

MPSC Study Notes: Geography of Maharashtra

In the post-independence period, in 1956, the states were reorganized according to the language structure of the country. Accordingly, Andhra Pradesh became the first state-based on linguistic principles. The states were restructured according to the same restructuring. As a result of this restructuring, there are five Marathi speaking districts in the state of Hyderabad (Aurangabad, Beed, Parbhani, Osmanabad, Nanded) and eight Marathi speaking districts in the central state of Vidarbha (Buldhana, Akola, Amravati, Wardha, Nagpur, Bhandara, Yavatmal, Chanda). And 13 districts in the Bombay Presidency. The bilingual state of Mumbai was formed on November 1, 1956, comprising 26 districts and Gujarat. But the demand for an independent state for Marathi speakers led to agitation in the then bilingual state. After the sacrifice of 106 martyrs in the state, on May 1, 1960, Maharashtra became an independent state for Marathi speakers, with 26 districts except for Gujarat.

Establishment of Mumbai State (bilingual)	November 1, 1956
Establishment of the state	May 1, 1960
Capital	Mumbai
Sub capital	Nagpur
First Chief Minister	Yashwantrao Chavan
The first governor	Sriprakash

Latitude extension of Maharashtra: - 15'37 North latitude to 22'6 North Latitude

Longitude extension of Maharashtra: - 72'36 East longitude to 80'54 East longitude.

Area: - The total area of the State is 3,07,713 Sq. In terms of km and area, it ranks third in the country after Rajasthan (3,42,239 sq km) and Madhya Pradesh (3,08,313 sq km).

Maharashtra occupies the western and central parts of India. The state has a long coastline (720 km) stretching along the Arabian Sea.

- Deccan plateau is one of the prominent features of Maharashtra.
- The plateau is the largest in western and southern India, nearly 100 m in the north and 1000 m in the south, and forms a triangular shape.
- Note: the plateau extends over eight Indian states: Maharashtra, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Kerala.
- In the north, the plateau is separated by Satpura and Vindhya ranges from Gangetic plains forming a natural boundary.
- Deccan plateau is separated from the Konkan coastline by the Ghats, the succession of steep hills which are periodically bisected by narrow roads.
- Many famous hill stations are located in these Ghats.
- The Western Ghats are also known as the Sahyadri Mountain range.
- The Sahyadris and Satpura mountain ranges serve as natural borders for the State.
- The Sahyadris provide a physical barrier to the state from the open sea, as the hill runs parallel to the coast. Sahyadris have an average elevation of 1200 meters (4000 ft).

- On the east, the Satpura Hills along the north and Bhamgarh-Chiroli- Gaikhuri ranges act as protective barriers.
- By area, Maharashtra is the third largest state after Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, and it is the second-largest state by population.
- Maharashtra has 6 administrative divisions, 36 districts, 535 cities, 355 talukas, and 63,663 villages.
- Kalsubai is the highest elevated point (1646 meters) in Maharashtra.
- Kalsubai Harishchandragad Wildlife Sanctuary is located in these mountains.
- The mountain range situated on the Deccan Plateau is a large igneous province, made of solidified flood basalt and dates back to the Cenozoic era.
- Konkan plains are present towards the west of Maharashtra and stretch from 50-80 km in width.
- The State has 17% of the total area as forest, and a major part of the forest is in the Sahyadri and eastern part.
- Prominent rivers of Maharashtra: Krishna, Godavari, Bhima, Tapi-Purna, and Wainganga.
- 1821 dams are located in Maharashtra. The central part of Maharashtra receives low rainfall.

Major geographical regions of Maharashtra

- The State is divided into 5 geographical regions.
 - a. Konkan [Konkan Division]: The western coastal region is located between the Sea and the Western Ghats.
 - b. Kadesh [Nashik Division]: This region lies in the valley of the Tapi river, this region forms the north-western part of Maharashtra and is in the central part of India. The major cities of this region are Nashik, Dhule, Jalgaon, and Bhusawal.
 - c. Marathwada [Aurangabad Division]: historically, it was part of the princely states of Hyderabad until 1956. It forms the southeastern part of Maharashtra. Major cities: Nanded and Aurangabad.
 - d. Vidarbha [Nagpur and Amravati Division]: this is the easternmost region and was formerly part of Central Provinces and Berar. Major cities: Nagpur (winter session of the state assembly is held), Amaravati, Akola, and Chandrapur are the main cities of the region.
 - e. Desh [Pune Division]: Desh is also known as Paschim Maharashtra. It is a prosperous belt. Farmers in this region are wealthy as the land is fertile. Sangli district is known for a large number of sugar factories and sugar processing plants. It is bound by Konkan Division to the west, Aurangabad division to the east, Nashik Division to the north, and Karnataka State to the south. Paschim Maharashtra is regarded as a highly developed area as its annual income is higher than the average GDP of the country.

Climate of Maharashtra

- The state witnesses a tropical climate and there are three distinct seasons:
 - a. Summer: March-May, temperature- 22to 43 degrees Celsius
 - b. Monsoon: June-September, July is the wettest month of Maharashtra, and the rainy season starts retreating from September onwards.
 - c. Winter: October-February
- Maharashtra has varied rainfall and many regions are regarded as dry regions.

- Heavy rainfall regions witness an average of 200 cm and the regions included are Raigarh, Thane, Ratnagiri, and Sindhudurg districts.
- Low rainfall regions, average 50 cm, include Nashik, Pune, Dhule, Jalgaon, Ahmednagar, Satara, Sangli, Kolhapur, and Solapur.
- Rainfall is higher in areas adjacent to the Sahayadri mountains such as along the Konkan coast and foothills of mountain ranges.
- Central Maharashtra receives comparatively less rainfall.
- Eastern Vidarbha receives good rainfall due to the influence of the Bay of Bengal branch.
- October to February the State witness pleasant weather (12 to 34 degrees Celsius).

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