

Did You Know ...?

- Chess was invented in India?
- India has the most post offices in the world?
- Until 1896, India was the only source for diamonds?
- The number system was invented by India? Arybhatta was the scientist who invented the digit zero?
- India is the only other country, other than the US and Japan, that has built a super computer indigenously?
- Algebra, Trigonometry and Calculus are studies that originated in India?

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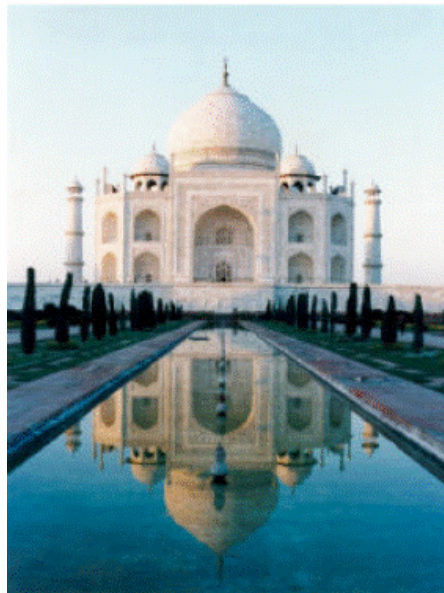
India: The Land of Mystery and Diversity

India is a fascinating country. It is home to thousand year old ornately sculptured temples, the world famous Taj Mahal, modern skyscrapers and slums. It is framed by the daunting Himalaya's in the north, the Arabian Sea and Pakistan in the west and the Bay of Bengal and Bangladesh in the east. The southern tip of India is washed by the waves of the azure Indian Ocean separating it from Sri Lanka. India contains an astonishing variety of geographical features from stretches of eternally frozen glaciers, deep rain-forests, fertile valleys, blistering deserts, and palm sprinkled silvery beaches.

It is an ancient land, with an absorbing history. The Neolithic Indus Valley civilization, almost 5000 years ago, extended much over what is now Pakistan and western India. The Aryans spread the Vedic civilization until the 1st millennium from the west through the Gangetic plains in the east. In the south, Dravidian culture was prominent and flourishing. Great religions were born, vast empires rose and fell; and waves of invaders repeatedly attacked India for its treasures. From the 10th century Islamic empires were established, ending with the Mogul Empire. European colonialism began in the 17th century, ushering in a new era in the

region, by Portugal, Holland, France and lastly, Britain. India gained independence in the late 1940's mainly through the non-violent movement for freedom and justice led by M.K. Gandhi, which left an incredible impression throughout the modern world.

Over thousands of years, geographical, historical and religious influences have weaved the colorful fabric of Indian culture, one of the oldest know to humanity. Tall, fair skinned and green eyed Aryans, small framed Asians and dark skinned Dravidians, have all left a complex demographic profile in the society. Religion, in many forms, is the basis of India's cultural context. This is entwined with every aspect of life and culture in India. The diversity is reflected in the 17 major languages and 900 dialects. Hindi is the National language but use of English remains extensive in education and business. Traditions, rituals, art, music and dance, drama, literature, movies, recreation, sports and cuisine all have their distinct flavors depending on the region of the country. It never



fails to amaze observers, who witness bullock carts competing with motor vehicles, street vendors selling their wares in the shadow of fashionable shopping centers and snake charmers existing amicably with physicians and scientists.

Independent for only 50 years, modern India is also a struggling young

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country, trying to meet up with the challenges of a staggering population of 1.1 billion, a vastly diverse democratic society and fast advancing global technological progress. After extensive economic reforms in the early 90's, India's economy began to grow at a high rate as markets opened up for international investment. Foreign companies realizing India's potential have made efforts to get more involved. Both imports and exports are growing and overseas markets are being explored by



newly confident Indian entrepreneurs. Presently, India is emerging as an economic super power with vast human and natural resources and knowledge base.

Traveling in India can be a colorful, inspiring and interesting experience. It can also be confusing, chaotic and frustrating. Many love it, some are challenged by it, but no one can come back indifferent. India almost demands response from its visitors. It is essential to get reliable information when planning a trip to India. Health and safety tips from a travel organization or health clinic are very important.

More and more foreigners are visiting India for reasons other than sight seeing. Companies are sending their employees as expatriates and consultants are being invited to live and work in India. To meet their needs, many local and international organizations are available to assist with obtainable resources. Indian embassy and consulates are good sources for such a search.

The spirit of India eludes easy definition or explanation. India is many things to many people and each individual comes away with a unique experience.

- Subha Addy, LCSW-ACP, AP
for CAI

Suggested Reading: What's This India Business?

Globalization, to many companies these days, means moving from the West to India. The already vast country is growing economically at a tremendous rate, and author Paul Davies explains offshoring, outsourcing and the global services revolution in India in his book, "What's this India Business?"

The introduction makes the reader familiar with India, including its weather and education, and not only brings the reader up to date about the growing economy, but also introduces the future of offshoring to India, including statistics of pioneer companies.

His examples allow the reader to gain a real perspective on the impact India and its global services revolution have on Western economies, and in turn the colossal impact of those businesses on India's economy.

The title of the book is discussed throughout the book as well as the fundamental nuances of the culture which favors familial relationships, and the importance of these when doing business in India.

Divided into three parts, with several sub-titles for each chapter, the book makes for an organized read from cover to cover, or allows you to pinpoint specific interest on the content pages.

The final chapter touches upon corporate social responsibility and encourages a positive approach to outsourcing. This book is required reading for anyone who is associated with India in business.

-Tjidzani Maphosa



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in India programs

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