



My Drift

Title: India

Written By: Jerry D. Petersen

Date: 5 May 2023

Article Number: (423-2023-13)



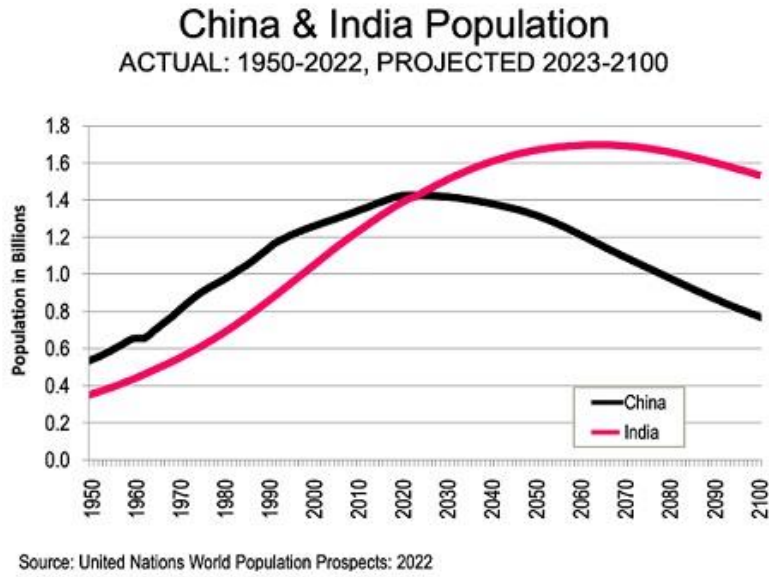
A typical city street in India

Did you hear that India is now the most populous country in the world?

Yes, it is true. India has overtaken China in terms of total population, according to the World Population Review (WPR). The WPR database suggests that Indian population on March 3, 2023, stood at 1.428 billion against China's 1.425 billion. The United States comes third with 339 million people.



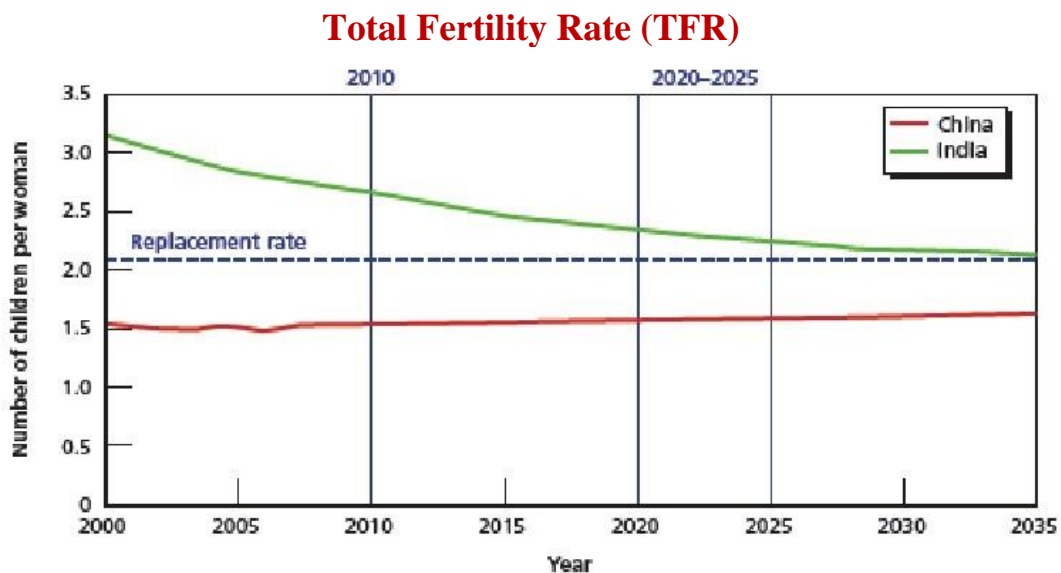
Indian Family



Why did India overtake China in population?

China's current Total Fertility Rate (TFR) is estimated to be 1.6 children per woman – down substantially from earlier decades and significantly below the “replacement rate” of 2.1 children per woman. This is despite the relaxation of the country's well-known one-child policy, which was introduced in 1980 but amended to allow two children beginning in 2016 and three children beginning in 2021.

India's TFR is going down (3.2 in 2000 to 2.2 in 2023) but is well above China and the United States for that matter – Our current TFR is 1.8 children per woman.



China's population fell in 2022 some 850,000 people from the previous year, according to China's National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). This downward trend is expected to continue in the future.

Some General Information



India, officially the Republic of India is a country in South Asia. It is the seventh-largest country by area and now the most populous country in the world. Bounded by the Indian Ocean on the south, the Arabian Sea on the southwest, and the Bay of Bengal on the southeast, it shares land borders with Pakistan to the west; China, Nepal, and Bhutan to the north; and Bangladesh and Myanmar to the east. In the Indian Ocean, India is in the vicinity of Sri Lanka and the Maldives; its Andaman and Nicobar Islands share a maritime border with Thailand, Myanmar, and Indonesia.

History

Modern humans arrived on the Indian subcontinent from Africa about 55,000 years ago. Their long occupation, initially in varying forms of isolation as hunter-gatherers, has made the region highly diverse, second only to Africa in human genetic diversity.

In the early medieval era, Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and Zoroastrianism became established on India's southern and western coasts. Muslim armies from Central Asia intermittently overran India's northern plains, eventually founding the Delhi Sultanate, and drawing northern India into the cosmopolitan networks of medieval Islam. In the 15th century, the Vijayanagara Empire created a long-lasting composite Hindu culture in south India.

Gradually expanding rule of the British East India Company followed, turning India into a colonial economy, but also consolidating its sovereignty. British Crown rule began in 1858. The rights promised to Indians were granted slowly, but technological changes were introduced, and modern ideas of education and the public life took root. A pioneering and influential nationalist movement emerged, which was noted for nonviolent resistance and became the major factor in ending British rule. In 1947 the British Indian Empire was partitioned into two independent dominions, a Hindu-majority Dominion of India and a Muslim-majority Dominion of Pakistan, amid large-scale loss of life and an unprecedented migration.

India has been a federal republic since 1950, governed through a democratic parliamentary system. It is a pluralistic, multilingual, and multi-ethnic society. India's population grew from 361 million in 1951 to over 1.4 billion in 2022. During the same time, its nominal per capita income increased from US\$64 annually to US\$1,498, and its literacy rate from 16.6% to 74%. From being a comparatively destitute country in 1951, India has become a fast-growing major economy and a hub for information technology services, with an expanding middle class. It has a space program which includes several planned or completed extraterrestrial missions. Indian movies, music, and spiritual teachings play an increasing role in global culture. India has substantially reduced its rate of poverty, though at the cost of increasing economic inequality. India is a nuclear-weapon state, which ranks high in military expenditure. It has disputes over Kashmir with its neighbors, Pakistan, and China, unresolved since the mid-20th century.

Among the socio-economic challenges India faces are gender inequality, child malnutrition, and rising levels of air pollution. India's land is megadiverse, with four biodiversity hotspots. Its forest cover comprises about 22% of its area. India's wildlife, which has traditionally been viewed with tolerance in India's culture, is supported among these forests, and elsewhere, in protected habitats.

How many states and cities are there in India?

There are 28 states, 8 Union Territories and 400 cities in India. The capital of India is New Delhi, and each state has a capital. There are currently 48 cities with a population of over a million. I'm not going to list or talk about all these, but we will take a look at the 10 most populated cities.

#1 Mumbai

City Population (2022 Estimate)	12,691,836
Metro Population (2022 Estimate)	20,961,000



The city of Mumbai is the capital of Maharashtra and is **the most populated city in India**. The metropolis of Mumbai is also the second largest in the country, right after Delhi. **Bombay is the original name of this city**, and it was officially changed to Mumbai in 1995. This city can be found on the Konkan Coast, right along the west coast of India.

#2 Delhi

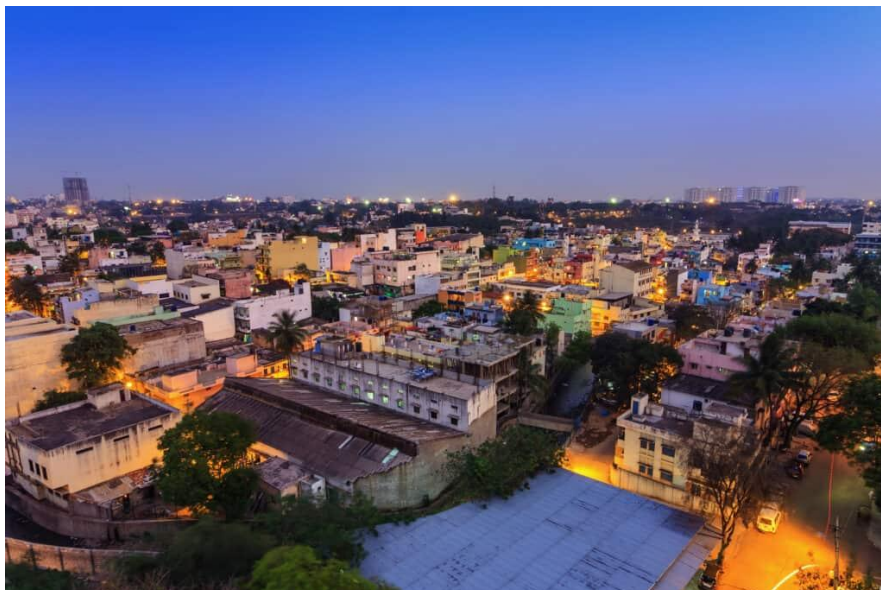
City Population (2022 Estimate)	10,927,986
Metro Population (2022 Estimate)	32,066,000



Delhi is a megacity in India and is one of the most populated cities in the world. **The metropolis of Delhi is considered the second-largest city in the world, only behind Tokyo, Japan.** Delhi is made up of two components, which are Old Delhi and New Delhi. The city of New Delhi is the capital of India and is one of the many components that make up the megacity of Delhi. With its massive population size, Delhi is one of the fastest-growing cities in the world and has a growth rate of 9.28%.

#3 Bengaluru

City Population (2022 Estimate)	8,443,675
Metro Population (2022 Estimate)	11,883,000



The city of Bengaluru is the capital of Karnataka and is the largest city located in South India. Since the Bengaluru metropolis has a population of over 10 million, it is classified as a megacity. The metro area of Bengaluru is one of the fastest growing among larger cities in the country and had a growth rate of 3.55% in 2022. The city Bengaluru was founded in 1537 but was originally called Bangalore before its name change. Today, **the city is India's leading tech city and is known as the "Silicon Valley of India."**

#4 Hyderabad

City Population (2022 Estimate) 6,800,970
Metro Population (2022 Estimate) 10,534,000



Located in the Indian state of Telangana, Hyderabad is its region's capital and the largest city in its area. Hyderabad was founded in 1591 and is **a city beloved for its historical monuments like the Golconda Fort, the Asman Garh Palace, and the Qutub Shahi Tombs.** Over the years, this city has had a steady population growth, with it having a growth rate of 2.59% in 2022. Hyderabad is located in southeastern India and is right next to the Musi River.

#5 Ahmedabad

City Population (2022 Estimate) 6,357,693
Metro Population (2022 Estimate) 8,450,228

Located in the Indian state of Gujarati, Ahmedabad is the most populated city in its region. This city is located near the Sabarmati River and is considered a twin city with Gandhinagar, which is the capital of Gujarati. In 2021,

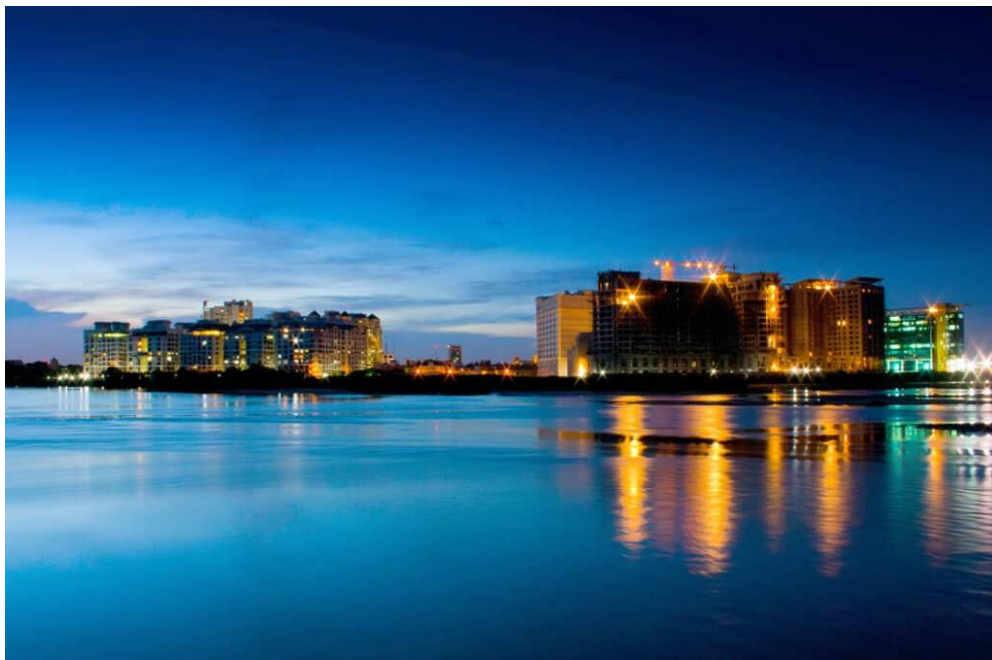
Ahmedabad had a population growth of 2.42% which is consistent with the years previous. Along with being one of India's most populated cities, Ahmedabad is the country's 5th largest city and the biggest in its state. **Known as one of India's greatest textile hubs, Ahmedabad is a popular tourist attraction because of its food, museums, and cultural-historical monuments.**



#6 Chennai

City Population (2022 Estimate) 4,646,732

Metro Population (2022 Estimate) 10,971,108



Originally, the city of Chennai was called Madras until its name underwent a change in 1996. This city is located on the Coromandel Coast and is the capital of Tamil Nadu. Starting off as a small fishing city, Chennai was formed in 1639. The metropolis of Chennai is one of the fastest growing metropolises in the country and has a growth rate of 2.43%.

Chennai is one of the most popular tourist spots in southern India. Filled with restaurants serving local delicacies, the city also has landmarks like ancient temples and the government museum. This very populated city is run by the Greater Chennai Corporation, which is the oldest city corporation in India, and the second oldest in the world after London.

#7 Kolkata

City Population (2022 Estimate) 4,631,392

Metro Population (2022 Estimate) 14,035,959



The city of Kolkata, formally Calcutta, is the capital of West Bengal. This city sits on the eastern bank of the Hooghly River and was established in 1686. While the city of Kolkata is very large, its metropolis population is one of the three largest in the entire country. Kolkata has seen a steady growth of the population of around 0.84% yearly.

Kolkata is known as the football hub of India, and the city has the second-oldest soccer league in the world. Sports are a part of this city's culture, and the city is home to the third-largest cricket arena in the world. Kolkata has a rich history and is the city with India's oldest port and metro system.

#8 Surat

City Population (2022 Estimate) 4,467,797

Metro Population (2022 Estimate) 7,784,276



Surat is located in the western state of Gujarat and is one of the fastest-growing cities in the world and is the second-largest city in Gujarat. The city is well known for its diamonds and is the world's largest diamond manufacturing center, doing around 90% of the world's diamond polishing and cutting.

Surat regularly ranks high as being one of the cleanest cities in India, despite its large population. This port city sits on the banks of the Tapi River and has a tropical climate. Tourists are common in this city since it has several beaches and historical buildings like the Surat Castle.

#9 Pune

City Population (2022 Estimate) 3,700,000

Metro Population (2022 Estimate) 6,808,000

Pune is the second-largest city in Maharashtra and is known as the state's cultural hub. The city was founded in 1436 and today is one of India's cities with a thriving IT and automobile industry. Education has always been important in Pune, and the city was also home to India's first girl school, which was created in 1848. Pune is rapidly growing in population, and in 2022, it experienced a growth of around 2.63%.



#10 Kanpur

City Population (2022 Estimate) 2,823,249

Metro Population (2022 Estimate) 3,190,000

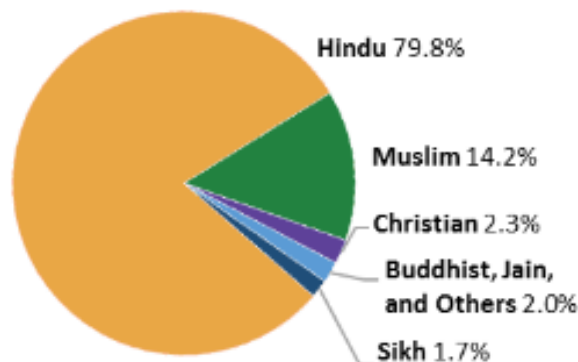


The city of Kanpur is currently the 10th most populated city in India. Also spelled Cawnpore, this industrial city is located in the central-western part of Uttar Pradesh. Kanpur is the largest city in its state and is the capital of its region. The metropolis region of Kanpur has seen a yearly growth of 1.17% in 2022.

Kanpur is extremely industrialized and is India's 9th largest urban economy. This city, as does its country, has a history of colonization by the British, which shows in the city's buildings, and other infrastructure. Founded in 1207, Kanpur sits on the bank of the Ganga River and today is one of India's most beautiful cities. Parks, zoos, education centers, theme parks, and historical buildings are some sights to see in this city.

Religion

While 94% of the world's Hindus live in India, there also are substantial populations of Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, and adherents of folk religions. For most Indians, faith is important: In a recent Pew Research Center survey, eight-in-ten Indians said religion is very important in their lives.



Do Hindus believe in God?

Hindus believe in a universal soul or God known as Brahman who is worshipped in many diverse forms. These forms include complementary attributes of male and female deities, in human as well as animal forms.

Hindus believe that there are four goals in human life: Kama, the pursuit of pleasure; Artha, the pursuit of material success; Dharma, leading a just and good life; and Moksha, enlightenment, which frees a person from suffering and unites the individual soul with Brahman.

Hinduism—one of the principal faiths in the modern world, with more than one billion followers—is the world's oldest religion, with complete scriptural texts dating back 3,000 years.

Mountains

The names of the seven mountain ranges in India are The Himalayan mountains, The Karakoram and Pir Panjal range, the Purvanchal range or eastern mountain range, Vindhya and Satpura range, the Aravali range, the Eastern ghats, and the Western ghats.

The Himalayas are the highest mountain range in the world and have 9 out of 10 of the world's highest peaks, including the highest Mount Everest (29,029 feet) in Nepal. At 28,251 feet, K2, which straddles the Pakistan-China border, is about two and a half football fields shorter than Everest, but it's widely considered the planet's toughest and most dangerous mountain to climb, earning the nickname "Savage Mountain." Kanchenjunga is in the Himalayas and is the highest peak in India and it is the world's third-highest peak, rising 28,169 feet above sea level. Kanchenjunga is located 46 miles north-northwest of Darjiling, on the boundary of Sikkim, northeastern India, and eastern Nepal.

These mountains, referred to as the Third Pole, are the source of some of Asia's major rivers, and also help to regulate our planet's climate.



Rivers

The 12 major rivers of India are the Ganges, Brahmaputra, Indus, Godavari, Krishna, Yamuna, Narmada, Tapti, Mahanadi, Cauvery, Chenab, and Beas.

Ganges River or Hindi Ganga is the great river of the plains of the northern Indian subcontinent. Although officially as well as popularly called the Ganga in Hindi and in other Indian languages, internationally it is known by its conventional name, the Ganges. From time immemorial it has been the holy

river of Hinduism. For most of its course it is a wide and sluggish stream, flowing through one of the most fertile and densely populated regions in the world. Despite its importance, its length of 1,560 miles is relatively short compared with the other great rivers of Asia or of the world.



The Ganges River

Wildlife



Attractions

There are many interesting attractions in India – We will look at seven of them.

1. The Taj Mahal, Agra

There are few sights in the world as iconic as the Taj Mahal, which is a must-see on most India itineraries, particularly for travelers on the famous Golden Triangle circuit, linking Delhi, Agra, and Jaipur. A testament to the power of an emperor's love, this astonishingly beautiful mausoleum was named after Mumtaz Mahal, who was the favorite wife of Shah Jahan.



Construction began upon her death in 1631, and it took 20,000 of the most skilled craftsmen in the Mughal empire 17 years to complete. The queen consort was interred inside in a private chamber at the heart of the monument and Shah Jahan was later buried alongside his wife when he died in 1666. Incorporating many elements of Islamic design including an onion-shaped dome, arches, towering minarets and filigree marble screens, the Taj shows perfect bilateral symmetry along an axis running through the center of the main dome and the surrounding gardens.

While it shines brilliant white from a distance, up close the Taj is adorned with an elegant tracery of scrollwork, leaves, flowers, and Islamic motifs, executed in marble. This is enhanced by black calligraphy inlaid around the entrance, and delicate inlaid floral patterns using precious and semi-precious stones such as jasper, lapis lazuli, carnelian, malachite, jade, and mother of pearl.

The best time to visit is either at dawn or dusk when the atmosphere is brilliantly altered by the change in lighting. You can view the Taj Mahal by moonlight on five nights of every month, the night of the full moon and the two nights on either side of the full moon.

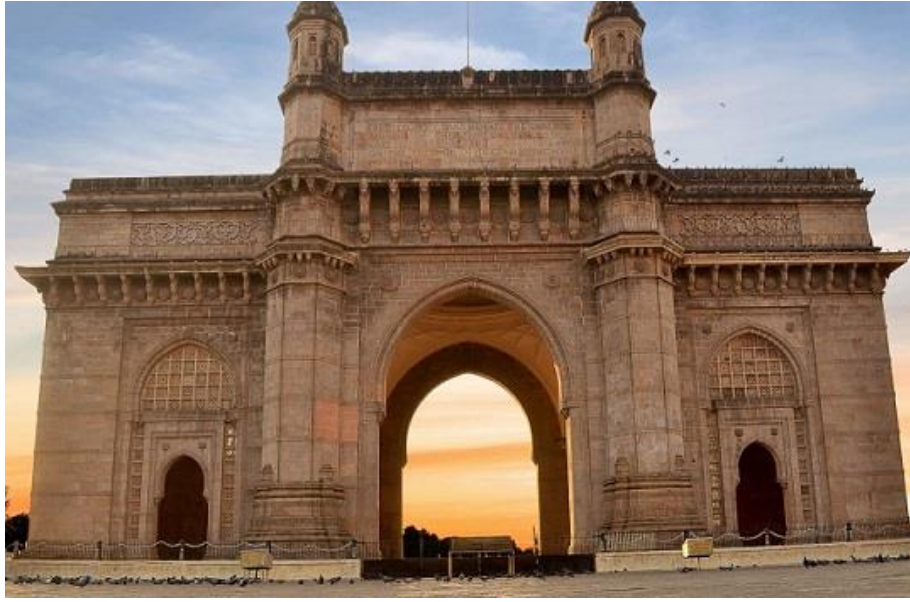
2. The Red Fort, New Delhi



New Delhi's colossal, crescent-shaped Red Fort, named after the stunning red sandstone, that was used in its construction, was built by Shah Jahan in 1648. Also called Lal Qal'ah, it was home to emperors of the formidable Mughal dynasty for almost 200 years, until 1857 when the British took over. It covers a vast area of 254.67 acres ringed by one and a half miles of defensive walls, enclosing a complex of palaces and entertainment halls, projecting balconies, baths and indoor canals, and geometrical gardens, as well as an ornate mosque.

3. The Gateway of India, Mumbai

Standing an impressive 85 feet tall and located on the waterfront at Mumbai Harbor on the tip of Apollo Bunder, overlooking the Arabian Sea, the iconic Gateway of India is a bold yellow basalt arch of colonial triumph and a must-see when in Mumbai. Incorporating Islamic styles of 16th-century Gujarat, it was built to commemorate the arrival of King George V and his wife Queen Mary in 1911 and was opened with much pomp and ceremony in 1924. It was, for a while, the tallest structure in the city.



4. Amber Palace, Jaipur



Amber Palace or Amber Fort, also spelt Amer, was built as a fortified palace in 1592 by Maharaja Man Singh I and has long served as the capital of Jaipur. Carved high up into the hillside, the fort is accessible on foot via a steep climb from the town below. You will enter Amber Fort through the Sun Gate (Suraj Pol), which leads to the Jaleb Chowk, the first courtyard, with its many decorated elephants, and the Shila Devi Temple, dedicated to the goddess of war.

5. Agra Fort



With the Taj Mahal located so close by, it is easy to forget that Agra has one of the finest Mughal forts in India. Built as a military structure in 1565 by Emperor Akbar with later additions by Shah Jahan, Agra's Red Fort is an interesting mix of both Hindu and Muslim influences. The fort is entered through Amar Singh Gate with its low outer wall and dogleg design built to confuse attackers, and you can expect to be truly amazed as you walk through courtyard after courtyard of this palatial red-sandstone and marble fortress.

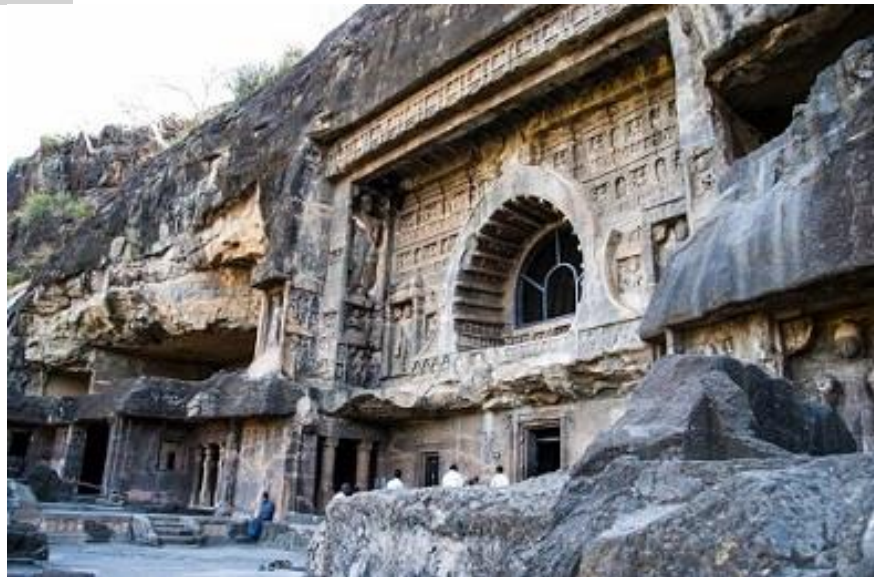
6. Mysore Palace



The seven palaces that make up the Mysore Palace complex are nothing short of spectacular. The Wodeyars ruled Mysore from 1399 to 1950. The original palace was built of wood in 1399, and was burnt down in 1897, during the wedding of Jayalakshammanni, the eldest daughter of Chamaraja Wodeyar, and was rebuilt in 1912 in Indo-Saracenic style, blending together Hindu, Muslim, Rajput, and Gothic styles of architecture.

It is a three-storied stone structure, with deep pink marble domes and a 145 foot five-storied ivory tower. An imposing sculpture of Gajalakshmi with her elephants sits above the central arch, she is the goddess of wealth, prosperity, good luck, and abundance. The palace is surrounded by a large garden and hosts an annual arts and culture festival.

7. Ajanta Caves



The magnificent Ajanta Caves are rock-cut cave monuments excavated out of a vertical cliff above the left bank of the River Waghora in the hills of Ajanta in the Aurangabad district of India's Maharashtra state. They are thirty in number, including the unfinished ones, connected with the river by rock-cut staircases. Dating from the 2nd century BC to about 480 AD, they were abandoned around 650 AD and forgotten until 1819, when a British hunting party stumbled upon them.

Their isolation contributed to the fine state of preservation in which some of their paintings remain to this day. The well-preserved murals depict everything from battlefields to sailing ships, city streets and teeming animal-filled forests to snow-capped mountains. The gateway to the Ajanta Caves and the equally spectacular Ellora Caves, is the city of Aurangabad.

Comments

First off, I have never been to India and I'm pretty sure I won't be going in this lifetime. If you would have asked me to name two cities in India, my answer would have been Bombay and Calcutta. Today, these two cities do not exist, they have been renamed. Why?

The city's official name change to Mumbai from Bombay happened when regional political party Shiv Sena came into power in 1995. The Shiv Sena saw Bombay as a legacy of British colonialism and wanted the city's name to reflect its Maratha heritage, hence renaming it to pay tribute to the goddess Mumbadevi.

The British called Kolkata Calcutta, but it was always called Kolkata in Bengali — derived from the name of one of the three villages said to have become the modern city of Kolkata. In 2001 the government of West Bengal decided to officially change its capital city's name to Kolkata to reflect its original Bengali pronunciation.

How are United States and India relations?

India has been a “strategic partner” of the US for at least two decades, but they're not formal allies. That means that while they have much in common — two large, heterogeneous democracies — New Delhi doesn't feel bound to sync its world view with Washington.

India is also friends with Russia. But at the heart of this relationship is New Delhi's long dependence on Moscow as its main supplier of weapons and cheap Russian oil.

In conclusion, I think the U.S. should try harder to be friends with India. I trust India more than Russia, China and/or Pakistan.

Regardless, India is an interesting country.

Bigdrifter44@gmail.com

Bigdrifter.com