to achieve high and balanced economic development in the general interest while particular programs and measures helped the poor. The prevailing view of the time in most of the world—that industrialization was the key to economic development—was adopted in India, partly because the country was large and had substantial natural resources and partly because it was determined to develop defense industries.

Soon after independence the first steps were taken to establish a public sector. A policy resolution in 1948 gave the government a monopoly in armaments, atomic energy, and railroads. The resolution also reserved exclusive rights to the government to develop minerals (such as coal and oil), the iron and steel industry, aircraft manufacture, shipbuilding, and the manufacture of telephone and telegraph equipment. Private companies operating in these fields were guaranteed at least 10 years before the government might take them over. Some continued to operate as private companies in these fields in the mid-1980s.

The preserve of the government was greatly extended in 1956. Some 17 industries were to be exclusively in the public sector as established in a second industrial policy resolution; in

another 12 industries, the government would take the lead, but private companies could also engage in production. This resolution covered industries producing almost entirely capital and intermediate goods. The private sector was relegated primarily to production of consumer goods. In 1956 the life insurance business was nationalized, and in 1973 the general insurance business was nationalized. Many of the larger commercial banks were nationalized in 1969. Over the years the central and state governments formed many agencies and companies engaged in finance, trading (such as the Food Corporation of India), mineral exploitation, manufacturing, utilities, and transportation. The public sector was extensive and influential throughout the economy, although the value of its assets was small relative to the private sector.

During World War II the British imposed many controls to manage prices, ration goods, and restrict the use of foreign exchange. At independence India inherited a trained, competent civil service versed in administering controls as well as other tasks. Soon controls were reinstated, a process that accelerated after the mid-1950s when the country encountered its first foreign exchange crisis. The Industries Act of 1951 and the Essential Commodities Act of 1955, with subsequent additions, provided the legal framework for the government to extend price controls, which came to include steel, cement, drugs, nonferrous metals, chemicals, fertilizer, coal, automobiles, tires and tubes, cotton textiles, food grains, bread, butter, vegetable oils, and a number of other commodities. By the late 1950s controls were pervasive, regulating investment in industry, prices of many commodities, imports and exports, and the flow of foreign exchange.

Controls were usually imposed to correct some specific problem, but often without adequate understanding of their effect on other parts of the economy. The government set prices low for basic foods, transportation, and other commodities and services, for example, to protect the living standards of the poor. This was a desirable objective, but the effect was counterproductive when the government also limited output of needed goods and services. Price ceilings were resorted to during shortages, which frequently contributed to black markets appearing in those commodities and also to tax evasion by participants. Import controls and tariff policy stimulated local manufacturers toward production of substitute goods for imports and under conditions sufficiently devoid of competition or pressure to be efficient. Export growth was long ignored. The government's extensive controls created imbalances and structural problems in many parts of the economy (see Manufacturing, this ch.).

Private trading and industrial conglomerates (the so-called large houses) existed under the British and continued after independence. The government viewed these large houses with suspicion, and rightly so in some cases, for manipulating markets and prices to their profit. Shortly after independence the government instituted licensing on businesses starting up, particularly in manufacturing, and on expansion of capacity. In the 1960s, when shortages of goods were extensive, considerable criticism was leveled at traders for manipulating markets and prices. The result was the 1970 Monopolies and Restrictive Practices Act, which was designed to provide the government with additional information on the structure and investments of all firms with assets over Rs200 million (for value of the rupee—see Glossary), to strengthen the licensing system to decrease the concentration of private economic power, and to place restraints on certain business practices considered contrary to the public interest. The act emphasized the government's aversion to bigness in the private sector, but critics contended that the act resulted from shifts in the political scene and not from a strong case against big firms. The act and subsequent enforcement restrained private investment. In 1983 the act was strengthened. The government's attitude toward foreign participation in Indian companies had been ambivalent, but as a general rule was more against foreign firms than for them; the passage of the 1970 act hardened the government's stance toward foreign firms (see Manufacturing, this ch.).

The extensive controls, the large public sector, and the many programs undertaken by the government contributed to a substantial growth of the administrative structure of government. The government also sought to provide employment in its offices for many of the unemployed. The result was a swollen, inefficient bureaucracy that seemed to take forever to process and approve papers. Businessmen complained that they had to spend more time getting government approval than running their business. Many observers reported extensive corruption in the huge bureaucracy.

After a decade of slow growth and severe problems, in the mid-1970s the government started to modify its approach to regulating the economy. A period of liberalization began that was to accelerate considerably in the early 1980s. Controls were not dismantled, only loosened to stimulate growth and remedy some of the distortions. By 1984 import regulations had been relaxed to increase the flow of raw materials, intermediate goods, and machinery needed for production; licensing procedures were loosened and also speeded up; more effort was made to attract

foreign firms to establish businesses in India; and prices of a number of commodities were raised, which along with relaxation of controls on investment and expansion of capacity made production profitable and attracted private investment. Economists and businessmen approved the opening of the economy, although indicating more was needed. In fact in 1984 an advisory group (formed in 1981) suggested further liberalizing moves to the prime minister. The effort to relax controls was hampered to an unknown extent by bureaucrats who did not want their fiefdom weakened. The loosening of controls was generally conceded to have played an important part in the rapid economic growth in the early 1980s.

The government also modified its approach to public sector enterprises in the 1980s. Efforts were made to improve management and to make these businesses more autonomous and less constrained by bureaucratic supervision. The government slowed its usual practice of rescuing sick firms by nationalizing them in the interest of maintaining employment, because few in the past had turned out to be viable and had chronically incurred losses. Prices were raised for such products as petroleum, coal, steel, cement, and electricity to improve their profitability. In 1982 the public sector included 20 nationalized banks, seven insurance firms, the national railroad (which had a separate budget), and nearly 200 other enterprises, of which 55 percent were in manufacturing. The government had invested over Rs240 billion in these enterprises since independence. The states also established many enterprises. The public sector enterprises produced aggregate losses in a number of years, but between FY 1980 and FY 1982 there were small aggregate profits, almost completely because of profits from the national oil companies. It was critical to the government's fiscal soundness and the ability of public enterprises to finance their own needed investments that the public firms become more profitable. India earned a small return from its public sector investments.

A high rate of investment was a major factor in the improved rate of economic growth after the mid-1970s. Investment went from about 19 percent of GDP in the early 1970s to nearly 25 percent in the early 1980s. The relaxing of controls on the private sector and a high rate of public investment stimulated investment in both sectors. India, however, required a higher rate of investment to attain comparable economic growth than most other low-income developing countries, indicating a lower rate of return on investments. Part of the adverse Indian experience was explained by investment in large, long-gestation, capital-intensive pro-

jects—such as electric power, irrigation, and infrastructure—but delayed completions, cost overruns, and underutilization of capacity were contributing factors as well. Private savings financed most of the investment. By the mid-1980s India could not continue to increase the rate of investment to attain economic growth because nearly half of the population was below the poverty line. Planners acknowledged that more efficient use of existing facilities had to be achieved to sustain high economic growth; equity considerations precluded trying to squeeze greater savings out of its population. These hard facts had been responsible for loosening the government's formerly tight control over the economy.

The government's ability to mobilize domestic resources will be a critical issue through the decade of the 1980s, at least, in order to sustain a high rate of investment and therefore rapid economic growth. India's rate of taxation (17 percent of GDP in FY 1982) was high considering the low average per capita income; the rate compared favorably with many other developing countries, including some with substantially higher incomes. Increased taxation would be difficult on a general basis because of equity considerations. There were possibilities, however, on a selective basis. Agricultural income of the wealthier farmers could be taxed. Broadening the personal income tax base and improving collection would also increase public revenues.

Greater resource mobilization was possible outside of taxation. The largest potential for resource generation lay in higher operational efficiency of public sector enterprises. Greater efficiency in the use of existing electric power and irrigation facilities would increase state resources and boost output of users of these services. Central government manufacturing enterprises, particularly those producing fertilizers, steel, and nonferrous metal, could improve their operations greatly. The national railroad needed to continue to improve its performance. Price adjustments, particularly for electric power, irrigation, and some manufacturing industries, would enable them to recover costs and eventually part of the funds needed for modernization and expansion. Increasing user fees, perhaps with adjustments for the poor, would at least cover the operating costs of the public enterprises providing the service. One important farm state, for example, where most of the produce was sold through a state marketing organization, collected important revenue by taxing all goods sold through its marketing enterprise. Increased users fees would reduce subsidies, freeing government funds for productive investments.

The government initiated, sustained, and refined many programs over the years to help the poor. Probably the most im-

portant was the supply of basic commodities, particularly food, at controlled prices, which were distributed by public shops throughout the country. The poor spent about 80 percent of their income on food; the other half of the population spent over 60 percent of their income on food. The price of food was a major determinant of wage scales. Often when food prices rose sharply, rioting and looting followed. Until the late 1970s the government frequently had difficulty obtaining adequate grain supplies in bad years. Sometimes surplus grain states were cordoned off to keep private traders from shipping grain to deficit areas to secure very high prices and to force partial sales to public agencies; state governments in surplus grain areas were often less than cooperative. By the late 1970s and into the 1980s the central government, by holding reserve stocks and importing adequately and early, maintained sufficient grain supplies to meet the increased demand during the bad drought years of FY 1979 and FY 1982. The record grain harvest of FY 1983 built up the government's grain supplies beyond storage capacity. There was discussion of a possible export of grain to relieve this pressure.

Over many decades famine codes evolved to mitigate the worst effects of adverse monsoon rainfall, which affected not only farmers but village artisans and traders as well when incomes fell. The government, for example, supplied water by financing well digging and, more recently, by power drilling; rescinded land taxes on affected areas; tried to maintain stable food prices; and provided food when needed. By the 1980s the land tax was minor, but its remission did help affected farmers. Provision of food was necessary for those lacking money to buy grain. Food was distributed by the government through a food-for-work program. The actual work was a secondary consideration, but useful projects often resulted. Employment was offered at a low daily wage and usually paid in grain, the rationale being that only the truly needy would take jobs at such low pay.

Out of past experiences and recent studies emerged additional programs to help the poor. The studies indicated that the poor were not discriminated against by an unusual maldistribution system but by their low average incomes. Sustained real growth of the economy above historical levels could significantly affect per capita income and quickly boost a considerable portion of the poor above the poverty line. In the 1980s India's programs to help the poor included those to provide the basic consumption needs at stable, low prices; to increase income through pricing and regulations, such as supplying subsidized water, fertilizer, and other inputs; to foster location of industry in backward areas;

to increase access to basic social services, e.g., education, health, and potable water supply; and to help special groups and areas. The total money spent on programs for the poor in the early 1980s was not discernible from the budget data but was large, exceeding 10 percent of plan outlays in the FY 1980–84 period. The government claimed a significant drop in the proportion of the population below the poverty line between FY 1980 and FY 1983.

In 1984 the three major national programs, apart from stabilizing prices for basic consumer requirements, were the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP), the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), and the Minimum Need Programme (MNP—to provide basic social services in health, education, etc.). The NREP evolved from the food-for-work concept to use unemployed and underemployed labor to build productive community assets. This program potentially could affect a significant part of the rural underemployed by offering jobs to the unemployed and those needing supplemental work, but in the early 1980s funds for this program were declining in real terms. Critics also questioned the projects undertaken. The IRDP aimed to provide a new group of recipients each year with credits and subsidies to purchase assets to boost their income. IRDP grew rapidly in coverage and amount per family between FY 1980 and FY 1983, but more funding was available than used, indicating that implementation lagged or that matching state funds were inadequate. The MNP was to account for 6 percent of the outlays in the FY 1980–84 plan but suffered funding constraints by 1983. Nonetheless, observers credited the program with substantial achievements by 1984 in the country's investment in human capital.

The government's role in the economy was much more pervasive than outlined here. Moreover, government in India includes that of the central and states administration. The Constitution assigns responsibility to the states in a number of matters, including those having to do with the ownership, redistribution, improvement, and taxation of land. The central government tried to establish programs and norms among the states and union territories, but implementation often remained at the lower levels of government. A wide range of action was taken by the states that affected the programs of the central government and growth of the economy, particularly those affecting land reform and the plight of the small landless farmer. In some matters concerning subsoil rights and irrigation projects, the central government exerted its political and financial leverage to obtain its objective, but the states sometimes modified or retarded the impact of cen-

tral government policies and programs. In spite of the divergencies, government exerted considerable influence on the economy, sometimes in brutally direct ways and sometimes in subtle and indirect ways.

Planning

Indian leaders quickly turned to planning once they were masters of the country's economy. Their socialist orientation and avowed objective of intervention in the economy to foster growth and social justice could be more pointed and effective through the use of national plans. Moreover, there was some familiarity with planning dating back to the 1930s. Even before independence, the colonial government had briefly established a planning board that lasted from 1944 to 1946. Private industrialists and economists combined to publish three development plans in 1944.

In 1950 the Planning Commission was established, responsible only to the prime minister and independent of the cabinet. In 1985 the prime minister remained chairperson of the commission, and the minister of planning was the deputy. There were seven additional members in 1983. A staff drafted national plans under the guidance of the commission; draft plans were presented for approval to the National Development Council, which consisted of the Planning Commission and the chief ministers of the states. The council could make changes in the draft plan. After council approval, the draft was presented to the cabinet and subsequently to Parliament, whose approval made the plan an operating document for the central and state governments (see The Union Government, ch. 8).

The First Five-Year Plan (FY 1951–55) attempted to stimulate balanced economic development while also correcting imbalances caused by World War II and partition in 1947. Agriculture, including combined irrigation and power projects, received priority in investments. Good weather plus the flow of funds raised farm output substantially, creating an optimism among planners that the country was close to self-sufficiency in food grains. High farm production contributed to substantial growth in the rest of the economy, and many of the plan targets were surpassed.

The Second Five-Year Plan (FY 1956–60) emphasized industrialization, particularly basic, heavy industries in the public sector, and improvement of the economy's infrastructure. The plan also stressed social goals, such as more equal distribution of income and extension of the benefits of economic development to

the large number of disadvantaged in the society. National income (in real terms) increased 20 percent during the plan compared with a target of 25 percent. Public investment failed to match the plan. Production of a number of key commodities that were to form the base for the next plan fell substantially below plan targets. A poor harvest in FY 1957 required substantial food imports and reemphasized the continued dependence on good monsoon rains to meet food needs. Well before the end of the plan the necessity of large grain imports, along with arms purchases in response to Pakistan's defense buildup and other factors, exhausted the large foreign currency reserves that had been accumulated during World War II. A foreign exchange crisis resulted that required imposition of a variety of controls and curtailed budget expenditures for the last half of the plan period.

The Third Five-Year Plan (FY 1961–65) aimed at a substantial rise in national and per capita income while expanding the industrial base and rectifying the neglect of agriculture in the previous plan. National income was planned to grow at more than 5 percent a year, and self-sufficiency in food grains was to be achieved in the mid-1960s. By 1962, when a brief war was fought with China on the Himalayan frontier, agricultural output was stagnating, industrial production was considerably below expectations, and the economy was growing at about half of the planned rate. Defense expenditures were sharply increased, and more foreign aid was sought to maintain development expenditures; foreign aid provided 28 percent of public development spending. Midway through the plan it was clear that plan goals could not be achieved. Food prices began rising in 1963, causing rioting and looting of grain warehouses in 1964. War with Pakistan in 1965 sharply reduced the foreign aid available.

By the mid-1960s the economy was in disarray, and planning was under considerable scrutiny. Successive severe droughts in 1965 and 1966 further disrupted the economy and planning. Three annual plans guided development between FY 1966 and FY 1968 while plan policies and strategies were reevaluated. Immediate attention centered on increased agricultural growth, stimulation of exports, and the quest for efficient use of industrial assets. Expansion of agriculture was to be based largely on the supply of inputs necessary to take advantage of the new high-yield seeds becoming available, primarily for food grains. The rupee was substantially devalued in 1966, and export incentives were adjusted to promote exports. Controls affecting industry were simplified, and greater reliance was placed on the price mechanism to achieve industrial efficiency.

The Fourth Five-Year Plan (FY 1969–73) called for a 24-percent increase over the Third Five-Year Plan in real terms of public development expenditures, which amounted to Rs159 billion in 1969 prices. The state's development expenditures were just slightly higher than those of the central government, and the total public sector accounted for 60 percent of plan expenditures. Foreign aid contributed 13 percent of plan financing. Agriculture, including irrigation, received 23 percent of public outlays while most of the remainder was spread among electric power, industry, and transportation. National income was planned to grow at 5.7 percent a year, but the realized rate was only 3.3 percent a year. Many of the production targets in agriculture and industry were missed by substantial margins. Nationalization of banking and actions toward large private business houses during the plan period created uncertainties in the private sector.

The Fifth Five-Year Plan covered FY 1974 through FY 1978. The plan was drafted in late 1973 when crude oil prices were rising rapidly, which quickly forced a series of revisions. The fifth plan was subsequently approved in late 1976, but it was terminated at the end of FY 1977 because a new government wanted different priorities and programs. This plan was in effect for only a year, although it provided some guidance to investments throughout the five-year period.

The fifth plan called for public sector plan expenditures of Rs394 billion (in 1974 rupees), a 60 percent increase in real terms over the actual investments achieved in the fourth plan. This substantial rise in development expenditures was nearly achieved when yearly outlays were totaled for the five years; actual expenditures fell less than 5 percent short of the target (in constant prices). Industry and mining received 23 percent of actual outlays, agriculture and irrigation 22 percent, power 19 percent, transportation 17 percent, and social services 17 percent. Private sector investments were to be Rs270 billion, but in early 1985 details were lacking on actual investments, although private industrial development slackened during the plan period. External financing contributed 13 percent of plan expenditures. National income increased 5.2 percent a year in real terms over the five years compared with a goal of 4.4 percent a year. Production of a number of basic commodities came close to or exceeded plan goals.

The economy operated under annual plans in FY 1978 and FY 1979 before the Sixth Five-Year Plan was approved and became effective for the period FY 1980–84. Development expenditures in the sixth plan were to be nearly Rs1.7 trillion (in FY 1979

prices), of which Rs975 billion were to be public sector outlays. Internal resources were to finance 90 percent of the investments. Public sector development spending was concentrated in agriculture and irrigation (24 percent), industry including mining (21 percent), power (20 percent), and transportation (16 percent). GDP growth, in constant prices, was to increase by 5.2 percent a year. A major objective of the plan was to increase employment, largely through rural programs, in order to lift more citizens above the poverty level. The sixth plan also focused on deficiencies and bottlenecks in the economy, such as shortages of electric power, coal, and transportation capacity.

By early 1985 the end of the sixth plan had not been reached, but it was apparent that important shortfalls were in prospect even though the economy's performance was above average. Over the first four years real GDP growth was better than planned (5.5 percent against a 5.2 percent target) thanks to good monsoon rains in FY 1983 that raised agricultural output substantially. An important shortfall, however, was in public sector investment, particularly that of the states, which would mean the persistence of shortages and bottlenecks in key parts of the economy. The investment goals of the sixth plan were considerably above previous levels, but resource mobilization by the public sector proved inadequate for the level of outlays planned. India's economy entered the second half of the 1980s with important constraints to rapid growth, balanced development, and improvements in income distribution and social justice.

By late 1984 only the bare outlines had been published of the Seventh Five-Year Plan, which presumably would begin in FY 1985. Total public development expenditures during the plan were to be Rs1.8 trillion (in 1985 prices), about double the sixth-plan target. Private investment was expected to reach Rs1.4 trillion. GDP growth was expected to average a little above 5 percent a year, consisting of around 4 percent growth a year in agriculture and around 7 percent a year in industry. Considerable attention was to be given to stimulating rural employment in order to reduce the population below the poverty line to 23 percent by 1990. Resource constraints required avoidance of large new projects and more effective use of existing investments.

Planning over three decades showed that India's economy, a mix of public and private enterprise, was too large and autonomous to be wholly predictable or responsive to directions of the planning authorities. Actual results usually differed in important respects from the plans. Major shortcomings of the plan results included insufficient improvement in income distribution and al-

leviation of poverty, delayed completions and cost overruns on many public sector projects, and far too small a return on many public sector investments. Even though the plans turned out to be less effective than expected, they helped guide investment priorities, policy recommendations, and financial mobilization.

Budget

India's public finance system followed the British pattern. The Constitution establishes the supremacy of Parliament—specifically the Lok Sabha (House of the People)—in financial matters. No taxes may be levied and no exenditure from public funds disbursed without an act of Parliament. Parliament also scrutinizes and audits all government accounts to ensure that expenditures were legally authorized and properly spent. Proposals for taxation or expenditures may be initiated, however, only by the Council of Ministers—particularly the Ministry of Finance. The finance minister is required to submit to Parliament on the last day of February a financial statement detailing the estimated receipts and expenditures of the central government for the new fiscal year and a financial review of the current fiscal year.

The Lok Sabha has one month to review and modify the government's budget proposals. If by the first of April, the beginning of India's fiscal year, the parliamentary discussion of the budget has not been completed, the budget as proposed by the finance minister goes into effect, subject to retroactive modifications when parliamentary discussions have been completed. On completion of its budget discussions, the Lok Sabha passes the Appropriations Act, authorizing the executive to spend money, and the Finance Act, authorizing the executive to impose and collect taxes. Supplemental requests for funds may be presented during the course of the fiscal year to cover emergencies, such as war or other catastrophes. The bills are forwarded to the Rajya Sabha (Council of States—the upper house) for comment. The Lok Sabha, however, is not bound by the comments, nor may the upper house delay passage of money bills. When signed by the president, the bills become law. The Lok Sabha cannot increase the request for funds submitted by the executive, nor can it authorize new expenditures. Taxes passed by Parliament may be retroactive.

State governments maintain their own budgets, prepared by the state's ministers of finance in consultation with appropriate officials of the central government. Primary control over state finances rests with each state legislature in the same manner as at

the central government level. State finances are supervised by the central government, however, through the comptroller and the auditor general. The latter reviews state government accounts annually and reports his findings to the appropriate state governor for submission to his legislature. The central and state budgets consist of a budget for current expenditures, known as the budget on revenue account, and a capital budget for economic and social developmental expenditures.

The national railroad, the largest public sector enterprise, and the Posts and Telegraph Department have their own budgets, funds, and accounts. The appropriations and disbursements under these budgets are subject to the same form of parliamentary and audit control as the other government revenues and expenditures. Dividends accrue to the central government, and deficits are subsidized by it; this is true also, directly or indirectly, of other government enterprises.

The Constitution allocates the power to raise and disburse public funds between the central and state governments. Because of its greater revenue sources, the central government shared with the states its receipts from personal income taxes and certain excise taxes. It also collected certain other taxes, the total proceeds of which were transferred to the states. The division of the shared taxes was determined by financial commissions established by the president, usually at five-year intervals. The Eighth Finance Commission recommended in an interim report in 1983 that the former ratios of shared taxes remain the same in FY 1984, that is, 85 percent of the net proceeds of personal income taxes and 40 percent of the net proceeds of excise taxes (excluding that on electricity) were to be transferred to the states according to a schedule devised by the commission. The Eighth Finance Commission in its final report in 1984 recommended, however, that an extra 5 percent of excise taxes (excluding electricity) be transferred to an enlarged group of expected deficit states during FY 1984–89. The central government avoided such a change in FY 1984 but accepted the recommendation for FY 1985–88. The central government also provided the states with large-scale grants and loans to meet their commitments.

The states have greater aggregate administrative and housekeeping expenses than the central government because they are usually responsible for implementation of national policies and programs. The states, for example, administered over two-thirds of the country's development expenditures in the early 1980s. The state's share of total public revenue collected, however, declined from 48 percent in FY 1955 to about 42 percent in the late

1970s. The states have continuously sought a greater share of central government revenues. An important cause of the state's decline in the share of revenues collected was the diminished importance of the land revenue tax, which had traditionally been the main direct tax on agriculture. This tax declined from 8 percent of all (state and union) tax revenues in FY 1950 to less than 1 percent in FY 1981. The states have jurisdiction over taxes levied on land and agricultural income, and vested interests exerted pressure on the states not to raise agricultural taxation. As a result, in the 1980s agriculture largely escaped significant taxation, although there has long been nationwide discussion about increasing land taxes or instituitng some sort of tax on incomes of the richer portion of the farm community. In 1985 this remained only a potential source of considerable funds for economic development, for such taxation presented many administrative and political problems.

The consolidated finances of the central and state governments contained most of the public sector activity. In the FY 1983 proposed budgets of these jurisdictions, consolidated current revenue receipts amounted to Rs369 billion, of which Rs315 billion were tax revenues—22 percent of GDP. Consolidated expenditures for current and capital items amounted to Rs509 billion—35 percent of GDP. In India's fiscal system, part of capital expenditures were to be financed by drawing on specific funds and by issuing various government securities; in FY 1983 these planned borrowings amounted to Rs116 billion, leaving a consolidated proposed budget deficit of about Rs23 billion to be funded largely by treasury bills. For more than two decades the joint finances of the public sector have usually resulted in budget deficits, the amount increasing sharply after the late 1970s as the government increased development spending.

The proposed FY 1983 budget of the central government contained total revenues (including capital receipts) of Rs294 billion and total expenditures of Rs310 billion, leaving an anticipated deficit of about Rs16 billion, which was slightly smaller than the year before (see table 13, Appendix). Taxes, specifically indirect taxes, were the main source of income. Indirect taxes are usually considered to have a harder impact on the poor than direct taxes, and limited data suggested that this was the case in India. In FY 1983 the central government was expected to collect Rs100 billion from excise taxes, Rs40 billion of which was to be transferred to the states. India applied excise taxes throughout the economy, including production of intermediate goods used for subsequent production. The result was an accumulation that made the effective excise taxes to final consumers much higher than the nominal

rate. This produced effects, perhaps including discouraging exports of manufactures, only partly known and possibly unintended by economic officials. In the early 1980s economic advisers had recommended that India replace its present excise taxes with a value-added tax (VAT) similar to that used widely in Western Europe, but by early 1985 the recommendation had not been adopted. Foreign trade duties in FY 1983 were expected to be about Rs59 billion, almost entirely from tariffs on imports. A few other indirect taxes brought the central government's expected indirect tax revenues (net of shares to the states) to Rs123 billion in the proposed budget.

Direct taxes expected by the central government in the proposed FY 1983 budget amounted to Rs31.5 billion. Corporation taxes amounted to nearly Rs24 billion. Personal income tax collections were expected to be nearly Rs17 billion, of which Rs11 billion was to be transferred to the states. Personal income taxes, which were levied on nonagricultural sources, declined in importance, from 21 percent of taxes in FY 1950 to 6 percent in FY 1981. Even though the tax rates were progressive and were high for the wealthy, the increasing number of exemptions, deductions, and tax preferences diminished the tax base and reduced the effective tax rates. Tax evasion was considered to be serious. In FY 1978 only a little over 3 million assessees paid personal income tax, representing perhaps 2 to 3 percent of the adult population. In FY 1981 the exemption on family income was raised, reducing the number of taxpayers to about 1.3 million individuals. Economists considered that income taxes could produce more revenue through improved collection, readjusting exemptions and deductions, and broadening the base, although care needed to be exercised not to undermine incentives or tax those with low consumption. Some other taxes produced small amounts of revenue. A tax on conspicuous consumption had been advocated but had not been adopted by early 1985. Capital receipts included repayments on loans by states, foreign loans, and borrowing in domestic markets and from funds.

Current expenditures in the proposed FY 1983 central government budget amounted to Rs218 billion. Nondevelopmental spending was the largest at Rs135 billion, of which defense was Rs54 billion and interest payments on the national debt Rs47 billion. Defense had been a major expenditure for years. Grants to the states amounted to Rs41 billion. Current developmental expenditures were Rs42 billion, which funded social and economic services already established.

Capital expenditures in the proposed FY 1983 central gov-

ernment budget amounted to Rs92 billion. The largest entry consisted of loans and advances to the states, largely for developmental projects, amounting to Rs44 billion in FY 1983. Central government developmental expenditures were Rs40 billion, representing investments in the economy. The largest sector was industry, including mining and the oil industry. The remaining economic investments were substantially less and were spread over agriculture, utilities (water and power), railroads, and other transport and communications. Nondevelopmental capital expenditures were largely for defense.

The state governments obtained funds from a variety of sources. They had their own taxing powers. State sales taxes provided the bulk of their receipts, amounting to Rs63 billion in their FY 1983 proposed budgets. Other taxes, including state excise duties, raised total state tax collections to Rs108 billion. The state's share of income and excise taxes transferred from the central government amounted to nearly Rs52 billion in FY 1983. In addition, states and union territories received about Rs85 billion in grants, loans, and advances from the central government. States also turned to lotteries as a source of income; some 170 state-sponsored lotteries existed in 1984. The fiscal performance of the individual states varied widely, but in the aggregate they usually recorded deficits.

Public Debt

The central government's budget deficits (including borrowings under capital receipts) steadily increased the public debt after independence, but at an accelerating pace in recent years. This public debt a little more than doubled between FY 1965 and FY 1973, but it rose nearly fivefold between FY 1973 and FY 1984, much of the increase occurring after FY 1979. The anticipated debt position of the central government in April 1985 was expected to be Rs1.1 trillion (approximately US$100 billion at the 1984 exchange rate), the bulk of which was owed to citizens and domestic institutions and firms, particularly the central bank. The government's use of bank credit was an important source of inflationary pressure. Officials were aware that large deficit financing from the central bank should not continue and that more appropriate means of financing government spending had to be found, such as improving tax collections and bettering the return from public enterprises.

Indian officials were much more conservative about the country's external public debt. The problem of servicing foreign

debts was recognized and caused officials to be cautious about borrowing abroad. Traditionally, most foreign loans were concessional and for specific projects. The adverse shift in India's terms of trade after 1978 and the worldwide recession that depressed export markets in the early 1980s, however, caused India to increase foreign borrowings in order to continue high economic growth. The country's outstanding external public debt increased from about US$15 billion in FY 1978 to nearly US$27 billion by April 1984, of which about US$17.5 billion (at the early 1984 exchange rate) was owed by the central government. Officials also turned more to commercial sources and supplier credits during this period; nonconcessional debt rose from about 5 percent of the total in FY 1978 to 15 percent by FY 1984. Despite the adverse situation in the early 1980s, India maintained prudent policies and a high credit standing. In FY 1983 debt service payments stood at about 13 percent of receipts of foreign exchange for exports of goods and services and the inflow of current transfers (see Balance of Payments, this ch.). The ratio was expected to rise to about 20 percent after the mid-1980s. This was still manageable but pointed to the need for greater domestic savings, particularly by the public sector.

Foreign Aid

Since independence, India has had to draw on foreign savings to finance a part, usually a small part, of its economic development. The low consumption level of the population and the amount of investment the economy needed necessitated borrowing abroad, although the government attempted to be as self-reliant as possible. The country also received grants and relief funds (during famine and other emergencies) that did not require repayments. This aid far exceeded US$30 billion by 1984. The World Bank (see Glossary), including its associated agencies, had provided at least US$17 billion since independence. United States economic aid totaled about US$10.8 billion, of which nearly half had been repaid by 1984. Many other countries had also provided financial assistance over the years.

Early on, the World Bank organized the Aid-to-India Consortium, consisting of the World Bank Group and 13 countries: Austria, Belgium, Britain, Canada, Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany), France, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and the United States. The consortium was formed to coordinate aid and establish priorities among India's major sources of foreign assistance and to simplify

India's request for aid based on its plans for development. Consortium aid was bilateral, government-to-government aid for the 13 consortium countries, and almost all of the aid, including that from the World Bank Group, was for specific projects judged to be valuable contributions to India 's development. The consortium, particularly the World Bank Group and the United States, has provided much of India's foreign economic assistance since independence.

Many countries provided economic aid. One important source was the Soviet Union, which had committed the equivalent of at least US$1.5 billion by 1983, largely for specific projects and perhaps accounting for about 5 percent of India's total aid. East European communist countries had supplied small amounts of aid. West European countries had supplied economic aid to India in various forms and in substantial amounts; Britain and West Germany each had supplied more aid than the Soviet Union. Since 1973 several Middle Eastern oil-exporting countries had provided financial assistance, some of which related to petroleum exports; Iran was the largest by 1983, having committed US$1 billion to an iron ore project in the mid-1970s. Historically, the bulk of India's foreign economic assistance has been on concessional terms—containing interest rates and repayment terms less onerous than from commercial sources. A significant part consisted of grants requiring no repayment. Much of United States aid in the 1970s and early 1980s was in the form of grants.

Foreign assistance to India has fluctuated because of many factors, but generally foreign countries have responded when India experienced economic difficulties. Aid flows increased in the mid-1970s to an annual average of US$1.9 billion, compared with US$1.1 billion in FY 1972 and FY 1973, when the jump in oil prices imposed balance of payments constraints on India. In FY 1977–79, when India's balance of payments improved and foreign exchange reserves built up, foreign aid disbursements fell back to an average US$1.7 billion a year. By the early 1980s the second large oil price increases and the general recession in the world economy again imposed balance of payments constraints on India. Foreign aid disbursements rose, averaging US$2.3 billion in FY 1980 and FY 1981, US$2.6 billion in FY 1982, and US$2.7 billion in FY 1983. For FY 1984 the Aid-to-India Consortium raised its annual aid commitment from US$3.7 billion the year before to US$4 billion. This was a commitment, however, to the aid pipeline to be drawn on over several years, whereas disbursements were the amounts actually used in a year. India had additional inflows of foreign loans and other capital movements from

other sources not considered concessional or as aid; these helped alleviate shortages of foreign exchange. By the beginning of FY 1984, India had about US$8.5 billion of aid commitments to draw on in future years.

The sources of aid have shown some changes since the early 1970s. The World Bank Group, particularly one of the World Bank affiliates—the International Development Association (IDA), which made loans with more concessional terms than the bank—increased its lending to India and by 1984 was the most important source of aid. IDA lending to India was expected to decline in the late 1980s because its supply of funds to lend had been cut back by contributing members, leaving less to lend to India and other countries; the World Bank had increased its lending to India, however. After the 1974 oil price increase, the East European countries provided almost no additional aid during the rest of the 1970s except for a US$26 million wheat loan from the Soviet Union. In the 1980s, however, the communist countries significantly boosted their aid contribution, primarily because of a Soviet Union commitment in FY 1980 of US$616 million for projects to be constructed over a period of time. Middle Eastern oil-exporting nations provided aid to India in the latter part of the 1970s, but their commitments in the early 1980s were small.

Economists expected India to need a continuing large inflow in the 1980s of foreign savings to finance the investments needed to sustain economic growth of 5 percent a year or better. Less growth would provide little improvement in per capita incomes and consumption levels. The terms on which foreign savings were available to Indian officials would make a difference. Although India sharply increased borrowing abroad on commercial terms in the early 1980s, officials still were concerned about debt service in future years. If concessional foreign aid diminished in the second half of the 1980s, Indian officials were expected, on the basis of past performance, to reduce foreign borrowing as debt service became a burden, with a consequent slowing of investment and economic growth. The proportion of concessional foreign aid available to India in the rest of the 1980s was problematic but could become an important determinant of the economy's growth rate and consumption level.

In addition to receiving aid, India provided small amounts of foreign aid to other countries. By 1983 commitment of assistance amounted to about US$1 billion. The bulk of it had been committed as grants to Bhutan, Nepal, and Bangladesh. Loans had also been extended to these neighbors as well as to several other underdeveloped countries in Asia and Africa. The aid included tech-

nical assistance from Indian experts, equipment, and training. Annual disbursements were small, however (see Relations with Small Neighbors, ch. 9).

Labor

Little information about the size and employment of the labor force was available in the mid-1980s, and that available consisted largely of educated guesses. Even the censuses were questioned and usually adjusted by demographers (see Population, ch. 2). Less was known about the large part of the population employed in farming, cottage industries, small-scale manufacturing, and various services in both rural and urban areas. The central government had a statistical agency that made surveys of samples of the population on which it could base estimates of the labor force, sources of employment, the degree of unemployment, and other variables. Conceptual problems, changes in classifications and techniques, and additional difficulties undercut the usefulness of these surveys. The result was considerable uncertainty about the economic activity of the bulk of the population.

The government, on the basis of the 1981 census, estimated the labor force to number some 222 million, called main workers, plus an additional 22 million marginal workers (those that had worked fewer than 183 days in the year preceding the census enumeration). The 1971 census results indicated a labor force of 180 million, which was roughly comparable to main workers in the 1981 census. These figures show the labor force increasing by 42 million, or 4.2 million new additions each year.

In contrast, World Bank demographers, adjusting the 1971 and 1981 censuses for underenumeration, counting as workers those who worked much fewer than 183 days in a year, and using other data available on age groupings and workers' participation rates, estimated the labor force as 228 million in 1970 and 302 million in 1980. By this estimate the labor force grew by 2.8 percent a year—faster than the population because of the changing age distribution of the population and higher participation rates of younger age-groups. By this estimate, over 7 million Indians entered the work force each year. Projecting this estimate for 1980 and using a lower rate of growth, which the data suggested, the Indian labor force numbered about 330 million in 1984.

The sources of employment were mainly derived from survey data in conjunction with the 1981 census. In the early 1980s about 70 percent of the labor force was engaged in agriculture (in-

cluding forestry and fishing), 13 percent in industry (including mining and construction), 6 percent in trade, 3 percent in transportation and communications, and the remainder in other services, including government. About 80 percent of the labor force was in rural areas. The data indicated that agricultural laborers accounted for 25 percent of the labor force and farmers 42 percent.

More adequate information was available for the modern sector, called by the Indians the organized sector. Included were the public sector of all levels of government and nonagricultural enterprises employing 25 persons or more in the private sector. Some smaller private firms also voluntarily contributed statistics. The public sector in 1982 employed nearly 16 million compared with about 7.5 million employed in the private sector (see table 14, Appendix). Modern industries employed only about 10 percent of the labor force at best, and the public sector had been responsible for most of the job creation of the preceding two decades. In FY 1982 the organized sector increased employment by 600,000 to nearly 23.5 million—about one-tenth of the jobs needed by entrants into the labor force.

Regardless of the figures used, India had a large and rapidly growing labor force. Providing employment proved difficult. Analysis of the Indian survey data by a World Bank economist provided some useful insights in the late 1970s. Chronic unemployment appeared to have increased about fivefold in the 1960s and 1970s to about 7 to 8 million workers in 1978 (the latest survey data). Unemployment based on a specific day used in surveys rose slightly between 1973 and 1978 and amounted to about 19 million workers in 1978, an unemployment rate of over 8 percent. Survey data on underemployment were available only for 1959 to 1967, based on respondents' indicating they worked 42 hours or less in a week and wanted more work. The underemployed reached a staggering 46 percent of the labor force and involved as many as 77 million workers. In the 1960s unemployment was mostly confined to the rural population, but in the 1970s part of unemployment shifted to urban areas. Women consistently suffered a higher incidence of unemployment than men, but in the 1970s their share of total unemployment declined from about 50 percent to 30 percent. The poorest households had the highest incidence of unemployment.

It was clear that many more jobs were needed that would provide useful, productive work at an adequate wage. Many of the laborers and self-employed in the work force were engaged as street vendors, petty traders, and in other services for which they received little income. They did what they could because the

population had to work to eat; the unemployed lacked unemployment insurance and other measures available in Western Europe and the United States. Analysis of the survey data and projections indicated that the Indian economy would have to sustain an annual average 6.5 percent growth rate for more than two decades to reduce the broadest measure of unemployment, covering intermittent work and the chronically unemployed, from over 8 percent in 1978 to 1 percent by the year 2000. Some developing countries have sustained such a rate, but it would be difficult for India because of a number of features of its economy. It was more likely that the government would have to use a dual strategy to sustain high economic growth as well as implement programs to absorb more of the unemployed and underemployed.

The government has always had job creation as one of its goals. The focus of the public sector investments on capital-intensive heavy industry and the impediments to private sector expansion, however, created fewer jobs than expected as the population grew faster than expected. By the early 1980s government policies were still trying to create more jobs. The number of products reserved for small-scale and cottage industries was greatly enlarged, and incentives were provided to manufacturers to locate in areas lacking industry. It was expected that small-scale production would create more jobs than large plants. The extension of irrigation and the use of high-yield farming techniques were also promoted, partly because of the increased employment they would provide in rural areas. But job creation for the new entrants into the labor force and reduction of disguised unemployment and underemployment will remain a difficult challenge for decades. Failure to meet the challenge would cause greater poverty and perhaps explosive social tensions.

An unexpected source of employment appeared after the oil-exporting nations sharply increased crude oil prices in 1974. The Middle Eastern oil-exporting countries quickly undertook massive development programs based on their much larger oil revenues. Most of these countries required the importation of labor, both skilled and unskilled. India became one of many nations supplying the needed labor. By 1983 some 900,000 Indian workers were registered as temporary residents in Middle Eastern countries. India benefited from the opening of job opportunities and from the remittances these workers sent home, which amounted to around US$2.5 billion of foreign exchange in the early 1980s (see Balance of Payments, this ch.). In 1983 India enacted a new law governing workers going abroad to correct substantial abuses that had emerged; in general, the new legislation provided more protection and required fairer treatment of In-

dians employed overseas. By 1984 the slowdown of development activities by Middle Eastern oil-exporting nations had not slowed recruitment of Indian workers, but there was a shift in the kinds of labor needed. Few laborers, metalworkers, and engineers, for example, were required for construction projects, but this was largely compensated for by the need for maintenance workers and operating staff in power plants, hospitals, and offices.

India's labor force contained the extremes. Large numbers were illiterate and unaccustomed to machinery or routine. The country also had a very large pool of highly educated scientists, technicians, and engineers capable of working any place in the world, which some of them did. India claimed 2.3 million scientists and technicians, to rank eighth in the world. A substantial number of the skilled people left India to work abroad; the country had suffered a brain drain since independence. Nonetheless, many remained in India along with a trained industrial and commercial work force. Administrative skills, particularly in large projects or programs, were in short supply, which was not uncommon elsewhere in the world.

The Trade Unions Act of 1926 provided recognition and protection for the nascent Indian labor union movement. The act defines a trade union as any combination of seven or more persons who unite primarily to regulate relations between employers and workers. The number of unions has grown considerably, from about 11,000 registered with the government in FY 1961 to 33,000 in FY 1979. Membership grew more slowly, from about 4 million in FY 1961 to 6 million in FY 1978. Most unions were small and usually active in only a single firm. Union membership was concentrated in the organized sector. Many unions were affiliated in regional or national federations, of which there were several important ones. Union leadership has been held largely by politicians, often giving the trade union movement more a political than an economic role (see Occupational Interest Groups, ch. 8).

Labor unrest has frequently affected the Indian economy. The year 1979 was the worst in the 1970s when nearly 44 million man-days were lost. Industrial disputes continued at a high level in the early 1980s. About 37 million man-days were lost in 1981, some 77 million man-days in 1982, and 44 million man-days in 1983. The years 1982 and 1983 were somewhat abnormal, however, because of the Bombay textile strike, which affected a large number of plants, accounting for about one-third of the country's cloth output in the mill sector. The Bombay strike alone accounted for about 44 million man-days lost in 1982 and 19 million

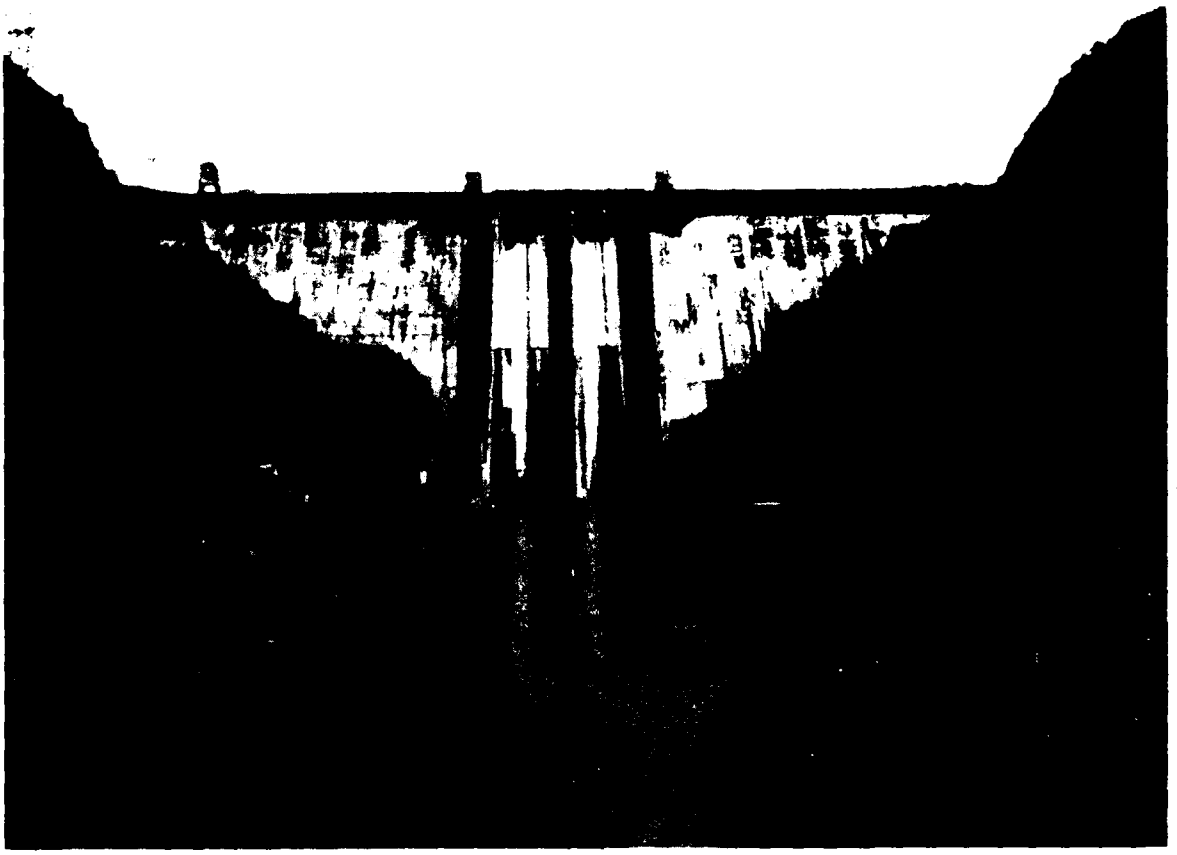
man-days lost in 1983. The strike petered out in 1983, but some 13 mills were unable to restart by mid-1984 because of financial difficulties since the strike. A 26-day strike by some 300,000 dockworkers largely shut down imports and exports at India's 10 major ports in the spring of 1984, stranding about 200 ships until the strike was settled. Four dock union federations had called the strike for higher wages.

In stark contrast to the position of unionized workers in many modern sector enterprises was the isolated, insecure, and exploited laborer in rural areas. Many of the latter became bonded laborers, in fact, indentured slaves, some almost willingly because of the security of employment it provided. The International Commission of Jurists, studying India's bonded labor, defined such a person as one who worked for his creditor or someone in the creditor's family against nominal wages in cash or kind until the creditor, who kept the books and set the prices, declared the loan repaid, often with usurious rates of interest. The system sometimes extended to the debtors' wives and children, who were employed in appalling working conditions and exposed to sexual abuse. The Constitution, as interpreted by the Supreme Court of India, and a specific act in 1976 prohibit bonded labor.

A study in FY 1981 by two Indian organizations of over 1,000 villages in just 10 states estimated that 2.2 million persons were in debt bondage in the agricultural sector of those states alone. The International Commission of Jurists believed that there might be as many as 50 million bonded laborers on the basis of the Supreme Court's interpretation of forced labor in 1982. Almost two-thirds of those identified as bonded laborers belonged to Scheduled Castes (see Glossary) and another 18 percent to Scheduled Tribes; 84 percent of the masters were caste Hindus (see Tribes, ch. 4). The bulk of debtors had no land or livestock. Debtors often rejected assistance to be liberated from their bondage because of fear of reprisal by the creditor or fear of not being able to find alternative work.

Industry

At independence industrialization was viewed as the engine of growth for the rest of the economy and the supplier of jobs to reduce poverty. Although substantial industrialization has been accomplished and considerable changes wrought in the economy, industrial growth failed to live up to expectations. The index of industrial production rose an average of 5.8 percent a year from FY



Bhakra Dam
Courtesy Embassy of India, Washington

1951 through FY 1982; although this increase was respectable, it was less than what some other developing countries had achieved and less than what the planners expected and the economy needed. The emphasis on large-scale, capital-intensive industries created far fewer jobs than the annual entrants into the labor force, leaving unemployment and underemployment growing problems.

Energy

An inadequate supply of energy was an important constraint on industrial growth. India's economy was in transition as far as energy sources were concerned. For many centuries the people have been using such renewable sources as firewood and animal and agricultural wastes for fuel. These noncommercial sources still accounted for 54 percent of the energy consumed (expressed in terms of oil equivalents) in FY 1975 (the latest year for which such data were available in early 1985). By 1985 they probably still

supplied close to half of the primary energy used in the economy, although population pressures on the land had greatly reduced the firewood available in many places, accelerating the use of kerosene, bottled gas, and electricity where available in rural villages.

India achieved impressive results in developing commercial energy since independence, but this accomplishment was usually overlooked because of the serious shortages of recent years. Coal production rose from nearly 33 million tons in FY 1950 to 128 million tons in FY 1982. Installed generating capacity expanded from 2,300 megawatts in 1950 to nearly 38,100 megawatts in early 1984. Oil production increased from 200,000 tons to 26.3 million tons over the same period. In spite of the rapid growth of commercial energy, demand grew even faster. Serious energy shortages constrained development in the late 1970s and into the mid-1980s. Unfortunately for Indian development under current conditions, the supply of energy will not meet demand until well into the 1990s, if then. An energy balance could be achieved more quickly by substantially elevating investments, raising efficiency of existing facilities, improving planning and implementation of energy projects, and reducing demand through conservation measures.

In the early 1980s the country's sources of primary commercial energy (converted to oil equivalents) were coal and lignite (55 percent), petroleum (33 percent), hydroelectric power (11 percent), and nuclear power (1 percent). Industry was the largest consumer of commercial energy (56 percent), followed by transportation (23 percent), households (11 percent), agriculture (16 percent), and miscellaneous (4 percent). Officials consistently followed energy policies over the years that limited the use of petroleum to sectors where substitution of other energy sources was not feasible. The sharp increase of world oil prices in 1974 and 1979 reinforced the move away from petroleum, for India's oil import bill went from US$269 million in FY 1972 to nearly US$6 billion in FY 1981, although the volume of oil imports rose only 30 percent.

Industry was by far the largest consumer of coal and electricity. In FY 1980 it accounted for 75 percent of the coal consumed outside of thermal power plants, 63 percent of electricity, and 19 percent of the oil products. Since the mid-1960s the consumption of energy per unit of value in production has climbed steadily, mostly because of increased use of electricity. Economists thought that energy conservation and efficiency could considerably slow the growth of energy consumption by industry over time but only through substantial investments. The transportation system was the largest user of oil products and the second

largest user of coal. The growth of road transport and the replacement of steam locomotives with diesel-electric caused much of the growth of oil consumption by transport units; by FY 1980 nearly two-thirds of the sector's energy requirements came from oil, and the proportion was expected to go higher as the shift in modes of transportation continued. Households in FY 1980 accounted for 7 percent of coal consumption, 19 percent of petroleum, and 10 percent of electricity. The consumption of commercial energy in agriculture grew rapidly after independence, but from a very low base. It will continue to grow. Commercial energy, mainly diesel oil and electricity, was largely used for preparing land, pumping water, threshing grain, and transporting products.

Coal was India's main source of primary commercial energy. In FY 1981 reserves (in seams greater than 1.2 meters lying at depths less than 600 meters) amounted to 85 billion tons, 25 million tons of which were proven reserves. The proven reserves included 9 billion tons of coking coal, about 14 billion tons of noncoking coal, and other grades, including lignite. Additional coal existed in smaller seams, at greater depths, and in undiscovered locations. In late 1984 the Geological Survey of India, a central government agency, reported finding large deposits of about 2.9 billion tons of high-quality coal; the finds may be links between existing coalfields. The bulk of the coal found has been in the eastern and northern part of the country. Known reserves would last many years into the future. In the 1980s development of strip mines was stressed over underground mines because of the speed with which they could be completed.

The coal industry was a key segment of the economy. Most of the industry was nationalized in the early 1970s. Coal India Limited (CIL) was created in 1975 as the government's holding company for several operating subsidaries. In FY 1980 private coal companies accounted for only 12 percent of production. Production stagnated in the second half of the 1970s at around 105 million tons after an initial surge in production following nationalization. In the late 1970s and early 1980s the industry was plagued by the flooding of mines, serious power shortages, lags in commissioning new mines, labor unrest, lack of explosives, and shortages of transportation. The government set coal prices, and until the early 1980s prices did not cover operating expenses of the more technically difficult public mines. The central government largely supplied investment funds.

In the late 1970s and to the mid-1980s the coal industry, along with electric power and transportation, was a critical

bottleneck in the economy and particularly handicapped industrial growth. The government in the early 1980s placed some of its most able administrators in charge of CIL, raised coal prices, received financial and technical assistance from Britain, and took other measures to raise coal production. Production did rise, but shortages eased largely because of diminished demand. It was expected that FY 1984 production would be about 148 million tons, well below the plan target of 165 million tons by March 1985; that target had been set below expected demand. If there was no shortage of coal in 1985 and later, it would be the result of less demand than expected, not because coal production had increased according to plan. The gap between supply and demand for coal would likely increase in the next decade.

The prospects of oil and natural gas were better than those of coal. Oil in commercial quantities was first discovered in India in 1889 in Assam by a company taken over by Burmah Oil Company in 1921 (see fig. 1). These two companies were the only ones involved in exploration, which was confined to the Northeast, and production in India until the 1950s (see Principal Regions, ch. 2). The Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC) began in 1954 as a department of the Geological Survey of India, but it became in effect the country's national oil company in 1959 by an act of Parliament. It was involved in areas outside of the Northeast. Oil India Limited (OIL) was also established in 1959, having one-third government ownership to develop an oil field just discovered by Burmah Oil Company. By 1981 the government had purchased all of Burmah Oil Company's assets in India and completely owned OIL. Meanwhile, the ONGC discovered oil in Gujarat in 1959 and subsequent other fields in the 1960s and 1970s. After independence, a few exploration and production agreements were signed with foreign oil companies, but the terms were usually difficult, and oil in commercial quantities was not found. In the early 1980s the government auctioned exploration and production leases to foreign oil companies in order to spread exploration costs that were becoming too large to bear alone, but the difficult terms and past government attitudes drew a small response. In 1984 the government was still trying to attract foreign oil companies to help in exploration.

The oil fields discovered in India, except for the Bombay High field, were of modest size. Oil production amounted to only 200,000 tons in 1950 and 400,000 tons in 1960. Assam was the major producing area with about 4.2 million tons a year by the early 1970s when oil production from Gujarat also exceeded 4 million tons. In 1974 the ONGC discovered a giant field offshore of

Bombay, which was named the Bombay High, and several nearby smaller fields, some containing only natural gas. Development of the Bombay High was pushed; production began about 1977 and by FY 1979 had exceeded 4 million tons a year and 8 million tons a year by FY 1981. Production from the Bombay High was responsible for the rapid growth in the early 1980s of the country's total crude oil production, which increased from 11.8 million tons in FY 1979 to 26 million tons in FY 1983 and was expected to reach 29 million tons in FY 1984. Production was expected to continue to rise for a few years from the currently producing fields and then decline. The crude and some associated gas from the Bombay High were piped to terminals and refineries near Bombay.

As of 1985 India's oil and gas reserves were not large, but prospects for additional discoveries were favorable. In March 1983 proven and probable recoverable reserves were 470 million tons of oil and 410 billion cubic meters of gas. Probable reserves were the estimated content of fields known from actual drillings and inferred from the geology. Other petroleum deposits had been found recently, but the size of their reserves was not known. India had a number of sedimentary basins, mostly offshore, which had good prospects of containing oil or gas deposits. In the 1980s exploration was being pushed to find more petroleum, but the government and its oil companies were short of funds because of the large investments needed in various parts of its oil industry and downstream facilities. Hence there was an interest in participation by foreign oil companies in the mid-1980s, but it remained to be seen if terms were made attractive enough for foreign firms to invest in drilling. If new discoveries were not made, oil production would decline in the 1990s, and the country's energy balance and balance of payments would deteriorate.

Consumption of petroleum products has been increasing. Consumption, in terms of crude oil, amounted to 8 million tons in FY 1960, 22 million tons in FY 1972, and 32 million tons in FY 1981. By the 1980s much of India's production consisted of high-quality crude oil, but the country's main requirements were for such intermediate products as diesel oil and kerosene. In FY 1983 domestic oil production was said to supply 65 percent of the country's requirements, and 70 percent would be achieved in FY 1984. Although India's refineries probably would process the domestic crude oil produced in FY 1984, they were not equipped to make the products that consumers required. As a result, India needed to sell and to make swap arrangements for its crude with other countries to obtain the kinds of crude oil needed by its refineries and the products used in the economy; in addition, crude

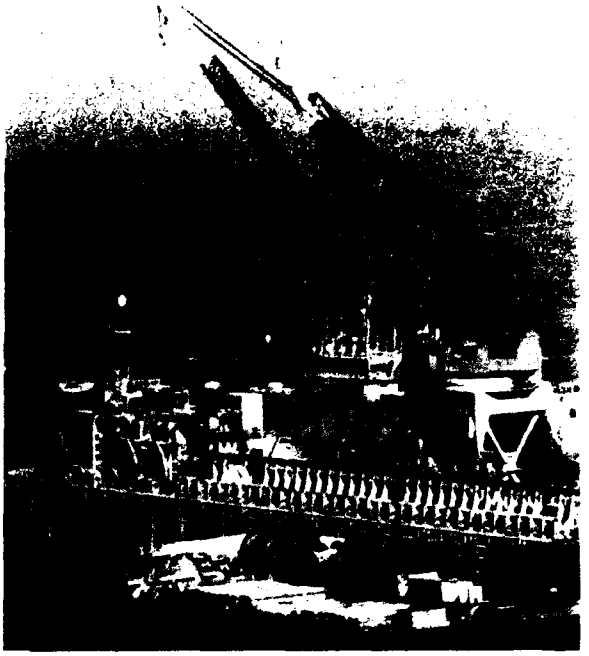
oil and refined products were imported to supplement the domestic supply. In 1985 India's refineries needed investments in additional facilities to turn out the products the economy needed most. Expanded domestic crude oil production reduced the net amount of petroleum imports, however.

Substantial quantities of natural gas were produced in association with crude oil production. Most of the associated gas in the Northeast fields was flared because it was uneconomical to build the pipelines and processing facilities required to bring the gas to distant consumers. Some of the gas in the Gujarat fields was used for fuel and feedstock in various industries. As production of crude oil from the Bombay High climbed in the 1980s, the associated gas had to be flared. In FY1981 about 40 percent of the gas produced had to be flared. In the mid-1980s gas was not an important source of energy, but it would be in the second half of the 1980s.

In the early 1980s large investments were made to bring gases from the Bombay High and from nearby natural gas fields (particularly the South Bassein field) ashore for use as fuel and to supply feedstock to fertilizer and petrochemical plants, which also had to be constructed or converted to use gas. By the mid-1980s gas could be delivered to facilities near Bombay and near Kandla in Gujarat. A 1,300-kilometer gas pipeline was to be constructed in stages from northeast of the Gujarat coast to a point about 200 kilometers east of New Delhi. Toward the late 1980s the capacity of the pipeline would be raised to 20 million cubic meters of gas per day. The supply of gas at this level of production from known fields was expected to last 20 years at least. The large investments for exploration and development required of India's two public sector oil companies exceeded their financing to conduct the exploration desired. The administrative and technical talent of these oil companies was spread thin on so many major projects. The lack of funds and talent largely explained the government's attempts to attract foreign oil company investment in the oil industry.

The electric power industry was both a supplier and a consumer of primary energy, depending on the kind of energy used to turn the generators. Hydroelectric and nuclear power plants added to the country's supply of primary energy.

India's first hydroelectric station was constructed in Darjeeling in 1897. Since then, several additional units have been built, some in large projects that included benefits from flood control and irrigation. By the early 1980s the installed capacity for hydroelectric generation amounted to about 12,000 megawatts, and about 4,700 megawatts of additional capacity was scheduled for



Drilling for oil on the Bombay High Courtesy Embassy of India, Washington

completion by 1985. The country had a large economically exploitable hydroelectric potential of about 75,000 megawatts (at a 60-percent load factor); more than two-thirds of the potential, however, was located in the Himalayan region and the Northeast in areas with difficult access and distant from consuming centers. In the 1980s more attention and investments went to hydroelectric generation because of its low, long-term cost and lack of pollution. Nonetheless, hydro facilities had to be coordinated with other sources of electricity because seasonal and annual variations in rainfall affected the head of water to turn the generators and the amount of electricity that could be generated.

Nuclear power plants added to the supply of primary energy by producing electricity from nuclear fuels. India had sufficient reserves of perhaps 15,000 tons of U3O8 that were economically exploitable at early 1980s prices and large quantities of thorium in beach sands to meet potential fuel needs for nuclear power in the near future. In 1984 three operational nuclear power plants had a combined capacity of about 1,100 megawatts. In 1963 the United States supplied the first plant, consisting of two 210-megawatt boiling water reactors near Bombay. The remaining plants, including those under construction, were pressurized heavy water reactors. The plant in Rajasthan was operational in 1984, although one reactor was temporarily shut down because of a leak. A reactor at a plant near Madras was operational, and a second was scheduled for completion in 1985. An additional plant of 470 megawatts was scheduled for completion in 1987–89 in Uttar

Pradesh. Since the early 1980s there has been discussion of considerable expansion of the nuclear power program to meet energy needs by the year 2000 beyond the 5,000 megawatts planned for installed capacity. It was not clear whether the government was committed to doubling that capacity.

Shortly after independence India established its own Atomic Energy Commission (AEC), installed a research reactor, and began training a substantial number of nuclear scientists, engineers, and technicians. The design of the pressurized heavy water reactors was foreign, but India claimed that 90 percent of the design and manufacture of such reactors recently installed had been Indianized. Five heavy water plants had been completed, making the country self-sufficient in 1985 if there were sufficient electricity to operate the plants at capacity. Officials claimed that India had the ability to reprocess spent fuel, enrich uranium, and produce fuel rods as well as to have developed a new fuel based on plutonium carbide for a prototype breeder reactor designed and built by Indians. The country had substantial reserves of thorium, which was used for the first time in the world to fuel a small test reactor in preparation to use such fuel in third generation reactors. In 1974 India exploded a "peaceful" nuclear device, using plutonium derived from a Canadian supplied reactor. That explosion resulted in the disruption of the supply of fuel, parts, and technology from foreign sources to an unknown degree, reinforcing the country's efforts toward self-reliance in the 1980s. Nuclear power was under the AEC, the head of which reported directly to the prime minister.

The larger portion of the electric power industry had long been an administrative headache. At independence the limited generating facilities were mainly owned by private companies and municipalities operating under state licenses. An act in 1948 established the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) and the State Electricity Boards (SEBs). CEA was largely advisory—to develop national power policy—and had few other functions. The SEBs were given authority to build, own, and operate power systems and to sell power to the public, but each was controlled by its state government. The SEBs established electric charges, although CEA exerted more pressure in the 1980s for standardized rates high enough to cover costs. The SEBs gradually absorbed most of the private and municipal power systems, although a few continued to operate in 1985.

As power generation grew, it became obvious that larger units and interconnections between systems were necessary. In the mid-1960s five Regional Electricity Boards (REBs) were

created by an agreement of the central and state governments to help integrate power systems in their regions. In 1969 the Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) was set up by the central government to finance rural electrification and to promote rural electric cooperatives. In 1975 the central government set up the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) and the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) to build, own, and operate large power stations because the SEBs had failed to meet supply requirements. The NTPC located its plants close to coal mines to reduce transportation costs. In 1976 the powers of CEA were enlarged. By 1985 the SEBs still owned and operated the bulk of the country's generating facilities, but central authorities were able to force better performance by the SEBs and to develop facilities to meet national needs, including the beginning of a national grid.

In FY 1982 installed generating capacity was 38.8 million kilowatts. The amount of electricity generated was 130.1 billion kilowatt-hours, excluding that from captive generators at industrial plants and private utilities. Thermal plants supplied 61 percent of the electricity, and hydrogeneration 37 percent. For many years the generation of electricity fell below demand, amounting to at least 10 percent each year in the early 1980s. The coal, steel, fertilizer, cement, and aluminum industries were the worst affected. An increasing number of plants were choosing to install their own small, inefficient power plants to ensure supply rather than depend on public power. Many factors contributed to the shortfall of electric power, including slow completion of new installations, low utilization of installed capacity because of insufficient maintenance and coal, and weak managment. By 1985 much remained to be done to increase the power supply to meet demand.

In an effort to meet the country's energy balance, a return to renewable sources was begun. In 1982 the Department of Nonconventional Energy Sources was established in the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum. The largest program concerned generation of gas from decomposition of organic wastes. Instead of drying cattle dung for fuel, which was still sold in large cities and rural villages in 1984, the intent was to use the dung in biogas plants that would produce both gas, for heat and lighting, and fertilizer. About 200,000 family-sized biogas plants were in operation in 1984, and officials hoped to provide 100,000 during the year. Such a program, however, was limited to families with sufficient cattle to supply the small plants. Another program was to use solar energy through photovoltaic panels to operate irrigation pumps and crop dryers. Considerable research had been done and experimental units tried, but actual installation was minor. Wind

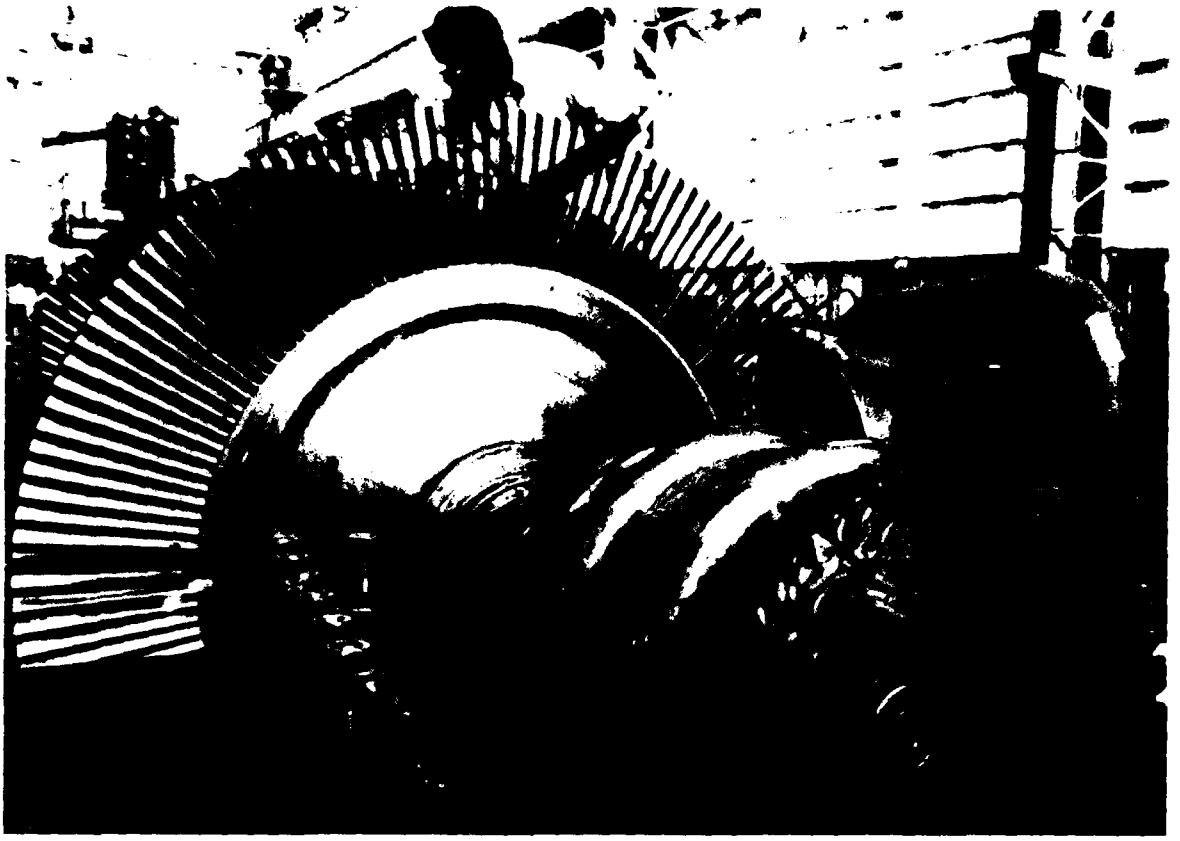
power and small hydrogenerators on irrigation canals were other possibilities under study.

Mining and Quarrying

India appeared less endowed with mineral resources than other large countries, such as the United States and the Soviet Union. Nonetheless, some key minerals had been found in adequate quantities to base industries on their extraction and processing. In FY 1982 mining and quarrying contributed 3 percent to GDP after rapid growth in the 1960s and 1970s. In the years following independence, surveying, exploration, and mining had increased to feed the growing metallurgical, construction, and other industries. By the mid-1980s assessment of the country's mineral resources was still far from complete. The Geological Survey of India conducted most geological activities, and the Mineral Exploration Corporation, a public enterprise formed in 1972, undertook detailed exploration.

Apart from coal, oil, and gas, iron ore was the most important mineral product. In fact, the country was a major world producer and possessed reserves estimated as high as 28 billion tons. Production in FY 1982 amounted to about 41 million tons, part of which was exported (see table 15, Appendix). Government estimates of reserves of manganese ore, used in the iron and steel, chemical, and glass industries, totaled nearly 117 million tons; production in FY 1982 was nearly 1.5 million tons. Chromite reserves were about 111 million tons, and production was 339,000 tons in FY 1982. Bauxite reserves, the main mineral source for aluminum, amounted to about 2.5 billion tons, and production amounted to over 1.8 million tons in FY 1982. Reserves of copper ore were 455 million tons, and production was 2 million tons in FY 1982; copper was also imported in large quantities to meet domestic requirements. India had limited quantities of silver, lead, zinc, and gold ores and imported these metals at times. The country had reserves of many nonmetallic minerals sufficient for phosphate fertilizer, refractory materials, ceramics, and the construction industry.

Ownership and the power to grant mineral concessions rested with the state governments. The central government, however, exerted considerable influence over such leases, particularly in cases of important and strategic minerals. In fact, most of the mining of important and strategic minerals was carried on by central government companies in which states sometimes held part ownership. Some private companies continued to operate in



Turbine rotor under construction for domestic use and export
Courtesy Embassy of India, Washington

extractive industries, but by 1985 their output was minor for most minerals.

Manufacturing

It required little imagination for India's leaders at independence to foresee that the country would eventually become an important member of the world community. It also required little imagination to see that the country would need armed forces to defend the security interests of the new nation. In 1948 one of the earliest decisions affecting industrial policy was that defense industries would be developed by the public sector. Building defense industries for a modern force almost by necessity required the concomitant development of heavy industries (metallurgical and machine tools) to build and feed the defense industries. Enlarging and revamping armament factories from the colonial era and building new ones, India during the next 30 years developed a large diversified defense industrial complex capable of producing many of the sophisticated weapons required by its military forces (see Defense Industry, ch. 10). India produced combat air-

craft, warships, various military vehicles, electronic equipment, and guns. Production often started under foreign licensing, but as much as possible, design and production became Indianized. India was one of only a few developing countries to produce a variety of high-technology military equipment to supply its own needs.

Another early and important industrial policy decision was that the government would build and operate the key industries, which largely meant those producing capital and intermediate goods. This decision partly reflected the socialist stance of the major leaders, i.e., public ownership of basic industry was believed to ensure development in the interest of the whole population. The decision also reflected the belief that private industrialists would find establishment of many of the basic industries on the scale the country needed either unattractive or beyond their financial capabilities. Moreover, there was concern that private industrialists could dominate markets in key commodities to enlarge their profits. Officials were also concerned about domination by large foreign corporations. Technology was needed and sought from abroad, but often under licensing or collaboration arrangements; some foreign equity investment was approved, but it remained relatively small. Foreign ownership in Indian companies was limited to a maximum of 40 percent in most cases.

The Industrial Policy Resolutions (of 1948 and 1956), which delineated the lines between the public and private sectors, stressed the need for a large degree of self-sufficiency in manufacturing, the basic strategy that guided industrialization into the early 1980s. Manufacturing expanded rapidly from 1950 to the mid-1960s at about 7 to 8 percent a year. Private manufacturing, which was largely confined to consumer goods, quickly grew to supply the domestic market with substitutes for imports, which were increasingly restricted by tariffs and quantitative controls. The large public investment programs created a demand for capital goods, basic metals, and construction material. Industry expanded to supply industrial machinery, transport equipment, and such intermediate products as iron and steel, cement, and fertilizers. The strategy was quite successful in promoting rapid industrialization into the mid-1960s, by which time India had a broad-based manufacturing sector.

After 1965 industrialization slowed because of many factors. Between 1965 and 1975 industrial growth was more than one-third below the previous rate and little faster than the economy as a whole; industrial employment in the organized sector increased about 1.8 percent a year, far less than the growth of the labor

force. Demand for capital and intermediate goods, which was largely dependent on the level of public investment, tended to fall. Slow growth of per capita incomes constrained demand for consumer goods. Import substitution required larger investments and more complex technology. The private sector was also restrained by a comprehensive and cumbersome regulatory framework that consisted of licensing of investment, including expansion; controls on imports and exports; allocation of scarce, domestically produced, raw materials; price controls; and reservation of production of certain commodities to the public sector or small-scale firms. It was very difficult, for example, for a private manufacturer to obtain approval to expand in order to produce a commodity that was in short supply if he already was an important supplier.

Considerable distrust of private industrialists has long existed. Before independence there was a strong tendency for ownership or control of much of the large-scale private industrial economy to be concentrated in relatively few hands. A chief means by which this was accomplished was the institution of managing agencies, which became powerful under the British because the agencies had access to London money markets for the capital needed to develop Indian industries, notably textiles, cement, sugar, and paper products. Through diversified investments and interlocking directorates, the individuals who controlled the managing agencies came to control much of the new factory industry. The narrow control of broad areas of industry facilitated price-fixing and cartel arrangements, which were particularly evident in the jute industry.

After independence the new government set out to regulate the managing agency system. It passed legislation to restrain further concentration, used the development of the stock market to induce the sale of stock in tightly held companies to the public, and applied higher corporate tax rates to such companies. It also attempted to offset the monopoly effects of the managing agencies by fixing prices of a number of basic commodities, including cement, steel, and coal, and assumed considerable control of the distribution of these products. Finally, the government abolished some of the managing agencies in 1969 and the remainder in 1971.

In 1951 the government required licensing of all new and existing industries above a minimum size to prevent large, established industries from monopolizing the markets for consumer goods that were rapidly opening up to domestic producers. Later in the 1950s when foreign exchange became a problem, licensing also served to control imports of foreign equipment to protect the balance of payments. In 1970 the Monopolies and Restrictive

Practices Act supplied the government with additional authority to diminish concentrations of private economic power and to restrict business practices contrary to the public interest. This act was strengthened in 1984, even though the government was relaxing many of the controls on the private sector. By the mid-1980s it appeared that elements within the government still distrusted large-scale private industry, while other groups sought greater private sector participation in industrialization.

The government favored small-scale and cottage industries because of the large number of jobs provided. By the late 1970s employment in small-scale units was estimated at nearly 17 million, about 80 percent of industrial employment. The central government and the states provided a wide variety of support for small-scale and cottage industries, including exemptions from licensing requirements, reservation of production of certain commodities for small units, concessionary credit, technical assistance, other financial aid, industrial buildings, and raw material supplies. The list of products reserved for small units, for example, has continued to be enlarged since the early 1950s.

Industrialization occurred in a protected environment, which led to distortions that after the mid-1960s contributed to the sagging of the industrial growth rate. Tariffs and quantitative controls largely kept foreign competition out of the domestic markets, and most Indian manufacturers looked on exports only as a residual possibility. Industry paid insufficient attention to the quality of products produced, technological development elsewhere, and economies of scale, although government decisions also strongly affected this attitude. Management was weak in many plants, private and public. Shortfalls in reaching plan goals in public enterprises, moreover, denied the rest of the industrial sector key inputs, such as coal and electricity. By the late 1960s much of the industrial sector was inefficient and uncompetitive with foreign suppliers.

By the time of the first oil crisis, in the mid-1970s, the government was reconsidering its strategy and policies toward industrialization because they were not achieving their objectives. This has been a characteristic of the government since it became independent. Evaluations of plan developments have been made in midstream, and study groups have been appointed for particular problems as they emerged. Officials benefited from this, although the evaluations and studies did not often produce sharp changes. The reconsiderations of strategy and policies in the mid-1970s slowly produced liberalization measures that accelerated in the early 1980s.

One change was increased attention in the 1970s and early 1980s to exports of manufactured goods, a change that was forced by pressure from the balance of payments. The promotional system for exports of manufactures was strengthened, such as partial compensation for payment of indirect taxes, duty-free imports of inputs, and concessional interest on export credits. The export licensing system and the range of export commodities required to be channeled through designated agencies was greatly reduced. Exports of manufactured goods rose nearly 19 percent a year between 1970 and 1978, even though this was only 5 percent of total manufacturing output. India exported a variety of machinery and equipment, including complete plants, particularly to Third World countries, and it even exported machine tools to the United States and Western Europe. Indian companies were particularly successful in obtaining contracts for exports of engineering services, equipment, and construction services in Middle Eastern countries. By 1984 export earnings from overseas construction projects had increased threefold in just two years. India also entered tripartite arrangements with large multinational corporations to build various plants and projects in developing countries.

By 1984 liberalizations of control measures had a beneficial effect on industry. The licensing system had become quicker and less restrictive; limited expansion and modernization, for example, were permitted in a number of industries without licensing. Import controls were loosened, enabling industries to import more easily raw materials and the latest equipment to help production. Imports were allowed of items that were also manufactured domestically, subjecting some industries to foreign competition. Price and distribution controls for some products were eased and improved, which was reflected in the profitability of the producers. The cement industry was one illustration, where partial price decontrol and liberalized imports encouraged greater output because of increased profitability, but efficiency also increased as a result of foreign competition. Policy changes essentially eliminated shortages of cement, improved utilization of existing capacity, and encouraged private investment in substantial new capacity, in areas located to provide better regional distribution. Cement capacity increased from 22.6 million tons in FY 1978 to 39.6 million tons in FY 1983. In another example, the government, about three decades after independence, authorized private industry to manufacture communications equipment because that from the public sector was not sufficiently modern or reliable. In 1985 other policy changes were under discussion, including shifting primarily to fiscal and indirect controls.

Rajiv Gandhi, the new prime minister following his mother's assassination and his overwhelming election victory in December 1984, announced major economic changes in early January 1985. He stated that his government would soon introduce measures to loosen further foreign trade controls in order to stimulate exports and lessen protection of domestic industry from foreign competition. Major reforms in the organization and management of public sector enterprises would be attempted to make them more productive, and industrial controls on the private sector would be further relaxed. Corruption and inefficiency in the bureaucracy would also be targeted. Observers remarked on the rapidity and the breadth of the changes that Gandhi proposed; if carried through effectively, economists expected significant improvements in the management and growth of the economy.

Another major policy change in the 1980s was the government's greater interest in attracting foreign firms. In the oil industry it was necessary to secure the financial and technical help that foreign firms could provide. Presumably the same reasons applied in other industries. Foreign ownership of up to 100 percent could be approved in ventures involving essential technology or completely export-oriented businesses. Most foreign ownership was 40 percent or less, however. In the early 1980s, Japanese automobile companies made direct investments in Indian joint ventures, but most foreign firms shied away from equity investments. There was a surge in the early 1980s of collaboration agreements with Indian companies. Most of these arrangements were for the provision of technology rather than financing. This has been a major form of importing technology over the years. By 1984 Britain, the United States, and West Germany were the leading sources of collaboration agreements.

India's efforts to attract foreign technology received a jolt in late 1984. Lethal gas escaped from a storage tank at a Union Carbide plant making insecticides in Bhopal. More than 2,500 people were killed and more than 100,000 treated in the worst industrial accident in the noncommunist world. Union Carbide held 51 percent ownership in its Indian subsidiary; the remaining shares were held by Indians. The Bhopal plant was Indian managed and one of 13 plants owned by Union Carbide's Indian subsidiary producing various chemicals. Many damage claims were expected to be filed in Indian and United States courts. The effect of the accident on popular Indian opinion, the central and state government's attitude toward foreign companies, and the views of foreign firms on the risks of attempting business in India remained to be seen.



Railroad diesels under construction for domestic use and export Courtesy Embassy of India, Washington

Policy changes were long overdue because industrial output had not grown commensurate with investments in it, particularly public sector plants. In the early 1980s public manufacturing companies, which were concentrated in basic heavy industries, accounted for one-third of manufacturing investment but less than 15 percent of the value added compared with medium and large private manufacturing, which had about 40 percent of the investment and 50 percent of the value added. Small-scale and cottage industries had about 27 percent of the investment and 35 percent of the value added. Capacity utilization in manufacturing had a declining trend between 1970 and 1982 and served as an indicator of general problems in the sector. There were wide differences in various industries. One public sector aluminum company, for example, operated between 30 and 40 percent of capacity in the early 1980s largely because of a shortage of electricity. Insufficient power, coal, and rail transport caused underutilization of capacity in many more industries. Shortages of other inputs also contributed to underutilization. Production bottlenecks resulting from inadequate maintenance and underinvestment in modernization and particular problem areas contributed to underutilization of existing plants, including such important industries as fertilizers, steel, engineering, textiles, and jute. Economists largely agreed that industry had to become more efficient and that the existing facilities could be more productive, although some investment would be required for modernization and for removing bottlenecks.

In spite of the problems, by 1985 India had a broad-based and fairly sophisticated industrial sector. It produced most of the

country's needs for manufactured products (see table 16, Appendix). Imports were mainly raw materials and some intermediate goods—chiefly those for which the country had insufficient natural resources, such as copper and some petroleum products. Imported machinery was usually highly sophisticated equipment. Industrial output of engineering goods was of such quality and reliability that the country exported large electric generators, boilers, transport equipment, agricultural machinery, prime movers, and machinery for textile, mining, chemical, and other plants. The country was high in world ranking in such commodities as cement, steel, diesel engines, and machine tools.

About two-thirds of manufacturing output originated in the organized sector, that is, firms with 10 or more employees using power or 20 or more not using power that were required to register under the 1948 Factories Act. The other one-third originated in the small-scale and cottage industries, which accounted for about 80 percent of industrial employment. In FY 1979 (the latest data available in early 1985) there were over 95,000 registered factories employing about 7.7 million employees. Nearly 80 percent of the factories were small, employing fewer than 50 workers and accounting for about 9 percent of the value added and 16 percent of the employment in organized industry. Large-scale plants employing 1,000 or more workers numbered about 1,200 but provided nearly 45 percent of employment and 52 percent of value added.

In FY 1979 the private sector owned 92 percent of the more than 95,000 factories in organized manufacturing, employed 69 percent of the workers, accounted for 26 percent of the fixed capital, and contributed 67 percent of the value added. In comparison, the public sector owned 6,158 factories (7 percent), employed 26 percent of the workers, accounted for 69 percent of fixed investment, and contributed 28 percent of value added. A joint sector, where public and private funds were invested in joint ownership of a factory, accounted for the remainder. Efficiency in the use of capital, measured by the ratio of fixed capital to value added, was substantially higher in privately owned plants, which was attributable in part to the capital-intensive nature of public undertakings and in part to better management.

Banking and Monetary Policy

The basic elements of the financial system were established during British rule. The national currency, the rupee, had long

been used domestically before independence and even circulated abroad, such as in the Persian Gulf area. Foreign banks, mainly British and including some from other parts of the empire, such as Hong Kong, provided banking and other services. The Reserve Bank of India was formed in 1935 as a private bank, but it also carried out some central bank functions. This efficient banking system, however, was geared to foreign trade and short-term loans. Banking was concentrated in the major port cities.

The Reserve Bank was nationalized, effective January 1, 1949, and given broader powers. It was the bank of issue for all rupee notes higher than the one-rupee denomination, the agent of the Ministry of Finance in controlling foreign exchange, and the banker to the central and state governments, commercial banks, state cooperative banks, and some other financial institutions. The Reserve Bank formulated and administered monetary policy to promote both stable prices and higher production. Over the years it was given increasing responsibilities for the development of banking and credit and their coordination with the five-year plans. The Reserve Bank had a number of tools to affect commercial bank credit.

After independence the government sought to adapt the banking system to the needs of the developing country. A number of specialized institutions were formed to provide credit to industry, agriculture, and small businesses. Banking was pushed into rural areas, and agricultural and industrial credit cooperatives were promoted. Deposit insurance and a system of postal savings banks and offices were created to foster use by small savers. Subsidized credit was provided to particular groups or activities considered in need and justifying such help. A credit guarantee corporation was established to cover loans by commercial banks to small traders, transport operators, self-employed persons, and other borrowers not otherwise effectively covered by major institutions. Over the years the system was effectively revamped to extend to all kinds of savers and to provide credit to many different customers.

In 1969 the government nationalized the 14 major private commercial banks. Six more were nationalized in 1980. The reasons given for nationalization were to force the commercial banks increasingly to meet the credit requirements of the weaker sections of the community, to participate more effectively in the financial needs of the development process, and to cease to be subject to monopolization by the vested interests of large industry, trade, and agriculture.

In 1982 the commercial banking system consisted of 201 scheduled banks (capital and reserves of not less than Rs500,000)

and four nonscheduled banks. Public sector scheduled commercial banks numbered 149 and accounted for about 90 percent of commercial banking. Of these, 121 were regional rural banks, first established in 1975, to increase the flow of credit toward specified weaker sections in rural areas; they also undertook some other commercial banking activity. The remaining 28 banks in the public sector were regular commercial banks, 20 of which were those nationalized in 1969 and 1980. The State Bank of India was the largest commercial bank. Formerly the Imperial Bank, founded in 1921, it acted as the central bank until 1935. In 1956 the State Bank of India was set up as a government agency to take over the assets of the Imperial Bank, including seven subsidiaries. The seven subsidiaries were now called the associate banks of the State Bank, which owned at least majority shares in each associate. This group of eight banks in the public sector accounted for about 30 percent of the aggregate banking business in the country. The State Bank had 6,100 branches and deposits of over Rs110 billion in the early 1980s. The State Bank and its seven associate banks comprised the rest of the public commercial banks.

The remaining commercial banks included a number of branches of foreign banks. Grindlay's Bank (British) was the oldest in India and also the largest. Since the late 1970s foreign banks have sought to establish branches in India, seeing a more receptive attitude. Those that sought approval for branches included the Chase Manhattan Bank, the Bank of Kuwait, and the Bank of Bahrain. Government approval appeared to depend on the foreign bank's ability to prove what they could do to benefit India. Eighteen foreign banks had branches in India, and another 13 only had representative offices by 1984.

The government's policies have had a strong effect on the banking system. After nationalization of the major banks, the number of branches increased from about 8,300 in 1969 to 40,800 in 1983. Particularly important was the growth of branches in rural areas, from 1,900 in 1969 to 21,600 in 1983. Rural areas had 53 percent of the branch network. This caused a tremendous expansion of banking services in previously unbanked rural and urban areas. The ratio of assets of financial institutions to GDP increased from 38 percent in 1950, to 73 percent in 1975, and to 103 percent in 1980. There has been an impressive growth of financial activities and financial deepening of the economy.

More significant than the growth of deposits and credit by commercial banks after 1969 was the shift in directions of loans. Before 1969 large and medium industry and wholesale trade accounted for over three-quarters of bank credit. By 1981 this share

was 43 percent. Increasingly, government policy has forced public sector banks, and other commercial banks to a lesser degree, to channel more credit to small farmers, small-scale industry, road and water transport, retail trade, and other small businesses that traditionally had little share in bank credit. Loans to such priority sectors as small borrowers often had very low interest rates. These weaker sections of the community had substantially better access to bank credit than even a decade earlier, but the credit needs of many were still supplied by money-lenders at high interest rates.

In addition to commercial banks, there were a number of specialized banks, usually supplying medium- to long-term loans and equity financing. The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development was set up in 1982 as the banker, overseer, and coordinator of policies for other banks supplying credit to agriculture and small businesses in rural areas. A number of public sector institutions supplied financing to industry in both the public and the private sector. The most important was the Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI), founded in 1964. It coordinated activities of other financial institutions concerned with industry and supplemented their resources to finance industrial growth; it also had the power to enforce a system of priorities for future industrialization. The IDBI was originally a subsidiary of the central bank, but in 1976 it became an autonomous corporation owned by the central government. It obtained funds from various sources, including issuing bonds in foreign currencies in money markets abroad. In 1982 the Export-Import Bank of India was established to provide export credits, particularly for large projects and expensive equipment, and to help finance commercial banks in foreign trade activity. Some 12 stock exchanges operated in the country, although the issuing of shares had only been a minor form of financing industrial investment.

Credit demand exhibited seasonal fluctuations because of the importance of agriculture in the economy. Annual variations in rainfall also caused year-to-year shifts in the country's credit needs. The monsoon rains were often called India's real finance minister. At times of poor rainfall and low harvests, credit demand usually dropped as the general level of economic activity fell. In bad agricultural years prices often rose because of shortages. After the late 1970s the government dampened the rise of prices in drought years by maintaining larger stocks of food and importing more freely. Between 1981 and 1983 total domestic credit expanded nearly 20 percent a year, far faster than the growth of the economy. It held an inflationary potential that the

government tried to stop in FY 1983 by sharply contracting credit.

Finance officials, as well as the rest of the government, were attuned to price movements. Much of India's development since independence was accompanied by relative price stability. In the 1970s price inflation became more of a problem, but India kept the inflation rate substantially below international levels between 1973 and 1978. Domestic inflation, based on the wholesale price index, rose an average of 4.8 percent a year between FY 1974 and FY 1978. In FY 1979, however, the wholesale price index rose nearly 20 percent because of poor rainfall; the domestic inflation rate averaged over 9 percent a year between FY 1979 and FY 1982. In FY 1983 it again rose more than 9 percent, reflecting primarily the drought the previous year. In 1984 the country faced the threat of more inflation unless bank credit to the government slowed, the supply of goods increased, or the population's inflationary expectations changed.

Foreign Trade

Imports and exports played a small but critical role in the economy. In FY 1982, even though total imports amounted to US$14.9 billion and exports to US$9.2 billion, imports amounted to only 10 percent of GDP and exports to 6 percent. Imports were mainly raw materials and intermediate goods, along with some sophisticated machinery that was critical for the economy's growth and modernization. The economy could function with a lower level of imports, but only at the expense of slower growth and greater poverty. Exports were largely a peripheral activity except for a few commodities, such as tea and jute.

The relationship of the government to foreign trade has been pervasive since independence, partly inspired by the goal of self-reliance. This relationship took two general forms. The first consisted of a practically all-inclusive system of foreign exchange and direct controls over imports and exports. The second consisted of active public sector participation in productive enterprises and the establishment of a growing group of government-controlled trading entities, such as the original, many-faceted State Trading Corporation of India (formed in 1956) and subsequent satellite corporations devoted explicitly to such commodities as tea, jute, cotton textiles, ores and minerals, cashews, handicrafts, and railroad equipment.

Before the 1970s government policy primarily emphasized

industrialization to produce substitutes for imported products. By the early 1970s it became apparent that the policies guiding development and foreign trade were restraining economic growth. It was recognized that the economy needed increased flows of imports to stimulate production and modernize agriculture and industry and that exports had to be increased to pay for imports of materials and technology. Between 1950 and 1970 exports grew at an average rate of 2.3 percent a year in real terms, far slower than the country's economic growth or the world growth of exports. Incentives were quickly instituted that promoted the growth of exports during the 1970s, the volume of which increased an average of 7.3 percent a year during the decade. Volume growth of exports slowed greatly, however, to only 1.3 percent a year between 1980 and 1983, partly because of the worldwide recession and domestic shortages and bottlenecks.

Liberalizing controls on imports progressed more slowly but became effective in the early 1980s. Import procedures were simplified, and the licensing system was made less restrictive and included automatic allowances for growth of imports when a recipient needed them. Access to imports, other than petroleum, fertilizers, edible oils, and grains, by license holders was estimated to have increased about 50 percent between FY 1981 and FY 1983. For about one-fifth of imports, licensing no longer imposed an effective restriction. In an effort to increase access to imports, the government lowered the protection afforded the remaining 80 percent of imports. In the early 1980s import duties, including increases in all auxiliary duties, rose considerably, but the protection provided to domestic industry actually declined.

The liberalization of imports did not cause them to increase rapidly. Between 1968 and 1979, the volume of imports rose by an average 3.6 percent a year, but with substantial year-to-year variation. Imports peaked in FY 1980 at US$15.9 billion and fell afterward, reaching US$14.9 billion in FY 1982 (see table 17, Appendix). Preliminary data for FY 1983 indicated about a 2 percent rise in imports. A major factor in the decline of imports in the early 1980s was the fall in petroleum imports. India's net oil bill fell from US$6.7 billion in FY 1980 (over 40 percent of total imports) to US$3.4 billion in FY 1983 (24 percent of total imports) because of growing domestic production and some conservation measures. India exported some of its high-grade, low-sulfur crude oil and imported lower grade crude and products in a mix suitable to domestic requirements and the existing refining capacity. In FY 1983 India's oil exports, part of which went to the United States, amounted to about US$1.5 billion. Refining capacity was being changed so India probably would not be

exporting crude oil after the mid-1980s

Some other import commodity groups besides oil declined in the early 1980s. Imports of fertilizers, edible oils, and nonferrous metals fell significantly. The decline of these bulk imports was sufficient to allow a substantial increase of "other" imports, a category that included a wide assortment of goods, much of which included raw materials and intermediate goods for production. The expansion of "other" imports partially reflected the liberalized importing procedures.

In FY 1982 Middle Eastern oil-exporting countries supplied 27 percent of India's imports. Saudi Arabia was the most important oil source, accounting for 10 percent of imports, followed by Iraq with 6 percent and Iran with 5 percent. In the 1970s Iran and Iraq had been the important oil suppliers, frequently changing places as the leader, until war broke out between them in September 1980, forcing India to turn to other sources. Western Europe supplied 23 percent of imports, Britain and West Germany being the most important. The Soviet Union supplied 11 percent of imports and other East European communist countries supplied an additional 2 percent. The United States supplied 10 percent of imports, and an additional 2 percent came from the rest of North America and from South America. Japan supplied 7 percent of imports, and the rest of Asia and Oceania supplied 13 percent.

By the mid-1980s India had a diversified base for future export growth. The country was no longer limited mostly to tropical products as it had been at independence. The growth of exports during the 1970s was particularly strong in such nontraditional products as engineering goods, clothing, gems and jewelry, chemicals, and handicrafts. In the early 1980s as export growth slowed, the diversified base permitted some commodity groups to grow while others stagnated or declined because of price changes or production difficulties. The overall result, however, was an increase of exports by FY 1982, and a substantial increase appeared likely in FY 1983.

In the early 1980s exports of agricultural products declined, partly because of the drought in 1982 (see table 18, Appendix). A recovery of agricultural exports was expected in FY 1983. After FY 1980 exports of crude materials and manufactured goods also fell, but some commodities, particularly raw tobacco and gems, increased, thereby diminishing the amount of the decline. Gems were mostly imported raw diamonds that were polished and reexported. India specialized in diamonds at the lower end of the quality and size market, which suffered much less than larger and higher quality stones in the world recession markets of the early 1980s. The

main cause for the rise in exports was a wide range of products that were not specified in the statistics available except for crude oil exports, which amounted to US$1.1 billion in FY 1982.

The Soviet Union has been India's largest market for exports in recent years, accounting for 20 percent of total exports in FY 1982. Other East European countries bought an additional 4 percent of exports. These countries for many years purchased such traditional Indian exports as tea, coffee, cashews, tobacco, spices, and leather, but in the 1970s they bought an increasing variety of manufactured goods, including machinery. In fact, by the 1980s these countries accounted for a high proportion of exports of such commodities as leather, pepper, cashews, knitwear, and cosmetics. A reversal of roles occurred to a degree. India had first imported machinery, particularly large complete plants, as aid from the Soviet Union; by the 1980s the Soviet Union was exporting more basic products, such as oil and industrial raw materials, while India was increasingly exporting manufactured products. India's trade with the communist countries was by bilateral clearing accounts that did not require foreign exchange; the accounts were meant to balance through the exchange of goods. In the 1980s, India's exports exceeded imports with the Soviet Union, which in effect was an Indian loan of substantial amounts. In 1983 the Soviet Union canceled orders for some Indian exports to reduce the imbalance, which adversely affected many Indian manufacturers. India also increased imports of oil and fertilizers, in which India was trying to achieve self-sufficiency. By 1985 it was not clear what the future held for Indo-Soviet trade.

Indian exports to other areas were smaller. Western Europe bought 19 percent of exports in FY 1982; Britain accounted for 6 percent of exports, West Germany 4 percent, and other West European countries for smaller proportions. The United States purchased 12 percent of India's exports. Middle Eastern oil exporters bought 11 percent, Saudi Arabia accounting for 3 percent and Kuwait 2 percent. Countries in East Asia and Oceania bought 24 percent of India's exports. Japan's purchases were 10 percent. African nations bought 4 percent of exports.

Balance of Payments

India has frequently encountered balance of payments difficulties. The usual recourse has been to contract imports, thereby reducing production and economic growth, although the amount of foreign aid available was an important factor in how

harsh the restrictions became. Following the first round of oil price increases in 1974, increased foreign aid and some belt-tightening overcame the country's balance of payments problems. In the late 1970s the growth of exports and the increased remittances home from Indians working abroad permitted a buildup of substantial foreign currency reserves. Toward the end of the 1970s the country's external payments situation was more favorable than it had been for many years.

The second large oil price increase, of 1979–80, quickly altered India's terms of trade and balance of payments situation. Between FY 1978 and FY 1980, India's oil bill increased threefold, or by about US$4.6 billion. The deficit on the balance of trade rose from US$1.5 billion in FY 1979 to US$7.7 billion by FY 1980. Officials negotiated a substantial loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which along with the foreign exchange reserves, foreign aid, and export possibilities, made adjustments possible over a period of time. The intent was to keep the economy growing at 5 percent or more to reduce poverty, while making structural adjustments in the economy to compensate for the change in the external environment. By 1985 officials appeared to have chosen wisely and managed well. The country and its population were spared the effects that a sharp contraction of imports would have had on production in industry and agriculture, and their children were spared the burden of a greatly increased foreign debt had the main effort been to borrow the country out of its immediate difficulties.

The deficit on the balance of trade came down slowly from US$7.7 billion in FY 1980, to US$6.2 billion in FY 1982, and an estimated US$5.9 billion in FY 1983, even as imports were liberalized and the terms of trade continued to move against India (see table 19, Appendix). Exports were partially restrained by the worldwide recession. Tourist travel to India declined, partly because of tighter visa requirements. Interest payments on the country's external debt increased from about US$480 million in FY 1980 to nearly US$850 million in FY 1982 and an estimated US$1.1 billion in FY 1983. Remittances from Indians working abroad increased in the late 1970s to peak at nearly US$2.8 billion in FY 1980, but they then started to drop, reaching about US$1.9 billion in FY 1982. The net effect of these various factors caused the country's current account balance to deteriorate, from a negative US$3 billion in FY 1980 to a negative US$3.9 billion by FY 1982. It may have reached more than a negative US$4 billion in FY 1983.

Officials used a mixture of capital inflows to finance the de-

teriorating current account balance. Foreign aid was the major source, although actual drawings of aid were not detailed in the summaries of the balance of payments. Grants of aid, which declined slowly, still totaled nearly US$2.2 billion between FY 1980 and FY 1982. Net loans amounted to about US$4.1 billion over the same period. Many of the loans were foreign aid with concessional terms, but India also turned to international capital markets and suppliers' credits for part of the required financing. Most of the commercial borrowing was at favorable rates because of the country's high credit standing and was related to specific projects in such fields as oil, steel, and aluminum. In January 1984 the government restricted further private borrowings in international capital markets for an indefinite period because government financial institutions had funds, including foreign exchange, to supply private industry.

Net loans from the IMF totaled US$5 billion from FY 1980 through FY 1983. In January 1984 India announced that it would not use the remaining US$1.2 billion under the 1981 IMF Extended Fund Facility because the balance of payments had shown sufficient improvement. In an unusual move to increase the inflow of capital, officials instituted programs to attract funds from Indians and Indian companies abroad. The nonresident time-deposit scheme offered attractive rates and resulted in US$1.3 billion of such deposits over three years. Nonresidents—individuals (usually wealthy Indians) and firms—were also permitted to acquire up to 5 percent of total equity in Indian companies. This program encountered difficulties from resident Indian shareholders because even 5 percent foreign ownership could destabilize existing management; it remained to be seen whether significant amounts of capital could be attracted in this way. Direct foreign investment in India, usually limited to a 40 percent ceiling, was permitted but by 1985 still attracted only a minor inflow.

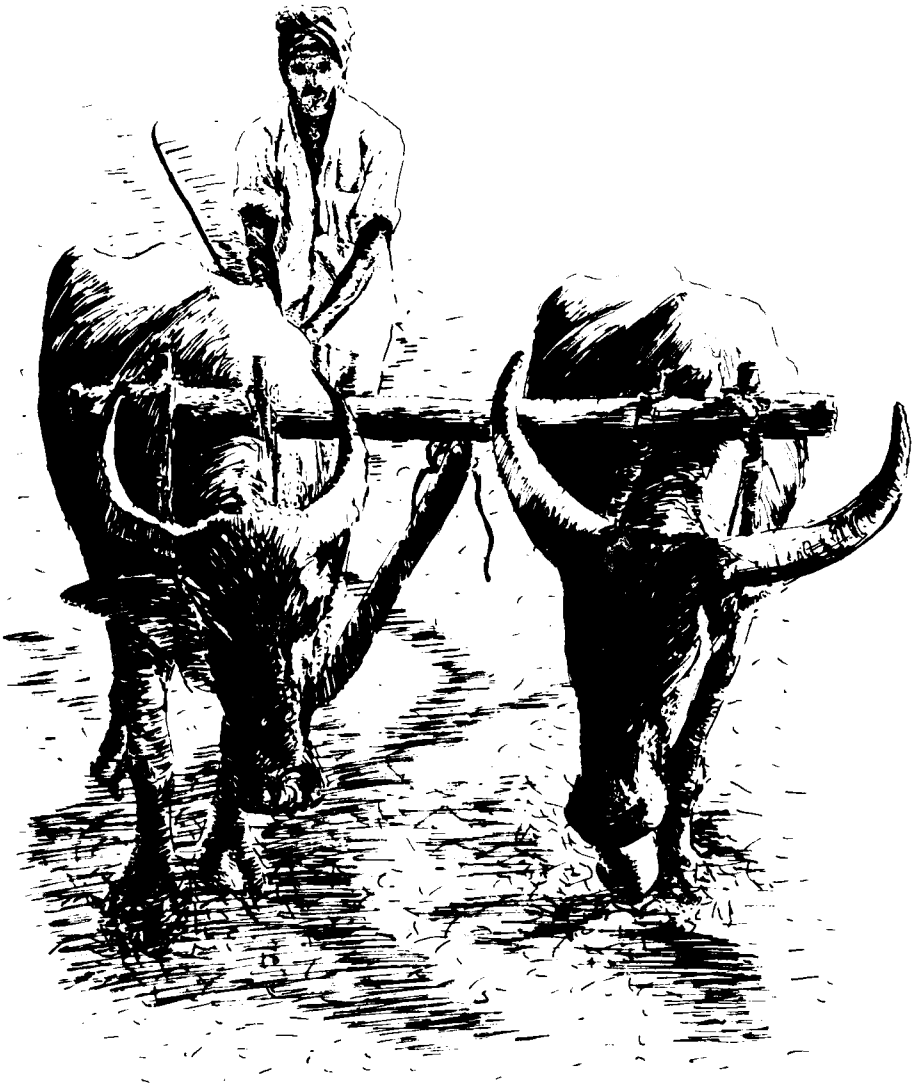
By 1985 Indian officials appeared to have weathered the external adverse developments of the early 1980s without sacrificing investments and economic growth of the domestic economy. By 1984 foreign exchange reserves had climbed back to a level sufficient to finance imports for about four months, which was considered adequate. Increased domestic oil production and foreign aid contributed significantly to preventing a more serious balance of payments crisis. But the country faced increasing debt repayments in the years ahead. For the rest of the 1980s, skillful economic management and a sound policy environment for the large investments in the economy's productive capacity will be required to provide the return needed to service the foreign debt, sustain

adequate imports, and reduce the extensive poverty. Failure could threaten the country's social fabric and democratic institutions.

* * *

Those interested in the formation of the Indian economy and its development through the mid-1960s should read Gunnar Myrdal's epic *Asian Drama: An Inquiry into the Poverty of Nations*. Prem Shankar Jha's *India: A Political Economy of Stagnation* reviews developments from the mid-1960s through most of the 1970s from an economic and political point of view. The annual *Economic Survey*, prepared by the minister of finance for submission with the government's budget, reviews economic developments during the current fiscal year. The annual *Statistical Outline of India* provides considerable statistical information, including the most recent released by the government. The *Financial Times* survey, "India," usually published annually, carries many articles covering up-to-date issues and developments concerning the economy. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Chapter 7. Agriculture



IN THE EARLY 1980s agriculture (including animal husbandry, forestry, and fishing) continued to be the largest and most important sector of the economy. It accounted for more than one-third of the national income and provided employment for over two-thirds of the work force. The agricultural sector produced nearly one-third of the country's exports and provided a large part of the raw materials used by industry.

Census figures disclose that as of March 1, 1981, some 526 million persons, 77 percent of the nation's population, lived in rural areas. Between 1961 and 1981 there was an increase of 166 million rural residents, a gain about equal to the combined populations of France, Italy, and the Federal Republic of Germany. Although in this 20-year span the rural population increased by 46 percent, the net sown area expanded by only 10 percent. As growing numbers struggled to eke out a livelihood from the soil, farming units grew smaller, and the ranks of landless laborers grew greater. But thanks to a breakthrough in crop yields, popularly known as the Green Revolution, agricultural production in 1981 was more than half again as large as in 1961.

India has long desired and, because of its size, needed to produce most of its foodstuffs. Because of a considerable measure of success with many of its farm policies and programs, in the mid-1980s it seemed closer to self-sufficiency than at any time since the early 1940s. As in earlier plans, India's Sixth Five-Year Plan (FY 1980–84) continued the nation's focus on the expansion of food grains production. Large investments in fertilizer plants led to substantial gains in domestic production and increased availabilities of chemical fertilizers. The expansion of irrigation facilities was a key element of the sixth plan, and an additional 2.4 million hectares, much of it planted to food grains, came under irrigation in each of the first three years of the 1980s. Although increased irrigation has helped to lessen the sharp year-to-year ups and downs of farm production resulting from the vagaries of the monsoon rains, it has not eliminated them.

In the 1983–84 crop year, the production of all crops was an estimated 55 percent above the average of the final three years of the 1960s. Benefiting more fully than any other crop from the Green Revolution, wheat production rose by a whopping 235 percent; all cereals rose by about 45 percent. The harvest of fruits and vegetables, coffee, rubber, sugarcane, and tobacco increased by one-half or more. Most other crops registered modest gains. An

[illegible]

exception was pulses: production changed hardly at all. A rise in oilseed production of 45 percent was not sufficient to keep pace with rapidly growing demand, necessitating a sharp rise in the imports of vegetable oils.

Although nutrition was insufficient by internationally accepted standards as measured in calories, in the early 1980s the Indian people as a whole were as fully fed as at any time in the previous half-century. The estimated average daily per capita consumption rose from 1,889 calories in the 1975–77 period to 2,056 in 1979–81. Food grains accounted for 136 of this estimated gain of 167 calories. Consumption of sugar increased, but consumption of pulses, vital to the largely vegetarian diet of the Indian people, decreased. In fact, at 120 calories per capita per day, pulse consumption in 1979–81 was down by 15 percent from 1975–77 and was only half the level of the 1960–62 period. Despite recent impressive gains in the production of several important crops, in the mid-1980s India still faced tremendous challenges on the farm front, especially in light of the continued rapid growth in the nation's already huge population.

Land Use

The geographical expanse of India encompasses approximately 329 million hectares. In 1980 some 148 million hectares, 45 percent of the total, were sown to field crops. (Because 29 million hectares were double-cropped, the gross sown area came to 177 million hectares.) Another 5 percent, about 17 million hectares, was in pasture or tree crops. Approximately 139 million hectares, 42 percent of the nation's land surface, were considered unavailable (built-up areas, etc.) or completely unsuited for agriculture (steep mountainsides, etc.). The remaining 8 percent—12 million hectares classified as cultivable but fallow and 13 million hectares classified as cultivable wasteland—contains all the land left for expanding the sown area, and for various reasons much of it is unsuited for cropping. Expansion in crop production must, therefore, come mainly from increasing yields on lands already in some kind of agricultural use.

Topography, soils, rainfall, and the availability of water for irrigation are major determinants of the crop and livestock enterprises characteristic of the three major geographic regions of India and their agro-ecological subregions. From north to south the regions are the Himalayas, the Indo-Gangetic Plain, and the Peninsula (see Geography, ch. 2).

Himalayas

The Himalayan region of some 520,000 square kilometers, which ranks well behind the other two regions in agricultural importance, is divided into two principal agro-ecological subregions, separated by 1,000 kilometers of Nepalese territory. The larger of the subregions—the Western Himalayas—encompasses the states of Jammu and Kashmir (Kashmir), Himachal Pradesh, and the districts of Kumaon and Garhwal in western Uttar Pradesh (see fig. 1). Although rainfall is generally adequate, as a result of the rugged topography less than 10 percent of the land is used for agriculture. The principal soils used for agriculture are sandy loams on the hillsides and alluvial clays in the subregion's premier agricultural locale, the Vale of Kashmir. The main crops are rice, corn, wheat, barley, millet, and potatoes. Most of India's temperate-zone fruits (apples, apricots, cherries, and peaches) and walnuts are grown here. Sericulture and sheepherding are of some significance.

The Eastern Himalayan subregion, encompassing Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Meghalaya, and the northern tip of West Bengal, is characterized by heavy rainfall—200 to 400 centimeters annually—most of it occurring in the May-to-September period. The soils are moderately rich in organic matter and are acidic. Much of the farming is done on terraced hillsides, but there is a significant amount of shifting cultivation, accompanied by deforestation and soil erosion. Rice, corn, millet, potatoes, and oilseeds are the main crops. But the region is most widely known for its tea gardens in the Darjeeling area of West Bengal.

Indo-Gangetic Plain

To the south of the Himalayas, stretching the breadth of the subcontinent, lies the Indo-Gangetic Plain (see fig. 5). In India the plain encompasses about 840,000 square kilometers, including all or a major portion of eight states—Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, and Assam—and the union territory of Delhi. Again, there are two major agro-ecological subregions.

The vast Sutlej-Ganges-Brahmaputra alluvial plain, extending from Punjab to Assam, is the most intensively farmed zone of the country and one of the most intensively farmed in the world. Rainfall, most of which comes with the summer monsoon, is gen-

erally adequate for *karif* (summer-grown crops). But in some years vast areas are seared by drought. Fortunately, much of the land has access, or potential access, to irrigation water from wells and rivers, ensuring crops even in years of drought and making possible a *rabi* (winter-grown) as well as a *karif* crop. Wheat is the premier crop in the west, rice in the east. Pulses, sorghum, oilseeds, and sugarcane are among other important crops. Mango orchards are common. Other fruits of the subregion include guavas, jackfruit, plums, lemons, oranges, and pomegranates.

Although no longer an area of alluvial deposits, the Thar Desert, or Great Indian Desert, is classed as a subregion of the Indo-Gangetic Plain because of its generally low relief. It encompasses all or the greater part of Rajasthan, Haryana, and Gujarat. Rainfall is scanty and erratic. About two-fifths of the total area is under cultivation, much less in Rajasthan but considerably more in Haryana and Gujarat, where irrigation facilities are widespread. The Rajasthan Canal project, which will bring water from the north, will substantially increase the area under cultivation in Rajasthan. The leading crops of the subregion are millet, sorghum, wheat, and peanuts. Vast expanses of sparse vegetation provide sustenance for sheep and goats. In recent years dairying has become important in locations where sufficient feed is available.

Peninsula India

South of the Indo-Gangetic Plain lie a series of hills extending across India from Gujarat in the west to West Bengal in the east. From the northern rim of these hills to India's southernmost tip, Cape Comorin, lies Peninsula India. Encompassing 1.9 million square kilometers, three-fifths of the nation's territory, it is a region of geographical complexity and agricultural variety. Three agro-ecological regions are identifiable, each characterized by much diversity.

The Eastern Coast and Uplands subregion encompasses Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, and the eastern half of Madhya Pradesh. The coastal plains and deltaic tracts that extend inland for some 100 to 200 kilometers benefit from both the June-September southwest monsoon and the October-November northeast monsoon (see Climate, ch. 2). Where the plains end, the rugged, well-watered Eastern Ghats begin. Still farther inland lies a vast, undulating region of sparse rainfall. As the topography and climate change, so does the pattern of agriculture. The proportion of land under cultivation ranges from about one-half along the coastal

plain and in western Andhra Pradesh to about one-fourth in eastern Madhya Pradesh. Except in areas of the river-valley projects, double-cropping is rare. Rice is the predominant crop in high-rainfall areas, sorghum in low rainfall areas. Other crops of significance in the Eastern Coast and Uplands are pigeon peas, mustard, peanuts, millet, linseed, castor, cotton, and tobacco.

The Central Plateau and Western Highlands subregion encompasses Maharashtra, western and central Madhya Pradesh, and Goa. An unbroken chain of mountains blocks the agricultural heart of the subregion, the Central Plateau, from a quite narrow plain along the Arabian Sea. The elevation of this plateau ranges from 300 to 1,000 meters; the climate is semiarid, characterized by extremes of temperature and variable rainfall. Deep, alluvial black soils that retain moisture for a long time are the basis for much of the region's output of farm products, but there are many farming areas that are covered by thin, light-textured soils that suffer quickly from drought. Whether a crop is made or lost is, therefore, often dependent on the availability of supplementary water from ponds and streams. About 60 percent of the land in Maharashtra is under cultivation, less in Madhya Pradesh. About three-fourths of the cropland of the Central Plateau is planted to food crops (millet, sorghum, rice, wheat, and peanuts); most of the remaining cropland is planted to fodder crops.

The final subregion, the Karnataka Plateau and Western Ghats, is the southern point of Peninsula India, bordered by both the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea. Here is the India—the land of spices—that Vasco da Gama and the other great European navigators came searching for five centuries ago. The area under cultivation varies from about 10 percent in the Western Ghats to 25 percent in the coastal tracts to 55 percent on the Karnataka Plateau. Sorghum, finger millet, pulses, cotton, and oilseeds are the main crops on 90 percent of the cultivated land that is dry-farmed. Rice, sugarcane, and vegetables predominate on the 10 percent that is irrigated. Coconuts, areca, coffee, pepper, rubber, cashew nuts, tapioca, and cardamom are widely grown on plantations in the Nilgiri Hills and on the western slopes of the Western Ghats.

Land Tenure

Matters concerning the ownership, acquisition, distribution, and taxation of land are, by provisions of the Constitution, matters for determination by the several states (see State and

Local Government, ch. 8). Because of the diversity of attitude and approach that would result from such freedom if some general guidelines were not provided, the central government has from time to time, both within and apart from the successive five-year plans, laid down general directives dealing with the main problems affecting the ownership and utilization of land. But it remains for the state governments to implement the guidelines designed under the auspices of the union government. Such implementation has varied widely among the several states.

Landholdings

India is a land of small farms, of peasants cultivating their lands using mainly family labor and, despite the spread of tractors in recent years, a pair of bullocks. In 1980 one-half of all operational holdings were less than one hectare in size. Nineteen percent fell in the one- to two-hectare range, 16 percent in the two- to four-hectare range, and ll percent in the four- to 10-hectare range. Only 4 percent of all operational holdings encompassed 10 or more hectares.

Although farms are typically small throughout the country, the average size holding by state ranges from about one-half a hectare in Kerala and three-quarters of a hectare in Tamil Nadu to three hectares in Maharashtra and five hectares in Rajasthan. Factors influencing this range include soils, topography, and rainfall, the density of the rural population, and the thoroughness of land redistribution programs.

The operators of most agricultural holdings possess vested rights in the land they till, whether it be as full owners, protected tenants, or something in between. Many factors— historical, political, economic, demographic—have had an impact on the development of the land tenure status that prevailed in the mid-1980s. The land tenure picture is complicated, and it varies widely from state to state, but there is much less variation now than formerly.

Structure at Independence

Independent India inherited a structure of landholding that was characterized by heavy concentration of cultivable areas in the hands of a relatively large absentee landowner class, by excessive fragmentation of small landholdings, by an already growing class of landless agricultural workers, and by the lack of any generalized system of documentary evidence of landownership or



Bullocks power a Persian wheel to raise water; Madhya Pradesh
Courtesy Clarence Edward Pike

tenancy. Land was and remains important as a status symbol, and from one generation to another there was and continues to be a tendency for an original family holding to be progressively subdivided. This has resulted in many landholdings below the minimum size that could provide a livelihood for a family. Borrowing against land was almost inevitable, and this frequently resulted in the loss of the land to the local moneylender or large landowner, thereby further widening the gap between large and small landholders. Moreover, inasmuch as the large landowner and moneylender tended to belong to the higher castes and the petty owners and tenants to lower castes, the developing tenure situation had by the 1940s come to have a strong social as well as economic and local status aspect (see Village India, ch. 5).

The land tenure structure at independence reflected the patchwork situation the British Raj had inherited and progressively streamlined for administrative purposes. By the time independence was achieved in 1947, both the outgoing and the incoming rulers were in agreement that for reasons of social justice, as well as economic (and thereby eventually political) development, major changes had to be made in the prevailing land tenure systems. When the new government took power, it was firmly committed to a "land to the tiller" policy.

Preindependence Land Tenure

In modern times, ownership of land in India has not been of the freehold kind familiar in common-law countries. Rather, the state has historically claimed for itself the right to a direct share of the produce of every field. Insistence on the prerogative of the government as a sort of superlandlord formed the key to various British land settlements in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. During the British period a complex system of land tenure and tax collection developed. Several forms can be distinguished according to their effect on the relations between farmers, landowners, and government.

The zamindari system of annual money payments fixed in perpetuity was established in Bengal by the East India Company in 1793 to facilitate revenue collection and create vested interests loyal to the company (see Company Rule and the British Empire, ch. 1). Former Mughal tax collectors were installed as zamindars (intermediate owners or landlords) over the erstwhile small owners or cultivators. As the British consolidated their control of India, zamindars were vested with ownership rights, the previous owners becoming their tenants. The system spread throughout most of the north. Zamindars were required to pay a permanently fixed sum, but no limit was placed on the total amount that the zamindar could collect from his tenants. As the population grew faster than additions to the cultivable cropland or yields, rents rose. Many tenants were forced from the land. By the time the British departed, zamindars typically were collecting from their tenants one-third to one-half of the gross produce.

In central India *malguzars* were responsible for collecting taxes from the farmer and paid to the government 60 percent of the total tax collected. Like the zamindar, the *malguzar* controlled all the barren land, lakes, and forests within his jurisdiction but, unlike the zamindar, he did not necessarily own the cultivated land. He did, however, exercise the right to levy sales taxes on immovable property and to rent the use of forests, lakes, and barren land. A person without any landed property in the village could be a *malguzar* ,and he was free to sell his *malguzari* rights.

In the princely states *jagirs* (gratuities of large estates) were given to certain individuals by the ruler for some service, usually military. The British Raj also granted *jagirs* in reward for services, particularly for loyalty during the Sepoy Mutiny (or Sepoy Rebellion of 1857). The *jagirdars* (ones holding a *jagir*) rendered certain ceremonial services to the government and paid a nominal tax. In

return, they were entitled to keep the rest of the income for themselves, and for all practical purposes they were rulers of the *jagirs*. Their position vis-à-vis their peasants and their rulers was very much like that of the zamindar. Another group of intermediaries were the *imams*, who held their lands either at concessionary rents or rent-free by virtue of being religious orders or national heroes.

The common feature of the intermediary groups was that the actual cultivators and the government had no direct relations, and thus the intermediaries were free to exploit the farmers, who had no means of redress for their grievances. The term *zamindari* came to be synonymous with all kinds of intermediaries, who at independence collected tax on some 40 percent of the area under cultivation. The remaining 60 percent of landholdings were held under *ryotwari* tenure (that is, the cultivator, called a *ryot*, paid his taxes directly to the government). Some of the lands so held were owner worked, and some were held by tenants-at-will or sharecroppers, who paid about one-half of the produce or its value as rent. The *ryotwari* tax ran about 20 to 25 percent of gross receipts, but tenants on *ryotwari* land often paid up to one-half of the harvest for the use of the land.

Land Reforms

Land Reform Legislation

Immediately after independence several states adopted legislation for the abolition of the zamindari system; there were violent protests, and zamindars legally contested the validity of such legislation. To carry out the commitment of the ruling Indian National Congress (see Glossary) to a "land to the tiller" program, in 1951 the central government developed and secured legislative approval of comprehensive land reform legislation that included guidelines for the states, to be adapted by them to their local needs and conditions. The major recommendations were the abolition of intermediaries, the protection of tenants and the implementation of a program to give tenant farmers an opportunity to purchase the land they farmed, the reduction of rents, the fixing of legal ceilings on the size of holdings, and the development of cooperative village management and cooperative farming.

A vast body of legislation was enacted by the states to implement the general guidelines. A major objective of the legislation was to achieve security for the tenant in his right to continue working the land he was, and in many cases long had been, cultivating. Because the establishment of any such security of tenure would reasonably have as its result the loss by the landlord of such

portions of his land as he had not himself been cultivating, the relations between many tenants and landlords became bitter and violent.

A major problem was to find a workable compromise between the elimination of absentee landlordism and the reasonable right of such absentee landlords who wished to do so to "resume" part of their land—that is, to take over the active management or cultivation of some specified portion of their holdings. In an attempt to restrict the resumption of land to those small landowners who genuinely intended to undertake the labor of cultivation, legislation was enacted that required physical labor in the fields by any landowner who wished to resume land from his tenants.

Intermediary Systems Dismantled

The land reforms permitted zamindars to keep the lands recorded as home farms. Because *jagirdars* often did not have home farms, they were empowered in some states to create them by evacuating tenants. Where the laws did not make provisions for the creation of such home farms, the *jagirdars* sometimes did so by taking the law into their own hands, with consequent violence.

Despite innumerable problems, by the early 1970s the intermediaries as such had for practical purposes been eliminated; their rights had been acquired by the states in exchange for compensation in cash and government bonds. More than 20 million former tenants of zamindars had acquired occupancy rights to the land they tilled. Whereas previously the intermediary collected rent from his tenants and passed on a portion of it as land revenue to the state government, the state now collected the rent directly from the tenants who, in effect, had become renters from the state. Most former tenants acquired the right to purchase the land they tilled, and payments to the state were spread out over a period of 10 to 20 years. Relatively few tenants, however, perceived sufficient advantage to outright ownership over protected tenancy to commit themselves to the expenditure. Also, adequate administrative machinery to carry out this objective had not yet been provided by many of the states.

Intermediaries were divested not only of their cultivated land but also of ownership of forests, lakes, and barren lands and of various other economic rights, such as collecting taxes on sales of immovable property within their jurisdictions, collecting money for grazing privileges on uncultivated lands, and using river water. These rights were also taken over by the state governments for compensation. By 1980 over 6 million hectares of waste,



Rural scene near Agra
Courtesy Sheila L. Ross

fallow, and other categories of unused land had been vested in the state governments and, in turn, distributed to landless agricultural workers.

Protection of Tenants

In order to protect tenants from exorbitant rentals (often up to one-half the produce), the states have passed legislation for regulating rents. The maximum rate of rent has been fixed at levels not exceeding one-fourth to one-fifth of the gross produce in all states except in Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, and Punjab. The states also have adopted various other measures for the protection of tenants, including moratoriums on evictions, minimum periods of tenure, and fixity of tenure subject to eviction on prescribed grounds only.

Ceilings on Size of Holdings

Because of the large number of landless farmers and the frequent neglect of land by big landlords, the principle that there should be a ceiling on the size of landholdings, depending on the

crop planted and the quality of the land, was embodied in the First Five-Year Plan (FY 1951–55). An agricultural census was conducted to provide guidance in setting such ceilings. During the Second Five-Year Plan period (FY 1956–60), most states enacted legislation fixing ceilings, but there was little uniformity between states; ceilings ranged from six to 132 hectares. Certain specialized branches of agriculture, such as horticulture, cattle breeding, and dairying, were usually exempted from ceilings.

All the states instituted programs to force landowners to sell their over-the-ceiling holdings to the government at fixed prices; the states, in turn, were to redistribute the land to the landless. But adamant resistance, high costs, sloppy record keeping, and poor administration in general combined to weaken and delay this aspect of land reform.

To ensure more uniformity in incomes, combat evasions of the intent of the laws, and secure more land for distribution to the landless, the central government in the 1970s pushed for greatly reduced ceilings. For a family of five, the union guidelines called for not more than 7.3 hectares of good, irrigated land suitable for double-cropping, not more than 10.9 hectares of land suited for one crop annually, and not more than 21.9 hectares for orchards. Exemptions were continued for cocoa, coffee, tea, and rubber plantations; lands held by official banks and other government units; lands held by industrial companies for nonagricultural purposes; and lands held by agricultural schools and research organizations. At the option of the states, lands held by religious, educational, and charitable trusts could also be exempted.

By the beginning of the 1980s most states had modified their ceiling laws to conform to the central government's guidelines. In Maharashtra, for example, the revised ceiling law that became effective on October 2, 1975, set upper limits in hectares as follows: perennially irrigated land, 7.2; seasonally irrigated land, 10.8; paddy land in an assured rainfall area, 14.6; and other dry land, 21.9. By the early 1980s about 150,000 hectares had been declared surplus under this act, about 100,000 of which had been distributed to 6,500 landless persons. In Bihar the land reform amendment of 1973 set a range of ceilings on holdings from six to 18 hectares, depending on land quality, for a family of five and offered an additional allowance of one-tenth of the ceiling for each additional member, subject to a maximum of one and one-half times the holding. Up to April 1978 the Bihar government had acquired 94,000 hectares of surplus land and had distributed 53,000 hectares to 138,000 landless families.

Consolidation of Fragmented Holdings

Nearly all of the states have enacted legislation aimed at the consolidation of each tiller's landholdings into one contiguous plot. Implementation has been patchy and sporadic, however. By the early 1980s the work had been completed only in Punjab, Haryana, and western Uttar Pradesh. Work had begun in Orissa and Bihar. In most of the other states nothing had been done. The Sixth Five-Year Plan set a goal for the completion of the consolidation of holdings within 10 years.

Cooperative Farming

In the 1950s and 1960s the economic planners envisaged the creation of cooperative farming societies that would rapidly transform the rural economy from one of individual peasant farming to one of cooperative village management. Lands were to be pooled and earnings shared. Voluntary participation was stressed, but relatively lucrative financial help was extended to encourage participation. Over 2,000 pilot cooperative farming societies were created by government and another 2,000 on villagers' initiative, but most foundered quickly. Many of the societies, composed entirely of illiterate peasants, were unable to keep proper records. Cooperative leaders were often ignorant, dishonest, or both. Some societies were created on worthless wasteland given to the landless by the states. Beginning in the late 1960s the Green Revolution diverted the attention of national leaders. The movement came to naught, not necessarily because it was a bad idea but because it was never given a proper chance to succeed.

Land Records and Revenue

Considerable progress has been made in most states on administrative matters concerning agricultural land. By the early 1980s most of the cultivated areas had been surveyed cadastrally and a record of rights prepared. In most states revenue assessments against farmland had been revised upward in keeping with a rise in farm prices. In several states steps were taken to associate village panchayats (see Glossary) with the maintenance of land records, collection of land revenue, and the management of lands belonging to government; the results of these efforts have frequently been unsatisfactory, however.

To protect the states from challenges of their land reform laws in the courts, the Constitution was amended in 1974 to include in its Ninth Schedule the state laws that had been enacted

in conformance with national guidelines. Land reform laws enacted after 1974 were also included.

The Landless

A major concern in rural India continues to be the huge number of landless or near-landless families, many wholly dependent on a few weeks of work at the peak of the planting and harvesting seasons. According to an official sampling survey in the 1971–72 period, the landless and those holding less than four-tenths of a hectare accounted for 45 percent of rural households. The number of landless families has grown steadily since, both in absolute terms and as a proportion of the population. A 1978 estimate placed the number depending primarily on casual farm work for a livelihood at 146 million out of a total rural work force of 218 million. Unless or until some means are found to employ this vastly underused work force in a more rational way, India will remain mired in poverty.

Agricultural Development

Although the private sector has consistently provided some 70 percent of the investments in agriculture, rapidly growing public expenditures have played a large part in stepping up agricultural development. In real terms, annual expenditures on agriculture by government more than doubled between the 1960s and the mid-1980s. Over the same period, however, agriculture's share of the nation's total development expenditures dropped from 22 percent to 19 percent.

Growth on the farm front is a major key to progress toward such national goals as reducing rural poverty, providing an adequate diet for all citizens, supplying agricultural raw materials for the textile and other industries, and expanding exports. In consequence, the central government has become progressively more involved in guiding the nation's agriculture. The central government provides overall leadership, coordination, and a significant part of the financing of agricultural programs. Its contributions to five-year plan agricultural projects grew from around 10 to 15 percent of the total in the mid-1960s to around 25 percent in the mid-1980s. Nevertheless, the primary responsibility for the design and implementation of agricultural programs remains with the states.

Research and Education

Sustained agricultural growth in recent years has stemmed largely from new technologies and techniques imparted to farmers in an effective way. The foundation stone for today's agricultural research, education, and extension systems was laid in 1881, when the British rulers created the Imperial Department of Agriculture. A second stone was laid in 1889 with the addition of a small research unit and a third in 1903 with the establishment of the Indian Agricultural Research Institute in the heart of the Indo-Gangetic Plain at Pusa in Bihar. Soon thereafter colleges of agriculture were established at Pune (Poona), Nagpur, and Coimbatore. Because of a destructive earthquake at Pusa, the research institute was moved to New Delhi in 1936.

Following independence and the establishment of national planning, agricultural research, education, and advisory services multiplied, at both the national and the state levels. One of independent India's significant achievements has been the successful movement toward a common institutional and organizational framework for agricultural research, education, and extension. Operated by the states but guided and partially financed by the union government, the nation's agricultural research-education capability had by 1985 become vast and impressive and included state agricultural universities (see Education, ch. 2).

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) is the national body that coordinates research, education, and instruction in extension to agriculture, animal husbandry, and fisheries. It functions mainly through cooperative projects in which the union and state governments are partners. ICAR, however, directly administers 35 institutes, including the Indian Agricultural Research Institute in New Delhi, that carry out research in fundamental and applied subjects that extend beyond state interests. It also operates directly several national services, including the National Bureau for Plant Genetic Resources, New Delhi, which collects, introduces, and distributes genetic materials; the National Bureau of Soil and Land Use Planning, Nagpur, which surveys and maps farmlands throughout India; and the National Service Centre for Water Technology, which works with state, university, and privately run research centers to develop more efficient ways to use irrigation water. There are ICAR publications for everyone, from senior officials to barely literate peasants. State research institutions concentrate their efforts on problems within the boundaries of their respective states.

The agricultural universities—of which there were 22 in the

mid-1980s—are the core of advanced agricultural education in India. Largely modeled on the land-grant college system in the United States, all universities offer both undergraduate and postgraduate studies in agriculture and related sciences, conduct research, and carry out training programs for farmers and for extension workers who, in turn, train farmers. Additional university-level training in the agricultural sciences is provided by several of the ICAR institutes. The Indian Veterinary Research Institute at Izatnagar, Uttar Pradesh, for example, provides training and awards both master's and doctor's degrees in veterinary medicine. The Central Staff College of Agriculture at Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh, provides training programs and workshops for senior members of the staffs of the agricultural universities of ICAR and of other government agencies concerned with agriculture.

Agricultural Extension

Although under British rule the foundations were laid for systems of agricultural research and higher education in agriculture, the surface was hardly scratched toward developing a system for transmitting modern agricultural technology to the countryside. Following independence the first step toward building an agricultural extension system was to expand the Grow More Food Campaign, which had been created during World War II. Administrators and extension workers were exhorted to convince cultivators of the gains in yields to be obtained from the use of improved seeds, compost, farmyard manure, green manuring, and better cultivation practices. The rural agents, often already inundated with other assignments, had little or no training for the work. Gains in yields were minimal. India's leaders came to realize that to convert millions of peasants to the use of new farm technologies was a colossal task.

To accomplish this task was the prime reason for the inauguration in 1952 of the Community Development Programme. The country was divided into development blocks, each consisting of around 100 villages and a population of 60,000 to 70,000 persons. By 1962 the entire country was covered by over 5,000 such blocks. The key person in the program was the village-level worker, responsible for transmitting to about 10 villages not only farming technology but also such village uplift programs as cooperation, adult literacy, and health and sanitation. Each block was staffed with extension workers, though the villagers themselves were expected to provide the initiative and much of the needed financial and manpower resources, which they were often not in a position, or inclined, to do. Although by the early 1960s progress was apparent, it was equally

apparent that the program was spread too thin to bring about the hoped-for increase in agricultural production.

The Intensive Agricultural District Programme (IADP), launched in five districts in 1960 by the union government in cooperation with the Ford Foundation, was quite a different approach to boosting farm yields. The basic concept underlying the IADP was that the concentration of scarce inputs—technical staff, fertilizers, improved seeds, credit, etc.—in the potentially most productive districts would yield more farm crops than would a wider but thinner spreading of the same resources. Under technical guidance provided by American cooperative specialists, the program placed more than usual emphasis on the importance of organizational structures and administrative arrangements. For the first time, modern technology was systematically introduced to Indian farmers. Within a decade the program covered 15 districts containing 28,000 villages and 1 million inhabitants. The IADP was thus a significant influence in the forthcoming Green Revolution.

The Directorate of Extension of the union government's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development was assigned primary responsibility for providing training and informational support to all categories of extension workers from village to state capital levels. In 1980 preservice training of *gramsevaks* and *gramsevikas* (male and female village-level workers, respectively) was conducted at 108 centers around the country. The number of *gramsevaks* employed at that date totaled 98,000 and that of *gramsevikas,* 12,000. In addition to preservice training, more than 60,000 of these workers had been given an additional one-year course of instruction. In-service training in extension education had been provided for more than 1,500 extension service officers. Technical assistance extended by the World Bank (see Glossary) for more than a decade had by 1984 contributed significantly to the development of more effective and professional extension services in India.

Irrigation

In India irrigation water boosts farm output by permitting agriculture in areas that are naturally too arid to produce crops, by providing water to supplement the monsoon rains for summer-grown crops, and by making possible double-cropping in wide areas that usually have sufficient rain for winter-grown crops. Except for the southeastern part of the country, which receives most of its rain from the northeast monsoon in October and November,

dryland cultivators must place their hopes for a harvest on the southwest monsoon, which reaches India in early June and by mid-July has extended itself to the entire country. At the end of September it recedes rapidly. There are great variations in the average amount of rainfall received by the various regions—from much too much for most crops in the Eastern Himalayas to never enough in Rajasthan. Season-to-season variations in rainfall are also great. The consequence is bumper harvests and full stomachs in some seasons, crop-searing droughts and the horrors of hunger in others. Therefore, the importance of irrigation to India can hardly be overemphasized.

In 1983–84 about two-fifths of the country's net cropped acreage was irrigated. And, although only about one irrigated hectare in four was double-cropped, about three-fifths of the nation's food grains came from irrigated fields—lands almost four times as productive as those entirely dependent on rainfall. Thus there still exists in India a tremendous potential for expanding farm output by increased use of irrigation.

Irrigation has been a high-priority area of economic development since the beginning of the planning era; more than half of all public expenditures on agriculture have been spent on irrigation alone. In consequence, the area under irrigation expanded from 22.6 million hectares in crop year 1950–51 to an estimated 58.5 million hectares in 1982–83; but this was only about half of the estimated potential of 113 million hectares. The overall strategy had been to concentrate public investments in surface systems involving big dams, long canals, and other large-scale works requiring huge outlays of capital over a period of years and in deep-well projects involving large capital outlays. Shallow-well schemes and small surface projects, mainly ponds (called tanks in India), have been supported by government credit but otherwise run by private entrepreneurs.

Of the estimated 58.5 million hectares irrigated in 1982–83, some 32.9 million hectares were irrigated from surface water sources (24.3 million from "major" and "medium" works and 8.6 million from "minor" works) and 25.6 million hectares from wells. The latter involved 2 million tube wells, 7 million dug wells, and hundreds of thousands of ponds—the last an unreliable source likely to be dry when water is most needed. Between 1951 and 1984 nearly 1,000 major and medium irrigation works were started, and about 300 were completed. The most ambitious of these projects, the Rajasthan Canal, which was started in 1958 and was scheduled for completion in 1985, will be the world's longest irrigation canal. Beginning at the Hairke Barrage, a few

kilometers below the confluence of the Sutlej and Beas rivers, it runs south-southwest for 650 kilometers, terminating deep in Rajasthan near Jaisalmer, not far from the border with Pakistan. By mid-1984 some 600,000 hectares of newly irrigated lands had been sold; it was expected that sales eventually would total 1.6 million hectares. A dramatic change was under way in this hot and inhospitable wasteland as desert dwellers switched from raising goats and sheep to raising wheat and as outsiders flocked in to purchase six-hectare plots for the equivalent of US$3,000.

Progress has not been achieved without problems. Large dams and long canals are costly and are also highly visible indicators of progress; the political pressure to launch such projects is therefore frequently irresistible. But because funds and technical expertise are both in short supply, many projects move forward at a snail's pace. The Rajasthan Canal project, for example, was originally scheduled for completion in 1965. And the union government's transfer of huge amounts of water from Punjab to Rajasthan, a grievance frequently cited by Sikh extremists in the Punjab, contributed to the antigovernment stance that in June 1984 compelled the national government to use military force to quell activities by Sikh extremists (see Public Order and Internal Security, ch. 10).

Corruption and inefficient management were significant problems with India's government-owned irrigation facilities. Reports surfaced, too numerous to dismiss, that employees of the various irrigation departments demanded bribes from cultivators, which if not paid resulted in the shutting off of water to the farmer's field, and that lower level employees who refused to participate in such tactics and share the bribe monies with their superiors often lost their jobs or were transferred to a post distant from their homes. Also too numerous to ignore were reports of widespread maldistribution of water supplies as a result of ignorance and/or carelessness on the part of irrigation department engineers and their assistants.

Fertilizers

Estimates for crop year 1983–84 placed India's consumption of chemical fertilizers at a record 7.2 million nutrient tons, up by one-tenth from the level of the previous year. (In terms of nutrients, the 6.4 million tons consumed in 1982–83 consisted of nitrogen, 4.3 million tons; phosphate, 1.4 million tons; and potash, 700,000 tons.) The 1983–84 consumption represented a two-and-a-half-fold increase in 10 years, a thirteenfold increase in

20 years and a seventyfold increase in 30 years. But nationwide the average application of fertilizers was still only about five kilograms per sown hectare.

In the 1950s fertilizer consumption was negligible (66,000 tons in 1951–52, increasing to 305,000 tons in 1959–60), and about one-half had to be imported. There were always numerous high-priority demands for the nation's always-scarce foreign exchange resources, and both fertilizer imports and fertilizer availabilities grew slowly (see Profile of the Economy, ch. 6). But ample applications of fertilizers proved to be a requirement for success with the new high-yield varieties of grains and other field crops that became available in the 1960s. Consequently, to reap the benefits of the new seeds and new technologies, the government from the outset has accorded a much higher priority to making fertilizers available to farmers. More foreign exchange has been made available for imports. Even more important, there has been a manyfold expansion of the domestic fertilizer industry.

India produces both nitrogenous and phosphatic fertilizers but continues to be entirely dependent on imports for potash. In 1980 the installed capacity for nitrogenous fertilizers was 3.9 million nutrient tons, about 5 percent of total world capacity and exceeded only by the Soviet Union, United States, and China. Production of nitrogen-based fertilizers was dominated by ammonia/urea, which accounted for about four-fifths of the installed capacity for nitrogenous fertilizers in 1980. Because of chronic shortages of feedstocks, utilization has consistently fallen well short of capacity, but wider use of natural gas and the introduction of coal as a feedstock have eased the feedstocks situation. In the mid-1980s naphtha and natural gas each accounted for about one-third of the feedstocks used, followed by fuel oil and coal, in that order.

Although by 1980 India had 34 superphosphate plants, 11 small phosphoric acid plants, three triple superphosphate plants, and three nitrophosphate plants, production of phosphatic fertilizers has grown at a slower rate than has the production of nitrogenous fertilizers. Overall plant capacity utilization in 1980 was only about 70 percent. The country is poorly endowed with the raw materials (sulfur and phosphate rock) needed to meet its growing needs for phosphate. Most of the phosphate reserves are in small deposits of low-grade rock in Rajasthan. A growing volume of imports of phosphate as well as potash seemed probable.

The central government had exercised a heavy hand in the development and operation of the fertilizer industry. In 1980 more than half of the industry's capacity was fully owned by the

government and an additional one-fifth by joint (government/private) enterprises. About one-fifth was owned by private companies, the remaining one-twelfth by cooperatives. The government rationed feedstocks in short supply. Based partly on estimated costs, it set prices that could be charged by each plant. The government also dictated the prices that consumers could be charged, for both domestically produced and imported fertilizers.

There were several distinct categories of government subsidies on fertilizers, on imports, on domestically produced single superphosphate, on freight, etc. The total fertilizer subsidy under all categories for fiscal year 1983–84 (FY—see Glossary) was budgeted at the equivalent of US$800 million, up 23 percent from the previous year.

Seeds

The release in 1961 of the first corn hybrids suited to Indian farming conditions was the beginning of rapid change in the production and use of high-yielding seeds in India. Soon after the breakthrough on corn, hybrids of sorghum and pearl millet were developed, followed by the production of high-yielding varieties of wheat and rice. Almost immediately, progressive farmers were clamoring for the new seeds. To develop a production and distribution system to meet the demand, the government formed the National Seeds Corporation (NSC) in 1963.

Under the aegis of the NSC and with support from state agencies and progressive farmers, the area producing certified seeds leapt from 360 hectares in 1963–64 to 35,000 hectares in 1968–69. By contracts with farmers, the NSC in 1980 produced about 75,000 tons of high-quality seed, about half of India's total output. In the mid-1980s the NSC remained the chief coordinator at the national level, but by 1980 most states had set up their own agencies to undertake seed certification under the Indian Seed Act.

Pesticides

Because of their greater vulnerability to plant pests and diseases, the spreading use of the new high-yielding varieties of seeds has made Indian agriculturists aware as never before of the need to combat these menaces. The sale of synthetic pesticides jumped from 8,620 tons in crop year 1960–61 to 65,000 tons in 1982–83. In 1960 only about 6 million hectares received chemical pesticide protection, but by the early 1980s some 100 million hectares were being treated. The rapid rise in the use of plant-protec-

tion chemicals led to the enactment of the Insecticides Act of 1968 to regulate the import, sale, transport, distribution, and use of insecticides.

The Green Revolution

The High Yielding Variety Programme, initiated by the central government in 1966, produced the long-sought breakthrough in farm production. Based on high-yielding varieties of wheat, rice, and other grains that had been developed in Mexico, the Philippines, and elsewhere with assistance from the Rockefeller Foundation, the project produced dramatic results from the start. It was quickly dubbed the Green Revolution; because it fit, the name stuck.

The Green Revolution involved much more than the planting of seeds of high-yielding varieties. It required an assured supply of water and the means to control it, large inputs of fertilizers and pesticides, and adequate farm credit. In the regions of India that can best provide these requirements (Punjab, Haryana, and western Uttar Pradesh), the results have been spectacular. In less favored regions the results have been limited or negligible. The High Yielding Variety Programme has been most successful in connection with wheat.

The Sixth Five-Year Plan targets for the planting of high-yielding varieties of food grains in 1984–85 were 25 million hectares in rice, 19 million in wheat, 5 million in sorghum, and 2 million in corn. Actual achievements in 1982–83 were 18.7 million hectares planted in rice, 18.1 million in wheat, 4.8 million in sorghum, and 1.7 million in corn. For wheat this represented 78 percent of the total sown area; for rice, 50 percent; sorghum, 30 percent; and corn, 30 percent.

The estimated harvest of wheat in 1983–84, which was 44.6 million tons, represented a more than fourfold increase from the 10.4 million tons harvested in 1965–66. Rice production (milled basis), an estimated 59 million tons in 1983–84, was almost double the 30.6 million tons harvested in 1965–66. In 1983–84 the sorghum harvest was 60 percent greater and the corn harvest 40 percent greater than in 1965–66.

Financing and Marketing

Cooperatives and Credit

Throughout the planning era government has favored



Sikh farmer in Punjab
Courtesy Embassy of India, Washington

cooperative societies as a channel for providing credit and as a means of broadening the experience of the villagers in such activities as marketing, community farming, and consumer purchasing. Credit societies were the first to be established and have continued to be the most extensive and important group of cooperatives. Of the roughly 250,000 cooperatives in the country in 1980, about one-half were credit cooperatives of which some 100,000 were primarily agricultural credit cooperatives.

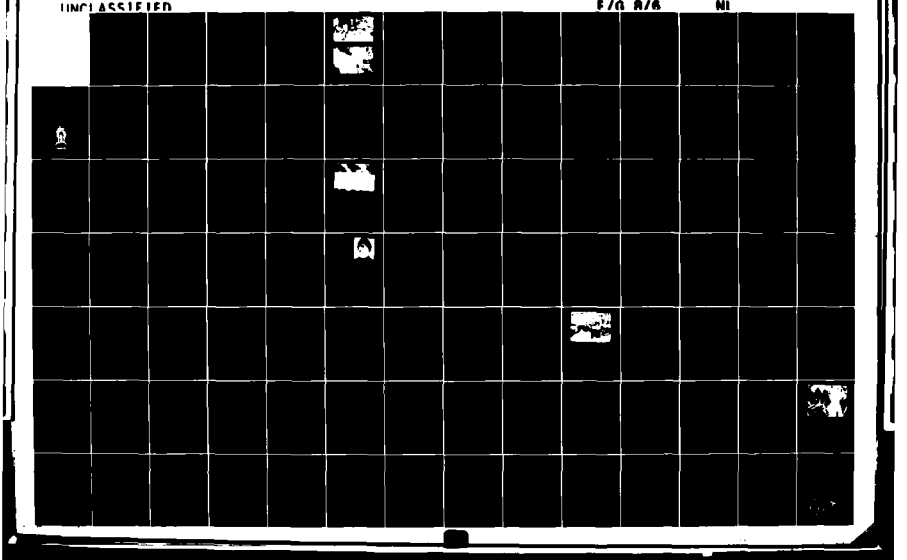
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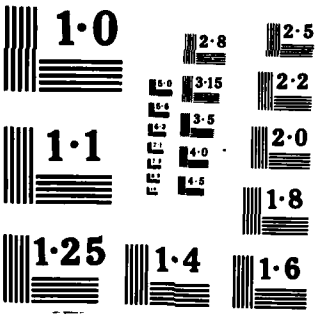
A seemingly immutable fixture of rural India has been the village moneylender, keeping most peasants forever in debt with his readiness to lend and his exorbitant terms. A high percentage of peasant indebtedness has traditionally stemmed from loans obtained not to finance farming operations but to pay for such things as dowries and weddings (see Marriage, ch. 5). It has been government policy to change all of this—to discourage peasants from borrowing for other than productive purposes and to make agricultural credit readily available on reasonable terms.

During the 1960s and 1970s, a period when the Green

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Revolution and other changes under way in rural India were rapidly expanding the credit needs of farmers, the public credit system for agriculture grew rapidly. By 1979–80 it accounted for 30 percent of all farm financing. But rapid growth was accompanied by flaws, such as short-handed or inadequately trained staffs and insufficient coordination with other lenders. In the 1980s overdue accounts hovered around 50 percent. The result has been the virtual stagnation of real credit disbursements throughout the period of the sixth plan.

The credit outlook was by no means all negative. Several states have tackled the overdue problem by such steps as providing larger and better trained credit management staffs, screening loan applicants more diligently, and working more closely with borrowers. Stemming at least in part from increased farm earnings generated by the Green Revolution, currency holdings and funds placed with financial institutions by agricultural households have grown steadily. A particularly heartening development has been the growth in private funds available for investment in agriculture. In 1979–80 private funds, much of it farmers' own savings, financed 70 percent of such investments.

Marketing

Concerted efforts to promote cooperative marketing of agricultural produce began in the late 1950s. The union government took the lead in the establishment of local, district, state, and national cooperative marketing organizations. The major commodities handled were and remain food grains, jute, cotton, sugar, milk, and areca nuts. Established in 1958 as the apex of the state marketing federations, the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India handled much of the domestic and most of the export marketing for its member organizations.

Cooperatives have also come to play a significant role in the processing and storage of agricultural commodities and in the provision of farm supplies. By 1978 some 130 cooperative mills accounted for half of the nation's output of refined sugar. There were 318 cooperative cotton gins, 84 spinning mills, 737 rice mills, and 73 dairy processing plants. Some 20,000 rural warehouses with a storage capacity of 2 million tons were in operation. The Indian Fertilizers Cooperative, claiming a membership of 27,000 cooperative entities, was manufacturing chemical fertilizers and allied products for its members.

Price Policies and Programs

In the mid-1980s the government maintained a many-faceted system of price and marketing controls over agricultural products. The major objectives were to make India self-sufficient in food grains, assure growers of a price for their commodity that will exceed the cost of production, channel inputs into the production of commodities most needed by the economy, ensure the poorest sector of the population of its basic food needs at modest prices, maintain buffer stocks for emergencies, and regulate exports and imports of agricultural commodities in line with the nation's overall economic objectives.

The Food Corporation of India was organized in 1965 to stabilize the prices and supplies of grain. In the mid-1980s it remained the central government's agency—one of its largest— for the domestic procurement, stocking, importation, and distribution of grains. The purchase of domestically grown grains (almost exclusively wheat and rice) at government-fixed prices served both as a partial price-support mechanism and as a means of acquiring the food stocks needed for public distribution. Where feasible, the government used cooperatives as its procurement agencies.

Although the wheat and rice programs overshadowed all others, in 1983–84 the central government also maintained minimum prices to producers for sorghum, millet, corn, barley, pulses, sugarcane, raw jute, cotton, and tobacco. Prices for all commodities were set annually on the basis of the recommendations of the Agricultural Prices Commission, which had functioned since 1965.

In 1984 food grains were distributed at subsidized prices to consumers through 281,000 fair price shops (government licensed and controlled but privately owned), which were mostly in the cities, and to flour millers, who in turn sold to bakers under a quota system. Fair price shops supplies were rationed informally. Certain disincentives, such as location in low-income neighborhoods and long lines, limited participation by the less needy. There have also been efforts to limit price increases in the regular retail market by supplying more grain through the fair price shops and the millers. The government subsidy on food grains distributed through the system in 1982–83 was the equivalent of about US$660 million.

In a typical year about 20 to 25 percent of the wheat harvest and 10 to 15 percent of the rice harvest passed through the government system. Government-owned food grain stocks on hand at the end of 1983 totaled about 15.4 million tons (wheat, 10.7 million; rice, 4.6 million; and other, 500,000), somewhere

close to the average for the previous decade. But stock levels varied widely, climbing steeply in the aftermath of ample monsoon rains, and dropping precipitously following years of drought. In bumper-crop years storage became a major problem, one for which India was receiving World Bank assistance in 1984.

The government also influenced the prices farmers received for a commodity through its import and export policies for that commodity. These were usually determined by what the union government identified as the larger interests of the country. All the usual devices were used: licenses, bans, quotas, tariffs, subsidies, minimum and maximum prices, trade monopolies, foreign exchange controls, and so forth.

Marketing Services

The Directorate of Marketing and Inspection of the union government's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development is the organization responsible for administering federal statutes concerned with the marketing of agricultural produce. Market research is another of its functions. The directorate also works closely with the states in providing those agricultural marketing services that are constitutionally state matters.

Under the Agricultural Produce (Grading and Marketing) Act of 1937, primary commodities—about 40 in the mid-1980s—are compulsorily graded for export and voluntarily graded for internal consumption. Although the regulation of commodity markets was a function of the state governments, the Directorate of Marketing and Inspection provided them with various services. The directorate also provided financial aid, down to the village level, in setting up commodity grading centers in selected regulated markets.

By the 1980s warehouses for storing agricultural produce and farm supplies played an increasing role in government price support and price control programs and in the distribution of farm commodities and farm supplies. And, because the public warehouses issued a receipt to the owners of stored goods on which loans could be raised, warehouses were also of growing importance in agricultural finance. The Central Warehousing Corporation, an entity of the union government, operated warehouses at centers of nationwide importance. Various state governments operated warehouses at major points within their jurisdictions, and cooperatives operated warehouses in smaller towns and larger villages. The growth of the warehousing system has resulted in a decline in both weather damage to produce and the loss to rodents and other pests.



Vegetable vendor in Delhi market
Courtesy Clarence Edward Pike



Crawford Market, Bombay
Courtesy Sheila L. Ross

External Aid

Since the 1950s, external aid—both financial and technical—has made a significant contribution to the progress that has occurred in rural India. Agricultural aid has come from many sources—the United States, Ford Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, World Bank, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, European Economic Community, Soviet Union, Britain, and Japan—to name just a few.

Agricultural aid has come in many forms. Between 1963 and 1972, for example, under a program of the United States Agency for International Development (AID), some 400 American scientists and scholars served on the faculties of India's agricultural universities, while more than 500 faculty members of the Indian institutions received advanced training abroad. Several hundred agricultural research projects, financed with funds generated from sales of American farm commodities under United States Public Law 480 (Food for Peace Program), have fueled technological breakthroughs in Indian agriculture. Norway pledged aid totaling some US$11.2 million a year for three years, 1984 through 1986, a substantial part of which was to be used for the import of fertilizers and fisheries equipment. The listing could go on and on.

But India has not been just a receiver of aid. Increasingly, India has been sharing its agricultural technology with other developing countries. Numerous foreign scientists have received special and advanced training in India; hundreds of foreign students have attended agricultural universities there. India has contributed scientists, services, and funds to the work of the International Rice Research Institute in the Philippines and to numerous other international agricultural endeavors.

Crop Production

India is so vast and so varied in its soils and climates that nearly every crop cultivated anywhere in the world is grown somewhere in India. A relatively small number of crops, however, dominate the nation's farm economy.

Food Grains

Food grains are paramount. (In India, the term food grains includes not only rice and wheat but also millet, corn, sorghum, and other coarse grains [all eaten mainly by humans] and pulses, e.g., dried peas, beans, and lentils.) In 1983–84 a record 131,000

hectares were planted to food grains, about three-fourths of the total acreage sown (see table 20, Appendix). This represented an increase of 35 percent from 1950 to 1951 but was only 5 percent above the level of 1970–71. In 1980–81 food grains accounted for 72 percent of the total food consumed (caloric basis).

Rice, India's preeminent crop, is the staple food of the peoples of the eastern and southern parts of the country. Production of an estimated 59 million tons in 1983–84 from 41.5 million hectares represented a 229-percent gain from 1950–51 and a 40-percent gain from 1970–71 (see table 21, Appendix). The per-hectare yield rose from 668 kilograms in 1950–51 to 1,123 kilograms in 1970–71, to 1,422 kilograms in 1983–84 (see table 22, Appendix). India imports marginal quantities of rice from Southeast Asia and exports some choice quality rice.

Wheat, a winter-grown crop, has demonstrated most dramatically the increased production potential of the Green Revolution. Between 1960–61 and 1980–81 yields almost doubled. Production in 1983–84 of 44.6 million tons was almost seven times the 1950–51 output. Still, to keep its fair price shops stocked, India must import several million tons annually.

Sorghum and millet, the principal coarse grains, are dryland crops most frequently grown as staples in central and western India. Corn and barley are staple foods grown mainly near and in the Himalayan region. The nation's production of pulses, an important source of protein in the largely vegetarian Indian diet, was less in 1983–84 than in 1960–61, a period during which population grew by nearly 70 percent.

Other Food Crops

Peanuts (groundnuts), grown mainly as a rain-fed crop in the semiarid areas of western and southern India, account for about one-half of the nation's production of vegetable oils, an essential in the Indian diet. The second ranking source of vegetable oils is cottonseed, an important by-product of cotton fiber and until rather recently mostly fed to cattle. Rapeseeds and mustard seeds rank third. Soybeans and sunflower are relatively new as significant oilseeds in India. Although the total production of oilseeds in 1983–84 was 125 percent higher than in 1960–61 and, as a result of improved extraction rates, oil production had expanded a bit faster, the production of vegetable oils has not kept pace with demand. Since the mid-1970s imports of vegetable oils have grown larger, to 1 million tons or more a year and at import values of US$600 to US$800 million annually.

In the mid-1980s India remained the world's largest producer of sugarcane, and sugar played an important role in the nation's food economy. It accounted for nearly 10 percent of total calories consumed (roughly half in the form of refined sugar and half as crude sugar) and for about 5 percent of private consumption expenditures. Sugarcane production in the early 1980s was triple the level of the early 1950s.

Industrial and Export Crops

Raw cotton, the basic raw material of India's giant textile industry, is the most important nonfood commodity produced on India's farms (see Industry, ch. 6). For 1983–84 production of cotton fiber was estimated at 1.4 million tons, mill consumption at 1.3 million tons. The harvest of raw jute, second only to cotton as a farm-produced industrial raw material, totaled about 1.1 million tons in 1983–84.

Although at the lowest level in a decade, with exports valued at US$382 million in 1982–83, tea retained its position as India's premier agricultural export. Unmanufactured tobacco followed with shipments valued at US$249 million. Coffee ranked third, vegetable oil cakes fourth, and cashew nuts fifth. Spices continued to be important; exports in 1982–83 totaled US$92 million. Jute manufactures and cotton textile exports fabricated from Indian-grown fibers combined for a total of nearly US$500 million.

Livestock and Poultry

Livestock and poultry occupied an important place in the economy of India. In addition to supplying most of the milk, meat, eggs, hides, and skins consumed in the country, animals, mainly bullocks, remained the major source of power for both farmers and draymen. The nation's mostly nondescript domestic animals were being upgraded, but in relation to numbers India's livestock were among the world's least productive.

In 1984 the country's bovine population, the world's largest, was estimated at 249 million head, about 7 percent more than a decade earlier. About three-fourths of this vast herd was cattle, mainly of the zebu species; the remainder was buffalo. In 1984 there were an estimated 41 million sheep, 2 million fewer than in 1974. The number of goats, however, swelled by one-fifth in a decade to reach an estimated 81 million head in 1984. Horses, camels, and donkeys (animals seldom used on Indian farms) collectively

numbered about 8 million. Since the mid-1960s poultry flocks have expanded rapidly; the 1984 layer population was estimated at 92 million birds, broiler production at 60 million. In contrast with the omnipresent cattle, swine were only occasionally seen.

Cattle were kept primarily for draft and for the production of milk for home consumption. Because of the Hindu belief in the sanctity of the cow, virtually none was slaughtered. In fact, in many states slaughter is illegal. Thus the cattle population of India includes a higher proportion of aged and decrepit animals than elsewhere in the world. Public or charity-maintained *gosadans* (sort of "retirement" homes for stray and wild cattle) are an institution unique to India. Nevertheless, vast numbers of unwanted cattle wander at will.

Production of milk, the most important livestock product, reached an estimated 35 million tons in 1983, compared with 34 million tons in 1982 and 23 million tons in 1973. Buffalo milk accounted for 60 percent of the total; the organized sector of the dairy industry depended wholly on buffalo. The increase in dairy production was attributable to the expanding use of high-yielding milk animals and to the development of huge production-processing-marketing projects for Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi, and Madras and to the formation of some 5,000 village dairy cooperatives. India's own production of dairy products was supplemented by annual imports of approximately one-half million tons, mostly dry skim milk.

The government has taken numerous steps to make the livestock segment of the Indian economy a more productive one. Major emphasis has been placed on increasing the yield of milk by crossbreeding indigenous cattle and buffalo with well-known exotic breeds. Through crossbreeding, Indian scientists have developed poultry strains capable of laying up to 265 eggs in a 12-month period. Much progress has also been made in the field of veterinary medicine. The number of veterinary hospitals and dispensaries increased from 2,600 in 1955 to 14,000 in 1983. A vigorous program of vaccination against rinderpest, the leading scourge of cattle and buffalo, resulted in a drop in the incidence of the disease from 196 cases per 100,000 animals in the mid-1950s to just one per 100,000 in 1980. A chronic shortage of feed, however, placed a serious restraint on boosting and upgrading livestock and poultry production.

Forestry

Some 70 million hectares, almost one-fifth of the total land area, were officially regarded as forestland in the mid-1980s. But

these figures were misleading. Because more than half of this land was barren or brushland, the area under productive forest was actually something less than 35 million hectares, roughly one-tenth of the country's land area.

Most forests are found in high rainfall, high altitude regions, in areas to which access is difficult. About one-fourth of the total forestland is in Madhya Pradesh; other states with significant forests are Orissa, Maharashtra, and Andhra Pradesh (each with about 9 percent of the national total), Arunachal Pradesh (7 percent), and Uttar Pradesh (6 percent). The variety of forest vegetation is large: there are 600 species of hardwoods, sal and teak being the principal economic species.

Despite large-scale tree planting programs, forestry was one area of the economic arena where India has actually slipped backward since independence. The key reason was that annual fellings were four times the growth rate. Widespread pilferings by villagers for firewood and fodder represented a major drain. The forested area was also shrinking as a result of clearing of land for farming, inundations for irrigation and power projects, and the construction of new urban areas, industrial plants, roads, power lines, and schools.

Yet domestic needs were increasing steadily. For the year 2000 roundwood requirements have been projected to be 290 million cubic meters (70 percent fuelwood, 30 percent industrial roundwood), representing an increase of about 35 percent from the usage of the early 1980s. Statistics were scarce, but 1981 estimates placed the annual production of wood in India at approximately 215 million cubic meters. In addition, India in 1981 produced about 3 million tons of bamboo, half of it used by the pulp and paper industry.

Under British suzerainty a high percentage of forested lands were controlled by the hereditary rulers of the princely states and by large landlords; both frequently denuded the forests in order to support lavish life-styles. Most of the remainder consisted of lands set aside as government forests in provinces ruled directly by the British. Title to most forestlands passed to the states at independence or shortly thereafter. For some states forestlands were a significant source of revenue. Although most forests were owned by the states and most forestry programs administered by them, the union government has become interested in forestry programs but has allotted only scanty funds to them.

India's strategy for forestry development reflects three major objectives: to reduce soil erosion and flooding, to supply the growing needs of the domestic wood products industries, and to

supply the needs of the rural population for fuelwood, fodder, small timber, and miscellaneous forest produce. To achieve these objectives the National Commission on Agriculture in 1976 recommended that each state reorganize its forestry department into two separate units. To work toward the accomplishment of the first two objectives, one unit would be responsible for traditional forestry and wildlife activities; to accomplish the third objective the commission recommended the creation of a new kind of unit to develop community forests. Following the leads of Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh, a number of states have since established community forestry agencies.

Social forestry was the term generally applied to the activities enforced by the state community forestry agencies. The emphasis was on such projects as planting woodlots on denuded communal cattle-grazing grounds to make the villages self-sufficient in fuelwood, to supply the timber needed for the construction of village houses, and to provide the wood needed for the repair of farm implements. Also, both individual peasants and tribal communities were encouraged to grow trees for profit. In 1983 in Gujarat, one of the more aggressive states in the social forestry movement, the forestry department distributed 200 million tree seedlings. In Gujarat and in the nation the fast-growing eucalyptus was the main species being planted, followed by pine and poplar.

Fishing

Having an estimated commercial catch totaling 2.3 million tons in 1982, India ranked eighth among the fishing nations of the world. The 1982 catch consisted of 1.4 million tons taken from marine waters and 900,000 tons taken from inland waters. The catch more than doubled between the early 1960s and the mid-1970s but has since remained relatively stable. Although more than 95 percent of the catch was consumed domestically, on a nationwide basis per capita availability of fish and seafood in the early 1980s averaged only 3.1 kilograms a year.

The important marine fishery varieties were mackerel, sardine, Bombay duck, shark, ray, perch, sciaenid, carangid, sole, ribbonfish, white bait, tuna, silver belly, prawn, and cuttlefish. The main freshwater fish were carp and catfish; the main brackish-water fish, hilsa and mullet.

Great potential existed for expanding the nation's fishing industry. India's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), stretching 200 nautical miles into the ocean, encompasses in excess of 2 million

square kilometers. In the mid-1980s only about one-third of that area was being exploited. The potential annual catch from this area has been estimated at 4.5 million tons. In addition to its marine EEZ, India has about 1.4 million hectares of brackish water available for aquaculture, about 1.6 million hectares of freshwater lakes, ponds, and swamps, and about 27,000 kilometers of rivers and streams.

Observers estimate that more than 5 million people were in one way or another dependent on fisheries for their livelihood. In the mid-1980s about half a million were active as fishermen; 50,000 worked on motorized craft, the remainder on traditional vessels. Another half-million were engaged in fish-farming, typically managing a pond of less than one hectare in size that was usually owned by a government agency or village panchayat. An additional 1 million persons considered themselves to be fishermen but were not working as such. Many of these worked as salt-makers, ferrymen, or seamen or operated boats for hire.

In 1984 the fishing fleet operating in Indian waters consisted of about 153,000 nonmechanized traditional boats, 20,000 mechanized boats and medium trawlers, and 65 large trawlers of 21 meters and longer. More than 100 of the medium and large trawlers were foreign owned; these operated in Indian waters under special charter arrangements with the union government. Traditional non-mechanized craft still accounted for almost two-thirds of the total catch. Japanese, Thai, Taiwanese, and other poachers were reportedly active off India's east coast.

In FY 1983 exports of fish and fish products were estimated at 86,000 tons, valued at US$365 million, placing India among the world's leading seafood exporting nations. During the preceding two decades and as a result of the installation of freezing facilities that enabled India to produce products that meet international standards, frozen shrimp, a high-value item, became the dominant seafood export. Other significant export items were frozen frog legs, frozen lobster tails, dried fish, and shark fins. In FY 1982 Japan was the destination for 73 percent by value and 53 percent by volume of total exports.

In an effort to improve returns to fishermen and provide better products for consumers, several states have organized fishermen's marketing cooperatives. Nevertheless, most traditional fishermen still relied on household members or local fish merchants for the disposal of their catches. In some places marketing was done entirely by fisherwomen who carried small quantities by headloads to nearby places. Good wholesale or retail markets were still rare.

Fisheries research and training institutions were supported by both state and central governments. These governmental units deserved much of the credit for the expansion and improvements that have occurred in the Indian fishing industry. The principal fisheries research institutions, all of which operated under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, were the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute at Cochin, Kerala; the Central Inland Fisheries Institute at Barrackpore, West Bengal; and the Central Institute of Fisheries Technology at Willingdon Island and near Cochin. Most fishery training was provided by the Central Institute for Fishery Education in Bombay, with ancillary institutions in Barrackpore; Agra, Uttar Pradesh; and Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh. The Central Fisheries Corporation, Calcutta, has been instrumental in bringing about improvements in fishing methods, ice production, processing, storage, marketing, and the construction and repair of fishing vessels. Operating under a 1972 act of the Indian Parliament, the Marine Products Export Authority, headquartered in Cochin, has made several market surveys abroad and has been instrumental in introducing and enforcing hygienic standards that have gained for Indian fishery export products a reputation for cleanliness and quality.

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The literature on Indian agriculture is voluminous, and much of it is highly detailed. Among reliable overviews of several aspects of contemporary agricultural problems and progress are *Agricultural Research and Education: Recent Progress* and *Agriculture in India*, both of which were prepared and published by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. The Indian government's *India: A Reference Annual, 1983* (and subsequent editions as they become available) is also valuable. Syed Sajid Hussain Zaidi's *Rural India and Malnutrition*, K. Sain's *Land Reform and Agricultural Development*, and B.S. Sidhu's *Land Reform, Welfare, and Economic Growth* are also highly useful and informative. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Chapter 8. Government and Politics



ON OCTOBER 31, 1984, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated in her official compound by two of her personal bodyguards. These men were members of the Sikh religion and had acted out of revenge for Gandhi's ordering of an army assault on the Golden Temple, their religion's holiest sanctuary, five months before. After her death was announced, mobs of Hindus attacked and killed Sikhs and destroyed their property, particularly in the national capital region containing New Delhi, and where officials estimated that more than 2,700 died. The crisis was the most serious in India's history since the period after independence, when communal violence erupted between Hindus and Muslims and Mahatma Gandhi was killed by a Hindu extremist. The Sikh crisis was not the only one facing Rajiv Gandhi, Indira Gandhi's son who was sworn in as prime minister hours after her death. The state of Assam was gripped by a seemingly unresolvable ethnic and political crisis, and there were disturbing new incidents of communal violence between Hindus and Muslims throughout the country.

There were other, less visible signs of malaise that threatened the viability of the political system. Many observers felt that Indira Gandhi's assertive style of leadership had contributed to a continuing conflict in relations between the central government and the states; the Indian National Congress, the party that had led the country to independence and had held power since that time, had become a top-heavy organization that seemed incapable of serving its historical role as a forum for the building of a national consensus. Corruption and abuses of power remained serious problems among both elected and appointed officials. The daily fare of Indian political reporting was a litany of scandalous accusations and counteraccusations. India's numerous and deeply divided opposition parties had not proved, during their brief and tumultuous period in power in 1977–79, that they could be a credible alternative to Congress, and the prospects for a viable two-party system were more remote than ever.

Nevertheless, India remained in the mid-1980s an essentially stable political system. Amid the violence of October and November 1984, the political succession was smooth; Rajiv Gandhi took over the machinery of parliamentary government, maintaining continuity but also making significant changes in personnel. Observers hoped that he would make good on earlier promises to reform and revitalize Congress. Other factors contributing

to stability included the Indian traits of tolerance of ambiguity and diversity—the obverse of the coin of communal animosity—governmental institutions inherited from the British, a free press, a professional and apolitical military, and a tradition of respect for the rule of law despite tensions between the government and the judiciary. Indian society had become deeply politicized. With highly visible exceptions, most conflict was resolved within the legal and constitutional framework. This was evident in December 1984 at the end of a tense and tragic year, when 350 million Indians went to the polls in generally peaceful elections for the Lok Sabha, the lower house of Parliament. Yet the question remained in the mid-1980s whether the political system could withstand the strains imposed on it as a new era began with the prime ministership of Rajiv Gandhi.

India's Political Legacies

India has ancient and diverse political legacies. The archaeological evidence of urban culture excavated at Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro suggests that organized states existed in the northwestern region of the subcontinent as early as the third millennium B.C. The hand of government is seen in the ancient cities' heavily fortified citadels, streets laid out in a grid, and the standardization of weights and measures. The Aryan-speaking peoples who migrated into India beginning around 1500 B.C. imposed the fourfold division of society into varnas, or castes, that probably reflected their subjugation of indigenous peoples (see The Antecedents, ch. 1; Theory of Caste, ch. 5). The religious literature of the Vedic period (1500–500 B.C.) stresses the individual's duty of conforming to caste-defined roles, and the political order was justified in terms of supporting this hierarchy (see Hinduism, ch. 3).

Much of India's classical political thought was strikingly modern in its ruthlessly pragmatic approach to questions of policy. Plato, Aristotle, and the Chinese philosopher Mencius alike sought a definition of the ideal state and its moral foundations. Indian writers, such as the compilers of the *Kautilya Arthashastra* (attributed to Kautilya, chief minister of the fourth century B.C. empire builder, Chandragupta Maurya) regarded the *arthashastra* (science of polity) as the means of obtaining and preserving *artha*, material wealth. Like the western political thinkers Niccolò Machiavelli and Thomas Hobbes, they strove to separate the sphere of politics from those of religion and morality.

In their unsentimental view, similar to Hobbe's discussion in the *Leviathan*, the supreme duty of man is self-preservation. The state exists to rescue him from the intolerable perils of anarchy that threaten life and property, and any method is justifiable to assure the state's preservation. In the words of one scholar, some of the *arthashastra* theorists' recommendations "would have made Machiavelli blush."

A fear of anarchy buttressed authoritarian rule. Nevertheless, the rationalistic spirit of political thought was expressed in an old Buddhist text that discusses the origin of kingship. It recounts that human beings, having lost their original innocence and ability to govern themselves, came together and elected a sovereign known as the "Great Chosen One." This idea that the state is a human artifice and not a divine creation anticipates in a very general way the social contract theories that were expounded in Europe during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, though its influence on later political institutions was negligible.

The more ambitious rulers of ancient and medieval India sought to unify the subcontinent under a single state. Most successful in this regard was the emperor Asoka (273–232 B.C.), whose realm included most of the territory of what is now India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, with the exception of the southern region where Dravidian rulers maintained their independence. Asoka took strong exception to the pragmatism and amoralism of the *arthashastra* school of political thought. As a Buddhist, he repudiated caste. Guilt-stricken by the suffering resulting from his early career of imperial expansion, he promoted Buddhist ideals of dharma (righteousness) and ahimsa (nonviolence) as the basis of policy. For modern Indians, Asoka's reign has symbolized their hope of building a unified but peaceful state. The four lions surmounting a pillar that Asoka had put up at Sarnath, near Benares (Varanasi) in the present-day Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, was appropriately adopted as the seal of the modern Republic of India (see fig. 1).

Another ruler who anticipated the ideals of the modern Indian state was Akbar (1556–1605), the great Muslim Mughal emperor, who sought to promote a spirit of toleration among his Hindu and Muslim subjects. He appointed Hindus to high office, married a Hindu Rajput princess, and abolished a special tax that Hindus as unbelievers had to pay to the Islamic state. Setting himself up as the ultimate arbiter of religious questions, this enlightened despot established his own creed, known as "Divine Monotheism," a universalistic synthesis of Islamic mysticism and Hinduism. Akbar hoped that this would serve as the religious

basis for unifying his vast empire. But this attempt at synthesis did not endure. Akbar's successors in the seventeenth century were less adventurous theologically. Their reigns witnessed the official persecution of the Sikhs, whose gurus (see Glossary), like Akbar, had sought a common ground between Islam and Hinduism, and the rise of a militant Hindu movement in central India led by the Maratha hero Sivaji (see The Mughal Era, ch. 1).

The adventurers and merchants who came to India as representatives of the East India Company between the seventeenth and the nineteenth centuries were motivated by profit, not by a desire to change India. The company needed a stable regime to extract wealth from the country, however—something the Mughal rulers were decreasingly able to provide. Through the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth century the company assumed greater legal and administrative powers and recruited Indians for the lower levels of its administrative bureaucracy. This process was accelerated under direct British rule after 1858. A small elite, from which new generations of Indian lawyers, physicians, civil servants, and entrepreneurs emerged, attended Western-style schools where the medium of instruction was English.

The British decision in the 1830s to promote English- rather than Indian-language education had vital political implications. Those able to afford an English education were brought into contact with European social and political ideas. This was the era of theorist Jeremy Bentham and the Utilitarians (with their maxim, "the greatest good for the greatest number"), the libertarian John Stuart Mill, the early socialists, and movements for national independence throughout Europe.

During the closing decades of British colonial rule, educated Indians demanded and obtained increasing measures of self-government (culminating in the Government of India Act of 1935) and admission to the military officer corps and to the Indian Civil Service (ICS), hitherto the almost exclusive preserve of the British. Not all members of the elite were committed to liberal parliamentarianism. Hindu revivalists condemned imported European culture and styles of life as shallow and materialistic. In the twentieth century, revolutionary communism has had great appeal for young intellectuals, especially in volatile Calcutta. Subhas Chandra Bose, a preindependence figure whose popularity in his native West Bengal continues to rival that of Mahatma Gandhi, was strongly attracted to fascism. But the luminaries of the Indian National Congress (see Glossary), the country's principal political movement, were intellectually citizens of the liberal West. They were visibly distant from many of their own cultural

and political traditions, and they rejected authoritarian fascist and Leninist doctrines that might have seemed more appropriate to govern and unify a country as divided as theirs. They mapped the future of democratic India in terms of a secular state, parliamentary supremacy, strong guarantees of personal liberties (though the 1950 Constitution gives the central, or union, government extraordinary powers in time of emergency), and an independent judiciary.

Mahatma Gandhi is commonly credited with having successfully utilized traditional symbols to mobilize India's masses in support of modern goals of independence and social reform. He was a bridge between the educated elites of Congress and the peasant or worker nonelites, but he was also the product of a British legal education that included two decades' experience living overseas, a student of Western Christian, pacifist, and anarchist as well as Hindu ideas, and a shrewd politician. His satyagraha (literally, soul force) movement of nonviolent civil disobedience assumed a moral community between newly articulate Indians and the more enlightened of the British; the suffering of the resister, he thought, would shame the oppressor, forcing him to see the error of his policies.

The Indian political system is in a sense like an ancient archaeological site, having many layers corresponding to different traditions and historical eras. The old supports the new, although it is the newest that is often the most apparent. India's political legacies over the centuries—Hindu concepts of disinterested duty (a central element in Gandhi's popular appeal) and pragmatic pursuit of wealth and power, the seldom-realized ideal of a universal monarch such as Asoka and Akbar, the violent confrontations of Hindus and Muslims and missed opportunities for reconciliation, and the partly coerced, partly spontaneous adoption of Western ideas and institutions during the colonial centuries—have contributed in differing degrees to contemporary political phenomena. In any single development, or in the career of any politically involved individual, several "layers" come into play with different meanings for different audiences.

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, Oxford-educated and well-versed in parliamentary politics at the side of her father, Jawaharlal Nehru, was also remarkably skilled in reaching down to the older layers of India's political legacy. She cultivated the image of herself as the "Mother of India" to gain support from the common people, a strategy that worked remarkably well in the 1978–80 period when her political fortunes were at a low ebb. Given the thin line in popular Hindu thought between humans and the

gods, she was to many voters the incarnation of Durga, consort of the god Siva (or Durga's more fearsome manifestation, the destroyer Kali). Her son Rajiv, designated prime minister in the hours after her death, was obliged to depend on the drawing power of his family name to remain in power, though the idea of a "Nehru dynasty" was abhorrent to urban intellectuals. Yet Indira's violent death was in part the result of her tragic underestimation of the power of religious and communal outrage, i.e., her decision to send troops into the Sikh Golden Temple in Amritsar in June 1984 and her refusal to dismiss the Sikh contingent of her bodyguard, two of whom assassinated her on October 31, 1984.

Political scientist W. H. Morris-Jones argues in *The Government and Politics of India* that with the departure of the British in 1947 and the promulgation of a constitutional guarantee of universal suffrage in 1950, "polity and society come to meet." Prime Minister Nehru and his Congress colleagues, Western in political style and commitment, had to compromise with the traditional worldviews of their constituents and modify their cosmopolitanism to take account of sectional points of view. This they did reluctantly. The process of accommodation and the blending of India's many disparate political legacies continued under Nehru's daughter, however. Gathering power increasingly into her own hands, she showed a willingness to undermine or bypass constitutionally defined institutions in order to maintain maximum control over the political system.

The Constitution and the Evolution of Governmental Institutions

India's Western legacy is embodied in its Constitution, adopted by an interim Constituent Assembly on November 26, 1949, and put into effect on January 26, 1950 (see The Constitution, ch. 1). The Constitution is one of the world's longest and most detailed, containing 395 separate articles and nine appendixes, known as schedules. By 1984 it had been amended 46 times. Approximately 250 of its articles were taken, with slight changes, from the Government of India Act of 1935 (see The 1935 Constitution, ch. 1). The document provides for a democratic, federal republic with a parliamentary form of government. The drafters drew on the experience of foreign democracies that seemed relevant to conditions in India. To the British form of parliamentary government they added a preamble, an enumeration of the fundamental rights of the citizen, and a supreme court simi-

lar to that of the United States; a system of federalism in which residual powers of legislation remained in the central body, as in Canada; a detailed specification of the division of powers between the central government and the states, as in Australia; and a set of directive principles of national policy, as in Ireland.

The foreignness of the document was apparent to all. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, head of the committee that compiled the final draft, hoped that it would be instrumental in cultivating popular "constitutional morality." He believed that democratic consciousness would develop as leaders and voters gained experience in the day-to-day operation of parliamentary institutions. The Constitution's "un-Indianness" has been criticized in many quarters, however. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi sought, through amendments, to remove the blocks placed in the way of strong, centralized rule, principally the Forty-second Amendment, which was ratified during the 1975–77 period of Emergency rule. Before her death, scholars and Congress (I) figures talked of amending the Constitution in order to create a strong presidential rather than a parliamentary system. It was suggested that she would serve as a popularly elected chief executive with broad-based powers, like the president of the French Fifth Republic. As of early 1985 no concrete proposals had been advanced in this direction, however.

The ordinary process of constitutional amendment requires the assenting vote of a majority of the total membership of each of the two houses of Parliament and a majority of not less than two-thirds of the members of each house present and voting. In addition, the assent of the president of India is also required. In the case of provisions affecting the federal scheme of the Constitution, the election of the president, the organization of the judiciary system, or the amendment process itself, an amendment must, in addition, be ratified by the legislatures of not less than one-half the states. The Twenty-fourth Amendment Act of 1971 and the Twenty-fifth Amendment Act of 1972 reaffirmed Parliament's right to amend any part of the Constitution, including provisions defining Fundamental Rights. The Forty-second Amendment Act of 1976 was essentially a basic reshaping of the Constitution, giving greater power to the union government and undercutting the Supreme Court of India's powers of judicial review (see The Judiciary, this ch.).

Individual Rights

The Constitution prohibits discrimination and guarantees to

all citizens basic rights to equality before the law (Article 17 abolishes untouchability); freedom of religion, culture, speech, and assembly; equal opportunity for public employment; and protection against illegal seizure of property and against arbitrary arrest and detention. The judiciary is the custodian of the Fundamental Rights; the Supreme Court has constitutional authority to enforce them, and Parliament may empower lower courts to do the same. Except where there is specific reference to citizens only, Fundamental Rights are available to citizens and noncitizens alike.

The conception and even the language of the Fundamental Rights provisions are similar to the guarantees of freedom in the Constitution of the United States, but the Indian Constitution enumerates them in considerably greater detail. The elaboration was considered necessary because democratic consciousness was not ingrained in the political system and because Indian society was composed of a complex of religious, social, linguistic, and regional groups. Fundamental Rights are restricted in an area where martial law may be in effect. When an emergency has been declared by the president, all Fundamental Rights may be suspended. In addition, the government has the constitutional right of preventive detention, even in peacetime.

Immediately following the statement of Fundamental Rights is a section of the Constitution entitled "Directive Principles of State Policy." These are intended to guide the conduct of legislators and executives in governing the country, but they are not directly enforceable by law. They are, rather, the goal toward which India's total efforts are to be directed in order to achieve the social order envisioned in the Constitution's preamble—political, social, and economic justice and liberty, equality, and fraternity. These principles direct that all legislative and executive actions shall be such as to promote the welfare of the people by aiming to secure them such rights as an adequate means of livelihood and freedom from economic exploitation. The Directive Principles also urge the organization and strengthening of panchayats (village councils); the improvement of living standards, health, social security benefits, working conditions, and education; the protection and betterment of the backward classes; the development of a nationwide uniform civil code; the separation of the judiciary from the executive; and the promotion of international peace and security.

The Forty-second Amendment to the Constitution, brought into force in January 1977, entailed a substantial change in the status of Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles. A provision stated that no law implementing any of the Directive Princi-

ples could be declared unconstitutional on the grounds that it violated any of the Fundamental Rights. Moreover, laws preventing or prohibiting "anti-national activities" or the formation of "anti-national associations" could not be invalidated because they infringed on the freedom of speech, assembly, association, or any of the other Fundamental Rights. A new section, devoted to "Fundamental Duties," was included in the Constitution. Its clauses were vague and general (one enjoined citizens "to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood among all the people of India, transcending religious, linguistic, and regional or sectional diversities"), but they reflected a new emphasis in governing circles on order and discipline to counteract what some leaders perceived as the excessively freewheeling style of Indian democracy.

The Forty-third and Forty-fourth Amendments, passed after the March 1977 general election put the opposition Janata Party in power, revoked the earlier amendment's provisions that the Directive Principles take precedence over the Fundamental Rights and placed curbs on Parliament's power to legislate against "anti-national activities." Criteria for the imposition of an emergency were made more stringent. The right to property was taken from the list of Fundamental Rights, however, and made simply a legal right.

Group Rights

Although the framers of the Constitution adopted the liberal Western orientation that stressed the rights of individuals as citizens, they judged that individual liberty and equality could not be promoted unless special attention was paid to the rights of disadvantaged groups. Part XVI of the Constitution elaborates in detail "Special Provisions Relating to Certain Classes." These include the reservation of seats in the Lok Sabha (House of the People) and in state legislative bodies for members of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Scheduled Castes being equivalent to the untouchables, or harijans) (see Tribes, ch. 4; Caste in Operation, ch. 5). The number of seats to be set aside for them is proportional to their share of the national and respective state populations. Other provisions include the reserving of some government appointments for these disadvantaged groups insofar as this does not interfere with administrative efficiency. The Constitution stipulates that a special officer for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes be appointed by the president to "investigate all matters relating to the safeguards provided" for them, as well as periodic commissions to investigate the conditions of the

"Backward Classes" (roughly equivalent to Sudra castes). The president, in consultation with the governor of a state, has the responsibility of designating those groups that meet the criteria of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Similar provisions exist for the small Anglo-Indian community (see Descendants of Foreign Groups, ch. 4).

The framers provided that the special provisions would cease after the passing of 20 years from the promulgation of the Constitution, anticipating that the progress of the disadvantaged groups during that time would have removed significant disparities between them and other groups in society. However, the Twenty-third Amendment, passed in 1969, extended them for an additional 10 years from 1970 to 1980, and the Forty-fifth Amendment of 1980 extended them until 1990.

Press Freedom

Freedom of speech and expression are defined as Fundamental Rights in the Constitution (Article 19A), and this is generally interpreted to include freedom of the press. However, limitations on these freedoms are specified "in the interests of the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the State, friendly relations with foreign States, public order, decency or morality, or in relation to contempt of court, defamation, or incitement to an offense" (Article 192). With the exception of the 1975–77 Emergency period, the press in India has in general exercised a great degree of independence. In the mid-1980s there was no prepublication censorship, though issues of newspapers or magazines, domestic or foreign, could be confiscated if they contained what the government considered offensive material.

When the Emergency was proclaimed on June 25, 1975, rigid press censorship was imposed. A law protecting newspapers from court action for publishing parliamentary proceedings was repealed, and the Prevention of Publication of Objectionable Matter Act of 1976 was passed. The country's four domestic news agencies were merged into a single organization, Samachar. Some newspapers, such as the English-language *Statesman*, *Indian Express*, and *Tribune*, attempted to maintain a measure of independence and were the target of government punitive measures. When the Janata Party government came to power in 1977, Emergency measures concerning the press were repealed.

The publication of material with the intent of stirring up ethnic or communal animosity is an offense under the law. When Indian Army units entered Punjab (see Glossary) to quell militant

Sikhs in June 1984, a news blackout was imposed on the state, and foreign journalists were prohibited from entering. Under these provisions an Indian journalist working for the Associated Press was charged in October 1984 with publishing details of Operation Blue Star, the army takeover of the Sikhs' Golden Temple.

Observers noted in the mid-1980s that the government exercised a large measure of indirect control over newspapers because of regulations that control their access to newsprint, allocated by a public corporation; the importance of government advertising (constituting as much as 50 percent of all advertising in newspapers); an accreditation procedure of correspondents; credit arrangements with nationalized banks; and state control of the importation of printing presses and other machinery. To maintain good relations with the government, most newspapers practiced careful self-censorship.

Television (Doordarshan) and radio (All India Radio) were state owned and managed. They customarily presented the government's point of view. However, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) was allowed to transmit radio programs, and its account of domestic developments was often different from that of All India Radio.

Emergency Provisions

The Constitution provides for three different categories of emergency, proclaimed in each case by the president: war or an external or internal threat to security; a threat to the financial security of the nation or a part of it; or the "failure of constitutional machinery" in a state. In varying degrees federal principles cease to operate under such emergency conditions, and Fundamental Rights may be suspended under the first two categories. A proclamation of emergency ceases automatically after two months unless approved by resolution of both houses of Parliament.

In the case of the failure of the constitutional machinery of a state, that is, its inability to maintain order and stability, the president may assume any of the executive functions of that state or transfer these to the state governor. The proclamation may declare that the legislative powers of the state shall be exercisable by the union Parliament, and Parliament can, in turn, delegate these legislative powers to the president. Such a proclamation, however, does not affect the powers exercised by the state's high court. If approved by Parliament, an emergency can be extended for successive six-month periods up to a maximum of three years. During such an emergency the state is said to be under "Presi-

dent's Rule."

Prime ministers Nehru and Lal Bahadur Shastri were reluctant to utilize President's Rule; it was imposed only eight times between 1950 and 1966; Indira Gandhi's first tenure as prime minister (1966–77) witnessed its imposition 39 times. Critics accused her government of using this emergency provision not to preserve law and order in times of genuine crisis but as an effective means of unseating uncooperative opposition state governments.

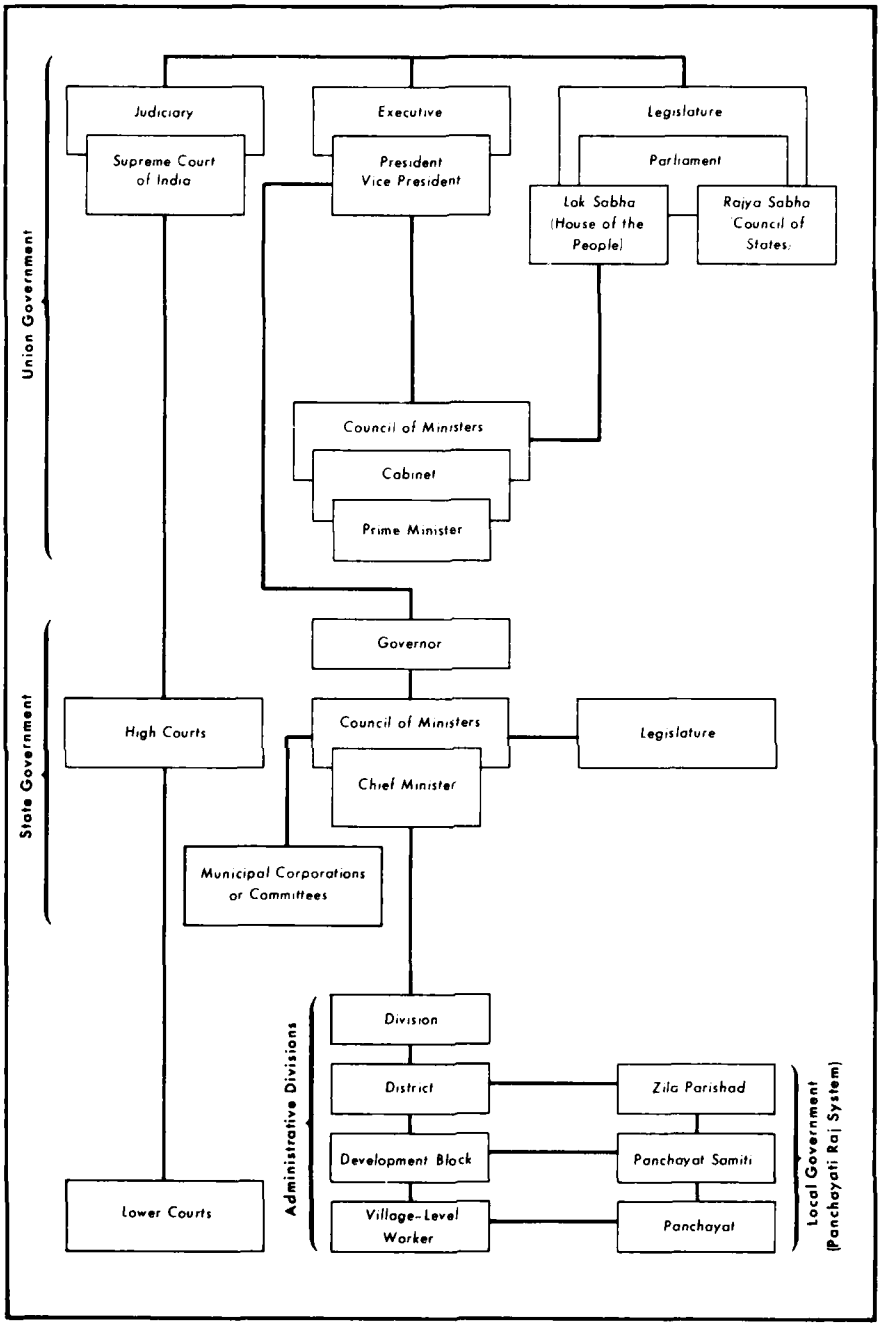
As of early 1985 the president had declared national states of emergency three times: in 1962 during the war with China; in 1971 when India was at war with Pakistan over East Pakistan (later Bangladesh); and on June 25, 1975, as a response to an allegedly rising tide of lawlessness and threats to internal security. The Forty-second Amendment significantly strengthened the president's emergency powers. The president could proclaim an emergency in all or any part of the country (previously the president could not unilaterally impose it except through the medium of President's Rule within given states), and President's Rule would remain in force for a year after approval of Parliament (instead of the previously designated six months). The Forty-fourth Amendment repealed these and other emergency provisions. It stipulated that an emergency could not be proclaimed in the case of internal disturbance unless it amounted to armed rebellion and that its proclamation had to be approved by a two-thirds majority of Parliament within a month and could be extended after six months only with a second two-thirds majority. It also provided that President's Rule could not be maintained in a state for a period of more than one year unless the Union Election Commission certified that elections could not be held. The amendment also substantially limited the government's powers of preventive detention.

The Union Government

The union government is divided into three distinct, but not entirely separate, branches: the executive, legislative, and judicial. The executive leadership is drawn from and is responsible to the legislative body. The Constitution provides for a judiciary that is free from executive or legislative interference in its deliberations (see fig. 16).

The Executive

The executive branch is formally headed by the president,



Source: Based on information from Richard L. Park, *India's Political System*, Englewood Cliffs, 1967, 80, 87

Figure 16. Governmental System, 1985.

who is aided and advised by the Council of Ministers. Although the president is head of state and supreme commander of the armed forces and, technically, is vested with a great range of powers, the prime minister has been the de facto head of the union executive. Dr. Ambedkar compared the presidency to the British monarch, representing but not ruling the nation. The presidential office is one of great ceremony and prestige, and the drafters envisioned it as playing an important symbolic role in upholding constitutional rule. The oath of office binds the individual to "preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution."

The president is elected for a five-year term by an electoral college consisting of the elected members of both houses of Parliament and of the legislative assemblies in the states. The participation of the state assemblies in the election is designed to ensure that the president is the chosen head of the nation and not merely of the majority party in Parliament, thereby placing the office above politics and endowing the incumbent with an aura of national unity.

On paper, the president's powers are formidable. The president appoints the prime minister and other members of the Council of Ministers on the advice of the prime minister; he (or she) also appoints the attorney general, the governors of the states, the chief justice and the justices of the Supreme Court and those of the high courts, and ambassadors and other diplomatic representatives of India. Article 123 of the Constitution empowers the president to issue ordinances when Parliament is not in session; the ordinances have the force of acts of Parliament but must be considered by the legislature after it has assembled. The president also has the power to summon and prorogue Parliament and can dissolve the Lok Sabha. He or she can impose President's Rule in a state if he or she is convinced that the state government cannot maintain order.

The first president, Rajendra Prasad (1950–62), set a precedent by limiting his role to that of nominal and ceremonial head of state. His successors have not sought to exercise their powers on their own. After Gandhi's candidate, V.V. Giri, won the 1969 presidential election over an official Congress candidate, she was able to use the office as a largely pliable instrument to maintain her position of power. She prevailed on President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, a Muslim from Assam with little power or prestige of his own, to issue the proclamation of Emergency on June 25, 1975. However, during 1979, the last year of the tumultuous Janata government, President Neelam Sanjiva Reddy acted on his own to form a new government from opposition parties after the Janata

prime minister resigned; when the new government collapsed, he called for general elections. Reddy's atypical initiatives suggest that, given the enormous powers of the presidency, a powerful president and a pliable or divided Parliament could markedly alter the nature of government. In the event of the president's death, the vice president assumes office until a new president is chosen, which must take place within six months.

The Council of Ministers is made up of three classes of officials: a varying number of cabinet ministers (20 in mid-1984), noncabinet ministers, and deputy ministers. The cabinet forms an inner circle within the Council of Ministers. It is formally the highest policymaking body and the supreme organ of coordination in the government. Formed by the prime minister, it automatically dissolves upon his or her resignation. It is composed of senior ministers, who are selected by the prime minister on the basis of the relative importance of their respective portfolios and their political and administrative skill and experience. During the closing years of Gandhi's rule, however, cabinet ministers tended to be chosen on the criterion of loyalty to her rather than competence. Other tendencies that diminished the role of the cabinet in the political process included her preference for seeking guidance from a small circle of personal advisers rather than ministers, frequent reshuffling of cabinet posts, and her practice of bypassing ministers and dealing directly with senior bureaucrats, particularly after 1980.

The Legislature

Parliament consists of the president and the two houses, the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha (Council of States). The Constitution's inclusion of the president as a part of Parliament was meant to stress the interdependence rather than the independence of the executive and legislative branches. Parliament's principal function is the passing of laws on those matters the Constitution specifies to be within its domain in the federal structure. Among its constitutional powers are the fixing or changing of state boundaries, major responsibility for amending the Constitution, control of the nation's finances, and the removal of the cabinet by a vote of no confidence.

Parliament functions in principle as a debating and deliberating body. Each daily session of the Lok Sabha begins with a question period; the Rajya Sabha holds question periods four days a week. The political opposition typically has been outspoken in its criticism of the ruling party, but given the solid majority of Con-

gress (I) in both houses in the mid-1980s, the opposition has had minimal influence on the legislative process. Legislation was commonly presented to Parliament by Gandhi's government and rubber-stamped by loyal party members, sparking shouting matches and frequent walkouts by a frustrated opposition. Observers noted with some anxiety the increasing irrelevance of Parliament. A practice of growing frequency in the mid-1980s was the use of Article 123. While Parliament was not in session, the president, Giani Zail Singh, a Gandhi loyalist, proclaimed ordinances that the Congress (I) majority later approved.

The Lok Sabha. The Lok Sabha consists of 542 members elected on the basis of universal adult suffrage in the states and union territories plus two additional members named by the president from the Anglo-Indian community. The usual Lok Sabha term is five years; it may be dissolved by the president before the end of the term and new elections held (a maximum of six months after the dissolution). In an emergency its length may be extended for a maximum of one year at a time and for not longer than six months after the termination of the state of emergency. This occurred in 1976 when the general election was delayed beyond its five-year term under Emergency rule provisions enacted in June of the previous year, though elections were held in March 1977. The Constitution stipulates that it meet at least twice a year (customarily, it meets three times annually) and have no more than six months between sessions. Lok Sabha members must be at least 25 years of age.

For the basis of Lok Sabha representation, the states and union territories are divided into single-member constituencies. The allocation of seats to each state or union territory is determined on the basis of population in proportion to the total population of the country. In 1976 the Forty-second Amendment fixed the allocation of seats in accordance with the 1971 census until the year 2001. The purpose of this measure was purportedly to assure that states with effective family planning programs would not lose representation. The "winner take all" nature of single-member constituencies, similar to those used in Britain, has meant that a party that garners a plurality of the popular vote can win a majority of Lok Sabha seats and that small shifts in the popular vote can have major consequences in terms of representation. Congress (I) won 34.5 percent of the valid votes in March 1977 and 42.7 percent of the valid votes in January 1980 but secured 153 seats in 1977 and 351 seats in 1980. In December 1984 it won 49 percent of the popular vote and took 401 seats in the Lok Sabha.

The Rajya Sabha. The Rajya Sabha may have a maximum of 250 representatives; in 1984 it had 244. All but 12 of the members are elected by the state legislatures for six-year terms. The president nominates 12 members for their special knowledge or practical experience in such fields as literature, science, art, and social service. A representative must be at least 30 years of age.

The Rajya Sabha is a continuous body and not subject to dissolution. One-third of the members retire every two years. The number of seats allocated to each state and union territory in the Rajya Sabha is determined on the basis of relative population, but the smaller units have been accorded some extra weight. Through its permanent character and its function of revising or delaying legislative bills sent to it from the Lok Sabha, it provides added stability and continuity to the legislative process.

Participation and approval by both houses is required for all legislation. The Lok Sabha, the body to which the Council of Ministers is responsible, is superior in important respects, but in most regards the houses are coequal for ordinary legislation.

A bill that does not involve financial matters may originate in either house. It goes through three readings before it is considered passed. After a bill has been passed by the originating house, it is transmitted to the other house, where it goes through the same procedure of consideration. The second house can accept, reject, or amend the bill. If the bill is amended by the second house, it must be returned in its amended form to the sponsoring house. If a bill is rejected by the second house, if there is disagreement about the proposed amendments, or if the house to which the bill was transmitted fails to act on it for six months, the president is empowered to summon a joint session of the two houses to vote on the bill. The disagreement is resolved by a majority vote of the members of both houses present in the joint sitting. The decision of the two houses sitting jointly is more apt to conform with the desire of the majority in the Lok Sabha, because it is numerically about twice as large as the Rajya Sabha.

When the bill has been passed by both houses of Parliament, separately or in a joint sitting, it is sent by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha to the president for his or her assent. The president, who is empowered to refuse assent, may send the bill back to Parliament for reconsideration. If both houses pass it again, with or without amendments, and it is sent to the president a second time, he or she must approve the bill. With the president's assent, the bill becomes an act on the Statute Book.

Money bills, as defined in the Constitution, must be initiated

in the Lok Sabha and can be introduced only on the recommendation of the president. In a dispute, the Speaker of the Lok Sabha is the final authority who decides whether a bill is a money bill. On being passed by the Lok Sabha, a money bill is transmitted to the Rajya Sabha for its consideration. The Rajya Sabha must act within 14 days. It may amend or reject a money bill, but the Lok Sabha may then reconsider and pass it by a simple majority and send it to the president. The president cannot withhold his or her assent from a money bill. Thus, in regard to finance, the Lok Sabha is supreme.

The Judiciary

The modern judicial system had its beginnings under British auspices in the late eighteenth century and was extended and consolidated during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Its legal concepts and procedures resemble those of Anglo-Saxon countries.

The judiciary is a single, integrated, hierarchical system consisting of the Supreme Court of India at the top, high courts in the states, and lower courts in the district and local areas. The idea of the independence of the judiciary, introduced by the British, has struck deep roots in India. The Constitution guarantees security of tenure for judges (to age 65 for Supreme Court justices and age 62 for judges of the high courts) and outlines an exhaustive procedure for dismissal on charges of incompetence or misconduct. The president can dismiss a judge only after both houses of Parliament present a recommendation for removal. This requires a double majority in each house, i.e., a majority of the total members of that house and a two-thirds majority of those present at the time of voting. The 1968 Judges (Inquiry) Act stipulates that before the voting, the Speaker of the house must appoint a committee of three, including a Supreme Court justice and a high court chief justice, to investigate charges and recommend whether a motion for dismissal should be presented to the membership.

The courts have been compromised by political pressures, however. The attitude of the Gandhi government was generally one of hostility and suspicion, regarding an independent judiciary with its substantial powers of constitutional review as a principal obstacle to the government's economic and social goals. During the 1975–77 period of Emergency rule, the Supreme Court failed to oppose constitutionally dubious measures enacted to impose a more unitary and authoritarian political order. Its powers had been circumscribed by government-sponsored constitutional



Parliament House, New Delhi
Courtesy Air-India Library

amendments and the willingness of some justices to play a political (and progovernment) role. But given India's diverse and contentious social groups, the judiciary overall has played an indispensable role in mediating social conflict. Not only the educated elites concentrated in the cities but also the poorer rural and urban sectors of the population have made frequent use of the courts, and Indians in general have gained the reputation of being a highly litigious people.

The Supreme Court of India

The Supreme Court is the ultimate interpreter of the Constitution and of the laws of the land, although its judicial powers have been limited over the years by the legislature's power of amendment. Its decisions are binding on all the courts of India. It consists of a chief justice and a maximum of 17 other justices. The chief justice is appointed by the president, who also appoints the other justices after consultation with the chief justice. These appointments do not require parliamentary concurrence.

The jurisdiction of the Supreme Court is divided into three categories: original, appellate, and advisory. Parliament may enlarge the jurisdiction and powers of the court in certain areas of

legislation and enforcement.

The Supreme Court has original and exclusive jurisdiction in disputes involving legal rights between the union and one or more states, between the union and any state, and between two or more states. It is barred from jurisdiction in what are considered political matters, however, or in matters involving treaties or covenants. Appellate jurisdiction includes definitive interpretations of the Constitution in matters of law and the determination of civil and criminal cases. It has wide discretionary powers to hear special appeals on any matter from any court except those of the armed services. In its advisory capacity, the Supreme Court may submit an opinion on a question of law or fact referred to it by the president, or it may decline to give an opinion. The court also functions as a court of record and supervises and controls every high court.

Supreme Court-Executive Relations

The government of Indira Gandhi on numerous occasions challenged the authority of the Supreme Court, seeking to neutralize it through the passage of constitutional amendments and the appointment of politically sympathetic justices in violation of the practice of seniority. In 1967, in the case of *Golaknath v. State of Punjab*, the Supreme Court ruled that Parliament was not empowered to amend or abrogate the Fundamental Rights provisions of the Constitution, including the provisions (articles 31, 31A, and 31B) governing the right to private property. Gandhi and her party criticized the court's decision as providing excessive protection to big landlords, both rural and urban, in the name of safeguarding Fundamental Rights. The government's position was that considerations relating to the general welfare overrode those relating to individual property rights.

On February 1, 1970, the Supreme Court declared invalid the government-sponsored Bank Nationalization Bill that had been approved by both houses of Parliament in August 1969. In contravention of the Supreme Court decision, President Giri on February 14, 1970, promulgated the bill again, thereby nationalizing 14 major banks. In December 1970 the Supreme Court also rejected as unconstitutional a presidential order of September 7, 1970, that abolished the princely titles, privileges, and pay of the former heads of India's old princely states (see Integration of the Princely States, ch. 1).

In reaction to these Supreme Court decisions, Parliament adopted a series of government-backed constitutional amend-

ments presumably designed to pave the way for a more equitable distribution of the country's wealth. On November 5, 1971, the Twenty-fourth Amendment Act received the president's assent after having been approved by a majority of the state legislatures and by both houses of Parliament. The amendment expressly provides that Parliament is empowered to amend any provision of the Constitution, including the provisions relating to the Fundamental Rights.

The Twenty-fifth Amendment Act, which became law on April 20, 1972, invests Parliament and the state legislatures with sole and final responsibility to determine the amount of government compensation to be paid for nationalized property and declares such parliamentary decisions to be nonjusticiable. Furthermore, the Twenty-fifth Amendment provides that any bills adopted by Parliament or by the state assemblies to give effect to Articles 39b and 39c of the Directive Principles section of the Constitution relating to the equitable distribution of the country's wealth may not be challenged in a court of law. The Twenty-sixth Amendment Act of December 1971 adds a new constitutional article that abolishes all vestiges of rulership, including princely privileges and privy purses.

On April 24, 1973, the Supreme Court handed down its decision in the *Keshavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala* case, ruling seven to six that although Parliament did have the right to amend the Constitution, including Fundamental Rights provisions, it could not alter or destroy the Constitution's "basic structures." Thereafter, interpretation of the application of the basic structures rule became a leading point of contention between the court and the executive. The day after the decision was given, Gandhi disregarded the seniority rule in appointing a new chief justice, advising the president to appoint a junior member of the Supreme Court, Ajit Nath Ray, over three senior justices who had decided against the government's interests in the *Keshavananda* case. The supercession of judges (choosing a chief justice on criteria other than seniority) was seen by critics as an attack on the independence of the judiciary, but government spokesmen began talking about India's need for a "committed" judiciary. One government minister defended supercession on the grounds that considerations of "judicial integrity" had to be balanced by considerations of the "philosophy and outlook" of individual justices whom the president might nominate.

During the Emergency the Supreme Court did not oppose the imposition of authoritarian rule but attempted as much as possible to preserve its power of judicial review. Thus on November

7, 1975, it approved the retroactive change of election laws that made it possible for Gandhi to retain her seat in the Lok Sabha, despite violations that under the previous law would have obliged her to give up the seat. Yet in the same judgment, it reasserted its power of judicial review in the matter of election laws. The court, under progovernment Chief Justice Ray, ruled favorably in 1976 on the legality of the mass transfer by the president of high court judges unsympathetic to the regime, a substantial attack on judicial independence that punished dissident judges by sending them to hardship posts. The Supreme Court also refused to challenge the constitutionality of the preventive detention of opponents of the regime that occurred after the June 25, 1975, imposition of the Emergency. In January 1977 the government again circumvented the seniority rule by choosing M. H. Beg, a junior justice and Gandhi supporter, as chief justice.

The Forty-second Amendment, approved by Parliament and brought into force in January 1977, was a comprehensive, 59-clause measure designed to effect profound changes in political institutions. The Supreme Court's power of judicial review was greatly curtailed. The amendment essentially abrogated the 1973 *Keshavananda* decision barring amendment of the Constitution's basic structure. It established the list of Fundamental Duties as a curb on the exercise of the Fundamental Rights of the Constitution, barred the Supreme Court from declaring laws "for the prevention or prohibition of anti-national activities" unconstitutional on grounds of violation of fundamental rights, and gave Parliament and the states the power to create special tribunals. Most basically, it denied to the Supreme Court the power to declare any constitutional amendment unconstitutional except insofar as the process of ratifying it had not followed constitutionally defined procedures. It determined that a minimum of two-thirds of the Supreme Court justices, rather than a simple majority, was necesary to declare a union or state law unconstitutional and that a minimum of seven justices was required to hold such deliberations. If only a simple majority of justices on a bench held a law unconstitutional, it would remain in force.

The Janata government of Prime Minister Morarji Desai sponsored passage of the Forty-third Amendment, enacted in December 1977, and the Forty-fourth Amendment, enacted in December 1978. These restored the Supreme Court's powers and revoked most of the repressive measures of the Forty-second Amendment. Judicial review was substantially restored, and the provisions requiring a two-thirds majority in constitutional cases and establishing special tribunals were repealed. The Forty-

fourth Amendment barred future amendments that might compromise the independence of the judiciary or undermine the Fundamental Rights.

The Desai government canceled the mass transfer of high court judges ordered by the president at Gandhi's bidding and appointed a new chief justice of the Supreme Court, Y.V. Chandrachud, on the basis of seniority (Chief Justice Chandrachud was also a well-known opponent of Gandhi). Yet observers noted that the court's decisions reflected political pressures in a manner not totally unlike those of the Emergency: it ruled in 1977 in the *Dissolution* case that the Janata government had not overstepped constitutional bounds by dismissing nine Congress state governments, and in the following year it declared constitutional the special courts set up outside the normal judicial framework to try protagonists of Emergency rule, including Gandhi's politically active son, Sanjay.

The return to power of Gandhi in January 1980 subjected the court to new pressures. In May 1980 it struck down two articles of the Forty-second Amendment dealing with parliamentary abrogation of Fundamental Rights and amendment of the Constitution. This prompted heated denunciations on the part of Congress (I) politicians, who accused the court of blocking social progress, singling out Chief Justice Chandrachud as a special target of vilification. However, the government won a victory in the December 31, 1981, decision on the *Judges' Transfer* case, in which the court ruled favorably on the constitutionality of the government dismissal of temporary judges and the transfer of high court judges, many of whom were Janata appointees, without the consent of the chief justice. In the mid-1980s the court remained highly politicized and deeply divided, its status as a body above politics much diminished.

High Courts

The Constitution provides that there shall be high courts for the states and union territories and that every high court is a court of record; in the mid-1980s there were 18 high courts covering the 22 states and nine union territories. A high court may serve two or more of these. For example, the high court of Chandigarh served the states of Punjab and Haryana and the union territory of Chandigarh; the high court of Gauhati served the Northeast states of Assam, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Manipur, and Tripura and the Northeast union territories of Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh.

High courts are not subject to the control of a state legislature

or executive. Although Supreme Court decisions, such as that in the 1981 *Judges' Transfer* case, have made substantial concessions to the union executive in the matter of the choice of high court personnel, the Constitution requires that the high court chief justices be appointed by the president of India after consultation with the chief justice of the Supreme Court and the governor of the state; consultation with the high court chief justice is also sought before presidential appointment of high court judges.

The high courts exercise original and appellate jurisdiction within their respective states and union territories. They also have the power to issue appropriate writs in cases involving Fundamental Rights guaranteed by the Constitution. High courts supervise all courts within their territorial jurisdiction except those dealing with the armed forces, and they may transfer constitutional cases to themselves from subordinate courts. Original criminal cases before a high court are tried by a jury, but civil cases are not.

Lower Courts

Each state is divided into a number of districts. Within each, a judge presides as a district judge over civil cases and as a sessions judge over criminal cases. Judges are appointed by the governor of the state in consultation with the high court of the state. The district courts are subordinate to and controlled by the high courts.

There is a hierarchy of judicial authorities below the level of the district court. Many of them are selected by competitive examination by the state's public service commission.

Lesser criminal offenses not tried by a sessions court are entrusted to the courts of first-, second-, and third-class magistrates functioning under the supervisory authority of a district magistrate. All magistrates, including the district magistrate, are under the control of the high court. At the village level, bodies of local self-government called panchayats try cases involving minor offenses. They have limited powers and may impose only moderate fines as punishment.

State and Local Government

In early 1985 the country remained divided into 22 states and nine union territories. The Constitution defines the structure of state governments in a manner very similar to that of the union government. Subject to legislation by Parliament, the union ter-

ritories may have their own councils of ministers and elected assemblies or be governed by the president of India through appointed administrators. Union territories are a heterogeneous collection of mostly small entities: Goa, Daman, and Diu (former Portuguese colonies absorbed by India in 1961); Dadra and Nagar Haveli (also former Portuguese possessions); Pondicherry (formerly a French colony); Lakshadweep; the Andaman and Nicobar Islands; Delhi (containing the national capital, New Delhi); and Chandigarh (containing the modernistic city designed by the French architect Charles LeCorbusier that in early 1985 was the capital of both Punjab and Haryana states). Two larger entities, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram in the Northeast, are also union territories.

Relationship Between the Union and the States

One of the salient features of the Constitution is the scheme of federalism, which was adopted to answer the need for a central integrating authority and still satisfy regional interests and loyalties. Indian federalism is not the result of contractual agreement among previously independent units. The dominant position of the union government reflects the fact that federalism was originally imposed from above and that Nehru and his associates desired a strong central authority to ensure effective economic planning and to maintain national unity.

Under the Constitution the division of powers between the union and the states is secured by demarcating three different areas of legislation into a Union List, a State List, and a Concurrent List. Parliament has exclusive powers to make laws with respect to any of the 97 items on the Union List, which includes defense, foreign affairs, communications, interstate commerce, and transportation. It can also exercise concurrent jurisdiction with the state governments over any of the 47 entries on the Concurrent List, which includes criminal law and procedure, marriage and divorce, trade unions, social security and social insurance, economic and social planning, price control, factories, electricity, and newspapers. The purpose of the Concurrent List is to secure administrative uniformity throughout the country. A union law pertaining to any subject on the Concurrent List usually prevails over a state law. Moreover, the Constitution requires that the executive power of every state government be so exercised as to ensure compliance with the laws passed by Parliament and calls upon each state not to impede or prejudice the executive power of the union.

The Indian government is sometimes described as "quasi-federal," and there have been arguments concerning whether its basic nature is "a unitary state with subsidiary federal features" or "a federal state with subsidiary unitary features." Constitutional features are generally intended to minimize the force of centrifugal tendencies in the interest of national unity. For example, there is single citizenship for the whole country and not for its subsidiary parts; a single Constitution to govern the union government and the states, with certain exceptions and modifications in the case of the state of Jammu and Kashmir (the state is usually referred to simply as Kashmir); a single hierarchical system of judiciary, in which the judgment of the Supreme Court is binding on all lower courts; some all-India civil services that are shared by the union and state governments alike; the disbursement by the union government to the states of grants-in-aid, loans, and subsidies from central tax revenues; presidential appointment of state governors; the power of the president to invoke President's Rule in any state and thereby to encroach upon that state's jurisdiction in various spheres; and the power of Parliament, by simple majority and on recommendation from the president, to establish new states and to alter areas, boundaries, and names of existing states.

In spite of the formidable authority of the central government, the state governments are not reduced to powerless agents. The Constitution grants the state governments exclusive authority with respect to any of the 66 subjects on the State List, which includes public order, local government, public health, regulation of education, water supplies and irrigation, land revenues on agricultural income, and taxes on professions, trades, luxuries, entertainment, alcoholic beverages, and gambling. In addition, the state governments may normally exercise considerable authority in any of the entries on the Concurrent List. Furthermore, the Constitution requires the vote of at least half of the state legislatures on crucial national issues, such as the manner of presidential election or the distribution of legislative powers between the central government and the states.

Because some state-controlled areas, such as education, agriculture, and public health, are crucial in national development programs, effective reciprocal relationships and planning between the union and the states are extremely important. The role of the state governments in the administrative and developmental activities of the nation is further enhanced by their control and supervision over the affairs of local self-government.

The State Executive

On the advice of the union cabinet, the president appoints a state governor for a term of five years. The governor occupies a position in his state analogous to that of the president; the office has a large honorific component, but the Constitution also grants the governor broad discretionary powers. He can dismiss a state's council of ministers, dissolve its legislative assembly, refuse to give assent to a bill passed by the legislature and send it back for reconsideration, reserve a state bill for consideration by the president and, perhaps most important, select a chief minister, whose office is analogous to that of the prime minister in the central government. The governor may also advise the president on the need to proclaim an emergency in his or her state.

Executive power is exercised by the state council of ministers, headed by the chief minister, through its function as adviser to the governor. The council is collectively responsible to the legislative assembly, and its members are appointed by the governor on the advice of the chief minister.

Once considered to be "above politics," the office of state governor in the mid-1980s had evolved into a potent instrument of central control in states where opposition parties were in power. In such cases they commonly disregarded the advice of chief ministers, and when the latter's majorities in the legislature were uncertain, they attempted to engineer the collapse of the government. This occurred three times in 1984: twice successfully in the states of Sikkim and Kashmir, and once unsuccessfully in the southern state of Andhra Pradesh where Chief Minister Nandmuri Tarak Rama Rao of the Telugu Desam Party was able to thwart the governor's move to declare him without a majority and replace him with a more pliable substitute (see Years of Crisis, 1980–85, this ch.).

In the pungent words of Prabha Dutt, a correspondent writing for the fortnightly magazine *India Today* in February 1984, governors "are mostly tub-thumping superannuated politicians who have learned their lessons in the streets and have little time for constitutional niceties. Also they are essentially party men who are not about to abandon the loyalties of a lifetime." In the aftermath of the activities of the governors of the three states in 1984, allegedly directed from the central government, there were renewed but futile opposition calls for a curb on the governor's special powers.

The State Legislature

The Constitution establishes a legislature for each state and fixes the number of houses for each. In the mid-1980s Andhra

Pradesh, Bihar, Maharashtra, Kashmir, Tamil Nadu, and Uttar Pradesh had bicameral legislatures; the other states had unicameral legislative bodies.

Where an upper house exists, it is known as the Legislative Council (Vidhan Parishad), a permanent body that renews one-third of its membership every two years through a system of indirect election. Its functions are largely advisory, and the lower house, known as the Legislative Assembly (Vidhan Sabha), may override the objections of the Legislative Council by passing a controversial bill a second time.

The legislative assembly of each state is chosen by direct election from district constituencies. It may have a maximum of 500 and a minimum of 60 members. Unless dissolved earlier, it serves for five years.

The state legislatures enact bills on matters reserved to the states by the Constitution; they authorize the financial transactions of the states and exercise parliamentary control over the executive. No bill passed by the state legislature can become law without the assent of the governor, and if the governor believes that the bill is particularly controversial, he or she can reserve it for consideration by the president of India.

Local Government

The district is the principal subdivision within the state. Districts are large in terms of area and population, averaging over 8,000 square kilometers and 1.6 million inhabitants (though they may have as many as 4 or 5 million inhabitants). The district collector (DC) is the state's agent for administering nontechnical land matters, revenue collection, and the maintenance of law and order. DCs are civil servants, appointed by the state government from the ranks of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) or its own civil service. Like their British predecessors during the colonial period—district officers or district collectors—DCs are expected to remain informed of all matters of importance in the district (though judicial functions are not their responsibility). They spend much of their time "on tour" in rural districts, apprising themselves of conditions in remote villages.

Districts are divided into smaller units known as *taluqs* or *tehsils*, which contain from 200 to 600 villages. On the village level the *patwari*, or "village accountant," serves, in the words of one observer, as the "eyes and ears of the Collector" and the "general busybody of government" and is responsible primarily for maintaining land records.

In 1958 a three-tiered system of local self-government in the rural areas, known as the panchayati raj, was initiated. On the lower level, a village or group of villages elects members to a panchayat (literally, a council of five elders, but popularly known as a village council). The panchayat is responsible for public health and sanitation, public welfare, and the maintenance of roads and wells and may levy taxes on property or the sale or transportation of goods. In some places, the panchayat is also responsible for primary education, village records, and the collection of land revenues.

Panchayat chairmen are representatives to the second level, panchayat *samiti*, or block councils, the legislative body of the development block, an administrative unit of the Community Development Programme (see Agricultural Extension, ch. 7). The third level is the *zila parishad*, which operates on the district level. In the late 1950s and early 1960s there were great hopes that the panchayati raj system would promote Gandhian ideals of village self-government and economic self-reliance. By the mid-1980s, however, the system had largely fallen into decay and disuse. Centralization of planning undercut its functions over the years, and the tendency of privileged caste and landowner groups to gain control of its apparatus made it, in the eyes of the government, an instrument of local privilege rather than democratization, despite the reservation of seats for members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Large cities, such as Delhi, Calcutta, and Bombay, are governed by municipal corporations consisting of a popularly elected council and a mayor or president chosen by the council; the chief executive is the commissioner, appointed by the state governor. Smaller cities have municipal committees or boards.

The Public Services and Administration

During the colonial centuries the British built up a well-organized administrative structure staffed by well-trained personnel. Heading this structure was the elite Indian Civil Service (ICS), the "steel frame" of the British Raj. Nehru and other leaders of the independence movement initially looked on the colonial civil service as an instrument of foreign domination, but they came increasingly to appreciate the vital role it played in maintaining national unity.

The country is administered by a complex administrative structure that is not a single integrated civil service but is made up of three categories of services, namely, the All-India Services, the Central Public Services, and the State Public Services. The IAS,

the successor to the ICS, is one of the All-India Services. Also part of the all-India system are the Indian Police Service (IPS), as well as the engineering, forestry, and health services. For the most part, state governments have been loath to share administrative control in various fields with the central government and have therefore generally opposed the creation of new all-India services.

The IAS functions to ensure uniform and impartial standards of administration in certain important fields, to promote effective coordination in social and economic development, and to encourage a national point of view in the localities where they serve. In the mid-1980s this small elite numbered around 3,000 officers. Its recruits, appointed by the Union Public Service Commission, are university graduates who are selected through a rigorous system of written and oral examinations (in 1978 only 122 were given appointments out of an original candidate pool of almost 19,000). After a year's training at the National Academy of Administration in New Delhi and a period of apprenticeship and probation in the central government and in a state government, the officer is assigned to increasingly more responsible positions. After six or seven years an IAS officer might be appointed as a DC. IAS officers can serve in either state or union government services. They are drawn primarily from the educated and monied classes, although political scientist Robert Hardgrave noted in 1984 that 25 to 30 percent of all new recruits for the All-India Services come from the Scheduled Castes, and an increasingly large number possess rural and backward "caste" backgrounds.

The Central Public Services staff a broad variety of unrelated administrative bureaus ranging from the Indian Foreign Service to the Audits and Accounts Service and the Postal Service. The states have independent services within their own jurisdictions that are regulated by state laws and public service commissions. The state governor usually appoints members of the state public services upon the recommendations of the state public service commission. To a large extent, states depend upon the All-India Services to staff their top administrative posts.

The Constitution provides for the establishment of union and individual state public service commissions to hold examinations for the civil services of the union and the states and to regulate the appointment, promotion, and transfer procedures of their employees. The chairman and other members of the Union Public Service Commission are appointed by the president and, in the case of a state commission, by the governor of the state concerned. As nearly as possible, one-half of the members of the public service commissions must have been in the service of either

the union government or a state government for at least 10 years. Reappointment of commissioners to the same commission or to other forms of government employment is carefully limited in an effort to retain an independence of judgment by the commissioners.

The elite public services continue to command great prestige, though morale has been adversely affected by the relatively low salaries commanded even by members of the IAS and other All-India Services. Many of the most capable and experienced civil servants find employment in private business, where salaries are substantially higher. On the middle and lower levels, corruption traditionally has been a serious problem. To survive in an increasingly complex and interdependent world, both in the villages and in the urban areas, the ordinary Indian must deal with petty civil servants and depend upon them for the supply of essential services. Bribery, nepotism, and other abuses of power are often the rule rather than the exception, and it is the poorest who suffer because of their inability to pay for "special" services.

National Unity in a Divided Society

Indira Gandhi defined her political vocation in terms of preserving and enhancing India's unity as a nation. At times she seemed to regard herself as the linchpin of the political system whose removal would cause the country to fly into antagonistic fragments. She constantly accused her opponents of trying to undermine unity through sectional appeals, and she was inclined to regard parliamentary democracy and judicial impartiality as expensive luxuries for a poor and deeply divided country.

India's religious, linguistic, and social divisions are complex, and it is difficult to generalize over time or from region to region about the ways that they affect politics. In its diversity the country resembles a hypothetical united Europe rather than those Asian states, such as China or Japan, where traditional ruling strata were able to promote cultural homogeneity as well as impose political unity. The conceptualization of social and political divisions is itself a formidable task; they commonly overlap, and sectional consciousness (whether based on caste, religion, or language and ethnicity) tends to evolve and change over time.

Moderate and militant Sikh political movements in the mid-1980s were an illuminating example. Sikh demands have been based in part on regionalism (greater autonomy and more economic benefits for the Sikh majority state of Punjab) and in part on the desire to preserve the cultural integrity of the Sikhs as

a religious community (thus, some Sikhs demanded recognition of their faith as a religion separate from Hinduism in the Constitution). Traditionally friendly to Hindus, Sikhs felt a new sense of alienation and distrust toward the majority religious group after the assault on the Golden Temple in June 1984. The most militant stepped up their demands for the establishment of an independent Sikh state. Communal violence perpetrated by Hindus on Sikhs following the assassination of Gandhi by Sikh bodyguards resembled on a smaller scale the horrors of the 1947 partition, though at that time Sikhs stood on the side of Hindus against Muslims in the Punjab and other parts of the country. Moreover, the controversy has been fueled by divisions within the Sikh community between Sikhs assimilated to a greater or lesser degree with the majority Hindu community and different Sikh "caste" groups (though Sikhism in theory does not recognize caste) (see The Crisis in Punjab, this ch.).

Although the potential for violence, such as that between Hindus and Sikhs or Hindus and Muslims, is ever present, most sectional conflicts have been played out in a fairly peaceful manner through the medium of established political institutions and practices. The history of India since 1947 suggests that communal and other violence is not so much the inevitable product of social heterogeneity as the result of the government's lack of responsiveness or the opportunism of ambitious and unscrupulous sectional leaders.

Within the parliamentary framework on the union and state levels, different groups have assumed an active role in the political process in order to compete for limited resources (in a society of scarcity, one group's gain is apt to be another's loss) and to preserve the integrity of their communities. Indian observers have remarked on the "primacy of politics"—the tendency for almost any social conflict to be pushed into the political arena. Given the extensiveness of representative institutions at all levels of government, the relative freedom of the press, and the emotional (and economic) nature of group allegiances, India is a thoroughly politicized society.

Hardgrave notes in *India under Pressure* that the scope of political activity is wide. Elections have been held on a regular basis since 1951. Outside the electoral process, there is a well-established tradition of "direct action" that involves all sectors of the population. The legacy of the independence struggle includes satyagraha, Mahatma Gandhi's method of nonviolent civil disobedience; the hartal, or general strike; and the use of hunger strikes to force the authorities to accede to a given demand. In



President Giani Zail Singh, 1985
Courtesy Embassy of India, Washington

1975 Morarji Desai, an old Congress leader but an opponent of Indira Gandhi, used the tactic of going on a fast "to the death" to force the prime minister to allow elections in his state of Gujarat. Other direct action tactics include the *gherao*, or encirclement of an authority figure by protesters (the former often being subjected to hours of harassment and confinement), commonly used in industrial strikes and university protests; *rasta roko*, or the disruption of traffic by blocking roadways; *morcha*, or processions with banners and placards; and *dharna*, picketing or sit-down strikes, often held in front of government offices. Although much abused, the Gandhian concept of the moral power of the humble and powerless in the face of arrogant authority, expressed through the medium of direct (but generally nonviolent) action, has made it difficult for leaders to assume that lofty detachment from their subjects that they might inwardly crave.

Politics in a "Compartmentalized" Society

Although social divisions and their expression place great strain on government, they also have positive implications for national unity and stability. The large number of different social identities and their strong local orientation make it difficult for nationwide social, religious, or ethnic movements to emerge. This is particularly clear in the case of *jatis*, or subcastes (about 3,000 of them in all of India), which are village-based and rooted in local systems of economic interdependence known as *jajmani*

(see Caste in Operation, ch. 5). Where *jajmani* relations remain strong and insulated from external market forces, political consciousness tends to be focused on the local level. There is, in Morris-Jones' words, a "host of tiny worlds" remaining substantially (though of course not completely) self-sufficient. Within such a "compartmentalized" context, formidable and sustained challenges to central authority have been slow in developing.

Many *jatis* do have a certain regional coherence through the medium of subcaste or *jati* associations, organized to press the claims of the *jati* or enhance its status in a world where personal betterment has traditionally meant group rather than individual upward mobility. Within the hierarchical framework of the fourfold division of varna, or caste, subcastes customarily jostle among themselves for a higher relative position. Sudra *jatis* aspire to assume the rituals, styles of life, and privileges of the twice-born castes (Brahmans, Kshatriyas, and Vaishyas), claiming for themselves a more noble genealogy. Since independence an opposite logic has also been at work; subcastes may claim lower status in order to take advantage of the constitutionally guaranteed benefits accorded disadvantaged groups and special government assistance programs (see Tribes, ch. 4).

As a result of the breakdown of village isolation, *jatis* have become increasingly active in a larger context. For example, the Jats, a Sudra caste spread over a large area including parts of the states of Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh, have garnered considerable political influence. However, no single subcaste has anything approaching a majority of inhabitants in any Indian state. According to professors Lloyd and Susanne Rudolph, Jats in the mid-1960s formed about 9 percent of the total population of Rajasthan, while in the southern state of Mysore (now Karnataka), Lingayats and Okkaligas, respectively, formed 20 and 15 percent of the total. Most subcastes are substantially smaller. "The situation in most states," the Rudolphs say, "recalls one of Madison's conditions for republican liberty: that there be too many 'interests' to establish a 'tyranny' based on a permanent majority." Given the competitive nature of inter-subcaste relations within a locality, it has also been relatively difficult for them to maintain stable coalitions capable of imposing effective regional control. "Out" groups are always available to lend support to opposition movements, and Indian politics constantly produces strange bedfellows. Thus in the January 1980 general election, Congress (I) was able to win in the state of Gujarat, Morarji Desai's stronghold, through the "KHAM" strategy—a coalition of *K*shatriyas, *H*arijans, *A*divasis (tribals), and *M*uslims. There is a

constant shifting of alliances and endless political brokering.

Caste differences have traditionally been a vital factor in political campaigns because members of the same *jati* were expected to vote en masse for the candidate formally chosen by *jati* elders. According to a *New York Times* correspondent writing at the time of the December 1984 general election, "the procedure amounts to a kind of socially enforced unit rule in which the individual, as has been true for centuries, is expected to subordinate himself to the *jati*." The declining economic importance of the *jati* in a modernizing economy and increasing trust in the secrecy of the ballot have loosened caste-based sanctions, however, and many individuals feel free to vote for candidates not endorsed by the *jati*.

India's estimated 100 million untouchables were a special case because of their position at the bottom of the social hierarchy. In the 1980s some 90 percent of all harijans continued to live in rural villages. Relations between them and persons of higher caste have become strained as a new generation has become less willing to assume the traditional attitude of deference. Services once rendered to higher castes unquestioningly have tended to be given grudgingly or not at all. Many harijans have found livelihoods outside their caste-defined roles and have attained a measure of prosperity because of government assistance. Resentment between harijans and members of Sudra castes was widespread; gains by the former, often with government help, were commonly perceived as losses by the latter. This often resulted in violence. A new dimension in relations between harijans and members of higher castes on the village level has been the conversion of large numbers of harijans to Islam, particularly in Southern India. Like the more than 3 million harijans who converted to Buddhism in Maharashtra during the 1950s and 1960s, these new converts to Islam seek higher status and greater self-respect through a new religious identity.

Historically, the mosaic of subcastes, creating a compartmentalized society, has tended to contain conflict within one segment rather than allowing it to "spill over" into others. Moreover, it has tended to absorb dissident groups, including those that in theory reject caste (such as Sikhs, Muslims, and Christians), integrating them into an interdependent social and economic system on the local level. However, improvements in transportation and communication, the spread of literacy, and the development of a more monetized economy have eroded the walls of society's "compartments." As national integration proceeds, political conflict has intensified as local groups find com-

mon cause and build organizational ties with others in different localities. The most striking example of this since independence has been the appearance of regionalism and regional politics centered on ethnolinguistic groups inhabiting substantial geographical areas. Regional political competition, like its local counterpart, has generally occurred within the constitutionally defined framework, however, and has not posed an urgent threat to national unity.

Regionalism and Regional Political Crises

Nehru was opposed to the formation of "linguistic states" whose inhabitants shared common ethnic and linguistic characteristics. To him, they seemed expressions of a backward and traditionalist mentality. Yet in 1953 he was obliged to concede to the demands of the Telugu-speaking population for the creation of the state of Andhra Pradesh from portions of the old states of Madras and Orissa. This encouraged a stream of requests from other areas. In 1954 the States Reorganisation Commission recommended, and in 1956 the States Reorganisation Act brought about, a major but not complete amalgamation and realignment of the existing 27 states along linguistic lines, resulting in 14 states and six union territories. In 1960 the state of Bombay was divided into Gujarat and Maharashtra. In 1961 the government, in order to bring the Naga insurrection to an end, pledged statehood for the Nagas, and in 1963 Nagaland was carved out of Assam. At the same time, the Sikhs were pressing, on cultural and religious as well as linguistic grounds, to have their own state, a Punjabi Suba (Punjabi Province). In 1966 the state of Punjab was divided along linguistic lines; Haryana was created where Hindi-speakers, mostly Hindus, were a majority, leaving the Punjabi-speakers, most of whom were Sikhs, with their own Punjab state. Other changes included the change of the names of Madras (the state) to Tamil Nadu and Mysore to Karnataka; the creation of Himachal Pradesh from northern Uttar Pradesh; and the division of the rest of Assam into Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, and Mizoram.

Although the redrawing of India's political map along ethnic and linguistic lines had largely been completed by the mid-1980s, there remained demands for new federal units, voiced with varying intensity: a new state of "Udayachal" to be formed from Assam; one for the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra and the Saurashtra region of Gujarat; a state from the tribal regions of Bihar, Orissa, and Madhya Pradesh; one for the hill districts of

West Bengal; and a Greater (Vishal) Haryana, formed from that state and portions of neighboring Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. There also have been demands for the bifurcation of the state of Andhra Pradesh, creating a new state of "Telengana" (part of the old domain of the nizam of Hyderabad) separate from the coastal region.

Regionalism in India is a diverse phenomenon. Each of the politically significant regions—the Hindi Belt, Kashmir, West Bengal, the Northeast, and the South—had its own problems and orientations internally, in relation with the others, and in relations with the union government.

The Hindi Belt

The Hindi Belt, encompassing the states of Uttar Pradesh (India's most populous—111 million in 1981), Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Haryana, is regarded by its inhabitants and outsiders (often grudgingly) alike to be the "heartland" of the modern Indian state and nation, outweighing other regions in terms of power and influence. New Delhi, the national capital, is located in this region, and its special status is apparent from the highly controversial designation in the Constitution of Hindi as the national language (see Languages of India, ch. 4). Most of the country's national political leaders, including not only Indira and Rajiv Gandhi and other scions of the Nehru family but also opposition figures such as Chaudhury Charan Singh, leader of the Dalit Mazdoor Kisan Party (DMKP—Oppressed Worker's and Peasant's Party), and Janata Party leader Chandra Shekhar, are based in the Hindi Belt. In the general election of January 1980, 40 percent of the electorate was from these five states and the union territory of Delhi. Given regional and sectional challenges in other parts of the country, particularly the rise of regionally based political parties, the support of voters in the Hindi Belt was considered essential in the mid-1980s by any national party seeking a parliamentary majority.

In the western part of the Hindi Belt, particularly Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh, the "Green Revolution" is firmly established and the area relatively prosperous (though India's most productive state agriculturally is the Sikh-majority state of Punjab) (see The Green Revolution, ch. 7). As a result of the transfer of the land of the zamindars (absentee landlords) to their tenants after independence, an enterprising new class of small and middle-level farmers has become increasingly active and influential politically. They must deal with government in an effective way in

order to obtain necessary inputs, such as pesticides, fertilizers, tractors, and tractor fuel, and favorable terms for agricultural loans and generous price supports for their crops. Most of these "capitalist farmers"—comprising as much as 40 percent of the electorate—are members of the Sudra castes. Charan Singh, a Jat, was instrumental in organizing them and articulating their interests. Constituencies where Jats and other small and middle-level farmers were numerous remained in the mid-1980s strongholds of Charan Singh's DMKP, although the party won only three Lok Sabha seats in the 1984 election (see Opposition Parties, this ch.). Congress (I) has typically applied, with great success in the 1984 election, a strategy of "both ends against the middle," gaining the support of Brahmans, harijans, and Muslims in Hindi Belt constituencies.

Poorer areas of the Hindi Belt have less privileged access to government. In parts of Bihar, eastern Uttar Pradesh, and Madhya Pradesh, people were enmeshed in "feudal" landholding relationships, tenants having little if any political voice of their own (see Land Reforms, ch. 7). Government services were poor and corruption rife. The behavior of the police, who often acted as hired hands of the landlords, was often barely distinguishable from that of the criminal elements. In places such as the Chambal Valley in southern Uttar Pradesh and northern Madhya Pradesh, "Robin Hood"-type bands of dacoits (bandits) opposed governmental authority and enjoyed significant popular support.

The West

The western states of Gujarat and Maharashtra encompass areas and populations with their own languages, cultures, and histories distinct from those of the Hindi Belt, though not as "peripheral," in terms of the perspective of the Hindi center, as those of South India. Maharashtra contains the country's second largest and most cosmopolitan city, Bombay. Paradoxically, this metropolis was, beginning in the 1960s, the site of a vocal and at times virulent "sons of the soil" movement, the Shiv Sena (the Army of Sivaji, named for the seventeenth-century Maratha hero who battled the Mughals).

The Constitution guarantees the right of citizens to live in any part of the country they wish; although migration from one region to another has not occurred on a particularly large scale, in certain localities where significant migration has taken place, people speaking the local language have supported "sons of the soil" movements, fearing that better educated or more aggressive

people from other regions were depriving them of employment and economic opportunities. These outsiders formed as much as one-third of Bombay's population. The Shiv Sena, founded by Bal Thackeray in 1966, agitated for employment quotas in government and the private sector for Marathi-speaking Maharashtrians. In response to its appeals and threats (violence was never dismissed as an alternative by Shiv Sena activists), the state government established its own quotas and legislated for the adoption of similar preferences by private employers. Spokesmen justified quotas on the grounds that the Constitution, while guaranteeing equal treatment to citizens regardless of religion, caste, or ethnicity, does not prohibit the state "from making any special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens . . . ."

Thackeray's movement made him a politically powerful figure on the state level; the Shiv Sena played a central role in often violent agitation in the early 1970s to have the district of Belgaum—where a majority of the population speak Marathi—ceded by the neighboring state of Karnataka to Maharashtra. By the mid-1980s his influence had declined, but he remained a sinister figure whose often virulent denunciations of Muslims "with a Pakistani mentality" added sparks to the tinder of communal violence. In contrast to secularly oriented political leaders on the national level, he represented the parochial dimension of Indian politics, filled with resentment and long historical memories of communal and ethnic animosities (see Religion and Politics, this ch.).

Jammu and Kashmir

Politics in the strategically sensitive state of Jammu and Kashmir (Kashmir) involve tensions between different ethnic and communal groups, a strong sense of regional identity and independence, and the central government's countervailing determination to keep Kashmir in the union. At independence the maharaja of Kashmir, a Hindu, ceded his domain to India rather than Pakistan, though the majority of the population was Muslim (in the mid-1980s the state remained the only one in India with a Muslim majority). A portion had been occupied by Pakistani forces in October 1947; other areas in the Ladakh region of eastern Kashmir were occupied by Chinese troops in October 1962. More than in any other part of India (with the possible exception of Punjab), internal political tensions and rivalries have serious implications for overall national security. As a compromise measure worked out between the government of India and the

maharaja in 1947, the state enjoys enhanced autonomy, guaranteed in the Constitution. However, given widespread independence and pro-Pakistan sentiments among the Muslim majority, the union government in the mid-1980s sought to assert a greater measure of control over the state's political system.

Hindus are concentrated in the Jammu region, while the Muslim majority is concentrated in the more populous Vale of Kashmir. The state's most powerful and respected political leader was Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah until his death in 1982; though a Muslim, Sheikh Abdullah, known popularly as the "Lion of Kashmir," chose to support the maharaja's transfer of Kashmir to India in 1947 rather than its incorporation into Pakistan. Yet his determination to preserve Kashmiri autonomy made him suspect in the eyes of the union government, and he and his National Conference were barred from politics in 1953. Because of widespread popular dissatisfaction, Gandhi felt obliged to come to an agreement with him, and in 1975 Sheikh Abdullah was chosen as the state's chief minister. His National Conference gained control of the state legislature, though in the Hindu areas of Jammu, Congress had popular support.

When Sheikh Abdullah died in 1982, he was succeeded as head of the National Conference by his son, Farooq Abdullah. His nomination was supported by Gandhi and her son Rajiv, apparently in the belief that he would prove a weaker and more pliable leader than his respected father. However, the National Conference won a new mandate in the June 1983 state legislative elections. Suspicions that Congress (I) politicians had enlisted the support of a Hindu communalist group, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS—National Self-Service Organization), in Jammu and were provoking Hindu communalist sentiment elsewhere against Muslims prompted Farooq to declare himself openly as an opponent of the Gandhi government. In October 1983 he served as host of a conference of opposition party leaders in Srinagar, the state capital, claiming for himself the status of being a major leader of nationwide anti-Gandhi forces. Most alarming for the union government, Farooq criticized Gandhi's reluctance to condemn publicly the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan. Farooq's proposal of a highway link between Kashmir and Pakistan also worried Gandhi and her advisers.

Gandhi supporters engineered a split in the National Conference in July 1984. Members of the party were persuaded to switch their allegiance from Farooq to his longtime rival and brother-in-law, Ghulam Mohammed Shah. On July 2, 1984, the governor of the state declared Shah the new chief minister, hav-

ing a majority consisting of the defectors, an independent, and Congress (I) members of the legislative assembly. This "constitutional coup" removed, for a time at least, the threat that Kashmir might become a center for autonomist or separatist tendencies.

West Bengal and Sikkim

The state of West Bengal, containing Calcutta, India's largest city, is the smaller portion of the old British province of Bengal, which was divided into two parts at partition in 1947; in 1971 the larger portion became the independent nation of Bangladesh. The Bengal region has a language (or set of languages), culture, and civilization quite distinct from those of the Hindi Belt; Calcutta's status as the premier city of British India from the eighteenth century made it a center for the diffusion of Western ideas and the synthesis of these ideas with indigenous Hindu concepts. In the nineteenth century literate and articulate Bengalis such as Ram Mohan Roy and Debendranath Tagore sought cultural renovation, and figures such as Bankim Chandra Chatterjee played an important role in the development of Indian nationalism. In the twentieth century the Nobel Prize-winning poet Rabindranath Tagore was India's "ambassador to the world," and the popular Subhas Chandra Bose espoused an aggressive nationalism quite distinct from Gandhian nonviolent civil disobedience. In their crowded bookstalls and coffee shops, Bengalis were inclined—and are still inclined—to boast that "what Bengal thinks today, all India thinks tomorrow."

Still, the influence of Calcutta and the Bengal region in general declined during the twentieth century, owing in part to the transfer of the imperial capital from Calcutta to New Delhi in 1911, the central role played by non-Bengalis, such as Mahatma Gandhi and Nehru, in the independence movement, and the trauma of partition. In the mid-1980s "regional patriotism," in part spurred by resentment of the central government, was a principal factor in West Bengal's political life. Congress (I) had limited support from the electorate, the state government in early 1985 being led by the Communist Party of India (Marxist, or CPI(M) (see Opposition Parties, this ch.). Observers noted that the CPI(M) was principally a middle-class and reformist movement, speaking the "language of the World Bank rather than Moscow." Widespread distrust of the union government's inclination to impose President's Rule contributed as much or more to its popular support as the appeal of Marxist doctrine, though a more extreme revolutionary movement, the Naxalites, had gotten its

start in the West Bengal countryside in the late 1960s. Before the assassination of Prime Minister Gandhi, Bengali communists feared that she might attempt to subvert their government in a manner similar to that used in other oppositionist states.

To the north of West Bengal is the state of Sikkim, formerly the semi-independent "storybook kingdom" in the Himalayas ruled by Chogyal (king) Palden Thondup Namgyal and his American queen, Hope Cooke. The Chogyal's opposition to Indian paramountcy and the kingdom's very sensitive position, bordering Chinese-occupied Tibet, led to the forcible incorporation of the kingdom into the Indian union in 1974; the Thirty-eighth Amendment made Sikkim a state. Sikkim in the mid-1980s was divided ethnically between Nepalese, two-thirds of the population, and Lepchas and Bhutias, a powerful and influential minority that included the former royal family. This minority has a Buddhist culture similar to that of the people of Tibet, and tensions between them and the Nepali Hindu majority have been endemic. In May 1984 the governor of the state dismissed the chief minister on the grounds that he did not have a majority in the legislature; after the deposed chief minister, Nar Bahadur Bhandari, who had broad support among the Nepalis, announced the formation of an opposition party, the central government imposed President's Rule.

The Northeast

The Northeast encompasses a tapestry of diverse ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups, many of which have organized politically. Like Kashmir and Sikkim, this region, bordered by Bhutan, Chinese-occupied Tibet, Bangladesh, and Burma and connected to the rest of India only by a narrow corridor (the hill districts of West Bengal), is strategically sensitive. Insurgency in some areas is chronic, given their remoteness and the ease with which arms can be obtained from other countries (see Assam and the Northeast, ch. 10). Armed groups move readily back and forth across the border with Burma, a country where insurgency is also deeply entrenched.

The region consisted in the mid-1980s of the states of Assam, Nagaland, Tripura, Meghalaya, and Manipur and the union territories of Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh. A new configuration of federal units had been established by the union in 1972 with the creation of Mizoram and Meghalaya out of parts of Assam, the formation of the union territory of Arunachal Pradesh out of the old North-East Frontier Agency, and the elevation to statehood of

Meghalaya and the union territories of Tripura and Manipur. These actions, along with the 1963 creation of the state of Nagaland, were in large part motivated by New Delhi's desire to win the allegiance of ethnic elites and forestall separatist movements. In early 1985, however, underground groups such as the Tripur Sena in Tripura, the People's Liberation Army in Manipur, and the Mizo National Liberation Front in Mizoram, remained active in opposing the union government.

The state of Assam presented the union government with an urgent political crisis. Tensions, frequently resulting in violence, existed there between minority tribal groups and the Assamese (the latter being the largest ethnic group in the state, accounting for 61 percent of the population in 1971) and between these groups and outsiders, principally Bengalis from West Bengal and Bangladesh. In the mid-1980s tribals who had organized the Plains Tribal Council of Assam were demanding a separate state of Udayachal. The Assamese majority had a vocal "sons of the soil" movement that sought to enhance educational and employment opportunities and halt the migration of outsiders into the state.

There was widespread sentiment among the Assamese that they were being neglected by the union government. They feared that the constitutional provision guaranteeing the free movement of citizens and the willingness of non-Assamese to take advantage of it would make them a "colonialized" minority in their own state. Bengali immigration into Assam, originally an independent kingdom with cultural ties to the peoples of Southeast Asia, began in the nineteenth century under British auspices. Farmers from Bengal's crowded villages sought virgin land, and educated Bengalis predominated in Assam's administration and schools both before and after independence. Language was a sensitive issue, as in other parts of India. In 1972 violence flared up over the issue of whether Bengali, as well as Assamese, would be recognized as a medium of instruction in the state's institutions of higher education.

The issue of illegal aliens was the most volatile. Thousands had slipped over the border from desperately poor Bangladesh since 1971, and in 1979 it was discovered that 45,000 of them had been registered on voter rolls. The All-Assam Student's Union (AASU) and the All-Assam Gana Sangram Parishad (AAGSP) organized a movement with wide popular support demanding the expulsion of the "foreigners" and thereby forced the postponement of the 1980 general election in the state. Negotiations between the union government and Assamese political leaders continued over the next few years, but in January 1983 Gandhi ordered elections to fill the 12 vacant seats for Assam in the Lok

Sabha to coincide with state legislative assembly elections. To postpone them further would have necessitated a constitutional amendment. This proved to be a major and costly miscalculation. Assamese leaders called for a boycott of the February polls, and in fact only about 33 percent of eligible voters participated. Violence prevented polling in seven out of the 12 parliamentary constituencies.

The violence was the worst since partition. Over 1,000 Bengali Muslims were massacred by tribesmen in the town of Nellie during February 14–21, 1983. Tensions were exacerbated by communal sentiments. Illegal immigrants from Bangladesh were overwhelmingly Muslim, and Hindu communalist groups such as the RSS were active among the Assamese, who were predominantly Hindu.

Resolution of the issue of illegal immigrants remained uncertain in early 1985. The AASU advocated the "detection" of all foreign nationals who had moved to Assam since 1951 and the expulsion of post-1971 immigrants. It also sought the dispersal of post-1961 immigrants throughout the rest of the country. Compromise had yet to be fashioned between the union government, supporting a cutoff date of 1971 for legalized residency in the state but opposing the dispersal plan on constitutional grounds, and the AASU, which demanded an earlier cutoff date of 1961 for legal residence. When general elections were announced for December 1984, polling for Assam was postponed.

The South

The southern region, including the states of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, and Karnataka, encompasses distinct peoples and cultures whose development has taken place largely independently of North Indian centers of political power. This is particularly true of Tamil Nadu and Kerala, whose old kingdoms were rarely subjugated by northern rulers. It was only during the British period that the south was effectively tied to the rest of India in a single administrative framework (though there remained substantial enclaves, such as the large princely states of Hyderabad, Mysore, and Travancore) (see fig. 4). The Tamil people of Tamil Nadu boast a sophisticated culture rivaling that of the Sanskrit north, and Kerala was a place of trade and contact with the West from ancient times, as shown by its large populations of Christians and Muslims. The majority of the people of the four southern states speak Dravidian languages; after independence and particularly during the 1960s, there were active and at

times violent movements to resist the imposition of Hindi as the national language (see Linguistic Relations, ch. 4). Regional politics in the south has commonly involved assertions of ethnic and linguistic pride as well as demands for enhanced state autonomy.

Tamil Nadu and Kerala. In Tamil Nadu the principal vehicles for regional sentiments have been the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK—Dravidian Progressive Federation) and the All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK—All-India Anna Dravidian Progressive Federation) (see Opposition Parties, this ch.). These groups trace their origins to the preindependence Self-Respect Movement, a Dravidian cultural uplift organization founded by E.V. Ramaswamy Naicker in 1925. Naicker challenged the power of the Brahman castes, whom he described as exploitative and parasitic carriers of an alien, North Indian culture. Strongly influenced by Marxism, he called for the abolition of caste and the establishment of an independent "Dravidasthan" (Land of the Dravidian People) free of both British and North Indian "Aryan" control. The DMK, founded in 1949, kept up the demand for Dravidasthan until 1963. In 1967, in the wake of the union government's efforts to secure Hindi's status as the national language, it gained control of the state government. The DMK remained in power until displaced 10 years later by a breakaway faction that became the AIADMK.

The AIADMK's leader (and state chief minister in early 1985), M. G. Ramachandran (commonly referred to by his initials, MGR), was a popular Tamil film star with charismatic voter appeal. In a nation where motion pictures provide the major avenue for popular escapism, "voter recognition" was a powerful campaign weapon, and in the mid-1980s the backbone of AIADMK was the 180,000-member All-World MGR Manrams (Fanclubs) Association. Non-fans in Tamil Nadu criticized Ramachandran's preference for show over substance, his neglect of Dravidian culture, his political aspirations (in the mid-1980s the AIADMK maintained friendly relations with Congress [I]), and his controversial decision to allow his leading lady, Jayalalitha, to succeed him as party head. The DMK remained in opposition on the state level.

Kerala has been a stronghold of the CPI and the CPI(M) since 1957, when the CPI first led a coalition state government; though a frequent target of President's Rule edicts thereafter, in the mid-1980s its state government was a coalition of the CPI, Congress (I), and smaller groups. Congress (I) enjoyed wide support among Kerala's large Christian minority.

Andhra Pradesh. In the southeastern state of Andhra Pradesh, the Telugu Desam (Telugu Land) Party, formed in 1982, became a powerful new regional opposition force, winning 202 out of 294 seats in the January 1983 legislative assembly election. This was a remarkable feat given the party's youth and the fact that Andhra Pradesh voters had supported Congress state governments since independence.

The Telugu Desam Party's success was largely attributable to the "image" of its organizer and leader, Nandmuri Tarak Rama Rao. Like Ramachandran, Rama Rao had been a film star, playing in hundreds of Telugu-language films and usually taking the role of the god Krishna (much-beloved in India as a heroic foe of evil). In the eyes of villagers, Rama Rao had become Krishna, and his campaign excursions (in his "chariot of valor," a green 1940s-vintage Chevrolet pickup truck) resembled religious events rather than political rallies in the conventional sense. Yet there was also a strong regional appeal, as crowds chanted "Mara Desam, Telugu Desam" (My Country, Telugu Country), and the party pledged itself to the defense of the "3,000-year heritage of the Telugu people."

Once in power as chief minister, Rama Rao faced criticism for luring voters with empty promises of cheap rice and free school lunches and such erratic notions as his proposed establishment of a "Hindu Vatican" at the temple of the god Sri Venkateshwara in the village of Tirupati. The old star seemed to be losing his luster as charges of corruption and misuse of power circulated; however, the inopportune attempt of the Congress (I)-appointed state governor to engineer the collapse of Rama Ramo's government in August-September 1984 made him a figure of national as well as regional significance (see Years of Crisis, 1980–85, this ch.).

Religion and Politics

One of the foundations of the Indian polity is secularism. In principle, this means not only that freedom of religion and equal respect for all religious traditions are guaranteed but also that the government must remain aloof in matters of a strictly religious nature. Unlike the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Republic of India is not avowedly based on the principles of any single religion. Religious neutrality was a legacy of British rule wholeheartedly adopted by Congress, one that Mahatma Gandhi, despite his use of Hindu religious and moral symbols, strongly affirmed (although a commentator has noted that Gandhi "never wearied of arguing that all religions expressed the same truth . . . unaware

that this involved a peculiarly Hindu definition of truth").

Given bitter memories of the 1947 partition, when hundreds of thousands of people were killed in communal violence involving Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims, secularism has been regarded by India's political leaders as vital to national unity and survival. Only a minority of the population, however, accepts secularism in the Western sense of the term, i.e., recognition of an autonomous sphere of worldly activity, encompassing politics but separate from spiritual life, the latter being a purely private and individual affair. For the majority, religion is inextricably tied to social, economic, and political issues.

The divergence of viewpoints causes considerable confusion and ambiguity, particularly because secularism is not defined, or even mentioned, in the Constitution. Article 25 guarantees "freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion," and Articles 26, 27, and 28 affirm the "freedom to manage religious affairs," freedom to pay or refrain from paying religious taxes, and freedom to attend religious instruction or worship. There is no mention of the state as religiously neutral.

Communalism (a term generally used in the Indian context to refer to religious, as opposed to regional or caste, differences) remained a formidable element in politics in the mid-1980s. Given the group nature of social and economic life, religious communities commonly saw themselves in competition. Social change produced new abrasions and resentments. Instances of communal violence had increased since the early 1970s, and observers noted that some local politicians, hoping to take advantage of popular resentments, had employed criminals to attack the houses and shops of religious minorities and then attributed the violence to "spontaneous" outbreaks of religious rivalry (see Religious, Communal, Class, and Regional Differences, ch. 10).

The Muslim Community

India's 80 million Muslims (mid-1980s estimate), the country's largest religious minority, were found throughout the country; they formed the majority only in Kashmir and in the union territory of Lakshadweep. Isolated amid a "sea" of Hindus, losing most of their dynamic leaders and upper classes to Pakistan after 1947, and suspected by Hindus of being a fifth column for that state ever since, Muslims in the mid-1980s were divided and politically insecure; since independence they have generally supported the ruling Congress, the significant exception being the 1977 general election.

Muslim institutions of political importance included the Muslim League, a remnant of the original movement led by Mohammad Ali Jinnah that demanded a separate Pakistan (see The Beginnings of Muslim Separatism, ch. 1). Its support was located primarily in Kerala (where Muslims accounted for about 20 percent of the population). The League advocated the reservation of college places, government jobs, and seats in the state legislative assemblies for Muslims. The Muslim Majlis-e-Mushawarat (Muslim Consultative Council), established in 1964, mobilized support for political candidates, regardless of party affiliation, who showed concern for Muslim welfare. The Jamaat-i-Islami, primarily a religious and cultural organization, sought the conversion of Hindus to Islam and the promotion of religious orthodoxy. It was banned during the 1975–77 Emergency because of alleged links with foreign powers, but it enjoyed a revival after 1977.

In orthodox Islam, religion, politics, and social life form a coherent whole, and the concept of a secular state is regarded by fundamentalist Muslims as essentially irreligious. Members of the Jamaat-i-Islami and other "fundamentalists" have questioned the legitimacy of any political order not based on sharia, Islamic law. Moderate Muslims accept the secular state concept but have been reluctant to advocate the reform of Muslim personal law or recourse by Muslims to Indian civil law. Other issues of sensitivity to Muslims included such matters as the status of the Urdu language (and Arabic in Kerala), the quality of Islamic educational facilities, the upkeep of public facilities, such as Islamic cemeteries, and the maintenance of cattle slaughterhouses (beef, a part of the Muslim diet, is an anathema to observant Hindus).

Hindu Militance

Hindu militant groups, such as the RSS, the Hindu Mahasabha, and the Ram Rajya Parishad, have advocated a restoration of orthodox ritual practices and traditional spirituality and have also called for abandonment of the secular state in favor of a "Hindu Rashtra," or Hindu nation. An extremist associated with the RSS and the Hindu Mahasabha assassinated Mahatma Gandhi in January 1948, but in the mid-1980s these groups publicly supported his goal of a morally renovated Hinduism accomplished through abolition of untouchability. Militant groups—particularly the RSS, whose members are organized in a quasi-military fashion—have often been linked with violence against Muslims and other minorities. Like the Jamaat-i-Islami, the RSS was banned during the emergency. its political arm was the Jana Sangh, though this

party merged with the Janata Party in 1977.

Issues of special concern to traditionalist Hindus in the mid-1980s included the abolition of the slaughter of cows and a ban on the conversion of Hindus to other religions, particularly Islam. Large numbers of harijans had been converted to Islam in Southern India, particularly in Tamil Nadu, and Hindu groups were alarmed that Islamic missionary groups received substantial aid from wealthy countries on the Arabian peninsula. In Orissa and Madhya Pradesh, Hindu groups managed to have laws passed prohibiting the conversion of Hindus through "inducements," a measure aimed at Christian as well as Muslim proselytization.

Occupational Interest Groups

Urban-based occupational interest groups—trade unions, business groups, and professional associations—play a central role in the political life of most industrialized nations; but in India, where 80 percent of the population lives in rural villages where caste still defines social relations, such groups must share access to government with the advocates of more "traditional" caste, communal, and regional interests. In recent years, as a result of the prosperity wrought by the Green Revolution, "capitalist farmers" have joined agricultural pressure groups, such as Charan Singh's All-India Kisan Sammelan. This group's strength was graphically demonstrated in December 1978, when 800,000 peasants came to New Delhi to hold demonstrations in honor of its founder. The streets of the capital were clogged not only with bullock carts but also with tractors, symbols of the activist farmers' new prosperity.

In the mid-1980s trade unions in India continued to be highly politicized. This was because most had close ties with political parties and because government played an arbitration role in most important labor-management disputes and thus became a focus of union pressure (see Labor, ch. 6). The Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC), the country's largest labor federation, was associated with Congress (I), while the All-India Trade Union Conference (AITUC) and the Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) had ties with the CPI and CPI(M), respectively. The Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS) was the labor arm of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP—Indian People's Party) (see Opposition Parties, this ch.). In the mid-1980s India had about 25,000 unions, having 10 million members. Organized labor was a well-paid elite in a country that had high rates of urban and rural unemployment; despite the connections of many unions with communist labor federations, they did not pose a significant

challenge to the Congress (I) government.

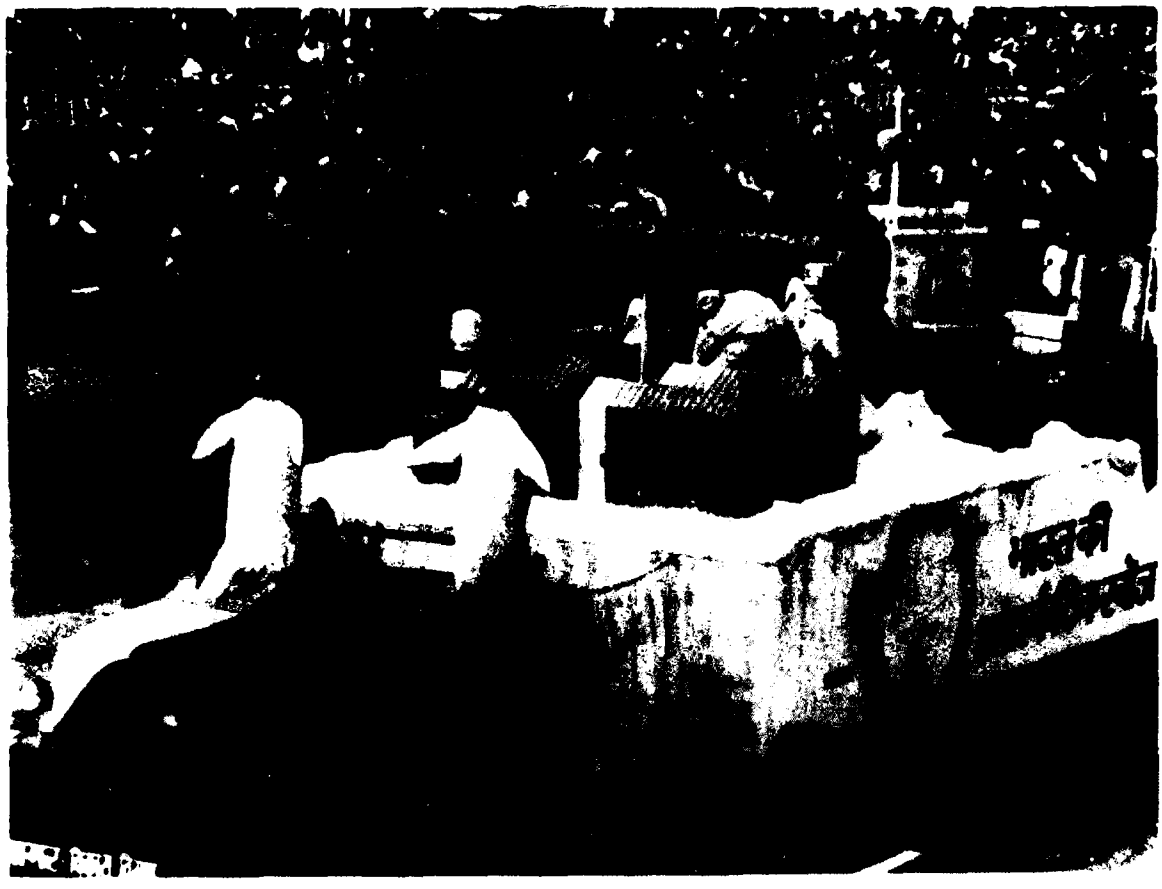
Private business has traditionally been dominated by caste and religious minority communities: the Marwaris, Chettiars (or Chettis), Parsis, and Jains. The two largest industrial combines in the mid-1980s were family-run enterprises, the House of Tata (Parsis) and the House of Birla (Marwaris). The latter has had close ties with Congress since before independence. The most important business groups were the All-India Manufacturer's Organization (AIMO), the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (Assocham), and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI). FICCI, with a membership of 100,000 firms, was generally considered in the mid-1980s to have the closest ties to government; in fact, government-business associations were intimate despite the traditional advocacy of socialism by Congress.

College and university students were vocal but deeply divided among themselves. Thus, they have had a rather limited role in the political process. Yet the "J.P. Movement" of Jayaprakash (J.P.) Narayan, which posed a serious challenge to the Gandhi government in the 1974–75 period, had primarily student support. Like trade unions, student groups were affiliated with political parties, including Congress (I), the CPI(M), and the BJP.

In striking contrast to the situations in neighboring countries, the military in India has confined itself to a strictly professional role, refraining from any active involvement in politics. This was true even during the Emergency period of authoritarian rule. The union government has had to rely on the armed forces to quell internal disorder, however, and some observers wondered whether increasing domestic disorder might lead to a situation in which the military might begin to exercise its potentially enormous political influence (see The Armed Forces in Public Life, ch. 10).

The Crisis in Punjab

In the mid-1980s Sikh militants demanding the creation of "Khalistan," an independent Sikh state, posed the most serious challenge to India's unity and stability. Equally ominous for future political developments was the deep sense of grievance and alienation felt by moderate Sikhs toward the government following the military assault on the Golden Temple. Communal violence, perpetrated by Hindu mobs on Sikhs after the assassination of Gandhi by two of her Sikh bodyguards, marked a tragic turning point. Previously, these two religious groups had enjoyed close relations. Observers regarded the Punjab crisis as the result



Float in Republic Day Parade 1984, indicating India's Interest in Antarctica
Courtesy Embassy of India, Washington

of a basic failure of India's internal political process. The mediating institutions of party and government that could have brought about a peaceful resolution of regional and communal issues had broken down; in consequence, both sides had turned to force as a last resort (see Sikh Agitation in the State of Punjab, ch. 10).

In the aftermath of the assault on the Golden Temple, Sikhs and other critics of Gandhi accused her of insensitivity and bad faith in negotiating with Sikh leaders over matters that were not, in themselves, nonnegotiable. The critics argued that she took a hard line with the Sikh regional and communal party, the Shiromani Akali Dal (referred to as Akali Dal), because she did not want to surrender any of her powers to the states and because she needed the support of Hindi Belt voters who were envious of Sikh prosperity. There were also accusations that her followers in Congress (I) had covertly encouraged extremists, particularly Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, in order to split the Sikh movement.

The government, in turn, accused foreign powers of playing a vital role in the growth of Sikh separatism and attempting to undermine Indian unity through terrorist acts. But the talk of government underhandedness and international terrorist networks obscured the fact that the crisis was a complex phenomenon, drawing together all the factors—religion, language, regionalism, and even caste—that create cleavages within the society.

The Issue of Sikh Identity

In the early 1980s the Sikh community, forming about 2 percent of the population, seemed an unlikely source of militant opposition to the union government. Punjab was the most prosperous state in India; the Green Revolution gave farmers crop yields approaching those of the American Middle West and incomes averaging twice those of the rest of the country. They were prominent in business, the professions, the civil service and, above all, the armed forces. Sikh officers and men had been in the front lines in all of India's wars, and their loyalty to the state was symbolized by the Sikh Regiment's ceremony of saluting both the flag of India and the Guru Granth Sahib, their holy scriptures, when new recruits were inducted. India's seventh president, Giani Zail Singh, chosen in 1982, was a Sikh.

A vocal minority, however, working through the medium of the Akali Dal, sought to gain the support of the community at large by posing demands to the union government in the name of preserving Sikh identity. The Akali Dal had led the agitation for a Sikh-majority state that had resulted in the division of the postindependence state of Punjab into Punjab and Haryana. Akali Dal leaders, such as Master Tara Singh, believed that the integrity of the Sikh *panth*, or congregation, could be safeguarded only if the Sikhs had their own state within the federal system; in such a state, *panth* leaders could initiate legislative remedies and the politics of patronage to protect such vital Sikh customs as the wearing of unshorn hair and the *kirpan*, or ceremonial dagger, and to prevent the growth of heterodox religious movements. Like militant leaders in the Hindu and Muslim communities, Tara Singh and his followers in the Akali Dal disputed the basic principle of secularism. Religion, they felt, could not be separated from political or economic issues. The viability of Punjab as a linguistic, political, and economic entity, they asserted, was essential for the continued survival of the Sikh community. The issue of language was especially important. Most Sikhs speak Punjabi, and the Guru Granth Sahib is written in the Gurmukhi

script. From the time of the 1951 census, Hindus in Punjab had identified themselves not as Punjabi- but as Hindi-speakers, whose written language was in the Devanagari script. In the eyes of many Sikhs, Hindu "abandonment" of Punjabi deepened the rift between the two religious communities.

Even after the 1966 redrawing of boundaries, the Sikhs were demographically an uncertain majority, forming only 52 to 55 percent of the population of the new state. The Akali Dal had wide popular sympathy during the agitation for the Punjabi Suba, but it could not form state governments on its own thereafter and was forced out of the government entirely when Congress gained a large majority of legislative assembly seats in 1972. The party opposed the Emergency, and it was returned to power in 1977 in a state-level coalition with the Janata Party.

Increasingly, support for the Akali Dal was limited to the Jat Sikhs, farmers who had originally belonged to the Jat Sudra caste but had converted to Sikhism. Sikhs living and working in urban areas, known as Bappa Sikhs, and harijans who had converted to Sikhism tended to support Congress or one of the communist parties. These groups, along with the Hindus still living in Punjab, denied the Akali Dal the role it sought as spokesmen for the Sikhs and a true Punjab regional party.

The most urgent issue for Sikh communalists was the ease with which Sikhs were assimilated by the Hindus, the result of centuries of close and friendly association between the two communities. Militant Sikhs traditionally defended Hindus as well as themselves from Muslim incursions; the two groups intermarried, and members of Hindu families often converted to Sikhism (in colonial days, a passport to service in the British Indian Army). To most Hindus, Sikhism was a branch of Hinduism rather than a separate religion, and this mentality was reflected in Article 25 of the Constitution, which grouped Sikhism with the other Indian traditions—Hinduism, Jainism, and Buddhism. Sikh adherents were divided along lines of greater or lesser adherence to the letter and spirit of Sikh orthodoxy; this had been defined by Guru Gobind Singh, seventeenth-century founder of the order of the Khalsa ("the pure," or "the elect") and the last of Sikhdom's 10 gurus. Members of the Khalsa were Sikhs in the fullest sense, experiencing baptism, taking the surname Singh ("lion"), and wearing the "five Ks" (see Sikhism, ch. 3). By contrast, Sikhs known as Sahajdhari (slow adopters) were less conscious of Sikh identity as something clearly different from Hinduism. An eclectic attitude on the part of both Hindus and Sahajdhari Sikhs broke down communal barriers. Moreover, younger generations of prosperous and

Western-educated Sikhs had begun to question their religion's tenets, particularly such symbolic matters as the wearing of unshorn hair, turbans, and beards. Anxieties over assimilation formed the motivational core of Sikh separatism and "fundamentalism."

The Road to Confrontation

In 1973 the Akali Dal issued the Anandpur Sahib Resolution, calling for the creation of a "Sikh Autonomous Region" having its own constitution. It wanted the union government to be responsible only for defense, foreign affairs, railroads, currency, and communications. The resolution also called for the cession of contiguous areas of neighboring states to the new political unit. Other Akali Dal demands included the establishment of Chandigarh as the capital of Punjab alone and the more favorable allocation by the union government of river waters needed for irrigation. Particularly sensitive was the issue of sharing the waters of the Beas and Sutlej rivers with neighboring Haryana (see fig. 5).

Although only a handful of extremists were receptive to the creation of an independent "Khalistan" and the demand for a "Sikh Autonomous Region" was met with some scepticism, there was palpable discontent over New Delhi's slowness in resolving the issue of Chandigarh and what was perceived to be an inequitable sharing of irrigation waters. Lack of fiscal autonomy also hampered industrial development, and the federal status quo was perceived as hindering future economic growth in the country's most dynamic region. The introduction of a population-based quota system for recruitment into the armed forces also led to a reduction of opportunities in this most hallowed of Sikh vocations.

In addition to broad-based economic and political demands, the Akali Dal requested the central government's affirmation of certain changes in the status of the Sikh religion. Demands included the recognition of Amritsar, the site of the Golden Temple, as a holy city; the granting of permission to Sikhs flying on Indian airlines to wear the *kirpan* in exception to antihijacking precautions; and the passage of an act that would place the management of all *gurdwaras* (Sikh places of worship) in the country under a single administration. In early 1984 there were also demands that Article 25 of the Constitution be amended to recognize the status of Sikhism as a separate religion, prompting demonstrations in which activists publicly burned copies of that document.

Congress (I) sought to present itself to the Sikh community as an alternative to the Jat-dominated Akali Dal; Giani Zail Singh, chief minister of Punjab between 1972 and 1977 and union minister of

home affairs in 1980–82, played a central role in this strategy, appealing to religious sentiment and developing ties with such "fundamentalists" as Bhindranwale. In the pervasive atmosphere of distrust and discontent that existed in Punjab in the early 1980s, two "streams" of Sikh activism emerged: the relatively moderate Akali Dal, which before the assault on the Golden Temple was involved simultaneously in negotations with the union government and mass agitation against it, and extremists, among whom Bhindranwale was the central figure, who engaged in acts of terrorism against Hindus and heterodox Sikhs. Tensions between Sikhs and Hindus grew as the tempo of violence increased. In October 1983 the union government imposed President's Rule, but the terrorism intensified as armed gangs of extremists carried out gangland-style slayings largely under the direction of Bhindranwale, ensconced in the sanctuary of the Golden Temple.

Negotiations between the union government and the Akali Dal proceeded fitfully; both sides accused each other of bad faith, and the atmosphere of intensifying violence made a peaceful resolution increasingly unlikely. In March 1984 Punjab was declared a "disturbed area"; in June the armed forces were brought in to seize the Golden Temple complex, which under Bhindranwale had become an armed fortress. Operation Blue Star, carried out in early June, 1984, resulted in several hundred casualties (see Sikh Agitation in the State of Punjab, ch. 10). These included Bhindranwale, who in the eyes of Khalistan supporters in India and abroad acquired a martyr's status. Akali Dal leaders who had also been in the Golden Temple were arrested and placed in preventive detention. For many Sikhs the seizure of the Golden Temple was analogous to earlier calamities, when it had been occupied by Mughal or Afghan forces. The event marked the beginning of a new and estranged relationship between traditionally loyal Sikhs and the Indian government and even of Sikh distrust of the concept of India.

Congress (I) attempts to rebuild support within the Sikh community during the summer of 1984 were largely futile, although the government was able to enlist support for repair of the heavily damaged temple complex. Sikh leaders had either been killed or placed in detention. Growing animosity with Hindus flared into large-scale communal violence in November 1984, following the assassination of Gandhi. Tragically and ironically, she had refused to dismiss trusted Sikhs from her personal bodyguard, as suggested by her advisers, because to do so would be a symbolic denial of her government's commitment to the principle of secularism.

The Indian National Congress and National Leadership

On the eve of its centenary in 1985, the Indian National Congress—specifically that branch known as Congress (I)—demonstrated that it remained the country's only truly national political party. In India's eighth general election, held December 24–27, 1984, it won an unprecedented 401 seats in the Lok Sabha out of 508 contested; two more seats were won in balloting, held in five constituencies on January 28, 1985. In part, the success of Congress (I) represented a sympathy vote for its fallen leader and widespread popular belief that Rajiv Gandhi—by virtue of being her son, the grandson of India's first prime minister, Nehru, and the grandson of an early nationalist, Motilal Nehru—was entitled to assume the position of national leadership. Dynastic appeal was not the only factor, however. The opposition was deeply divided and incapable of presenting the people with a viable alternative. The major opposition parties suffered debilitating losses (see Opposition Parties, this ch.). In the new Lok Sabha the largest opposition group was not a party with a national focus but the Telugu Desam Party (see Regionalism and Regional Political Crises, this ch.).

Yet past experience had taught Rajiv Gandhi and party notables that electoral victories could not be taken for granted. In the March 1977 general election, Congress (I) had been forced out of power by a united opposition. Before Gandhi's assassination some observers believed that nationwide popular dissatisfaction and a spirit of greater cooperation among opposition leaders might cause this to happen again or that Congress (I) would win only a slim legislative majority.

Congress (I) was only a fragment of the original Indian National Congress that had led the country to independence and dominated its political system during the 1947–67 period. As the initial indicates, it was organized around Indira Gandhi, created by her after she was expelled from the "Ruling" Congress (R), in January 1978. But as her fortunes rose through 1978 and 1979, the party grew as defectors joined it, and she led it to victory in the January 1980 general election.

The party's most serious problem in the mid-1980s was internal—the demoralization that resulted from her having monopolized power at the top and the atrophy of party institutions at the lower levels. Under Nehru, Congress had been a major factor in political stability because it served as an effective instrument for the mediation of caste, communal, and regional interests. Although a stern and patrician leader, Nehru valued intraparty democracy and sought to

incorporate diverse points of view into party programs. According to political scientist Stanley A. Kochanek, the Congress "high command" served as "an appellate structure to arbitrate and mediate state level conflicts, ensure fair procedures, and confirm newly emerged state leaders in office. It could not impose leaders on a reluctant party, nor could it sustain leaders in power who had lost the confidence of the majority of the state legislative party." Critics accused Nehru's daughter of converting the party into an instrument of personalist and authoritarian rule. Most symptomatic of this were her attacks on such institutions as the judiciary; her plans to make her younger son, Sanjay, and after his death in 1980 her older son, Rajiv, her successor; and her awarding of top party and government posts not to the most qualified and experienced persons but to those most loyal to her. She was perennially suspicious of any politician having an independent base of popular support.

Nevertheless, changes in the character of national leadership could not be explained entirely in terms of the prime minister's ambition to establish a family dynasty. Indian society had become increasingly politicized since independence. During the Nehru years (1947–64), the political system was still largely under the control of regional and local elites, many of whom were Western-educated. These were people who spoke the language of parliamentarianism and believed in the rule of law. The rise of new classes—such as the capitalist farmers of the Hindi Belt and Punjab, militant harijans and other disadvantaged minorities, and regionalist and "sons of the soil" movements throughout the country—gave politics a new populist flavor during the 1960s and 1970s. National integration and the breakdown of society's caste-defined "compartments" brought previously isolated groups into a competitive relationship. Increased conflict resulted as popular demands focused on government as a major distributor of social and economic goods in a society of scarcity.

Gandhi believed that a strongly centralized party and government were necessary in order to respond to these new challenges and to preserve national unity. She bypassed the old Congress leadership and appealed directly to the voters, particularly the least fortunate sections of the population. Yet the growth of Congress as an instrument of one-woman rule also reflected the political system's endemic weaknesses: corruption, inertia, and the political immaturity of the electorate. In early 1985 it remained unclear whether her successor could reverse the trends of two decades and restore life to the party's institutions.

Indira Gandhi as a National Leader, 1966–80

Before being designated prime minister after the death of Lal Bahadur Shastri in January 1966, Gandhi had served as hostess, confidante, and troubleshooter for her father and had gained valuable political experience after he chose her to be Congress president in 1959. She also served as minister of information and broadcasting in the government of Shastri (1964–66), an experience that may have confirmed her chronic suspicion and dislike of an independent press. Although it is unclear whether Nehru wanted his daughter to be prime minister, the "Syndicate," a group of bosses who had assumed control of the party after his death, backed her candidacy in the belief that she, a relative unknown in the public eye, would be easy to manipulate. This proved to be a serious miscalculation. Her political instincts were astute, and she toppled older and more experienced opponents in Congress with ruthless determination.

The struggle between Gandhi and the Syndicate took place within the party and on the national electoral stage between 1966 and 1972. General and state legislative assembly elections in 1967 resulted in a severe setback for Congress, marking the end of its unquestioned dominance of the political system. It lost 78 seats in the Lok Sabha, barely retaining a majority of about 40 seats, and lost its majority in eight of the 16 states voting in state elections. By-elections in 1969 for the state legislatures resulted in losses in four states, including West Bengal where leftist groups, led by the CPI(M), formed a United Front government.

The losses depleted the ranks of Gandhi's opponents, and an ostensibly ideological confrontation took shape after she criticized the Syndicate for being excessively conservative and for betraying the party's socialist principles. A final break occurred in 1969 over the choice of a new president of India. The incumbent, Zakir Husain, had died in May. When the Syndicate designated the conservative speaker of the Lok Sabha as the Congress presidential candidate in July, the prime minister decided to assert her authority in a series of decisive steps. She dismissed from the cabinet Finance Minister Desai, a leading conservative (later to enjoy a sort of revenge as India's first non-Congress prime minister), and ordered the nationalization of India's 14 largest banks, a move popular with the socialist wing of the party as well as with leftist opposition groups but one totally abhorrent to the Syndicate. On August 12, 1969, she succeeded in having her candidate for the presidency, V.V. Giri, elected over conservative objections.

In November 1969 the Syndicate struck back, expelling Gandhi from the party and ordering the parliamentary Congress to

choose a new prime minister. Instead, Congress members in the Lok Sabha supported her 226 to 65. Congress was split into two groups, her Congress (R) and the pro-Syndicate Congress (O), for "Organizational" or "Opposition." Yet her government lacked a majority and could stay in power only with the support of non-Congress groups, principally the CPI and the DMK.

General elections for the Lok Sabha were held in March 1971, a year earlier than the maximum term of five years. This gave the prime minister the chance to take her case to the people. She campaigned on the issue of abolishing poverty, directing her appeal to harijans, tribals (see Glossary), Muslims, and other disadvantaged groups. Congress (R) won a decisive victory (though a smaller percentage of the popular vote than during the Nehru era), gaining 352 out of 518 seats and a two-thirds majority. Congress (O) was reduced to 16 seats. The largest opposition party, with 25 seats, was the CPI(M), retaining its power base in West Bengal.

The "Indira wave" left Gandhi firmly in control of the Congress party apparatus, and her two-thirds majority in Parliament enabled her to pass amendments to the Constitution in order to further her social and political goals (see The Judiciary, this ch.). Victory over Pakistan in the December 1971 war with Pakistan brought her enhanced prestige. In legislative assembly elections held in 16 states in March 1972, Congress (R) gained control in 14, winning 70 percent of all seats contested.

Although she enjoyed unprecedented power and prestige, Gandhi faced daunting challenges in the next few years. First of all, there were economic reversals. Failure of the monsoon led to food shortages. During 1973 the price of food rose 20 percent. (Some observers have speculated that the monsoon is the single greatest factor in a political leader's success or failure, droughts occurring in approximate six-year cycles.) The quadrupling of crude oil prices by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in 1973 also contributed to inflation and high unemployment. Charges of government mismanagement and corruption circulated. There were food riots, industrial strikes, and even a mutiny by policemen in mid-1973 that had to be quelled by the army (see State and Other Police Services, ch. 10).

Another ominous factor was the growing influence of the politically ambitious Sanjay Gandhi and his control of the youth wing of Congress (R). Born in 1946, Sanjay had trained as an automobile mechanic at the Rolls-Royce factory in Britain and in 1970 had received a license from the government to produce a low-cost "people's car," the Maruti. His lack of qualifications and erratic management style (no Marutis were in fact produced)

aroused considerable public criticism, as did his recruitment of arrogant young contemporaries to serve as his retainers in the offices of the Youth Congress. During the early 1970s Sanjay carved out a sizable political and economic "kingdom." During the same period his mother increasingly came to depend almost exclusively on a very small circle of personal advisers, including her son, in the making of policy. As the prime minister grew more isolated, political power became a "household" matter.

There was growing instability on the state level as Congress (R) governments, headed by unpopular, centrally imposed chief ministers, fell and came under President's Rule. But the greatest challenge came from Jayaprakash (J.P.) Narayan, a saintly figure in the tradition of Mahatma Gandhi, who emerged from political retirement in 1974 to organize student strikes and demonstrations in Gujarat. The "J.P. Movement" spread to Bihar and assumed the proportions of a nationwide agitation against the government.

The Emergency, 1975–77

On June 12, 1975, the high court of Allahabad found Gandhi guilty of relatively minor election violations committed in her constituency during the 1971 general election, and she was obliged by law to give up her seat in Parliament. The next day the results of the state legislative assembly election in Gujarat were announced, revealing a sweeping victory for the newly formed opposition Janata (People's) Front. Faced with these reversals and mass demonstrations by Janata Front supporters in the capital, Gandhi, apparently at the urging of Sanjay, had the president declare a state of Emergency on June 25, 1975. Political opponents, including Narayan and Desai, were arrested, a "news blackout" was imposed on the capital's newspapers, rigid censorship of all media was imposed, and 26 communal and extremist organizations, including the RSS and the Jamaat-i-Islami, were declared illegal. The 21 months of the Emergency witnessed the passage of the Forty-second Amendment, whose provisions were designed to create a more centralized political system (see The Judiciary, this ch.). Individual rights as defined in the Constitution were suspended, and over 100,000 persons throughout the country were arrested and detained without trial.

During the Emergency Sanjay gained new prominence. He initiated the Five-Point Programme—mass sterilization, slum clearance, tree planting, abolition of dowries, and the promotion of literacy—as a kind of shock treatment to create a more modern and efficient society. The poorest, most backward, and most vul-

nerable sections of the population felt the brunt of these heavy-handed and ill-advised policies. Mass sterilization campaigns were particularly offensive, as local officials used coercive methods to round up men, regardless of their family situation, to fulfill vasectomy quotas. Harijans were special targets of victimization. In April 1976 people rioted at the Turkman Gate in Delhi against forced vasectomies, and a number were killed by police (rumors put the figure at 400). Slum clearance resulted in the demolition of 150,000 structures in the capital, leaving tens of thousands homeless, particularly in Muslim and poor Hindu quarters of the city. This aroused bitterness among Muslims, and the imam (see Glossary) of Delhi's Jama Masjid, Hazrat Abdullah Shah Bukhari, campaigned against the government among his coreligionists across the country. Popular disaffection was strongest in North India, where Emergency rule, especially the Five-Point Programme, was most thoroughly implemented.

The prime minister called elections for March 1977 (the Lok Sabha's five-year term had run out the previous year) in the mistaken belief that her party still enjoyed substantial popular support. Her plans to use the balloting as a referendum on the legitimacy of the Emergency measures backfired when the Janata Party won 43 percent of the popular vote (compared with Congress' 35 percent) and 298 out of 542 seats in the lower house. Gandhi and her son were both unseated in their constituencies in Uttar Pradesh in an election unique in India history because of the appearance of a united opposition.

Exile and Return

Out of power and under investigation for alleged criminal offenses committed while in office, Gandhi engineered a remarkable comeback by capitalizing on the ineptitudes of the Janata government, casting herself in the role of an innocent victim of Janata persecution, and building a new base of support outside the established Congress. In January 1978 she founded her own "Indira" Congress, initially a small circle of loyal followers that grew as her political fortunes improved. In March 1978 Congress (I) won a solid majority of seats in five state legislative assembly elections, and in November she returned to Parliament in a by-election in a constituency in Karnataka. As Janata's uneasy coalition was coming apart at the seams in 1979, Congress (I), the largest party in opposition with 74 seats in the lower house, first supported a new government formed by Charan Singh in July and then withdrew its support the next month. The president ap-

pointed a caretaker government, and general elections were held in January 1980.

Congress (I) won 43 percent of the vote and 351 out of a total of 525 lower house seats contested (polling for 17 seats was postponed). The party represented the rise of a new generation in politics. Two-thirds of its parliamentary members were first-termers in the Lok Sabha, and 150 of them were chosen personally by Sanjay. Many of his close associates were appointed to responsible government positions, though Sanjay did not join his mother's new cabinet.

She was unwilling, or unable, to hinder her son's building of a substantial personal power base; just as she had followed her father to power, she expected that her son would follow her, and he assumed the aura of a "crown prince." In the words of a correspondent for the *Far Eastern Economic Review* in 1984, Sanjay "constituted an extra-constitutional center of power right in the prime minister's house. Surrounded by cronies whose political morality was little better than that of gangsters, he created a secretariat of his own that functioned parallel to the prime minister's secretariat and often proved more assertive than the prime minister's own advisers . . ." But in June 1980 Sanjay was killed when the stunt plane he was piloting crashed on the outskirts of the capital. He was cremated with elaborate honors and fanfare, and his mother turned to his older brother, Rajiv, to assume the role of successor.

Years of Crisis, 1980–85

With considerable reluctance, Rajiv agreed to stand for the seat in Parliament—Amethi in Uttar Pradesh—vacated by the death of his brother, and he was elected in June 1981. Two years older than Sanjay, Rajiv was a shy and retiring person with a reputation for integrity, content to pursue his career as a pilot for Indian Airlines rather than become involved in politics. "An officer and a gentleman thrown among wheelers and dealers" (in the words of an *India Today* correspondent), he was appointed member of the Youth Congress executive committee (Sanjay's old power base) and a Congress (I) general secretary. He built up his own following, nicknamed the "computer group" because of its enthusiasm for high technology and "Harvard Business School methodology," consisting of old schoolmates with technical and managerial backgrounds. If Sanjay was the arrogant "crown prince," an ancient fixture in Indian dynastic politics, Rajiv was the technocrat, "forward looking" but unskilled in the time-tested formulas of political bargaining and back-scratching.

Although the 1980 election victory confirmed her status as the only genuinely national political leader (on the popular level, this was embodied in the slogan "Indira is India and India is Indira"), her management of regional political crises was deeply and, ultimately, tragically flawed. Union-state relations had "decayed," in the words of Morris-Jones, who stated in an August 1984 article in *Asian Survey* that "in politics, style is often substance, and Mrs. Gandhi's style has transformed these relations from ones of political bargaining to ones akin to feudal tutelage." There were rumors that she might replace the parliamentary system of government with a strong, popularly elected presidency and thus permanently resolve union-state issues in favor of the union government.

Union government interference in state politics reached disturbing proportions. In 1982 the chief minister of Maharashtra, A.R. Antulay, was forced to resign by the central government because of his involvement in massive corruption; he was replaced by Babasaheb Bhosale, himself pushed out of office a year later. In Andhra Pradesh there were three changes in chief ministers in 1982 alone. This disgusted local political leaders, who formed the Telugu Desam Party, headed by Nandmuri Tarak Rama Rao, which roundly defeated Congress (I) in the January 1983 state legislative elections. At the same time, voters in neighboring Karnataka unseated a Congress (I) government and installed the Janata Party with Ramakrishna Hegde as chief minister. The Karnataka upset was largely the result of popular dissatisfaction over the tumultuous administration of Gundu Rao, Congress (I) chief minister and an old Gandhi loyalist. These losses were significant because both Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka had been Congress strongholds and had provided Gandhi with vital support as she built up Congress (I) in 1978 and 1979.

The political crisis deepened through the summer of 1984. Governments unsatisfactory to the center were toppled in Sikkim and Kashmir (see Regionalism and Regional Political Crises, this ch.). A similar exercise in state-level coup d'état was attempted in August in Andhra Pradesh by the Congress (I)-appointed governor. He dismissed Chief Minister Rama Rao on the grounds that a split in the Telugu Desam deprived him of his legislative majority. N. Bhaskara Rao was invited to form a new government consisting of Telugu Desam dissidents and Congress (I) adherents; but Bhaskara Rao's majority was illusory, and the deposed chief minister was able to maintain leadership over a contingent of 163 Telugu Desam loyalists in the 295-member house; when a vote of confidence was called in mid-September, a new governor (the

previous one had resigned) was obliged to reinstate Rama Rao. The affair severely damaged the union government's prestige and enhanced Rama Rao's status as a national opposition figure.

The army assault on the Golden Temple cut the Gordian knot of crisis in Punjab without resolving any of the underlying problems. In Assam, ethnic and communal animosities continued to fester. There was, moreover, evidence that caste Hindus were becoming more assertive of "majority rights"; in November 1983 a pilgrimage involving hundreds of thousands of caste Hindus was organized in Maharashtra by Hindu communal organizations such as the RSS, a development significant as a demonstration of both religious devotion and political power. Minorities feared that Gandhi might abandon them in pursuit of the caste Hindu vote. Muslims were particularly disturbed at the inability of the authorities to curb communal rioting in Bombay and Hyderabad. Growing Sikh-Hindu tensions marked an ominous new dimension to the age-old problem of communalism.

In the aftermath of the assassination of Prime Minister Gandhi the strengths of the Indian political system were at least as evident as its fragility. Although opposition leaders criticized the haste with which Rajiv was sworn in as prime minister (on previous occasions the senior minister had been designated acting prime minister), continuity was maintained as he formed his own government and announced a general election for December 24–27, 1984. The polling gave him an unprecedented victory, yet in early 1985 his imprint on the political system remained a matter of intense speculation.

Congress Ideology and Organization in the 1980s

In the mid-1980s ideology was not a formative element in intraparty dynamics. There was a general consensus on such vague principles as socialism, planned development of a mixed public and private economy, eradication of poverty, and elimination of social injustice. The Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of the Constitution embody definitive statements of Congress ideals because the party played the major role in drafting that document after independence. Adherence to the principle of secularism (however that might be interpreted) remained important insofar as Gandhi and other party leaders regularly attacked opposition groups for pandering to communal sentiments and resisted communal demands, such as those of the Sikhs. Rajiv's viewpoint in the first month of his prime ministership represented something of a departure from the traditional stress on a

planned, socialist economy, in that he advocated a greater role for private enterprise and the reform of the bureaucracy through the adoption of modern management methods.

In early 1985 the structure of Congress (I) remained hierarchical, retaining the formal organization of the preindependence and Nehru-era party; it had commitees at the grass-roots level and also, in ascending authority, at the district, state, and national levels. At the apex stood the All-India Congress; this was composed of state- and district-level Congress committee members who met annually in plenary session. Its seventy-seventh session, held in Calcutta in January 1984, planned strategy for the upcoming general elections. According to the party's constitution, the All-India Congress elects the party president for a two-year term and also chooses delegates to the All-India Congress Committee (AICC), consisting of one-eighth of the delegates from each state or union territory chosen by their fellows. The AICC in turn chooses seven persons to serve on the Congress Working Committee (CWC), the party's executive and policy-formulating body. Often referred to as the "Congress high command," the CWC had a total of 20 members, 13 of whom were appointed by the party president.

However, Congress (I) in the mid-1980s was organizationally moribund. The last intraparty organizational elections had been held in 1972, and the AICC and CWC, formally authoritative, had little real power or influence. Congress "federalism"—the initiative of state, district, and local party committees within its organizational framework—had largely broken down. Committee members on all levels had retained their posts out of loyalty to Gandhi or one of her subordinates rather than out of genuine popular support. The incumbent party functionaries owed their careers to Gandhi or her son Sanjay and had vied with each other in professions of esteem for the prime minister. She sought to exacerbate intraparty factionalism in order to prevent the rise of a leader from the ranks who might have challenged her dominant position. In the acerbic words of a correspondent for the *Times of India* writing in 1982, the party was "no more than a rabble held together by one towering personality."

In a March 1983 interview, Rajiv suggested that elections might be a first step in undertaking comprehensive reform of the party and that a measure of decentralization was desirable. He stated that "over the last . . . ten maybe fifteen years, the party has stopped functioning as a party . . ." and that "we have to restore the responsibilities of the lower office bearers, the block presidents and the district presidents and really restore a democratic

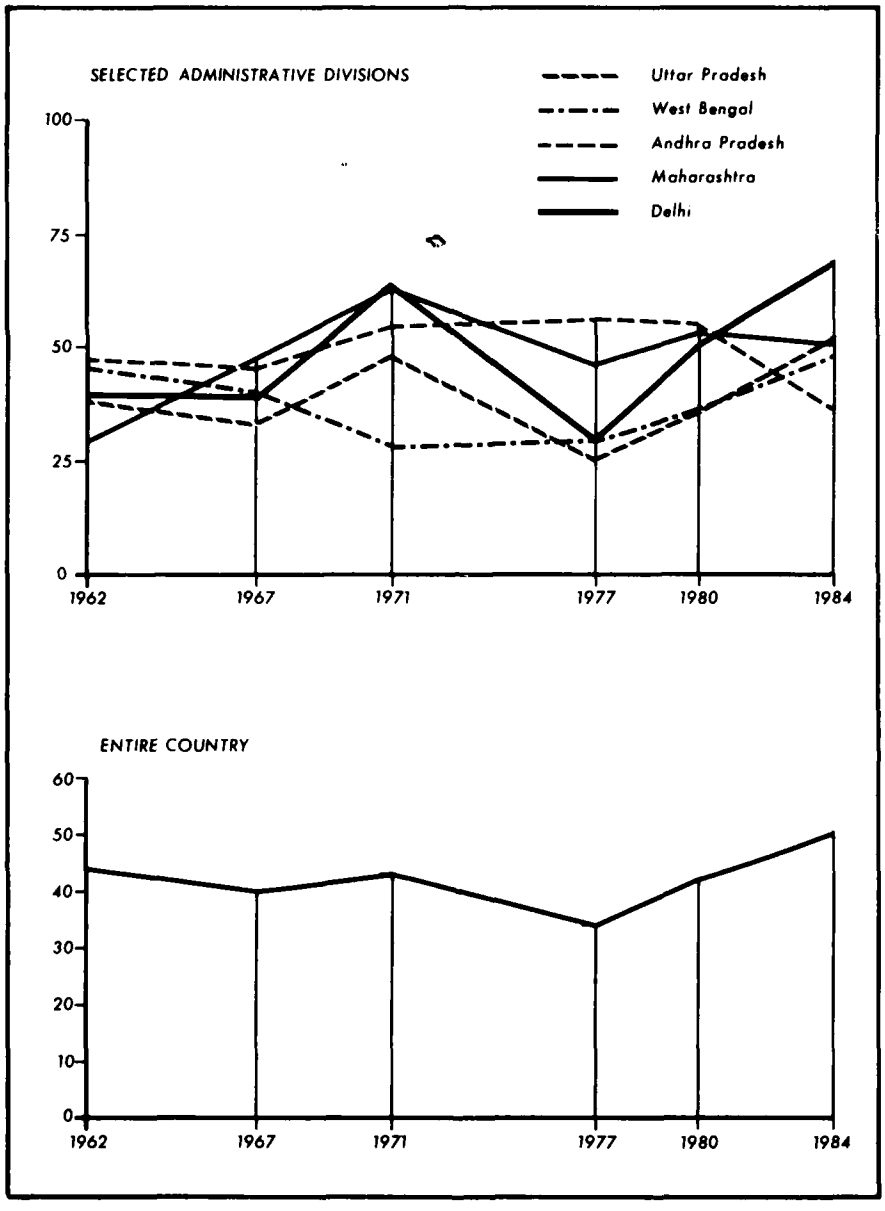
functioning within the party." However, elections had not been scheduled as of early 1985. The reason given for this in early 1984 was that state party committees had not kept proper membership rolls after the schism that gave birth to Congress (I) in 1978. In one state, Orissa, elections had been held on a trial basis, and the result was bitter factional infighting and legal complications. This may have convinced leaders that for the time being at least, talking about democratization was preferable to actually implementing it.

Congress (I) had two categories of membership: primary and active. An estimate published in 1982 of the number of primary members was 10 million, active members numbering around 300,000 (though these were the same as figures published 10 years before). Active members had specific responsibilities and could hold party office, but the centralization of party decision-making during the Indira years left them with few real responsibilities. Both primary and active members contributed membership dues. Other sources of party support included donors from the business world, and there were frequent accusations that the coffers of Congress (I) were filled with "black money," funds concealed illegally to avoid taxation.

Electoral Performance, 1952–84

Examination of electoral performance between 1952, when the first general election was held, and 1984 shows that Congress was the only political party with a genuinely nationwide constituency. Support varied from state to state and over time, but no other party, with the notable exception of the Janata Party in 1977, could claim anything approaching an equally broad electoral base. Opposition parties were either expressions of regional sentiment—such as the DMK or the Telugu Desam, possessing little or no nationwide appeal—or groups with national aspirations that could not extend their support beyond regional power bases, such as the CPI(M) in West Bengal. Congress' share of the popular vote in the general elections held between 1952 and 1980 ranged between 41 and 48 percent, the exception being the 1977 election when it dipped to 35 percent. Absolute majorities of between 54 and 80 percent of the seats in the Lok Sabha were achieved by the "multiplier effect" of single-member, winner-take-all constituencies. (In 1977 Congress won only 28 percent of the total seats.) Overall, there has been stability in Congress' share of the popular vote (see fig. 17).

The March 1977 election marked the low point in Congress'



Source: Based on information from Myron Weiner, *India at the Polls, 1980*, Washington, 1983, 153; Salamat Ali, "Rajiv's First Act Triumph," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, January 10, 1985, 22; and Prannoy Roy, "Election Analysis: An Unprecedented Result," *India Today*, January 15, 1985, 16–20.

Figure 17. Indian National Congress Percentage of the Popular Vote Throughout India and in Selected Administrative Divisions, 1962–84.

fortunes. This was a special case because opposition forces were successful in forming a united front and challenging a government whose Emergency measures were extremely unpopular among key groups.

In the December 1984 general election, Congress (I) gained 49 percent of the popular vote and 401 out of 514 of the lower house seats contested (polling for seats in Assam, Punjab, and some seats in other states—a total of 34—was postponed) (see table B). Observers in early 1985 were unsure whether this represented the beginning of an era of undisputed Congress (I) dominance or whether the consensus prompted by a sympathy vote for Indira Gandhi would be an ephemeral phenomenon.

Congress performance in the states has followed no clear-cut trends. Traditionally, the states of Gujarat and Maharashtra in the west and Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka in the south have been party strongholds, while support has declined over the years in the Hindi Belt (though the defeat of Congress (I) state governments in the two southern states in January 1983 signaled a new trend). Generally, state-level issues have preoccupied voters. There was limited "spillover," Congress successes or failures in one state not being a particularly significant factor in its performance in other states. This reinforces the notion that, given the strong regional orientation of Indian politics, "horizontal" alliances between political forces in different states are slow in developing.

Minorities in the 1977 and 1980 General Elections

One essential element in Congress' success as a national party has been the loyalty of disadvantaged minorities (harijans, tribals, and Muslims, together forming 33 percent of the total population). Unlike the caste Hindu majority, these groups have not been able to gain significant political power on the local or state levels and have historically had to depend on the top-down initiatives of Congress to protect their interests. Their support became vital as opposition parties began making inroads into Congress' caste Hindu following, especially in the Hindi Belt. It was to these groups that Gandhi addressed her themes of social justice and an end to caste discrimination and broke with the older party establishment.

Several factors prompted widespread harijan and Muslim desertion from Congress in March 1977. One was the effect of Emergency policies, especially Sanjay's notorious Five-Point Programme, which caused considerable suffering among minority groups. A second was the forging of an antigovernment al-



Voters casting their votes in world's largest democracy, 1984
Courtesy Embassy of India, Washington

liance of sorts between Muslims, whose most vocal spokesman was the imam of the Jama Masjid, and Hindu communalist organizations, such as the RSS and the Jana Sangh (one of the four parties that formed the Janata Party in early 1977), perhaps the strangest bedfellows in Indian politics. Because police personnel in the Hindi Belt were commonly Rajputs, a caste group with strong anti-Muslim sentiments, Muslims were often singled out for Emergency police actions. Harijan antigovernment sentiment was crystallized in February 1977, when Jagjivan Ram, their most prominent national leader, resigned from Gandhi's cabinet to form his own party, the Congress for Democracy (CFD), and pledged support for Janata in the March elections.

Table B. Results of the Lok Sabha Election, December 1984[1]

State or Union Territory	Seats	Congress (I)[2]		Telugu Desam Party[3]	CPI (M)[4]	
States						
Andhra Pradesh	42	6	(41)	28	1	(0)
Assam[10]	14	---	(2)	---	---	(0)
Bihar	54	48	(30)	0	0	(0)
Gujarat	26	24	(25)	0	0	(0)
Haryana	10	10	(5)	0	0	(0)
Himachal Pradesh	4	3	(3)	0	0	(0)
Jammu and Kashmir	6	2	(1)	0	0	(0)
Karnataka	28	24	(27)	0	0	(0)
Kerala	20	13	(5)	0	1	(6)
Madhya Pradesh	40	39	(35)	0	0	(0)
Maharashtra	48	43	(39)	0	0	(0)
Manipur	2	1	(1)	0	0	(0)
Meghalaya	2	2	(1)	0	0	(0)
Nagaland	1	1	(0)	0	0	(0)
Orissa	21	20	(19)	0	0	(0)
Punjab[12]	13	---	(12)	---	---	(0)
Rajasthan	25	25	(18)	0	0	(0)
Sikkim	1	1	(0)	0	0	(0)
Tamil Nadu	39	25	(20)	0	0	(0)
Tripura	2	0	(0)	0	2	(2)
Uttar Pradesh	85	82	(51)	0	0	(0)
West Bengal	42	16	(4)	0	18	(27)
Union territories						
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	1	1	(1)	0	0	(0)
Arunachal Pradesh	2	2	(2)	0	0	(0)
Chandigarh	1	1	(1)	0	0	(0)
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	1	0	(1)	0	0	(0)
Delhi	7	7	(6)	0	0	(0)
Goa, Daman, and Diu	2	2	(0)	0	0	(0)
Lakshadweep	1	1	(0)	0	0	(0)
Mizoram	1	1	(0)	0	0	(0)
Pondicherry	1	1	(1)	0	0	(0)
TOTAL	542[11]	401	(351)	28	22	(35)

Table B. Continued

AIADMK[5]		Janata Party		CPI[6]		Congress (S)[7]		Dalit Mazdoor Kisan Party[8]	
0	(0)	1	(0)	1	(0)	1	(1)	0	(0)
---	(0)	---	(0)	---	(0)	---	(0)	---	(0)
0	(0)	1	(8)	2	(4)	0	(4)	1	(5)
0	(0)	1	(1)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)
0	(0)	0	(1)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(4)
0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)
0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(1)	0	(0)
0	(0)	4	(1)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)
0	(0)	1	(0)	0	(2)	1	(3)	0	(0)
0	(0)	0	(4)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)
0	(0)	1	(8)	0	(0)	2	(1)	0	(0)
0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(1)	0	(0)	0	(0)
0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)
0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(1)
0	(0)	1	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)
---	(0)	---	(0)	---	(0)	---	(0)	---	(0)
0	(0)	0	(4)	0	(0)	0	(1)	0	(2)
0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)
12	(2)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)
0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)
0	(0)	0	(3)	0	(1)	0	(0)	2	(29)
0	(0)	0	(0)	3	(3)	0	(0)	0	(0)
0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)
0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)
0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)
0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)
0	(0)	0	(1)	0	(0)	0	(1)	0	(0)
0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)
0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(1)	0	(0)
0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)
0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)
12	(2)	10	(31)	6	(11)	4	(13)	3	(41)

Table B. Continued.

State or Union Territory	Seats	Bharatiya Janata Party	Independents and Other		Polling Postponed
States					
Andhra Pradesh	42	1	1	(0)	2
Assam[10]	14	---	---	(0)	14
Bihar	54	0	1	(3)	0
Gujarat	26	1	0	(0)	0
Haryana	10	0	0	(0)	0
Himachal Pradesh	4	0	0	(0)	1
Jammu and Kashmir	6	0	3[11]	(3)	1
Karnataka	28	0	0	(0)	0
Kerala	20	0	5	(4)	0
Madhya Pradesh	40	0	1	(0)	0
Maharashtra	48	0	2	(0)	0
Manipur	2	0	0	(0)	1
Meghalaya	2	0	0	(0)	0
Nagaland	1	0	0	(1)	0
Orissa	21	0	0	(0)	0
Punjab[12]	13	---	---	(1)	13
Rajasthan	25	0	0	(0)	0
Sikkim	1	0	0	(1)	0
Tamil Nadu	39	0	1[13]	(16)	1
Tripura	2	0	0	(0)	0
Uttar Pradesh	85	0	0	(1)	1
West Bengal	42	0	5	(7)	0
Union territories					
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	1	0	0	(0)	0
Arunachal Pradesh	2	0	0	(0)	0
Chandigarh	1	0	0	(0)	0
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	1	0	1	(0)	0
Delhi	7	0	0	(0)	0
Goa, Daman, and Diu	2	0	0	(1)	0
Lakshadweep	1	0	0	(0)	0
Mizoram	1	0	0	(1)	0
Pondicherry	1	0	0	(0)	0
TOTAL	542[14]	2	20	(39)	34

Table B. Continued.

---means no polling
[1]For purposes of comparison, January 1980 election results are placed in parentheses.
[2]Congress (Indira).
[3]Formed after January 1980 election.
[4]Communist Party of India (Marxist).
[5]All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (All-India Anna Dravidian Progressive Federation).
[6]Communist Party of India.
[7]In the January 1980 elections Congress S, meaning Congress (Socialist and Secular), ran as Congress (U), named for Devaraj Urs.
[8]Formed in 1984; figures for 1980 are for its largest component, the Bharatiya Lok Dal.
[9]As of January 15, 1985. In polling held in five constituencies on January 28, 1985, Congress (I) won two seats, Telugu Desam two, and DMK one.
[10]Balloting postponed in January 1980 for 12 of the 14 constituencies. In February 1983 elections were held for the 12 Lok Sabha seats in conjunction with Assam legislative assembly elections. Five Congress (I) candidates were elected, but because of ethnic violence, polling could not be completed in the remaining seven constituencies. Elections were postponed in all 14 constituencies in December 1984.
[11]National Conference Party, Farooq Abdullah's group.
[12]Balloting postponed in December 1984.
[13]DMK—Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (Dravidian Progressive Federation).
[14]Two additional seats are reserved for the Anglo-Indian community, making a total of 544.

Source: Based on information from George E. Delury, ed., *World Encyclopedia of Political Systems and Parties*, New York, 1983, 444; "Results of the General Election in India," *India News*, January 7, 1985, 4; and Myron Weiner, *India at the Polls*, 1980, Washington, 1983, 152.

In January 1980 Congress (I) was successful in regaining minority support, largely because of the growing sense of unease among the minorities with the caste Hindu-dominated Janata Party and a serious increase in communal and caste violence during the 1977–79 period. Apparently, large numbers concluded that their long-term interests lay with Congress (I) despite past abuses. They were probably the largest single factor in the 1980 election victory. In that year, according to political scientist Myron Weiner, they contributed an estimated 32.4 million votes to the party, compared with around 17 million in 1977.

The December 1984 General Election

A wave of popular sympathy in the wake of Gandhi's assassination virtually guaranteed victory in the December 1984 general election (one opposition leader noted cynically that "Indira Gandhi dead is more powerful than Indira Gandhi alive") but Congress (I) launched the most expensive and sophisticated campaign in India's history. Ample use was made of a newly installed network of television broadcasting stations, controlled by the gov-

ernment, to promote Rajiv's image as his mother's rightful successor. Video tape recordings of mother and son were shown nationwide. The party engaged a Bombay advertising firm to design the campaign; one of its brainstorms was the distribution of millions of shiny, metallic *bindi*—the dots Hindu women wear on their foreheads—engraved with a hand, the campaign symbol of Congress (I). Although spending by individual candidates was limited to Rs20,000 (for value of the rupee—see Glossary), more than Rs110 million was spent nationwide on newspaper advertisements, pamphlets, posters, and banners. Celebrities such as matinee idol Amitabh Bachchan and the former maharaja of Gwalior were recruited to run against well-known opposition figures. Rajiv himself traveled over 50,000 kilometers in 25 days of hard campaigning, reaching as many as 20 million people.

Despite the party's immense advantage (it was estimated that it could outspend the opposition by a factor of nine or 10), a tone of negativism and fear sometimes crept into the campaign. Some of Rajiv's speeches were interpreted as appeals to Hindu chauvinism and anti-Sikh sentiment. One observer noted that for the first time in independent India's history, a national leader had spoken of *badla* (revenge), apparently referring to Sikhs. He also refused to bar three Delhi politicians who allegedly had been involved in anti-Sikh violence from running on the party ticket. In many localities, the Hindu communalist RSS switched its support from the right-wing BJP to Congress (I), an unprecedented development. Since the early 1980s the ruling party had implemented a strategy of gaining caste Hindu support, which threatened to leave its traditional minority constituencies dangerously exposed. During the campaign Rajiv also accused opposition leaders of having links with Pakistan, other foreign powers, and Sikh secessionist groups overseas. Opponents of the Gandhi regime were frequently depicted as involved in a huge, anti-India conspiracy with foreign assistance. Congress (I) advertisements asked rhetorically: "Will the country's border finally be moved to your doorstep?"

The promise of a new beginning and the rhetoric of fear both contributed to a sweeping victory. Congress (I) won in virtually every region, including constituencies that had substantial Muslim and harijan populations (minorities apparently had no alternative to continued support of their traditional protector). In the Hindi Belt states it won more than half of the popular vote, with impressive victories in opposition strongholds in Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and the union territory of Delhi. Support declined slightly in the western states of Gujarat and Maharashtra, but Congress (I) made substantial inroads into CPI (M) strongholds in

West Bengal, where it won 48 percent of the vote. In the south it gained in Kerala and Tamil Nadu and lost slightly in Karnataka. Only in Andhra Pradesh did an opposition party, the Telugu Desam, have enough support to achieve a major reversal and deprive Congress (I) of a majority of constituencies.

Opposition Parties

During most of independent India's history, opposition parties have played a peripheral role in the political process on the national level. With the exception of the 1977–79 period, they have served primarily as monitors and critics of Congress policies. In this capacity they have defended the openness of the political system against the autocratic proclivities of the ruling party but have been incapable of uniting effectively and offering the voters a credible alternative. In December 1984 opposition parties won only 92 seats in the Lok Sabha out of 508 contested (not including 15 independents), a low point in their electoral fortunes. In the states they have had greater success, appealing to regional sentiments and exploiting the resentment aroused by the union government's attempts to control the state governments. But in early 1985 opposition parties were in control in only four states.

Even more than Congress (I), the opposition parties in the mid-1980s were plagued by institutional weakness. Usually they consisted of a political leader with some national prestige surrounded by his or her personal following. With the possible exception of the communist parties, personalism rather than ideology or institutional continuity was the rule, and personal dynamics determined the parties' fortunes. Party discipline was slack, and on numerous occasions the ruling party could take advantage of internal factional rivalries to induce opposition party members to defect to its own ranks. There was little that opposition groups could do to counter this strategy, given the funds and manpower at the disposal of Congress (I). In terms of their constituencies and general orientations, the opposition—ranging from the CPI (M) on the left to the Hindu communalist BJP on the right—found little on which they could agree and could unite only under extraordinary circumstances.

The Rise and Fall of Janata, 1977–79

Jayaprakash Narayan's antigovernment movement in Bihar and Gujarat on the eve of the Emergency provided opposition

parties with a rare opportunity to act in concert. The Janata Front was formed in 1975 and successfully contested the Gujarat legislative assembly elections. In January 1977, after general elections were scheduled by the union government for March, Narayan, the country's most respected opposition leader, presided over the creation of the Janata Party. He declared that he would refuse to support any opposition group as long as anti-Congress forces remained divided, and his prestige as a saintly figure in the tradition of Mahatma Gandhi facilitated the successful melding of a very disparate united front. The four parties involved were the original members of the Janata Front: Narayan's own Socialist Party, whose program was an amalgam of Gandhian, Marxist, and social democratic ideas; Congress (O), the remnant of Congress left over when Gandhi split the party in 1969 and led by her old rival, Desai; the Jana Sangh, the political arm of the Hindu communalist RSS; and the Bharatiya Lok Dal (BLD), headed by Charan Singh, its platform tailored to Uttar Pradesh's rural interests. In February they were joined by harijan leader Jagjivan Ram's Congress for Democracy, and an alliance was also made with the CPI(M), the DMK, and the Akali Dal. By pooling their resources and manpower and capitalizing on popular dislike of Emergency measures, they unseated a Congress government for the first time in Indian history.

The new national leaders—Desai, Charan Singh, and Ram (Narayan was reluctant to play an active role)—were deeply divided among themselves, and the Janata Party failed to stand the test of time or an accumulation of personal animosities. Narayan stepped in to choose the 81-year-old Desai as prime minister; Charan Singh served as minister of home affairs, the second most prestigious post in the government. Differences between the two men developed on a broad range of issues, not the least of which was how to deal with the alleged criminals of the Emergency, especially Sanjay and Indira Gandhi. Charan Singh was forced out of the cabinet in June 1978, only to be brought back in as finance minister in January 1979 to prevent a permanent split of the party. But Janata was falling apart. In July Raj Narain, a colorful and eccentric associate of Charan Singh, broke with the party and formed the Janata (Secular), ostensibly over the issue of the communalism of "fascist" Jana Sangh elements. Ram sought to become India's first harijan prime minister but was blocked by Desai. In late July the president of India forced Desai to step down. Charan Singh formed a new, but short-lived, government that humiliatingly found itself dependent upon Gandhi's Congress (I) for a majority; it was swept out of office in January 1980.

Opposition Parties in the Mid-1980s

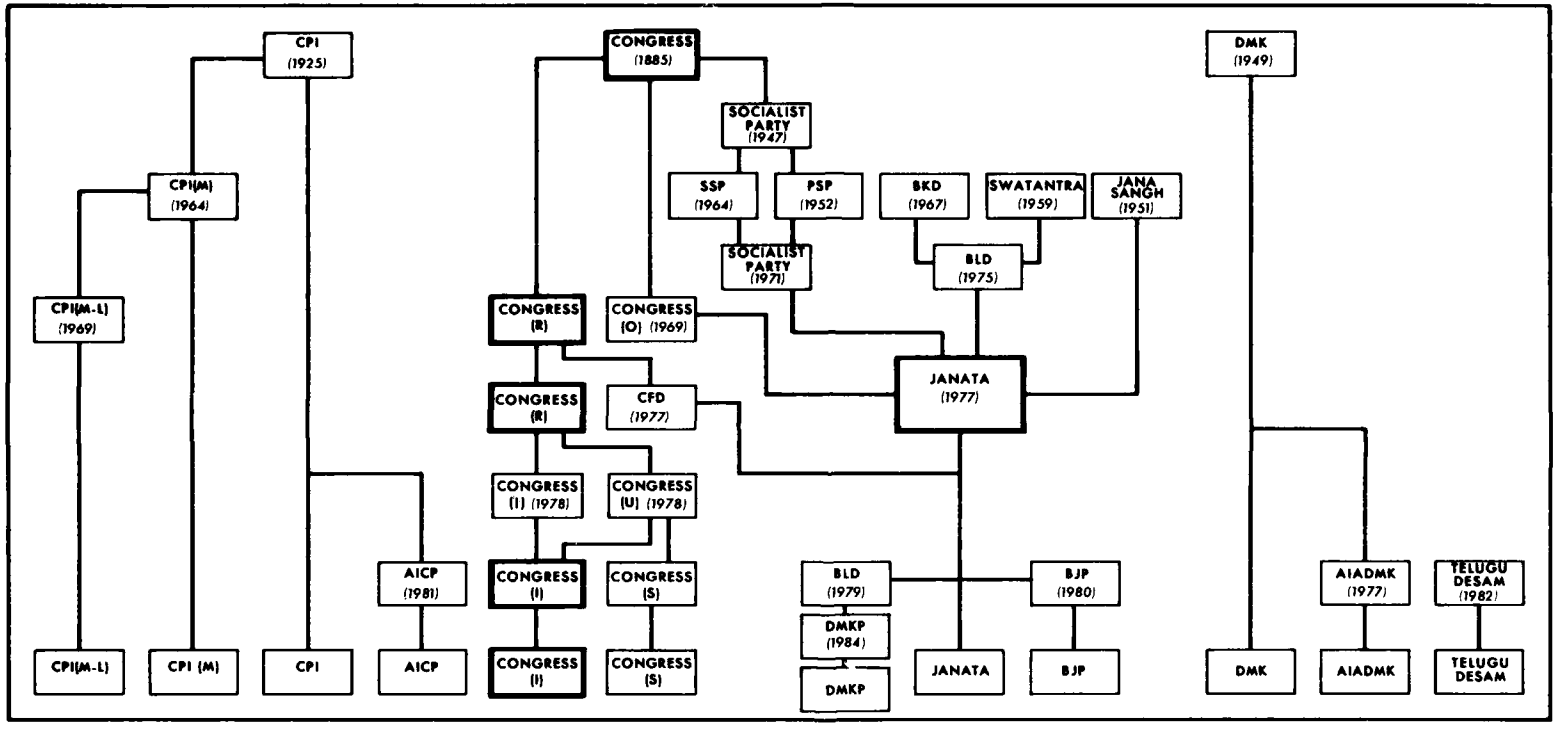
Janata's collapse did not bode well for future attempts to promote opposition unity. Rivalry among the three most important leaders—Desai, Charan Singh, and Ram—remained strong, though power was passing from these aged men (Ram, born in 1908, was the youngest) to a younger generation. Opposition conclaves were held in 1983 and 1984 in Vijayawada, Srinigar, Delhi, and Calcutta as leaders planned strategy for the upcoming general elections. Telugu Desam chief, Rama Rao, had called the first at Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh in May 1983, and 24 leaders from 14 opposition parties attended. In August 1983 two conservative parties formed the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), and in September five leftist parties formed the United Front (UF). Indignation over Congress (I)-instigated coups in Kashmir and Andhra Pradesh provided new ground for opposition unity. Describing an opposition mass rally in the capital, a correspondent for *India Today* wrote in September 1985 that "not since the historic meeting . . . in June 1975, addressed by the late Jayaprakash Narayan, have so many opposition leaders covering the entire political spectrum, come together on the same platform and spoken in one voice even if the theme was the time-worn one of 'Mrs. Gandhi's dictatorial and dynastic rule'." In October 1984 four opposition groups, led by the BLD's Charan Singh, formed the Dalit Mazdoor Kisan Party (DMKP—Oppressed Workers' and Peasants' Party). But joint-action strategies foundered after Gandhi's assassination transformed the target of their campaigns into a national heroine and martyr.

In the mid-1980s the major opposition parties included those with national aspirations and those whose platforms were regional in orientation. Most of these lost heavily in the December 1984 polling.

Noncommunist Parties with National Aspirations

Most of the noncommunist national parties were members of what was called the "Congress culture" and traced their origins to the Indian National Congress. They had left the Indira-dominated component at some time after 1969 (see fig. 18). Some of these parties kept the Congress name, using a veritable alphabet soup to advertise their differences with the main branch of the party. In early 1985 these included the Indian National Congress (J), or Congress (J), led by Ram and claiming support among the country's harijans; the Indian National Congress (S), or Congress (S), for "Socialist and

AIADMK—All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam
(All-India Anna Dravidian Progressive Federation)
AiCP—All-India Communist Party
BJP—Bharatiya Janata Party
(Indian People's Party)
BKD—Bharatiya Kranti Dal
BLD—Bharatiya Lok Dal
CFD—Congress for Democracy
Congress—Indian National Congress
Congress (I)—Congress
(Indira)
Congress (O)—Congress
(Organizational) *or* (*Opposition*)
Congress (R)—Congress
(Ruling)
Congress (S)—Congress
(Socialist and Secular)
Congress (U)—Congress
(Urs)
CPI—Communist Party of India
CPI (M)—Communist Party of India
(Marxist)
CPI (M-L)—Communist Party of India
(Marxist-Leninist)
DMK—Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam
(Dravidian Progressive Federation)
DMKP—Dalit Mazdoor Kisan Party
(Oppressed Workers' and Peasants' Party)
Jana Sangh
Janata—Janata Party
PSP—Praja Socialist Party
Socialist Party
SSP—Samyukta Socialist Party
Swatantra—Swatantra Party
Telugu Desam—Telugu Desam Party



Source: Based on information from George E. Delury, ed., *World Encyclopedia of Political Systems and Parties*, New York, 1983, 445.

Figure 18. Evolution of Major Political Parties, 1885–1984.

Secular"; and the Rashtriya Congress, based in Gujarat. Congress (S) was successful in electing four candidates to the Lok Sabha in December 1984, and Congress (J) won a single seat.

Of greater importance was the Janata Party, led by party president Chandra Shekhar and including a broad spectrum of other leaders, such as Desai and the socialists Mahdu Limaye and George Fernandes. The party's representation in the Lok Sabha dropped from 31 to 10 in the December 1984 polling, and Shekhar lost his constituency in Uttar Pradesh to a Congress (I) candidate. After the election the prospects for Janata's only state government, headed by Ramakrishna Hegde in Karnataka, were uncertain; because of the Congress (I) sweep of his state's parliamentary seats, he dissolved his government and called new state elections for 1985.

Although Charan Singh had built a strong, personalist base for himself among prosperous farmers in Uttar Pradesh, the DMKP won only three seats in the lower house compared with a previous total of 41 for Charan Singh's BLD. Other "Congress culture" parties included the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP), established in 1981 by H.N. Bahuguna, which had support among Muslims in Uttar Pradesh and had joined the DMKP, and the Rashtriya Sanjay Manch (RSM—National Sanjay Group). Founded in 1983 by Maneka Gandhi, Sanjay's widow, this party traded on the memory of her husband and recruited many of his then-discredited followers. The 27-year-old Maneka challenged Rajiv Gandhi in his parliamentary constituency of Amethi in Uttar Pradesh—motivated by ambition and a classic rivalry between daughter-in-law and mother-in-law—but lost badly; the RSM won no Lok Sabha seats.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP—Indian People's Party), which had historical links to the Jana Sangh and the RSS, was the only major noncommunist, national opposition party that did not trace its origins to the Indian National Congress. In the mid-1980s its leaders, Atal Behari Vajpayee and L.K. Advani, sought to broaden its popular base by giving it a noncommunal, "secular" image and by seeking support outside its traditional bastions among caste Hindus in the north of the country. Observers noted that its communalist appeal had been to a large extent co-opted by Congress (I). After December 1984 its total number of seats in the Lok Sabha was two, and Vajpayee lost his seat.

Communist Parties

The CPI was founded in 1925 and acted as a component of the Moscow-controlled Communist International (Comintern); it was closely linked to the Communist Party of Britain. Although it cooperated with the Indian National Congress during the independence

struggle, the two groups diverged when the communists, cooperating with Britain as an ally of the Soviet Union in World War II, refused to support Congress' "Quit India" movement in 1942. After 1945 communists were involved in strikes and a peasant uprising in Hyderabad (now part of Andhra Pradesh). In 1957 the CPI came to power in the state of Kerala at the head of a coalition government, but President's Rule was imposed two years later.

Beginning in late 1959 communist unity was shaken over the Sino-Indian border dispute (see Relations with China, ch. 9). The party was divided over the question of whether it should support China or India. In November 1962, in the wake of the Sino-Indian border war, the party formally declared an anti-Chinese and pro-Indian line, but factional warfare continued unabated until 1964, when the party split into a pro-Soviet faction, known thereafter as the Communist Party of India (CPI), and a pro-Chinese faction, the Communist Party of India (Marxist), or CPI(M). In May 1969 a third group was organized under the name of the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist), or CPI(M-L). In 1981 the All-India Communist Party (AICP) emerged.

In the mid-1980s the CPI enjoyed "fraternal relations" with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) and followed Moscow's direction ideologically. Before 1977 it generally supported Gandhi, even during the Emergency. In that year its general secretary, Rajeswara Rao, broke with Congress and attempted to cultivate better relations with the CPI(M). Pro-Congress elements in the CPI broke away in 1981 to form the AICP. The CPI had significant support among voters in Kerala (where it was part of a coalition government along with Congress [I]), Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal. In December 1984 it gained six Lok Sabha seats, co mpared with a previous total of 11. It claimed 5 million members in a number of affiliated groups.

In the mid-1980s the CPI(M), independent of Moscow, enjoyed larger electoral support and membership than the CPI. Party ranks and affiliated groups totaled approximately 11 million. The CPI(M) had been the largest opposition party in the Lok Sabha, but in December 1984 its total fell from 35 to 22, six fewer than the Telugu Desam. In early 1985 the party had state governments in West Bengal and Tripura.

Regional Parties

The Telugu Desam Party became the largest opposition group in the Lok Sabha following the December 1984 election,

winning 28 seats (two additional seats were won in January 1985). In Kashmir the National Conference headed by Farooq Abdullah won three seats; in Tamil Nadu the pro-Congress (I) All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK—All India Anna Dravidian Progressive Federation) won 12 seats; and the opposition Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK—Dravidian Progressive Federation) won one seat and then won a second seat in January 1985. Because polling was postponed in Assam and Punjab, the status of the Sikh community party, the Akali Dal, and the All-Assam Gana Sangram Parishad (AAGSP) was uncertain in early 1985 (see Regionalism and Regional Political Crises, this ch.).

* * *

Richard L. Park and Bruce Bueno de Mesquita's *India's Political System* (second edition, published in 1979) and Robert L. Hardgrave's *India: Government and Politics in a Developing Nation* (third edition, published in 1980) provide good overviews of the political system, and Hardgrave 's *India under Pressure* is an excellent discussion of developments up to 1984. *The Government and Politics of India* by W. H. Morris-Jones was published in 1971 but still has many useful insights. *The Modernity of Tradition* by Lloyd I. and Susanne Hoeber Rudolph has an interesting discussion of the role of caste and politics; Barrington Moore's treatment of India in *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* deals with the way in which democracy developed in a segmented society. Highly readable accounts of Indian political life are found in *India File* by Trevor Fishlock and in *Calcutta*, a history of that city by Geoffrey Moorehouse. Ved Mehta's *A Family Affair*, covering the Emergency, the Janata period, and Indira Gandhi's reemergence in 1980, is good literature as well as good political reporting. *Indira Gandhi: Her Road to Power* is a vivid but critical portrait of the late prime minister by her cousin, Nayantara Sahgal.

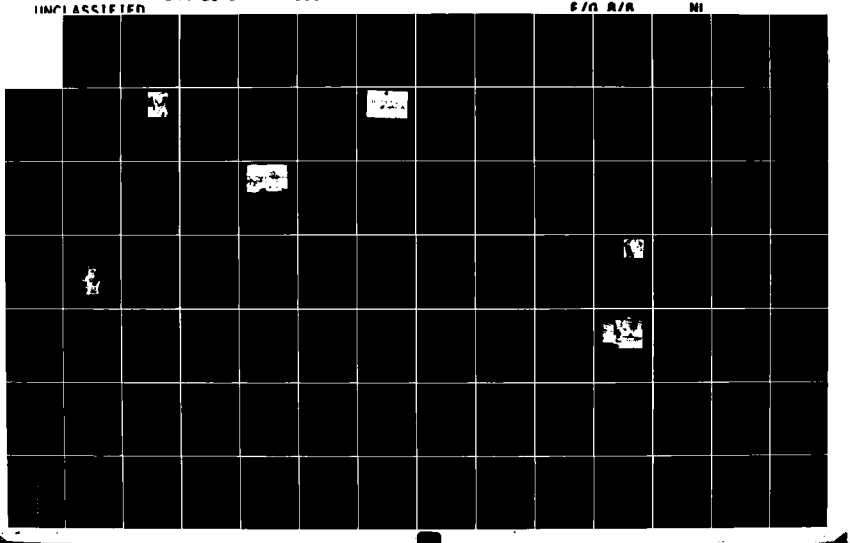
Articles on political developments can be found in such publications as the *Indian Journal of Political Science*, the *Indian Political Science Review*, *Asian Survey*, *Pacific Affairs*, and the *Far Eastern Economic Review*. The *Christian Science Monitor* has well-written coverage of India, as does the *New York Times*. *India Today*, a fortnightly published in India, publishes high-quality political and investigative reporting. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

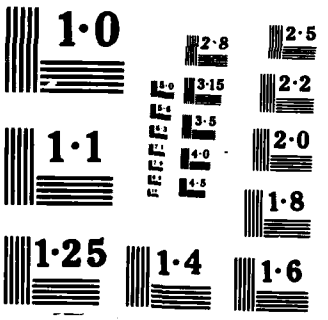
Chapter 9. Foreign Relations



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THE BASIC DETERMINANTS of Indian foreign policy in the mid-1980s continued to be, on the one hand, India's large size, power potential, strategic location, and unique struggle for independence and, on the other hand, the external circumstances of global great power rivalry in the post-World War II era. Whereas the first set of factors impelled India to participate actively in world affairs, the second set constrained both the impact of that participation and the directions it took. At the time of independence, the partition of the country and its abysmal poverty also imposed constraints on foreign policy. Thus, India's role and status in the international system has not been constant and has been affected both by its own capabilities and by the tensions within the international system at any given time.

India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, articulated foreign policy goals and national interests in terms of independence of decisionmaking, peace, insulation of the South Asian region from great power conflict, and international cooperation, especially for economic development. These tenets were summed up in the stance of nonalignment. Nehru refused to commit India either to those military alliance systems created by the United States or to the one formed by the Soviet Union. He cultivated solidarity with Asian and African countries emerging from colonial rule and supported the United Nations and its agencies, as well as other cooperative multilateral organizations, such as the Commonwealth of Nations. Although his successors did not sustain the same high international profile for India that Nehru gained, they drew on the national consensus he had built around nonalignment. They made adjustments of content in dealings with the United States and the Soviet Union in response to changing needs and circumstances, but the continuity in the themes of Indian foreign policy with respect to the global powers has been striking. Changes have arisen in specific relationships, especially with such middle-ranking states as Canada, Japan, or the oil-exporting countries, as interests and capacities have altered. Pragmatism, rather than ideology, has shaped India's foreign policy.

India's unusually large number of neighbors show a great variety in size, power, and perspective on India. This fact has added to India's difficulty in evolving a consistent pattern of neighborly behavior and in working out regional solutions to chronic social and economic problems. Ideological and territorial conflicts with Pakistan and China have resulted in wars and pro-

longed periods of tension, notwithstanding attempts to resolve disputes and establish peaceable norms of interstate dealings. A solid base of Indian assistance to, and tolerance for, the vagaries of its smaller neighbors has been disturbed from time to time by disagreements with some of them on issues that arouse strong emotions on both sides, such as the treatment of minority communities. Charges have been levied against India for harboring hegemonic ambitions. For reasons of proximity, cultural similarity, and the socioeconomic pressures of modernization, the countries of South Asia were likely to command the continued attention of the Indian government.

In nearly four decades since independence, India has substantially increased its tangible assets of military and economic power, diversified its international relationships, and developed highly trained personnel. At the same time, both internal and external challenges to national security have persisted and may have increased. According to several analysts, India's strategic environment in the mid-1980s was less stable and more threatening than it had been in the 1950s. Tension existed, therefore, between national aspirations for external peace and internal development and the capability of achieving conditions conducive to their fulfillment. Aware of this tension, Rajiv Gandhi, as the head of a new government that was elected in December 1984, and which had an unprecedented majority in Parliament, stated his intention of seeking friendship with India's neighbors and all other countries. He said he expected to continue the foreign policy he had inherited.

The Foreign Policymaking Establishment

In India, as in most countries, foreign policy has been made by the national leadership. Among the national leaders of the independence struggle, Nehru had the most long-standing interest in world affairs. From the late 1920s onward, he drafted statements on international issues for the Indian National Congress (see Glossary). As a member of the interim government in 1946, he outlined India's approach to the world. During his tenure as prime minister—1947 to 1964—Nehru was also foreign minister and set the pattern of direction and control. His successors, too, chose to exercise considerable control over India's international dealings, although they appointed separate foreign ministers for most of the period. The varying personalities and perceptions of successive prime ministers no doubt influenced policy decisions,

but they did not alter the definitions of national interest and foreign policy goals that Nehru articulated.

Because of Britain's historic monopoly over the security and external functions of government, the number of Indians capable of contributing to making foreign policy or influencing it was extremely small at the time of independence. With Nehru's encouragement, specific issues were debated in Parliament, and divergent viewpoints found expression in the press. As political participation increased, controversies arose, and as experience spread, international affairs received more attention from an informed public. But, for several reasons arising from the generally low level of literacy and political development in India, institutional connections between public opinion and foreign policymaking remained weak. Actual implementation of policy and daily conduct of international relations were the responsibility of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), and diplomatic missions abroad were manned largely by members of the Indian Foreign Service (IFS).

Nehru's command of foreign policymaking has been affirmed by contemporary accounts of impartial observers, the official record, memoirs of foreign and Indian diplomats, and works by his biographers. In historian Michael Brecher's words, Nehru was "the philosopher, the architect, the engineer, and the voice of his country's policy towards the outside world." Every major decision—from remaining within the Commonwealth as a republic to committing troops for United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations—was his. Nevertheless, Nehru consulted many different people and relied on the advice of a few trusted individuals. Prominent among them were his Congress colleague Maulana Azad, the philosopher S. Radhakrishnan, the historian K.M. Panikkar, his sister Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, and his brilliant but caustic friend V.K. Krishna Menon. The administration of the foreign office and the conduct of international affairs were entrusted to senior members of the Indian Civil Service—G.S. Bajpai, N.R. Pillai, and K.P.S. Menon.

The consequences of Nehru's preeminence were not all beneficial. Despite his numerous speeches and personal touches, Indian officials were not fully inculcated in the unique blend of idealism and realism that Nehru had achieved. There were frequent gaps and some contradictions between the formulation of policies and their detailed implementation, as in the case of the state of Jammu and Kashmir (Kashmir). Advisers to the prime minister vied for his attention and played upon his attachments, which inevitably resulted in a dilution of rational and factual elements in their analyses of situations, such as occurred, for exam-

ple, in postrevolutionary China. Those closest to Nehru did not necessarily agree with one other. Indeed, the antagonism between his sister and Krishna Menon was obvious and notorious, especially at the UN. India's foreign policy came to be perceived as Nehru's policy, dependent on his international prestige for success, as in the 1950s, or discredited with his failure vis-à-vis China after 1960. It took time for others to understand what Nehru had always asserted—that the main pillars of India's foreign policy were logically indicated by the basic determinants of history and geopolitics.

A full-time minister of external affairs was appointed for the first time by Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri in 1964. But Shastri was propelled into center stage by China's explosion of nuclear bombs in 1964 and by Pakistani incursions, leading to war in 1965. He personally negotiated the Tashkent Agreement with Pakistan before his death in 1966. In terms of bureaucratic politics, Shastri expanded the Prime Minister's Secretariat and gave it enhanced powers. The trend continued until it had become the de facto coordinator and supraministry of the Indian government in the 1970s. Some parity of status between foreign and prime ministers prevailed during the Janata government (1977–79), partly because the respective incumbents, Atal Behari Vajpayee and Morarji Desai, headed different factions in a coalition party. The brevity of their tenure in office, however, precluded substantive institutional change.

As prime minister, Indira Gandhi appointed several foreign ministers over the years or took over the portfolio herself from time to time. None of her appointees achieved preeminence or challenged the authority of her decisions. Her ingrained secrecy, her habit of frequently switching portfolios among cabinet ministers, and her reliance for important tasks on nonelected individuals, such as P.N. Haksar, D.P. Dhar, Mohammed Yunus, and G. Parthasarathi, assured her continued dominance over all aspects of government. Moreover, in the international realm, her long experience and close contacts with world leaders were incomparable assets. She used personal diplomacy to the maximum advantage.

The generally weak institutional infrastructure of foreign policymaking has been growing steadily in the public domain as well as in the bureaucracy. A small foreign department was established by Congress in 1925 to establish overseas contacts and to publicize its freedom struggle. After independence parliamentary committees acted more as Nehru's students than his masters. In theory, Parliament exercised overall control through its power of the purse, its often lively debates, its regular question hours, and its occasional motions for adjournment or no confidence. On

some issues it brought about a modification of the government's stand—as on China after 1959 or on the Czechoslovak crisis of 1968—or even a reversal of decision—as on an agreement with the Voice of America in 1963. On most issues it merely drew out information and endorsed governmental action.

The most important official link between the legislature and the executive is the Lok Sabha's (House of the People, the lower house of Parliament) Consultative Committee on External Affairs, which meets regularly and is drawn from many parties. Usually it has served either as a transmission belt for government briefings or as a deliberative chamber. The wide spectrum of views but low level of international experience among its members, its lack of independent research facilities, and the absence of procedures for hearing outsiders have prevented it from playing a more creative role in foreign policy. The watchdog functions of Parliament were most effectively performed by opposition parties. Other than Congress, only the communist parties and the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) developed coherent platforms on foreign policy. After the mid-1950s the communist parties were broadly supportive of Indian foreign policy. The BJS was critical both of the idealistic rhetoric of nonalignment and of a perceived lack of flexibility in its implementation. It advocated a more vigorous use of India's power or even an alliance with Western countries in order to defend national interests from erosion at the hands of Pakistan and China. The BJS was part of the Janata government, but its foreign policy in practice showed more continuity than change with Congress.

Pressure groups on foreign relations acted outside and inside Parliament but were much less organized or articulate than in other democracies. They consisted of business groups, such as the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce International; religious groups, especially among Muslims; and various friendship or cultural societies promoting closer ties with specific countries (see Occupational Interest Groups, ch. 8). A constellation informally known as the "Soviet lobby" was discernible among the latter. An equally informal "American lobby" was also said to operate within various middle-class associations. Academicians, publicists, and columnists have historically played little role in foreign policymaking but they have helped raise the intellectual content of public debate on international issues. After 1980 tiny steps were taken by MEA to use the independent work of scholars to augment its inadequate facilities for research and analysis.

In the mid-1980s MEA remained the department of government most concerned with foreign affairs. It was responsible for

providing accurate information to the prime minister and foreign minister, evaluating and analyzing data, recommending concrete measures when necessary, planning policy alternatives for the future, and maintaining communication with foreign missions in New Delhi. It administered some 135 Indian missions abroad, organized Indian participation in conferences abroad (nearly 100 in 1983–84), and handled the logistics of international conferences hosted by India. There were 26 of these in 1983–84, including two mammoth "heads of government" meetings—that for the Nonaligned Movement and for the Commonwealth of Nations, both held in 1983.

MEA, like other departments of the government, was organized hierarchically. The minister of external affairs was of cabinet rank and could be assisted by a minister of state. The highest ranking civil servants were three secretaries, among whom the foreign secretary took precedence. Proposals have been made from time to time to revive an earlier senior and coordinating post of secretary general. Three additional secretaries were followed by joint secretaries, deputy secretaries, undersecretaries, and attachés, in descending order of seniority. The total number of posts for officers at MEA in the 1983–84 period was 161, and there were 794 posts abroad, not counting 19 on training, 19 officers on leave, and 20 on deputation. These officers were supported by a large number of administrative and clerical personnel.

The working structure of MEA was based on divisions, numbering 21 in early 1985. Apart from the administrative and protocol divisions, there were territorial divisions handling large areas of the world, such as the Americas, and functional divisions dealing with such matters as external publicity or the UN. By the late 1970s the economic division had become the largest in MEA, reflecting the new priorities of Indian diplomacy, and the number of commercial posts at home and abroad was increasing. MEA administered the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, which arranged exhibits, visits, and cultural exchanges with other countries and oversaw the activities of foreign cultural centers in India. MEA also administered a small but growing foreign aid program directed toward Bhutan, Nepal, and developing countries in Southeast Asia and Africa. This program accounted for two-fifths of the total expenditure of MEA during fiscal year (FY—see Glossary) 1984. The largest single expense was the maintenance of missions abroad.

Members of the IFS were recruited through annual written and oral competitive examinations. Competition was keen, and graduates of the best universities possessed an edge over other

candidates. Notwithstanding the urban and English-speaking bias of the IFS officers, they came from a great variety of regional and economic backgrounds, not from a narrow, elite class or one community. Training programs were still going through experimentation and were somewhat elementary. Training provided recruits an acquaintance with rural India and a theoretical introduction to international affairs. Except for foreign language proficiency, all training took place within India. MEA and the IFS were frequently criticized for generalization in an age of specialization; inadequate coordination, research, and planning; poor external publicity; and insufficient integration with the rest of the government and country. Some reforms had been initiated on the recommendations of expert commissions, such as the *Pillai Report of 1964*, but the foreign policy establishment cannot change alone in India.

Nonalignment

The seventh summit conference of the Nonaligned Movement was held in New Delhi in March 1983. India was host to the heads of government or heads of state of 100 member countries (plus the liberation movements of Palestine and South West Africa), nine guest and eight observer countries, and representatives of various regional organizations and of UN special committees. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi chaired this conference of a movement that represented the majority of the world's people.

In her welcoming address she reiterated the definition of nonalignment, emphasized its significance in a world "balancing on the brink of the collapse of the world economic system and annihilation through nuclear war," and referred to the continuing search for racial equality, national sovereignty and development, and global peace. The economic and political declarations emanating from the conference through a consensus mechanism expressed the application of general principles to specific situations in southern Africa, Southwest Asia, and Central America, as well as in international economic dealings. In pursuance of this New Delhi Declaration, special emissaries were sent to Iraq and Iran to plead for a cessation of hostilities, and Gandhi dispatched letters and held meetings with leaders of developed countries, urging international negotiations on global economic issues. In 1984 she initiated an appeal for disarmament to all nuclear powers. None of these moves resulted in a tangible change in the international situation and so appeared to be gestures without

power, but they underlined the concerns of many people around the world.

Gandhi's actions as chairperson of the Nonaligned Movement were also in keeping with the tenets of Indian foreign policy enunciated by Nehru in the first phase of the cold war. Nehru asserted that in the uniquely bipolar configuration of the international system after World War II, the best way to exercise independence was "to keep away from power politics of groups aligned against one another." Opposition to military alliances in the cold war context was a consistent feature of nonalignment. Nehru did not construe avoidance of entangling alliances to mean neutralism or passivity but rather a projection of India's voice to gain an honorable status and to further its goals. The goals were described in highly moralistic and universalistic terms and not merely as national interests. They focused on anticolonialism and racial equality, relaxation of tensions and creation of an "area of peace," recognition of Asia as a new vital force, and alleviation of poverty through international cooperation. For Nehru, India had a mission in the world as a beacon of freedom and as the voice of nonviolence and conscience; he embraced this mission with evangelical zeal. Moreover, Nehru believed that nonalignment would remind a heterogeneous and inward-looking Indian people of their new collective personality in a diverse world and thus serve to reinforce national unity and self-esteem. His faith in the superiority of negotiation and mediation over military confrontation, as much as recognition of India's lack of substantive power, underlay his preference for hortative diplomacy. Despite his sensitivity, Nehru may have been unaware of the irritation to others caused by the self-righteous tones adopted by India's representatives.

Nehru's ideas on nonalignment unfolded over time and seldom met with full understanding in world capitals. At first, close affinity between India and Britain and the many continuities of policy between the two governments appeared more significant than the 1947 transfer of power. Moscow described India as a "tool of Anglo-American imperialism" and encouraged the disruptive agitations of Indian communists. Washington, for the most part, ignored India and regarded nonalignment as verbal posturing or "immoral" neutralism. It was partly in order to avoid international isolation that Nehru decided to retain India's membership in the Commonwealth as a republic. There were other unsentimental reasons as well, i.e., to prevent the Commonwealth from becoming wholly pro-Pakistan; to have access to Western economic assistance and military equipment without excessive dependence on the United States; and, most important, to con-

vert the Commonwealth from a monarchical extension of the British Empire to a multiracial organization of equal members with which India could consult and cooperate without being subjected to external controls.

Within the Commonwealth, the Colombo Plan facilitated economic assistance to South Asia. A special relationship was created between India and Canada that lasted into the 1960s. On important issues in the early 1950s, Britain, Canada, and Australia urged their ally, the United States, to pay closer attention to India's viewpoint. Differences on such contentious issues as Kashmir, Rhodesia, race relations, or citizenship rights were not allowed to disrupt the urbane proceedings of prime ministers' meetings. The formation of the Commonwealth Secretariat in 1964 gave new opportunities to Indian officials. In short, Commonwealth membership was found to be compatible with an independent foreign policy and remained a focus of Indian diplomacy. This fact was highlighted in 1983, when India hosted the Commonwealth Prime Ministers Conference for the first time.

The political viability of nonalignment was established during the Korean War (1950–53), as both a part of and separate from the UN diplomacy that accompanied that war. As a member of the UN Security Council in 1950, India supported the resolution condemning the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) for its attack but decided not to send combat troops. India also resisted United States efforts to link all related issues into a front against China. India attempted—albeit unsuccessfully—to obtain recognition of China as an independent power and as a member of the UN, as well as to reduce the risks of having the war spread. Other Asian and Arab delegations in the UN supported these efforts and began to hold consultations among themselves, which continued in the mid-1980s as the enlarged Group of 77. By 1952 Stalin had determined that India was "not our enemy" and so opened the way for future Soviet-Indian friendship. India's mediatory role in resolving the stalemate over prisoners of war in Korea was eventually found acceptable by China and the United States. The Indian Custodian Force supervised the process of interviews and repatriation that followed, and India chaired the five-member Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission. This was the first of several peace missions entrusted to Indian armed forces by the UN in the Middle East, Cyprus, and the Congo (now Zaïre). UN secretaries general relied heavily on nonaligned nations to assist them in preventive diplomacy.

The 1954 Geneva Accords on Indochina established three International Commissions of Supervision and Control—for Viet-

nam, Cambodia, and Laos—that India chaired until their disbandment in 1973. In the mid-1950s Nehru's formula for regional peace through nationalism and nonalignment seemed acceptable to all parties involved in Southeast Asia except the United States, Thailand, and a few of their allies. As military conflicts expanded in the Indochinese states—from anticolonial struggles to civil war and to aspects of great power rivalry— India lost the capacity to influence events there. And with the establishment of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) and the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), international politics throughout Asia congealed into patterns of alignment and counteralignment. This diminished the possibility of achieving in practice the Asian-African solidarity heralded at the Asian Relations Conference in New Delhi in 1947 and the Afro-Asian Conference in Bandung in 1955.

Of equal or greater importance was the fact that differences between India and the United States became pronounced. India's antagonism toward SEATO and CENTO and toward the United States as their sponsor was rooted in Pakistan's adherence to both. India's reaction to United States military aid to Pakistan was consistently vehement, not only because the cold war was injected into the subcontinent but also because Pakistan's military capacity was improved enormously. India's position in Kashmir hardened, as did its opposition to Western proposals for settlement (see Relations with Pakistan, this ch.). India searched for new sources from which to purchase military equipment at reasonable prices to counter the hardware and weapons that Pakistan had received virtually free. By the late 1950s the Soviet Union was willing to supply both military sales and economic assistance, while praising India's nonalignment and endorsing its anticolonial stance (see Relations with the Soviet Union, this ch.).

Although India urged other newly independent states to abjure foreign military entanglements, it did not attempt to organize them into a nonaligned coalition. Nevertheless, similarity of approach to international problems brought Nehru together with President Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia and Gamal Abdul Nasser of Egypt in frequent meetings. A desire to provide a forum for the increasing number of governments professing nonalignment and to enhance the prestige of the group as a whole produced the dramatic Belgrade summit conference of 25 nonaligned nations in September 1961. Although Nehru was recognized as a founder of nonalignment, his preoccupations at that time lay elsewhere, and it was obvious that his influence had declined. The nonaligned countries did not offer India comfort or aid in the wake of the Chinese border war of 1962, although the administration of

John F. Kennedy did (see Relations with China, this ch.).

For most of the 1960s and 1970s India was absorbed in internal developments and in deepening the tangible content of bilateral relations. During the same period an informal grouping of nonaligned states achieved the momentum of a movement. Indira Gandhi was not given to theorizing about international affairs. She was flexible but hardheaded about protecting India's national interests, among which economic development remained a vital concern. India's continued participation in the Nonaligned Movement was as much for tangible economic reasons as for intangible political ones. As an importer of energy, India's need for close relations with the oil-exporting countries of the Persian Gulf increased. Common membership in the Nonaligned Movement was useful, if sometimes exacting.

As the membership of the movement expanded, factions developed. Countries having close ties to the United States, such as Singapore, competed with those having close ties with the Soviet Union, such as Vietnam. This was most evident at the Nonaligned Movement summit meeting at Havana in 1979, when a dispute arose over the credentials of the representatives of Cambodia (at the time known as Kampuchea and at other times as the Khmer Republic). It was resolved by the "moderates," including India, by leaving the seat vacant. Similarly contentious was the suggestion that socialism was the "natural ally" of nonalignment; India, among others, found such a notion unacceptable, and it was rejected.

Within India, the Janata government had talked of "genuine nonalignment," i.e., not pro-Soviet. Some Indians recalled Nehru's quip about remaining nonaligned from the nonaligned. Others wanted to play a more assertive role in world affairs. Accordingly, when the Iran-Iraq War prevented Iraq from taking up its duties of chairmanship, India's candidacy was unopposed. Gandhi, who returned to power in 1980, exercised a moderating influence on the movement. Notwithstanding the much publicized differences in 1980 between India and the Islamic countries on the Soviet military occupation of Afghanistan, the salient paragraphs on the subject in the communiqués of the Nonaligned Foreign Ministers Conference of 1981 and the Nonaligned Summit Conference of 1983 were drafted jointly by India and Pakistan and reflected common concerns.

Relations with Pakistan

In early 1985, as in all the years since independence, Pakistan remained India's most vexing international problem. On sev-

eral occasions the two countries had humanely resolved difficulties affecting their peoples in such matters as property transfers, visits, and water rights. But India and Pakistan have divergent national ideologies and have been unable or unwilling to establish a mutually acceptable power equation on the subcontinent. Often their relations have been in conflict, and the tension of mutual suspicion runs beneath the surface of the most benign exchanges of compliments.

The national ideologies of pluralism, democracy, and secularism for India and of Islam for Pakistan grew out of preindependence struggles between Congress and the All-India Muslim League, and in the mid-1980s the line between domestic and foreign politics in Indo-Pakistani relations remained blurred. Because great power competition—between the United States and the Soviet Union and between the Soviet Union and China—became intertwined with Indo-Pakistani conflicts, India was unable to attain its goal of insulating South Asia from global rivalries. Because of this intertwining, Pakistan was able to "borrow" external power to "balance" India's superior endowments of population and resources. Thus, relations with Pakistan have demanded a high proportion of India's international energies and undoubtedly will continue to do so. One encouraging feature of a fresh and nonconflictual approach by both has been their participation in the South Asia Regional Cooperation Programme, which has a modest but practicable agenda (see Relations with Small Neighbors, this ch.).

The ideological debate between Congress and the League over the "two nation" theory was not solved by partition but was kept alive in Kashmir. The League rulers of Pakistan could not logically accept the legality of Kashmir's accession to what they phrased "Hindu India" because that princely state had a Muslim majority population. Having secured only the mountainous, northern one-third of the state by force of arms in 1947–48, Pakistan's representatives argued with great conviction that the people of Kashmir (concentrated mainly in the valley) should be allowed to exercise their right to self-determination through a plebiscite, as promised by Nehru and required by UN Security Council resolutions in 1948–49. No subsequent government in Pakistan formally renounced this position or the government's self-imposed obligation to speak out in international forums on the subjects of Kashmir or those Muslims who were elsewhere in India. India reacted badly to outside comments on its domestic affairs, in part because it was experiencing difficulties in building a secular state and providing security for all its citizens, regardless of ethnic or religious identity.

The Indian case on the issue of Kashmir, which was complex and legalistic, hardened over the years into obduracy. At first India's representatives drew attention only to the facts of invasion, defense, the legality of accession, and the need for suitable conditions—that is, a withdrawal of Pakistan's forces from all the state—in which case a plebiscite could be held. In 1952 an elected and overwhelmingly Muslim Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir, led by the popular Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, debated various alternatives for the future and voted in favor of confirming accession to India. Thereafter India took this as an adequate expression of popular will and demurred on holding a plebiscite. After 1953 Kashmir was identified as standing for the secular, pluralistic, and democratic principles of the Indian polity. As Pakistan became increasingly authoritarian, militarized, and aligned with the United States, Nehru questioned Pakistan's right to be heard on Kashmir and refused to discuss the subject with Pakistan's president, Field Marshal Mohammad Ayub Khan. The opportunity to do so rationally was provided by the major achievement of a multilateral treaty dividing the waters of the Indus River system in 1960, but Nehru failed to seize the opportunity.

After its humiliating experience in the 1962 border war with China and under heavy pressure from Britain and the United States (which supplied assistance to both India and Pakistan), India engaged in six rounds of secret talks with Pakistan on "Kashmir and other related issues." A variety of possible solutions to the Kashmir dispute were discussed, including condominium, internationalization, and partition. According to one of the principal negotiators, India was prepared to modify the Cease-Fire Line (CFL) in favor of Pakistan to the extent of 4,100 square kilometers and a natural defense line if Pakistan would then recognize the line as an international boundary. The Pakistani delegation was led by Foreign Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who demanded the Vale of Kashmir in its entirety. Meanwhile, Pakistan signed a border agreement with China to the further detriment of India's security in Ladakh (see fig. 1). Despite the urging and personal intervention of emissaries from Britain and the United States, no agreement was reached between India and Pakistan. India's suggestions for a "no war" declaration or a disengagement of troops along the CFL were also put aside.

In 1964 another attempt at mediation was made, this time by Sheikh Abdullah, who recently had been released from a long detention by the Indian government because of his objections to Indian domination. Ayub Khan rejected his suggestion for a confed-

eration of India, Pakistan, and Kashmir. Before a proposed meeting between Ayub Khan and Nehru could take place, Nehru died on May 27, 1964.

According to reports of UN observers at the time, armed infiltrators from Pakistan crossed the CFL in the summer of 1965, and the number of skirmishes between Indian and Pakistani troops increased. On September 1 Pakistan launched an attack across the international frontier in southwest Jammu and Kashmir in an attempt to cut the main Indian road into the valley. Indian forces retaliated on September 6 in the plains of the Punjab and prevailed over Pakistan's apparent superiority in modern tanks and aircraft. India refrained from threatening or attacking East Pakistan (present-day Bangladesh), and China threatened but did not intervene militarily on Pakistan's behalf. A cease-fire called by the UN Security Council on September 23 was observed by both sides. At Tashkent in January 1966 the belligerents agreed to restore the previous state of affairs and to resolve outstanding issues by negotiation. No discernible progress was made, and in the late 1960s first the Ayub Khan regime and then the double wing polity of Pakistan began to disintegrate. Meanwhile, Shastri had died at Tashkent, hallowing the agreement; Indira Gandhi became prime minister and strove for political survival.

The third Indo-Pakistan war, of 1971, centered in the east over the secession of East Pakistan, but it also included engagements in Kashmir and on the western front. India's military victory in that war was complete. It was widely interpreted in India—but not in Pakistan—as an ideological victory, too; the "two nation" theory was apparently disproved by the Muslims of Bangladesh. India could afford to be magnanimous in the interests of both subcontinental peace and ratification of the status quo in Kashmir. At Simla, India, on July 2, 1972, Gandhi and Bhutto (then president of Pakistan) signed an agreement in pursuance of which India would return all captured territory and personnel to Pakistan and by which the two governments would "settle their differences by peaceful means through bilateral negotiations." The term *CFL* was dropped in favor of "line of actual control" in Kashmir, and military commanders on the spot were authorized to delimit the line and were given the responsibility for maintaining the peace along it. External bodies, including the UN, were thereby excluded. The two sides agreed not to alter the line unilaterally and promised to respect it "without prejudice to the recognized position of either side." Both sides further undertook to "refrain from the threat or use of force in violation of the line." India was confident that Bhutto had accepted the status quo as final in Kashmir but did not press him to



Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, 1984
Courtesy Peter R. Heimsath

announce that fact publicly and so endanger his political survival in Pakistan. Although Pakistan did not remove the subject of Kashmir from the UN agenda, it did not exacerbate the dispute either.

During the late 1970s and early 1980s Kashmir prospered under a virtually autonomous government led first by Sheikh Abdullah and then by his son Farooq. The difficulties between Srinagar, capital of Kashmir, and New Delhi that surfaced with some regularity were similar to those between other state capitals and the central government. This was evident in the summer of 1984, when Farooq's government was overthrown by the highly questionable means later attempted in Andhra Pradesh (see Regionalism and Regional Political Crises, ch. 8). As long as bilateral relations between India and Pakistan were calm or improving, the areas adjacent to the line of control remained quiet. Serious skirmishes—as occurred close to the Karakoram Pass in the summer of 1984—were symptomatic of a general deterioration in relations. India, remaining suspicious of Pakistan's intentions and its ability to exploit weak spots, maintained a heavy garrison in Kashmir, which also served to support defenses against China in Ladakh.

Beginning with the Tripartite Agreement between India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh in April 1974, steps were taken to normalize relations on the subcontinent. The opening of travel facilities permitted Indians and Pakistanis to resume their links of family, language, culture and, to a limited extent, trade. Pilgrimages took place in both directions (many Muslim shrines are in

India, and many Sikh shrines are in Pakistan). Hurdles of red tape were cleared as hundreds of people crossed the borders every week. Generally, they encountered friendliness, interest, and hospitality. So, too, did the journalists, scholars, scientists, artists, and athletes who made visits in the early 1980s. The level of exchanges, however, was kept controlled and low, largely out of deference to fear among Pakistan's Islamic fundamentalists of being swamped by exuberant "Hindu" culture. For a similar reason trade was very slow to expand.

On the governmental level ambassadors were again exchanged in 1976 and became social and diplomatic lions in each other's capital. (After the 1971 war Pakistan withdrew from the Commonwealth, and high commissioners were replaced by ambassadors as chiefs of the diplomatic missions.) The Janata government refrained from comment on the trial and execution of Bhutto by the military government of General Mohammad Zia ul Haq so as not to give the impression of interfering in Pakistan's domestic politics. In 1978 Foreign Minister Vajpayee was acclaimed in Pakistan when he asserted that India had no acquisitive intentions and did not wish to act as an "elder brother" in South Asia. He was deliberately calming Pakistan's chronic fears of strategic inferiority.

These fears were vastly exacerbated when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in December 1979 and Gandhi—who had masterminded the Bangladesh operations—was returned to power in 1980 in India's seventh general elections. She quickly dispatched a special emissary to assure General Zia that he could remove as many divisions as he wished from the Indian border without fear of any advantage being taken by India. She also suggested talks on reduction of force levels. Indian officials worked hard to make an "Indian option" (softly proposed by a few in Pakistan) an appealing option to Zia. The Indians hoped he would not succumb to the "American option" of arms escalation being offered by Washington. Gandhi tried to guard against antagonizing the Soviet Union on the one hand and democratic elements in Pakistan on the other. She also tried to avoid provoking the ire of the substantial anti-Pakistan lobby within India. These largely secret efforts culminated in the visit of Foreign Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao to Pakistan in June 1981, during which time he declared publicly that India was "unequivocally committed to respect Pakistan's national unity, territorial integrity, and sovereign equality" as well as its right to obtain arms for self-defense. Despite the setback suffered when the United States and Pakistan announced a new security and military assist-

ance program, regular meetings took place between high Indian and Pakistani officials. These were institutionalized in late 1982 in the Indo-Pakistan Joint Commission, which included subcommissions for trade, economics, information, and travel. When Gandhi received Zia for a lengthy luncheon on November 1, 1982, in New Delhi, they both were obviously dispensing cordiality, not enmity. They authorized their foreign ministers and foreign secretaries to proceed with talks leading to the creation of the South Asia Regional Cooperation Programme and to participate in its cooperative ventures.

Notwithstanding these advances, relations deteriorated badly in 1984. No progress was reported on discussions of a "no war pact," as suggested by Pakistan in 1982, or on India's countersuggestion of a nonaggression and friendship agreement. From India's viewpoint, a return to the bilateralism and peaceful intent of the Simla Agreement of 1972 was sufficient. Instead, both countries expressed fears of military action by the other, upgraded their defense forces, and kept their nuclear weapons-option open. (India's capability had been demonstrated in 1974 but was not carried further in a military program. Pakistan's nuclear program was clandestine, and as of early 1985 its weapons capability was undemonstrated but considered imminent by international specialists in the field.) India was unable to reassure Pakistan that it did not have hegemonic ambitions and did not intend to combine with the Soviet Union in dividing Pakistan. Gandhi said privately, and many Indians concurred, that Pakistan was unappeasable, the reverse of the belief of many Pakistanis. India suspected Pakistan of acquiring sophisticated weapons systems from the United States in the context of the Afghan situation but with the intention of using them against India at some time in the future. Once again Pakistan was perceived as borrowing external power to alter a subcontinental power equation favoring India. The prospects of alignment between Pakistan and the Islamic world, as well as with the United States and China, created anxiety in New Delhi. The severe strain caused by internal turmoil in India heightened these fears.

Indira Gandhi's government alleged that Pakistan was involved in the terrorism and separatist agitation that was rocking the Indian state of Punjab, but government officials said that disclosure of evidence gathered on the subject was "not in the public interest." Many Indians, including dissident Sikhs who openly sought assistance and arms in Pakistan, expected Pakistan to aid anti-Indian elements in Punjab or Kashmir, if only to avenge India's intervention in Pakistan's civil war of 1971. The govern-

ment's 1984 *White Paper on the Punjab Agitation* went further. It stated that India's strength, unity, and secularism were targets of attack from "communal fanaticism with powerful external support." The clash between territorial nationalism and religious nationalism was heard again, as in the 1940s. Zia's many statements of good intent and his presence at Gandhi's funeral in November 1984 were accepted with qualifications. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi expressed his hope that friendly words would be accompanied in the future by friendlier actions than those in the past year.

Relations with China

Throughout 1984 India and China continued their slow and cautious moves toward improving a relationship that had fallen into a morass of hostility in the early 1960s. India placed high priority on settlement of the boundary questions as the touchstone of normalization. Discussions in 1983 and 1984 produced some guidelines for negotiation on the border but no agreement on specific aspects of it. Although India and China engaged in cultural, scientific, and commercial exchanges as both sought to diversify their international dealings in the 1980s, their chosen paths of internal development remained strikingly different.

The two largest states of Asia had had few contacts with each other from the time their cultures developed in ancient times right up until the 1950s. Although Nehru predicted his vision of "resurgent Asia" on friendship between India and China, he was uncertain about how to obtain this in the absence of reciprocal compliments from the Chinese communist leaders who came to power in 1949. Moreover, there was an incipient conflict of interest in Tibet, a geographical and political buffer zone where India had inherited special privileges from the government of British India. China wanted to reassert control over the farthest and most autonomous reach of the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911) and to "liberate" the Tibetan people from Lamaism and feudalism. It did so by force of arms in 1950.

Nehru was confronted with a dilemma. On the one hand, if India clung to inherited privilege and condemned China's actions in the UN, India would antagonize China, open itself to charges of "imperialist" collaboration, and lock Tibet into cold war politics. On the other hand, if India abandoned all rights in Tibet, it would leave the way open for Chinese expansion to the great mountain barrier of the Himalayas and make India an accomplice in the sub-



Commonwealth Meeting, November 1983, New Delhi
Courtesy Embassy of India, Washington

jugation of the Tibetan people. Nehru knew that India could not defend its outposts in Tibet and did not want to provoke further military action by China. He adopted a course of action that was a compromise between the two sides of the dilemma and the conflicting recommendations he was getting from Ambassador K.M. Panikkar in China and Indian officials in Tibet, Xinjiang, and New Delhi. He was persuaded that China, like India, would prefer peace in order to be free to pursue development. Accordingly, he informed China that India sought neither political nor territorial ambitions, nor did it seek special privileges in Tibet, but that traditional trading rights must continue. With Indian support, Tibetan delegates signed an agreement in May 1951 recognizing Chinese sovereignty and control but guaranteeing that the existing political and social system in Tibet should continue. Direct negotiations between India and China commenced in an atmosphere improved by India's mediatory efforts in ending the Korean War.

In April 1954 India and China signed an eight-year agreement on Tibet that set forth the basis of their relationship in the form of the five principles of peaceful coexistence, or *panchasheel*. These principles were respect for each other's integrity and sovereignty, mutual nonaggression, noninterference in each

other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. Although critics called *panchasheel* naive, it was justified as being the best way of juxtaposing contrasting systems and beliefs without conflict, and it became the basis of a network of international and even domestic relationships in Asia. Nehru went further in praising it "as making it difficult progressively for the other country to break trust." In the absence of either the wherewithal or a policy for defense of the Himalayan region, Nehru calculated that India's best guarantee of security was to press friendship and reassurance on China, nurturing it in the habits of peaceful coexistence. He hoped to stave off Chinese expansionism by words rather than military cordons and attempted to erect a psychological buffer zone in place of the lost buffer of Tibet. Thus the theme song of Indian diplomacy in the 1950s was Sino-Indian friendship—"Hindi-Chini bhai-bhai" (India and China are brothers). The second part of the 1954 agreement dealt with the specifics of trade and pilgrim travel. A serious omission was any reference to respective jurisdictions in the Himalayas or definitions of borders, even with respect to the six designated mountain passes used for trade. Up to 1959, Chinese leaders amicably assured India that there was no territorial controversy on the border and that the marked discrepancies between Indian and Chinese maps were merely debris of the past.

In practice, however, small border incidents occurred within months of the 1954 treaty as both countries extended their administrations to hitherto neglected frontier districts. The Indian government kept news of skirmishes secret and their protests to China polite, but it was unable to continue doing so when an Indian reconnaissance party discovered a completed Chinese road running through the Aksai Chin part of the Ladakh district of Kashmir. Thereafter, border clashes became more frequent and more serious; Parliament showed a lively concern, and Indian protests became more strongly worded. In January 1959 Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai wrote to Nehru, rejecting the latter's contention that the border was based on treaty and custom and pointing out that no government in China had accepted as legal the 1914 Simla Convention of the McMahon Line defining the eastern section of the Indo-Tibetan border. Zhou Enlai's position was part of a broader ideological and territorial confrontation with India caused, in part, by a revolt in Tibet against China's control and policies of transformation and, perhaps, by resentment of India's international prestige at the time.

China's repressive counteractions in Tibet drove the Dalai Lama—spiritual and temporal head of the Tibetan people—to

seek sanctuary in India in March 1959; asylum was granted, and many thousands of Tibetan refugees settled in India. Although the Dalai Lama was not permitted to engage in overt political activity, he was greatly honored. China accused India of expansionism and imperialism in Tibet and throughout the Himalayan region. China claimed 104,000 square kilometers of territory, over which India's maps showed clear sovereignty, and demanded "rectification" of the entire border. Long articles appeared in Chinese journals, attacking Nehru and analyzing in scathing terms India's bourgeois economy, democratic polity, and friendship with the United States. China commenced border negotiations with India's immediate neighbors—Burma, Nepal, and Pakistan—in which it underlined India's "obstinacy."

Emotions in India ran high. A meeting between Nehru and Zhou Enlai led to talks between officials in 1960 on the entire range of border issues. These talks produced a mountain of documents, prepared mainly by the Indian side, but little else. The Chinese team appeared to place less reliance on historical research into treaty and custom than on the strong position their forces enjoyed on the ground. Zhou Enlai proposed that China relinquish its claim to most of India's Northeast in exchange for India's abandonment of its claim to Aksai Chin. Although this proposal was not made public at that time, it was repeated by China's new leaders in the 1980s. The Indian government, constrained by domestic public opinion, rejected the idea of a settlement based on uncompensated loss of territory as being humiliating and unequal. It moved to strengthen its defenses all along the border by building roads and other communications facilities; increased its purchases of transport and military equipment; deepened its already friendly ties with both the United States and the Soviet Union; moved its troops in Ladakh into forward positions; and took a strong diplomatic line with China. By October 1962 Nehru evidently believed that Indian forces could, as he announced, "clear Indian territory of Chinese aggression." He was wrong.

China had kept the initiative in the frontier regions and attacked on October 20, 1962. (Reputable observers disagreed as to the specific events that launched the war.) Having pushed the unprepared, ill-equipped, and poorly led Indian forces to within 48 kilometers of the Assam plains in the Northeast and having occupied strategic points in Ladakh, China declared a unilateral cease-fire on November 21 and withdrew 20 kilometers behind its new line of control. India was militarily and psychologically humiliated. Defense Minister Krishna Menon was forced to resign. Nehru's health was poor, and he confessed publicly to hav-

ing lived in a "fairy world of illusion." The emotion-charged Parliament passed a resolution limiting the government's power to sign away "sacred" territory. With the assistance of Britain and the United States, India moved to modernize its defense forces, which included raising 10 new mountain divisions. The Soviet Union moved gradually from a position of neutrality on the Sino-Indian conflict to one of tacit support for India as its own rift with China became more serious.

Sino-Indian relations worsened through the 1960s as the Sino-Pakistani entente solidified and Sino-Soviet relations worsened. Between 1967 and 1971 an all-weather road was built, linking Xinjiang with Pakistan; India could do no more than protest. China continued an active propaganda campaign against India and in all likelihood supplied ideological, financial, and other assistance to dissident groups, especially to tribes in the Northeast. China's Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and the "thoughts of Mao Tse-tung" inspired emulation within the extreme wing of the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist), or CPI (M-L), known as the Naxalites for their violent land-grabbing techniques in Naxalbari, West Bengal (see External Agitation and Internal Subversion, ch. 10). China accused India—probably with some justification—of assisting the Khampa rebels in Tibet. Diplomatic contact between the two governments was minimal although not formally severed. India had withdrawn its ambassador in 1961 and did not replace him. The flow of cultural and other exchanges that had marked the 1950s ceased entirely.

In the aftermath of its Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and military clashes with Soviet forces in March 1969, China made tentative overtures to Indian diplomats. "Mao's smile," as this was called, lasted through 1970. But the trend was reversed in 1971, when the opening between China and the United States facilitated through Pakistan's military leader, General Agha Mohammad Yahya Khan, led both countries to support him in Pakistan's civil war while India sided with the insurgents in East Pakistan. In August 1971 India signed a 20-year Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation with the Soviet Union and in December of that year won a decisive victory over Pakistan. By this time China was seated in the UN, where its representatives denounced India as being a "tool of Soviet expansionism." Although China did not intervene militarily in the Indo-Pakistani wars of 1965 or 1971, it assisted Pakistan diplomatically and in other ways. These facts, combined with China's efforts—as perceived in New Delhi—to undermine traditional Indian influence in the Himalayan kingdoms of Nepal and Bhutan; China's denunciations

of India's belated absorption of Sikkim; and continued Chinese assistance for rebel activity in the Northeast were formidable barriers to normalization of relations. The logic of such normalization was inescapable, however.

Informal and unofficial contacts in the mid-1970s paved the way for an exchange of ambassadors in 1976. The advantages and disadvantages of developing ties with China were debated in India. Some advisers to the prime minister argued that China was an expansionist and revisionist power that could not be friendly to a status quo-minded India and that China's links with Pakistan and developing ties with the United States posed threats to Indian security. Others, mainly those outside the government, argued that direct ties to China would lessen India's reliance on the Soviet Union and also serve to dilute the Sino-Pakistani link. Indira Gandhi took a median position on the issue, opting for cordiality without excess, talks without negotiation, and normalization without dramatics. She made it clear that she was prepared neither to accept an institutionalized inferiority of India vis-à-vis China nor to sacrifice friendship with the Soviet Union.

The Janata government in India and the post-Mao leadership in China continued the process of reestablishing ties that had begun in 1976. Trade delegations were exchanged, and credit and banking facilities were reopened. Member of Parliament Subramanium Swamy was invited to Beijing in July 1977. Deng Xiaoping met him and repeated Zhou Enlai's suggestion of exchanging claims as the basis of a border settlement. Foreign Minister Vajpayee visited China in February 1979 and was told by his hosts that they no longer assisted dissidents in India. He returned home quickly when China invaded Vietnam to "teach it a lesson." India and China had conflicting positions on Vietnam and on Kampuchea, which were amply manifested then and in the 1980s (see Nonalignment, this ch.).

Both countries renewed efforts to mend fences after Gandhi returned to power and the Soviet Union occupied Afghanistan. China's leaders advised General Zia of Pakistan and General Zia ur Rahman of Bangladesh to settle their disputes with India amicably. China modified its former pro-Pakistani stand on Kashmir and appeared willing to remain silent on India's absorption of Sikkim and its special advisory relationship with Bhutan. China's leaders agreed to discuss the boundary issue—India's priority—as the first step to a broadening of relations. The two countries exchanged news agencies and a variety of delegations. Hindu religious sentiments were appeased when Kailash and Mansarowar in Tibet—the mythological home of the Hindu pantheon—were

opened to annual pilgrimages from India. In 1981 Foreign Minister Huang Hua was invited to India, where he made complimentary remarks about India's role in South Asia. Premier Zhao Ziyang simultaneously toured Pakistan, Nepal, and Bangladesh. Indian and Chinese officials in Southeast Asia met to exchange ideas on regional problems but could not achieve a meeting of the minds.

There remained impediments to any rapid improvement in Sino-Indian relations. China's static offer on the border fell far short of Indian demands for specific settlements in each sector of the border and explicit recognition of Kashmir and Sikkim as parts of India. Border talks were not terminated, but they showed no progress in early 1985. Tibet remained an area of tension and instability for China, and the Dalai Lama's continued residence in India remained an irritant to the Chinese government, which had invited him to return to Tibet. India faced very severe problems in Assam and throughout the Northeast and was suspicious of ultimate Chinese intentions (see Assam and the Northeast, ch. 10). Suspicions were fueled when China protested India's inclusion of tribal dancers at the 1982 Asian Games held in New Delhi. Although trade between the two countries increased steadily, it was mainly confined to the resumption of traditional border trade; there was little complementarity between two economies at similar levels of development. In international developmental forums, financial institutions, and Third World meetings, India and China appeared more often as competitors than as colleagues. Both countries seemed to give higher priority to deepening and improving relations with the two global powers than to upgrading their bilateral relationship. Future steps were likely to depend as much on the international climate as on their respective efforts.

Relations with Small Neighbors

India is the giant of South Asia. Its levels of economic and industrial development, scientific and technological progress, higher education, and administrative and military competence are much higher than its neighbors. The evolution of stable and democratic political institutions has proceeded further than elsewhere in South Asia, although Sri Lanka is comparable in quality but not in size or quantity. This fact undoubtedly has led to expectations in India that external powers, as well as its neighbors, should automatically defer to its preeminent position in the region. Equally, it has led to fears among smaller neighbors of being absorbed or dominated by India.

Every country in South Asia is intimately connected with India by virtue of geography and history and interacts with it in innumerable ways. The same ethnic, religious, and linguistic groups to which their peoples belong are found also in India. Marital ties overlap national boundaries. With the exception of Pakistan, land borders are open, and efforts to close them by such means as fences or ditches—as begun by India in 1983 on its Bangladesh border—are clearly futile. By law, citizens of Bhutan and Nepal have the same access to Indian educational and economic opportunities as do Indian citizens, and there has been a continual influx of people from Bangladesh into surrounding districts in India. Striking similarities exist between each South Asian country and a neighboring state in India; for example, between West Bengal and Bangladesh or Sri Lanka and Kerala, or between Nepal and adjacent parts of Himalayan India. Interactions among peoples are often beyond the control of their respective governments. As a consequence, relations between India and its smaller neighbors are a complex blend of solid, almost routine, harmony in many areas of interaction and much publicized dissonance on some issues at the governmental level.

For different reasons, none of the governments in South Asia was enthusiastic about conducting intergovernmental affairs in a regional forum. In the 1960s and 1970s the smaller countries seemed to prefer membership in international organizations, such as the UN or the Nonaligned Movement, where India's preponderance was diluted. The Indian government, conversely, suspected that in a purely regional body organized on the principle of one country-one vote, it would face a potentially damaging coalition making demands on it. Nevertheless, a modest but hopeful start was made in late 1980 on the initiative of Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Meetings of foreign secretaries were followed by meetings of foreign ministers from the seven member nations of the South Asia Regional Cooperation (SARC) Programme: India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, and Maldives. Meetings were rotated among capitals. Six subcommittees were formed and responsibilities allocated to study and pursue interregional relations in such manageable and mutually beneficial areas as soil conservation and telecommunications. Contentious issues were deliberately excluded.

In dealing with its neighbors, India faced dilemmas of different kinds, none of which had been resolved to the satisfaction of all parties concerned with any given issue. One was the classic dilemma of big power-small power relations. India's exertions of pressure or power to protect its perceived security interests

against intrusion by stronger powers—as in the Himalayas or in the Indian Ocean—have been perceived at times as threatening by smaller neighbors. When the smaller nations have been tempted to use extraregional great powers, such as China or the United States, as counterweights to India, they have further stimulated India's perceptions of threats.

This dilemma has been most visible in India's relations with Nepal since the Sino-Indian conflict erupted. Nepal's inclusion in India's defense perimeter was made explicit, but without formal military alliance, by an exchange of letters that accompanied their 1950 treaty stating, inter alia, that "neither government shall tolerate any threat to the security of the other by a foreign aggressor." An agreement concluded at the same time gave Nepal special privileges in trade and transit across India and thus cemented a "special relationship" between India and Nepal. Many strains surfaced in the 1960s and came to a head in the mid-1970s, when Nepal pressed for substantial amendments in its favor in the trade and transit treaty and openly criticized India's actions in Sikkim.(The Himalayan Kingdom of Sikkim was a protectorate of India until it was made a state in the Indian union in 1975 after a series of actions that one Indian journalist subsequently described as "smash and grab.") India implicitly demanded that Nepal respect India's security needs (of which Sikkim was deemed a vital part) as the price for continued economic concessions. In 1975 King Birendra proposed that Nepal be recognized internationally as a "Zone of Peace"; he received support from China and Pakistan. In New Delhi's view, if the king's proposal did not contradict the 1950 treaty and was merely an extension of nonalignment, it was unnecessary; if it was a repudiation of the special relationship, it represented a possible threat to India's security and could not be endorsed. In 1984 Nepal repeated the proposal; there was no reaction from India.

Less dramatically, but probably for similar reasons, Sri Lanka in the 1980s no longer interpreted a 1971 UN resolution declaring the Indian Ocean as a "Zone of Peace" in exactly the same manner as did India. Moreover, Sri Lanka appealed to external powers, and not only India, to help resolve its internal security problems. New Delhi was chagrined on both counts.

A second kind of dilemma posed for India lies in the blend of domestic and foreign politics in all issues involving neighbors. One recurring example of this was the periodic outbreak of ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka between its Sinhalese majority and Tamil minority. Tamil Nadu, the South Indian state separated from Sri Lanka by the shallow and narrow Palk Strait, consistently expressed its special concern with the fate of the Tamils in Sri

Lanka. New Delhi has tried to balance the strong pressures exerted on it by Tamil Nadu against the equally strong imperative of maintaining good relations with a stable and democratic Sri Lanka. The agreements between New Delhi and Colombo were sometimes made at the expense of "stateless" people of Indian origin. Conflict between Sinhalese and Tamils in Sri Lanka reached crisis proportions in 1983 and 1984, when outbreaks of unprecedented violence were accompanied by Sri Lankan allegations of Tamil Nadu support for extremist and separatist Tamils in northern Sri Lanka. Emissaries of the Indian government lent good offices to all parties for a negotiated settlement in Sri Lanka, but by early 1985 no resolution of the problem was in sight.

Another example of the conflicting pulls exerted by states and neighbors was the issue of the Farakka Barrage on the Ganges River. Originally built to flush silt from the port of Calcutta in West Bengal, it was objected to by Bangladesh because, historically, water flowing into the eastern branch of the river had been reduced during the dry season. For many years in the 1970s and early 1980s India released additional water to Bangladesh despite strong objections from the government of West Bengal. Joint river waters commissions interminably discussed ways and means of augmenting the flow of waters through the lower Ganges—without which the problem of Farakka cannot be satisfactorily solved—but produced no tangible results. In July 1983 the two governments signed an agreement on sharing the waters of the Teesta River and made progress in demarcating their long border and increasing commercial exchanges. But Calcutta continued to press New Delhi to take a hard line with Dhaka on every issue, including the rationalization of borders by exchanging enclaves.

A third kind of dilemma for India arises from the familial quality of South Asian relationships created by history but resulting in several "identity problems." For example, the assertion of national identity by Nepal or Bangladesh was often in contradistinction to India, whose culture India's small neighbors shared in large measure. (Pakistan manifested an extreme case of this phenomenon.) Attempts by India to remind them of commonality through active cultural diplomacy were often perceived by them as patronizing at best or having hegemonic intent at worst. As a former foreign minister of Nepal, Rishikesh Shaha, has explained, the greater the sense of cultural or economic dependence on India, the greater the need to convince themselves and others that they were independent of India. Thus, in the 1950s, when Nepal was still a relatively isolated mountain kingdom, close ties with India were welcome. As the number of Nepalese living and

working in India rose to over 5 million in the 1980s and the involvement of India in Nepal's economic activities proceeded apace, so too did the king's resistance to special relationships. Similarly, in 1975 Bangladesh moved away from the linguistic nationalism that had marked its liberation struggle and linked it to West Bengal and instead stressed Islam as the cementing force in Bangladeshi nationalism.

These gestures would have posed no dilemma for India had it been sufficiently confident of its own heterogeneous and secular identity with an inclusive, not an exclusive, cultural tradition. In fact, serious communal problems within the Indian polity of the 1980s made it less tolerant of its neighbors' self-assertions. Problems included dramatic demographic changes in districts bordering on Bangladesh. Chauvinistic feelings were on the upswing in India, especially with respect to Islam.

In contrast to the situation with Bangladesh was that of Bhutan. Despite very heavy involvement of India in Bhutan's economic, educational, and military life and India's advisory role in foreign affairs enshrined in a 1949 India-Bhutan treaty, the pace of change has been determined by Bhutan, with India's support. Bhutan's geographic isolation, its distinctive Buddhist culture, and its deliberate restriction on the number and kind of foreigners admitted even temporarily helped to protect its separate identity. Autonomy has been fully respected by New Delhi. India has sponsored Bhutan's membership in the UN and other bodies and has been rewarded with a relationship that, in the words of the *1983–84 Report of India's Foreign Office*, is "marked by complete understanding not only in respect to bilateral relations but also international issues."

Relations with the United States

Observers of Indo-American relations have frequently commented on the fluctuations of warmth and coolness that characterized them. Expectations of mutuality in national interests have been generated by many similarities between the two countries, such as democratic political systems, pluralistic societies, and similar legal traditions. Many disappointments have resulted from the fact that although the long-term objectives of both states in world peace, prosperity, and stability were the same, they have seldom agreed on how to pursue these ends in specific areas or in a given time frame. Although a search for commonality continued in the mid-1980s, their diplomacy remained one of misun-

derstanding and missed opportunities. The world's two largest democracies were separated geographically, were at different stages of economic and political development, and were strongly asymmetrical in terms of power and immediate salience to each other. Both were given to viewing their acts as moral and the acts of those who differed, immoral.

Most Americans were ignorant of and indifferent to the nationalist struggle in India, and the image they received of Mahatma Gandhi was a confused one. President Franklin D. Roosevelt's efforts to persuade Britain to accelerate movement on Indian independence were frustrated by Winston Churchill's obduracy on the subject, thus producing both goodwill and bitterness among Indians. The contrasting experiences of the United States and India in the twentieth century gave the leaders of the two countries after World War II very different perceptions on major issues confronting the contemporary world.

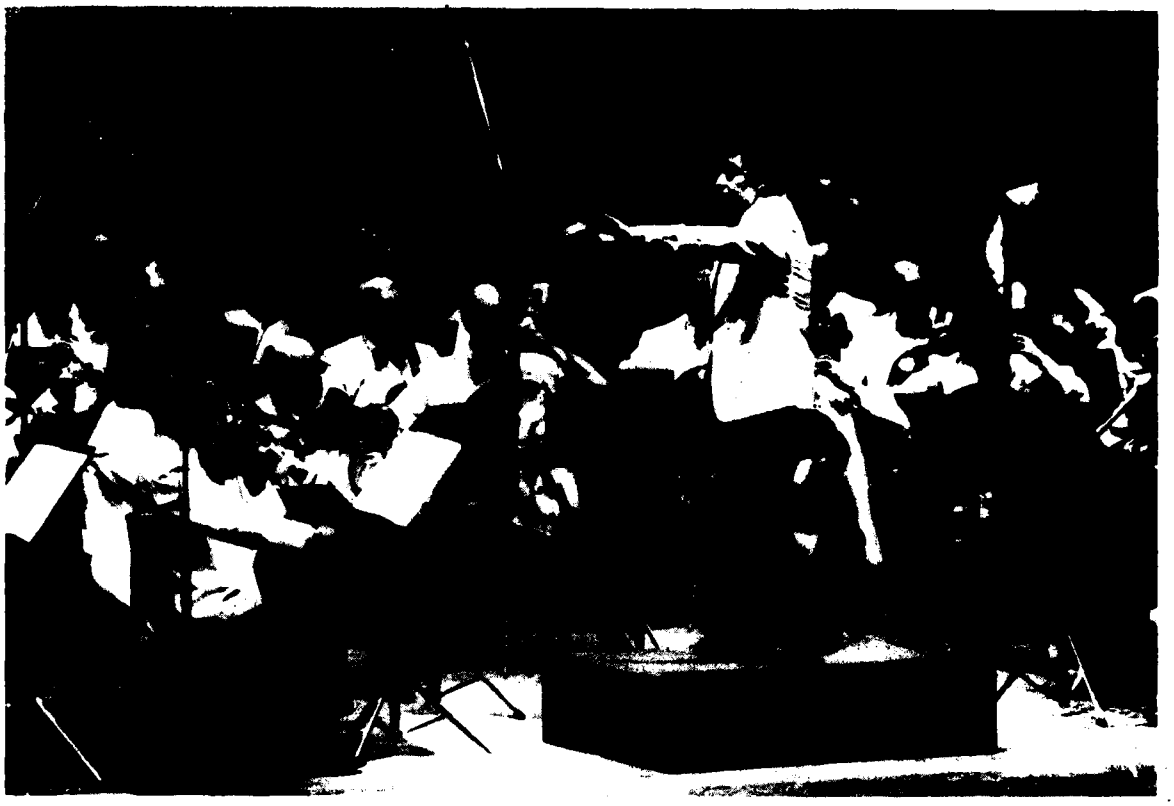
The United States stood as head of a victorious but rapidly crumbling alliance, and India stood as the largest and most populist nation to emerge from colonial dependency. Divergent perceptions could have been expected from their leaders, but these were often described as misunderstandings or wrongheadedness. Each side endeavored, but without success, to convert the other to its own way of thinking. Each adopted a style of making commentaries on the other's foreign policies in a tone of moralistic and self-righteous criticism. Moreover, key decisionmakers in the two countries frequently found their counterparts personally difficult to deal with. The antagonisms aroused in the 1950s by Secretary of State John Foster Dulles in India and Defense Minister Krishna Menon in the United States,for example, were strong and long-lasting. In contrast, the exceptionally cordial meetings between President Dwight D. Eisenhower and Prime Minister Nehru in 1956 and 1959 and between President Ronald Reagan and Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1981 and 1982 did much to mitigate outstanding problems of the times.

Generally speaking, major problems in Indo-American bilateral relations have arisen from different attitudes on the issues of greatest concern to them: communism, colonialism, economic development, and international order. At no time did India subscribe to United States strategies of containing communism through military alliances or security arrangements. In Nehru 's view, Asian nationalism was a sufficient antidote. India's policy of nonalignment precluded it from forming military alliances and was the basis of its brief friendship with China and enduring ties with the Soviet Union. Moreover, Pakistan's inclusion in Amer-

ican security arrangements had severe repercussions on India not only because external military assistance was perceived as encouraging Pakistan's leaders in adventurism on the subcontinent but also because the regional imperatives of South Asia tended to be overlooked by Washington's policymakers, who were preoccupied with global strategies. On the issue of European colonialism, the United States did not support India's anticolonial stands in international forums, was closely identified with West European allies, and reacted sharply to India's military takeover of the vestigial Portuguese colony of Goa in 1961. A common concern with promoting economic development drew India and the United States into a closer relationship based on aid in the 1950s and 1960s (see Foreign Aid; Foreign Trade; Balance of Payments, ch. 6). However, their prescriptions for developmental strategy and international economic cooperation varied, and since 1971 direct United States aid to India has been negligible. Underlying issues of international order surfaced in the 1970s on questions relating to multilateral financial institutions and, with equal or greater cogency, on questions of nuclear nonproliferation. They remained pertinent in 1985.

India's refusal after independence to commit itself to either side in the Cold War had a dual effect on United States policies in South Asia. On the one hand, consideration of India's importance and potential power called forth tangible American support for its economic and political stability, partly to counteract the appeal of communism and the influence of the Soviet Union. On the other hand, India's nonalignment made it difficult for United States officials to justify such support within their own competitive decisionmaking process and led many of them to prefer countries such as Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey, which appeared to support Western security interests. One result of this duality was the United States-Pakistan alliance of 1954, renewed in 1959 with accompanying assurances from Eisenhower to Nehru that the arms supplied to Pakistan would not be used in any aggressive war. When Pakistan and India went to war in 1965, the United States government refused to support India but suspended military transfers to both countries. The United States-Pakistan alliance had an adverse effect on the peace of the subcontinent and on United States influence, which declined sharply in both countries after 1965.

An exhaustive literature exists on the intertwining of great power rivalries and Indo-Pakistani conflicts. The events of 1971 provide a classic example of how this intertwining dragged Indo-United States relations to their nadir. United States leaders were



Zubin Mehta conducting New York Philharmonic Orchestra, September 1984
Courtesy Embassy of India, Washington

preoccupied with their initiation of a new relationship with China. They became involved in a crisis they had not anticipated on the side of Pakistan's military regime, which was using brutal measures against its own people, and against the stronger and more democratic power in the region, which was backed by the Soviet Union. India launched a successful campaign from April to November to raise international consciousness on the plight of people in East Pakistan and the pressures on India created by the presence of 10 million refugees who had fled East Pakistan. A succession of official and nonofficial dignitaries pleaded with the United States not to send more arms to Pakistan but to persuade the generals to reach a political settlement with East Pakistan's chosen leaders, thus allowing refugees to return home. Disputed quantities of arms continued to enter Pakistan despite assurances from the United States to the contrary and over the objections of various United States legislators and administration officials.

In November 1971 Gandhi visited Washington. She praised the press, restated the Bangladesh case, and decried that "once again, we see the old habit of underestimating the power of nationalism in Asia." Her two meetings with President Richard

M. Nixon brought no understanding. (Her subsequent letter to him of December 17 expressed her regret that the United States had not used its leverage to bring about a peaceful solution of problems but had made "innuendos and insinuations" blaming India for the crisis.) When war was formally declared after Pakistan air strikes occurred in the west, the United States and Chinese delegations in the UN Security Council took a decidedly pro-Pakistani stand and called for a cease-fire. The Soviet Union's veto prevented any resolution from coming into effect. On December 8 a United States naval task force, spearheaded by the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier U.S.S. *Enterprise*, was dispatched to the Bay of Bengal. Although its appearance there was brief and inactive, the incident left deep scars on the Indian psyche. In the words of Professor Norman Palmer, "for the first time, even in informed Indian circles, the United States was regarded as a major security threat by India."

Indo-United States relations remained cold and verged on the antagonistic for years. Nixon's abrupt termination of US$82 million in economic assistance quickened India's decision to close down a large United States Agency for International Development (AID) establishment altogether. The Indian government placed numerous restrictions on the easy flow of American scholars and students to India, whose number had increased dramatically in the mid-1960s. A consequence was that programs for the study of India in American universities suffered serious reverses. Other educational, cultural, or scientific groups of Americans in India, many of whom were unabashedly pro-Indian, became suspected of connection with the United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). India's criticisms of United States policies in Vietnam and Cambodia increased, and it upgraded its representation in Hanoi. When the United States expanded its naval support base on the island of Diego Garcia and engaged in naval exercises in the Indian Ocean with Pakistan in 1974, Indian protests were loud. India saw its security threatened by any escalation of great power military presence in the ocean and had endorsed Sri Lanka's earlier proposal to declare the Indian Ocean as a "Zone of Peace." The same differences that had marked Indian and United States approaches to land-based security were evident with respect to the seas. The militarization or otherwise of the Indian Ocean remained an active issue of contention between them in 1985.

Damages began to be repaired by both governments. A potentially explosive problem of United States rupee holdings was defused in 1973 by a detailed and carefully negotiated agreement that, in effect, wrote off more than one-half the debt and directed

use of the remainder to mutually acceptable programs. In 1974 an Indo-United States Joint Commission with three, and later four, subcommissions was established. It served to insulate a cooperative core of bilateral dealings in education and culture, business and economics, science and technology, and agriculture from political controversy and provided mechanisms for regular exchanges at high levels of public life. The détente between the United States and the Soviet Union undoubtedly eased United States-Indian problems, too. High hopes of improved relations were expressed when Jimmy Carter became president of the United States and the Janata government led by Morarji Desai took over in New Delhi. If these expectations were not fully realized, at least hopeful new beginnings were made. These came to an abrupt end, it seemed, when events originating outside India triggered Cold War reflexes in the United States and these invariably resulted in a denigration of India's concerns.

Promulgation of the Carter Doctrine, creation of the Rapid Deployment Force (later called the United States Central Command) and an Indian Ocean fleet, planned expansion of the naval base at Diego Garcia, arrangements to supply Pakistan with US$3.2 billion in military and economic aid over five years, other related actions, and a sustained rhetoric of power were justified within the United States as counteracting Soviet aggression. All of these actions were perceived in India as being a pretext for intervention in the littoral countries of the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean, of being a source of instability in the region, and of threatening India's security. In short, the differences between India and the United States on how to cope with the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in their own best interests were as profound as their differences on the Korean War had been. This time, however, the arena of possible United States-Soviet confrontation had shifted close to India. Americans condemned Gandhi's government for initially giving the benefit of the doubt to the Soviet Union and for failing to join in denunciations of that country, and numerous Americans recalled India's failure to condemn Soviet oppression in Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968. Indians criticized United States policies as being not conducive to any political settlement in Afghanistan in the near future.

Gandhi and Reagan took initiatives to surmount their differences and deployed diplomats as envoys in this task. The leaders met in 1981 and 1983 at the international venues of an economic conference at Cancun and at a General Assembly meeting at the UN. In 1982 Gandhi made a state visit to the United States that stimulated more favorable publicity for India than on any previ-

ous occasion. The visit was followed by a series of high-level exchanges, including the visits of Vice President George Bush and Secretary of State George Shultz to India. Some bilateral matters in dispute (such as supplies of fuel and spare parts for India's Tarapur atomic power plant) were resolved, at least on paper, and the relationship improved. The official United States contingent to Indira Gandhi's funeral rites in November 1984 included men who could establish a warm rapport with Rajiv Gandhi, the new prime minister. It seemed possible in early 1985 that the two governments had learned to live with their differences on strategies.

Relations with the Soviet Union

In early 1985 the Indo-Soviet relationship remained one of considerable importance to both countries. Since the early 1950s the two governments have taken pains first to create a friendly relationship, then to extend it, and constantly to keep it in good repair by minimizing in public their disagreements on specific issues. Their relationship was constructed on the basis of unsentimental, nonideological realpolitik. It had the benefit of neighborly proximity without actually policing a common land frontier. Close and cooperative ties have been forged in particular sectors of Indian industrial development and defense production and purchases. But the relationship continued to be circumscribed by wide differences in domestic and social systems and the absence of substantial people-to-people contacts—in contrast to Indo-American relations. The activities of India's communist parties have occasionally complicated government-to-government relations.

India's nonalignment enabled it to accept Soviet support in areas of strategic congruence, as in disputes with Pakistan and China, without subscribing to Soviet global policies or proposals for Asian collective security. The Indian governments, both Congress and Janata, regarded the Soviet link—epitomized in the Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation signed in 1971—as advantageous. They have, however, stressed its nonexclusive character by moving to strengthen ties with other countries, especially in Western Europe, in the late 1970s and 1980s.

India's relations with the Soviet Union evolved in distinct phases but have been stable since the late 1970s. Nehru's first visit to the Soviet Union in 1928 evoked admiration for the Soviet Union's rapid transformation but revulsion for its violent methods; these reactions were reflected in his writings. The

Soviet Union remained aloof from and contemptuous of India's nonviolent nationalist struggle, and during World War II the Communist Party of India (CPI) collaborated with the British. Although Nehru sent his sister to Moscow as ambassador immediately after independence, she was not received by Stalin. Her successor, S. Radhakrishnan, fared better, and his successor, K.P.S. Menon, was the last foreigner to meet Stalin before his death.

In August 1953 a major shift in Soviet policy was announced, and hopes were expressed for "friendly cooperation" with India. This was prompted by the Soviet decision to broaden its international contacts and to cultivate the nonaligned and newly independent countries of Asia and Africa. Nehru's state visit to the Soviet Union in June 1955 was the first of its kind. It was followed by the trip of Premier Nikolai Bulganin and General Secretary Nikita Khrushchev to India in November and December of 1955. The Soviet leaders endorsed the entire range of Indian foreign policy based on *panchasheel* and supported its positions on Kashmir and Goa. The 1956 edition of the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia* showed revisions in the section on India by praising Mahatma Gandhi; this represented a significant ideological shift dictated by national policy. In India the CPI began to support Nehru's "peaceful" foreign policies and the "progressive" elements of his domestic policies. The Soviet Union and East European countries offered new avenues of trade and economic assistance.

Between 1956 and 1960 economic cooperation between India and the East European communist countries was consolidated. By 1965 the Soviet Union was the second largest national contributor to India's development, albeit at a much lower total than the contribution from the United States. The advantages to India of these new arrangements were manifold. They contributed to India's emergence as a significant industrial power through the construction of plants to produce steel, heavy machinery, coal mining equipment, foundry forges, heavy electrical equipment, machine tools, precision instruments, and power. They enhanced India's public sector oil companies and their ability to extract and refine petroleum. Soviet investment went to India's public sector industry, which the World Bank and Western industrial powers had been unwilling to assist until spurred to do so by Soviet competition. Soviet aid was extended on the basis of long-term, government-to-government programs, which covered successive phases of technical training for Indians, supply of raw materials, progressive use of Indian inputs, and markets for finished products. As such, Soviet aid was less susceptible than United States aid to market fluctuations or shifts

in public opinion. Financial terms were soft, and bilateral arrangements were made in nonconvertible national currencies. This helped to expand and diversify trade in new markets as well as to conserve India's scarce foreign exchange. Moreover, the Soviet Union refrained from criticizing India's Second Five-Year Plan (FY 1956–60) and so reinforced its self-esteem. Although numerous problems arose later in the management and production of public sector industries and in the exchange rates between rupees and rubles, the Soviet contribution to Indian economic development was generally regarded as positive.

The years 1959–65 appeared at the time to be uncertain ones in Indo-Soviet political relations. Although their interests were parallel in anticolonialism and denunciation of United States-sponsored military pacts (conveniently ignoring the Soviet Union's Warsaw Pact), the main issues confronting India were its conflict with China and its foreign exchange crisis. Both led India to seek, and find, substantial improvement in relations with the United States. Because Nehru had not made the mistake of regarding China and the Soviet Union as one monolithic bloc, he counted on and worked for Soviet neutrality on the Sino-Indian border differences and war of 1962. It later emerged that the Soviet Union and China were experiencing differences that became irreconcilable and led to a breakdown in their military and economic alliance. Because China's position with respect to its borders with both India and the Soviet Union was similar—both borders were the product of "unequal" treaties and must be renegotiated—Indian and Soviet interests in upholding the sanctity of traditional borders converged. The Soviet Union did not give explicit or cartographic endorsement to Indian claims on the border, but its diplomatic support for India was later cited by China as an important cause of the Sino-Soviet rift. Moscow tried to straddle the Sino-Indian conflict by calling on its "fraternal ally" and its nonaligned friend to adjust their "misunderstandings" and by placating China's sensibilities in public pronouncements on the war without breaking ties with India.

Meanwhile, in FY 1959 India decided to accept earlier Soviet offers of military sales and to negotiate the purchase of transport aircraft and helicopters capable of efficient operations at high altitudes (see Foreign Military Relations, ch. 10). The importance of India's initial purchases of Soviet military equipment was far greater than their quantity. Purchases were made against deferred rupee payments, a major concession to India's chronic shortage of foreign exchange. Simultaneous provisions were made for licensed manufacture and modification in India, one

criterion of self-reliant defense on which India placed increasing emphasis. Soviet sales were made without any demands for restricted deployment, adjustments in Indian policies toward other countries, adherence to Soviet global policies, or acceptance of Soviet military advisers. Therefore, they did not offend Indian sensitivities on matters of national autonomy—already badly ruffled by the policies of Britain and the United States. The Soviet image in India improved.

A conspicuous result of Soviet policies was greater involvement in Asia. The Soviet Union tried to neutralize CENTO members Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan in the early 1960s. In April 1965 Pakistan's president, Ayub Khan, visited Moscow for the first time and obtained a modification of Soviet support for India on Kashmir and the offer of Soviet arms. During the Indo-Pakistani war of 1965 the Soviet Union acted together with the United States in the UN Security Council to bring about a cease-fire. Soviet leader Alexsey Kosygin went further by offering his good offices for a negotiated settlement, which took place at Tashkent in January 1966. Until 1969 the Soviet Union took an evenhanded position on the subcontinent and supplied a limited quantity of arms to Pakistan in 1968. Gandhi described this in Parliament as posing a "danger to India's security and peace on the subcontinent." She made her displeasure known in Moscow. Her displeasure was deepened by regular criticism in Soviet journals of the persistence of "feudal tendencies" in her political party and other scathing descriptions by Soviet news agencies of the "degenerate, parasitical, speculative and bureaucratic capitalism" practiced in India. The 1965–69 period was a cool phase in Indo-Soviet relations.

When Kosygin visited India in May 1969, he made strong efforts to regain Indian confidence by reiterating Soviet support. Moscow had been disappointed at India's ambivalence and hesitation in making comments on the Sino-Soviet armed clashes in Xianjing and on the Ussuri River in March 1969. Thereafter, the Soviet Union tried to construct a "collective security system in Asia" with the subcontinent as its linchpin. It offered India (and Pakistan) attractive bilateral treaties. Neither the idea nor the nomenclature of a collective security system arranged against China appealed to India. Prime Minister Gandhi avoided giving a direct answer on the offer and during her own tour of Australia and Asian capitals spoke only vaguely about the possibilities of regional economic cooperation. Soviet proposals for greater economic cooperation between it, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India were equally abortive.

The most intimate phase in the Indo-Soviet relationship was

the 1971–76 period; its highlight was the 20-year treaty of August 1971. The immediate stimuli were the deepening crisis on the subcontinent since March 1971 caused by Pakistan's civil war and, more important, the opening of the United States-China link accompanied by Washington's frank communication to New Delhi that should China intervene in the subcontinent, the United States would be unable to support India as it had in 1962. Gandhi acted with speed, and high officials commuted between New Delhi and Moscow. Draft treaties were worked and reworked; both governments were reluctant to commit themselves in advance to specific actions of a military nature. Thus, although articles 8, 9, and 10 of the treaty relate to defense, they are deliberately limited in scope. They commit the parties "to abstain from providing any assistance to any third party that engages in armed conflict with the other" and "in the event of either party being subjected to an attack or threat thereof . . . to immediately enter into mutual consultations."

India benefited at the time from dramatic affirmation that it was not alone in the struggle that loomed ahead—as a deterrent for China. It received accelerated and augmented shipments of military equipment in the last quarter of 1971 from the Soviet Union and was able to change a cautious Soviet position on the Bangladesh crisis to one of support for India's stand. The price paid by India for these gains showed later, when it was universally perceived as having made a compromise in its practice of nonalignment, which tarnished Gandhi's image among some circles at home and abroad. The Soviet Union gained both from the friendship of the largest noncommunist power in Asia and from a widespread perception that it had gained influence in Asia—even as that of the United States was declining. The first state visit of Soviet president Leonid Brezhnev to India in November 1973 was conducted with tremendous fanfare. The theme of economic cooperation was stressed, and tangible arrangements were made to further it. By the late 1970s the Soviet Union was India's largest trading partner.

Nevertheless, Gandhi was not prepared to alter important principles of Indian foreign policy. In her typically oblique fashion—well understood by Soviet officials—she warned Brezhnev about pursuing his collective security proposals or from putting any pressure on her. She made it clear that the Soviet Union would not receive any special privileges—much less base rights—in Indian ports, despite their major contributions to the construction of shipbuilding and ship-repairing facilities in Bombay and Vishakhapatnam. India's advocacy of declaring the Indian Ocean

a "Zone of Peace" was directed against aggrandizement of Soviet naval presence as much as that of other extraregional powers. By repeatedly emphasizing the nonexclusive nature of its friendship with the Soviet Union, India kept open the way for normalizing relations with China and diversifying military purchases in Western Europe. Progress in both directions commenced in 1976 and continued through 1984.

The Janata government did not repudiate the Indo-Soviet treaty or make any substantial changes in foreign policy. Moscow made hasty alterations in ideological tracts so as to condemn Gandhi's Emergency rule (1975–77) and to win favor with Janata. The style of operation chosen by Prime Minister Desai and Foreign Minister Vajpayee lent credence to the view that India was distancing itself from the Soviet Union, for example, in attitudes toward Africa, Southeast Asia, and West Asia. As a consequence of the disintegration of the Janata government and the reelection of Gandhi to power, top Soviet officials hastened to mend their fences with her.

By 1980 relations between the two countries had achieved a high degree of stability and predictability. The Afghan crisis, therefore, did not have as strong or as negative an impact on official Indo-Soviet relations as many observers expected. Indian diplomacy followed a course similar to that adopted on previous occasions, such as the uprisings and Soviet occupations in Hungary in 1956 and in Czechoslovakia in 1968. Indian representatives at the UN avoided condemnatory language and abstained on condemnatory resolutions as useless Cold War exercises that could only antagonize the Soviet Union and postpone political settlement. India reiterated its basic precepts for withdrawal of all foreign troops and negotiation among concerned parties. In joint communiqués with the leaders of other countries, such as France and Indonesia, stronger views were expressed in correct phraseology. In the Indian press and public, sympathy for the Afghans was strong, and some criticism of government action—or inaction—was heard. In meetings with Soviet leaders in New Delhi in 1980 and in Moscow in 1982, Gandhi pressed harder for the withdrawal of Soviet troops and for the restoration of Afghanistan's traditional nonalignment and independence. Her words were not reported in the Soviet press; neither was the subject mentioned in joint statements. Throughout 1984, however, numerous members of the Nonaligned Movement—both Islamic and non-Islamic nations—sharply criticized Gandhi's failure as leader of the movement to speak out forcefully and consistently on the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and suggested that her

near silence reflected the "Soviet connection."

It appeared likely in 1985 that past trends would persist in Indo-Soviet relations. Despite the absence of mutual security arrangements, the sophistication and quality of Soviet military equipment sold to India has been upgraded consistently. At times when India appeared inclined to favor certain items of West European or American manufacture, as in 1982 and 1984, Soviet delegations descended on New Delhi and offered generous terms on equivalent or superior items. Negotiations on bilateral trade, exchange rates, commodity lists, and joint production in industry continued to be hard and detailed. Friendship between the two governments has generated goodwill, cultural exchanges, and linguistic and educational facilities in both countries. The relationship remained essentially unsentimental, however, and calculated to meet specific shared interests.

International Organizations

India has participated actively in the UN and other international organizations since before independence. Although not a permanent member of the UN Security Council, India has been elected periodically—for the fifth time in 1983—to serve in a nonpermanent seat. India's membership in the UN Economic and Social Council has been practically uninterrupted through regular reelection. In 1985 India was also a member of the 20-nation UN Disarmament Committee and served on the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

From the time of the Korean War to the present, India has attempted to resist the imposition of cold war alignments and East-West disputes on UN General Assembly debates. It has consistently supported the institution of the UN Secretary General, however, as well as the negotiating and peacemaking activities of successive secretaries general. In the early 1960s India opposed the attempt made by the Soviet Union to have the secretary general replaced by a three-person directorate, or "Troika." Equally, India has opposed measures designed to use the UN as an anticommunist instrument. Several Indians have served with distinction as international civil servants.

In 1983 Prime Minister Indira Gandhi took the initiative of inviting heads of government or state to join her at the thirty-eighth session of the UN General Assembly and to make a collective appraisal of some of the major problems facing the world. Some 30 leaders did so, and their consultations were described as

being wide-ranging and useful. Gandhi led the Indian delegation, and her speech addressed the issues that most concerned India at the time: peace, disarmament, and development. She repeated India's concern that peripheral matters were detracting from efforts to reduce and eliminate nuclear weapons. India was among the first to sign the 1963 partial test ban treaty but refused to sign the 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, considering it discriminatory against development of peaceful nuclear technology in nonnuclear weapons countries and inattentive to the escalation of weapons production by the great powers. In 1983 India renewed its call for moves toward a comprehensive test ban treaty, and in early 1985 it welcomed the proposed renewal of bilateral United States-Soviet talks on arms control.

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The study of Indian foreign relations is facilitated by documents published in English by the Indian government in the form of annual reports of the Ministry of External Affairs, written replies to questions asked in Parliament, and articles in the *Foreign Affairs Record*. Published speeches of prime ministers are easily available, and there is no substitute for the speeches and writings of Jawaharlal Nehru for understanding the rationale and direction of Indian foreign policy.

A large number of books and articles are published each year on such subjects as nonalignment, foreign aid, nuclear weapons, or specific bilateral relations. Norman D. Palmer's *The United States and India* and Robert C. Horn's *Soviet-Indian Relations* are both detailed and analytical studies of India's relations with the global powers. Comprehensive surveys of Indian foreign relations are found in Charles Heimsath and Surjit Mansingh's *A Diplomatic History of Modern India* for the period 1919–65 and Mansingh's *India's Search for Power: Indira Gandhi's Foreign Policy, 1966–1982*. Two books that deal admirably with India's foreign policy decisionmaking and the domestic political structure underlying it are Jayant Bandyopadhyaya's *The Making of India's Foreign Policy* and Shashi Tharoor's *Reasons of State*. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Chapter 10. National Security



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THE PREEMINENT MILITARY power on the subcontinent since partition in 1947, India as of 1985 was continuing to expand and modernize its armed forces, seeking to develop a military capability commensurate with its self-perceived status as a great power and natural arbiter of regional affairs. The army was the world's third largest in terms of manpower, the air force the eighth largest in terms of combat aircraft, and the navy the most powerful of any of the Indian Ocean littoral nations. Both the army and the air force were essentially organized to defend two fronts: the western border with Pakistan, against which India fought in 1947–48, 1965, and 1971, and the northern border with China, where India suffered a humiliating defeat in 1962. That defeat prompted a reevaluation of the nation's security requirements and a new commitment to expand and improve the armed forces. Initially, priority went to the air and ground forces, which were required to defend the nation's land borders; during the 1970s, however, the navy was built up to achieve blue water capability in order to meet the challenge of increased superpower activity in the Indian Ocean—an area the government considered to be within its rightful sphere of influence.

India's highly developed domestic defense industry not only met the armed force's requirements for virtually all conventional arms but also produced them for export. Self-sufficiency in arms production has been an illusory goal, however, and most high-technology items continued to be made under licensed production or were imported. The Soviet Union, with which India signed a treaty in 1971, has since the mid-1960s supplied an estimated 80 percent of military equipment imported by India, largely because of the Soviet Union's willingness to turn over technology, its relatively easy credit terms, and the fact that few strings were attached to its weapons deliveries. National defense policy called for diversification of import sources, and major purchases were also made from France and Britain during the early 1980s. Nonetheless, these purchases continued to be more than offset by arms deals with the Soviet Union.

Although trained and equipped primarily to provide external defense, the armed forces—particularly the army—have also regularly filled internal security missions. These have included counterinsurgency operations against ethnic separatists and, under the control of civilian authorities, restoration of order when civil disturbances escalated beyond the control of police or paramili-

tary units. In June 1984 the central government ordered the army to conduct an antiterrorist campaign against Sikh terrorists in Punjab and to restore order there; in a departure from previous practice, military commanders, although under nominal civilian control, effectively ran the operation.

Sikh aspirations for increased autonomy or the creation of a separate Sikh nation, terrorist support for these goals, and the Sikh community's sense of isolation and outrage in the wake of army operations posed perhaps the most serious problem for the nation from 1980 to early 1985. The anti-Sikh riots that broke out after two Sikh security guards assassinated Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in October 1984 only deepened the division between the Sikh community and the rest of India. This was but one of a number of internal security problems the government faced, however. Minority ethnic separatist movements have long simmered throughout the country, and omnipresent communal tension, which since independence has sporadically flared into violence, appeared to have resulted from attempts to polarize communal relations and manipulate violence for political ends. As in the past, however, most outbreaks of communal violence were sparked by economic, social, or political tension that inflamed linguistic, communal, or religious passions. As such, they were probably resistant to government control, except over the long term.

Such challenges notwithstanding, as of early 1985 the government remained committed to enforcing a basic level of order and preserving national unity within a democratic framework. The Constitution guarantees fundamental rights and freedoms to all citizens, and a vigorous national press monitored compliance. Legal responsibility for maintenance of law and order was vested in state police forces; law enforcement agencies at the national level were also maintained to augment the effectiveness of the state forces. The police at all levels, however, faced an increasingly onerous burden in growing urban unrest and rising rates of ordinary crime. The widespread public perception of partiality and corruption in the police and criminal justice systems compounded the problems of law enforcement. Moreover, the lengthy delays that characterized the legal process—and indeed came close to paralyzing it—contributed to a growing public lack of faith in the rule of law.

The Development of the Armed Forces

Archaeological evidence indicates that the story of human

conflict on the subcontinent is as old as the human presence on the land. The earliest written records of the Vedic period (about 1500 to 500 B.C.) show continuous wars and, from about 600 B.C., the formal organization of standing armies. Subsequent military history up to the time of the European incursions in the sixteenth century is characterized by repeated major invasions, mostly by land from the north and west—and by innumerable conflicts between local rulers. These wars produced a pantheon of military heroes in Indian history and legend—such as Asoka in the third century B.C.—who have been invoked since independence as symbols of national unity.

When the Europeans arrived and began to set up trading posts, most armies in India were raised under a system whereby a central ruler assigned to a subordinate the right to collect taxes from a specified portion of land. In return, the subordinate at his own expense maintained an armed contingent that served at the behest of the ruler. When called to service, these forces—consisting primarily of a cavalry made up of local landowners, their relatives, and retainers—were joined by a small corps of professional troops maintained by the central ruler. A vast "infantry" element supported the whole.

When the power of the central authority declined, however, as did that of the Mughal Empire, beginning in the late seventeenth century, these military forces fell under the authority of independent power centers. During the eighteenth century, European trading companies used their own military forces, along with wealth, guile, and diplomacy, to establish themselves as minor local powers, contending with indigenous forces and one another for trade and influence. The superior military organization and technology of the European forces generally enabled them to prevail over their opponents, and the scope of European power expanded steadily. Contemporary Indian military tradition owes its greatest influence to the most successful of the European military models—that of the British.

The British Heritage

The origin of the modern Indian army can be traced to the forces employed by the East India Company—chartered in London in 1600—and trained in the use of arms for the protection of company trade. Employed first as guards and watchmen, Indians later were grouped into military formations and employed as auxiliaries to the company's European and Eurasian regular forces. After the French demonstrated in the early 1700s that Indians

trained and equipped along European lines made effective regular forces that were cheaper to maintain and easier to raise than European units, the British in the 1740s began to organize and train Indian units to serve in a regular capacity.

British forces in India were divided into three separate armies maintained by the presidencies (governments) of the East India Company's three major fortified trading sites—Calcutta (Fort William), Bombay, and Madras (Fort Saint George). In 1748 the armies were grouped under a single commander in chief—Captain Stringer Lawrence, who has been called the father of the Indian army. Under his direction they were organized, armed, uniformed, and trained by a nucleus of British officers. Although formally under a single commander in chief, great distances separated the three presidencies, and the Bengal (Calcutta), Bombay, and Madras armies developed as autonomous and separate entities.

By the end of the eighteenth century, the bulk of each army's forces was provided by units of Indian troops—known as sepoys—who generally were recruited by each army from groups within its own area. In these units Indian junior officers exercised low-level command under the overall control of British officers. Indian officers had no authority over non-Indians. In addition to the Indian units, the company employed a few all-British units. Small elements of regular British army personnel were also incorporated into the presidency armies.

The presidency armies were tested in battle during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as the East India Company and the British government sought to pacify the Indian people and eventually to extend British rule over the entire subcontinent. At the Battle of Plassey in 1757, for example, Robert Clive led a force of 900 British soldiers and 2,000 sepoys of the Bengal army that defeated an Indian force over 10 times its number. Although British forces suffered occasional defeats and some of their victories came only at great cost, by 1822 Britain had become the paramount power on the subcontinent (see Company Rule and the British Empire, ch. 1).

The rapid expansion of British control during the early part of the nineteenth century was accompanied throughout India by mounting tension. Political, social, religious, and ethnic factors underlaid sporadic outbreaks against British rule. Scores of thousands of sepoys had been brought into the armies to facilitate the expansion, but until 1857 only a few minor outbreaks of violence had surfaced in the military.

Long pent-up discontent among the sepoys over many issues erupted into open revolt, however, at Meerut on May 10, 1857,

starting the Mutiny of 1857—also known as the Sepoy Revolt, the Sepoy Rebellion, and the Indian Mutiny (see The Events of 1857, ch. 1). The immediate cause was outrage on the part of Hindu and Muslim soldiers brought on by rumors that beef fat, forbidden by religion to Hindus, or pork fat, similarly forbidden to Muslims, had been used as grease on their rifle cartridges. A paper shield on the cartridge had to be bitten off before it could be inserted into the rifle, and thus the sepoys believed that they were being deliberately forced to violate their religious beliefs.

The uprising, regarded as a mutiny by the British but as a struggle for freedom by later Indian commentators, was largely confined to elements of the Bengal Army in North India and parts of central India. The Punjab (see Glossary), including its Sikh chiefs, remained loyal to the British. The Madras Army took no part in the uprising. Although the revolt began as a military mutiny, it was not confined entirely to the army, and it is estimated that tens of thousands of civilians participated at one time or another.

The events of 1857 marked a turning point in the history of India. A proclamation by Queen Victoria terminated the government of the East India Company, and India became a British colony. The role of the armies was reevaluated, and all members were made servants of the crown. By 1861 the presidency armies had been greatly reorganized. Most of the Bengal Army was disbanded, the total number of sepoys in the three armies was reduced from 230,000 to 150,000, and the British element was raised from 40,000 to 75,000.

The composition and organization of the Indian units changed considerably as a result of the 1857 revolt. Most Indian artillery units were disbanded, and the artillery was placed in British hands. The British asserted that they would thenceforth adhere to the principle of "divide and rule" in organizing the Indian component, it being feared that development of a feeling of community among Indians would make control of the sepoys more difficult and would interfere with the practice of using units drawn from one area or community to enforce order in another. Indian regiments were thereafter increasingly organized on a territorial basis; individual companies—and in some cases entire regiments—included only those having the same religious, tribal, or caste backgrounds. When companies from several regiments were grouped into battalions, great care was taken to perpetuate and cultivate cultural and social distinctions between companies of different makeup.

By the late nineteenth century, recruitment had been con-

fined to certain classes and communities—mainly those in the northern border areas and the Punjab. Intake from other areas was strictly limited. Initially the narrowing recruitment base was both a response to the revolt itself and a reflection of the realities of contemporary security requirements. Most of the mutineers in the Bengal Army had been drawn from the Indo-Gangetic Plain, and most of the troops used to put down the mutiny had been raised in the Punjab (see fig. 4). The greatest military challenge to the British Raj was in the northern border areas; in contrast, Southern India had been relatively pacified.

Increasingly, however, recruitment policy came to be based upon the martial races notion, according to which the inhabitants of certain castes or tribes were reputed to make more fearless and disciplined soldiers than others. The popularization of this concept is usually attributed to Lord Roberts of Qandahar, who was commander in chief of the British Indian Army from 1885 to 1893. He believed that the best soldier material was to be found in northwestern India. Roberts regarded the southern people (especially in Madras), the Bengalis, and the Marathas of Bombay as poor soldier material. Their warlike spirit, he thought, had atrophied because of lack of use, soft living, and the hot, enervating climate.

Accordingly, when the Bengal Army was re-formed in 1885, its new units were raised in the Punjab. More significantly, in 1892 army policy was changed so that units were raised not on a territorial basis but on what the British referred to as a "class" basis, in which regiments admitted only those having similar ethnic, religious, or caste backgrounds. Intake came almost entirely from the so-called martial races, and in consequence the period from 1892 to 1914 is sometimes referred to as that of the Punjabization of the army. These patterns of recruitment and organization produced a regular, traditional, and professional force heavily oriented by region and caste and responsive to British command; the procedures also perpetuated regional and communal ties and produced an army that was not nationally based.

Administrative reforms in 1895 abolished the three separate presidency armies and centralized command under the authority of a single army headquarters at Delhi. During the early 1900s the process of centralization continued as all units were brought into a common sequence. During the same period the separation between military and civilian spheres of influence and the ultimate primacy of civilian authority gained final acceptance in both military and civilian circles and began to be institutionalized in the governmental system.

India's contribution to the Allied cause during World War I

in men, money, and supplies was substantial, and India voluntarily sent troops to all areas where Allied forces were engaged. During the course of the war, over 1 million Indian soldiers were sent out of the country; more than 100,000 were killed or wounded.

Mobilization for the war highlighted many weaknesses in the military establishment, however. Officer casualties had an inordinately serious effect on military formations because only the few British officers assigned to a battalion had the authority and prestige to exercise overall command. Indian officers from one company could rarely be transferred to another having a different ethnic, religious, or caste makeup. In consequence, after the war most battalions were reorganized to facilitate reinforcement between component companies. Propelled by strong pressure from Indian public opinion, the British also began to train a small number of Indians for officer commissions as a first step in the Indianization of the officer corps. Again under pressure, the British agreed to upgrade Indian armaments, but concrete action was slow in coming. The Royal Indian Air Force was established in 1932, and a small Indian marine unit was reorganized into the Royal Indian Navy in 1934. Indian artillery batteries were first formed only in 1936. Even though the practice of restricting recruitment to the so-called martial races had proved inadequate during World War I and entry had been opened to "nonmartial" groups, the traditional recruitment emphasis on martial races was nonetheless resumed after demobilization.

By World War II, Indian nationalism had gained considerable strength since its birth at the beginning of the century, and support for Britain was not so uniform as during World War I (see Independence, ch. 1). The viceroy of India, without consulting Indian political leaders, declared India to be at war with Germany on September 3, 1939. The legislature sustained this decree by passing the Defence of India Bill without opposition, largely because representatives of the Indian National Congress (see Glossary) boycotted the session. Between 1939 and mid-1945 the British Indian Army expanded from about 175,000 to over 2 million—entirely by voluntary enlistment. The small navy and air force were also increased, and the Indian officer corps grew from 600 to over 14,000. Indian troops were employed under overall British command in Africa, Italy, the Middle East, and particularly in Burma and Southeast Asia. The great expansion in manpower, the distant service of Indian forces, and the demonstrated soldierly ability of Indians from all groups did much to dispel the martial races theory.

In Asia, the Japanese sought to exploit Indian nationalism

and anti-British sentiment by forming and supporting the Indian National Army (INA)—composed of Indian prisoners of war—under the leadership of Subhas Chandra Bose, a former militant president of Congress. This force supported the Japanese in Burma but disintegrated in 1945; Bose was killed in an airplane crash the same year. The INA was not absorbed into the new army after independence, but public protest was great enough to deter the British from sentencing its members after the war. Its leaders were, nevertheless, screened from advancement in the new national military.

The National Forces

At independence important organizational changes strengthened civilian control over the military by abolishing the position of commander in chief of India and placing all three service chiefs on equal footing beneath the civilian Ministry of Defence. These moves greatly reduced the influence of the numerically dominant army, to which the other services had previously been subservient, and confined the service chiefs to exercising an advisory role in the defense decisionmaking process. In part, these changes reflected a degree of ambiguity in the attitudes of much of the civilian leadership toward the military, which was strongly identified with the colonial past and seemed to have little role to play in a state in which the principles of nonviolence were widely accepted (see The Indian National Congress, ch. 1).

Suggestions that the services be radically reformed or even abolished came to nought, however. The difficulties of the partition of British India in 1947 and Pakistan's invasion of Kashmir in 1948 confirmed the need for a national defense establishment. Performance in those engagements helped earn the military leadership sufficient political credibility to preserve the services as conventionally organized forces that maintained considerable continuity in tradition with their preindependence predecessors.

Independence and partition caused serious dislocation in the Indian defense establishment, which took years to overcome. Partition had been accompanied by a division of armed forces personnel and equipment; largely Muslim units went to Pakistan in a first stage, which was followed by transfers on an individual basis. About two-thirds of army personnel went to India. Although as an officially secular state India accepted all armed forces personnel without regard to religion, this radically reduced the Muslim component in the Indian armed forces. The division of the navy was based on an estimation of each nation's requirements. A com-



Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi speaking with Rakesh Sharma, first Indian in space, Courtesy Embassy of India, Washington

bination of the two systems was applied to the small air force. India also received about two-thirds of matériel and stores, but the division was complicated by the fact that all 16 ordnance factories were located in India, which retained them by agreement and upon payment of a sum to assist Pakistan in building its own ordnance factories.

Independence resulted in a sharp reduction of the number of experienced senior personnel available. Because British officers had held nearly all high-level command slots, as of 1947 only six Indians had commanded a brigade, and only one, a division. It was therefore necessary to retain some British officers for a time, and all three services were headed by British chiefs for a few years after independence. The armed forces also had to integrate into their regular forces qualified members of the armies formerly maintained by the autonomous Indian states whose forces had been abolished when the states acceded to India at independence (see Integration of the Princely States, ch. 1). The term *sepoy* was dropped about this time, and the word *jawan* has been used ever since when referring to the Indian soldier.

The 1948 conflict with Pakistan arose from a territorial dispute over Jammu and Kashmir (see fig. 1). Beginning about October 20, 1947, large numbers of armed tribesmen from the frontier areas of Pakistan moved into the area and advanced toward Srinagar, the capital. Indian military forces were ordered into action one week later. The conflict produced hundreds of thousands of military and civilian casualties but was inconclusive. A cease-fire was arranged under the aegis of the United Nations (UN) on January 1, 1949, demarcating a border that left Srinagar and the Vale of Kashmir in Indian hands.

The issue of armed forces development received little sup-

port or attention from civilian politicians in the 1950s. The government of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru placed its highest priority on economic development and believed that national security could best be achieved by remaining nonaligned in the superpower conflict and promoting a policy of peaceful coexistence with all states. National defense in the military sense had a relatively low priority. There was continued concern over the security threat from Pakistan, however, particularly during the 1950s, when Pakistan joined anticommunist alliances that brought it United States military aid. During the late 1950s relations also became strained with China because of disputed claims in the remote Himalayan areas of Ladakh in northeast Jammu and Kashmir (Kashmir) and along the line of what was then called the North-East Frontier Agency (later Arunachal Pradesh) in Northeast India. The government believed that it should take a diplomatic rather than a military approach to both problems, however. The armed forces participated in UN peacekeeping missions and in a number of internal security operations—especially in Nagaland on the Burmese border during the 1950s. Indian troops were also used in 1961 to occupy the old Portuguese enclaves of Goa, Daman, and Diu.

India's performance in the short but intense border hostilities with China in 1962 sparked a complete reevaluation of Indian security policy, and the war has been regarded as one of the turning points in Indian military history. India had completely misestimated the situation with China and was totally unprepared when that nation—in response to Indian actions—launched massive attacks in all sections of the disputed border. Tactically surprised and outnumbered, outgunned, and outmaneuvered, defending Indian forces fought well in a number of actions. By and large, however, Indian forces were revealed to be ill-equipped, short of ammunition and supplies, and untrained in mountain warfare. Access to the remote and forbidding mountainous area was so difficult and unimproved that communication was a major problem. The Indian performance was hampered by a lack of coordination, cooperation, and trust between commanders at all levels and between the military leadership and Ministry of Defence officials.

Having administered a succession of military defeats to Indian forces in the area—the bulk of the Indian Army, far to the south, was never engaged—China announced a cease-fire on November 21, 1962, and soon withdrew its forces approximately to lines occupied before the conflict. The net effect along the border was a stalemate, and claims of both nations remained unresolved as

of early 1985.

In the wake of the defeat, Prime Minister Nehru elevated the priority accorded to the military and instituted a searching reappraisal of India's defense problems and priorities. Defense spending was increased, and the nation embarked on a crash military modernization program aimed at developing the capability to defend against conventional war on two fronts, i.e., China and Pakistan. Throughout the services, standards of operational and support training were raised, and the scope and intensity of training were increased. A number of senior military officers and civilian officials either resigned or were transferred. Long-term defense planning was instituted, and the first five-year defense plan was drawn up to cover the 1964–69 period (see Defense Spending, this ch.)

Although India had received matériel support from the United States and Britain during the war, Indian requests were treated with little urgency after the Chinese withdrawal. The Soviet Union, however, proved willing to support virtually all phases of the planned military modernization program on favorable economic terms. India had already approached the Soviet Union for military aid in 1960 in an effort to counter United States support for Pakistan and to get support in the growing dispute with China. Just before hostilities broke out, India and the Soviet Union had agreed that India would import MiG-21 aircraft and would set up production facilities for domestic manufacture. This agreement was taken up after the war, and the first MiG-21s were delivered in 1964. The Soviet Union agreed to provide helicopters, tanks, and additional armaments in 1964, becoming in that year India's principal arms supplier—a position it continued to hold as of early 1985.

India justified its arms imports as an emergency, short-term measure. The nation's long-term goal was to achieve self-sufficiency in the production of all defense items. After the 1962 war the effort to build a domestic defense industry was accelerated, and weapons systems packages began to be evaluated in terms of their contribution to the development of the arms industry (see Defense Industry, this ch.). The Soviet Union was viewed as being supportive of India's search for self-reliance, proof being demonstrated in its willingness to transfer industrial and technological know-how and to permit production of sophisticated combat aircraft in India.

The nation's improved state of military capability was apparent in September 1965, when a brief war broke out between Indian and Pakistani forces. Lasting only about 22 days, the war was

the scene of the largest tank battle since World War II. It was ended by a UN cease-fire and mutual withdrawals. Both countries then signed a "no war" agreement at Tashkent on January 10, 1966, as a result of mediation provided by the Soviet Union. Indian forces gained more than enough success during these engagements to restore morale and to demonstrate the progress made since 1962 in unit training, communications, and logistics.

The Soviet Union's credibility as an arms supplier rose as a result of the war. The United States and Britain had embargoed arms shipments to both sides, but the Soviet Union had continued to meet its commitments and even agreed to meet requests for vessels for a planned naval expansion that had been received with little enthusiasm in the United States and Britain. At the same time, Pakistan had gone to China for arms, a move that in Indian eyes raised the specter of an alliance between its two adversaries against which India had no hope of prevailing without a powerful ally of its own. There was cause for worry during the 1965–70 period, when the Soviet Union attempted to balance relations with both India and Pakistan and negotiated arms deals with both, but the signing of the Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation with the Soviet Union in August 1971 effectively calmed those fears. Although the treaty was not directly related to the supply of arms, it provided a framework for cooperation that quickly led to a speed-up of Soviet arms supplies to India.

The treaty also proved a valuable counterweight to Pakistan's ties with China and the United States when civil war broke out in 1971 in East Pakistan, where Bengali nationalists were pressing for the formation of the independent state of Bangladesh. After troops from what was then West Pakistan were brought into East Pakistan to reinforce garrisons and suppress the secessionist movement, hundreds of thousands of refugees—mostly Hindu—fled to India. Anti-Pakistan guerrillas used Indian border areas for training bases and sanctuary and received training and materiél from India.

On December 3, 1971, Pakistan launched a series of preventive air raids against Indian airfields and on December 4 declared war. The initial Pakistani air strikes were ineffective, however, and the Indian Air Force attained and held air superiority after the first 24 hours. In the east the Pakistan Air Force detachment was destroyed, and supply and escape routes were cut off. In the west the Indian Air Force systematically and effectively struck aircraft and airfields, base installations, communications centers, and troop concentrations. At sea, an Indian Navy task force built around the aircraft carrier I.N.S. *Vikrant* immobilized the port

facilities of East Pakistan. At the same time, a task force in the west contained Pakistan's fleet and damaged shore installations at Karachi.

On the ground the Indian Army immediately invaded East Pakistan. Surprised and shocked by the speed and power of the Indian advance, Pakistan's forces were soon cut off and without air support. Dacca (now Dhaka) fell on December 16, and the Pakistani commander and about 75,000 men surrendered. In the west, India's forces had contained the expected attacks in Kashmir, Punjab, and Rajasthan and had elsewhere made limited advances into Pakistan. After the fall of Dacca, India declared a unilateral cease-fire, which was accepted by Pakistan on the following day, and recognized East Pakistan as the independent state of Bangladesh. One year later Pakistan and India exchanged territories seized during the war, and a modified line of control was delimited in Kashmir, although no final settlement of that issue was attained. Repatriation of prisoners and internees occurred during 1973.

Although the performance of the Indian armed forces was considered an outstanding success, one development during the war was viewed with dismay. During the hostilities the United States had ordered a task force led by the nuclear-powered and nuclear-armed U.S.S. *Enterprise* into the Bay of Bengal as a symbol of support for Pakistan. India interpreted this as a sign that the United States, which had recently made a dramatic opening to China, intended to join with Pakistan and China in an axis against India. The incident also demonstrated that even though India had been able to establish itself as the unrivaled power on the subcontinent, its own security could still be threatened from the sea. According to Stephen Cohen, an American scholar on the military, "one cannot overemphasize the intensity of the bitter Indian reaction to the *Enterprise* affair. . . . It had a major impact on military thinking . . . . and is remembered as a humiliating experience, all the more so because it occurred at just the moment of India's greatest military-political triumph."

In the months that followed the war, the Indian leadership raised the priority accorded to naval development and increased investment in electronics and the rocket development program. It also made a decision to proceed toward conducting a nuclear test explosion, which successfully took place in 1974, to the shock of most of the world. Thereafter India continued to focus on the development of nuclear capability, insisting that its research was for peaceful purposes. India continued to refuse to sign the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, asserting that the treaty legitimized nuclear weapons and their monopoly by those

nations that had already developed them. Although India continued to insist that its nuclear program was directed toward peaceful purposes, as of early 1985 there was much discussion in both official and nonofficial circles over the fact that China had nuclear weapons, and Pakistan was thought to be working toward developing them; these circumstances were believed to make it difficult for India to foreswear its own nuclear weapons option.

In early 1985 Indian officials continued to view naval expansion as a major priority, particularly in light of the buildup of the military forces of the superpowers in the Indian Ocean, which India increasingly considered as part of its own sphere of influence. The army and air force were also undergoing a major equipment replacement and modernization program, although contrary to the program in the navy, actual acquisition had been delayed until the late 1970s. Under that program, India has made major weapons purchases from Western nations, including Britain and the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) but continued to buy most of its equipment from the Soviet Union—in large part because that nation proved eager to keep India as a customer and offered it state-of-the-art equipment at very favorable rates.

The Indian Strategic Perspective, 1985

Although the Indian strategic perspective has undergone a process of evolution since independence, it has displayed a number of consistent underlying themes that reflect India's view of itself, its region, and the global situation. One of the most basic themes was the belief that however daunting India's problems with poverty might be, the nation had an immense potential that placed it among the world's greatest powers. Achieving recognition of its innate great power status became seen as a matter of national prestige. The fact that many countries only gradually came to accept this thesis has been at times a source of great frustration.

Indian strategic thought has also been conditioned by the belief that the subcontinent forms a geopolitical entity in which India, by virtue of its size, population, natural resources, and industrial capacity, was clearly predominant. The entire subcontinent, however, was seen as vulnerable to internal instability. Because of its central location and the fact that portions of its population shared religious, linguistic, or ethnic heritages with most of the people in South Asia, India was considered especially vulnerable to a spillover of turmoil from neighboring states.

Under these circumstances India's own national interests were seen to demand that it exert leadership over the area. According to one Indian analyst, Pakistan's refusal to accept this "harsh reality" has formed the crux of regional security problems.

Finally, although India—like most nations—has not consistently followed in practice what it espoused in philosophy, it has displayed a long-lasting suspicion of alliances per se and has repeatedly reiterated a policy of nonalignment in the superpower competition. These attitudes in part reflected the country's strong sense of independence and national identity, but they were also an expression of the belief that involvement by outside powers—especially the superpowers—in the affairs of any state has aggravated existing problems rather than solved them. During the 1950s and 1960s these perceptions were underscored by Pakistan's membership in anticommunist alliances, which brought it United States military aid that was seen as adversely affecting India's own security. Although it proved difficult to reconcile these beliefs with the signing of a treaty with the Soviet Union in 1971, the ideals themselves were not abandoned. Instead, the Indian leadership defended its relationship with the Soviet Union as a pragmatic response to Pakistan's ties with China and the United States, noted that the Soviet Union and India had congruent strategic interests in South Asia, and insisted that Indian independence had not suffered. As of early 1985, Indian rhetoric continued to encourage nations—especially those in the region—to scorn military alliances and to resist being drawn into the orbit of either superpower. At the same time, however, India has drawn criticism from co-members of the Nonaligned Movement for its own imbalanced treatment of the Soviet Union and the United States (see Relations with the Soviet Union ch. 9).

These underlying assumptions have continued to be evidenced in the Indian strategic perspective on the subcontinent and Pakistan, the greater Indian Ocean region, China, and the international scene. Nowhere was this more evident than in the doctrine of subcontinental security that India enunciated during the early 1980s. Under that doctrine, India declared that although it would not intervene in internal security conflicts in any South Asian state, it could not tolerate intervention by any other nation. India advised that should a nation require external assistance in dealing with security problems, that aid should be sought from within the region, principally from India. This policy reflected the long-standing belief that Indian security would be adversely affected by the involvement of nonregional actors in any nation within the subcontinent. It also reflected a new self-confi-

dence in the nation's ability to determine regional affairs. As of early 1985, neither India's willingness to enforce the doctrine nor its ability to do so had been tested.

Approximately two-thirds of India's ground forces and a major part of the air force continued in early 1985 to be deployed to defend the border with Pakistan. Relations with that nation have followed an up-and-down course punctuated by negotiations and border incidents (see Relations with Pakistan, ch. 9). India has continued to express suspicion of Pakistan's nuclear program, and the pattern of Pakistan's weapons acquisition has regularly acted as a major determinant of India's arms policy. The suggestion in 1981 that Pakistan might import F-16 advanced fighters from the United States, for instance, spurred India to conclude a deal with France for advanced Mirage 2000 fighter bombers.

Other nations on the subcontinent also continued to pose security concerns. Violence in Sri Lanka against the minority Tamil community has provoked a response in India's own Tamil community (see Religious, Communal, Class, and Regional Differences, this ch.). Sri Lanka was also seen as strategically significant because of its location in the Indian Ocean and the fact that its port at Trincomalee was the biggest natural harbor between Australia and Africa. Many observers have linked India's decision to enunciate a regional strategic doctrine to this concern over Sri Lanka. India has experienced internal security problems as a result of uncontrolled immigration from Bangladesh into the Northeast (see Assam and the Northeast, this ch.). India also had a deep interest in the security of Nepal and Bhutan, insofar as they formed forward lines of defense against China.

India's central location in the Indian Ocean, its vital maritime shipping interests, its island territories, and the fact that the ocean had brought conquerers to India in the past clearly would make it an area of strategic significance for the nation under any conditions. The area has been seen to be particularly critical since the early 1970s, however, as a result of the buildup of military and naval forces in the region at large, the warfare in the Persian Gulf area from which India's imported oil came, the continued search by the superpowers for new allies and bases, the entry of sophisticated weapons into Pakistan, and lingering tensions in Southeast Asia. Diplomatically, India has supported the UN effort to declare a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean (see Nonalignment, ch. 9). Militarily, India's continued interest in the area has been demonstrated by its program of naval expansion, the development of advanced naval and air support facilities in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and in Lakshadweep, and the

creation in 1984 of a new southern area force command headquartered at Trivandrum.

About one-third of the nation's ground forces—consisting mostly of the 10 mountain divisions raised after the 1962 war—as well as a substantial portion of air force assets were deployed in Northeast India on the common border with China. In the opinion of most analysts, however, India did not consider China an immediate threat. Instead, concern was focused on China's potential for affecting India's strategic environment over the long term, especially given China's relationship with Pakistan, its nuclear weapons capability, and the unresolved Sino-Indian border dispute. Border talks between the two countries have taken place since 1981, and another round was scheduled for 1985, but as of early 1985 the talks had proved inconclusive (see Relations with China, ch. 9).

The Armed Forces in Public Life

The Constitution places national defense in the exclusive domain of the central government, vesting the president with supreme command over the armed forces. Under the Forty-fourth Amendment to the Constitution, enacted in 1978, the president has the authority to declare an emergency and to take necessary action if the security of India or any part of it is threatened by external aggression or armed rebellion. An emergency declaration must be approved by Parliament within one month's time and may be continued beyond a six-month period only with the consent of Parliament.

The armed forces have been under firm civilian control since independence. Civilian authority has been so completely institutionalized that one expert on the Indian military has observed that the system amounted to an ". . . almost total civilian dominance . . ." and was without parallel in any other Third World nation. Civilian control was ensured not only through law but also through practical organizational means that discouraged the development of a unified military leadership that could be mobilized in opposition to the government. This was accomplished by maintaining the three services as separate but equal forces and dividing the resources of each among separate area commands. Military personnel were by and large isolated in cantonments, and their ties with foreign countries were kept at a minimum.

As a group, military personnel took pride in being apolitical

and played virtually no role in the national economic system. Even the defense industrial sector employed only a very small number of retired officers. The only serious conflict between the military and civil authorities occurred during the late 1950s and early 1960s, evolving around the minister of defense, V.K. Krishna Menon, who was perceived by military personnel as interfering in military affairs. Since the 1962 war and particularly after the 1971 war, however, the military has commanded a level of public admiration and support unequaled by any other national organization or group. The military leadership usually has been heard sympathetically by Parliament and the executive branch, and ministers of defense have been able to protect the interests of the ministry and the armed forces. What friction has occurred has involved promotion policies, the military wanting seniority to be the determinant for promotions to the highest ranking positions and the government at times using other criteria.

Matters relating to defense and security were protected by strict security measures, and few details of national defense policy or the military establishment were made public. In consequence there were few authorities in Parliament, the press, or the academic community who were capable of contesting official defense positions. One exception was the New Delhi-based Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis (IDSA), which was set up in 1967 with government support to promote advanced study and analysis of defense and security issues.

Missions

The principal mission of the armed forces was to defend the country against external aggression, and the defense services were organized, equipped, and trained almost exclusively toward performing this conventional defense role. Under special law, the army directed counterinsurgency operations against ethnic rebels in Northeast India. At least since 1962, the armed forces have also been seen as a valuable instrument for achieving foreign policy goals.

The armed forces were also required to perform emergency duties when requested by civilian authorities. These duties have primarily involved internal disaster relief and internal security operations. The military has welcomed the opportunity to perform duties of the first kind, appreciating the public relations value of "aid to the civil" operations. Civic action has rarely involved extensive participation in economic development, however, the military arguing successfully that such peacetime activity would erode pro-

fessional standards and take away from valuable training time.

Civilian authorities were legally entitled to seek military assistance to quell internal disorder, but in practice this has been done only reluctantly and only when it was unavoidable. Neither the government nor the military leadership looked favorably on using the defense services to perform civil order duties. The government has created and, when necessary, expanded several paramilitary forces precisely to avoid employing the military in an internal peacekeeping role. When a situation did escalate beyond the control of the civilian police and paramilitary forces, the law specified that the military could only undertake operations to restore order at the invitation of specified civil authorities and had to withdraw from the scene the moment the civil authority ordered. While on duty, military personnel exercised operational command over all military units deployed.

Despite a reluctance to call out the military to maintain public order, increasing levels of domestic disorder during the early 1980s had started a trend toward their greater use. In 1984, for instance, the army was deployed to restore the peace on several occasions, as well as to suppress riots in Assam, contain communal violence in Bombay and other cities, and restore order in New Delhi after the assassination of Indira Gandhi. The army was also used to flush out Sikh terrorists from the Golden Temple in Amritsar and to restore order in Punjab.

Personnel: Source and Quality

Under the Constitution, as amended in 1977, each citizen has a fundamental duty to "defend the country and render national service when called upon to do so." The three services have always been long-service, all-volunteer forces, however, and general conscription has never proved necessary. The normal securities of regular service life in contrast to the low average per capita income of most civilians have helped make a military career attractive.

The nation's ever increasing reserves of military manpower have always far exceeded the maximum called for by force authorizations or permitted by budgets. In 1985 the ratio of military personnel—1.12 million—to the total population—estimated at 746 million—was among the world's lowest. Far from constituting a drain on the civilian labor force, service in the military has provided critical employment opportunities in a nation in which unemployment remained a significant and growing problem.

The army and navy in 1985 maintained a combined recruiting organization that operated 60 offices in important cities and

towns nationwide. The air force's separate recruiting organization included 12 offices. Recruitment officers of both organizations toured the rural districts adjacent to their stations and also drew from surrounding urban areas. It was believed, however, that the air force and navy drew most of their recruits from urban areas in which educational opportunities were sufficient to produce applicants capable of mastering technical skills. The army also recruited outside India, admitting Gurkhas from Nepal into the Gurkha Regiment.

Initial enlistments varied in length, depending on the service and the branch or skill category, but 15 years was the usual minimum. The tour of duty was generally followed by two to five years of service in the reserves. Reenlistment was permitted for those who qualified, especially those possessing critical skills. The minimum age for enlistment was 17 years, the maximum varying between 20 and 27, depending on the service and skill category. The compulsory retirement age for officers also varied, ranging from 48 to 55 years for majors, equivalent ranks, and below, and rising to 58 for full generals and equivalents.

Candidates were required to meet minimum physical standards, which differed among the three services and were also adjusted to accommodate different physical traits of particular ethnic groups. Since 1977 recruiting officers have been instructed to relax the physical standards slightly when evaluating the only son of serving or former military personnel—both as a welfare measure and as a means of ensuring that a family tradition of military service can be maintained.

Educational standards for enlisted ranks differed according to service and skill category, the army requirement varying from basic literacy to higher secondary education (see Education, ch. 2). The other two services maintained higher standards befitting their greater need for technical expertise, the air force requiring at least higher secondary education, and the navy, graduation from a secondary school for all except cooks and stewards. Officer candidates had to have completed a higher secondary or equivalent education and passed a competitive qualifying exam for entry into precommission training (see Organization, Equipment, and Training, this ch.). All three services also accepted candidates holding university degrees in such fields as engineering, physics, or medicine for direct entry into the officer corps.

Enlistment was legally opened to all Indians in 1947. In 1949 further orders were given to abolish recruitment on an ethnic, linguistic, caste, or religious basis. In the case of the army's infantry regiments raised before World War II, however (their cohesion

and effectiveness were construed to be rooted in a long-term sentimental attachment to certain traditions), that order was officially interpreted as setting an ideal goal rather than mandating immediate change. In 1985 certain army regiments continued to have a homogeneous composition; others mixed groups within a regiment but segregated them at the battalion or company level. Still others were completely mixed throughout. The army has steadily been evolving into a more heterogeneous service. Regiments raised during World War II and after have recruited Indians of almost all categories, and the doubling of the army's size after the 1962 war sped up that process. The government made a special effort to recruit among underrepresented sections of the population and during the late 1970s and early 1980s reformed the recruiting process to eliminate some of the subjectivity in the candidate selection process. Since 1980 the government has sought to apportion recruitment from each state and union territory according to its share of the total population. Both the air force and the navy were almost totally "mixed" services and displayed considerable heterogeneity in composition.

Despite the government's policy of encouraging recruits from all states and regions, some groups continued to serve in the military in numbers disproportionate to their representation in the general population. For the most part this occurred because military service was traditionally a career of great esteem in some communities and an occupation of little interest in others. One exception was the Muslim community, which traditionally provided a large number of military personnel but which has not been heavily recruited since independence.

The government did not release details on the ethnic, class, caste, or regional backgrounds of defense forces personnel, but most observers agreed that Sikhs continued to be the most overrepresented group in the military. During the early 1980s Sikhs were believed to constitute 10 to 12 percent of total army personnel, as high as 20 percent of the army officer corps, and up to 35 percent of all air force pilots. In contrast, Sikhs made up about 2 percent of the total national population. Two all-Sikh army regiments—The Sikh Light Infantry and the Sikh Regiment—together contained approximately 20 highly trained battalions that accounted for a major element of the strike force in the main army divisions. After the storming of the Golden Temple in 1984, mutinies broke out in a few Sikh units around the country. Although initial statements by the military leadership declared that Sikh deserters would be tried and hanged, the attitude quickly softened, and it was announced that only the ringleaders of the mutinies would be dealt with severely.

According to the government, initial reports of the mutinies were greatly exaggerated, and most mutineers had been misled by inaccurate accounts of events by agitators.

Defense Spending

Military expenditures were controlled by the Ministry of Finance through the Financial Advisor (Defence), who was delegated to the Ministry of Defence. Spending proposals generated in the three services were submitted to the Ministry of Defence and then passed to the Financial Advisor, who had veto power over all budgetary matters. This system was considered one of the strongest of the institutional safeguards ensuring civilian oversight of the military, but it has been criticized on the grounds that it results in a triplication of work, slows decisionmaking, and puts civil servants having little military expertise in control of programs for which they do not have executory responsibility.

Since 1964, spending has been guided by five-year development plans that for most of the period have been updated on an annual basis. The 1980–85 plan, revised in 1982, emphasized improvement of communications through equipment replacement. The plan encouraged procurement from domestic sources when possible and placed great emphasis on investments to improve the nation's scientific and technological base.

The defense budget for fiscal year (FY—see Glossary) 1983 was estimated at Rs57.5 billion (for value of the rupee—see Glossary). That figure represented about 3.5 percent of the estimated gross national product (GNP) and accounted for approximately 24.6 percent of total central government expenditures. The 1983 military budget represented an annual per capita expenditure of less than US$8, in contrast with US$20 for Pakistan and an estimated US$10 for China.

Before the 1962 war, defense spending averaged less than 2 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). Greatly increased military expenditures in the immediate aftermath of the 1962 war raised that to more than 3.7 percent (see table 23, Appendix). The sharp increases were not sustained, however, and by 1967 defense spending had stabilized at about 3 percent of GDP—a level that, except for a short-term rise associated with the 1971 war with Pakistan, had been maintained as of 1984. Increases in defense expenditures after the 1962 war financed a process of modernization that commenced for the navy in about 1974 and for the air force and army during the late 1970s. Specific yearly increases often reflected the acquisition of one or more technologically



Prime Minister Indira Gandhi holding a model of a tank that will be manufactured in defense ordnance factory
Courtesy Embassy of India, Washington

sophisticated weapons systems. Over the 1977–83 period, the defense budget rose by approximately 112 percent in current prices; when factoring in inflation, the rise was about 44 percent.

For security reasons, the government revealed few details of the defense budget, but available published accounts provided some insights into patterns of defense resource allocation. Expenditures included allotments to the ministry, which funded ministerial operations and also provided for government investment in the defense industrial sector (see Defense Industry, this ch.). Another account financed pensions for defense services personnel.

Separate accounts allocated funds to each of the three services to cover current account expenditures, such as pay and routine maintenance and supplies. Distribution by percentage

among the services during the 1981–83 period was approximately 66 percent for the army, 25 percent for the air force, and 9 percent for the navy. In contrast, in 1963 the shares allotted to the army, air force and navy were 76 percent, 20 percent, and 4 percent, respectively.

These figures reveal a decline in the army's relative share of current account expenditures, accompanied by a corresponding rise in the share allocated to the air force and navy. This was accomplished by raising overall defense spending, not by cutting the army budget. The average cost of maintaining air force and navy personnel over the 1963–83 period was more than two and one-half times that of army personnel, making it possible to increase army personnel by an amount equal to nearly three times the increase in the other two services combined.

The air force share of current accounts expenditures held relatively steady at about 20 percent until the late 1970s, when aging aircraft and weapons systems began to be replaced with newer models of far greater cost. The relative growth in the navy's share had come earlier, commencing in the late 1960s and accelerating in the early 1970s. The emphasis on naval expansion was especially apparent in the area of capital expenditures, the navy's share rising from approximately 7 percent in FY 1963 to 34 percent in FY 1970 and to over 50 percent after FY 1977. It was estimated that about 30 percent of the total defense budget was spent on weapons and equipment financed by capital and current expenditure accounts.

The relationship between defense allocations and economic development has been a subject of debate since the late 1970s. Until the 1962 war, the prevailing official opinion was that military spending should be held to the absolute minimum to avoid diverting scarce national resources from the development program. After the war, however, it was agreed that the nation could not afford to sacrifice defense capability but had to balance the competing demands of defense and development. During the late 1970s several Indian defense analysts and military personnel began to challenge the assumption that military spending diverted resources from economic development. They argued instead that both national defense capability and economic development were prerequisites for the achievement of the other and that military spending contributed to economic development by expanding manpower training, strengthening infrastructure, and contributing to the transfer of technology and industrial know-how. Advocates of this position had grown increasingly influential as of early 1985.

Whichever argument represented the dominant official viewpoint, defense programs continued to be evaluated in terms of their military utility as well as their economic, social, and technological contribution to the development program. Favored defense programs were those that created employment, carried technological and industrial spinoffs for the civilian sector, contributed to the development of a domestic defense industry, or promoted social goals, such as offering upward mobility for members of oppressed castes or classes or furthering national integration through recruitment of differing groups. Programs were also judged on the basis of how they affected inflation, foreign exchange reserves, and existing development programs.

In general, the army's relatively labor-intensive programs have tended to score better in these areas than have those of the air force and navy, which generally required more capital-intensive investment. The army has also had a relative advantage in the interservice competition for resource allocation because production of its equipment required less lead time and technological sophistication than did navy and air force equipment and could more easily be managed by the domestic defense industry.

Defense Industry

The nation maintained one of the largest defense industrial and research complexes of any Third World nation. The entire conglomeration was under the authority of the Ministry of Defence. In early 1985 it comprised 33 ordnance factories, nine public sector undertakings, and a network of 39 major research and development establishments. Altogether, the complex was the second largest component in the industrial sector and employed over 300,000 people. The total value of defense industrial production was estimated at Rs11.4 billion in FY 1982 and was expected to have climbed to about Rs13.9 billion in FY 1983. Exports for FY 1984 were anticipated to earn some Rs410 million.

According to a Ministry of Defence report, "the main thrust of defence production effort is towards the twin objectives of modernization of arms and equipment and achievement of progressive self-reliance and self-sufficiency." The national leadership appeared to appreciate the possibility that local production might prove more costly and deliver results more slowly than outright purchase from foreign producers but has expressed its willingness to make such trade-offs in the interests of lessening the nation's vulnerability to foreign political influence. Nonetheless, as of early 1985 most sophisticated weapons systems continued to be

imported from foreign producers, and most items of domestic manufacture continued to be made under license agreements with foreign companies.

The defense industrial complex was built upon the system of ordnance factories and repair facilities inherited from the British. It was expanded during the 1950s, developing the capability first to assemble several models of aircraft and military vehicles and later to manufacture some components locally. After the 1962 war the government accelerated the development of the industry through increased investment and drew up ambitious plans to expand the level and scope of production. Except for the production of small arms and ammunition in ordnance factories, however, most sectors experienced difficulties in meeting the targets set by the early planners. It took longer than anticipated to recruit and train workers and to construct facilities, making it necessary to resort to interim imports of some items. Certain materials and components, especially advanced metals and electronics, were either unavailable in the domestic economy or produced in insufficient quantities. Moreover, the research and development establishment proved unequal to the tasks assigned it—a failure many critics blamed on insufficient investment. Many of these problems continued to plague the industry in 1985.

Nonetheless, the defense industrial sector had scored notable successes by the late 1960s, especially in ship construction and the production of MiG-21 aircraft. Production continued to expand during the 1970s, during which time the nation reached self-sufficiency in small arms, ammunition, and artillery. The proportion of domestically manufactured parts used in the production of a number of items grew steadily. By the early 1980s the nation was producing an impressive array of defense equipment, including warships, antitank missiles, and military vehicles and aircraft of all types. There was continued disappointment within government, however, over the failure to design and produce certain items indigenously, including jet and helicopter engines, technologically advanced aircraft, and a replacement for the Vijayanta main battle tank. Moreover, even in areas in which the industry had scored considerable success, it was still necessary to import key components. Nonetheless, the program has been evaluated an overall success. Although still short of reaching complete self-reliance, the government believes that it has gained foreign policy independence by decreasing the need to accommodate the wishes of foreign suppliers. Experience gained in domestic production has been translated into greater sophistication in negotiating with foreign suppliers when imports were unavoidable.

Ordnance factories and public sector defense projects were under the direction of the Department of Defence Production in the Ministry of Defence. Ordnance factories produced items for the defense services and the paramilitary and police forces. They manufactured a wide range of items, including vehicles, optical instruments, arms and ammunition, and naval vessels. The public sector undertakings were essentially publicly owned companies that engaged in research, development, and production of defense items (see table 24, Appendix). The oldest was Hindustani Aeronautics Limited (HAL), which operated 11 factories in six different states. As of early 1985, HAL manufactured helicopters, jet fighters, trainers, and interceptors, most under license agreement with foreign concerns. Bharat Electronics produced a diversified range of electronic equipment, including microwave communication sets and radars. Three major shipbuilding concerns—Mazagon Dockyards at Bombay, Goa Shipyard, and Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers at Calcutta—built and repaired a wide range of naval vessels. Most of the ordnance factories and the public sector undertakings produced items for the civilian as well as for the military sector.

The laboratories of the Defence Research and Development Organisation were administered by the Department of Defence Research and Development, which was established in 1980 and was headed by the scientific adviser to the minister of defense. The department was responsible for the design and development of weapons and equipment and for providing expert advice on military operations, equipment, and logistics problems.

The Nuclear and Space Programs

Neither the nuclear program nor the space program was developed for military purposes. Nor did it appear as of early 1985 that either had been used for other than peaceful ends. Both programs clearly had potential military applicability, however, and gave the nation options that, if necessary, the government could consider in the future.

The nation's nuclear research and development program was instituted in 1954, its first projects centering on the establishment of research reactors (see Energy, ch. 6). The program was accelerated in the early 1970s, and in 1974 India became the sixth nation in the world to conduct a nuclear test explosion. The government asserted that it was developing a peaceful nuclear capability and has made a substantial investment in the field of nuclear energy

As of early 1985 the government continued to insist that it

was not in the process of developing nuclear weapons. It has refused to foreswear that option, however, stating that to do so would be irresponsible, given the fact that Pakistan had a nuclear program, China possessed nuclear weapons, and superpower forces deployed in the Indian Ocean carried such weapons as well. India has also refused to sign the nuclear nonproliferation treaty on the grounds that the treaty legitimizes and protects the monopolization of nuclear weapons by those few countries already having developed them.

India's space program was established in 1962 under the aegis of the Department of Atomic Energy. It was reorganized in 1969 as the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). After the 1971 war the program was upgraded, and the Space Command and the Department of Space were created. The stated objective of the program was to achieve satellite launch capability for communications and educational purposes.

Using a Soviet rocket, ISRO placed India's first satellite into orbit in 1975. On July 18, 1980, India became the sixth nation in the world to orbit a satellite using an indigenously produced launch vehicle. A second was launched in 1981, and a third in 1983. Although the minister of defense has assured Parliament that the nation does not intend to develop the space program for military use, several Indian commentators, including the chairman of ISRO, have noted publicly that the country could easily adapt its rocket technology to develop an intermediate-range ballistic missile. Even without such a move, weather and communications satellites had potential military applicability.

Organization, Equipment, and Training

Under the Constitution, the supreme command of the armed forces is vested in the nation's president. Actual responsibility for defense matters, however, rested with the cabinet, decisionmaking authority being exercised through its Political Affairs Committee. That committee was chaired by the prime minister, and its members included the ministers of defense, external affairs, home affairs, and finance (see The Union Government, ch. 8). When requested, the chiefs of staff of the three services provided advice on military matters. Because the committee had wide-ranging responsibilites, including internal politics, foreign affairs, intelligence, and defense, a subcommittee known as the Committee for Defence Planning was established in 1978 to focus on defense issues.

The Ministry of Defence

The civilian Ministry of Defence was the central agency responsible for the administration, operational control, and balanced development of the three services. It acted as a channel for communicating government policy on defense matters to the three services and supervised policy implementation. Working closely with the Ministry of Finance through the Financial Advisor (Defence), the Ministry of Defence was responsible for developing a program for defense expenditure and obtaining parliamentary sanction for it. The ministry oversaw the defense research and production programs, the armed forces medical services, and several interservice training institutions. The coast guard, reserves, and certain auxiliary forces also fell under its purview.

The ministry was divided for administrative purposes into departments for defense, defense production, defense supplies, and defense research and development. Policy planning and implementation were the responsibilities of two major committees. The first was the Defence Minister's Committee, which had authority over issues involving the three services and their coordination. Since 1974, however, its role has been largely superseded by a "morning meeting" of the minister of defense, the defense secretaries, the scientific adviser to the minister, and the three service chiefs. The informal meetings were instituted in the wake of the 1962 conflict with China in order to provide an open forum to air problems, establish a working relationship among all parties, and facilitate prompt decisionmaking. They have usually been held on a twice weekly basis. The second major policymaking committee was the Defence Minister's Committee (Production and Supplies), which was established in 1980 and supervised defense research, production, and procurement. Other committees in the ministry focused on issues relating to pensions, defense electronics, research and development, and personnel.

The nation's higher defense establishment contained no integrated military organization as of early 1985. Instead, the three coequal and independent services coordinated their activities through the Chiefs of Staff Committee, which was chaired by the member having the longest tenure on that body. The committee provided a focus of professional military counsel for the ministry and the cabinet but had advisory power only. Internally, decisions were reached by consensus, the chairman having no peremptory authority. Although the Chiefs of Staff Committee had its own secretariat, that body did not function as a joint staff, and all three service headquarters independently maintained similar staff organizations that were also replicated in the minis-

try. Some interservice cooperation has developed on an incremental basis, and the frequency and magnitude of joint exercises has grown.

Each service had its own system of area commands, the boundaries of which did not coincide. As of early 1985 only one triservice-area command had been established. Set up in 1982, it covered the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and was headed by a naval officer responsible to the commander of the navy's Eastern Naval Command. Attached to it were several naval vessels and aircraft as well as an army brigade.

India's higher defense organization has been criticized repeatedly on the grounds that it was inefficient, that it isolated the services from the civilian policymaking process, and that it did not facilitate interservice coordination. Since the 1950s there have been proposals for the creation of a post of chief of the defense staff, whose holder would have peremptory authority over the service chiefs. It has also been suggested that various forms of an integrated defense staff be created. As of early 1985, however, it appeared that the system was unlikely to be changed for fear of upsetting the balance among the three services or reducing the level of civilian control over the military.

The armed forces were served by a well-developed system of military schools, many of which were joint establishments under the auspices of the Ministry of Defence. The National Defence College at New Delhi was the senior school serving the three services. It offered courses in politico-military affairs to prepare senior officers and civilian officials for key national security posts. The Defence Services Staff College at Wellington trained about 300 officers a year for staff appointments. Both schools regularly accepted a few foreign officers. The Armed Forces Medical College at Pune (Poona) provided medical training and a degree course in nursing; a limited number of slots were reserved for women. The National Defence Academy at Kharakvasla conducted a three-year course for prospective officers that combined military training with a program of general education. Admission was open to young men on the basis of a qualifying exam, and graduates went on to attend speciality training courses in the respective services before receiving commissions. A number of institutions prepared students for entry into the National Defence Academy. These included the Rashtriya Indian Military College at Dehra Dun and a system of 17 schools—known as Sainik Schools—that were located throughout the nation.

Army

Army headquarters at New Delhi was under the direction of the chief of the army staff, who was customarily a full general. The pattern of organization at headquarters and lower staff echelons throughout the army followed the British system. The chief of the army staff was principally assisted by a vice chief, a deputy chief, a military secretary, and four main staff divisions headed by the adjutant general, quartermaster general, master general of ordnance, and the engineer in chief.

The army in the field fell under five area commands: Western, Eastern, Northern, Southern, and Central—each headed by a lieutenant general (see fig. 19). The major combat formations included within these commands in early 1985 were two armored divisions, one mechanized division, 18 infantry divisions, 10 mountain divisions, five independent armored brigades, seven independent infantry brigades, one parachute brigade, and 17 independent artillery brigades (see table 25, Appendix). Divisions were grouped under eight corps headquarters as needed for field operations.

The army was also organized on a regimental basis. As in the British system, regiments were not generally tactical formations but instead functioned as headquarters training and recruitment centers. Infantry regiments commonly comprised between six and 15 battalions, which were usually attached to various formations and rarely served together. Cavalry regiments had a single battalion.

As in the past, many of the infantry regiments continued to recruit on a territorial, linguistic, or caste basis. In contrast, most other units were essentially "all-India" organizations. The Corps of Engineers was divided into Madras, Bengal, and Bombay groups in the old presidency manner, each group recruiting in its respective area. Many infantry and cavalry regiments traced their heritages to the nineteenth and eighteenth centuries and bore names redolent of historical and cultural imagery, such as the Maharatta Light Infantry, the Rajputana Rifles, and the Ninth Deccan Horse Regiment.

Army strength as of early 1985 was approximately 960,000. Principal equipment for the armored element included an estimated 2,900 main battle tanks, 250 Soviet-made BMP-1 mechanized infantry combat vehicles, and 500 armored personnel carriers of Soviet or Czechoslovak origin. About 35 percent of the tanks were T-54, T-55, or T-72 models from the Soviet Union or Czechoslovakia, and the remainder were domestically produced Vijayanta models. Artillery came from a variety of sources and included howitzers, mortars, and different kinds of field guns, in-

cluding some developed domestically for mountain use. Antitank weapons included rocket launchers and guns, as well as guided wire missiles of three types: the French-made SS-11-B1, the European-made Milan, and the Soviet Sagger. Air defense units used Soviet SA-6, SA-7, SA-9, and British Tigercat surface-to-air missiles as well as conventional towed and self-propelled antiaircraft guns. The army relied on the air force for air support and tactical supply and had no air element.

An extensive system of schools and training centers supported army operations. Perhaps the best known was the Indian Military Academy at Dehra Dun, founded in 1932 as an equivalent to the British Sandhurst. There, officer candidates received precommission training, courses varying in duration according to status at entry. Cadets were admitted on a direct entry basis by examination or upon graduation from the National Defence Academy. Entry was also open to enlisted personnel or junior commissioned officers who satisfactorily completed a three-year training course at the Army Cadet College at Pune. The Officers Training School at Madras prepared selected, serving, noncommissioned, and junior commissioned officers for short-service commissions. The College of Combat at Mhow conducted three levels of command courses. Advanced training for all grades and ranks was also provided by the various arms and services. These included the Infantry Schools at Mhow and Belgaum, the Armoured Corps Centre and School at Ahmednagar, and the School of Artillery at Deolali. In addition, various other schools and centers supplied technical and support training, including the Air Defence and Guided Missile School, on which construction was begun in 1983.

Air Force

The Indian Air Force was established by the British in 1932 in response to pressure from Indian nationalists. By 1985 it had grown to about 113,000 personnel, the major growth having come after independence, especially between 1964 and 1970.

Air force headquarters was at New Delhi, where the chief of the air staff, an air chief marshal, was assisted by five principal staff officers: the vice chief of air staff, deputy chief of air staff, the air officer in charge of administration, the air officer in charge of personnel, and the air officer in charge of maintenance. Each of the five had several directorates encompassing the span of air staff interests under his control.

The air force was deployed into five area commands: West-

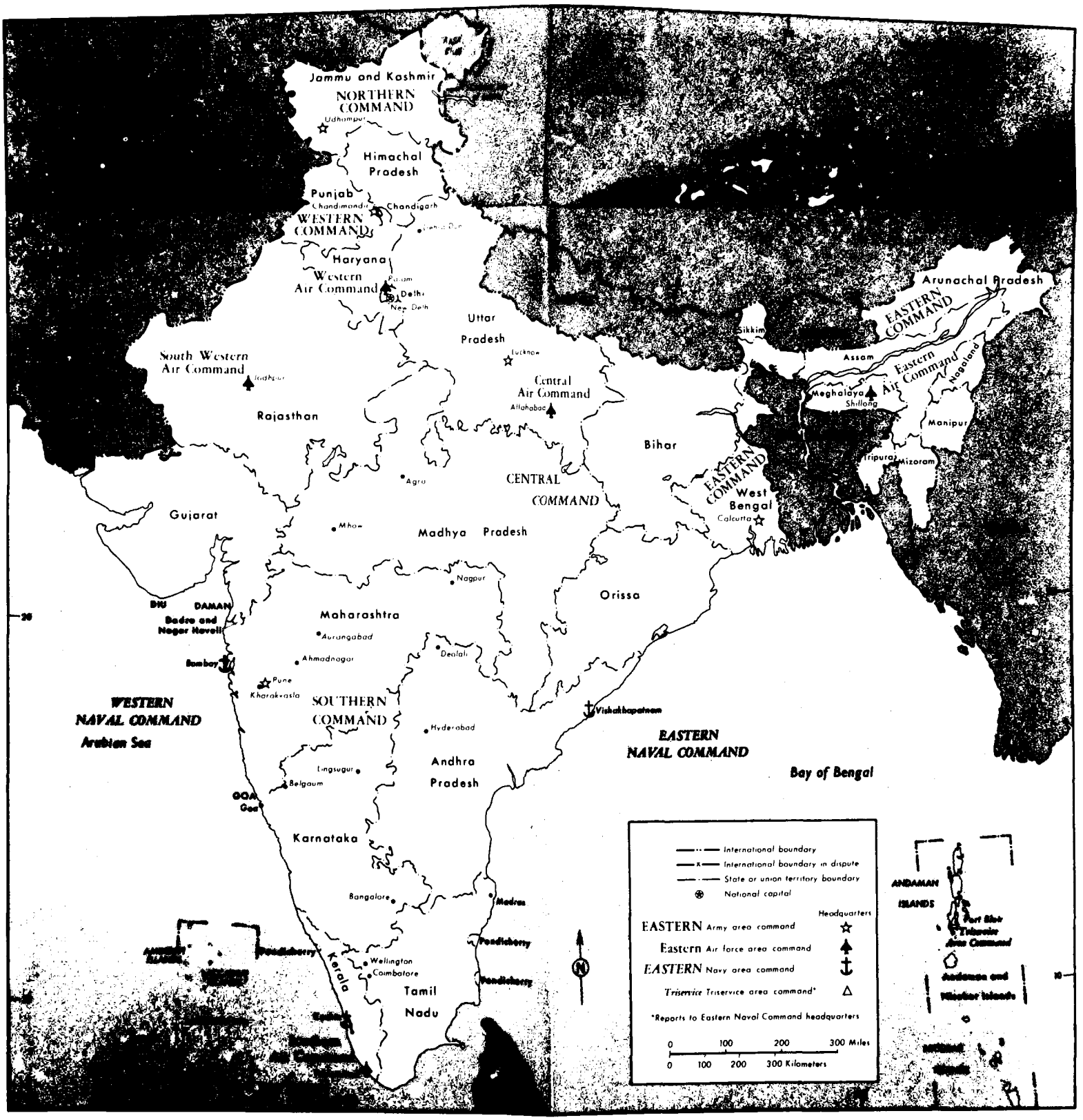


Figure 19. Area Commands of the Army, Air Force, and Navy, 1985

ern, South Western, Central, Eastern, and Southern air commands. These were joined by two functional commands: Training Command at Bangalore and Maintenance Command at Nagpur. In 1985 the main operational elements included 41 combat squadrons of light bombers, fighter and ground attack aircraft, interceptors, and reconnaissance aircraft; 10 transport and communication squadrons; and 14 helicopter squadrons (see table 26, Appendix).

During the late 1970s the air force entered a major equipment replacement cycle, the bulk of its aircraft approaching obsolescence at approximately the same time. By 1985 most new kinds of equipment had been chosen, and replacement programs were either completed or under way. First-line combat strength was provided by about 920 aircraft, including various versions of the MiG-21 (most built in India), MiG-23, MiG-25, and Su-7; the British Hunter F-56 and Canberra—both being replaced with the Anglo-French Jaguar; and the Indian-made Ajeet. Several combat aircraft were on order as part of the modernization program. These included the French Mirage 2000H, the Soviet MiG-27 and MiG-29. Transports were mostly a mixture of Soviet An-12s and An-32s, aging Canadian transports that were due for replacement, and HS-748s—designed in Britain and license-produced in India. Additional An-32s and HS-748s were on order, as were a number of Soviet Il-76 and West German DO-228 transports—the last to be license-produced domestically. The helicopters were primarily Soviet and French models, many being license-produced in India. About 30 air defense sites utilizing Soviet surface-to-air missiles were deployed under air force command.

The principal air force training center was at Hyderabad, the location of the Air Force Academy and the site of most pilot and navigator training. Basic flight training was undertaken at the Elementary Flying School at Bidar. Flight training was also available at Hakimpet and Yellahanka. Army paratroopers were trained by the air force at Agra. The air force technical school center was at Jalahalli, the administrative center at Coimbatore, and the Institute of Aviation Medicine at Bangalore.

Navy

The Indian Navy traces its origins to a maritime force established by the East India Company in the seventeenth century. Under a series of names—the Bombay Marine, the Indian Navy, and the Indian Marine—it served both the East India Company and the British colonial government as a coast guard. In 1934, however, it was restructured into the Royal Indian Navy, Indians

serving primarily in lower level positions. Dropping the "Royal" appellation, at independence the force had only 32 vessels and 11,000 officers and other ranks.

The navy was developed very slowly over the 1947–65 period, mainly through acquisition of former British naval vessels. The 1964–69 Defence Plan, however, called for a naval expansion program involving replacement of the fleet's aging vessels and development of a submarine service. As part of this expansion program, the British in 1964 agreed to help set up facilities at the Mazagon Dockyards at Bombay in preparation for local production of the British Leander-class frigate. The Soviet Union, however, proved willing to support all phases of the planned naval expansion, supplying naval vessels, support systems, and training on very favorable terms, and during the mid-1960s the Soviets replaced Britain as India's principal naval sponsor.

Naval headquarters at New Delhi was under the command of the chief of the naval staff—a full admiral. Principal staff officers were the vice chief of naval staff, the deputy chief of naval staff, the chief of personnel, and the chief of matériel. Under each officer were several operational and service directorates. The deputy chief of naval staff had responsibility, for example, over naval aviation and the submarine service. Total naval strength in 1985 was about 47,000, which included 2,000 who served in the naval air arm.

The navy was deployed under three area commands, each headed by a flag officer commanding in chief. Western Naval Command was headquartered at Bombay, Eastern Naval Command at Vishakhapatnam, and Southern Naval Command at Cochin. There were also major bases at Calcutta and Goa. At sea were the two fleets—Western and Eastern—whose strength was varied periodically. Naval facilities at Port Blair in the Andaman Islands and at Lakshadweep, as well as a naval logistic installation in the Nicobar Islands, extended the navy's reach into the Indian Ocean.

Heading the list of the Indian Navy's ships was the light attack aircraft carrier, I.N.S *Vikrant*, which was secured from Britain, after refitting, in 1961; it completed another three-year refit in 1982. As of early 1985, its Sea Hawk navy attack fighters were being replaced with British Sea Harriers. The I.N.S. *Vikrant* also carried antisubmarine helicopters and aircraft (see table 27, Appendix). The underwater fleet was made up of eight Soviet Foxtrot submarines. Surface vessels included three Kashin II destroyers of Soviet origin; 23 frigates—eight built in India, 10 from the Soviet Union, and five from Britain; and three corvettes from the Soviet Union. All of the destroyers and corvettes and 12 of the frigates car-

ried surface-to-surface or surface-to-air missiles or both.

Large patrol craft of Indian origin, 16 mine warfare vessels, 10 landing craft, and various supply and support vessels completed the surface fleet. As part of the navy's ongoing expansion and modernization program, several vessels were on order in 1985. These included four submarines built in West Germany and an unknown number of Soviet submarines; additional Soviet destroyers, corvettes, and landing craft; four Indian-built frigates; and an unknown number of Exocet surface-to-surface missiles.

In 1976 the naval air arm assumed responsibility for maritime reconnaissance from the air force and was equipped with various kinds of aircraft and helicopters. Major formations included one attack squadron flying the carrier-based Sea Hawks and Sea Harriers; one antisubmarine squadron of modernized French Alizé aircraft, also on the carrier; two maritime reconnaissance squadrons; one communications squadron; four antisubmarine helicopter squadrons deployed on the carrier, destroyers, and frigates; and one sea and air rescue helicopter squadron. Maritime reconnaissance aircraft were on order, as were British Sea King helicopters, Sea Harrier aircraft, and Sea Eagle surface-to-surface missiles and Exocet air-to-surface missiles. The maritime reconnaissance squadrons flew Super Constellation and Il-38 May aircraft, which had the capability to reconnoiter as far as the Strait of Malacca, Diego Garcia, and the Strait of Hormuz.

The major training centers for officers and other ranks were located at Cochin, where instruction was available in navigation, gunnery, torpedo and antisubmarine warfare, communications, and aviation. The submarine school was in Bombay, the engineering school in Lonvala, and the electronics school in Jamnagar. A naval academy was established at Cochin in 1973 but reportedly was scheduled to be moved to Ezhimala in Kerala in the mid-1980s. Sea training was undertaken in both fleets.

Coast Guard

Established on August 19, 1978, the task of the Indian Coast Guard was to provide for the safety and protection of offshore islands and installations, protect fishery resources, preserve and protect the maritime environment, and enforce the law throughout India's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The coast guard was initially instructed to assist customs authorities in antismuggling operations at sea, but it assumed full responsibility for dealing with maritime smuggling after being merged with the Customs Marine Department in 1982. The creation of the coast guard has

effectively allowed the navy to relinquish some of its responsibility for coastal defense and to concentrate more on its deep-sea role. The coast guard would have to be expanded beyond its 1985 level to perform all the missions assigned it, however.

The coast guard was under the administrative control of the Ministry of Defence but was funded by the Ministry of Finance. Under the command of the director general, a vice admiral in the navy, its small headquarters in New Delhi coordinated coast guard activities with other interested agencies. The headquarters maintained liaison with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development in matters relating to fisheries and with the Ministry of External Affairs in the event foreign vessels were caught poaching. Operationally, the coast guard was divided into three regional headquarters at Bombay, Madras, and Port Blair, each exercising command over the Western, Eastern, and Andabar and Nicobar maritime zones, respectively. The maritime zones were subdivided into 10 coast guard districts, eight comprising the waters of the coastal states of the mainland and two comprising the waters of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

At first the coast guard was staffed by officers and other ranks on deputation from the navy until its own personnel could be trained by the navy. In 1985 personnel were estimated to number approximately 2,000. Principal equipment included two former navy frigates, two offshore patrol vessels, three fast patrol craft, and 11 inshore patrol craft. The coast guard also had two air squadrons flying marine surveillance and air and sea rescue aircraft and helicopters. Long-term development plans called for the acquisition of larger patrol vessels, medium-range surveillance aircraft, and long-range rescue helicopters.

Reserves and Auxiliaries

Regular reservists made up the nation's largest and best-trained military reserve force. The total number of all ranks who were fit and available for recall to active service was estimated at 200,000 in early 1985. Other paramilitary or auxiliary forces supported the army as operational or training reserves. One of these was the Defence Security Corps, which was a paramilitary group trained by the army and organized for border security, reconnaissance, public order, and riot control duties. Another was the Territorial Army, which was an auxiliary force used in the event of emergency to relieve regular army units, aid civilian authorities, and maintain essential services. The Territorial Army was established in 1949 and was a volunteer organization under the direc-

tion of the army. It was organized into various units around the country and could not be used outside the nation except under special government orders. Qualified, able-bodied men between the ages of 18 and 35 were eligible to join.

All three services maintained divisions of the National Cadet Corps (NCC)—a volunteer youth organization similar to the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) in the United States. The purpose of the NCC was to provide nationwide training to expedite emergency mobilization. Participants did not incur a liability for active duty, but a number of commissions were reserved in all three services for NCC graduates who did apply. The NCC was organized into a junior division at the secondary- school level and a senior division at the university level. Both divisions were subdivided into sections for the army, navy, air force, and young women.

Conditions of Service

Pay and allowances compared favorably with the pay of civilian counterparts, with the possible exception of lower officer grades and certain special occupations, such as pilots. Monthly salaries varied according to service, although personnel usually earned similar pay for equivalent duties. In addition, there was an extensive and complex system of special allowances that were given, depending on the conditions under which personnel served and the location and kind of service. Free rations, for instance, were provided for personnel in both field and "peace" areas, coverage having been extended in 1983 to cover all personnel up through the rank of colonel. All personnel were entitled to annual leave of varying length; subject to a few exceptions, transportation costs for personnel and their families were paid for by the services. All commissioned officers and certain other specified ranks were required to contribute to the Armed Forces Provident Fund, a form of insurance.

Those retiring after at least 20 years of service as an officer or 15 years service below officer rank were entitled to pensions based on the rank held at retirement. Those who had not reached the minimum service requirement were eligible for special one-time bonuses. Extra remuneration was allotted to those disabled in the line of service or—in the event of the death of serving personnel—to their surviving families.

The Soldiers', Sailors', and Airmens' Board, chaired by the minister of defense, was one of the most important organizations dealing with the welfare of active-duty personnel and their

families. It worked in close cooperation with the Directorate of Resettlement in the Ministry of Defence to help ex-servicemen and their families find employment upon their return to civilian life. Several cooperative industrial and agricultural estates have been established under the auspices of the directorate, which also ran various training programs to prepare ex-servicemen for employment in new fields. Both the central and the state governments reserved a percentage of vacancies in the public sector for former defense services personnel.

Uniforms, Rank, and Insignia

Uniforms in the three services were generally similar in color and design to the corresponding three British services, colors following a typical pattern of olive drab for the army, sky blue for the air force, and dark blue for the navy. More variations were found in the army than in the other services, regiments preserving particular uniform accoutrements inherited from the past. Sikhs, regardless of service, wore the turban instead of standard military headgear.

The rank structure in the three services, especially in the commissioned officers categories, for the most part followed conventional British practice (see fig. 20; fig. 21) The Indian Army, however, utilized the category of junior comissioned officer (JCO), for which there was no exact equivalent in the United States or British services. Originally, this category pertained to Indians, usually senior noncommissioned officers, who were first referred to as Native Commissioned Officers and later as Viceroy's Commissioned Officers. By the time of independence, this category had become firmly established and was retained for reasons of economy and efficiency as the JCO. JCOs were promoted on a point system from within the ranks of their regiments, filling most of the junior command slots, such as platoon leaders. The senior JCO usually acted as the principal assistant to the commanding officer. Because of their age, experience, and prestige, JCOs were sometimes referred to as the backbone of the army.

Insignia of rank followed the British system closely. Progressive combinations of stars, Asoka lion badges, crossed sabers, and crossed batons in a wreath showed respective army ranks from JCO up through field marshal. The rank of field marshal was created for the victor of the 1971 war, General Sam Manekshaw, and has not been used since his retirement. Enlisted ranks were indicated by arm chevrons worn with the point down. Naval insignia followed the worldwide convention of sleeve stripes for officers and fouled anchor badges for enlisted personnel. The air

force used the broad and narrow sleeve stripe combination for officer ranks. Enlisted air force ranks were designated by various combinations of chevrons, lion badges, and winged symbols.

Military Justice

Rules and procedures for the investigation, prosecution, and punishment of military offenses and crimes in the services are laid down in the *Manual of Military Law and Regulations*. Basic authority rests in the Constitution, the Army Act of 1954, the Air Force Act of 1950, and the Navy Act of 1957.

The army and air force use three kinds of courts, in descending order of power: the General Court, conducting general court-martial trials; the District Court; and the Summary General Court. In addition, the army has a fourth kind of court martial, the Summary Court, which is not used by the air force. This court is conducted by local commanding officers and has powers similar to those called nonjudicial punishment in the United States service. The navy uses only the General Court Martial in addition to the nonjudicial powers established for commanders in the Navy Act.

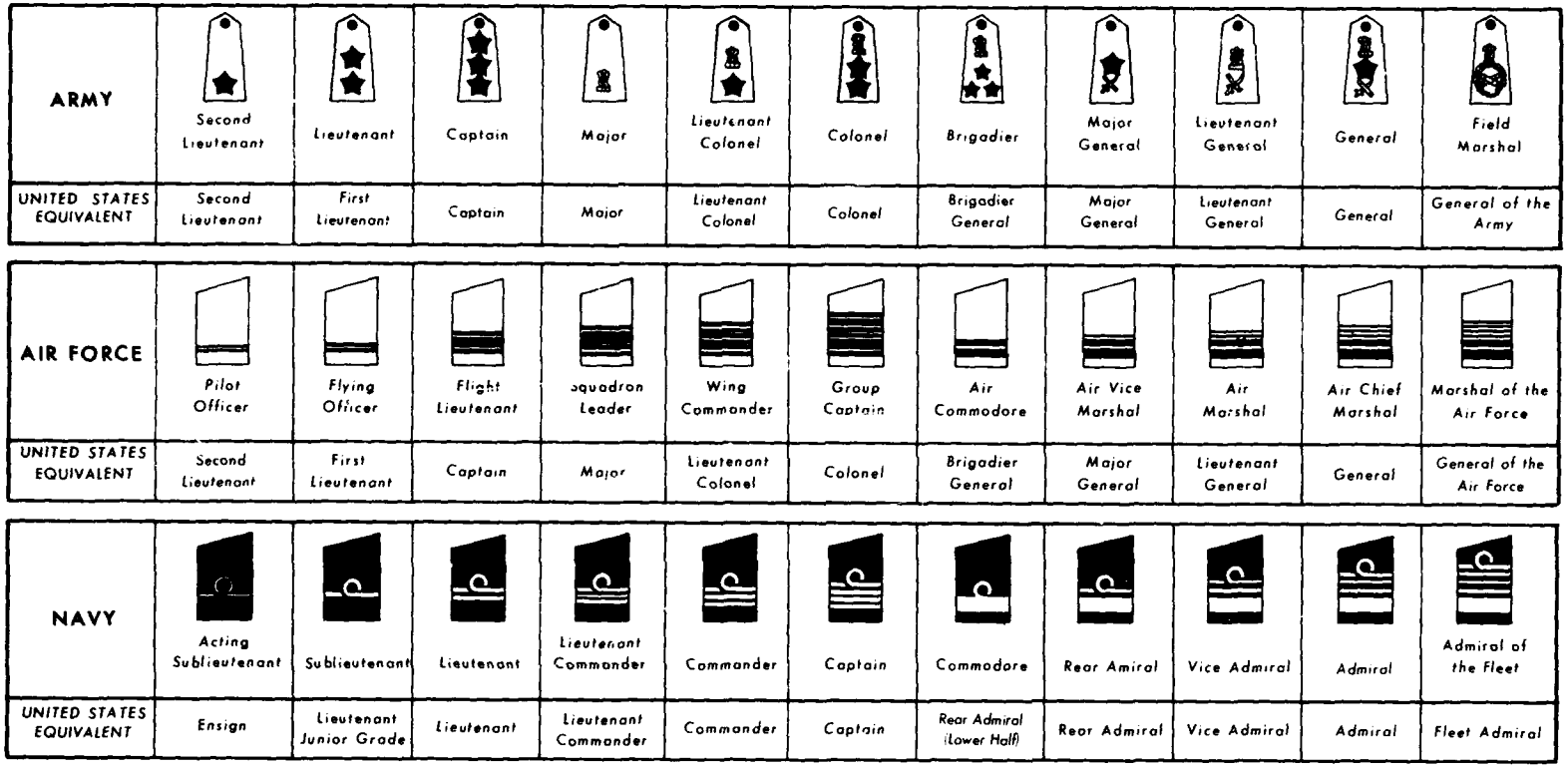
Courts-martial can be convened by the prime minister, defense minister, chief of staff of the service concerned, or by other officers so designated by the government or chief of staff. Channels of appeal from the findings or sentences of courts-martial are provided for, as are stages of judicial review, although the systems of appeal and review differ somewhat among the three services.

Members of the armed forces remain concurrently subject to both civilian and military law, and criminal courts of proper jurisdiction may assume priority over military courts in particular cases. A person convicted or acquitted by a court-martial may, with the approval of the government, be tried again by a criminal court for the same offense and on the same evidence. Once tried by a civilian court, however, one cannot be tried by a military court for the same offense.

Each of the three services has its own Judge Advocate General's Department (JAGD), which is the organ for legal matters of the service. For coordination, the JAGD of the army is included in the adjutant general's staff at army headquarters, in the chief of personnel's staff at the naval headquarters, and in the administration staff of the air force headquarters. In each service the JAGD is relatively free and independent of the other branches in the discharge of its judiciary functions.

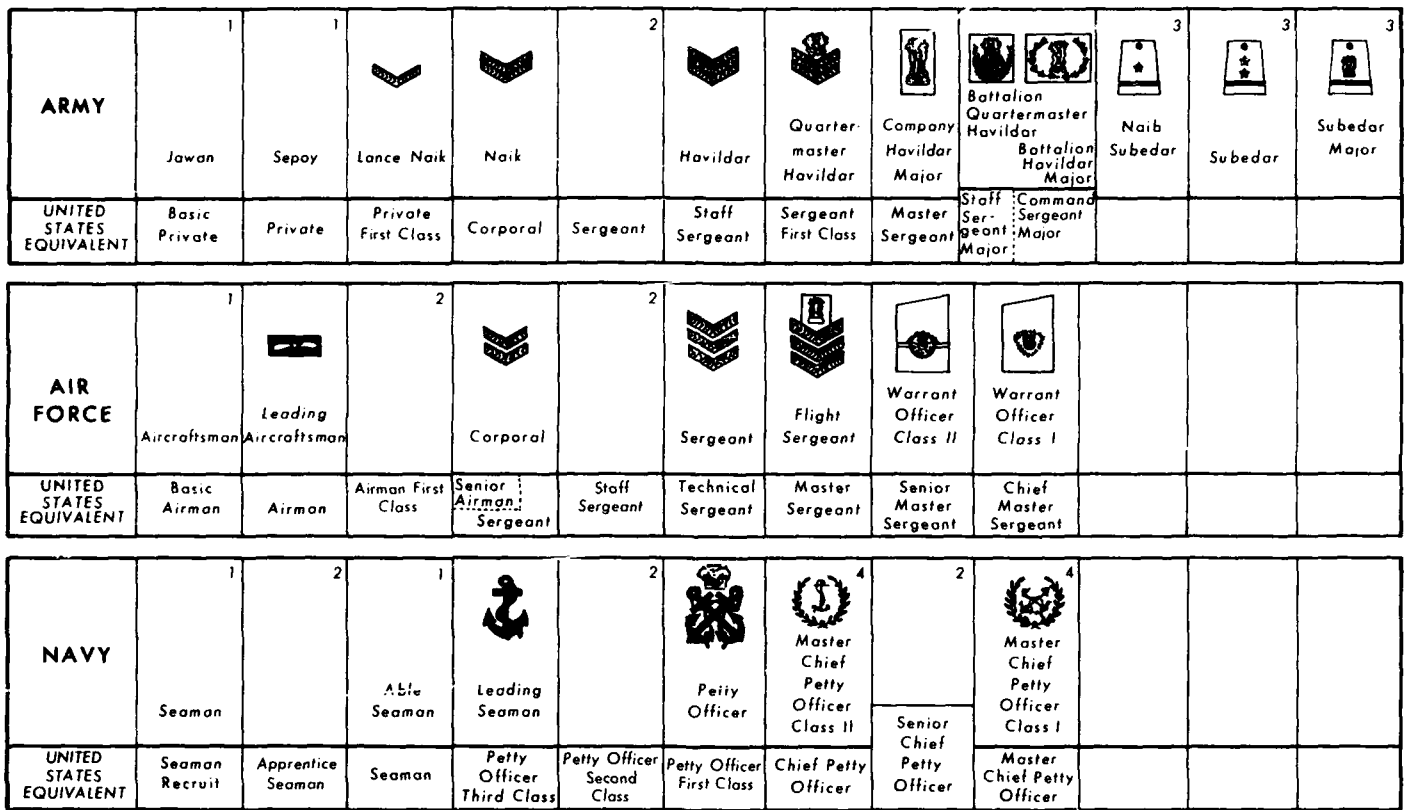
Foreign Military Relations

Although the 1971 Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooper-



ARMY	Second Lieutenant	Lieutenant	Captain	Major	Lieutenant Colonel	Colonel	Brigadier	Major General	Lieutenant General	General	Field Marshal
UNITED STATES EQUIVALENT	Second Lieutenant	First Lieutenant	Captain	Major	Lieutenant Colonel	Colonel	Brigadier General	Major General	Lieutenant General	General	General of the Army
AIR FORCE	Pilot Officer	Flying Officer	Flight Lieutenant	Squadron Leader	Wing Commander	Group Captain	Air Commodore	Air Vice Marshal	Air Marshal	Air Chief Marshal	Marshal of the Air Force
UNITED STATES EQUIVALENT	Second Lieutenant	First Lieutenant	Captain	Major	Lieutenant Colonel	Colonel	Brigadier General	Major General	Lieutenant General	General	General of the Air Force
NAVY	Acting Sublieutenant	Sublieutenant	Lieutenant	Lieutenant Commander	Commander	Captain	Commodore	Rear Amiral	Vice Admiral	Admiral	Admiral of the Fleet
UNITED STATES EQUIVALENT	Ensign	Lieutenant Junior Grade	Lieutenant	Lieutenant Commander	Commander	Captain	Rear Admiral (Lower Half)	Rear Admiral	Vice Admiral	Admiral	Fleet Admiral

Figure 20. Officer Ranks and Insignia of the Indian Armed Forces and Their United States Equivalents, 1985.



ARMY	[1] Jawan	[1] Sepoy	Lance Naik	Naik	[2]	Havildar	Quarter-master Havildar	Company Havildar Major	Battalion Quartermaster Havildar / Battalion Havildar Major	[3] Naib Subedar	[3] Subedar	[3] Subedar Major
UNITED STATES EQUIVALENT	Basic Private	Private	Private First Class	Corporal	Sergeant	Staff Sergeant	Sergeant First Class	Master Sergeant	Staff Sergeant Major / Command Sergeant Major			
AIR FORCE	[1] Aircraftsman	Leading Aircraftsman	[2]	Corporal	[2]	Sergeant	Flight Sergeant	Warrant Officer Class II	Warrant Officer Class I			
UNITED STATES EQUIVALENT	Basic Airman	Airman	Airman First Class	Senior Airman / Sergeant	Staff Sergeant	Technical Sergeant	Master Sergeant	Senior Master Sergeant	Chief Master Sergeant			
NAVY	[1] Seaman	[2]	[1] Able Seaman	Leading Seaman	[2]	Petty Officer	[4] Master Chief Petty Officer Class II	[2] Senior Chief Petty Officer	[4] Master Chief Petty Officer Class I			
UNITED STATES EQUIVALENT	Seaman Recruit	Apprentice Seaman	Seaman	Petty Officer Third Class	Petty Officer Second Class	Petty Officer First Class	Chief Petty Officer		Master Chief Petty Officer			

[1] No insignia [2] No rank. [3] Junior commissioned officer; no United States equivalent. [4] Worn on collar.

Figure 21. Junior Commissioned Officers and Other Ranks, 1985

ation between India and the Soviet Union provided for mutual consultations to take "appropriate measures to ensure the peace and the security of their countries," it did not constitute a mutual defense pact. The military relationship between India and the Soviet Union was largely based on the fact that the two shared common strategic interests in South Asia and that the Soviet Union has proved a reliable source of equipment at better terms than available elsewhere. India received no military assistance from the Soviet Union but did receive indirect subsidies in the form of low credit terms. Details of arms deals were not made public, but according to United States government publications, the value of Soviet exports to India during the 1976–80 period was approximately US$2.3 billion. The country concluded several major arms agreements with the Soviets during the 1981–84 period.

The Indian government has consistently maintained that no Soviet advisers were present in its armed forces and that the Soviet Union had not received any basing rights in India. Soviet naval vessels that called on Indian ports were said to be allowed to use Indian facilities to the same degree as were other friendly nations. The Indian press claimed in 1982, however, that Soviet pilots and advisers were in India during 1981 in conjunction with the MiG-25 program.

Military relations with the United States showed a warming trend after the state visit to the United States by Indira Gandhi in 1982. In 1984 United States warships called at Cochin and Bombay for the first time since 1971. That same year the Indian chief of the army staff visited the United States—the first visit by such a high military official in many years. The United States supplied less than 2 percent of India's military imports over the 1976–80 period.

Military relations with countries in the region—except for Pakistan—were relatively cordial. The Indian Navy has called at various ports throughout the Indian Ocean since the late 1970s. The country regularly admits foreign officers to several of its higher military training establishments. Officers in recent years have come from such countries as Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Nigeria, Ghana, and Sudan.

The Intelligence System

In early 1985 the Joint Intelligence Committee within the Cabinet Secretariat remained the nation's highest intelligence body. It maintained separate wings dealing with internal and external intelligence and specialized in intelligence analysis and coordination. Members of the committee included representa-

tives from the ministries of defense, home affairs, and external affairs; the intelligence chiefs of the three services; and representatives from the two parallel agencies that collected and disseminated intelligence—the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) of the prime minister's office and the Intelligence Bureau (also called the Central Bureau of Intelligence) of the Ministry of Home Affairs. A higher level intelligence coordinating body—the Senior Intelligence Board—was reportedly in the process of being formed under the chairmanship of the security adviser in the Cabinet Secretariat in 1984 and was to have as members the chairmen of the two wings of the Joint Intelligence Committee and the two directors of the Intelligence Bureau and RAW.

The Intelligence Bureau collected, analyzed, and disseminated data on internal affairs and was responsible for dealing with espionage, subversive activities, and political intelligence. The bureau also coordinated the activities of criminal investigation and intelligence branches in the states and performed special duties, including the protection of top government officials. The Intelligence Bureau originally had responsibility for external intelligence as well, but after the intelligence failures of the 1962 war the government decided that intelligence coverage would benefit from specialization. Thereafter, responsibility for external intelligence was taken over by the cabinet, and RAW became the principal national agency responsible for external intelligence. For security reasons the government released little information relating to the organization or the staffing of the intelligence agencies, but it was estimated that the Intelligence Bureau had approximately 13,000 employees during the early 1980s, and RAW, 7,000. Both maintained headquarters in New Delhi.

As of early 1985, the intelligence units of the three services did not have formal responsibility for intelligence collection. Their activities were confined to analyzing and applying information supplied by the civilian agencies, which also kept watch over the defense services.

Public Order and Internal Security

The most serious security problems facing the nation in early 1985 were internal, manifested in a variety of domestic disturbances arising from a number of related causes, old and new. These factors included age-old religious, communal, class, and regional differences; subversive activities of clandestine groups; unchecked immigration into the Northeast; and rising rates of or-

dinary crime. Additional complicating factors were factional struggles within and between legal political parties; tension between the central government and the states; and massive problems of population growth, unemployment, and poverty. In two cases in particular, a number of complex factors converged to present serious security problems. The first centered on Assam and the Northeast; the second related to Sikh agitation in Punjab.

The government has generally viewed such problems as an inevitable, if deplorable, part of a process of national integration—a process that will inevitably be difficult in a nation that encompasses multiple religions, languages, and ethnic groups and has a traditional, caste-based social structure (see Languages of India, ch. 4; Caste, ch. 5). Accepting that it must take a long-term approach, the government has established economic development as the number one national priority in hopes that improving economic livelihood will increase political stability and ease communal divisions over the long term. The government has also pursued policies designed to minimize inequalities in income, status, and opportunities. Ironically, over the short term, economic and social change resulting in part from these policies has been a contributing factor to increased social tension and public disorder.

Politically, the nation has sought to accommodate the cacophony of competing and conflicting demands of its large and varied population by maintaining an open and democratic system of government. As of early 1985 the system had largely proved both stable and effective but was not without strain. It withstood a great deal of stress during the 1975–77 Emergency, which began when Indira Gandhi, under pressure from the opposition to resign because of her conviction for electoral malpractice in the previous election, instead declared a national state of emergency (see The Emergency and the Janata Phase, ch. 1). The central government then arrested hundreds of political opponents, imposed press censorship, and postponed elections. The Emergency ended in 1977 after Gandhi and her party were defeated in general elections in March. Although the system was returned to its democratic footing and stayed that way after Gandhi was returned to power in 1980, political dynamics increasingly came to be characterized by corruption and by stress between the central government and the states.

The underlying divisions in the social, political, and economic structure found expression in growing violence during the late 1970s, and this trend continued in the mid-1980s. The increasing strain on law enforcement agencies proved too great in many instances, resulting in Indian Army forces being called out

to assist civilian forces more often than ever before. Observers in the national press uniformly agreed that public safety and internal order had seriously deteriorated and that public confidence in the government's ability to provide these services was imperiled.

The riots that broke out in the aftermath of the assassination of Indira Gandhi on October 31, 1984, were symptomatic of the nation's public order problem. Mob violence occurred in as many as 80 cities; most was perpetrated by Hindus against Sikhs in revenge for the assassination, which was carried out by two Sikh security guards. The most serious violence occurred in New Delhi, where an almost total breakdown of civil control made it necessary to call the army into the capital for the first time since independence. The police were widely condemned for standing by while mobs attacked and looted Sikh homes and businesses, beat and stoned to death Sikh men, and burned Sikh families alive in their homes. Some of the worst violence was believed to have come at the hands of organized mobs of young, poor, and low-caste men who were brought into Sikh neighborhoods, some allegedly led by party workers of Indira Gandhi's Congress (I) party. The complex communal, political, and economic motivations at work in the New Delhi riots, the willingness of many Indians to resort to violence, and the breakdown of civilian authority were indicative of the most destructive elements in contemporary Indian society. As of early 1985, however, observers disagreed over whether these were aberrations or permanent features of Indian life.

Religious, Communal, Class, and Regional Differences

Public manifestations of unrest in the form of planned or spontaneous demonstrations have long been a feature of Indian life. Nonviolent civil disobedience, or satyagraha, acquired prestige after World War I and has continued to be a favored tool for political agitation. Many demonstrations that began peacefully, however, have erupted into full-blown riots, the original intent of the demonstration forgotten. In some instances, organized groups have deliberately staged incidents to provoke trouble. In other cases, gatherings that began as religious processions or assemblies deteriorated into rioting. Professional strong-arm men *(goondas)* were sometimes hired to incite public violence. Other forms of protest included the blocking of roads and railroads, labor strikes, and business shutdowns.

Although India is a secular state, religious sentiment has remained a volatile element in the national life, and violation of religious norms easily sparks a militant reaction. In an event

reminiscent of the 1857 Sepoy Mutiny, for instance, rumors circulated in late 1983 that the staple cooking oil used by most Indians had been adulterated by beef tallow, leading to mass demonstrations and marches by Hindus throughout India. Activist factions of religious fundamentalists—especially Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs—have sought to stir religious fervor and chauvinism, often to the alarm and subsequent reaction of other groups. A militant Hindu organization, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (National Self-Service Organization—RSS) has been blamed repeatedly by both Muslims and Hindus for inciting communal violence.

Lingering ill-feeling between the Hindu and Muslim communities has often found expression in demonstrations and public violence. In May 1984, for instance, communal rioting in Bombay and Bihwandi left an estimated 300 dead. In September 1984 the army had to be called into Hyderabad to restore order when the annual festival to mark the birth of the Hindu deity Ganesha erupted into mob violence against the city's Muslim community, as it had every year since 1979. Although these eruptions appeared to relate solely to religious causes, members of both communities charged that the other community had engineered the riots for political purposes and called for their own community to observe solidarity against the other. One member of the Indian Police Commission asserted that the Bombay riots had been instigated to permit looting and the elimination of rival businesses.

The divisions of Indian society based upon ancient class and caste distinctions continued to be potential sources of disturbances and uprisings. By law, caste discrimination does not exist in independent India, but in actuality its practices continued to be followed. About 90 percent of the untouchables were estimated to live in rural areas, where many millions were tenant farmers under illegal economic bondage to caste Hindu landlords. Agitation by untouchables or disputes with landlords were frequently met with harsh retaliation by landlords and security officials. Violence has also broken out in cities, where many untouchables have migrated in search of jobs and opportunities.

Most violence against untouchables seemed to be overtly economic in origin, sparked by the resistance of other groups to a sharing of scarce resources and the disturbance of the economic status quo. Even when violence was related to economic factors, however, there was evidence that untouchables were often singled out as victims. Some anti-untouchable violence has also resulted from disputes over caste norms, caused when untouchables challenged the ritual norms of India's hierarchical society by

attempting to escape the constraints that the caste system placed on them (see Caste in Operation, ch. 5).

Taking advantage of improved communication and increased educational opportunities, untouchables, especially those in the cities, became increasingly politicized during the 1970s and demonstrated greater militancy in their efforts to escape the constraints of the caste system. An organization known as the Dalit Panthers was formed in the early 1970s to encourage untouchables to resist attacks by caste Hindus and to press their demands, violently if necessary. The group was reportedly still active in the early 1980s. The central government has also pursued policies designed to foster egalitarianism and to provide untouchables opportunities to better themselves. These programs have provoked a backlash among caste Hindus, however. In Gujarat in 1981, for instance, caste Hindu medical students launched a statewide agitation against the government's policy of establishing educational and employment quotas for untouchables and members of specified tribal groups (see Ethnic Minorities, ch. 4). A counterbacklash by untouchables followed, and public violence broke out in many areas.

Union labor, farmers, and student groups have also constituted categories that have contributed to public unrest. Labor unions placed great emphasis on political activity and, although independent, were often strongly influenced by political parties. In consequence, labor troubles, which on occasion have disrupted public order, have at times demonstrated political motivations and direction. Wildcat strikes and demonstrations were also not unusual, however. Farmers in 1981 mobilized tens of thousands of supporters to protest low farm prices. Highways and railroads in rural areas were blocked, several persons were killed, and crowds of farmers descended on New Delhi to attend rallies sponsored by various political parties. Student unrest escalated into violence only infrequently during the early 1980s. One exception, however, was in Assam, where student organizations were in the forefront of political agitation (see Assam and the Northeast, this ch.).

Since independence, public commotion and security problems have been caused by regionally based separatist or protest movements against the central government and by factional political conflicts within states. Localized violence that reflected regional antagonisms, colored by underlying religious or other sentiments, has also occurred. There has been continual agitation in Kashmir, although varying in intensity, for independence or autonomy. Supporters of the movement living abroad claimed

credit for assassinating an Indian diplomat in Britain in 1984.

In the southern state of Tamil Nadu, residual support for the establishment of an independent Tamil nation continued to be reported in early 1985. Public order in the state was affected to a greater degree, however, by the influx of ethnic Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka during the early 1980s. Tamil organizations in Tamil Nadu have demonstrated their indignation publicly over treatment of the Tamil minority in Sri Lanka. In turn, Sri Lanka has charged that Tamil separatists and terrorists from Sri Lanka have received sanctuary and support in Tamil Nadu. The Indian government has denied these charges, however. In other regionally based movements, supporters of deposed politicians in Kashmir and Andhra Pradesh publicly demonstrated their displeasure, sometimes violently, during 1984 over perceived central government interference in state politics.

External Agitation and Internal Subversion

Conflicting claims and unresolved border disputes with Pakistan and China have resulted in a general state of political tension along the frontiers that was manifested in espionage, clandestine agitation, and subversion. These had ramifications not only for sensitive border areas but also for parts of the Indian interior. The press reported regularly on the capture of Pakistani spies and agitators in the western border areas. The Indian government has also charged Pakistan with supporting Sikh agitation. China was alleged to be giving support to ethnic rebels in the Northeast.

Communist subversion also continued to be a problem. The country's two major communist parties, the Communist Party of India (CPI) and the Communist Party of India (Marxist), or CPI(M), were legal parties having representation in Parliament. A third party, however, the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist), or CPI(M-L), which split from the CPI(M) in 1969 during peasant revolts in the Naxalbari region of West Bengal, was considered an illegal and clandestine party because it advocated the use of violence. Supporters of the illegal party, known as Naxalites (from the region of the group's origin), adopted the rural model of peasant revolution espoused by Mao Zedong and also engaged in urban terrorism. Extensive police and army roundups in the early 1970s ended the insurgency, and thousands of alleged Naxalites were jailed during the Emergency. As of early 1985 various Naxalite factions were reported to maintain followings in parts of West Bengal, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Tamil

Nadu, and Assam. The government has also charged that Naxalites were responsible for some violence in Punjab during the early 1980s. The term *Naxalite*, however, was sometimes used very loosely to refer to urban or rural terrorists, and it was not clear whether or not a well-developed political organization that linked all factions existed in early 1985.

Assam and the Northeast

The eruption of violence in Assam and neighboring states during the early 1980s had its roots in problems that had been simmering in the Northeast for decades. The geographically isolated region was one of the most economically backward in the nation. It was populated by a mixture of tribal and other groups that had little in common with the bulk of the Indian population. In some areas separatist groups had been resisting national integration since the mid-1950s. Much of the land was reserved for tribal groups, confining the remainder of the population to relatively limited areas.

Under these circumstances, the arrival of increasing numbers of Bengalis from the state of West Bengal and from Bangladesh during the 1970s caused considerable strain on available land, economic resources, and employment and resulted in rising tension throughout the Northeast. The most severe reaction occurred in Assam, where Assamese had grown increasingly alarmed that their own culture, political influence, and economic well-being were being jeopardized by the overwhelming number of immigrants. Ethnic grievances were further escalated by the perception that the central government had neglected their problems and by tribal resistance to sharing tribal land with any nontribals.

The discovery that voting rolls in Assam included large numbers of illegal immigrants sparked a student-led "anti-foreign" agitation in 1979 that very quickly came to enjoy the support of most of the Assamese-speaking population. Conflict increasingly took on communal overtones as Hindu Assamese and Muslim Bengali organizations took sides. Violence reached crisis proportions in 1983, triggered by a government announcement that it intended to hold elections for the Assam legislature, using the existing voter rolls. In the most serious violence since partition, over 3,000 were killed in clashes between Assamese, tribals, and immigrants. The worst incident took place in the village of Nellie, where an estimated 600 Bengalis were killed by Lalung tribals. Most of the dead were women and children because the men of the village had left to raid a neighboring community.

The government has attempted to solve the problem by setting up tribunals to identify immigrants who had arrived before 1971, which has been established as the cutoff date for those wishing to obtain voting rights. It also increased the number of border security posts in an effort to halt continued immigration from Bangladesh and began to build a fence along the Bangladesh border in 1984. The underlying problems remained unresolved as of early 1985, however, and incidents of terrorism continued.

Other areas of the Northeast have also been troubled by violence, much of it generated by separatist groups pressing for independence from India. In Nagaland, where separatists have been active since 1956, the major insurgent group in the early 1980s was the National Socialist Council of Nagaland. The group was based in Burma, where it was also targeted for suppression. According to press reports in the early 1980s, the group had an army some 2,000 strong—the largest of any separatist group in the Northeast. The group has been active in harassing Assamese who have settled on Naga tribal land, and government officials have alleged that the group had received indirect and limited support from China.

Insurgency has been under way in Manipur since 1965. Two groups were active in the early 1980s—the People's Liberation Army and the Revolutionary Army of Kuneipak. Both were purported to have ties to China and to have engaged in urban terrorism to support demands that immigrants from West Bengal, Bangladesh, and Nepal be expelled from Manipur. Violence has also been reported between immigrants and Hindu Meitei peoples. Both were crowded into small valley areas because most surrounding hills were reserved for tribal groups.

In Mizoram the Mizo National Liberation Front has pressed for independence from India since 1966. The group has been relatively inactive since negotiating a cease-fire with the Indian government in the mid-1970s, but it engaged in occasional acts of violence during the early 1980s. The Mizo group reportedly had ties with the Tripura National Volunteers, formed in 1983 to press for an independent state of Tripura. Both groups maintained headquarters in Bangladesh and operated across the border areas. Violence in Tripura has also been associated with attacks by tribal groups on the Bengali community.

Sikh Agitation in the State of Punjab

The violence and widespread disorder that accompanied the agitation for increased Sikh economic, religious, and political au-

tonomy represented the most serious challenge to national unity since partition. The agitation began in 1981 after the principal Sikh political party, the Shiromani Akali Dal, presented to the government a list of 45 demands covering a number of issues of concern to the Sikh community. The demands were originally intended to serve as a basis for negotiation, but they quickly became identified as a symbol of the resurgence of Sikh identity and were pressed with increasing stridency. As the Sikh community grew more militant and more mobilized, relations between the Sikh and Hindu communities began to polarize. Secessionists favoring the establishment of an independent Sikh homeland (Khalistan) drew increasing support, especially from a number of Sikh fundamentalist extremists who advocated the use of violence in support of communal separatism. Principal among these was Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, a Sikh religious leader whose supporters had been responsible for terrorist acts against the schismatic Nirankari Sikh sect since 1978.

After the assassination of a Hindu newspaper editor in September 1981, an arrest warrant was issued for Bhindranwale. Violence broke out when he turned himself in, and it continued as Sikhs demonstrated their objection to his arrest. Several paramilitary units were detached to Punjab to put down the disorder. Bhindranwale was released in mid-October, at which time the government indicated that it might be willing to negotiate some of the Sikh religious demands but would not tolerate secessionist moves.

In early 1982 the Akali Dal launched demonstrations designed to force the government to negotiate on all demands, and hundreds were arrested in the ensuing weeks. Although the Akali Dal dissociated itself from the use of violence, a number of violent acts nonetheless occurred including the hijacking of two Indian Airline flights by men advocating the establishment of Khalistan. After the government failed to agree to negotiate on all 45 demands, an independent Sikh conference in November declared "holy war" on the government. In the following months, relations between the Hindu and Sikh communities further deteriorated, and murders, bombings, and assassinations became frequent occurrences.

After a series of terrorist attacks on Hindus, government officials, and police in early October 1983, the central government declared a state of emergency in Punjab on October 5, 1983, and took over the Punjab state government. Terrorist attacks increased, however. Many of the terrorists had by this time taken refuge in Sikh temples, which police and paramilitary forces were reluctant to enter. Bhindranwale and a large number of followers

had taken sanctuary the year before in the Golden Temple complex in Amritsar, the holiest of Sikh shrines. There they had fortified buildings, stockpiled weapons, and issued calls for Sikhs to arm themselves for war.

The government declared Punjab a "disturbed area" in early March 1984, a designation under which security forces could employ special powers to restore order. In early May, as violence continued to escalate, Punjab was declared a "dangerously disturbed area," which gave security forces almost unlimited powers, including shoot-to-kill authority. Violence continued unabated, however, and pressure mounted in the rest of the country to send in the army and to move against those holed up in the Golden Temple complex.

Matters came to a head when the Akali Dal announced in late May 1984 that it would launch an intensified noncooperation movement on June 3 in which supporters would block movement of food grains and stop the flow of water to neighboring states. The central government tried to negotiate to stop the movement and to defuse the situation while at the same time preparing for the worst.

On June 2 the central government announced that it was bringing in the army to assist the civilian authorities, and on June 3 it established a curfew in Punjab and its capital, Chandigarh, which is also the capital of Haryana and has the status of a union territory. Several Akali Dal politicians were arrested, and the state was closed to all foreigners. The army quickly began to patrol the streets and to search temple complexes throughout Punjab. During the night of June 5–6 the army launched a full-scale assault on the Golden Temple, the last battle of which was fought late on June 6. According to the government, 493 civilians and terrorists and 83 army personnel were killed in the battle, among them Bhindranwale. Many of those caught in the complex had been pilgrims to the temple. In the following weeks hundreds of Sikhs were detained on security grounds.

Although the government had the full support of most of the Indian population, its decision to storm the Golden Temple met with outrage and defiance in the Sikh community—both in India and abroad. The act united moderate and extremist Sikhs and created a deep division between Sikhs and other Indians. Mutinies among Sikh army personnel and violent demonstrations by Sikhs throughout India followed the attack. Demonstrations continued as Sikhs demanded that the army leave the Golden Temple complex—which it did in late September 1984. Bhindranwale appeared to have become a cult figure overnight, and government authorities warned that the extremist movement might develop into a classic terrorist organization.

The violent backlash against Sikhs in the wake of the assassination of Indira Gandhi appeared to have further deepened the sense of isolation in the Sikh community. Reports out of Punjab suggested that Hindus were moving out of the state while Sikhs from the rest of India were returning. As of early 1985 Punjab continued to be governed under emergency measures, and the difficult task of bringing the Sikh community back into the greater Indian society and involving them once more in the political system had yet to be undertaken.

Crime

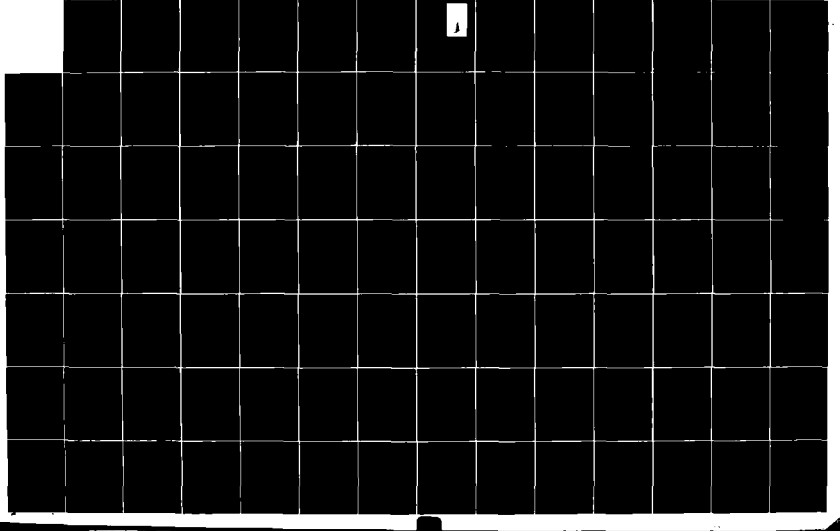
Data on the incidence of crime in the early 1980s were fragmentary at best in early 1985, but law enforcement officials and informed observers agreed that crime rates had continued to rise throughout the period. Many associated this increase with the social dislocations brought on by economic development and modernization and the concomitant breakdown of traditional value systems. The problem has been exacerbated by an increase in group violence, which has dra vn police resources from ordinary crime-fighting duties. Increased lawlessness in turn has been linked to a growing willingness by private individuals to take the law into their own hands.

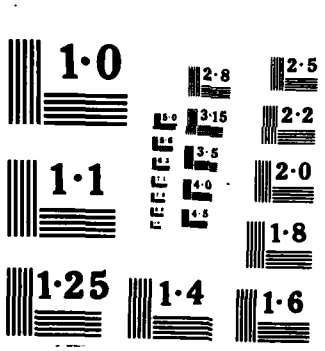
The most frequently committed offenses were related to theft—a particular problem in urban areas where thieves could easily escape detection. Many offenders were believed to come from the ranks of single young men who have migrated from their villages to urban areas where they have not been able to find jobs and who live a life cut off from any urban or village social structure. Organized crime in major cities has also been implicated in many property crimes. Many of the criminal organizations were highly sophisticated in their operations and were involved in a wide range of criminal activity, including protection rackets, illegal trade in alcohol and drugs, smuggling, extortion, and prostitution.

The rate of violent crime also appeared to be increasing. As elsewhere in the world, murder occurred most frequently among acquaintances or relatives, but other related causes included loss of group pride or prestige. The national press focused attention during the early 1980s on the phenomenon of "dowry deaths" or "bride burnings," in which women whose families were unable to pay supplemental dowry payments demanded by husbands' families died under suspicious and violent circumstances (see Marriage, ch. 5). Many murders, especially those in rural areas or against untouchables, were believed to go unreported.

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The uniquely South Asian crime of dacoity, or robbery committed by five or more persons acting together, continued to plague tens of millions of village residents. The problem was most severe in remote areas or areas having difficult terrain. In 1981, for example, 11 districts in Madhya Pradesh were declared dacoit infested; roving bands of dacoits looted villages, raped women, and killed suspected police informers and others. Dacoit gangs in Bihar engaged in widespread kidnapping for ransom over the 1981–84 period. Apprehension of dacoits was made difficult because police in rural areas were underequipped and understaffed, and victims often felt it safer and more effective to meet the demands of the dacoits than to involve the authorities.

Smuggling also had a centuries-old history in India, where long and open coastlines and mountain and jungle land borders have made for relatively easy passage of goods without detection or payment of taxes. Among the most vulnerable areas during the early 1980s were the Gujarat coast and the Maharashtra coast near Bombay. Gems, precious metals, foreign currency, and arms have long been prime goods in the trade. In recent years, high duties on cloth and electronic goods have also made these profitable contraband.

In the mid-1980s law enforcement authorities estimated that they intercepted less than 2 percent of the total traffic and that smuggling continued to increase. They noted that resources devoted to apprehending smuggling were insufficient and that police and other officials have not received the full cooperation of the courts and politicians in fighting the problem. The minister of finance observed in 1984 that the government had issued detention orders for 563 smugglers during the previous year but that these figures were misleading because many smugglers had political connections and had managed to secure long delays in legal proceedings or outright dismissal of charges. He also noted that approximately 1,000 cases instituted against smugglers in 1975 were still pending as of mid-1984.

Drug trafficking and drug abuse were relatively new crimes in India, which for the first time in history became a major transshipment center for drugs during the early 1980s. Drugs were smuggled into India from the Khyber Pass areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan after Pakistan cracked down on trafficking routes crossing its territory. The major centers in India were Bombay and Delhi; most drugs went to the United States and Western Europe. As the amount of drugs entering the country for transshipment grew, increased amounts also stayed in the country. Although India had traditionally had only a small problem with abuse

of opium substances because the drugs were far too expensive for the Indian population, a crude and inexpensive form of heroin entered the market in the early 1980s, and by 1984 heroin had become the second most abused drug in the nation, after cannabis.

As modernization and urbanization progressed, traffic offenses involving motor vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians increased rapidly. In 1981, the latest year for which complete figures were available in early 1985, India's motor vehicle fatality rate was 55 per 10,000 vehicles, in contrast with three per 10,000 in the United States. Economic factors were major contributing causes, the country being unable to afford sufficient traffic police, adequate licensing procedures, or driver training programs. Highways, which were often narrow and in poor repair, were crowded with a mixture of horse- or bullock-drawn carts, motor scooters, motorized rickshaws, fast-driving trucks, buses, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

Law Enforcement

The Constitution assigns the responsibility for maintaining law and order to the states, and almost all routine policing—including the prevention and detection of crime, apprehension of criminals, and maintenance of public order—was carried out by state police forces. The Constitution also permits the central government to participate in police operations and organization by authorizing the maintenance of the Indian Police Service (IPS). Officers of the IPS were recruited and trained by the central government and, except for those on headquarters duty, were assigned to senior positions in the state forces, where they came under the operational control of the states.

The Constitution also authorizes the central government to maintain any forces necessary to safeguard the national security. Under the terms of the Constitution, these paramilitary forces can be legally detailed to assist the states only if so requested by the state governments, and in practice the central government has usually observed these limits. Central control over the Indian federal system has been a perennial irritant in relations between the center and the states, however, and in isolated instances the central government has deployed its paramilitary units to protect central government institutions over the protest of a state government. Moreover, the limits on the use of central government forces have not always been in place. During the Emergency the Constitution was amended (effective February 1, 1976) to permit

the central government to dispatch and employ its paramilitary forces without regard to the wishes of the states. This action proved unpopular, and the use of the paramilitary forces was controversial. After the Emergency was ended, the Constitution was amended in December 1978 to make deployment of central government paramilitary forces once again dependent on the consent of the state government.

Police in 1985: A System in Crisis

The law enforcement system came under increasing public attack during the late 1970s and early 1980s for its inability to deal with crime and public disorder. The police as an institution were popularly viewed as corrupt, undisciplined, and ineffective. The police themselves expressed deep frustration over their inability to handle the nation's ever increasing law-and-order problems and appeared demoralized by politically motivated management.

The problem was not new. A report by a police commission formed in 1902 concluded that the public had little confidence in the police and believed them to be corrupt and oppressive. Although this summation was subject to exception in particular cases, it continued to hold as generally descriptive of public attitudes toward the police throughout the next eight decades. Popular antipathy toward them could be traced in part to their former status as the enforcing agents of British colonial power. Public distrust was also accounted for by the widespread belief in police corruption and petty dishonesty at lower levels and charges of partiality, lack of responsiveness, harassment, and occasional brutality.

During the 1970s, however, problems began to grow noticeably worse, partly because of the steady increase in group violence, which forced police to concentrate deployment near population centers where personnel would be available to handle outbreaks of public disorder. Although the strength of central government paramilitary forces was raised to meet these increased responsibilities, that of the state forces was not, making it necessary to pull police out of rural areas and off regular patrol assignments. This led to a rise in individual lawlessness and a deterioration in day-to-day public order that contributed to the public perception of police ineffectiveness and in turn to individuals seeking justice on their own. Moreover, putting down civil disturbances placed the police in a no-win situation, for any action they took could be interpreted as evidence of partiality to any one group.

During the same period, police personnel became increas-

ingly dissatisfied and militant over their salaries and working conditions. Organized police agitation was first demonstrated in the late 1960s, but the first violent episode occurred in 1973 in Uttar Pradesh, where police in the Provincial Armed Constabulary rebelled over working conditions and had to be put down forcibly by the army. Police agitation had become common by the late 1970s; in 1979 police strikes, demonstrations, and work stoppages occurred in every state. In a particularly violent incident in Bombay in 1982, the army had to be deployed to restore order after paramilitary forces sent in to disarm striking police fired on a crowd of police and sympathetic textile workers, killing several and sparking serious rioting. Most commentators, official and otherwise, agreed that police had genuine grievances but that neither the states nor the central government had the resources to do more than temporarily appease their demands.

Finally, the gradual politicization of the police, which had been under way at least since independence, was greatly accelerated during the 1970s. This was especially so during the Emergency, when senior officers at all levels were ordered to take actions that were either of dubious legality or clearly served narrow personal or partisan interests. Under the Morarji Desai government of the late 1970s, many of those who had cooperated with the government during the Emergency were censured, demoted, or even imprisoned. When Gandhi resumed office in 1980, however, some of those officers were reinstated or promoted, perpetuating a split in the police ranks and reinforcing the perception in the eyes of the police and the public that the police establishment was politically manipulatable.

Writing in 1984, David H. Bayley, an American specialist on the Indian police, asserted that the crisis in the Indian police system should be placed into a broader national perspective. He argued that the Indian political system was based on scarcity and that the government's role was to allocate money, jobs, opportunities, and services—including those of the police—to ameliorate the chronic deficiencies experienced by the population. In India's open and democratic society, competition for scarce benefits took the form of agitation to gain the attention of political decisionmakers. "In such circumstances policing is transformed from the professional imposition of a coherent moral consensus to an intensely political activity. Politicians see the police as critical arbiters of personal as well as group advancement. Order and justice are not rights that everyone may enjoy; they are benefits that government must allocate among competing claimants." According to Bayley, many police have tried to resist politicization, but

their livelihood and that of their families were vulnerable to manipulation of bonuses allocated or withheld and politically inspired transfers. During conditions of insecurity and lawlessness, police were made more sensitive to intimidation by one group or the need to exhibit loyalty to another. In the absence of a comprehensive reform of the system, the deterioration of the law enforcement establishment, the loss of public faith in it, and increased lawlessness appeared likely to continue as self-reinforcing conditions of Indian public life.

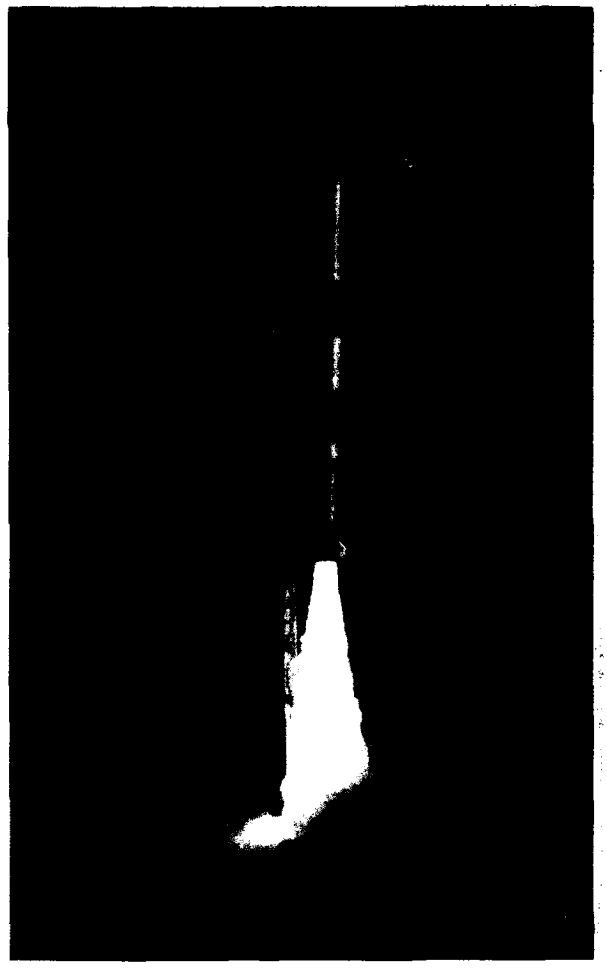
National-Level Agencies

The central national-level organization concerned with law enforcement was the Ministry of Home Affairs, which supervised a large number of government functions and agencies operated and administered by the central government; it also provided guidance and assistance to the state governments in their performance of similar functions. Generally, the ministry was concerned with all matters pertaining to the maintenance of public peace and order, the staffing and administration of the public services, the delineation of internal boundaries, and the administration of union territories.

The original structure of public services—central, state, and all-India—was known as the "steel frame" of the British Raj. After independence this structure was retained with only slight initial modification, the Constitution specifically establishing the Indian Administrative Service (IAS—formerly the Indian Civil Service) and the IPS. The mission of these services was to provide for continuity and a degree of central control while also allowing for extensive state authority (see The Public Services and Administration, ch. 8).

Officers of the IPS staffed most of the senior positions of all state and territorial police services and served on deputation in national agencies having responsibility for police and security matters. They were recruited by the Union Public Service Commission through competitive examination on a countrywide basis. After completing the basic course given to members of the all-India services, IPS officers attended the National Police Academy. They were then assigned to particular state forces, where they usually remained for the remainder of their careers. About one-half of the officers were regularly assigned to states other than those of their homes in an effort to promote nationalism and downplay provincialism.

Since the late 1970s there have been repeated reports of tension between senior officers of the IPS and those of the state forces and between IPS officers on deputation to national intelligence agencies and other agency personnel. Much of this tension was apparently



Blast-off of SLV-3 on July 18, 1980, which placed Indian satellite Rohini RS-1 in orbit around the earth Courtesy Embassy of India, Washington

caused by resentment over the monopolization of senior posts by IPS officers. One-third of senior ranks—constituting superintendents and above and referred to as gazetted ranks—were reserved for senior officers of the state services, but opportunities for promotion between ranks were limited. Because IPS officers entered service at a higher rank than did officers recruited by the states, IPS personnel generally held a very high proportion of the topmost jobs. As of 1980, eight states had requested that the central government not send them any more IPS officers in order to relieve the situation.

In addition to managing the IPS, the Ministry of Home Affairs maintained several agencies and institutions relating to police and security. Police in the union territories were the responsibility of the Police Division, which also ran the National Police Academy at Hyderabad and the Institute of Criminology and Forensic Science. The Central Bureau of Investigation investigated crimes that might involve public officials or undertakings or that had ramifications for several states.

The central government paramilitary forces were also controlled by the Ministry of Home Affairs. In 1985 their combined

strength was estimated at about 260,000. All were either organized or greatly expanded during the mid-1960s and early 1970s in response to growing socioeconomic and political disorder and the need for increased patrolling along the borders with Pakistan and China. Although organized to meet specific problems, these forces have been used in a variety of other situations as well.

The Central Reserve Police (CRP) was believed to be the largest of the paramilitary forces. It was established by the British in 1939 to help the military deal with the independence movement. Since independence it has been assigned the task of assisting state police and the army. The CRP has frequently been used to suppress internal disturbances, local authorities calling in CRP battalions from their garrisons when disorder escalated beyond the control of the local police. Because CRP personnel were usually drawn from outside the area in which they served, the CRP was often considered less partisan than local police and has won public approbation for its handling of outbreaks of communal disorder. The CRP's role in controlling antigovernment demonstrations and other opposition activities—especially during the Emergency period—has generally been viewed more problematically, however. The CRP has played a major role in assisting the army in dealing with insurgency in the Northeast, and it was estimated that as many as one-half of CRP personnel were deployed in the region during the early 1980s. The CRP has also been used to protect the security of the Ministry of Defence and other central government institutions.

The Border Security Force (BSF) was created in 1965 to free the army from performing routine patrol duties on the border with Pakistan. The BSF was organized by amalgamating state border units and was additionally charged with controlling smuggling, resisting infiltration, and assisting the army. It has also been used for internal policing purposes. The BSF was equipped with weapons of more advanced and sophisticated design than were other paramilitary forces and was believed to have a strength of about 85,000 in 1985. The BSF had its own system of schools and maintained a factory at Tekanpur that produced tear gas and smoke grenades for all police and paramilitary forces.

Several other smaller paramilitary forces were also maintained. The Assam Rifles, established in 1866 as a frontier defense force for the Northeast, was the oldest of the paramilitary forces. Its headquarters was in Shillong, and its main role since independence has been to deal with uprisings among tribal people in the Northeast. The Indo-Tibetan Border Force was raised after the

1962 war to provide border security in the high mountain areas on the northern borders. It was essentially a mountaineering force. The Railway Protective Force was assigned to protect and secure the national railroads. The Central Industrial Security Force provided security for public sector enterprises and certain specified installations. It was established in 1979 and was estimated to number about 26,000 in 1980. The government announced in 1984 that it was raising "national security guards" as a paramilitary force whose members would be used for internal security duties, including antiterrorism.

State and Other Police Services

The Police Act of 1861 established the fundamental principles of organization for police forces in India and, with some modification, basically continued in effect in 1985. Consequently, although the state police forces were separate and showed some differences in detail, their patterns of organization and operation were highly similar. The government did not reveal police strength levels, but observers estimated that the number of state police was approximately 765,000 during the 1975–85 period.

Each state police force was headed by an inspector general who answered to the home minister of the state. The domain of the inspector general was divided for command coordination into police ranges, each headed by a deputy inspector general, who had responsibility for three to six districts. The district police headquarters, commanded by a superintendent, was the fulcrum of state police operations. District superintendents had wide discretionary authority and were responsible for overseeing subordinate police stations as well as specialty elements, such as a criminal investigation detachment, equipment storehouses and armories, and traffic police. Many of the larger districts also had several assistant district superintendents.

Most preventive police work was carried out by constables assigned to police stations. Depending on the number of stations in a district (some had over 50, others, under 10), stations were grouped into subdivisions and, in some states, police circles to facilitate their supervision from the district headquarters. Major cities, such as New Delhi, Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, and Hyderabad, had separate municipal police forces headed by commissioners.

In most states police forces were functionally divided into unarmed (or civil) police and armed contingents. The former manned the police stations, conducted investigations, answered routine complaints, performed traffic duties, and patrolled the

streets. Usually they were armed with only a *lathi*—a bamboo staff sometimes weighted or tipped with iron. Those states that did maintain distinct armed contingents employed them as a reserve striking force for emergencies. Such units came in two forms—a mobile armed police under direct state control and district armed police, which were usually less well equipped. The latter were controlled by the district superintendents and were generally used for riot-control duty. Contingents were maintained at key locations around the state and acted only on orders from their chain of command. They did not come into contact with the public until they were committed to reestablish order.

At all levels the senior police officer answered to the police chain of command and was also legally required to respond to the general direction and control of designated civilian officials. In the municipal force the chain of command ran directly to the state home minister rather than to the district superintendent or district officials. This hierarchy of accountability to both civilian and police authorities has been a cause of confusion and disagreement. The participation by political authorities in police affairs was considered a hallmark of democracy and a safeguard for police accountability. At the same time, police have complained loudly and frequently of undue political interference in police affairs, charging that political authorities have increasingly attempted to influence police activities for personal or partisan purposes.

Although the police were one of the most pervasive of governmental agencies in Indian society, they were spread thin, and their communications and transportation capabilities—especially at lower levels—were often deficient in quality and quantity for their tasks. Many stations were located in isolated rural regions in which jurisdictions covered very large areas and on average had 75,000 people. In urban areas individual police stations usually had responsibility for much larger populations.

Police constables—the lowest police grade—accounted for over 80 percent of all police. In general their educational level was low, and their working conditions—apart from the danger inherent in police work—were usually poor. Opportunities for promotion were severely limited owing to the system of horizontal entry into higher grades; pensions were small and often irregular. These conditions seriously mitigated against attracting more highly qualified candidates into the lower police grades. Although a few women entered the police force through competitive examination and were treated equally with men, most of the small number of women in the force were used for special duties relating to women and children.

Police uniforms varied widely according to grade, region, and kind of duty performed. Frequently they were khaki and olive brown in color. Particularly among the armed police, uniforms resembled army dress rather than conventional police uniforms, as seen in the United States. The khaki uniforms of IPS officers were similar in all states.

Police in the states and in the union territories were assisted by units of volunteer Home Guards, which were maintained under guidelines formulated by the central government's Ministry of Home Affairs. Home Guards received minimal training and were paid only when called on for duty. They were used for a variety of tasks, including assisting the police in crime prevention and detection, undertaking watch and patrol duties, aiding in disaster relief, and supervising elections. The central government reimbursed the states and union territories at varying rates for expenses incurred in the program. In 1984 the minimum rate was 50 percent, the maximum, 100 percent.

The Criminal Justice System

The nation's criminal justice system was derived from the Anglo-American model, and a large body of Indian case law had been in place for over several decades. The judiciary and the bar were relatively independent, and established procedures for protection of defendants were routinely observed. Penal philosophy embraced the ideals of preventing crime and reforming criminals and restoring them to society.

The system has had serious problems for years, however, and few citizens appeared to have faith in its ability to impose order and render justice. Despite efforts to improve the efficiency of the criminal justice system, the judicial process continued to be characterized by lengthy delay, expectations and demands of partiality, and a general inability to solve disputes. Available evidence suggested that false testimony was commonplace, criminal cases were regularly withdrawn at the behest of local political officials, and lawyers were able to postpone judicial proceedings for long periods by manipulating established procedures. According to one legal scholar, it was more proper to speak in terms of a pathology of the system than to speak of an analysis of it.

As was the case with the law enforcement system, these problems were not new. Nor had a consensus developed on how to solve them, although the government has appointed several law commissions to study particular problems and to suggest

solutions. These have yielded only partial results, however, possibly because a basic disjunction existed between the criminal justice system, which was based on assumptions of individual equality and problem solving through litigation, and Indian culture, which was based on a hierarchical social structure in which problems were solved through compromise and negotiation and reflected the relative status of the individuals involved.

Criminal Law and Procedure

Under the Constitution, criminal jurisdiction belongs concurrently to the central government and the states. The prevailing law on crime prevention and punishment is substantially embodied in two principal statutes: the Indian Penal Code and the 1973 Code of Criminal Procedure. These acts took precedence over any state legislation and could not be altered or amended by the states. Separate legislation enacted by both the states and the central government also established criminal liability for acts such as smuggling, illegal use of arms or ammunition, and corruption. All legislation, however, was subordinate to the Constitution.

The Indian Penal Code was drafted by an English jurist and came into force in 1862; as amended it continued in force in 1985. Based mainly on English criminal law, the code defined basic crimes and punishments. It was applicable to resident foreigners and citizens alike and also recognized offenses committed abroad by Indian nationals.

The penal code classified crimes under nine categories: crimes against the state, the armed forces, public tranquillity, the human body, and property, as well as crimes relating to elections, religion, marriage, and health, safety, decency, and morals. Crimes were also categorized as cognizable or noncognizable, comparable to the distinction between felonies and misdemeanors in American usage. Six categories of punishment were also established: death, life imprisonment, rigorous imprisonment with hard labor, simple imprisonment, forfeiture of property, and fines. An individual could be imprisoned for failure to pay fines, and up to three months' solitary confinement could be included as part of rigorous imprisonment sentences. The possibility of commutation of death and life sentences was provided for.

Crimes were tried in courts of law under procedures that resembled the Anglo-American pattern. The machinery for prevention and punishment through the criminal court system was provided for by the Code of Criminal Procedure of 1973, which came into force on April 1, 1974, replacing a code dating to 1898. The

code included provisions to speed up the judicial process, increase efficiency, prevent abuses, and afford legal relief to the poor. The basic framework of the criminal justice system was left unchanged, however.

Constitutional guarantees protected the accused, as did provisions embodied in the Code of Criminal Procedure. Treatment of those held under special security legislation could depart from these norms, however (see Security Legislation, this ch.). In most cases police officers had to secure a warrant from a magistrate before instituting searches and seizing evidence. Persons taken into custody had to be advised of the charges against them, given the right to seek counsel, and brought before a magistrate within 24 hours of arrest. The magistrate had the option to release an accused on bail. During trial a defendant was protected against self-incrimination, and only confessions given before a magistrate were legally valid. Criminal cases were usually heard in open court, but a defendant did not have a legal right to an open trial, and in limited circumstances closed trials took place. Convictions could be appealed to higher courts.

The country had an integrated and relatively independent court system. At the apex was the Supreme Court of India, which had original, appellate, and advisory jurisdiction (see The Judiciary, ch. 8). Below it were 18 high courts that presided over the states and union territories. The high courts had supervisory authority over all subordinate courts within their jurisdictions. In general, these included several district courts headed by district magistrates, who in turn had several subordinate magistrates under their control. The Code of Criminal Procedure established two sets of magistrates for the subordinate criminal courts. The first consisted of executive magistrates, whose duties included issuing warrants, advising the police, and determining proper procedures to deal with public violence. The second consisted of judicial magistrates, who were essentially trial judges. Petty criminal cases were sometimes settled in panchayat (village council) courts.

Security Legislation

The Constitution provides that the central government can declare a state of emergency and assume temporary and exceptional powers in the event of war, external aggression, internal disruption, or the collapse of a state government for political or economic reasons. Under these circumstances and in cases having national security ramifications, the central government can invoke laws allowing for preventive detention of anyone deemed

a threat to national security and public welfare. Laws mandating preventive detention are required to set specific limits to detention orders—not exceeed 12 months—and to provide for the review of detention orders.

Several such laws were in place in 1985. The most important and the broadest in coverage was the National Security Act (NSA) of 1980, which replaced an executive ordinance issued in 1978. The executive ordinance in turn had replaced the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) of 1971, which had been drawn up to give the government emergency powers to deal with the Bangladesh crisis. MISA was invoked during the Emergency in amended form to permit preventive detention for up to two years, during which time a detainee did not enjoy the protection of the Fundamental Rights set forth in the Constitution or rights established in the common law. The use or, according to critics, abuse of MISA during the Emergency period led to its repeal.

The NSA authorized the government to detain persons without trial in order to protect the security of the state and the maintenance of order or essential services. The law could also be invoked to end strikes that threatened national security. In practice, it was frequently used to arrest those who participated in public disturbances or were believed likely to incite public violence. Subversives, especially Naxalites, and suspected infiltrators and spies have also been jailed under the provisions of the NSA. According to Amnesty International, the government has also used the NSA to detain nonviolent opponents of the government. Under the NSA, preventive detention could be imposed for periods up to 12 months; in practice, however, detention orders usually covered far shorter terms. The NSA was amended in 1984 to permit issuance of a subsequent detention order, provided the entire period under detention did not exceed 12 months. The amendment also provided that if one of the grounds on which a detention order was issued was ruled invalid or vague in a court of law, the detention order would still remain valid.

Preventive detention was also authorized under the Essential Services Maintenance Act of 1981. This act, which as of early 1985 had been used only rarely, permitted the detention of "economic offenders." The Public Security Act, promulgated in Kashmir, permitted the state government to exercise extraordinary powers, including preventive detention, to protect public security.

Special legislation in force in early 1985 had been drafted to provide the government with emergency powers in specific areas. The Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers

Act was enacted in 1983 to give the army special powers to restore order in Assam and Manipur after emergency rule was declared in both states. After emergency rule was declared in Punjab on October 5, 1983, and Punjab and Chandigarh were declared disturbed areas the next day, Parliament passed the Disturbed Areas Acts for Punjab and Chandigarh and the Armed Forces (Punjab and Chandigarh) Special Powers Act.

In 1984 Parliament passed the Terrorist-Affected Special Courts Bill to deal with extraordinary situations arising out of terrorist acts. The bill empowered the central government to establish special courts in areas affected by terrorism in order to facilitate speedy trial of offenders. Under the bill such trials could be held in camera to protect judges and witnesses. During discussion of the bill, government ministers assured Parliament that such measures would be invoked only when national security was threatened by terrorists, but opponents of the bill strongly criticized it as dangerously vague and open to abuse.

The Prison System

The Constitution provides that the correction and custody of criminals are state functions. Day-to-day administration of prisons was modeled on principles incorporated in the Prisons Act of 1894, the Prisoners Act of 1900, and the Transfer of Prisoners Act of 1950. Prison affairs in each state were administered by the state inspector general of prisons.

As a rule, conditions of health, food, sanitation, and safety were only minimally satisfactory, and prisons were congested and poorly staffed. As in other areas of public administration, however, the prison system varied from state to state. The more prosperous had better facilities and attempted rehabilitation programs; the poorer ones could afford only minimal accommodation. Conditions under which prisoners were held also varied according to how a prisoner was classified. India retained a system set up during colonial times that mandated different treatment for different categories of prisoners. Under this system, which enjoyed public support, foreigners, persons held for political reasons, and some middle-class prisoners were segregated from ordinary prisoners and given better treatment, including larger or less crowded cells and more food.

Prison conditions and reform proposals received considerable government and media attention during the late 1970s and early 1980s. Problems discussed included overcrowding, the plight of those held for long periods while awaiting trial, the es-

tablishment of separate facilities for women and juveniles, and staff discipline. The press carried numerous reports of beatings, torture, sexual abuse, and unexplained deaths of prisoners. The government took a serious view of such problems and, although limited in resources, has attempted to provide some assistance to the states in the area of prison reform. Under a program begun in 1979, the states were given annual grants-in-aid to renovate prison buildings, improve living conditions, and train prison staff. Priority was also given to improving basic amenities, such as the water supply and sanitation, and to expanding confinement facilities. The central government has also encouraged the states to adopt procedures based on a model prison manual developed in the early 1970s, and many have done so.

* * *

A wealth of material is available on the Indian military. General coverage of the history and development of the armed forces—particularly the army—can be found in Stephen P. Cohen's *The Indian Army*, Rajendra Singh's *History of the Indian Army*, and John Keegan's *World Armies*.

The latest information on the contemporary military establishment and defense issues can be found in periodical literature. Those journals containing the most articles on India are *Asian Survey, Far Eastern Economic Review, IDSA Journal*, and *Vikrant*.

A number of articles focusing on the process of defense decisionmaking are noteworthy for their treatment of a variety of other issues as well. These are "The Policy Process" by P.R. Chari in *Defense Policy Formation: Towards Comparative Analysis*, edited by James M. Roherty; "The Debate on Restructuring India's Higher Defense Organization" by Jerrold F. Elkin and W. Andrew Ritezel in *Asian Survey;* "Defense Planning in India" by Raju G.C. Thomas in *Defense Planning in Less Industrialized States: The Middle East and South Asia*, edited by Stephanie Neuman; "Indian Defense Policy: A New Phase?" by Glynn L. Wood and Daniel Vaagenes in *Asian Survey;* and "The Missions of the Indian Navy" by Gary L. Sojka in *Asian Survey*. Articles on defense spending and the defense industry include "The Armed Services and the Indian Defense Budget" by Thomas in *Asian Survey* and "India" by Thomas W. Graham in *Arms Production in Developing Countries*, edited by James Everett Katz. Discussion of the Indian strategic perspective can be found in "The Strategic

Imagery of Elites," an article by Cohen in Roherty's *Defense Policy Formation: Towards a Comparative Analysis;* "Subcontinental Security: Some Perceptions" by K. Subrahmanyam in *Asian Defence Journal;* and "Why India Goes to Moscow for Arms" by S. Nihal Singh in *Asian Survey*.

The International Institute for Strategic Studies' excellent annual, *The Military Balance*, provides current data on the size, budget, and equipment inventory of the armed forces, as do the annual editions of *World Armaments and Disarmament* yearbooks published by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. Information on military equipment is also available in the annual editions of *Jane's All the World's Aircraft, Jane's Armour and Artillery, Jane's Fighting Ships,* and *Jane's Weapon Systems*.

Most material covering internal security matters is found in periodical literature. Noteworthy are "The Police and Political Order in India" by David H. Bayley and "Whose Law, Whose Order: 'Untouchables', Social Violence, and the State in India" by Barbara R. Joshi—both published in *Asian Survey*. Annual editions of *Amnesty International Report,* published by Amnesty International, and *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices,* presented to the United States Congress by the Department of State, also provide valuable data on internal security conditions. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Appendix

Table

1 Metric Conversion Coefficients
2 Reproductive-Age Couples Using Contraception, by State, 1982
3 Infant Mortality, Selected Years, 1911–78
4 Health Care Services, Selected Years, 1960–82
5 School Enrollment as a Percentage of School-Age Children, Selected School Years, 1950–51 to 1984–85
6 Number of Schools and Teachers, Selected School Years, 1950–51 to 1980–81
7 School Enrollment, Selected School Years, 1950–51 to 1984–85
8 School Enrollment as a Percentage of School-Age Population by Sex, Selected School Years, 1960–61 to 1981–82
9 Estimate of Number of Native Speakers of Principal Spoken Languages, 1983
10 Distribution of Urban Population by Size of City, Selected Years, 1901–81
11 Population and Population Increases in Cities of over One Million, 1961–81
12 Gross Domestic Product by Sector of Origin, Selected Years, FY 1950–82
13 Summary of Central Government Budget, FY 1980–83
14 Employment in the Organized Sector, FY 1960 and FY 1981
15 Production of Selected Minerals, FY 1981 and FY 1982
16 Production of Selected Industrial Products, Selected Years, FY 1950–82
17 Summary of Major Imports, FY 1979–82
18 Summary of Major Exports, FY 1979–82
19 Summary of Balance of Payments, FY 1979–82
20 Area Planted in Principal Crops, Selected Crop Years, 1950–51 to 1983–84
21 Production of Principal Crops, Selected Crop Years, 1950–51 to 1983–84
22 Yield of Principal Crops, Selected Crop Years, 1950–51 to 1983–84
23 Defense Expenditures, 1950–84
24 Defense Public Sector Undertakings
25 Order of Battle for the Indian Army, 1985
26 Order of Battle for the Indian Air Force, 1985
27 Order of Battle for the Indian Navy, 1985

[redacted]

Table 1. Metric Conversion Coefficients

When you know	Multiply by	To find
Millimeters	0.04	inches
Centimeters	0.39	inches
Meters	3.3	feet
Kilometers	0.62	miles
Hectares (10,000 m)	2.47	acres
Square kilometers	0.39	square miles
Cubic meters	35.3	cubic feet
Liters	0.26	gallons
Kilograms	2.2	pounds
Metric tons	0.98	long tons
	1.1	short tons
	2,204	pounds
Degrees Celsius (Centigrade)	9 divide by 5 and add 32	degrees Fahrenheit

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Table 2. Reproductive-Age Couples Using Contraception, by State, 1982

State	Millions of Couples of Reproductive Age	Percentage of Couples Using Contraception
Andhra Pradesh	9.8	27
Assam	3.0	18
Bihar	13.3	12
Gujarat	5.7	35
Haryana	2.1	29
Himachal Pradesh	0.7	26
Jammu and Kashmir	1.0	11
Karnataka	6.2	25
Kerala	3.6	32
Madhya Pradesh	9.5	22
Maharashtra	11.0	37
Orissa	4.7	26
Punjab	2.4	27
Rajasthan	6.3	15
Tamil Nadu	8.3	28
Uttar Pradesh	21.7	11
West Bengal	8.5	24
TOTAL[1]	118.8	26[2]

[1]Includes union territory of Delhi (1 million).
[2]March 1983.

Source: Based on information from *Statistical Outline of India, 1984*, Bombay, June 1984, 177.

Table 3. Infant Mortality, Selected Years, 1911–78

Period	Death per 1,000 Live Births	Period	Deaths per 1,000 Live Births
1911–15	204	1941–45	161
1916–20	219	1946–50	134
1921–25	174	1951–61	146
1926–30	178	1961–71	129
1931–35	174	1975	140
1936–40	161	1978	125

Source: Based on information from Sudipto Mundle, "Recent Trends in the Condition of Children in India: A Statistical Profile," *World Development*, London, 12, No. 3, 1984, 301.

Table 4. Health Care Services, Selected Years, 1960–82
(in thousands)

	1960	1973	1981	1982
Primary health centers	2.8	5.3	5.7	6.0
Hospitals	4.0	4.0	6.8	6.9
Dispensaries	9.9	10.8	16.8	17.5
Hospital beds	186.0	281.0	476.0	487.0
Physicians	76.0	172.4	268.7	n.a.
Nurses	32.7	93.6	150.4	162.9

n.a.—not available.

Source: Based on information from *Statistical Outline of India, 1984*, Bombay, June 1984, 176.

Table 5. School Enrollment as a Percentage of School-Age Children, Selected School Years, 1950–51 to 1984–85

School Year	Primary School (Ages 6–11)	Middle School (Ages 11–14)	Secondary School (Ages 14–17)
1950–51	42.6	12.7	5.3
1955–56	52.8	16.5	7.4
1960–61	62.4	22.5	10.6
1965–66	76.7	30.8	16.2
1975–76	83.8	36.7	18.3
1981–82[1]	83.7	41.9	28.2[2]
1984–85[3]	95.2	50.3	n.a.

n.a.—not available.
[1]Provisional.
[2]1980–81.
[3]Targets.

Source: Based on information from *Statistical Outline of India, 1984*, Bombay, June 1984, 173; and India, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Research and Reference Division, *India: A Reference Annual, 1983*, New Delhi, December 1983, 49.

Table 6. Number of Schools and Teachers, Selected School Years, 1950–51 to 1980–81

	1950–51	1955–56	1960–61	1965–66	1980–81
Schools					
Primary	209,671	278,135	330,399	391,064	485,538
Middle	13,596	21,730	49,663	75,798	116,447
Secondary	7,288	10,838	17,257	27,477	47,755
Technical and sundry higher	1,377	2,064	4,853	6,047	8,708
Universities	27	32	45	64	132
Teachers					
Primary school	537,918	691,249	741,515	944,377	1,345,376
Middle school	85,496	114,839	345,228	527,754	830,649
Secondary school	126,504	189,794	296,305	479,060	902,332
University/college	18,648	27,883	41,759	66,882	n.a.

n.a.—not available.

Source: Based on information from India, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Research and Reference Division, *India: A Reference Annual, 1983*, New Delhi, December 1983, 49.

Table 7. School Enrollment, Selected School Years, 1950–51 to 1984–85
(in millions)

School Year	Primary School (Levels I–V)	Middle School (Levels VI–VIII)	Secondary School (Levels IX–XI/XII
1950–51	19.2	3.1	1.2
1955–56	25.2	4.3	1.9
1960–61	35.0	6.7	2.9
1965–66	50.5	10.5	5.0
1975–76	65.7	16.0	7.4
1980–81	72.7	19.9	9.5
1981–82[1]	73.6	21.1	n.a.
1984–85[2]	82.6	25.8	n.a.

n.a.—not available.
[1]Provisional.
[2]Targets.

Source: Based on information from *Statistical Outline of India, 1984*, Bombay, June 1984, 173; and India, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Research and Reference Division, *India: A Reference Annual, 1983*, New Delhi, December 1983, 49.

Table 8. School Enrollment as a Percentage of School-Age Population by Sex, Selected School Years, 1960–61 to 1981–82[1]

Level	1960–61	1975–76	1980–81	1981–82
Elementary school	62.4	83.8	83.1	83.7
Boys	82.6	99.0	100.4	99.4
Girls	41.4	66.2	66.1	66.9
Middle school	22.5	36.7	40.0	41.9
Boys	33.2	48.5	52.1	54.2
Girls	11.3	23.9	27.2	29.1
Secondary school	11.4	18.3	28.2	n.a.
Boys	18.0	25.6	40.8	n.a.
Girls	4.4	10.5	14.3	n.a.

n.a.—not available

[1] Age-groups 6–11 years (elementary), 11–14 years (middle), and 14–17 years (secondary)

[2] Provisional

Source: Based on information from *Statistical Outline of India, 1984*, Bombay, June 1984, 173.

Table 9. Estimate of Number of Native Speakers of Principal Spoken Languages, 1983

Language	Native Speakers (in millions)	Percentage of Population
Assamese	12.6	1.7
Bengali	63.0	8.5
Gujarati	36.0	4.7
Hindi	224.0	29.5
Kannada	30.0	3.9
Kashmiri	3.4	0.5
Malayalam	30.5	4.0
Marathi	58.5	7.7
Oriya	27.5	3.6
Punjabi	23.4	3.1
Sindhi	2.2	0.28
Tamil	51.8	6.8
Telugu	60.9	8.0
Urdu	37.0	4.8

Source: Based on information supplied by the Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington.

*Table 10. Distribution of Urban Population by Size of City, Selected Years, 1901–81**

Size of City	Percentage of Total Urban Population				
	1901	1951	1961	1971	1981
Over 100,000	22	38	45	49	60
50,000 to 99,000	11	12	12	14	12
20,000 to 49,999	17	18	20	18	14
10,000 to 19,999	23	15	14	13	10
Less than 10,000	27	17	9	6	4
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

*1981 figures exclude Assam and Jammu and Kashmir.

Source: Based on information from *Statistical Outline of India, 1982*, Bombay, January 1982, 41.

Table 11. Population and Population Increase in Cities of over One Million, 1961–81

City	Population in 1981 (in thousands)	Population Increase (in percentage)	
		1961–71	1971–81
Calcutta	9,166	23	34
Greater Bombay	8,227	44	38
Delhi	5,714	55	57
Madras	4,277	63	35
Bangalore	2,914	38	76
Hyderabad	2,528	44	41
Ahmadabad	2,515	44	44
Kanpur	1,688	31	32
Pune (Poona)	1,685	44	49
Nagpur	1,298	35	40
Lucknow	1,007	24	24
Jaipur	1,005	55	58

Source: Based on information from *Statistical Outline of India, 1982*, Bombay, January 1982, 43–45.

Table 12. Gross Domestic Product by Sector of Origin, Selected Years, FY 1950–82
(in billions of rupees at constant FY 1970 prices)[1]

Sector	FY 1950	FY 1970	FY 1980	FY 1981	FY 1982
Agriculture, forestry, and fishing	103	174	204	210	202
Mining and quarrying	1	4	5	6	7
Manufacturing	18	52	79	83	85
Utilities	1	4	8	9	9
Construction	7	20	24	25	26
Transportation and communications	6	19	34	37	40
Trade	14	40	61	65	66
Public administration and defense[2]	5	16	36	40	45
Business services	9	21	32	34	36
Other services	11	17	22	23	26
GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (at factor cost)	175	367	505	532	542

[1]For value of the rupee—see Glossary.
[2]Preliminary estimate subject to revision.

Table 13. Summary of Central Government Budget, FY 1980–83
(in billions of rupees)[1]

	FY 1980[2]	FY 1981[3]	FY 1982[4]	FY 1983[4]
Revenues and receipts				
Taxes				
Personal income tax	15	15	16	17
Corporation tax	13	20	23	24
Customs duties	34	43	50	59
Central excise taxes	65	74	83	100
Other	5	7	7	7
(Less share of taxes to states)	-38	-43	-46	-52
Total taxes	94	116	133	155
Non-tax current revenues	31	35	43	45
Total current revenues	125	151	176	200
Capital receipts				
Market borrowings	26	29	38	40
Other borrowings	30	44	51	54
Total capital receipts	56	73	89	94
Total revenues and receipts	181	224	265	294
Expenditures				
Current expenditures				
Nondevelopmental[5]				
Defense	35	42	49	54
Interest payments	26	32	40	47
Administration	8	9	10	11
Other	12	13	15	23
Total nondevelopmental	81	96	114	135
Developmental[5]				
Education	3	3	4	5
Public health	3	4	5	6
Agriculture	2	3	3	4
Industry	4	6	7	6
Other	11	14	19	21
Total developmental	23	30	38	42
Grants to the states	29	28	37	41
Total current expenditures	133	154	189	218
Capital expenditures				
Nondevelopmental	9	5	8	8
Developmental	31	38	41	40
Loans to states (net)	41	41	46	44
Total capital expenditures	81	84	95	92
Total expenditures	214	238	284	310

Table 13. (Continued)

	FY 1980[2]	FY 1981[3]	FY 1982[4]	FY 1983[5]
Deficit (-)	-33	-14	-19	-16

[1]For value of the rupee—see Glossary.
[2]Actual.
[3]Preliminary accounting of actual revenues and expenditures.
[4]Proposed.
[5]Excludes expenditures financed by grants to the states.

Table 14. Employment in the Organized Sector, FY 1960 and FY 1981[1]
(in thousands)

Sector	March 31, 1961			March 31, 1982		
	Public Sector[2]	Private Sector	Total	Public Sector[2]	Private Sector	Total
Agriculture[3]	180	670	850	457	851	1,308
Mining and quarrying	129	550	679	832	129	961
Manufacturing[4]	369	3,020	3,389	1,592	4,661	6,253
Utilities	224	40	264	698	36	734
Construction	602	240	842	1,112	71	1,183
Transportation and communications	1,725	80	1,805	2,781	60	2,841
Trade	94	160	254	113	277	390
Other services	3,727	280	4,007	8,362	1,463	9,825
TOTAL	7,050	5,040	12,090	15,947	7,548	23,495

[1]Data collected on all public sector enterprises and nonfarm employment in the private sector for enterprises generally employing 25 or more workers, some firms employing 10–24 workers voluntarily reported after the mid-1960s.
[2]All levels of government.
[3]Includes some forestry and fishing.
[4]Includes firms registered under the 1948 Factories Act, which covered enterprises employing 10 or more workers using power or those with 20 or more workers without power.

Table 15. Production of Selected Minerals, FY 1981 and FY 1982

Mineral	Unit	FY 1981	FY 1982
Asbestos	thousands of tons	25	27
Bauxite	-do-	1,923	1,854
Chromite	-do-	336	339
Coal	millions of tons	123	128
Copper ore	thousands of tons	2,107	2,018
Crude oil	millions of tons	15	23
Gypsum	thousands of tons	948	970
Iron ore	millions of tons	41	41
Lead concentrate	thousands of tons	20	22
Lignite	millions of tons	6	7
Limestone	-do-	32	33
Manganese ore	thousands of tons	1,526	1,448
Natural gas (used)	billions of cubic meters	2	2
Phosphorite	thousands of tons	551	542
Sulfur	-do-	4	5
Zinc concentrate	-do-	53	53

Source: Based on information from India, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Research and Reference Division, *India: A Reference Annual, 1983*, New Delhi, December 1983, 349.

Table 16. Production of Selected Industrial Products Selected Years, FY 1950–82

Product	Unit	FY 1950	FY 1970	FY 1981	FY 1982[1]
Aluminum	thousands of tons	4.0	168.8	206.8	208.1
Aluminum cables	-do-	1.7	64.2	70.3	52.4
Caustic soda	-do-	12.0	371.0	614.0	577.0
Cement	millions of tons	2.7	14.3	20.9	23.2
Copper	thousands of tons	7.1	9.3	24.7	n.a.
Cotton cloth	billions of meters	4.2	7.6	8.0	8.0
Cotton yarn	millions of kilograms	534.0	929.0	989.0	999.0
Diesel engines (stationary)	thousands	5.5	65.0	174.5	161.0
Diesel engines (vehicles)	-do-	n.a.	3.2	7.1	5.8
Electricity generated	billions of kilowatt-hours	5.3	55.8	122.0	130.1
Electric motors	millions of horsepower	0.1	2.7	5.3	4.7
Finished steel	millions of tons	1.0	4.6	7.8	8.1
Jute textiles	-do-	0.8	1.1	1.3	1.3
Machinery for cement plants	millions of rupees[2]	n.a.	42.0	437.0	410.0
Machinery for cotton textiles	-do-	n.a.	303.0	3,473.0	3,151.0
Machinery for sugar mills	-do-	n.a.	139.0	263.0	345.0
Machine tools	-do-	3.0	430.0	2,449.0	2,700.0
Nitrogenous fertilizers	millions of tons	---	0.8	3.1	3.4
Paper and board	thousands of tons	116.0	755.0	124.3	1,203.0
Pig iron	millions of tons	1.7	7.0	9.7	9.6
Power transformers	millions of kilovolt-amperes	0.2	8.1	21.5	18.8
Railroad cars	thousands	2.9	11.1	17.8	15.4
Refined oil products	millions of tons	0.2	17.1	28.2	31.1
Soda ash	thousands of tons	45.0	449.0	632.0	635.0
Steel ingots	millions of tons	n.a.	6.1	11.0	11.0
Vehicles	thousands of units	16.5	87.9	154.4	151.4

---means negligible.
n.a.--not available.
[1]Preliminary, subject to revision.
[2]For value of the rupee—see Glossary.

Table 17. Summary of Major Imports, FY 1979–82
(in millions of United States dollars)

Commodity	FY 1979	FY 1980	FY 1981	FY 1982[1]
Wheat	131	127	389	318
Rice	104	97	336	304
Crude oil	2,709	4,243	4,185	4,209
Petroleum products	1,337	2,426	1,627	1,604
Fertilizers[2]	639	1,037	783	281
Iron and steel products	1,076	1,080	1,348	1,190
Copper	111	163	n.a.	n.a.
Aluminum	131	259	n.a.	n.a.
Edible oils	552	865	700	235
Fibers	135	122	204	130
Diamonds	430	528	445	703
Pulp and paper	197	260	295	182
Chemicals	740	741	893	716
Precision equipment	193	223	225	197
Electrical machinery	294	296	326	258
Nonelectrical machinery	999	1,413	1,550	1,436
Transport equipment	419	598	342	624
Other	1,124	1,435	1,592	2,522
TOTAL	11,321	15,913	15,240	14,909

[1]n.a.—not available.
[2]Includes raw materials.

Table 18. Summary of Major Exports, FY 1979–82
(in millions of United States dollars)

Commodities	FY 1979	FY 1980	FY 1981	FY 1982[1]
Agricultural products				
Tea	455	539	443	382
Oil cakes	158	158	132	155
Coffee	202	271	164	191
Sugar	160	46	72	65
Spices	185	141	111	92
Fish products	245	275	314	363
Cashews	146	178	203	139
Other	71	37	35	30
Total agriculture	1,622	1,645	1,474	1,417
Crude materials				
Raw cotton	93	209	41	105
Raw tobacco	146	178	264	249
Iron ore	353	384	394	388
Other	44	39	49	35
Total crude materials	636	810	748	777
Manufactures				
Jute products	416	418	288	211
Cotton textiles	356	350	330	276
Coir products	45	22	19	26
Clothing	425	652	667	548
Cotton yarn and thread	19	36	23	23
Leather and products	601	478	454	386
Gems	642	763	852	857
Handicrafts	388	423	414	361
Iron and steel	40	15	89	58
Engineering goods	915	1,033	953	816
Chemicals	245	285	408	320
Other	382	384	32	138
Total manufactures	4,474	4,859	4,529	4,020
Other[2]	1,216	1,188	1,988	2,956
TOTAL	7,948	8,502	8,739	9,170

[1]Preliminary, subject to revision.
[2]Includes exports of crude oil amounting to US$220 million in FY 1981 and US$1,063 million in FY 1982.

Table 19. Summary of Balance of Payments, FY 1979–82
(in millions of United States dollars)

	FY 1979	FY 1980	FY 1981	FY 1982
Current account				
Exports (f.o.b.)[1]	7,948	8,504	8,519	8,001
Imports (c.i.f)[2]	-11,383	-16,204	-15,500	-14,249
Trade balance	-3,435	-7,700	-6,981	-6,248
Export of services	2,304	2,880	2,669	2,523
Import of services	-1,262	-1,515	-1,695	-1,583
Investment income (net)	287	600	286	-415
Current transfers (net)[3]	1,852	2,771	2,318	1,849
Current account balance	-254	-2,964	-3,403	-3,874
Capital account				
Direct investment in India	0	0	10	65
Grant aid	608	820	700	652
Loan disbursements	1,290	1,852	2,010	2,514
Loan repayments	-646	-677	-647	-683
IMF credits[4]	0	1,035	690	1,980
Other loans (net)	-44	-44	-166	-98
Other capital flows (net)	-743	-167	-1,151	-53
Capital account balance	465	2,819	1,446	4,377
Errors and omissions	13	-200	-441	0
Change in reserves[5]	-224	345	2,398	-503

[1]Excludes exports of petroleum under temporary swap arrangements; f.o.b. means "freight on board."
[2]Excludes imports of petroleum under temporary swap arrangements; c.i.f. means "cost, insurance, and freight."
[3]Excludes grant aid which is shown in the capital account. Almost all of the transfers were remittances from Indian workers abroad.
[4]IMF—International Monetary Fund.
[5]A minus sign indicates an increase in reserves.

Table 20. Area Planted in Principal Crops, Selected Crop Years, 1950–51 to 1983–84[1]
(in thousands of hectares)

Crop	1950–51	1960–61	1970–71	1980–81	1983–84[2]
Food Grains					
Cereals					
Rice	30,810	34,128	37,592	40,152	41,500
Wheat	9,746	12,927	18,241	22,279	23,400
Coarse grains	37,674	44,963	45,950	41,779	42,100
Total cereals	78,230	92,018	101,783	104,210	107,000
Pulses	19,019	23,563	22,534	22,457	24,000
Total food grains	97,249	115,581	124,317	126,667	131,000
Oilseeds					
Peanuts	4,494	6,463	7,326	6,801	7,450
Rapeseed and mustard seed	2,071	2,883	3,323	4,113	4,400
Cottonseed	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	7,823	8,100
Sesame	2,204	2,169	2,450	2,472	2,600
Soybeans	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	392	800
Sunflower	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	119	550
Other oilseeds	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	4,072	4,247
Total oilseeds	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	25,792	28,147
Sugarcane	1,707	2,415	2,615	2,667	2,900
Cotton	5,882	7,610	7,605	7,823	8,100

n.a.—not available.
[1]Indian crop year goes from July to June.
[2]Preliminary.

Table 21. Production of Principal Crops, Selected Crop Years, 1950–51 to 1983–84[1]
(in thousands of tons)

Crop	1950–51	1960–61	1970–71	1980–81	1983–84[2]
Food grains					
Cereals					
Rice	20,576	34,574	42,225	53,631	59,000
Wheat	6,462	10,997	23,832	36,313	44,600
Coarse grains	15,376	23,743	30,547	29,018	31,000
Total cereals	42,414	69,314	96,604	118,962	134,600
Pulses	8,411	12,704	11,818	10,627	12,000
Total food grains	50,825	82,018	108,422	129,589	146,600
Oilseeds					
Peanuts[3]	3,481	4,812	6,111	5,005	7,300
Rapeseed and mustard seed	762	1,347	1,976	2,002	2,700
Cottonseed	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	2,700	2,800
Sesame	445	318	568	446	550
Soybeans	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	442	700
Sunflower	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	66	300
Other oilseeds	470	505	604	1,242	1,365
Total oilseeds	5,158	6,982	9,259	11,903	15,715
Sugarcane	57,050	111,410	126,368	154,248	155,000
Cotton	600	1,004	809	1,326	1,415

n.a.—not available.
[1]Indian crop year goes from July to June.
[2]Preliminary.
[3]Nuts in the shell.

Table 22. Yield of Principal Crops, Selected Crop Years, 1950–51 to 1983–84[1]
(in kilograms per hectare)

Crop	1950–51	1960–61	1970–71	1980–81	1983–84[2]
Food grains					
Cereals					
Rice	668	1,013	1,123	1,336	1,422
Wheat	663	851	1,306	1,630	1,906
Coarse grains	408	528	665	695	736
Total cereals	542	693	949	1,142	1,258
Pulses	441	539	524	473	500
Total food grains	522	710	872	1,023	1,119
Oilseeds					
Peanuts[3]	775	744	834	736	980
Rapeseed and mustard seed	762	467	594	487	614
Cottonseed	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	345	346
Sesame	202	147	232	180	212
Soybeans	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1,128	875
Sunflower	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	555	545
Other oilseeds	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	305	321
Total oilseeds	---	---	---	461	558
Sugarcane	33,421	46,133	48,324	57,836	53,448
Cotton	102	131	106	170	175

n.a.—not available.
[1]Indian crop year goes from July to June.
[2]Preliminary.
[3]Nuts in the shell.

Table 23. Defense Expenditures, FY 1950–84

Year	Defense Expenditures[1]	Percent Change	Percentage of GDP[2]
1950	1.70	n.a.	1.7
1951	1.83	+7.0	1.8
1952	1.87	+2.0	1.9
1953	1.92	+2.6	1.8
1954	1.96	+2.0	2.0
1955	1.93	-1.5	1.9
1956	2.10	+9.0	1.8
1957	2.60	+24.0	2.2
1958	2.80	+8.0	2.0
1959	2.70	+4.0	1.9
1960	2.70	0.0	1.8
1961	3.00	+10.0	1.9
1962	4.30	+43.0	2.5
1963	7.30	+70.0	3.7
1964	8.10	+11.0	3.5
1965	8.60	+6.0	3.6
1966	9.00	+5.0	3.3
1967	9.50	+6.0	3.0
1968	10.20	+7.0	3.2
1969	10.80	+6.0	2.9
1970	11.70	+8.0	2.9
1971	14.40	+3.0	3.3
1972	16.20	+13.0	3.4
1973	16.70	+3.0	2.8
1974	20.00	+20.0	2.9
1975	23.30	+17.0	3.1
1976	25.60	+10.0	3.2
1977	27.10	+8.0	3.0
1978	28.90	+7.0	3.0
1979	31.90	+10.0	3.0
1980	38.60	+22.0	3.0
1981	46.00	+19.0	3.1
1982	53.50	+16.0	3.2
1983	57.50	+7.0	n.a.
1984	60.70	+6.0	n.a.

n.a.—not available.
[1]In current figures, given in billions of rupees (for value of the rupee—see Glossary).
[2]Gross domestic product—see Glossary.
[3]Estimated expenditures.
[4]Budget projection.

Table 24. Defense Public Sector Undertakings, 1981–82

Name and Comment	Headquarters	Value of Production*
Hindustani Aeronautics	Bangalore	2,460
Bangalore Division: 6 factories manufacturing and overhauling Jaguars, Gnats, Ajeets, trainers, and helicopters		
Koraput Division: MiG engines		
Nasik Division: MiG production		
Lucknow Division: aircraft accessories		
Hyderabad Division: aircraft accessories		
Kanpur Division: HS-748 and other aircraft		
Bharat Earth Movers	-do-	2,100
Produces earth-moving equipment, railroad cars, and tools		
Mazagon Dockyards	Bombay	1,160
Produces Leander- and Godavari-class frigates		
Bharat Electronics	Bangalaore	1,150
Factories at Bangalore, Ghoziabad, and Pune		
Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers	Calcutta	588
Builds cargo ships, patrol boats, barges, and survey vessels		
Praga Tools	Secunderabad	100
Small percentage of stock privately owned		
Goa Shipyard	Goa	90
Small percentage of stock privately owned; builds dredges, trawlers, tugs, and landing craft		
Bharat Dynamics	Hyderabad	29
Produces guided missiles, rockets, and torpedos		
Mishra Dhatu Nigam	-do-	n.a.
Trial production of strategic metals and alloys commenced in 1979		

n.a. — not available

*In millions of rupees (for value of the rupee — see Glossary)

Source: Based on information from India, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Research and Reference Division, *India: A Reference Annual, 1983*, New Delhi, 1983, 42–44; Defense Market Survey, *DMS Market Intelligence Reports: South America/Australasia*, Greenwich, Connecticut, 1984, and Alain Cass and K.K. Sharma, "India's Fighter Output Takes Off," *Financial Times*, London, May 5, 1982, 3.

Table 25. Order of Battle for the Indian Army, 1985

Personnel Strength: 960,000 Regular; 200,000 Reserve

Formations:

5 Area commands	5 Independent armored brigades
8 Corps headquarters	7 Independent infantry brigades
2 Armored divisions	1 Parachute brigade
1 Mechanized division	17 Independent artillery brigades
18 Infantry divisions	(including approximately 20
10 Mountain divisions	air defense regiments)

Type of Equipment	Approximate Number	Origin and comment
Main battle tanks		
T–54/–55	700	Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia
T–72	300	Soviet Union
Vijayanta	1,900	India
BMP–1 mechanized infantry combat vehicles	250	Soviet Union
Armored personnel carriers		
OT–62/–64	500	Czechoslovakia and India; on Czechoslovak design
BTR–60	n.a.	Soviet Union
Field Guns		
M–48 76mm	n.a.	Yugoslavia; being retired
25–pounder	n.a.	India; on British design; some self-propelled
100mm M1944	n.a.	Soviet Union
105mm	200	India
M–46 130mm	550	Soviet Union; some self-propelled
5.5-inch	n.a.	Britain; being retired
S–23 180mm	n.a.	Soviet Union
Howitzers		
75/24 75mm mountain	n.a.	India
M–56 105mm pack	n.a.	United States
Abbot 105mm	80	Britain; self propelled
D–20 152mm	n.a.	Soviet Union
Mortars		
81mm	n.a.	India; on British design
120mm	500	Soviet Union
160mm	20	-do-

Table 25. (Continued)

Type of Equipment	Approximate Number	Origin and comment
Recoilless launchers		
M-18 57mm	n.a.	United States
Carl Gustav 84mm	n.a.	Sweden
M-40 106mm	n.a.	United States
Multiple rocket system		
122mm BM-21	n.a.	Soviet Union
LRAR 122mm	n.a.	India
6-pounder antitank guns	n.a.	Britain
Antitank guided wire missiles		
SS-11-B1	n.a.	France
Milan	n.a.	European consortium
AT-3 Sagger	n.a.	Soviet Union
Antiaircraft guns		
40mm M1	n.a.	United States
40mm Mk 1	n.a.	Britain
Bofors 40mm L/60	n.a.	n.a.
Bofars 40mm L/70	n.a.	India; under license from Sweden
3.7-inch	500	Britain
ZSU-23-4	n.a.	Soviet Union; self-propelled
Surface-to-air missiles		
SA-6/-7/-9	n.a.	Soviet Union
Tigercat	n.a.	Britain
On Order		
T-72M main battle tanks	n.a.	Soviet Union
BRDM reconnaissance vehicles	n.a.	-do-
BMP-1-/-2BMD mechanized infantry combat vehicles	n.a.	-do-
Milan antitank guided wire missile launchers	n.a.	India; under license from European consortium

n.a.—not available

Source: Based on information from *The Military Balance, 1984–1985*, London, 1984, 99; *Jane's Armour and Artillery, 1983–84*, London, 1983; and *Jane's Weapon Systems, 1983–84*, London, 1983.

Table 26. Order of Battle for the Indian Air Force, 1985

Personnel Strength: 113,000

Formations and Equipment (Number and type)	Origin and Comment
5 area commands	
3 light bomber squadrons	
2 with 35 Canberra B(I)58/B(I)12	Britain; being replaced with Jaguars
1 with 18 Jaguar	British-French company; later acquisitions assembled in India under license
15 fighter/ground attack squadrons	
1 with 18 Hunter F-56A	Britain, being replaced with Jaguars
3 with 50 Jaguar GR-1	British-French company and India; under license
6 Jaguar T-2	-do-
2 with 36 Su-7BM	Soviet Union
1 with 18 HF-24 Marut	India; being replaced with Soviet MiG-23BN
4 with 72 Mig-23BN Flogger H	Soviet Union
4 with 72 Ajeet	India; improved version of British Gnat
21 air defense squadrons	
19 with 400 MiG-21/FL/PFMA/MF/bis	Soviet Union and India; under license
2 with 45 MiG-23MF Flogger B	-do-
2 reconnaissance squadrons	
1 with 8 Canberra PR-57	Britain
4 HS-748	India; under license from Britain
1 with 12 MiG 25R	Soviet Union
1 MiG 25U	-do-
9 transport squadrons	
3 with 90 An-32	-do-
2 with 30 An-12B	-do-
2 with 20 DHC-3 Otter	Canada
1 with 12 DHC-4 Caribou	-do-
1 with 9 HS-748M	India under license from Britain
1 headquarters communication squadron	
7 HS-748M	-do-
2 Boeing 737-248	Leased from United States
Liaison fleets and detachments	
15 HS-748	India; under license from Britain
C-47*	United States

Table 26. (continued)

Formations and Equipment Number and type	Origin and Comment
6 transport helicopter squadrons	
72 Mi-8	Soviet Union
8 liaison helicopter squadrons	
100 SA-316B Chetak	Indian license—production version of French Alouette III; some armed with 4 AS-11B antitank guided wire missile
60 SA-315B Cheetah	Indian license—production version of French Lama; some armed with 4 AS-11B antitank guided wire missile
Training command aircraft	
3 training and conversion squadrons	
12 Canberra T-4/-13/-67	Britain
30 Hunter F-56/T-66	-do-
40 MiG-21U	Soviet Union
16 Su-7U	-do-
Other training aircraft	
13 MiG-23UM Flogger C1	-do-
60 HT-2	India
83 HJT-16 Kiran	-do-
15 Marut Mk 1T	-do-
44 TS-11 Iskra	Poland
27 HS-748	India; under license from Britain
MiG-21*	Soviet Union
Su-7*	-do-
HPT-32*	India; replacing HT-2
Air-to-air missiles	
R-23R/T Apex*	Soviet Union
R-60 Aphid*	-do-
R-550*	France
Air-to-surface missiles	
AS-30*	-do-
AS-11B*	-do-
30 surface-to-air missile squadrons	
180 Divina V 750VK	n.a.
SA-2*	Soviet Union
SA-3*	-do-
On Order	
Mirage 2000H fighters	France
4 Mirage 2000H fighters	-do-
100 MiG-27M fighters	India; under license from Soviet Union
MiG-29 fighters	Soviet Union

Table 26. (continued)

Formations and Equipment (Number and type)	Origin and Comment
MiG–21bis fighters*	India; under license from Soviet Union
20 Ajeet fighters	India
6 An–32 transports	Soviet Union
Do–228 transports*	West Germany; later license-production in India
20 Il–76 transports	Soviet Union
10 HS–748 transports	India; under license from Britain
90 Kiran Mk 2 trainers	India
140 HPT–32 trainers	-do-
171 Hawk trainers	Britain
Mi–8 helicopters*	Soviet Union
Mi–24 helicopters*	-do-
45 Chetak helicopters	India; under license from France
R–23R Apex air-to-air missiles*	Soviet Union
R–60 air-to-air missiles	-do-

n.a.--not available.
*Quantity unknown.

Source: Based on information from *The Military Balance, 1984–1985*, London, 1984, 99; *Jane's All the World's Aircraft, 1983–84*, London, 1983; and *Jane's Weapon Systems, 1983–84*, London, 1983.

Table 27. Order of Battle for the Indian Navy, 1985

Personnel Strength: 47,000 (includes 2,000 in naval air force)

	Number	Origin and Comment
Fleet		
Submarines		
Foxtrot class	8	Soviet Union; diesel
Aircraft carrier		
I.N.S. *Vikrant*	*1*	Britain; major refit, 1979–82; carries up to 18 attack and 4 antisubmarine aircraft plus antisubmarine helicopters
Cruiser		
Fiji class; 8,700 tons	1	Britain; retired to training status
Destroyers		
Kashin II class; 3,950 tons	3	Soviet Union
Frigates		
Godavari class; 3,600 tons	2	India; modified Leander class; carries Styx surface-to-air missiles and 2 Sea King antisubmarine helicopters
Leander class; 2,450 tons	6	India; on British design; carries Seacat surface-to-air missiles and 1 helicopter
Whitby class; 2,144 tons	2	Britain; carries 3 Styx surface-to-surface missiles
Petya II class; 950 tons	10	Soviet Union
Leopard class; 2,251 tons	3	Britain; retired to training status
Corvettes		
Nanuchka II class; 780 tons	3	Soviet Union; carries 4 SS-N-2 surface-to-surface missiles and 1 SA-N-4 surface-to-air missile
Fast attack craft missile		
Osa I class; 160 tons	8	Soviet Union; carries 1 to 4 SS-N-2 surface-to-surface missiles
Osa II class; 160 tons	8	Soviet Union; carries 4 Styx surface-to-surface missiles
Large patrol craft		
SDB Mark 2 class; 203 tons	6	India
Abhay class; 120 tons	1	-do-

Table 27 (Continued)

Fleet	Number	Origin and Comment
Amphibious vessels		
Polnocny class; 780 tons	6	Soviet Union; landing craft—tank
Vasco da Gama class; 175 tons	4	India; landing craft—utility
Mine warfare vessels		
Natya class; 650 tons	6	Soviet Union; minesweepers—ocean
Ham class; 120 tons	4	*Britain*; minesweepers—inshore
Yevgenya class	6	Soviet Union; minesweepers—inshore
Support and service vessels		
Survey and oceanographic ships	6	India and Britain
Submarine tender	1	Soviet Union
Submarine rescue ship	1	-do-
Repair ship	1	-do-
Tankers	7	2 replenishment tankers chartered from private Indian company; 4 support tankers, India; 1 support tanker, Japan
Hospital ship	1	India
Tugs	6	-do-
On order		
T-class submarines	n.a.	Soviet Union
Type 1500 submarines	4	West Germany
Kashin destroyers	2	Soviet Union
Godavari frigates	4	India
Nanuchka corvettes	2	Soviet Union
Polnocny landing craft—tank	6	-do-
Exocet surface-to-surface missiles	n.a.	France
Naval Air Force		
1 Attack squadron		
Sea Hawk FGA-6	15	*Britain*; on aircraft carrier; being replaced with Sea Harriers
Sea Harrier FRS Mk 51	8	Britain; on aircraft carrier
1 antisubmarine warfare squadron		
Alizé 1050	5	France; 4 on aircraft carrier

Table 27 (Continued)

Fleet	Number	Origin and Comment
2 maritime reconnaissance squadrons		
L-1049 Super Constellation	4	United States
Il-38 May	3	Soviet Union
1 communications squadron		
Defender	18	Britain
4 antisubmarine warfare helicopter squadrons		
Sea King	10	Britain; on aircraft carrier and some frigates
Ka-25 Hormone	5	Soviet Union; on Kashin II destroyers
Alouette III	8	France; on some frigates
1 sea and air rescue/liaison helicopter squadron		
Alouette III	10	France
2 training squadrons		
HJT-16 Kiran aircraft	6	India
Sea Hawk FB-5 aircraft	2	Britain
Alouette III helicopters	3	France
Hughes 269 helicopters	4	United States
On order		
Sea Harrier Mk 51 aircraft	10	Britain
Sea Harrier T-60 aircraft	1	-do-
Il-38 May aircraft	3	Soviet Union
Sea King Mk42B helicopters	12	Britain
Sea Eagle surface-to-surface missiles	n.a.	-do-
Exocet AM-39 air-to-surface missiles	n.a.	France

n.a.—not available.

Source: Based on information from *Jane's Fighting Ships, 1983–84*, London, 1983, 222–31; and *The Military Balance 1984–85*, London, 1984, 99.

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Glossary

dharma—Conformance to duty and obligations of life as determined by karma (*q.v.*) and divine will.

fiscal year (FY)—Begins April 1 and ends March 31. Fiscal year 1984–85, for example, is designated FY 1984.

GDP (gross domestic product)—A value measure of the flow of domestic goods and services produced by an economy over a period of time, such as a year. Only output values of goods for final consumption and investment are included because the values of primary and intermediate production are assumed to be included in final prices. GDP is sometimes aggregated and shown at market prices, meaning that indirect taxes and subsidies are included; when these have been eliminated, the result is GDP at factor cost. The word *gross* indicates that deductions for depreciation of physical assets have not been made. *See also* GNP.

GNP (gross national product)—GDP (*q.v.*) plus the net income or loss stemming from transactions with foreign countries. For India, GNP in the early 1980s was very close to GDP. GNP is the broadest measurement of the output of goods and services by an economy. It can be calculated at market prices, which include indirect taxes and subsidies. Because indirect taxes and subsidies are only transfer payments, GNP is often calculated at factor cost by removing indirect taxes and subsidies.

guru—In Sikh faith, one of 10 spiritual leaders and teachers, first of whom was Nanak Dev, last Gobind Singh. In Hinduism, religious teacher or guide.

harijans—Term introduced by Mahatma Gandhi for untouchables. Literal meaning is children of God.

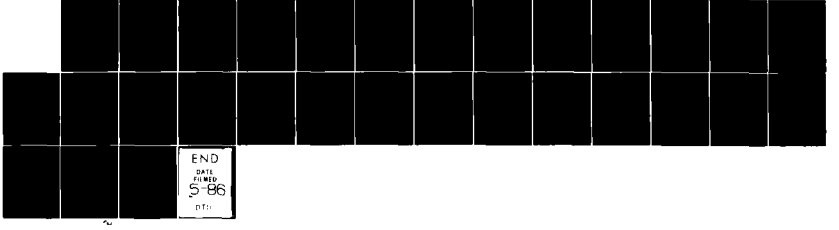
imam—A word used in several senses. In general use and lowercased, it means the leader of congregational prayers; as such it implies no ordination or special spiritual powers beyond sufficient education to carry out this function. It is also used figuratively by many Sunni Muslims to mean the leader of the Islamic community. Among Shiites the word takes on many complex and controversial meanings; in general, however, it indicates that particular descendant of the House of Ali who is believed to have been God's designated repository of the spiritual authority inherent in that line. The identity of this individual and the means of ascertaining his identity have been the major issues causing diversions among Shiites.

Indian National Congress—Founded in 1885 and subsequently

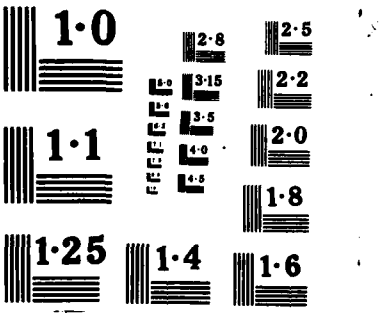
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known popularly as Congress. Major force in independence movement. Congress dominant in Parliament and formed governments from 1947 to 1977 and 1980 to 1985, at which time it enjoyed largest ever legislative majority. In 1969 Congress split, and and the ruling party became known as Congress (R) for Ruling; in 1978 it became Congress (I) for Indira, name still used in early 1985 (see fig. 18).

International Monetary Fund (IMF)—Established along with the World Bank *(q.v.)* in 1945, the IMF is a specialized agency affiliated with the United Nations and is responsible for stabilizing international exchange rates and payments. The main business of the IMF is the provision of loans to its members (including industrialized and developing countries) when they experience balance of payments difficulties. These loans frequently carry conditions that require substantial internal economic adjustments by the recipients, most of which are developing countries.

jagirdars—Individuals who possessed a *jagir*, which means a grant from the government to collect revenues, rents, and other valuables from land for a specified period.

jati—Basic endogamous unit of the caste system. There are perhaps 3,000 *jatis* in contemporary society.

karma—Spiritual merit or demerit that a being acquired in previous incarnation and is acquiring in present existence.

Mughals—Descendants of Mongol, Turkish, Persian, and Afghan invaders of South Asia who conquered and for a time ruled much of the Indian subcontinent. Sometimes written as Mogul, Moghul, or Mogol.

panchayat—A council of five or more. Found both in villages and in *jatis (q.v.)*.

pandit—Honorific for erudite individual, sometimes taken as personal or family name. Various Brahmans (as family of Jawaharlal Nehru) known as pandits.

panth—Literally, road or path, but used to designate system of religious practice and belief.

Punjab—State in India (and a province in adjacent Pakistan). Term *the Punjab* usually refers to either the prepartition state of British India or the geographic region centered on the five major rivers, whence its name, *panch ab*, meaning five waters, or rivers.

rupee (Rs)—National currency unit consisting of 100 paise. From September 1949 to June 1966 the official value of the rupee was Rs4.7 per US$1. Average conversion value per US$1 in 1966 was Rs6.36. From 1967 through 1971 the annual average

value was Rs7.50 per US$1. Average value per US$1 was Rs7.59 in 1972, Rs7.74 in 1973, Rs8.10 in 1974, Rs8.38 in 1975, Rs8.96 in 1976, Rs8.74 in 1977, Rs8.19 in 1978, Rs8.13 in 1979, Rs7.86 in 1980, Rs8.66 in 1981, Rs9.45 in 1982, and Rs10.10 in 1983. In 1984 value of the rupee in terms of dollars continued to fall, reaching Rs11.57 per US$1 in August.

Sanskritization—When used in the context of language, the word means the introduction of Sanskrit words and phrases into a contemporary language. When used in the context of social change, the word refers to the adoption by a *jati (q.v.)* of the rituals and practices of a higher, usually twice-born *(q.v.) jati* as a form of upward mobility for the caste.

satyagraha—Method employed by Mahatma Gandhi and his followers to secure sociopolitical reform by nonviolent, passive resistance and noncooperation. Individual following method is called satyagrahi.

Scheduled Castes—The Constitution includes a schedule (list) of castes (and tribes) that are economically and socially disadvantaged and are therefore entitled to specified benefits. Untouchables *(harijans--q.v.)* constitute the bulk of the Scheduled Castes.

swadeshi—Literally of one's own country. It was related to the independence movement, its adjunct being the boycott, but it also was a movement to further the use of Indian-made items, particularly cottage industry products, e.g., hand-loomed cloth.

swaraj—Independence; literally, self-rule.

tribal—In addition to its use as an adjective—tribal land or tribal customs, as examples—the word is also used in noun form as a synonym for tribesperson, tribesman, or tribeswomen.

twice-born—Referring to *jatis (q.v.)* claiming membership in one of the three upper *varnas (q.v.)*, i.e., Brahman, Kshatriya, and Vaishya.

varna—Literally, color. One of the four mythical caste groups (Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Sudra) from which most modern *jatis (q.v.)* are believed to derive.

World Bank—Informal name used to designate a group of three affiliated international institutions: the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the International Development Association (IDA), and the International Finance Corporation (IFC). The IBRD, established in 1945, has the primary purpose of providing loans to developing countries for productive projects. The IDA, a legally separate loan fund but administered by the staff of the IBRD, was set up in

1960 to furnish credits to the poorest developing countries on much easier terms than those of conventional IBRD loans. The IFC, founded in 1956, supplements the activities of the IBRD through loans and assistance designed specifically to encourage the growth of productive private enterprises in the less developed countries. The president and certain senior officers of the IBRD hold the same positions in the IFC. The three institutions are owned by the governments of the countries that subscribe their capital. To participate in the World Bank group, member states must first belong to the International Monetary Fund (IMF—*q.v.*).

Index

Abdali, Ahmad Shah: 31
Abdullah, Sheikh Mohammad: 68, 416, 473–74, 475
Abul Fazl: 25
Adi Granth (Granth Sahib), Guru: 32, 168, 428–29
Advani, L.K.: 456
Afghanistan: 92, 181; historic, 1, 2, 19, 23, 32, 47; Soviet occupation, xxxviii, 416, 471, 476, 477, 483, 493, 499–500
Afro-Asian Conference, Bandung, 1955: 470
Agha Khan: 50, 51
Agni: 145
Agra: 23, 24, 539
Agricultural Prices Commission: 363
agriculture (*see also* irrigation; land tenure): xi, 277, 338–73, 586; British period, 38, 39, 45, 353, 354, 364; commercial energy consumption, 311; cooperatives, 74, 347, 351, 360–61, 369; credit, 327, 329–30, 345, 360–62; crops, cash cropping, xi, 204–05, 229, 339–43 *passim*, 366–68, 593 (table); economy, importance to, 277–78, 292, 293, 329, 339, 352; Green Revolution (High Yielding Variety programme), xxxii, 74–75, 260, 293, 306, 339, 342, 351–62 *passim*, 367, 413, 428; gross domestic product, xi, 276–77, 278, 279, 339, 585; labor (*see also* village life), xi, 256–57, 269, 277, 304–05, 339, 344, 349, 352, 587; land holdings, size, 344, 345, 349–50; land use, 340–43; limited arable land, 268, 339, 340; livestock, 338, 341, 342, 368–69; marketing and price policies, 362–66, 553; monsoon-dependence, 79, 97, 277–78, 279, 290, 293, 329, 330, 332, 339, 341–42, 355, 356, 435; production, xxxii, 76, 275, 292, 295, 339, 360, 362, 366–69, 371, (tables) 593, 594, 595; research, education, and extension system, 353–55, 366, 373; small and middle-level farmers, "capitalist farmers," 413–14, 425, 433, 553; state and union government programs, 74, 108, 294, 295, 340, 352–64 *passim*, 402; swidden (slash-and-burn), 201, 202, 208
Ahmad Khan, Sayyid: 51
Ahmadabad: 105, 159, 175, 213, 584
Ahmed, Fakhruddin Ali: 390
Ahmednagar: 536
Aid-to-India Consortium: 301–02
Ain-i-Akbari: 25
Air Defence and Guided Missile School: 536
Air Force Academy: 539
Air Force Act of 1950: 544
Akali Dal Party. *See* Shiromani Akali Dal
Akbar (1556–1605): 23, 24–27, 32, 379–80, 381
Akhil Bharat Hindu Mahasabha: 59
Al Biruni: 19
Alexander the Great: 10
Ali, Mohammad: 58
Ali, Shaukat: 58
Aligarh Movement: 50–51
All-Assam Gana Sangram Parishad (AAGSP): 419, 458
All-Assam Student's Union (AASU): 419, 420
All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK): 421, 458
All-India Christian Conference on Peace: 172
All-India Communist Party (AICP): 457
All-India Congress and Committee: 441
All-India Kisan Sammelan: 425
All-India Manufacturer's Organization (AIMO): 426
All-India Muslim League (League): xxix, 50–62 *passim*, 68, 424, 472
All-India Radio: 387
All-India Scheduled Castes Federation: 158
All-India Services (*see also* civil service; police): 66, 405, 406, 407
All-India Trade Union Conference (AITUC): 425
All-World MGR Manrams (Fan-clubs) Association: 421
Allahabad (Prayag): 14; pilgrimage center and religious fairs, 153, 154
Allahabad High Court: 82, 436
Amar Das: 168
Ambedkar, Dr. B.M.: 59, 61, 157–58, 235, 383, 390

Amindivi Islands: 95
Amravti temple: 12–13
Amrita Bazar Patrika: 47
Amritsar (*see also* Golden Temple), "holy city," status, claims: 430
Andaman Islands: 95, 121, 401, 520, 534, 540, 542
Andhra Pradesh (*see also* Hyderabad; Telugu Desam (Land) Party: 68, 96, 403–04, 420, 444, 451, 453, 475, 554, 580; agriculture, 342–43, 349, 370; "Telengana" state, demands for, 70, 413; Telugu language, 195–96, 197–98, 412; tribal peoples, 199, 204–05
Angkor Wat: 16
Antulay, A.R.: 439
Arabian Sea: 92, 96
Aravalli Range: 267
Aristotle: 378
Arjan Das: 31–32, 168
armed forces: xiv, xxxviii-xxxix, 506–45; air force, xiv, xxxv, xxxviii, 505, 513, 515, 516, 524–25, 528, 536–39, 543, 600–02; apolitical, xxxix, 66, 378, 426, 521–22; area commands, 521, 534–40 *passim*; British period, 35, 44, 170, 380, 429, 507–13, 530–44 *passim*; Chiefs of Staff Committee, 533; civic actions, 522–23; civilian control, 510, 512, 521, 526, 534; coast guard, 533, 541–42; equipment, xiv, xxxviii, 513, 535–42 *passim*, (tables) 598–605; ethnic, linguistic, caste, religious homogeneity, 524–25, 529; interservice cooperation, 533–34; manpower, 535, 536, 540, 598, 600, 603; martial races (*see also* Sikhs, *infra*), 44, 510, 511,; military courts, 400, 544; missions, 505–06, 522–23; modernization, 462, 505, 515, 518, 526–27, 528, 539, 540–41; navy, xiv, xxxviii, 505, 511–28 *passim*, 538, 539–41, 543, 603–05; order of battle (army, navy, air force), 598–605 (tables); organization, 512, 515, 532–43 *passim*; pre-British, 506–07; public image, 522; recruitment, training, and conditions of service, xxxix, 430, 523–25, 534, 536, 539, 541, 543–44; reserves, auxiliaries, and paramilitary, 542–43, 598; riot control, 435, 440, 505–06, 522–23, 550–51, 552, 557–58; Sikh mutinies, 1984, xxxv-xxxvi, 506, 526, 558; Sikhs, xxxiv, xxxv, xxxvi, 32, 170, 171, 428, 430, 509, 525–26; uniforms, ranks, insignias, 544–45, 546–47, 569; world rank, xxxviii, 505; World War II: 63, 511–12, 525
Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers Act of 1983: 572–73
Armed Forces (Punjab and Chandigarh) Special Powers Act of 1983: 573
Armed Forces Medical College: 534
Armed Forces Provident Fund: 543
Armoured Corps Centre and School: 536
Army Act of 1954: 544
Army Cadet College: 536
Arthashastra: 11, 378, 379
Arunachal Pradesh: 119, 121, 157, 198, 341, 370, 401, 412, 514
Arya Samaj: 33, 41, 155
Aryabhata: 15
Asian Relations Conference, New Delhi, 1947: 470
Asian Survey: 439
Asoka (273–232 B.C.): 11–12, 13, 14, 157, 379, 381, 507, 544
Assam: 53, 74, 157, 312, 341, 399, 580; Chinese aid to rebels, 482, 483, 484; divisions of (*see also* Arunachal Pradesh; Meghalaya; Mizoram; Nagaland); 412, 418–19; ethnic and political violence, 1980s: xxxii, xxxiv, 101, 198, 377, 419–20, 440, 444, 458, 523, 550–53, 555–56, 572–73; geography and climate, x, 92, 97, 99; 1905 assimilation with Bengal, 51; tribal peoples, 198, 419, 555; "Udayachal" unit, demands for, 412, 419, 555
Assam Rifles: 566
Assam Valley: 103
Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM): 426
Associated Press: 387
Atatürk, Kemal: 58
Atomic Energy Commission (AEC): 316
Audits and Accounts Service: 406
Aurangzeb: 24, 28, 29–30, 32, 168
Australia: 469
Austria: 301
Ayodhya: 154
Ayub Khan, Mohammad: 473–74, 497
Azad, Maulana: 62, 463

Babur of Ferghana: 23, 24
Babur-Nama: 23

Bachchan, Amitabh: 450
Bahmani Kingdom: 21, 22–23, 30
Bahuguna, H.N.: 456
Bajpai, G.S.: 463
Baker, Sir Herbert: 54
balance of payments: 81, 276, 302, 313, 323, 333–36, 591 (table)
Baluchistan: 18, 25
Banerjea, Surendranath: 46, 47, 54
Bangalore: 539, 584, 597
Bangladesh: 488, 498, 572; border, 95, 418, 487; Ganges River water-sharing problems, 487; immigrants, 485, 520, 555–56— independence, xxxviii, 80, 517; Indian economic aid, 303–04; refugees, 1971, 80, 105, 278, 419–20, 491, 516
Bank of Bahrain: 328
Bank of Kuwait: 328
banking and monetary policy: 326–30; credit, 300, 327, 328–30, 335; nationalization of certain banks, 80, 286, 288, 294, 327, 396, 434
baroda: 67
Battle of Plassey, 1757: 36, 508
Bay of Bengal: 16, 92, 95, 96
Battle of Talikota, 1565: 23
Battles of Panipat, 1526, 1761: 23, 31
Bayley, David H.: 563–64
Beas River: 92, 430
Beg, M.H.: 398
Belgium: 301
Belquam: 536
Benares(Varanasi): 153, 379
Bengal (*see also* West Bengal): x, 25, 31, 35, 97, 535; British period, 36–40 *passim*, 55, 63, 64–65, 155, 508, 509, 510; Islam, conversion, 166; partition, 1905, and subsequent annulments, 51, 53, 54
Bentham, Jeremy: 40, 380
Bentinck, Lord: 40, 124
Bhabha, Homi: 75
Bhadravati: 105
Bhagavad-Gita: 56, 141, 144
Bhandari, Nar Bahadur: 418
Bharat Dynamics: 597
Bharat Earth Movers: 597
Bharat Electronics: 531, 597
Bharata Natyam: 17
Bharatiya Janata (Sangh) Party (BJP): 425, 426, 450, 451, 456, 465
Bharatiya Lok Dal (BLD): 83, 452, 453, 456
Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS): 425
Bhaskara Rao, N.: 439
Bhindranwale, Sant Jarnail Singh: xxxv, 170, 427, 431, 557–58
Bhopal: 67, 105; Union Carbide gas leakage, 324
Bhosale, Babasaheb: 439
Bhutan: 482, 483, 485, 488, 520; border, 91, 95, 96, 418; Indian aid, 303–04, 466
Bhutto, Zulfikar Ali: 473, 474–75, 476
Bidar military training schools: 539
Bihar: xxxii, 64–65, 117, 121, 404, 413, 414, 450, 451, 580; agriculture, handholdings, 74, 252, 341, 350, 351; languages, 187, 191; political unrest, 81, 436, 554; population, 89, 101, 102, 103; tribal separatist demands, 412
Bihwandi: 552
Bijapur sultanate: 30
Birendra, King: 486
Bombay (*see also* Gujarat; Maharashtra): 46, 62, 369, 405, 440, 563, 567; armed forces headquarters, 535, 540, 541, 542; Bombay High oil field, 312–313, 314; British period, 35, 41, 124, 508, 510; Dharavi slum colony, 269; division into Gujarat and Maharashtra, 1956, 70, 412; drug trafficking center, 560; Mazagon Dockyards, 498, 531, 540, 597; nuclear power plant, 315; religious and ethnic minorities, 173, 175, 212, 213; Shiv Sena movement, 414–15; strikes, violence, 1980s, 307–08, 440, 523, 552, 563; urbanization, 103, 266, 267, 584
Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act of 1976: 269, 308
Bonnerje, W.C.: 46
Border Security Force: xv, 566
Borobudur: 16
Bose: Subhas Chandra: 59, 63, 380, 417, 512
Brahmans (*see also* caste system): 141, 142, 158, 219, 233, 661; historic, 9–22 *passim*, 30, 59, 123; judicial leniency, 262–63; origin and meaning of term, 141, 144, 224; Panda (shrine) Brahmans, 150
Brahmo Samaj (Divine Society): 41, 155
Brecher, Michael: 463
Brezhnev, Leonid: 498
Brindaban pilgrimage center: 154
Britain: Asian sphere of influence, 53; economic aid, 301, 302, 312, 324, 366;

Evangelicals and Utilitarians, 37, 39–40, 380; military sales, xii, xxxviii, 482, 505, 515, 518, 536, 539, 540, 541, 598–605 *passim*; relations, 77, 468, 497, 516; trade, xii, 332, 333
British Broadcasting Corporation: 387
British company rule, 1757–1857 (*see also* East India Company): 34–42 *passim*, 346–47, 380, 507, 508; East India Act (1813), 124; India Act of 1784, 38; Indian armed forces, development. *See* armed forces: British period; moral superiority as justification ("White Man's Burden"), 37–38, 40
British India: 42–63, 170; administration, 42–43, 49–50, 170, 264, 266, 267, 564; conservatism, 44–45, 46–47; "drain of wealth," 38–39, 48; educational policy, 41, 124–25, 380; forward policy, 47; Government of India Act of 1921, 60, 125; Government of India Act of 1935, 61–62, 70, 125, 380, 382; India Councils Act of 1892, 46; India Councils Act of 1909, 52, 54; Indian elite (bureaucracy), 46, 49, 380, 405, 463, industry, 53, 57, 58, 276; Montague-Chalmsford Reforms of 1919, 55–56, 58; peasants and tribal rebellions, 32, 33, 34, 49, 54, 202, 380; political dissidents, internment, exile, 54, 64; racial relations, 43–44, 213–14; social and cultural effects, 35–48 *passim*, 67, 185, 232, 380
British Indian Army: 35, 44, 429, 509–11
Buddha: 144, 156
Buddhism (*see also* religion: ahimsa): xi, xxvii,xxviii, 10, 12, 133, 142, 156–58, 379, 418, 429; conversion to as gain in status, 133, 157–58, 233, 235, 241, 411; Pali religious language, 186; Tantric ritual, 157; tenets, 10, 156–57
Bukhari, Hazrat Abdullah Shah: 437
Bulganin, Nikolai: 495
Burma: 96, 481, 556; border, 95, 96, 418; historic, 16, 36, 42, 53, 54, 62, 63, 512
Burmah Oil Company: 312
Bush, George: 494

Calcutta: 213, 369, 380, 405, 453, 540, 567; British period, 35, 41, 45–46, 53, 64–65, 124, 417, 508, 509; capital transferred to New Delhi, 1911, 54, 417; industrial center, 263, 266–67; shipbuilding, 531 597; urbanization, 103, 265–66, 584
Calicut, port of: 34
Cambodia (Kampuchea, Khmer Republic): 470, 471, 483, 492
Canada: xiv, 30, 461, 469, 539, 600
Cape Comorin: 342
capital (*see* New Delhi): ix
Carnatic wars: 35
Carter, Jimmy: 493
caste system (varna) (*see also* Brahmans; Hinduism; *jatis*; untouchables): xxvii-xxviii, 221–37, 378, 552, 661; caste associations, 235–36, 264; caste mobility and forces of change, 41, 44, 59–60, 154–55, 200, 219–20, 229–37 *passim*, 243, 244, 251, 255, 259 61, 268, 410, 414, 433; hierarchy, 9, 219, 220, 222, 224, 225, 237, 262, 378; home and work dichotomy, 236; intercaste rivalry, 257–58, 264; *jagmani* relations. *See under* village life; Jains, 159; Kshatriyas, xxvii, 9, 13, 170, 221, 222, 232, 233, 661; non-Hindu groups, influence on, xxxviii, 9, 199–201, 211, 212, 222, 226, 235; occupational castes, 22, 224–25, 263; regional diversity, 219, 222, 235; ritual purity, 139, 142–43, 150, 152–53, 219–38 *passim*; sacred thread, 152, 221, 233; Scheduled Castes (*see also* untouchables), 661; Sikhs, 408; subcastes (*see also jatis*), 410–12; Sudras (Shudras), xxvii, 9, 10, 13, 30, 170, 221, 222, 237, 410, 414, 661; termination, Constitutional goal, 134–35, 234; Vaishyas, xxvii, 9, 13, 221, 222, 233, 661
Cauvery Basin: 13, 17
Cauvery River: 95, 96
Central and Family Welfare Council: 108
Central Bureau of Investigation: 565
Central Electricity Authority (CEA): 316, 317
Central Fisheries Institutes: 373
Central Industrial Security Force: 567
Central Plateau: 343
Central Public Services: 405, 406
Central Reserve Police (CRP): xv, 566
Central Staff College of Agriculture: 354
Central Treaty Organization (CENTO): xxxviii, 470, 497
Central Warehousing Corporation: 364
Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU): 425

Chalukyas: 16
Chandigarh. *See under* Haryana; Punjab
Chandra: 145
Chandra Pal, Bipin, 53–54
Chandrachud, Y.V.: 399
Chandragupta (Maurya): 11, 378
Chandragupta II: 14
Charan Singh, Chaudhury: 83, 413, 414, 425, 437, 452, 453, 456
Chase Manhattan Bank: 328
Chatterjee, Bankim Chandra: 47, 417
Chavan, S.B.: xxxvi
Chenab River: 92
Chera Dynasty: 13
Cherrapunji: 99
Chettis (Chettiars) business enterprises: 426
China (*see also* Tibet): 358, 372, 407; border and border questions, 95–96, 473, 478, 480–81, 483, 484, 521, 554; border war, 1962, xxxviii, 78, 79, 278, 293, 388, 457, 470–71, 481–82, 514–15, 522–30 *passim*; historic, 4, 14–15, 16, 24, 491; nuclear capability, 518, 521, 532; Pakistani relations, 482, 483, 514–21 *passim*; relations, xxxviii, 76, 77–78, 95–96, 461–69 *passim*, 474, 475, 478–84, 489, 496, 499, 505, 519, 520, 521, 526, 556; trade, 37, 483, 484
Chitral: 53
Chola Dynasty: 13, 16–18
Chota Nagpur Plateau: 92
Churchill, Winston: 488
cinema: 421, 422
citizens, term for: ix
citizenship: 402
civil aviation: xii, 281–82
civil nonviolent disobedience (satyagraha): 10, 11, 49, 57, 60, 66, 379, 381, 408–09, 417, 512, 551, 558, 661
civil rights: 5–6, 47, 381, 383–85, 571; constitutional guarantees. *See* Constitution, 1950; fundamental rights; equal rights, 72, 74, 384; emergency suspension (*see also* Emergency of 1975–77), 571–72
civil service (*see also* Indian Civil Service): xxxi, 66, 111, 286, 402, 404, 405–07, 462, 463; Parsis, 213; Sikhs, 170, 171, 428
Claiborne, William: 248
Classical Age: 14–18
climate and seasons (*see also* rainfall): x, 97–99
Clive, Robert: 38, 508
Coal India Limited (CIL): 311, 312
Cochin: 213, 540, 541
Code of Criminal Procedure of 1973: 570–71
Cohen, Stephen: 517
Coimbatore, air force administration center: 539
College of Combat: 536
Commonwealth of Nations: xiii, 461–69 *passim*, 476
Communist International (Comintern): 456
Communist Party of Britain: 456
Communist Party of India (CPI): 49, 59, 421, 425, 435, 456–57, 494, 495, 554
Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI[M]): 417, 421, 425, 426, 434, 435, 442, 450–51, 452, 457, 494, 554
Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) (CPI[M-L]): 457, 482, 554–55
Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU): 457
Congo: 469
Congress. *See* Indian National Congress
Congress for Democracy (CFD): 445, 452
Constitution, 1935: 61–63
Constitution, 1950: xxx, 69–72; amendment process and retroactive effects, xxx, xxxi, 382, 383, 398, 435, 561–62; caste system, goal of termination, 134–35, 234; Constituent Assembly, 64, 65, 69–70, 382; criticisms, 383; Directive Principles of State Policy, 384, 440; Forty-Second Amendment Act of 1976, effect, xxx, xxxi, 383, 384–85, 388, 392, 398, 399, 436; free movement of citizens, 414–15, 419; freedom of religion, 5, 72, 384, 423, 429; Fundamental Duties, 385, 398; fundamental rights (*see also* Forty-Second Amendment Act of 1976, *supra*), xiii, 69, 72, 308, 387, 400, 423, 440, 506, 571; government articles, xxx-xxxi, 69, 296, 297 382–407 *passim*, 571–73; group rights (*see also* tribal peoples; untouchables), 134–35, 234, 385–86; judicial system, 545, 570, 571, 573; land tenure, 343–44, 351–52; national security and public order provisions, 521, 523, 532, 561–62, 564; offi-

cial languages and languages of education, provisions, 182, 184
Cooke, Hope: 418
Cornwallis, Lord: 38
crime: 506, 518–19, 549–50, 559–61; bride burnings, dowry deaths, xxxiv, 248–49, 559; dacoity, 414, 560; drug trafficking and drug abuse, 560–61; Indian Penal Code, 570; ritual caste infractions, 41–42, 231, 262–63, 346, 551–52; smuggling, 418, 541–42, 560, 570; *thugee*, 40, 145
cultural origins, development and expression: 3, 8–22 *passim*, 134, 157, 185, 186–87, 417
Currency (rupee): 326–27; devaluation, 1966, 278, 293; exchange rates, xii, 286, 293, 303, 334, 335, 496, 529, 660–61
Curzon, Lord: 51, 53
Customs Marine Department: 541
Cyprus: 469
Czechoslovakia: xiv, 535, 598; Soviet invasion, 1968, xxxviii, 465, 493, 499

Dadra: 401
Dalai Lama, asylum: 78, 480–81, 484
Dalhousie, Lord: 43
Dalit Mazdoor Kisan Party (DMKP): 413, 414, 452, 453
Dalit Panthers: 553
Daman: 121, 401, 514
Darjeeling: 157, 266, 314, 341
Deccan, historic: 12–31 *passim*, 67
Deccan Plateau: x, 95, 97, 99
Defence Research and Development Organisation: 531
Defence Security Corps: 542
Defence Services Staff College: 534
Dehra Dun, military training schools: 534, 536
Delhi (Shahjahanabad) (*see also* New Delhi): 66, 121, 187, 267, 341, 369, 401, 405, 453; drug trafficking center, 560; historic, 18, 19–21, 23, 31, 32, 35, 42, 54; temples, mosques, 20–21, 24, 437, 445; urbanization, 103, 105, 266, 584
Democratic Socialist Party (DSP): 456
Deng Xiaoping: 483
Denmark: 301
Deoband Movement: 50–51
Deolali, military training school: 536
Department of Atomic Energy: 532
Department of Defence Production: 531
Department of Defence Research and Development: 531
Department of Nonconventional Energy Sources: 317
Department of Space: 532
Desai, Morarji (*see also* Janata [Secular] Party): 78, 80, 82, 83, 398–99, 409, 434, 436, 452, 453, 456, 464, 493, 499
Dhar, D.P.: 464
dharma (righteousness). *See under* caste system
Diego Garcia: 492, 493, 541
Digambaras sect: 159
Directorate of Resettlement: 544
Dissolution case: 399
Diu: 121, 401, 514
Doab: 16, 22, 30
Doordarshan: 387
Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK): 79, 421, 435, 442, 456, 458
drug trafficking and drug abuse: 560–61
Dulles, John Foster: 489
Dupleix, Joseph François: 35
Durga: 145, 382
Dutch East Indies Company: 34
Dutt: Prabha: 403
Dutt, R.C.: 48
Dyer, R.E.H.: 57

East India Company: 30, 31, 32, 34–35, 50, 346–47, 380, 507, 508, 509, 539
East Pakistan: *See* Bangladesh; Pakistan; civil war, 1971; Indo-Pakistani war of 1971
Eastern Ghats: 92, 97, 99, 342–43
economy (*see also* agriculture; industry): xi-xii, 471; at independence, xxxii, 5, 275, 276–77, 285, 286, 292; budget, 296–300, 586–87 (table); defense spending, xv, 293, 300, 526–29, 585, 596 (table); economic growth goals and reduction of poverty, 275, 276, 277, 282, 292, 293, 294, 308, 550, 563; foreign aid (*see also* Soviet Union; United States); 76, 276, 293, 294, 301–04, 333–34; GDP, xi, 278–79, 281, 288, 295, 318, 585 (table), 659; GNP, xi, 275, 659; growth and modernization, 275–85, 288, 293, 294, 462; inflation, 330, 435, 529; investment sources, 75, 276–300 *passim*; labor-intensive, 270; Nehru mixed

economy, 75–76, 77; 1960s problems, 79, 287, 293; 1970s problems, 81, 82, 294, 435; oil prices, 81, 260, 278, 294, 302, 310, 334, 435; organized/unorganized economy distinctions, 279, 281, 326; planning, 75, 105–09, 115, 119, 120, 126, 278, 292–96, 322, 339, 350, 351, 360, 405, 440, 526; price and other controls, 286–99 *passim*, 320, 321, 322, 331, 333–34, 363–66, 553; private enterprise, 285, 286, 287–88, 335, 441; public debt, 298, 300–01; public sector, 80, 281, 285–86, 288; scientific and technological development, 75–76, 275, 276, 279, 307, 316; taxation, 286, 289, 290, 296–99, 300, 586 (table); under British rule, 37, 39, 45, 48, 50, 53, 212, 286, 287; world rank, xxxii-xxxiii

education (*see also* social mobility): x, 15, 90–91, 116–29, 402, 524, 534, (tables) 581, 582, 583, 586; Brahmanic schools, 148; dropout rates, 118, 121, 122, 210; effect on traditional beliefs, 154, 220, 226; higher, 90–91, 116, 117, 119, 122–29 *passim*, 419; in U.S., 492; Jains, 159–60; languages of instruction, 91, 118, 123–24, 128, 184, 191, 194, 195, 208–210, 214; literacy, x, 118–19, 126, 208, 269, 275, 307, 436, 463; medical, 114; private, 121–29 *passim*, 287; rural, x, 90, 112, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 128, 255; Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, 116, 119, 121, 553; teacher recruitment, 208–10; tribal peoples, 181, 199, 208–10, 212; under British rule, 37–45 *passim*, 124–25, 214, 275; women, 90, 108, 117, 120–21, 126

Edward VIII (Duke of Windsor): 58

Egypt: 470

Eisenhower, Dwight D.: 489, 490

Elementary Flying School, Bidar: 539

elite: 237, 263–64, 407, 425, 433; English speaking, 91, 128, 179–85 *passim*, 195–97, 201, 237, 467; Hindu elite before independence, 41, 46, 53, 57

Ellora temple: 12–13

Elphinstone, Mountstuart: 40

Elphinstone Institution: 41

Emergency of 1975–77. *See under* Gandhi, Indira

energy sources: coal, xi, 310–12, 588; electricity, xi, 75, 275, 279, 310, 311, 314–18, 589; nonconventional, 317–18; nuclear energy, xxxiii, 275, 314, 315–18; oil and natural gas, xi, 300, 310, 311, 312–14, 335, 588; traditional, xi, 275, 309–10

English language: x, 194; prestige, elitist, 91, 128, 179–85 *passim*, 195–97, 201, 252, 467; spread under British rule, 37, 40, 50, 121, 123–24, 190, 214, 264, 380

Essential Commodities Act of 1955: 286

Essential Services Maintenance Act of 1981: 572

ethnic minorities: 198–215; Anglo-Indians, 213–15, 386, 392; Goanese, 213; Jews, 134, 213; Nagas, 70; Parsis, 159, 173–74, 212–13

European Economic Community: 366

European explorers and traders: 31, 34–36, 37, 213

Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ): 371–72, 541

Export-Import Bank of India: 329

exports: xii, 326, 330, 332–33, 334, 505, 591 (table); agricultural, 352, 362, 364, 367, 368, 372, 373, 591 (table); incentives, 293, 323, 324, 331; oil, 331–32

external debt: 76, 276, 300–01, 303, 334, 335–36, 496; U.S., 492–93

Ezhimala, military training school: 541

family, kin, clan (*gotra*): 237–42, 524; adoption, 240; female infanticide, 246; Hinduism, centrality, 133, 149, 150–54, 237; inheritance, 239; landownership, importance, 220, 253–54; matrilineal, patrilineal, 44, 226, 238–40; regional and caste variations, 250–51; roles, relationships, loyalties, 201, 219, 220, 237–54 *passim*; "satellite" members, 241, 250–51; status of women, 41, 240, 242, 246, 247–50, 251

Farooq Abdullah: 416, 458, 475

Fazlul Haq: 62

Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI): 426, 465

Fernandes, George: 82, 456

fiscal year: 659

fish and fisheries: xi, 231, 305, 339, 353, 371–73, 541–42

flag: x, 60, 157

Food and Agriculture Organization, U.N.:

366
Food Corporation of India: 363
Ford Foundation: 355, 366
foreign policy: xiii, 461–501, 518–21, 522; anticolonialism, 489, 490, 496; Asian and African, 76, 461, 466, 469–70, 499, 518–20; cultural diplomacy, 487–88; foreign aid program, 303–04, 466; global great power rivalry, effect, 461, 468, 470, 472, 482, 486, 490–505 *passim*, 518, 519; international conferences, hosting, 466, 467, 469, 470; international prestige, 77, 435, 462, 480, 496, 518; Middle East countries, relations, 323, 332, 461, 471; Nehru, xxxviii, 76–78, 461–73 *passim*, 478–82, 489–96 *passim*, 514; New Delhi Declaration, 1983, 467; nonalignment, viii, xiii, xxx, xxxviii, 19, 48, 76, 77, 461, 467–71, 486–98 *passim*, 514, 519; nonintervention, 519–20; peaceful coexistence (*panchasheel*), 479–80, 495, 514
forestry: xi, 206, 207–08, 281, 305, 339, 369–71, 436
Fort Saint George: 267, 507, 508, 509, 510
Fort William (Calcutta): 507
France: 35, 37, 301, 499, 506–07; military sales, xiv, 505, 520, 536, 539, 541, 599–605 *passim*
French East India Company: 35
von Fürer-Haimendorf, Christoph: 204, 208

Gama, Vasco da: 34, 343
Gandhi, Indira (*see also* Golden Temple; Indian National Congress): vii, xiii, 80–83, 413, 419–20, 434–39, 478, 494; assassination, xiii, xxx-xxxi, xxxvi, 377, 408, 426, 431, 506, 523, 551, 559; authoritative, despotic, xxx, xxxi, xxxii, 377–90 *passim*, 418, 433–41 *passim*, 453, 464; criticisms, 416, 426–28, 436–37, 439, 442, 497, 499–500; Emergency 1975–77, xxxi, 82–83, 386–99 *passim*, 424, 429, 436, 437, 444, 452, 499, 550, 554, 561–66 *passim*, 572; foreign policy, 464–77 *passim*, 483, 489–500 *passim*; goal of Indian unity, 407; January 1980 reelection, 399, 432, 438; "Mother of India," 381; 1977 election defeat (*see also* Janata Party; coalition government), 452, 550; nuclear disarmament appeal, 467; personal advisers, xxxi, 391, 433, 436, 441; political background, 78, 434, 474; populist acts and policies, 80, 81, 433, 435, 444; pragmatism, 378–79, 416, 461, 471; Supreme Court relations, xxx, 80–81, 82, 394–95, 396–99, 433, 561–62; use of President's Rule, 170, 171, 388, 390
Gandhi, Maneka: 456
Gandhi, Mohandas Karamchand (Mahatma, Great Lord): 56–65 *passim*, 142, 380, 381, 417, 452, 489, 495; assassination, 66, 153, 377, 424; principles and goals (*see also* civil nonviolent disobedience), xxix, 5, 10, 56, 57, 58, 59–60, 82, 142, 381, 408, 409, 422–23, 424, 659, 661; social reforms, 155–56
Gandhi, Rajiv: xxxvii, 382, 413, 416, 433, 438, 494; economic policies, 324, 440–41; foreign policy, 462, 478; Golden Temple invasion inquiry, xxvi; 1984 election, vii, xiii, xxxii, 377, 378, 432, 440, 450; on party reform, 441–42; personality, 438
Gandhi, Sanjay: xxxi, 82, 399, 433, 435–37, 438, 441, 444, 452
Ganesha: 145, 148, 552
Ganges River: 92, 96; Farakka Barrage and related water-sharing problems, 487; religious bathing, 152–53, 223
Ganges Valley, historic: 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 36, 45
Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineeers: 531, 597
Gauhati, high court of: 399
Gauri: 145
Gautama, Siddhartha (the Buddha): 156
Gaya, pilgrimage center: 154
Genghiz Khan: 20, 23
geography. *See* topography and geography
Geological Survey of India: 318
George V: 54
German Democratic Republic, xxxvii
Germany: 55, 63
Germany, Federal Republic of (West Germany): 301, 302; military sales, xiv, 324, 518, 539, 541, 602, 604; trade, xii, 332, 333
Gilgit: 53
Giri, V.V.: 80, 390, 396, 434
Goa: 121, 343, 401, 490, 495, 514, 540; Portuguese Goa, 22, 34

Goa Shipyard: 531, 597
Gobind Singh, Guru: 32, 168–69, 429, 659
Godavari River: 95, 96, 199
Gokhale, Gopal Krishna: 54
Golaknath v. State of Punjab: 396
Golden Temple, Amritsar: 32, 57, 168; army capture, 1984, and subsequent riots, xxxii, xxxv–xxxvi, 81, 170–71, 357, 377, 382, 386–88, 408, 426, 431, 440, 523, 525, 558
Gopal, Sarvepalli: 77
government, union (*see also* civil service; Constitution, 1950; parliament; president, state and local government): xiii, xxx, 116, 388–400, anticorruption drives, 1975, 1985, 82, 324, 441–42; British parliamentary model, 73, 296, 378, 382, centralized, xiii, 70, 81, 401, 433, 436, 441, 442, corruption, xxxii, 287, 357, 433, 435, 441; Council of Ministers and cabinet, xxx, 81, 296, 390, 391, 532; democratic principles, 83, 380–81, Directive Principles of State Policy, 384–85; emergency powers, *see also* state and local government; *President's Rule*), xiii, 70, 72, 82, 384–403 *passim*, 417, 521, 523, 542, 543, 571–73, federal, republican, parliamentary, xiii, xxx, 70, 381, 382, 383, 388, 401, 441, 472, 473, 550; hierarchal, 466, prime minister, xiii, xxx, 292, 390, 391, 464, secularism, 72, 154, 381, 422–23, 428, 431, 440, 472, 473, 512, 550, spy scandal, 1985, xxxvii; state government, concurrent and exclusive powers, xv, xxx, 70, 72, 82, 91, 116, 281, 291–92, 297, 318–19, 343–44, 377, 383, 388, 401–02, 404, 406, 438–40, 506, 550, 554, 561–62, 564–65, 570; union territories, 400–01
Grant, Charles: 124
Granth Sahib, Guru. *See* Adi Granth Sahib
Grindlay's Bank (British): 328
Grow More Food Campaign: 354
Gujarat: 70, 81, 412, 414, 553, 560, 580; agriculture and forestry, 341, 342, 371, historic, 25, 28, 212, oil fields, 312, 314, population, 102, 103, 110; Saurashtra separatism, 412, state politics, 82, 409, 410–11, 436, 444, 450–56 *passim*; tribal peoples, 199
Gulf of Cambay, 96
Gundu Rao: 439
Gupta Dynasty: 14–16
Gurkha Regiment: 524
guru: 30, 31, 32, 148, 149, 152, 168, 659
Gwalior: 42, 450

Habib, Irfan: 29
Hakimpet, military training school: 539
Haksar, P.M.: 464
Hanuman: 145
Harappa: 3, 6–8, 378
Hardgrave, Robert: 406, 408
Hardwar, pilgrimage center and religious fairs: 153–54
Harsha-vardhana of Kanauj (606–47): 14, 15, 19
Haryana: 70, 121, 412, 428, 580; agriculture, 341, 342, 349, 351, 360, 413; capital (Chandigarh), 399, 401; Greater (Vishal) Haryana demands, 413; Hindi language, 187; irrigation water, division, 430; Jats, political influence, 410; population, 102, 103–05, 110, 171
Hayat Khan, Sir Sikander: 62
health and welfare (*see also* population; family planning): xi, 89, 90, 109, 111–16, 533, (tables) 580, 586, endemic diseases, xi, 90, 112–13, 115; infant and child mortality, xi, xxxiii, 89, 90, 110–12, 126, 246, 580 (table), life expectancy, x, 76, 90, 111, 279; state and local controls, 402
Hegde, Ramakrishna: 439, 456
Himachal Pradesh: 187, 198, 341, 412, 580
Himalayas (Great Himalaya Range): x, 91–92, 96, 97–98, 103, 198, 267, 341, climate, 97–98
Hindi language: 21, 187, 429, as national language, proposed, 79, 413, 420–21, as second language, 194, 201, dialects, 187, 191, evolution, 190; official language, x, 179, 182, 184, 187
Hindi, lingua franca: 191
Hindu: 47
Hindu, by derivation: 139
Hindu Mahasabha: 424
Hindu Meitei peoples: 556
Hindu Rashtra (nation) proposed: 424
Hinduism (*see also* caste system, Vedas): xi, xxvii, 139–56; asceticism and monasticism, 148–49, 152, caste system justified by, 133–43 *passim*; ceremonial

observances and diversity of expression, 45, 133, 135, 139–54 *passim*, 238; classical, 142–43; cow, symbol of purity, 139, 142–43, 150, 151, 223; dharma, 9, 11, 12, 143, 222, 238, 378, 379, 659, 661; origins, 8–9, 11, 12; pantheon, 140, 143–46; percent of population, 133; pilgrimages and religious fairs, 22, 150, 152–54, 266, 483–84; reforms, revivalism, 33, 41, 45, 50, 59, 66, 154–56, 158, 233, 380, 552; ritual purification, 139, 142–43, 150, 152–53, 219–38 *passim*, 243; Sakti, Saktism, Tantrism, 145, 146, 148, 157; Sanskrit language, 186; sects and cults, 146–48; violation of norms, protests against, 41–42, 262–63, 346, 551–52
Hindustan: 23
Hindustani Aeronautics Limited (HAL): 531, 597
Hiraakud Dam Project: 96
history, inapplicability of conventional Western European terms: 3–5
Hobbes, Thomas: 378, 379
Home Guards: 569
Hong Kong: 327
House of Birla: 426
House of Tata: 426
Hsuan-Tsang: 15
Huang Hua: 484
Hugli: 34
Humayun: 23
Hume, Alan Octavian: 46
Hun invasions: 15
Hungary, Soviet invasion, 1956: 77, 493, 499
Husain Zakir: 62, 434
Hyderabad: 68, 74, 198, 440, 539, 552, 565, 567, 584, 597; princely state of, 21–22, 23, 43, 65, 67–68, 413, 415, 416, 420, 457, 472, 513

I.N.S. *Vikrant:* 516–17
Ibrahim Lodi: 23
Iltutmish (1206–36): 19
Imperial Department of Agriculture: 353
imports: xii, 326, 330, 590 (table); agricultural, 358, 364, 367, 369; food grains and edible oils, xi, 293, 329, 367, 590; military, 505, 515, 529–30; petroleum products, xii, 314, 331, 332, 333, 471, 590; tariffs and other restraints, 286, 287, 299, 320, 321, 322, 323, 331, 333–34; technology, 324
independence and partition of British India (1947) (*see also* Indian National Congress; Pakistan; political development): xxix, 63–66, 95, 489; Anglo-Indians, 214; communal violence, xxix, 5, 65–66, 170, 408, 417, 423; communist party lack of support, 457, 495; division of British assets, 66, 512–13; interim government, 64, 462; Lucknow Pact, 1916, 55; Mahatma Gandhi, role in, 56–63, 661; nationalist movement, 5, 40–49, 53–63, 417, 511–12; princely states, integration, 43, 61, 65, 67–69, 415, 416, 472, 513
India Today: 403, 438, 453
India Under Pressure: 408
Indian Administrative Service (IAS): xxxi, 184, 404, 405–06, 407, 564
Indian Agricultural Research Institute: 353
Indian Airlines: 438
Indian Army. *See* armed forces
Indian Civil Servide (ICS): 38, 42–43, 44, 405, 463, 564; Indianization, 47, 51, 62, 66, 380
Indian Council for Cultural Relations: 466
Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR): 353, 354, 373
Indian Express: 386
Indian Fertilizers Cooperative: 362
Indian Foreign Service (IFS): 406, 463, 466–67
Indian Independence Committee, Germany: 55
Indian Meteorological Service: 97
Indian Military Academy: 536
Indian National Army (INA): 63, 512
Indian National Congress (Congress) (*see also* Gandhi, Indira): December 1984 Lok Sabha elections, vii, xiii, xxxii, 377, 378, 392, 414, 432, 433, 434, 440, 444, 449–58 *passim*; independence, role in, xxix, 45–49, 54–65 *passim*, 73, 80, 125, 441, 457, 511, 660; Nehru leadership, 73–78, 432–33; 1967 elections, 79, 434–35; socialism, 426, 434, 440; States Reorganization Commission, 195; Syndicate, xxx-xxxi, 78, 434–35; umbrella organization, 60, 63, 69, 73; Youth Wings, 435–36, 438
Indian National Congress (Congress [I]):

414, 430–51, 659–60; antidefection bill, effect, xxxii; corruption and abuses of power, 377; disadvantaged minorities, support, 433, 435, 444–49; Indira Gandhi leadership, xxx-xxxi, 56–58, 432, 434–38, 439; January 1980 general elections, 392, 410, 432, 438, 439, 449, 452; March 1977 general election defeat (*see also* Janata [People's Front] Party), 392, 423, 432, 442–45, 452; national leadership, 432, 442; 1985 elections, xxxii, 442, 458
Indian National Congress (Congress [J]): 453, 456
Indian National Congress (Congress [N]): 80, 81–82
Indian National Congress (Congress [O]): 435, 452
Indian National Congress (Congress [R]): 432, 435, 437, 660
Indian National Congress (Congress [S]): 453, 456
Indian National Satellite (INSAT): xii
Indian National Trade Union Conference (INTUC): 425
Indian Ocean: strategic importance, 505, 518, 519, 520; "Zone of Peace" proposal, 486, 492, 498–99, 520
Indian Penal Code: 570
Indian Police Service (IPS) (*see also* police): xv, 66, 406, 561, 564–65
Indian Railways: 44, 45
Indian Seed Act: 359
Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO): 532
Indian Veterinary Research Institute: 354
Indochina, International Commissions of Supervision and Control: 469–70
Indo-Gangetic Plain: x, 4, 18, 103, 267, 341–42; early tribal migrations, xxvii, 4, 8, 139, 181, 184–85, 186, 202, 267, 378; geography and climate, 91, 92, 97, 99
Indo-Pakistan Joint Commission: 477
Indo-Tibetan Border Force: 566–67
Indo-United States Joint Commission: 493
Indonesia: 34, 172, 499
Indore: 105
Indus Plain: 103
Indus River: 3, 92; division of waters treaty, 1960, 77, 277, 473
Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI): 329
Industries Act of 1951: 286
Industry: xi, 267, 275, 306, 308–26, 586; agricultural commodities, 352, 358–59, 362, 368, 589; construction, 269, 270, 320, 585, 587; defense industry, xiv, xxxii, xxxiii, xxxviii, 63, 75, 285, 319–20, 494, 496–97, 505, 513, 515, 522, 527, 529–31, 539, 566, 597 (table), 598–605 *passim*; developmental expenditures, 294, 295, 300; foreign corporations, 287–88, 320, 324, 335, 495; growth rates, 75, 76, 81, 105, 278, 279, 285, 293, 295, 308–09, 320–21, 430,494, 589 (table); high technology, 320; import-substitution, 75, 286, 320, 330; inadequate energy supply, xi, 295, 309, 310, 311–12, 317, 322, 325; jute and other textiles, 267, 276, 321, 589, 591; labor force, 270, 305, 322, 326, 587; large-scale capital-intensive, 75, 279, 281, 292, 306, 309, 319, 325, 495, 589; licensing of managing agencies, 287–88, 289, 294, 321–22, 323, 331; manufacturing, xxxii-xxxiii, 275, 279, 319–26, 585, 587; operational efficiencies, 289, 322, 323, 325; petrochemical, 314, 589; private, 75, 320–24, 326, 426; public sector, 75, 276, 285–86, 288, 289, 320, 323, 324, 326, 330, 495, 496, 567; services, 279, 585, 587; small-scale and cottage industries, 39, 48, 59, 75, 277, 281, 306, 322, 325, 326; steel, cement, xi, 75, 279, 323, 326, 589, 591; unorganized category, 281; world rank, xxxii-xxxiii
Insecticides Act of 1968: 360
Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis (IDSA): 522
Institute of Aviation Medicine: 539
Institute of Criminology and Forensic Science: 565
Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP): 291
Intensive Agricultural District Programme (IADP): 355
internal security. *See* public order and internal security
International Atomic Energy Agency: 500
International Development Association (IDA): 303, 661
international memberships (*see also* Nonaligned Movement; United Na-

tions): xiii, 500–01
International Monetary Fund (IMF): 81, 334, 660, 662
International Rice Research Institute: 366
Inter-State Migrant (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act: 269
Iqbal, Sir Muhammad: 62
Iran: 23, 302, 332
Iran-Iraq war: 332, 467, 471
Iraq: 332
irrigation: xxxii, 260, 277–78, 291–92, 306, 317–18, 339, 340, 342, 355–57, 487; British programs, 33, 45, 170, 232; development expenditures, 294; historic, 13, 17, 20; Indus River, 77, 277, 473; Rajasthan Canal project, 342, 355–56
Irwin, Lord: 61
Isaacs, Harold: 234
Islam (*see also* Mughal Empire; Muslims): xi, 18, 133–34, 160–67; conversions to, 166, 235, 411, 424, 425, 436; Hindu influences, 164, 165–66; Shia (Shiites) and Sunni branches, 163–64, 659; Sufis *pirs*, 18, 21; tenets and practice, 160–63, 167, 424
Israel, Indian Jews immigration: 213
Italy: 301

Jahangir (1605–27): 24, 32
Jaipur: 584
Jalahalli, military training school: 539
Jammu and Kashmir (Kashmir) (*see also* Pakistan: Indo-Pakistan war of 1971): 91, 101, 110, 117, 121, 157, 341, 402, 404, 463–64, 580; accession to India, 67, 68, 415, 472, 473; border questions, 473, 474–75, 477, 554; Chinese presence (*see also* Ladakh), 95–96, 415; historic, 32, 170; Indo-Pakistan war of 1948, U.N. cease-fire, and proposed plebescite, 68–69, 77, 95, 412, 415–16, 470, 472–75, 483, 484, 485, 513; Kashmiri independence or autonomy claims, 553–54; Muslim majority (Kashmir), xxviii, 68, 415, 416, 423; 1947 partition of British India, violence, 65–66, 512; 1984 elections, 403, 416–17, 439, 458, 475; Public Security Act, 572; tribal peoples, 198
Jamnagar, military training school: 541
Jana Sangh Party: 79, 424–25, 445, 456
Janata (People's Front) Party: 82, 413, 436–56 *passim*; coalition government, 1977–80, 83, 377, 385, 386, 390–91, 398–99, 413, 429, 452–53, 464, 471, 476, 483, 493, 499, 563
Janata (Secular) Party: 452
Japan: 63, 156, 301, 407, 604; relations, 324, 366, 372, 461, 511–12; trade, xii, 332, 333
jatis (endogamous kin groups) (*see also* village life): xxviii, 20, 29, 154, 193–94, 221, 222, 226, 660; factionalism, 229, 231, 251–59 *passim*; political activity, 409–10, 411; ritual purity, 223, 238, 242; upward mobility (Sanskritization), 225, 231, 244, 251–52, 253, 254, 259, 661
Jats: 170; political activity, 410, 414, 429, 430
Jayalalitha: 421
Jhelum River: 92
Jinas: 158, 159
Jinnah, Mohammad Ali: 50–65 *passim*, 424
Jones, Sir William: 39
J. P. Movement (*see also* Narayan, Jayaprakash): 426, 436
Judges' Transfer case: 399, 400
judicial system: xxx, 394–400, 402; British legal principles, xiii, 40, 47, 196, 394, 570; criminal justice system, 545, 569–74; independence, 381, 388, 394, 399, 569, 571; military, 545; politicized, corruption, xxxi, 258–59, 399, 506, 569; preindependence, 20, 38, 40, 44, 46, 47, 234; security legislation, 571–73; sharia, 20, 165, 424
Jumna River. *See* Yamuna River
Junagadh: 65, 67
Justice: 59
Justice Party: 59

Kabir: 21, 164, 167
Kali (Bhavani): 40, 140, 145, 382
Kalidasa: 15
Kalinga kingdom: 11
Kalki: 144
Kama (Madan): 145
Kamraj, K.: 78
Kanauj temple: 19
Kanchenjunga: 91
Kandla: 314
Kanpur: 42, 584

Karnataka: 22, 96, 110, 412, 420, 439, 444, 451, 456, 580; Belgaum district, 415; Lingayats and Okklaligas, subcastes, 146, 410
Karnataka Plateau: 343
Kartikeya: 145
Kashmir. *See* Jammu and Kashmir (Kashmir)
Kautilya: 11, 378
Kennedy, John F.: 471
Kerala: 121, 196–97, 239, 344, 485, 541, 580; historic, 420; Muslims, 420, 424; political parties, 421, 451, 457, 554; population growth, 102, 103, 110; tribal peoples, 199, 212
Kesari: 47
Keshavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala case: 397, 398
Khalji Dynastyy: 20
KHAM coalition: 410
Kharakvasla: 534
Khilafat Movement: 58
Khrushchev, Nikita: 495
Kidwai, Rafi Ahmad: 62
Kipling, Rudyard: 53
Kochanek, Stanley A.: 433
Korean War, 1953: 77, 78, 469, 478, 493
Kosygin, Alexsey: 497
Krishna: 142, 144, 146, 422
Krishna-Menon, V.K.: 463, 464, 481, 489, 522
Krishna River: 22, 95
Krishna-Tungabhadra-Doab area: 16, 22
Kubera: 145
Kulu: 91
Kumbh Mela: 154
Kushan Dynasty: 12
Kuwait: 333

labor: 270–71, 304–08, 587 (table); bonded labor, 256, 269, 275, 308, 552; caste specialization, 22, 224–25, 263; child labor, 112, 117, 121; income disparities, 81, 83, 128, 252, 290; landless laborers. *See* village life; migrant, 269, 414–15; military, 523, 529, 544; Nepalese, 487–88; preindependence, 48; unemployment and underemployment, xxxiii, 76, 91, 128, 305–06, 309, 435, 523, 550; workers abroad, 306–07, 334
Laccadive Islands: 95
Ladakh: 32, 157, 473, 475, 514; Chinese claims to Aksai Chin, 78, 480, 481
Ladakh plateau: 68
Lahore: 23, 24, 32, 53–54, 92
Lajpat Rai Lala: 53–54
Lakshadweep: 95, 401, 423, 520, 540
land reform: 259, 291, 343–52; Naxalite movement, 1960s, 79–80; protection of tenants, 347–48, 349; right to property amendments, 72; zamindari acts abolished, 74, 347, 413
land tenure: 343–52; family property in common, 239, 241, 254; "feudal," 414; intermediary rent collectors (zamindars, *jagirdars*), 28, 39, 48, 259, 346–47, 348, 507, 660; preindependence, 28, 38, 39, 48, 345, 346–47; tribal peoples, 180, 201–11 *passim;* untouchables, 234, 252
languages (*see also* English language; Hindi language): x-xi, 118, 181–98, 583 (table); *apabhramsa* (decayed speech), 186, 187; Arabic, 37, 123, 124; as indicative of status, 180, 182, 184; Assamese, 182, 187, 201, 583; Bengali, 21, 182, 187, 190, 191, 198, 583; Bihari, 187; bilingualism, 194–95, 201; dialects, vernacular, caste idioms, 179, 180, 186, 190, 191, 192–93, 194, 201; diglossia, 190–91; distance and mutual intelligibility, 192–93; Dravidian languages, xi, xxvii, 7, 8, 179–87 *passim*, 192, 420; evolution, origins, xi, xxvii, 8, 179, 181–92 *passim;* distribution, geographic, 179, 183 (map); Gondi, 209; Gujarati, 182, 187, 191, 583; Gurmukhi, 168, 428–29; Guyarati, 187; Kannada, 17, 146, 182, 186–87, 583; Kashmiri, 182, 583; literary dialects, 187, 191, 428–29; Maithili, 191; Malayalam, 17, 182, 193, 197, 583; Marathi, 182, 187, 194, 195, 415, 583; Munda, 182, 201; mutual borrowing influence, 185, 186–87, 190, 192; official (15 plus English), x, 179, 182, 184; Oriya, 182, 187, 201, 583; Pahari, 187; Pali, 186; Persian, 34, 37, 50, 123, 124, 181, 185, 187, 195; Prakrits, 15, 186, 194; Punjabi, 21, 31, 168, 182, 187, 428, 581; Rajasthani, 187; regional lingua franca, 180, 187, 190, 191; retroflex consonants, 185; Sanskrit, 8, 15, 16, 17,

40, 123, 124, 180–95 *passim*, 661; Sindhi, 182, 187, 583; single national language, proposals, 47, 179, 182, 184; spelling of place names, vii; Tamil, 13, 14, 16, 17, 182, 186, 187, 190, 267, 420, 583; Telugu, 17, 182–97 *passim*, 209, 583; Urdu, 21, 50, 167, 182, 187, 191, 198, 424, 583
Lawrence, Henry: 32, 42
Lawrence, John: 32, 42
Lawrence, Stringer: 508
League. *See* All-India Muslim League
League of Nations: 56
LeCorbusier, Charles: 401
Lenin, V.I.: 59
Lepers Act of 1898: 113
Limaye, Mahdu: 456
literature. *See* Adi Granth; cultural origins; Vedas
Lodi Dynasty (1451–1526): 20
Lok Sabha (House of the People): *See* parliament
Longowal, Sant Harchand Singh: xxxvi
Lonvala, military training school: 541
Lucknow: 42, 584
Luytens, Sir Edward: 54

Macaulay, Thomas Babington: 40, 124
Macdonald, Ramsay: 61
Machiavelli, Niccolò: 11, 378, 379
Madhya Pradesh: xxxvi, 96, 187, 413, 414, 425, 444, 450, 580; agriculture, 342–43, 370; dacoits (bandits), 414, 560; education, 117, 121; tribal peoples, 199, 412
Madras (Fort Saint George) (*see also* Tamil Nadu); 70, 369, 412, 535, 536, 542; climate, x, 97; nuclear power plant, 315; preindependence, 35, 40, 46, 59, 508, 509, 510; urbanization, 103, 124, 267, 268, 567, 584
Madurai kingdom: 14, 22
Magadha kingdom: 11–12, 14
Mahaballipuram; 16
Mahabharata: 9, 141
Mahanadi River: 96
Maharashtra (*see also* Bombay): 30, 53, 70, 74, 404, 412, 560, 580; agriculture, 343, 344, 350, 370; Congress (I) support, 440, 444, 450; education, 117, 128; Mahar untouchables, 59, 158, 235, 411; population growth, 102, 110; Shiv Sena movements, 414–15; Vidarbha separatism, 412
Mahavira (Great hero): 158
Mahmud of Ghazni (979–1030): 19
Maintenance of Internal Security Act and Defence of India Rules, 1975: 82, 572
Malabar: 58, 95, 172, 173
Malaysia: xii
Malcolm, John: 40
Maldives: 485
Maloney, Clarence: 186
Mandelbaum: David: 171, 231, 258
Manekshaw, Sam: 544
Manipur: 53, 198, 264, 341, 399; insurgent groups, 418, 419, 556, 573
Mao Zedong: 554
Marathas: 30–31, 35, 36, 380, 414, 510
Marine Products Export Authority: 373
marriage: 152, 242–46; bride murders, suicides, 248–49, 559; bride selection and marriage negotiations, xxviii, 226, 234–246 *passim*, 251, 263; divorce, 249; dowry, xxxiv, 245–46, 248, 436; legal age, 244; purdah, 223; regional variations, 242–43; tribal customs, 211, 243; widow remarriage, 243, 249
Marwaris business enterprises: 426
Mason, Philip: 44
mass communications: xii, 43, 45, 107, 270–71, 285, 387, 436; languages, 191–92, 194; television, 449–50
Mathura: 19, 154
Mauryan Dynasty: 11–12, 13, 14
Meenakshi temple: 14
Meerut, Sepoy Mutiny, 1857: 41, 42, 508
Meghalaya: 99, 121, 198, 341, 399, 412, 418, 419
Mehta, Pherozeshah: 46
Mehta, Zubin: 213
Mencius: 378
Menon, K.P.S.: 463, 495
Menon, V.P.: 67
Mesopotamia: 6
Metcalfe, Charles: 40
metric conversion coefficients: 579
Mhow, military training schools: 536
Mill, John Stuart: 380
Mineral Exploration Corporation: 318
Minicoy Island: 95
Minimum Need Program (MNP): 291
mining and quarrying: 281, 294, 295, 305, 318–19, 585, 587, 588 (table); subsoil rights, 285, 291–92

Ministries of: Agriculture and Rural Development, 355, 364, 542; Defence, 512, 514, 526–34 *passim*, 542, 544, 566; Education, 116; Energy and Petroleum, 317; External Affairs, 463, 465–66, 467, 532, 542; Finance, 296, 327, 526, 532, 533, 542; Health and Family Welfare, 108; Home Affairs, 532, 564, 565–66, 569
Minto, Lord: 51
Mishra Dhatu Nigam: 597
Mizo National Liberation Front: 419, 556
Mizoram: 121, 198, 341, 399, 401, 412; independence movements (Tripura), 418, 419, 457, 556
Mohan Roy, Raja Ram: 41, 155, 417
Mohenjo-Daro: 6–7, 8, 144, 378
Mongols: 20
Monopolies and Restrictive Practices Act of 1970: 287, 321–22
Montague, Edwin: 55
Moore, Barrington: 29
Morris, Morris G.: 48
Morris-Jones, W.H.: xxxiii-xxxiv, 79, 382, 410, 439
Mount Everest (Mount Godwin-Austen, Dapsang): 91
Mountbatten, Lord: 65, 67
Mughal Empire: xxviii, 4, 18–36 *passim*, 123, 167, 168, 185, 202, 379–80, 660; Old Delhi (Shahjahanabad), 267; Persian official language, 187; termination, 42, 50, 507
Muhammad of Ghor: 19
Muhammad the Prophet: 160–61
Muhammaden Oriental College: 50
Muller, Max: 8
Munro, Thomas: 40
Muslim Conference: 68
Muslim Majlis-a-Mushawarat (Muslim Consultative Council): 424
Muslim separatism (*see also* Pakistan): xxix, 49–54, 63, 123, 424, 474
Muslims (*see also* Jammu and Kashmir [Kashmir]; language: Urdu): 166–67, 423–24, 456, 465, 472; Hindu-Muslim relations, 67–68, 134, 167, 377, 424, 488, 552, 555; Islamic invasions (*see also* Mughal Empire), xxviii, 18–23; military service, 512, 525; 1977 election vote, 423, 444–45
Mysore (now Karnataka): 35, 67, 410, 412, 420
Nadik: 154
Nagaland: 134, 145, 198, 341, 399, 412, 418, 419, 514; separatists, 1980s, 556
Nagar Haveli: 401
Nagarajunakinda temple: 12–13
Nagas. *See* Nagaland
Nagpur: 353, 539, 584
Naicker, E.V. Ramaswamy: 421
name: ix; origin, roots, xxvii, xxix
Nanak Dev, Guru: xxxv, 21, 31, 164, 167–68, 659
Nandi: 145
Naoroji, Dadabhai: 46, 48
Narain, Raj: 452
Narasimha Rao, P.V.: xxxvi, 476
Narayan, Jayaprakash (J.P.): 59, 82, 426, 436, 451, 452, 453
Narbada River: 96, 199
Nasser, Gamal Abdul: 470
National Academy of Administration: 406
National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India: 362
National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development: 329
National Bureau for Plant Genetic Resources: 353
National Bureau of Soil and Land Use Planning: 353
National Cadet Corps (NCC): 543
National Commission on Agriculture: 371
National Conference Party: 416, 458
National Council of Educational Research and Training: 116
National Defence Academy: 534, 536
National Defence College: 534
National Democratic Alliance (NDA): 453
National Development Council: 292
national emblem: 157
National Filaria Programme: 112
National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NTPC): 317
National Leprosy Eradication Programme: 113
National Malaria Eradication Programme: 112
National Police Academy: 564, 565
National Population Policy: 107
National Programme for the Control of Blindness: 113
National Rural Employment Programme

(NREP): 291
national seal: 379
national security (*see also* armed forces; foreign policy; public order and internal security): xiv-xv, 462, 485–86, 505–75; border security, xv, 556, 566–67; defense programs, xv, 293, 299, 300, 505, 513–29 *passim*, 585, 586, 596 (table); emergency mobilization, 388, 521, 523, 542, 543; nuclear and space programs, possible uses, 532; Pakistan as threat to. *See* Pakistan *entries*; president, supreme commander, 72, 390, 521, 532; subcontinent as geopolitical entity, 518–21
National Security Act (NSA) of 1980: 572
National Seeds Corporation (NSC): 359
National Service Centre for Water Technology: 353
National Socialist Council of Nagaland: 556
National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC): 317
national unity: 69, 423, 433, 468, 512; religious, linguistic, social diversity, effect on, 407–22, 506, 550, 556–59; "unity in diversity," 5, 407–22
Navy Act of 1957: 545
Naxalite movement: 79–80, 417, 482, 554–55, 572
Nehru, Jawaharlal: vii, 5, 62, 63, 65, 72–78, 382, 388, 417, 432, 433, 481–82; death of, 78, 474; democratic principles, 72–73, 77, 432–33; foreign policy, 36, 76–77, 461–73 *passim*, 478–82, 489–96 *passim*, 514; goals, xxix, 70, 75–76, 401, 489–96 *passim*, 514; goals, xxix, 70, 75–76, 401, 405, 468; influence, mass appeal, xxix-xxx, 73, 381, 462–63, 464; modernization of armed forces, 515; opposition to linguistic states, 412; socialist leanings, 59, 73, 75
Nehru, Motilal: xxix, 54, 60, 432
Nellie: 420, 555
Nepal: 91, 95, 172, 481–88 *passim*, 520; Gurkha Regiment of Indian Army, 524; immigrants, 487–88, 556; Indian economic aid, 303–04, 466
Netherlands: 301
New Delhi: ix, 353, 406, 567; anti-Sikh riots, 1984, xxxvi, 377, 523, 551; armed forces headquarters, 534, 535, 536, 540, 542; Asian Games, 1982, 269, 484; capital, ix, 54, 401, 413, 417; Sikkim annexed, 1974, 81; slum clearance, 436, 437; strategic location, 267
Nicobar Islands: 95, 121, 401, 520, 534, 540, 542
Nixon, Richard M.: 491–92
Nizamuddin Auliya: 21
Nonaligned Movement: xiii, 466, 467, 468, 471, 485, 499, 519
nonviolence. *See* civil nonviolent disobedience (satyagraha)
Northeast (*see also* Assam; Ladakh; Manipur, Mizoram; Nagaland): ethnic and other insurgency, 520, 522, 549, 554, 555–556, 566
North-East Frontier Agency: 514
North-West Frontier Province (NWFP): 62, 65
Norway: 301, 366
nuclear nonproliferation position: 490, 501, 517–18, 532
nuclear programs: xxxiii, 75–76, 81, 279, 310, 315–18, 494, 517–18, 531–32; nuclear potential, xxxiii, 477
Nur Jahan: 24

Officers Training School: 536
Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC): 312
Oil Limited, India (OIL): 312
Operation Blue Star (*see also* Golden Temple): xxxvi, 387, 431
opposition parties (*see also names of political parties*): xiii, 70, 79, 392, 403, 416, 432, 436, 442, 451–58,; antidefection bill, 1985, xxxii; banned, 1975, xxxi, 424, 436; foreign policy platforms, 465; intraparty factionalism, 83, 254, 441, 442, 451, 452, 453, 553
Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC): 435
Orissa: 96, 102, 103, 117, 412, 425, 442, 580; agriculture and landholdings, 74, 342–43, 351, 370; Muslim minority, 134; preindependence, 25, 31, 62; tribal peoples, 199, 201; tribal separatist demands, 412
Ottoman Empire: 23–24, 54–55
Oudh, historic: 36, 41, 50

Pakistan (*see also* All-India Muslim League; Muslim separation; indepen-

dence and partition, 1947): 477, 516; border, 91, 92, 95; British assets, division, 66, 512–13; China, relations, 482, 483, 514–21 *passim*; civil war, 1971 (*see also* Bangladesh; Indo-Pakistan war of 1971; refugees; *infra*), 278, 474–75, 482, 498, 516; creation of, 1940, 63, 65; Indo-Pakistan war, 1965, 79, 278, 293, 464, 474, 490, 497, 515–16; Indo-Pakistan war, 1971, 81, 278, 388, 435, 474–75, 477, 516–17, 522, 526, 572; intra-Indian travel, pilgrimages, 475–76, 477; Jammu and Kashmir, accession to India, nonacceptance (*see also* Jammu and Kashmir [Kashmir]), 68–69, 77, 95; nuclear capability, 518, 520, 532; princely states' accession, 67; relations, 77, 461–62; 470, 471–78, 487, 505, 519, 520, 554; subversive activities, 477–78; trade, 476, 477; U.S. arms sales and security arrangements, 476–77, 489–93 *passim*, 514–20 *passim*

Palden Thondup Namgyal, Chogyal: 418

Palestine liberation movement: 467

Pallavas of Kanchi: 16

Palmer, Norman: 492

pandit: 660

Pandit, Vijaya Lakshmi: 463, 464

Pandya Dynasty: 13, 16

Panikkar, K.M.: 232, 463, 479

Panini: 15, 186

Pant, K.C.: xxxvi

Paper Currency Act of 1861: 45

parliament (*see also* Gandhi, Indira; Indian National Congress [Congress I]): Congress domination, 391–92, 660; constitutional amendments by, xxxi, 383, 394–95, 396–97; foreign policy advisory role, 464–65; legislative and other powers, xiii, 292, 296, 383–98 *passim*, 402, 403; Lok Sabha (House of the People), xxx, 296, 390, 391–92, 393–94, 465; president, role and duties, 296, 383, 390, 391, 393, 394, 403; proportional representation, 392, 393; Rajya Sabha (Council of States), xxx, 296, 391, 393–94

Parrinder, Geoffrey: 168

Parsis business enterprises: 426

Parthasarathi, G.: 464

Parvati: 140, 145

Pataliputra (Patna): 11

Patanjali: 15

Patel, Sardar Vallabhai: 67, 73

People's Liberation Army: 419, 556

Peshawar: 12

Pillai, N.R.: 463

Pillai Report of 1964: 467

Pitt, William: 38

Plains Tribal Council of Assam: 419

Plato: 378

Pokharan, nuclear tests: 81

Poland: xiv, xxxvii, 601

police: xv, 523, 562–64; corruption, politicization, xxxiv, 204, 208, 414, 445, 506, 552–68 *passim*; paramilitary, xv, 81, 557–66 *passim*; Rajputs, 445; Sikhs, 170, 171; state police, 81, 506, 567–69; underequipped, underpaid, understaffed, 435, 531, 560, 561, 562–63, 568; women, 568

political development (*see also* British India; independence and partition; Indian National Congress): 5, 45–66, 275, 380–81, 433; communal representation in separate elections, 52–53, 54, 58–59; Congress Working Committee (CWC), 58, 59, 60, 80, 441; Constitution of 1935, 60–63; dyarchy concept, 56, 59; Hindu-Muslim rivalries, 49–58 *passim*, 62–68 *passim*; 472; Indian Relief Bill, 1914, 56; Legislative Councils, 56, 64; minorities and untouchables, special claims, 61; Nehru Report, 1928, 60; "one culture, one language, one flag," 59; provincial elections, 1937, 62; "Quit India" movement, 1942, 64, 457; Round Table Conferences, London, 1930, 1931, 60–61; socialist trends, 59, 62, 285, 292, 320; Surat meeting, 1907, 54; women in, 59

politics (*see also* Gandhi, Indira; Indian National Congress [Congress]; opposition parties): xiii, 414, 416, 563; British legacy, 66, 378–82; caste and family, effect (*see also* caste Hindu vote, *infra*), xxxiv, 91, 236, 259, 261, 410, 411, 433; caste Hindu vote, 440, 444, 449, 450, 456, 553; corruption, xxxiii-xxxiv, 83, 550; municipal, 267–68; occupational interest groups, 307, 414, 425–26, 433, 465, 476, 553; populist, 433; regional pressures and tactics, 5, 407–25 *passim*, 438–40, 444, 488; *sarvodaya*, *swaraj*,

57, 58, 60; Scheduled Castes, special legislative seats, 81, 83, 405, 406, 410, 553; stability, 377–78, 432, 440, 550; students, 426, 436, 553, 555; untouchables, 233, 235, 252, 433, 444, 453, 553
Pondicherry: 35, 401
Poona. *See* Pune
Poonch hills: 68
Population Advisory Council: 108
population: x, 99–111; age/sex ratio, 100 (chart), 102; census accuracy, 101–02; density and distribution, 102–05, 264, 266; family planning, xxxiii, 76, 89–90, 102, 105–111, 173, 392, 580 (table); famines and epidemics, effect, 58; growth, economic pressures of, 75, 76, 285, 304, 306, 550; growth rate, x, xxxiii, 89, 99–102, 105, 275, 279, 584 (table); mass sterilization campaigns, xxxi, 82, 107, 110, 436, 437, 444; origins, 7–8; rural, 103, 339; tribal peoples, percent of and geographic distribution, 198–99
Port Blair naval and coast guard facilities: 540, 542
ports (*see also names of ports*): xii, 281
Portugal, early explorations and trade (*see also* Goa): 34, 37, 213, 343
Postal Service: 406
Posts and Telegraph Department: 297
poverty: 233, 275, 276, 277, 282, 285, 289, 298, 305, 550; government poverty-alleviating programs, 105, 286–95 *passim*, 306, 435, 436–37, 440; poverty line defined, 282
Praja Party: 62
Prasad, Rajendra: 390
prehistory: 6–8
president: xiii, 390–91; chief of state, xxx, 390; dominance of prime minister, xxx, xxxi; duties and powers, xiii, 296, 383, 388–91, 392, 393, 400, 401, 402, 403, 406, 521; election, 390, 441
press: 434, 463, 506; caste newspapers, 236; censorship, 1975, xxxi, 82, 386, 436, 550; freedom of, with limitations, 47, 378, 386–87; languages, 47, 160
Prevention of Publication of Objectionable Matter Act of 1976: 386
preventive detention: 72, 384, 388, 398, 571–72; Akali Dal leaders, 1984, 431, 558; Emergency, 1975, xxxi, 436, 550, 563
Preventive Detention Act (1950): 72
princely states: 61; British paramountcy, 36, 43, 50, 67, 420; monetary and other privileges revoked, 1970, 80, 396, 397
prison system: 573–74
Prithvi (Chasrati): 145
public order and internal security (*see also* crime; police; preventive detention): 506, 518–19, 549–75; arms smuggling, 418; army and paramilitary forces, 435, 440, 505–06, 522–23, 531, 542–43, 550–67 *passim*; civil disobedience leading to riots, 551–52; external subversion, 477–78, 482, 483, 484, 553–55, 556; food riots, 1960s, 1970s, 290, 293, 435; hijacking, 557; immigrants and illegal immigration, 414–15, 419, 520, 549, 555–56; individual lawlessness, 72, 559, 562, 564; lack of public confidence, 551, 562; law enforcement, 378, 506, 560, 561–69; Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) of 1971, amendment, 82, 572; Naxalites problem, 79–80, 417, 482, 554–55, 572; religious, communal, class, and regional differences, 67–68, 477–78, 506, 549–59 *passim*, 571–73; subversive activities, 549, 554–55, 556, 572; violence against untouchables, 258, 552–53
Pune (Poona): 30, 45–46, 175, 213, 534, 536, 584
Punjab (*see also* Golden Temple; Sikhs): 119, 260, 444, 510, 517, 580, 660; agriculture, 341, 349, 351, 360, 428; British period, 32, 36, 45, 53–55, 62, 68, 170; capital (Chandigarh), 121, 399, 401, 430, 558; division into Haryana and Punjab, 1966, 70, 170, 412, 428; geography and climate, 92, 97; Hindu-Sikh relations, xxxiv–xxxv, 408, 429–31, 458; historic, 19, 23, 30, 31, 33, 42; Jats, political influence, 410, 429, 430; landownership pattern, 252; Muslim minority, 134; partition, 1947 (*see also* Pakistan), 65, 168, 170; population, 103, 110; Sikh Gurdwaras Act of 1924, 34, 58–59; Sikh majority, 412; Sikh terrorism and demands for independent state (Khalistan, Sikhistan), 1980s, xxxii, xxxv–xxxvi, 79, 170–71, 357, 377, 382, 408, 426–31, 440, 477–78, 506, 550–52, 556–59, 573

Puranas: 8, 141–42

Qandahar: 25

Radhakrishnan, S.: 463, 495
railroads: xii, 281, 285, 288, 289, 297
Railway Protective Force: 567
rainfall: 97, 99, 315, 341–42, 343, 356; monsoons, x, 92, 96, 97, 99, 329
Rajasthan: 96, 117, 121; agriculture: 74, 341, 342, 344, 357, 413, 517, 580; Hindi language, 187; Jats, political influence, 410; nuclear power plant, 315; phosphate deposits, 358; population, 89, 102, 103–05, 110; tribal peoples, 199
Rajaraja (985–1014): 16
Rajendra I (1018–44): 16
Rajeswara Rao: 457
Rajput: 12, 19–31 *passim*, 36, 59; origins, 15
Rajya Sabha (Council of States). *See* parliament
Ram, Jagjivan: 445, 452, 453
Ram, Rajya Parishad: 424
Rama: 144, 145, 146, 154
Rama Krishna Mission: 156
Rama Rao, Nandmuri Tarak: 403, 422, 439–40, 453
Ramachandran, M.G. (MGR): 421, 422
Ramakrishna: 156
Ramayana: 9, 17, 141
Rana Sangha: 23
Rani of Jhansi: 42
Ranjit Singh: 32, 170
Rann of Kutch: 77, 92, 95
Rao, N. Bhaskara: 439
Rashtriya Congress: 456
Rashtriya Indian Military College: 534
Rashtriya Sanjay, Manch (RSM): 456
Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS): 416, 420, 424–25, 436, 440, 445, 450, 456, 556; Jana Sangh (political arm), 424–25, 452
Raurkela: 105
Ravi River: 6, 92
Ray, Ajit Nath: 397, 398
Raychaudhuri, Tapan: 29
Reagan, Ronald: 489, 493
Reddy, Neelam Sanjiva: 390–91
refugees: 103; Dalai Lama, asylum, 78, 480–81, 484; Pakistan civil war, 1971, 80, 81, 105, 198, 278, 419–20, 491, 516; partition of British India, 1947, 65, 170, 277; Sri Lankan Tamil minority, 554; Tibetan, 181
Regional Electricity Boards (REBs): 316–17
regionalism (*see also* Jammu and Kashmir [Kashmir]): 411–22; Hindi Belt, 413–14, 427, 433, 444, 445, 450; northeast, 418–20, 482; south, 16, 35, 36, 59, 420–22; West Bengal and Sikkim, 417–18; western states, 414–15
religions and religious life (*see also* Buddhism; Hinduism; Sikhism): 135–75; ahimsa, 57, 137–38, 158–59; basic concepts, 135–39; Christianity and Christian missionaries, xi, xxviii, 33–40 *passim*, 50, 134, 172–73, 200, 202, 212, 213, 214, 233, 420, 421, 425; folk, tribal, 134, 145, 171, 211–12; freedom of, 5, 72, 384, 428, 429; Jainism, xi, xxvii, xxviii, 10, 21, 133, 142, 156, 158–60, 426, 429; Judaism, 134, 174–75, 213; karma, 138, 143, 158, 659, 660; *moksha* (*mukti*), 137, 138–39, 143; monastic orders, 149, 152, 158, 159; *panth*, 660; percent of population by religion, 133–34; state patronage, 72; transmigrations, 137, 138–39, 143, 158, 168; zoroastrians, xi, xxviii, 134, 173–74, 212
Reserve Bank of India: 327
Revolutionary Army of Kuneipak: 556
Rippon, Lord: 46
roads: xii, 204, 205, 210–11, 281, 561; local responsibility, 405
Roberts, Lord: 510
Rockefeller Foundation: 360, 366
Rome: 4
Roosevelt, Franklin D.: 80, 439
Roy, M.N.: 59
Royal Asiatic Society: 39
Royal Indian Air Force: 511
Royal Indian Navy: 539–40
Rudolph, Lloyd: 410
Rudolph, Susanne: 410
Rural Electrification Corporation (REC): 317
rural life. *See* village life
Russia, Bolshevik Revolution, 1917: 59

Sainik Schools: 534
Sakas: 12, 15
Samachar: 386

Samudragupta: 14
Samyukta Socialist Party: 79
Sangam period: 14
sanitation. *See* standard of living
Sankaia, H.D.: 8
Santals: 45, 199, 201, 208
Sarabhai, Vikram: 75
Saraswati, Dayananda: 41, 155
Sarawati: 145
Sarnath (Varanasi): 379
Satavahana Dynasty: 12–13
Satpura Range: 92, 99
Saudi Arabia: 332, 333
Sayyid Dynasty (1414–51): 20
School of Artillery: 536
Schwartzberg, Joseph E.: 4
Secunderabad, Praga Tools: 599
Senapur: 228
Sepoy Mutiny (Rebellion), 1857: 41–42, 346, 508–09
Shah Ghulam Mohammad: 416–17
Shah Jahan (1628–57): 24
Shaha, Rishikesh: 487
Shankaryan Vedanta: 156
Sharma, Miriam: 252, 256
Shastri, Lal Bahadur: xxx, 79, 388, 434, 464, 474
Shekhar, Chandra: 413, 456
Shillong: 566
Shiromani Akali Dal (Akali Dal): xxxvi, 33–34, 58–59, 429–31 *passim*, 452, 458, 557
Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC): 34, 58–59
Shiv Shena (Army of Sivaji) movement: 414, 415
Shourie, Arun: 83
Shultz, George: 494
Shvetambaras sect (Jains): 159
Sikh Empire: 31–34, 36, 68, 170, 380
Sikh Ghadr Party, California: 55
Sikhism: xi, xxviii, 32, 33, 133, 167–71, 475; Akal Tekhat, 168; as branch of Hinduism, 429; *bhakti cults*, 21, 22, 31; converts, 429; Khalsa (Panth), 32, 169, 170, 428, 429; Nirankari Sikh sect, 557; separate religion status, claims, 408, 430; symbols of orthodoxy, xxxvi, 32, 168–69, 428, 429, 430
Sikhs (*see also* Golden Temple; Punjab *entries*; Sikhism): 28, 134; assassination of Indira Gandhi and subsequent rioting. *See* Gandhi, Indira: assassination; Punjab: Sikh terrorism, British period, 33, 34, 58–59; in armed forces, 32, 170, 171, 428, 430, 509, 525–26; Jat Sikhs, 429; Keshadhari/Sahajdhari Sikhs, 169, 429; political development, 33, 58–59, 407–08; Singh, Kaur, surnames, 32, 169, 429; status and prosperity, 170, 428
Sikkim: 403, 439, 484; ethnic groups, 418; integration into Union, 81, 418, 483, 486
Simla: 266
Simon, Sir John: 60
Sind: 18, 25, 36, 45, 62
Singapore: 471
Singh, Arjun: xxxvi
Singh, Giani Zail: xxxiv, 171, 392, 428, 430–31
Singh Sabha: 33, 170
Sir Sayyid Ahmad (Khan): 50, 51
Sitala: 164
Sitaramayya, Pattabhai: 63
Siva: 140, 142, 144, 145, 146, 148, 153, 154; Nataraja Siva, 17; Saivism, 146
Sivaji, Chatrapati: 30, 380, 414
size: x
Skandagupta (455–67): 15
Slave Dynasty (1206–90): 20
Smuts, Jan: 56
social services development: 294
social mobility (*see also* caste system; *Jati*): xxviii; education, 125–26, 128, 255, 268; English language, 179–80, 182, 196, 252; military service, 529; nepotism or personal connections, 236, 237; nuclear family, effect of, 250–51
social systems (*see also* caste system; ethnic minorities; poverty): x-xi, xxxiv, 180, 219–71; caste etiquette, 224, 225, 226, 228; Christian communities, 173; diversity, xxviii, xxxix, 4–5, 179, 186, 378, 550, 570; hierarchal, 193; Hindu value system, xxvii-xxviii, 9–10, 133, 135, 139, 142, 143, 180, 186, 219–37, 251–52, 256, 263; Jains, 153; linguistic, regional, and religious loyalties, xxviii; middle castes, 259, 262, 268; Muslims, social clusters, 134; Parsis, 213; politicized, 409–11, 433; preindependence, 8–23 *passim*; social status, xxviii, 180, 193–95, 233, 345; tribal

peoples, 201–02, 210–12; Western values, 233, 268
Socialist Party: 152
Soldiers', Sailors', and Airmen's Board: 543–44
Somnath temple: 19
South Asia Regional Cooperation (SARC) Programme: 472, 477, 485
Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO): xxxviii, 470
South West Africa: 467
Soviet Union: 358; economic aid, 76, 79, 302, 303, 366, 470, 495–96, 498; military sales and technological support, xiv, xxxviii, 470, 496–97, 498, 500, 505, 515, 516, 518, 535–41 *passim*, 598–605 *passim*; relations, xii, xiii, xxxvii-xxxviii, 461, 468, 469, 476, 481, 483, 489–500 *passim*, 516, 519; Sino-Soviet relations, 95, 482, 496, 497; trade, xii, 332, 333, 495, 498; Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation, 1971, 482, 494, 498, 505, 516
Space Command: 532
space programs: xii, 75–76, 275, 279, 517, 532, 597
Spate, O.H.K.: 4
Spear, Percival: 37
Sri Lanka: xii, 34, 156, 484, 485, 492; Tamil minority conflicts, 486–87, 520, 554
Sri Venkateshuara temple, Tirupati: 22, 422
Srinagar: 24, 416, 453
Srinivas, M.N.: 233
Srirangam temple: 17
Srivijaya: 16
Stalin, Joseph: 469, 495
standard of living: xi, xxviii, 108, 114, 275; nutrition, xi, xxxiii, 112, 118, 340; urban, 267, 270, 282
state and local government: xii, 73, 400–05; administration (*see also* civil service), 405–07; budgets and financing, 296–98, 300; concurrent and exclusive powers, xv, xxx, 70, 72, 82, 91, 116, 281, 291–92, 297, 318–19, 343–44, 377, 383, 388, 401–06 *passim*, 438–40, 506, 550, 554, 561–67 *passim*; corruption and inefficiency, 122–23, 414, 422, 439; executive and legislative, 403–04; President's Rule (*see also* Golden Temple, Amritsar), 170, 171, 384, 387–88, 390, 402, 417, 418, 421, 431, 436, 457, 557–59, 573; reorganization along linguistic and ethnic lines, 70, 180, 197–98, 412–19 *passim*; special benefits for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, 81, 83, 90, 116, 181, 199, 200, 208, 234, 385–86, 405, 406, 410, 553
State Bank of India (Imperial Bank): 328
State Electricity Boards (SEBs): 316, 317
State Public Services: 405
State Trading Corporation of India: 330
State Reorganization Act of 1956: 412
Statesman: 386
Sthanakvasis: 159
Strait of Hormuz: 541
Strait of Malacca: 541
Suez Canal: 43
suffrage: 5, 392; British India, 55, 61
Sumer: 6
Supreme Court of India: xiii, xxx, 80, 82, 390, 394–400, 571; Fundamental Rights, rulings on, 396, 397; politicized and divided, 399; powers, independence, and judicial review functions, 69, 382–83, 384–99, 402
Surat: 30, 34, 35
Surya: 148
Sutlej River: 32, 92, 430
Sutlej-Ganges-Brahmaputra plain: 341
Swamy, Subramanium: 483
Swatantra Party: 79
Sweden: 301, 599

Tagore, Debendranath: 417
Tagore, Rabindranath: 417
Taj Mahal: 24
Tamil Nadu (formerly Madras): 117, 344, 404, 420, 425, 451, 554–555, 580; agitation against Hindu as a national language, 79, 421; "Dravidasthan" state, proposed, 421, 554; 1984 elections, 458; population growth, 102, 110; Sri Lankan ethnic Tamils, problem of, 486–87, 520, 554; tribal peoples, 199
Tandon, Purushottumdas: 73
Tanjore temple: 17
Tapti River: 92, 96
Tara Singh, Master: 428
Tarapur atomic power plant: 494
Tata Iron and Steel Company: 54
Teesta River, water-sharing agreement, 1983: 487

Tekanpur: 566
telecommunications. *See* mass communications
Telengana: 72
Telugu Desam (Land) Party: xiii, 403, 422, 432, 439–40, 442, 451, 457–58
temperature: x, 97, 99
Territorial Army: 542–43
Terrorist-Affected Special Courts Bill of 1984: 573
Thackeray, Bal: 415
Thailand: 156, 172, 372, 470
Thanaswar temple: 19
Thar Desert (Great Indian Desert): x, 92, 97, 267, 342
Thompson, Edward: 38
Tibet: 156; Chinese occupation, 78, 418, 478–84; trade and pilgrim travel, 479, 480
Tilak, Bal Gangadhar: 47, 54–55, 56, 62
Times of India: 441
Timur (Tamerlane): 20, 23
Tirupati, Sri Venkateshwara temple, 22, 422
Tito, Josip Broz: 470
Todar Mal, Raja: 25, 27
Topi, Tantia: 42
topography and geography (*see also* Himalayas; Indo-Gangetic Plain): x, 4, 89, 91–97; river systems (*see also names of rivers*), 92, 94 (illus.), 95, 96
tourism: 266
Trachoma Control Programme: 113
trade (*see also* British company rule; exports; imports): 305, 323, 330–36, 495, 585, 587; Bombay port, 267; historic, 6, 12–22 *passim*, 28–29, 34, 36–37; local, 192–93, 205–06; strikes and politically motivated unrest, 82, 307–08, 408, 435, 551, 553, 572; trade unions, 275, 307–08, 425–26
Trade Unions Act of 1926: 307–08
transportation: xii, 181, 294, 585, 587; blocking as form of protest, 551, 553; British development, 41, 45; energy consumption, 310–11; shortcomings, 281–82, 289, 295, 311–12; truck transport, xii, 281, 311
Travancore (present-day Kerala): 60, 67, 420
tribal peoples: 116, 180–81, 198–212, 484, 555, 556, 566, 661; Andamanese, 199; assimilation of Hindu practices, 181, 199–201, 202, 211–222, Bhil, 201; Bondos, 201; Chenchus, 206; economy, 201–02, 204–08, 210–11, 555; geographic concentrations, 103, 181, 182, 198–99, 201; Gonds, 199, 201, 209, 210, 211–12; land tenure and land use, 180, 201, 202, 204; languages, 182, 184, 194, 201; migrant workers, 269; Pardhans, 210, 211; religious beliefs and rituals, 211–12; Santals, 45, 199, 201, 208; Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes, special government benefits, 181, 199, 200, 208, 234, 385–86, 405; separatist demands, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, 412
Tribune: 386
Tripur Sena: 419
Tripura: 399, 418, 419, 457, 556
Tripura National Volunteers: 556
Trivandrum: 521
Tughlaq Dynasty (1320–1413): 20
Tungabhadra River: 22
Tyabji, Badruddin: 46, 51

Ujjain: 154
Uma: 145
Union Carbide: 324
Union Election Commission: 388
Union Public Service Commission: 406, 564
Unionist party: 62
United Front coalition: 434, 453
United Nations (*see also* Jammu and Kashmir [Kashmir]: Indo-Pakistan war of 1948, U.N. cease-fire and proposed plebescite): xiii, 485; peace missions, mediation, and other Indian support, 77, 78, 461, 463, 467, 469, 500–01, 514
United provinces (*see also* Uttar Pradesh): 61, 62, 65
United States: 358; economic and technological aid, 76, 79, 301, 302, 315, 324, 366, 490, 492, 494, 495; Indian Ocean naval presence, 493, 517; military aid to other Asian countries (*see also* Pakistan), 519, 520; military sales, xiv, xxxviii, 482; relations (*see also* Pakistan: U.S. relations), xxxvii-xxxviii, 77, 461, 468, 470, 471, 481, 488–98 *passim*, 516, 517; trade, xii, 323, 331, 332, 333

United States Central Intelligence Agency: xxxvii, 492
U.S.S. Enterprise: 492, 517
University Grants Commission: 116
untouchables (harijans): xxvii, 15, 219, 659; atrocities against, 258, 437, 552–53; attempts to improve social and ritual status (*see also* conversion to, *infra*), 155, 156, 204, 220, 233–37, 257–58, 262, 263–64, 552–53; bonded labor, 308; conversions to: Buddhism, 133, 157–58, 235, 241, 411; Christianity, 172; election vote, 1977, 144–45, 152; Islam, 166, 411, 425; Sikhism, 429; landlord relationships, 256–57, 259–60, 552; language repertoire, 193; probable origins, 222; regional classification variations, 235; Scheduled Classes, government special benefits, 90, 116, 234–35, 263, 385–86; special political privileges, 83, 335, 405, 406, 410, 553; tribal peoples, 206; wage labor, 257
untouchability, constitutional illegality: 72, 234, 424
Untouchability (Offenses) Act of 1955: 234–35
urbanization: 103, 105, 229, 264–71, 552, 559, 584 (tables); Anglo-Indians, 214; Bappa Sikhs, 429; caste system, 220, 226, 236, 237, 251, 261, 263–64, 268; Christian communities, 173; crime, 506, 559; employment, 270–71; growth rate, 264–65; nuclear families, 241, 251; regional and religious affiliation, importance, 193, 237, 251, 263; regional differences, 266, 269; slums, shantytowns, 267, 269–70, 282; standard of living, 112, 264, 267–68, 270, 282; temporary labor migration, 269, 282; voluntary associations, Western status symbols, 237, 251, 263, 268
Uttar Pradesh: xxvii, 74, 157, 404, 413, 414, 416, 437, 452, 563, 580; agriculture, 341, 351, 360, 371; Amethi, Rajiv Gandhi constituency, 438, 456; education, 117, 121; Hindi language, 187; Jats, political influence, 410; nuclear power plant, 315–16; population growth, 89, 101, 102, 103, 110, 111; tribal peoples, 198

Vajpayee, Atal Behari: 450, 464, 476, 483, 499
Varuna: 145
Vedas, 8, 13, 139–41, 142, 151, 155, 185, 221–22, 378; Rig-Veda, 8, 140, 185, 221
Victoria, Queen: 42, 509
Vietnam: 469–70, 471, 483, 492
Vijayanagar Empire: 22–23
Vijayawada: 453
village life (*see also* caste system; *jatis*; land reform; standard of living): 204, 205, 210–11, 219, 220, 251–60; credit sources and indebtedness, 154, 206, 208, 211, 256, 257, 328, 345, 361–62; debt servitude, 256, 275, 308; education (*see also* education: rural), x, 90, 112, 116; factionism, 220, 225, 254–55; headmen, 228, 229, 239, 244, 254; health care and health problems, 89–90, 111–12, 114–115; *jamani* system (exchanges of goods and services), 226–29, 256–58, 260–62, 277, 345, 409–10, 552; *jati* panchayats (caste councils), xiii, 116, 219, 220, 225, 226, 228–31, 254–59 *passim*, 348, 352, 400, 405, 571, 660; landless laborers, 15, 228, 256, 260, 282, 339, 344, 349, 352; large landowners, leadership, 251–52, 255–56, 259–60; local government, *panchayati*, 404–05; outcasting and other sanctions, 230–31, 234, 244; peri-urban, 251; regional diversity, 219, 253; rural population, 103, 399; social and religious changes, 155, 164; unemployment and underemployment, xxxiii, 75, 282; violence, xxxiv, 257
Vindhya Mountains: 4, 96
Vishakhapatnam: 498, 540
Vishnu: 144, 145, 148, 154; Vishnavism, 146
Vivekananda, Swami: 156
Voice of America: 465

Wavell, Lord: 65
Wedderburn, William: 46
Weiner, Myron: 449
Wellington: 534
West Bengal: 74, 92, 97, 99, 103, 117, 157, 431, 435, 485, 556, 580; agriculture, 341, 342, 555; CPI (M) stronghold, 442, 450–51, 457; hill districts, 157, 412–13, 418; immigrant problem, 556; Naxalite movement, 79–80, 417–18, 572,

separatist demands, 412–13, 417; tribal peoples, 199; water-sharing problems with Bangladesh, 487
Western Ghats: 92, 97, 99, 343
Wolpert, Stanley: 61
women (*see also* marriage): 230, 255; education, x, 90, 117, 120–21, 126; emancipation of, 74; employment, 271, 305, 568; in Jain monastic orders, 159; National Cadet Corps membership, 543; Parsis, 213; percentage of population, 102; property rights, extent of, 239; religions observance by, 154; status, 15, 41, 240, 242, 246, 247–50, 251; suttee, 15, 40, 41
World Bank and World Bank Group: 77, 301, 302, 303, 355, 364, 366, 495, 660, 661–62
World War I: 48, 54–55, 510–11; Defence of India Act of 1915, 55
World War II: 62, 63, 64, 286, 457, 511–12, 525; Indian National Army (INA), 512

Yahya Khan, Agha Mohammad: 482
Yama: 145, 152
Yamuna (Jumna) River: 92, 154, 267
Yellahanka military training school: 539
yoga: 148
Yugantur: 53
Yugoslavia: xiv, 470, 598
Yunus, Mohammed: 464

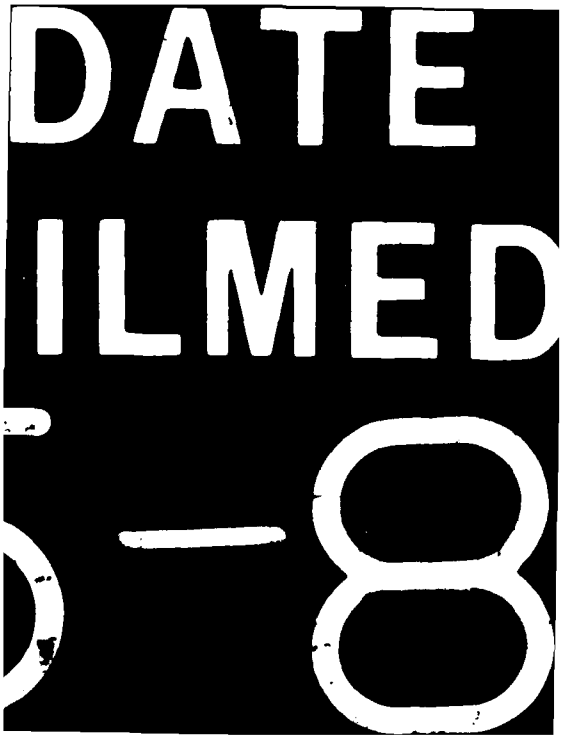
Zhao Ziyang: 484
Zhou Enlai: 480, 481, 483
Zia ul Haq, Mohammad: 476, 477, 478, 483
Zia ur Rahman: 483

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550–65	Afghanistan
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550–28	Ethiopia
550–167	Finland
550–155	Germany, East
550–173	Germany, Fed. Rep. of
550–153	Ghana
550–87	Greece
550–78	Guatemala
550–174	Guinea
550–82	Guyana
550–164	Haiti
550–151	Honduras
550–165	Hungary
550–21	India
550–154	Indian Ocean
550–39	Indonesia
550–68	Iran
550–31	Iraq
550–25	Israel
550–182	Italy
550–69	Ivory Coast
550–177	Jamaica
550–30	Japan
550–34	Jordan
550–56	Kenya
550–81	Korea, North
550–41	Korea, South
550–58	Laos
550–24	Lebanon
550–38	Liberia
550–85	Libya
550–172	Malawi
550–45	Malaysia
550–161	Mauritania
550–79	Mexico
550–76	Mongolia
550–49	Morocco
550–64	Mozambique
550–35	Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim
550–88	Nicaragua
550–157	Nigeria
550–94	Oceania
550–48	Pakistan
550–46	Panama
550–156	Paraguay
550–185	Persian Gulf States
550–42	Peru
550–72	Philippines
550–162	Poland
550–181	Portugal
550–160	Romania

550–84	Rwanda
550–51	Saudi Arabia
550–70	Senegal
550–180	Sierra Leone
550–184	Singapore
550–86	Somalia
550–93	South Africa
550–95	Soviet Union
550–179	Spain
550–96	Sri Lanka (Ceylon)
550–27	Sudan
550–47	Syria
550–62	Tanzania
550–53	Thailand
550–178	Trinidad and Tobago
550–89	Tunisia
550–80	Turkey
550–74	Uganda
550–97	Uruguay
550–71	Venezuela
550–57	Vietnam, North
550–55	Vietnam, South
550–183	Yemens, The
550–99	Yugoslavia
550–67	Zaïre
550–75	Zambia
550–171	Zimbabwe


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-8