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# India: facts and figures

**Capital**

New Delhi

**Official language**

Hindi

**Land area**

3,287,263 sq km (the sixth largest country in the world)

**Population (2001 census)**

1.027 billion (the second largest in the world)

**Density of population**

324 per sq km (average)

**Population growth (1991–2001)**

21.34%

**Main cities** (population in millions, 2001 census)

Mumbai (Bombay) 16.4; Kolkata (Calcutta) 13.2;  
Delhi 12.8; Chennai (Madras) 6.4;  
Bangalore (5.7); Hyderabad 5.5

**Religions**

Hinduism (83%); Islam (11%); Christianity (2.3%);  
Sikhism (1.9%); Buddhism (0.8%);  
Jainism (0.4%)

**Life expectancy**

64 years (male) and 65 years (female)

**Sex ratio**

933 females per 1000 males  
(927 females per 1000 males in the 0–6 age group)

**Literacy**

65 per cent (males 76 per cent;  
females 54 per cent)

**Infant mortality**

72 per 1000 live births

**Maternal mortality**

437 per 100,000 live births

**Rural population**

72 per cent

**Poverty**

26 per cent live below the official poverty line

**Agriculture**

64 per cent of total work force  
26 per cent of gross domestic product  
18 per cent of India's exports

**Currency** (August 2004)

85 Indian Rupees = £1  
46 Indian Rupees = \$1

**Per capita income (annual)**

Rs 16,486 (£194)

**Foreign trade**

Exports \$44 billion; imports \$50 billion

**India's share in world trade**

0.7 per cent

**UNDP Human Development Index Ranking**

124<sup>th</sup> place among 173 nations

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# Dates and events

*Some landmarks in the development of modern India*

- 1526** Babur founds the Mughal empire, with its capital in Agra.
- 1612** British East India Company establishes trading post at Surat in Gujarat.
- 1798** Company troops begin military campaigns to subdue Indian territories.
- 1799** Fourth Mysore War ends in victory for the British.
- 1818** East India Company gains virtual control of India.
- 1853** First railway line opened in India, from Bombay to Thane.
- 1857** Indian Mutiny (First War of Independence).
- 1858** British crown assumes direct governance of India.
- 1885** Foundation of Indian National Congress.
- 1906** Foundation of Muslim League.
- 1919** Jallianwala Bagh massacre of demonstrators at Amritsar.
- 1920** Indian Congress launches campaign of non-violent resistance to British rule, inspired by Mohandas K. Gandhi.
- 1929** Resolution of Independence passed at Lahore congress.
- 1947** India partitioned: creation of Pakistan (East and West). India achieves independence.
- 1948** Mahatma Gandhi assassinated. Kashmir accedes to union with India.
- 1950** India becomes a Republic (26 January).
- 1951** First Five Year Plan inaugurated.
- 1964** Death of Prime Minister Nehru.
- 1965** Hostilities with Pakistan over Kashmir. Hindi proclaimed national language.
- 1966** Nehru's daughter, Indira Gandhi (Congress Party), becomes Prime Minister.
- 1971** Second Indo-Pakistan War. India recognises new State of Bangladesh (formerly East Pakistan).
- 1974** India becomes sixth nuclear power by exploding nuclear device.
- 1975** Declaration of Emergency, in response to 'internal disturbance', drastically curtails political and individual rights.
- 1983** India's multi-purpose satellite, INSAT-1B, successfully blasts off aboard space shuttle 'Challenger' from Cape Canaveral, USA.
- 1984** Indian troops enter Golden Temple in Amritsar to evict militant Sikhs. Indira Gandhi assassinated by Sikh bodyguards; succeeded as Prime Minister by her son, Rajiv Gandhi. Bhopal disaster: several thousand people die in major industrial accident.

**1990** Renewed violence in Jammu and Kashmir; Governor's rule imposed.

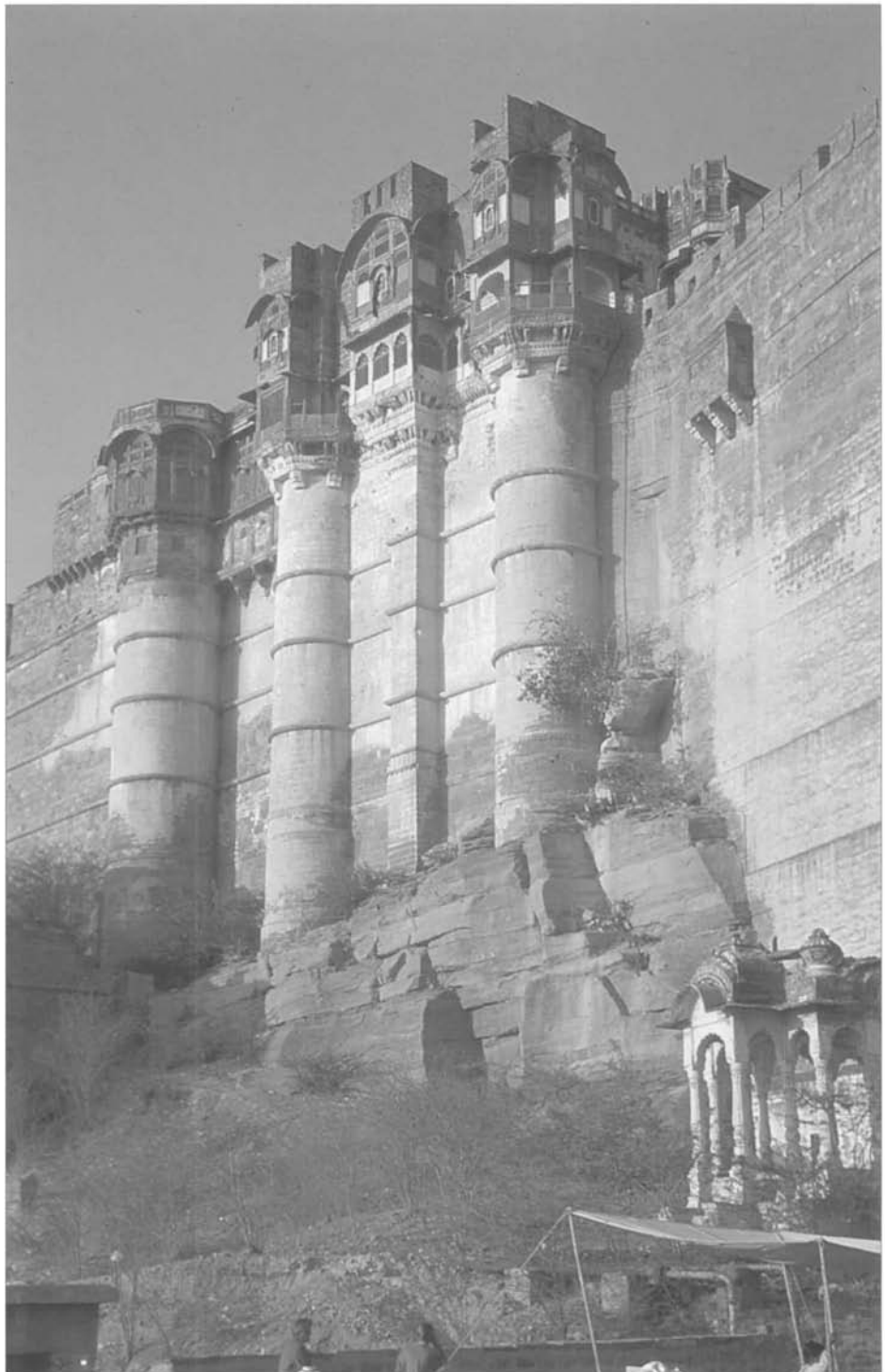
**1991** Former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi assassinated by a member of the Tamil liberation movement.

**1992** Increasing popular support for Hindu nationalist BJP. Hindu militants destroy Babri Masjid mosque in Ayodhya; widespread communal riots ensue.

**1998** BJP victory in parliamentary elections. Atal Behari Vajpayee sworn in as Prime Minister. India conducts nuclear tests, prompting similar tests by Pakistan.

**2004** BJP defeated in parliamentary elections. Manmohan Singh (Congress Party) is sworn in as Prime Minister, leading the United Progressive Alliance.

▼ *The Golden Fort of Jaisalmer, Rajasthan*



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And I am indebted to the teams at the various Oxfam offices, for making it all possible.

*Pamela Bhagat*



Shailan Parker/Oxfam

◀ A primary school class,  
Hyderabad

▶ Village musicians playing  
traditional instruments

# Oxfam GB in India

Jonathan Rainford/Oxfam



For more than 50 years Oxfam Great Britain has been part of the dynamics of change in India, participating in the nation's progress, while sharing its concerns about persistent poverty, inadequate public services, communal conflicts, natural disasters, and the deterioration of natural resources.

Oxfam in India is responding to these challenges through three main programmes, which support sustainable livelihoods, help communities to prepare for and respond to disasters, and promote gender equality. Four pilot programmes focus on urban poverty, minority girls' education, reduction of communal conflict, and HIV/AIDS. Oxfam's work links grassroots development initiatives with high-level advocacy to influence public policy and achieve lasting change. Oxfam works on development programmes in ten states but responds to crises, as appropriate, in any part of the country.

Oxfam's commitment to listening and learning from the grassroots and its practice of engaging in debate with policy makers give it access to information

at all levels. This is apparent in the types of partner that Oxfam works with: a disaster-response and advocacy group in Wirepetta; in Nagaland, an organisation that integrates people living with HIV/AIDS into society; in Lucknow, a resource centre for a campaign to claim constitutional rights on behalf of women; in Jodhpur, a group that helps *dalits* to challenge discrimination; in Rapar, a natural-resource management programme; and 250 other organisations across the country. In the past, many partnerships that began with their first small grant from Oxfam, like *ANAND*, *UMBVS* (*Urmul Marusthali Bunkar Vikas Samiti*), and *Tarun Bharat Sangh*, have received international recognition for their work with poor communities.

Oxfam recognises the power of civil-society institutions to influence development policy and practice in India. It works with other elements of civil society to ensure that the interests of poor people are placed at the heart of policy and practice in matters such as conflict resolution, forest management, rights over resources for secure livelihoods, and market access for small producers. Oxfam's long history of working in India means that it has rich institutional experience on which to draw in the search for effective and creative approaches to the challenges of poverty and suffering.

Oxfam's resources are modest compared with the problems that it seeks to address. Its funds are managed under two heads. 'Restricted' funds are given by specific donors for special programmes agreed in consultation with the donor. During emergencies these monies may rise to £4 million. 'Unrestricted' funds are a general pool of funds raised as donations from individuals and organisations. These funds can be used for any programmatic and administrative work. In the budgets for the year 2004-05, the unrestricted funds are £1,991,999 and restricted funds are £2,090,000.

Oxfam's head office in New Delhi is supported by four regional offices in Lucknow, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, and Kolkata; it co-ordinates programmes spread over the whole country. In early 2004, the South Asia regional office of Oxfam GB moved from Dhaka in Bangladesh to New Delhi, in view of the strategic position that India occupies in the region and increasingly on the international stage. The dynamics of change continue within Oxfam too.

◀ Earthquake response, 2001: unloading Oxfam water and sanitation equipment at Ahmedabad airport

▼ Kilolai Naadi in drought-ridden Rajasthan: women collecting water from a pond constructed by a local NGO, with Oxfam support



Shailan Parker/Oxfam

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► *Mohammad Shakeel helps his mother to prepare the family's evening meal at their home in Hyderabad.*

