

1. Details of Module and its structure

Module Detail	
Subject Name	Geography
Course Name	Geography 02 (Class XI, Semester - 2)
Module Name/Title	Peninsular India: Hills and Plateau, Indian Desert, Coastal Plain and Indian Islands
Module Id	kegy_20203
Pre-requisites	Basic concepts about Peninsular India, Indian Desert ,Coastal Plain and Indian Islands
Objectives	After going through this lesson, the learners will be able to understand the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Main features and characteristics of Hills and Plateau of Peninsular India• Main features and characteristics of Indian Desert• Main features and characteristics of Western and Eastern Coastal Plains of India• Importance, Location and features of Island groups of Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea
Keywords	Deccan Trap, Central Highland, Coastal plain, Island, Ravines, Rift valley, Gap, Pat, Block Mountains,

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Peninsular India: Hills and Plateau

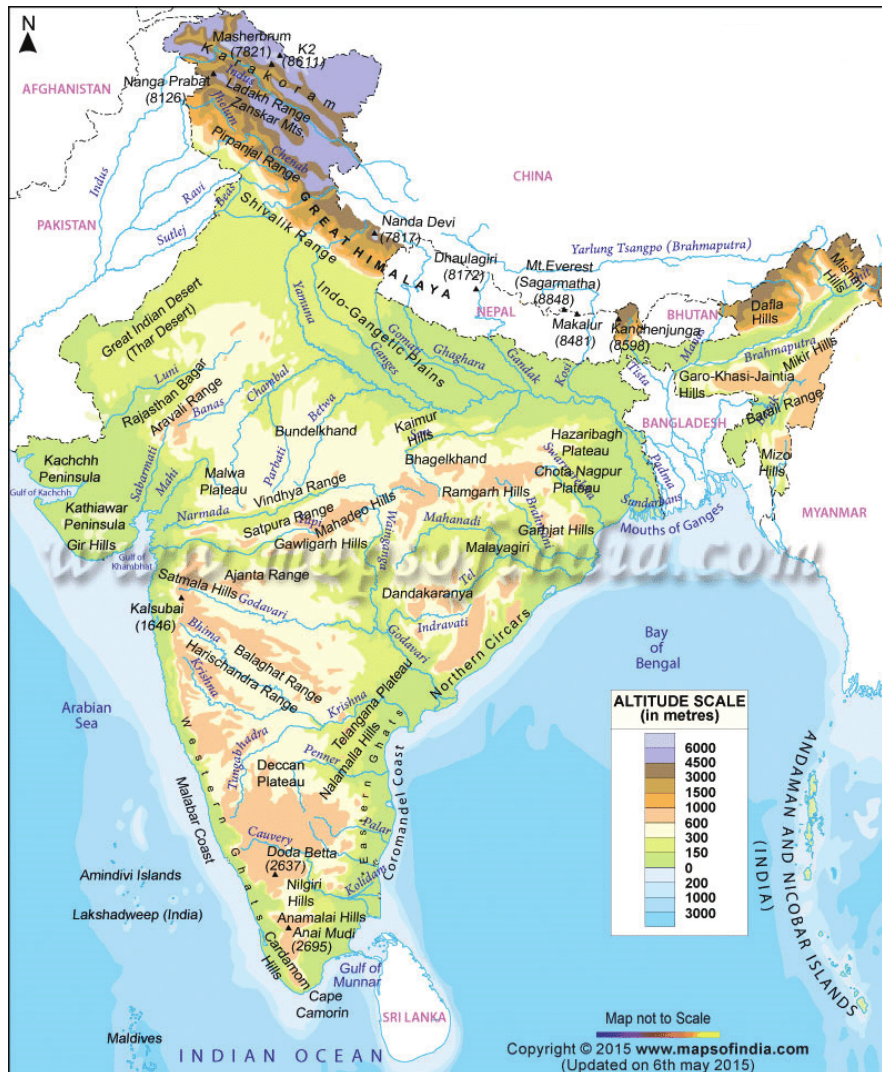
Rising from the height of 150 m. above the river plains up to an elevation of 600-900 m is the irregular triangle landmass known as the Peninsular plateau.



Peninsular plateau

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Delhi ridge in the northwest, (extension of Aravalis), the Rajmahal hills in the east, Gir range in the west and the Cardamom hills in the south constitute the outer extent of the Peninsular plateau. However, an extension of this is also seen in the northeast, in the form of Shillong and Karbi-Anglong plateau. The Peninsular India is made up of a series of plateaus (plateaus) such as the Hazaribagh plateau, the Palamu plateau, the Ranchi plateau, the Malwa plateau, the Salem-Coimbatore plateau and the Karnataka plateau, etc.



India Physical Divisions

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/324116194/figure/fig1/AS:610071595720704@1522463811005/Topography-map-of-India-wwwmapsofindiacom-Carta-topografica-dellIndia.png>

This is one of the oldest and the most stable landmass of India. The general elevation of the plateau is from the west to the east, which is also proved by the pattern of the flow of rivers. Name some rivers of the Peninsular plateau which have their confluence in the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian sea and mention some landforms which are typical to the east flowing rivers but are absent in the west flowing rivers. Some of the important physiographic features of this

region are tors, block mountains, rift valleys, spurs, bare rocky structures, series of hummocky hills and wall-like quartzite dykes offering natural sites for water storage. The western and northwestern part of the plateau has an emphatic presence of black soil.



[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d4/Hill Station Of %22 Savanadurga %22 the largest monolith hills in Asia.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d4/Hill_Station_of_Savanadurga_the_largest_monolith_hills_in_Asia.jpg)



[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/f9/Hampi Fluss Haupttempel.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/f9/Hampi_Fluss_Haupttempel.jpg)

This Peninsular plateau has undergone recurrent phases of upliftment and submergence accompanied by crustal faulting and fractures. (The Bhima fault needs special mention,

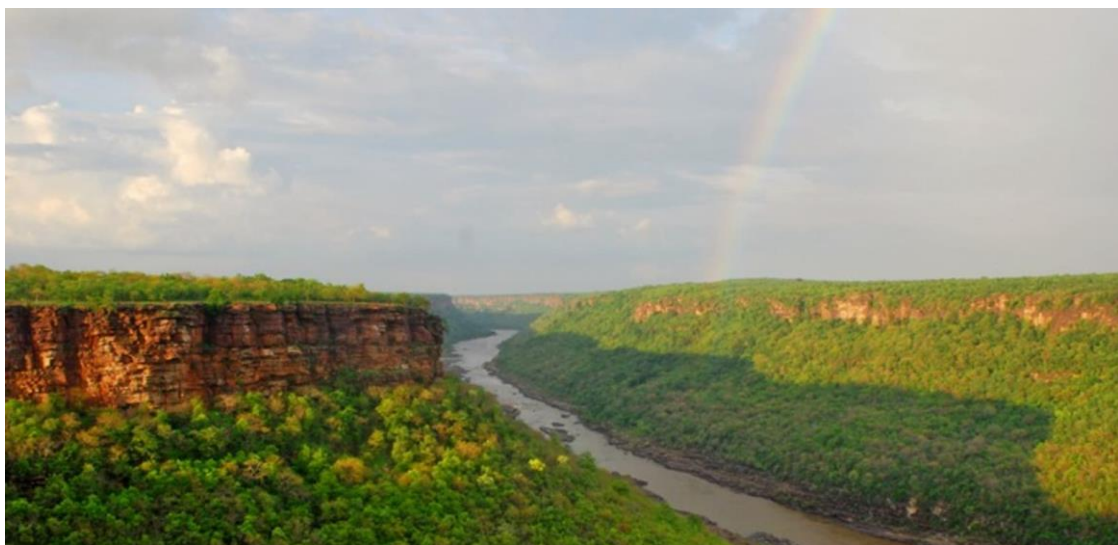
because of its recurrent seismic activities). These spatial variations have brought in elements of diversity in the relief of the peninsular plateau. The northwestern part of the plateau has a complex relief of ravines and gorges. The ravines of Chambal, Bhind and Morena are some of the well-known examples.



The ravines of Chambal

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[The_ravines_reminde_me_of_Chambal_Valley_in_India_%2836427459024%29.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/6/61/The_ravines_reminde_me_of_Chambal_Valley_in_India_%2836427459024%29.jpg)



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On the basis of the prominent relief features, the Peninsular plateau can be divided into three broad groups:

- (i) The Deccan Plateau
- (ii) The Central Highlands
- (iii) The Northeastern Plateau.

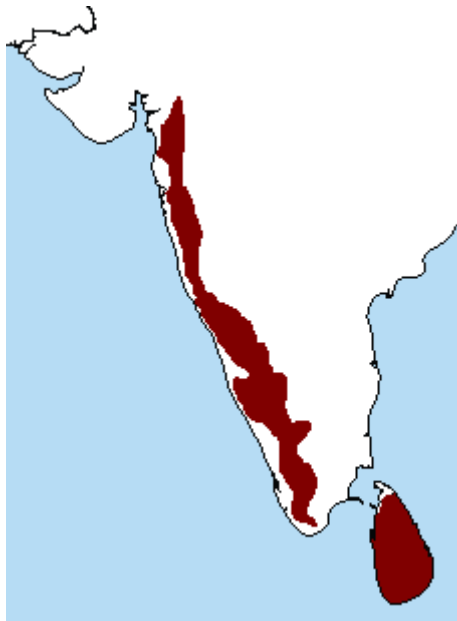
The Deccan Plateau

This is bordered by the Western Ghats in the west, Eastern Ghats in the east and the Satpura, Maikal range and Mahadeo hills in the north. Western Ghats are locally known by different names such as Sahyadri in Maharashtra, Nilgiri hills in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu and Anaimalai hills and Cardamom hills in Kerala.



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Western Ghats are comparatively higher in elevation and more continuous than the Eastern Ghats.



[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d0/Western_Ghats -
_Sri Lanka MAP.png](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d0/Western_Ghats_-_Sri_Lanka_MAP.png)

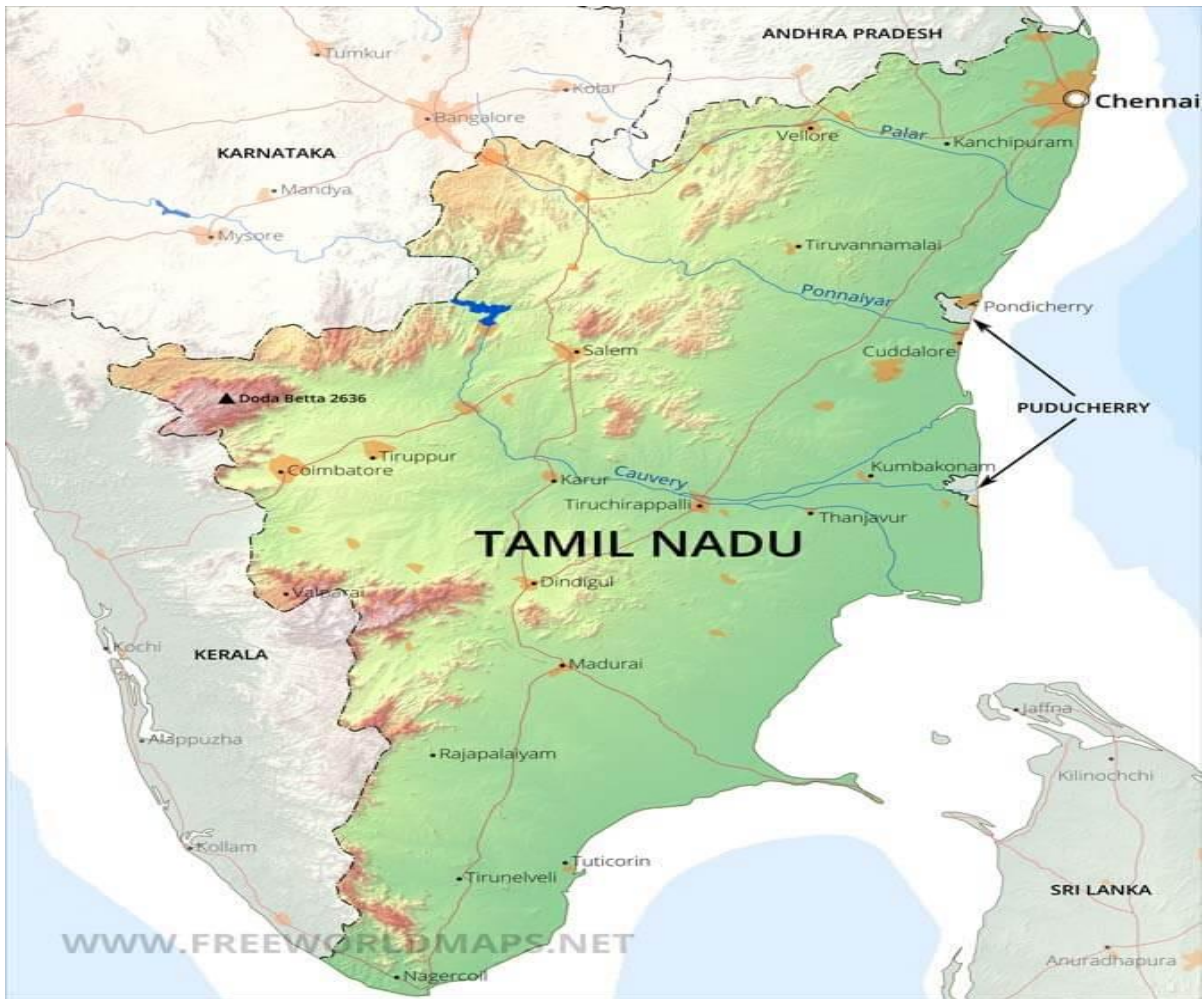
Their average elevation is about 1,500 m with the height increasing from north to south. 'Anaimudi' (2,695 m), the highest peak of Peninsular plateau is located on the Anaimalai hills of the Western Ghats followed by Dodabetta(2,637 m) on the Nilgiri hills.

Most of the Peninsular Rivers have their origin in the Western Ghats.



Anaimudi (2,695 m)

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/2b/Naikolli Mala near Anaimudi.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/2b/Naikolli_Mala_near_Anaimudi.jpg)



<https://www.freeworldmaps.net/asia/india/tamilnadu/tamilnadu.jpg>



Nilgiri hills

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/14/Nilgiri_mountain_view.jpg

Eastern Ghats comprising the discontinuous and low hills are highly eroded by the rivers such as the Mahanadi, the Godavari, the Krishna, the Kaveri, etc.



<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/f/f1/Indiahills.png/522px-Indiahills.png>

Some of the important ranges include the Javadi hills, the Palconda range, the Nallamala hills, the Mahendragiri hills, etc. The Eastern and the Western Ghats meet each other at the Nilgiri hills.



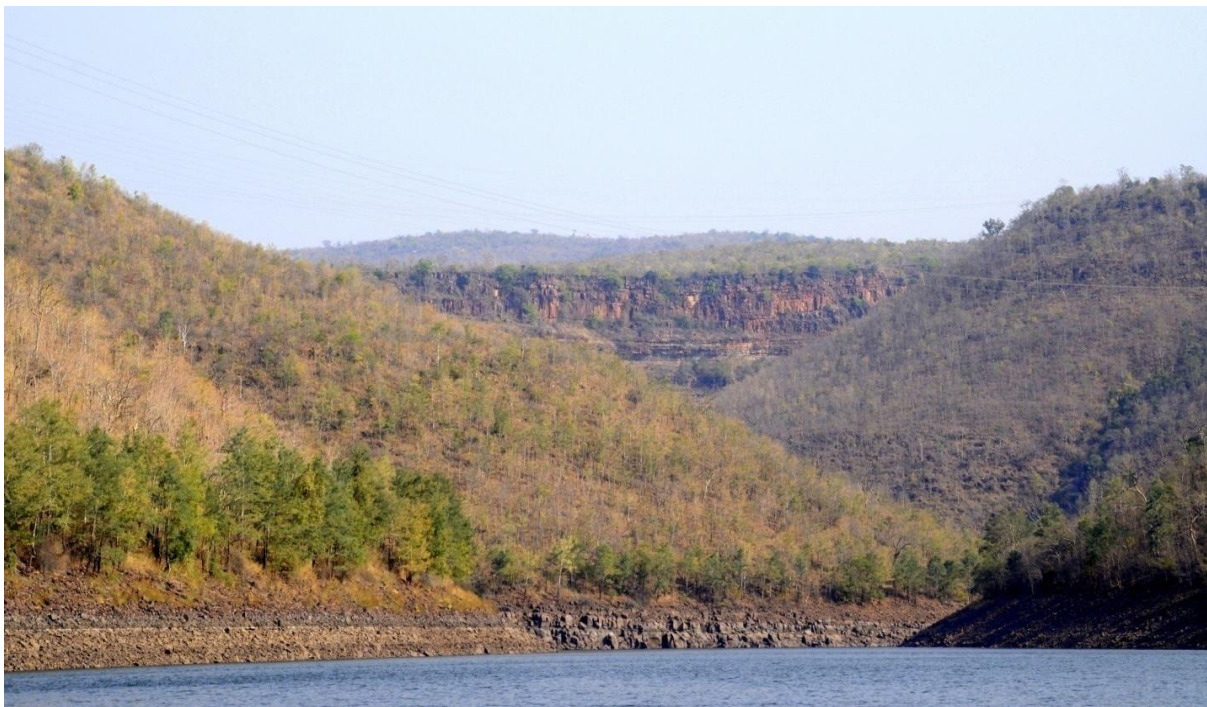
Javadi hills

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Palconda range

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/8/8f/Andhra Pradesh -
Landscapes from Andhra Pradesh%2C views from Indias South Central Railway %28
97%29.JPG/1024px-Andhra Pradesh -
Landscapes from Andhra Pradesh%2C views from Indias South Central Railway %28
97%29.JPG](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/8/8f/Andhra_Pradesh_-_Landscapes_from_Andhra_Pradesh%2C_views_from_Indias_South_Central_Railway_%2897%29.JPG/1024px-Andhra_Pradesh_-_Landscapes_from_Andhra_Pradesh%2C_views_from_Indias_South_Central_Railway_%2897%29.JPG)



Nallamala hills

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/eb/Nallamala Hills near Srisailam 01.j
pg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/eb/Nallamala_Hills_near_Srisailam_01.jpg)

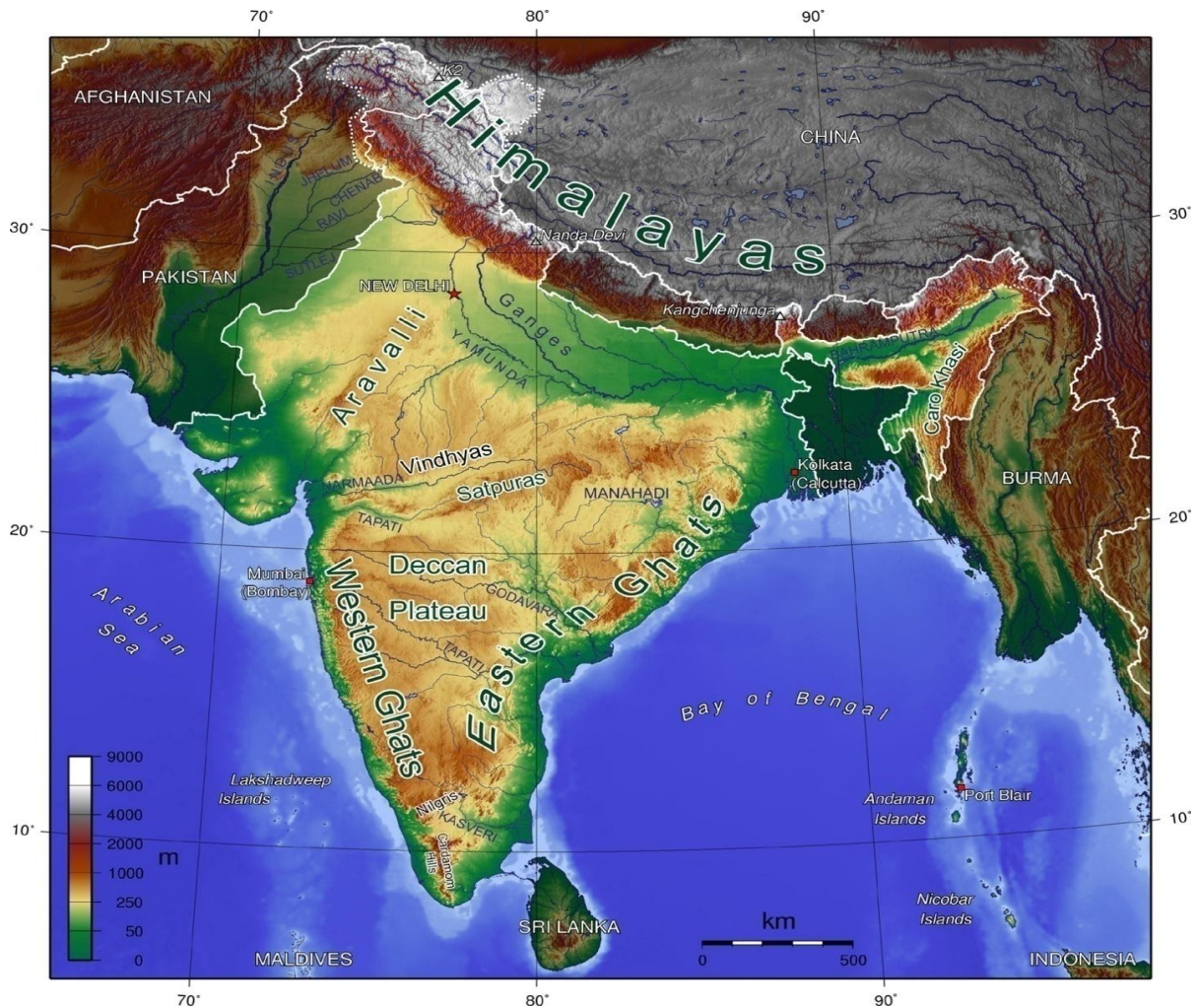


Nilgiri hills

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The Central Highlands

They are bounded to the west by the Aravali range. The Satpura range is formed by a series of scarp plateaus on the south, generally at an elevation varying between 600-900 m above the mean sea level. This forms the northern most boundary of the Deccan plateau. It is a classic example of the relict mountains which are highly denuded and form discontinuous ranges. The extension of the Peninsular plateau can be seen as far as Jaisalmer in the West, where it has been covered by the longitudinal sand ridges and crescent-shaped sand dunes called *barchans*. This region has undergone metamorphic processes in its geological history, which can be corroborated by the presence of metamorphic rocks such as marble, slate, gneiss, etc.



https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/7a/India_Geographic_Map.jpg



Aravali range

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Satpura range

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The general elevation of the Central Highlands ranges between 700-1,000 m above the mean sea level and it slopes towards the north and northeastern directions. Most of the tributaries of the river Yamuna have their origin in the Vindhyan and Kaimur ranges. Banas is the only significant tributary of the river Chambal that originates from the Aravalli in the west. An eastern extension of the Central Highland is formed by the Rajmahal hills, to the south of which lies a large reserve of mineral resources in the Chotanagpur plateau.



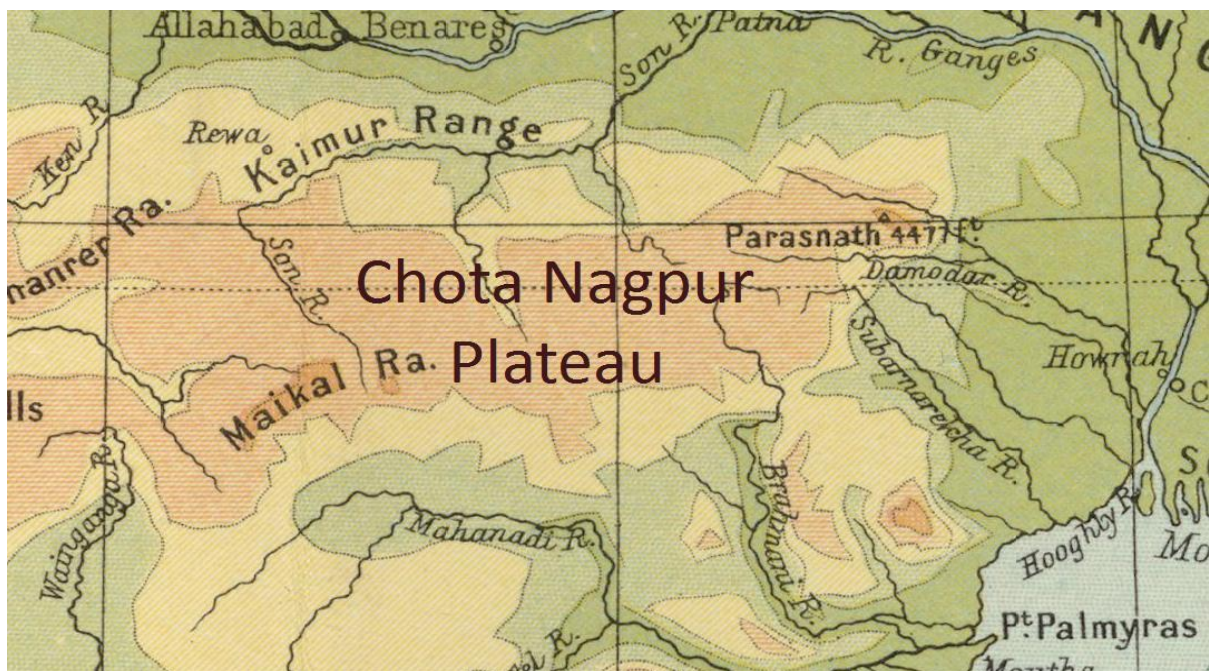
Vindhyan and Kaimur ranges

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Rajmahal hills

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Chotanagpur plateau

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The Northeastern Plateau

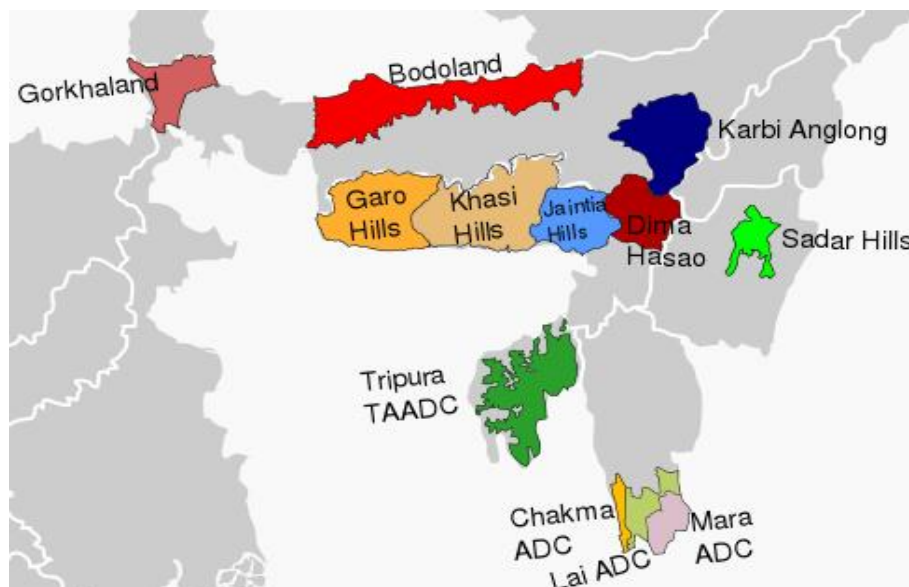
In fact it is an extension of the main peninsular plateau. It is believed that due to the force exerted by the northeastward movement of the Indian plate at the time of the Himalayan origin, a huge fault was created between the Rajmahal hills and the Meghalaya plateau. Later, this

depression got filled up by the deposition activity of the numerous rivers. Today, the Meghalaya and Karbi-Anglong plateau stand detached from the main Peninsular Block.



https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/1/1b/Assam_Karbi_Anglong_locator_map.svg/419px-Assam_Karbi_Anglong_locator_map.svg.png

The Meghalaya plateau is further sub-divided into three: (i) The Garo Hills; (ii) The Khasi Hills; (iii) The Jaintia Hills, named after the tribal groups inhabiting this region from west to east. An extension of this is also seen in the Karbi-Anglong plateau, Assam.



https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/1/10/NE_Autonomous_divisions_of_India.svg/489px-NE_Autonomous_divisions_of_India.svg.png

Similar to the Chotanagpur plateau, the Meghalaya plateau is also rich in mineral resources like coal, iron ore, sillimanite, limestone and uranium. This area receives maximum rainfall

from the south west monsoon. As a result, the Meghalaya plateau has a highly eroded surface. Cherrapunji displays a bare rocky surface devoid of any permanent vegetation cover consequently called 'wet desert'.



Cherrapunji

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/ef/Cherrapunji%2C_Shillong.jpg

Indian Desert

To the northwest of the Aravali hills lies the Great Indian Desert. The Great Indian Desert is also known as the 'Thar Desert'. It is a large, arid region, expanded in the north-western part of the [Indian subcontinent](#) forming a natural boundary between [India](#) and [Pakistan](#). This is renowned as the world's [17th largest desert](#) and the world's 9th largest subtropical desert. Almost a ratio of 85 per cent and 15 per cent of the desert are located in India and in Pakistan respectively. Most of the portions of the Great Indian Desert lie in Rajasthan covering an area of 208,110 km whereas only some portion is stretched in Haryana, Punjab and the [Rann of Kutch in Gujarat](#). In India, it extends between the [Aravalli Hills](#) in the north-east, the [Rann of Kutch](#) throughout the Arabian coast and the alluvial plains of the [Indus River](#) in the west and north-west.



It is a land of undulating topography dotted with longitudinal dunes and *barchans*. This region receives low rainfall below 150 mm per year; hence, it has arid climate with low vegetation cover. It is because of these characteristic features that this is also known as *Marusthali*.



Thar Desert

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It is believed that during the Mesozoic era, this region was under the sea. This can be corroborated by the evidence available at wood fossils park at Aakaland marine deposits around Brahmsar, near Jaisalmer (The approximate age of the wood fossils is estimated to be 180 million years). Though, the underlying rock structure of the desert is an extension of the Peninsular plateau, yet, due to extreme arid conditions, its surface features have been carved by physical weathering and wind actions. Some of the well pronounced desert land features present here are mushroom rocks, shifting dunes and oasis (mostly in its southern part). On the basis of the orientation, the desert can be divided into two parts: the northern part sloping towards Sindh and the southern towards the Rann of Kachchh.



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Rann of Kutch

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/9c/Salt_desert%2C_Great_Rann_of_Kutch_%2816494913578%29.jpg

Most of the rivers in this region are ephemeral. The Luni river flowing in the southern part of the desert is of some significance. Low precipitation and high evaporation makes it a water deficit region. There are some streams which disappear after flowing for some distance and present a typical case of inland drainage by joining a lake or playa. River Luni, the largest river of the desert falls in to the Runn of Kutch, making it a typical example of inland drainage. The lakes and the playas have brackish water which is the main source of obtaining salt.

Several salt water lakes are found in this region which provides a unique and comfortable environment for Thar Desert dwellers. Effect of weather on rocks is caused to derive salts which mix with the water of lakes and creates salt water lake in the region. But water of the [lakes](#) is not consumable for human beings. It is only used for drinking purposes of other animals and for viable farmland. Extreme lack of drinkable [water](#) is faced always in the Thar Desert. Paucity of rainfall is found mostly during the monsoon season and annual [rainfall](#) in the region is not exceeding over 100-500 millimeters. The Sāmbhar, Kuchaman, [Didwana](#) in Rajasthan and [Kharaghoda](#) in Gujarat, etc. are some of the famous salt water lakes in Thar Desert.



Sambhar Lake

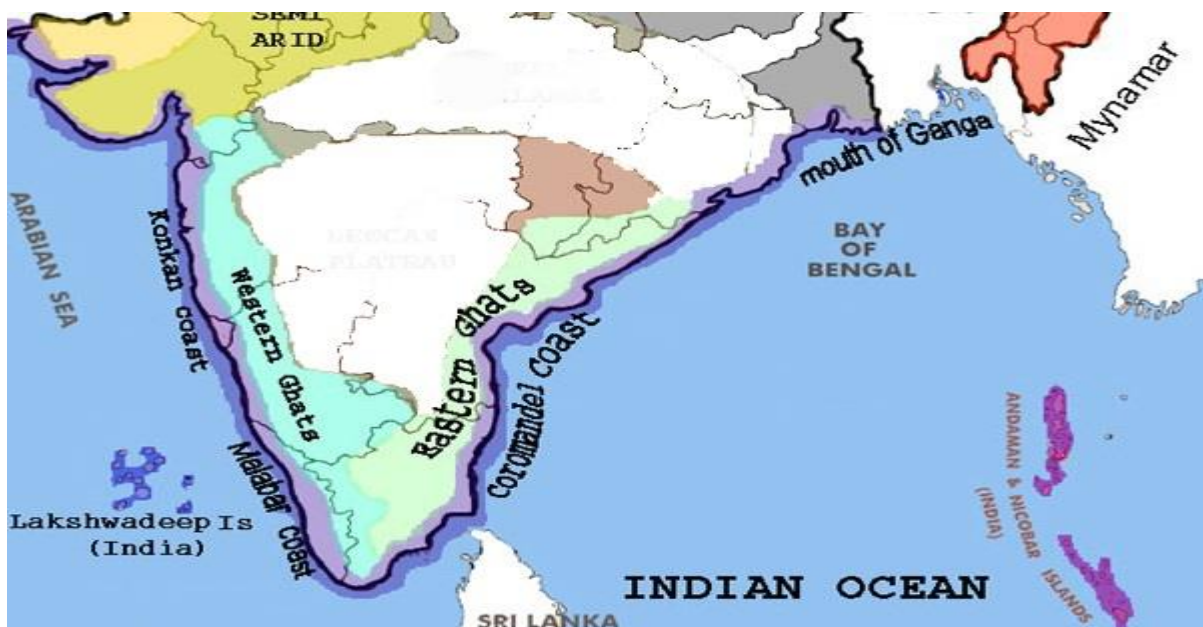
[https://www.py-tech.org/images/made/assets/images/editorial/Sambhar salt Rajasthan flickr Nevil Zaveri 750 564 80 s.jpg](https://www.py-tech.org/images/made/assets/images/editorial/Sambhar_salt_Rajasthan_flickr_Nevil_Zaveri_750_564_80_s.jpg)

Coastal Plain

Coastal plain is defined as an area of flat, low-lying land which is adjacent to a sea coast or a coastal plain is a flat, low-lying piece of land next to the ocean. Coastal plains are separated from the rest of the interior by nearby landforms, such as mountains. The coastal plains have been formed due to two possible reasons:

Coastal plains can form in two basic ways. Some start as a continental shelf, a flat piece of land located below sea level. When the ocean level falls, the land is exposed, creating a coastal plain. Sometimes, these coastal plains can extend far inland.

A coastal plain can also develop when river currents carry rock, soil and other sedimentary material into the ocean. Layers of this deposited sediment build up over time, creating a flat or gently sloping landscape



coastal plain

<https://m.jagranjosh.com/imported/images/E/Articles/Western-and-Eastern-Ghats.jpg>

Coastal Plain of India spans from the south west Indian coastline along the Arabian sea from the coastline of the Gulf of Kutch in its western most corner and stretches across the Gulf of Khambhat, and through the Salsette Island of Mumbai along the Konkan and southwards across the Raigad region and through Kanara and further down through Mangalore and along the Malabar through Cape Comorin in the southernmost region of South India with coastline along the Indian Ocean and through the Coromandel Coast or Cholamandalam Coastline on the South Eastern Coastline of the Indian Subcontinent along the Bay of Bengal through the Utkala-Kalinga region till the easternmost Corner of shoreline near the Sunderbans in West Bengal.



<https://www.iasmania.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/India-Physiography.png>

The coastal plains of India are located along the Arabian Sea coast in the west and along the Bay of Bengal coast in the east. According to their location to the east or west of the peninsula, they are called:

- A. West coastal plain and
- B. East coastal plain

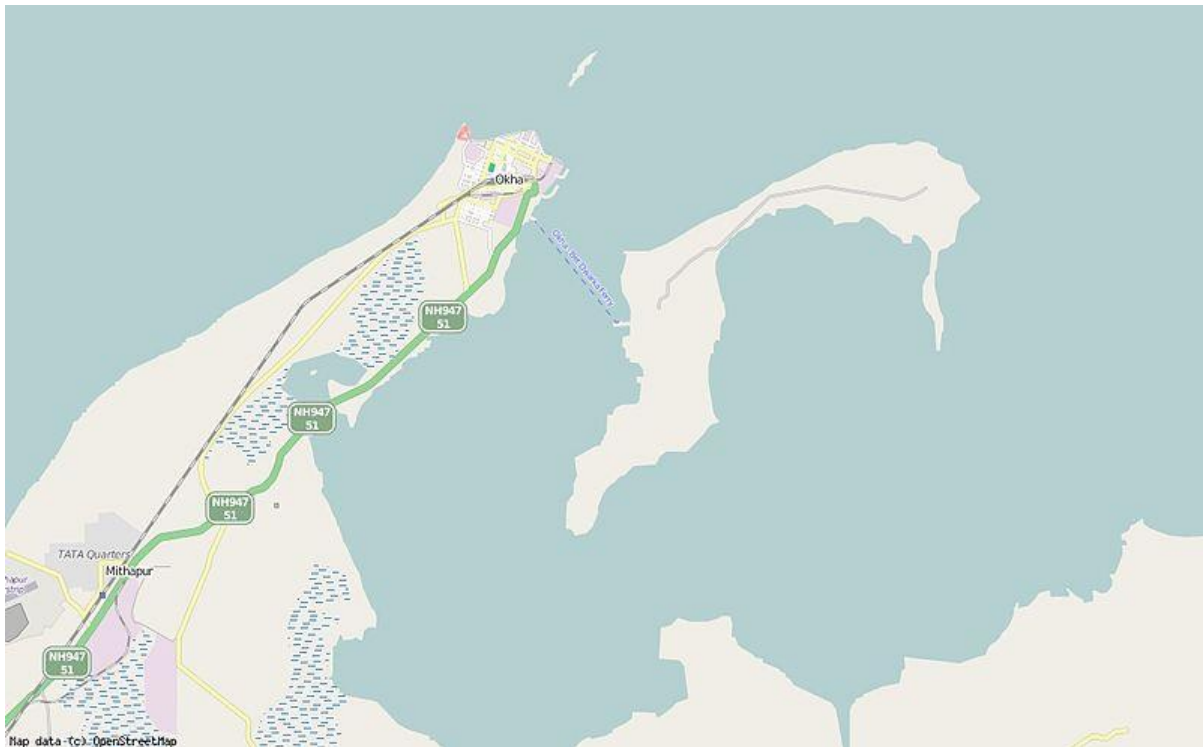
West Coastal Plain

The western coastal plains are an example of submerged coastal plain.



https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/c7/Porto_Covo_pano_April_2009-4.jpg

It is believed that the city of Dwarka which was once a part of the Indian mainland situated along the west coast is submerged under water. Because of this submergence it is a narrow belt and provides natural conditions for the development of ports and harbours.



Dwarka

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/9f/Bet_Dwarka Okha Gujarat Map.jpg/800px-Bet Dwarka Okha Gujarat Map.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/9f/Bet_Dwarka_Okha_Gujarat_Map.jpg/800px-Bet_Dwarka_Okha_Gujarat_Map.jpg)

Kandla, Mazagaon, JLN port NavhaSheva, Marmagao, Mangalore, Cochin, etc. are some of the important natural ports located along the west coast.

The area of Western Coastal Plains is found as narrow plain and it lies along the Western Coast or along the coast of Arabian Sea of India. It is situated as a thin strip of coastal plain extending 50 km width between the west coast of [India](#) and the hills of [Western Ghats](#). This plain area is located from nearest distance of south of river Tapi. It extends 1500 km from Cape Comorin or Kanyakumari in the south to Surat in north. Its width is ranging from 10 to 25 km from north to south. The western coastal plains are narrow in the middle and get broader towards north and south.

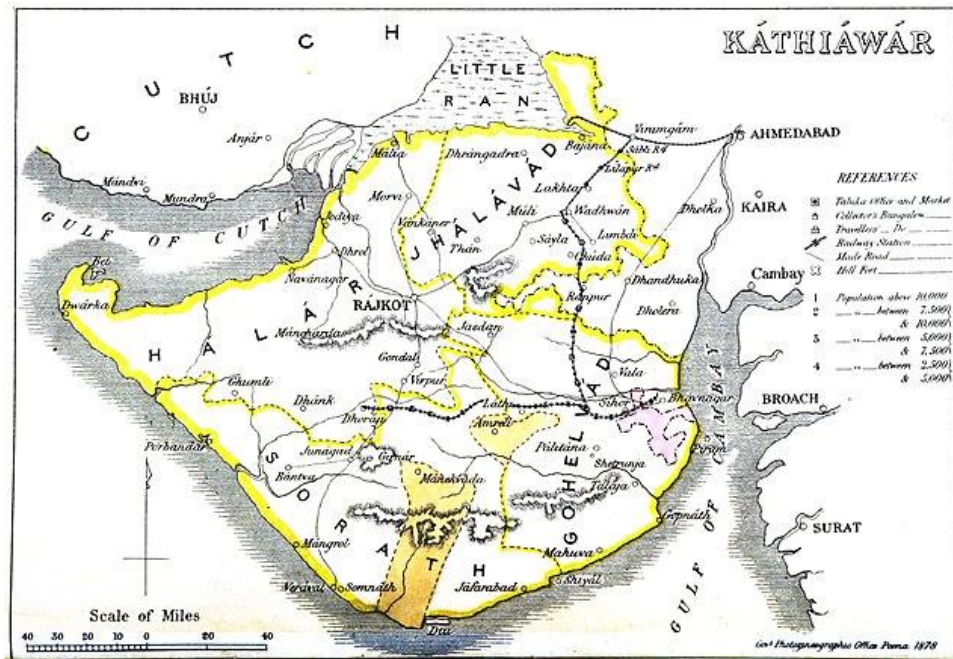
Extending from the Gujarat coast in the north to the Kerala coast in the south, the western coast may be divided into following divisions –

- Kathiawar Coast or Gujarat Coast
- Konkan Coast or Maharashtra Coast

- Canara Coast or Karnataka Coast
- Malabar Coast or Kerala Coast

Kathiawar Coast or Gujarat Coast

A vast plain area of central Gujarat state of western India is covered by Kathiawar Coast. The plains under this coast is extended about 33,000 square km. Geographical boundary of this Coast is created by the desert fringe of Rajasthan state to the north side whereas the hills of eastern Gujarat are situated in its east side. Its periphery is also formed by the Arabian Sea to the south and the Kathiawar Peninsula to the west.

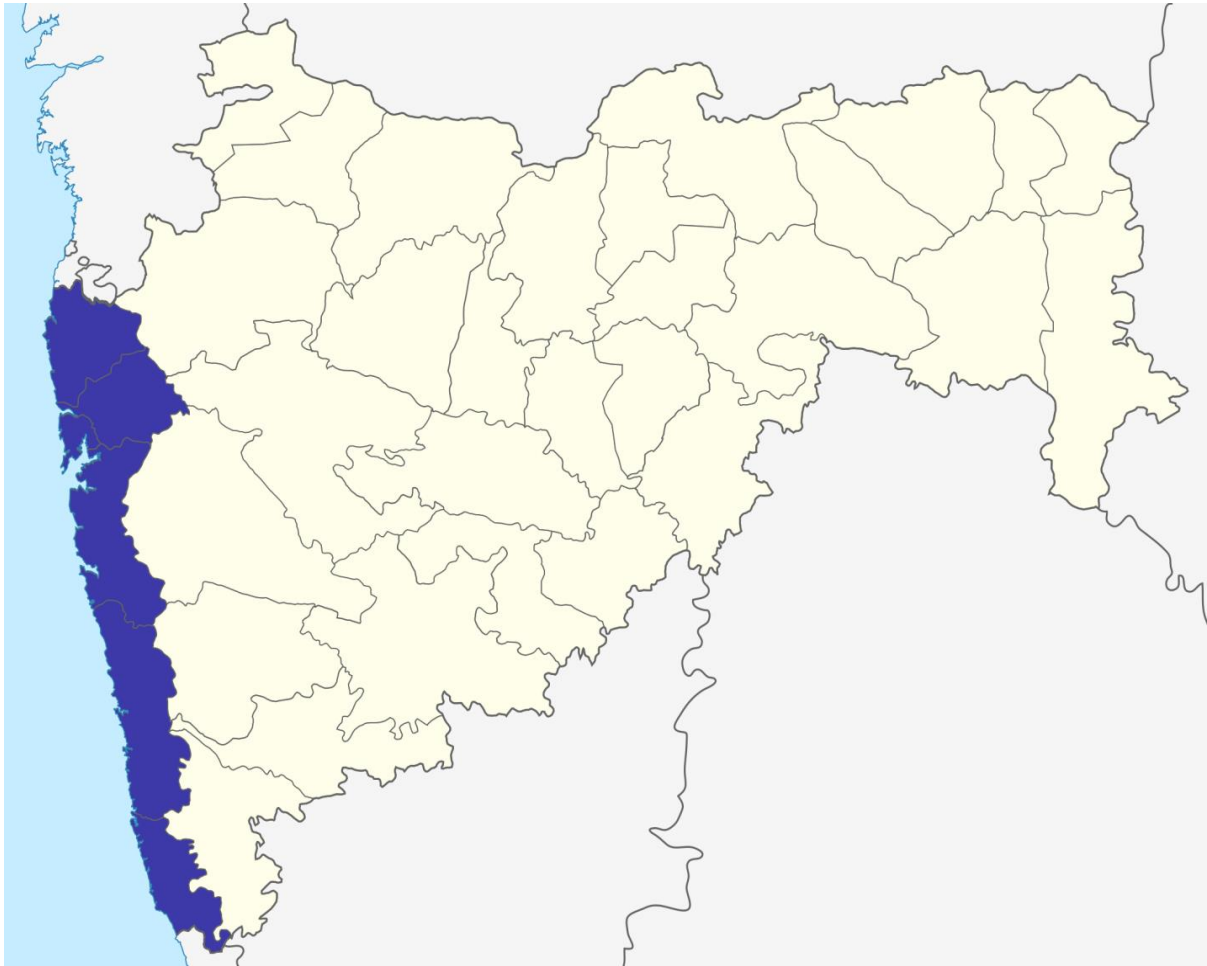


Kathiawar Coast or Gujarat Coast

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Konkan Coast or Maharashtra Coast

Konkan Coast is a rugged segment of the Western Coastline of [India](#). It is expanded 720 km long along the Western Coastline. The Konkan Coast is located between the Western Ghats or Sahyadri Mountain range in the east and the Arabian Sea in the west. Both the Gangavali River and Mayura River are flowing by making the southern and the northern boundaries respectively.

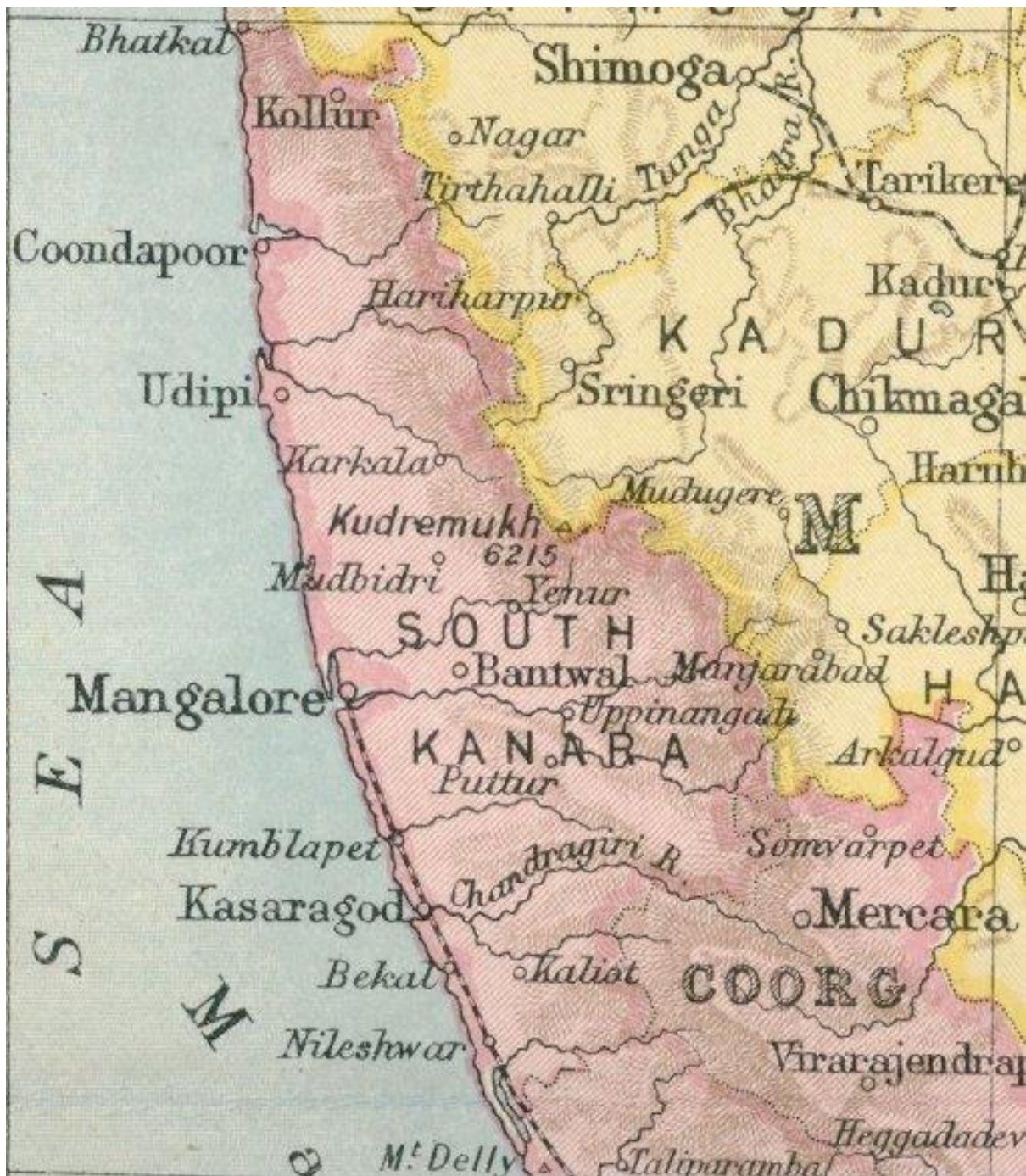


Konkan Coast or Maharashtra Coast

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Canara Coast or Karnataka Coast

Canara or Karnataka Coast is located in the coastal area of Karnataka state and its extension is found between Goa in the north and Mangalore in the south. It extends with having a length of 300 km approximately. This coastal plain sometimes shows narrow but occasionally, it is recorded as wider near to 70 km especially at the adjoining area of Mangalore. This Karnataka coastal region is bounded the Western Ghats in the east side and the Arabian Sea in the west side. Konkan coast limits the north part whereas south part is restricted by Malabar coastal region. The coastal area of Karnataka is sometimes called as Kanara region which consists of three coastal districts namely, Uttara Kannada or North Canara, Udupi and Dakshina Kannada or South Canara.



Canara Coast or Karnataka Coast

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/17/South_Kanara.jpg

The Coastal Plain of Kerala or Malabar Coast

The name 'Malabar' is derived from the [Malayalam](#) words 'Mala' which means hill and 'Vaaram' means range or region. It is located as a long and narrow coastline on the south-western seashore line of the mainland of [India](#). In connection with the states of India, this coastal plain primarily covers some parts of [Kerala](#) and the southern part of Karnataka. This coastal plain extends up to 545km approx. from Mangalore to the southern tip of the peninsula at Kanyakumri or Cape Comorin.

The rivers flowing through this coastal plain do not form any delta. The Malabar coast has got certain distinguishing features in the form of '*Kayals*' (backwaters), which are used for fishing, inland navigation and also due to its special attraction for tourists. Every year the famous *Nehru Trophy Vallamkali* (boat race) is held in *Punnamada Kayal* in Kerala.



The Coastal Plain of Kerala or Malabar Coast

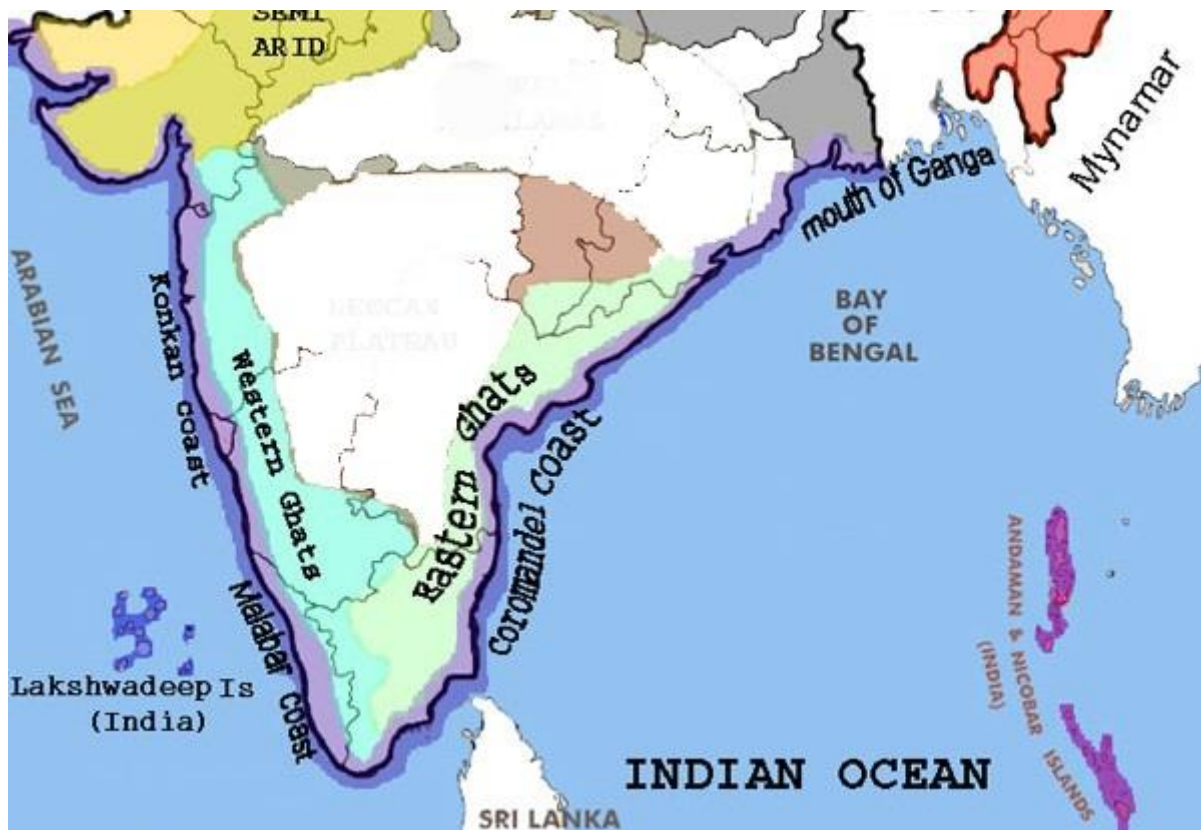
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East Coastal Plain

The **Eastern Coastal Plains** refer to a wide stretch of landmass of [India](#), lying between the [Eastern Ghats](#) and the [Bay of Bengal](#). It is wider and leveled than the western coastal plains and stretches from [Tamil Nadu](#) in the south to [West Bengal](#) in the north through [Andhra Pradesh](#) and [Odisha](#).

Deltas of many of India's rivers form a major portion of these plains. The Mahanadi, Godavari, Krishna and Kaveri rivers drain these plains. The region receives both the Northeast & Southwest monsoon rains with its annual average between 100 to 300 cm. The width of the plains varies between 100 and 130 km.

It is locally known as **Northern Circars** in the northern part between **Mahanadi** and **Krishna** rivers and **Coromandel Coast** in the southern part between **Krishna** and **Kaveri** rivers.



Eastern Coastal Plains

<https://m.jagranjosh.com/imported/images/E/Articles/Western-and-Eastern-Ghats.jpg>

Eastern coastal plain is 50 to 60 km wide and is broader than western coastal plain. The eastern coast is mainly emergent type i.e. its outline is regular and is characterized by offshore bars, sea beaches, sand ridges and lagoons.

Tamil Nadu coast is called *Coromandel Coast* while Odisha and West Bengal coast is called *Northern Circar coast*. Most of the east flowing rivers are broader as compared to west flowing rivers and forms delta whereas west flowing rivers (like Narmada and Tapi) form estuary. For example, Mahanadi delta, Godavari delta, Krishna delta etc. Region of Mahanadi delta is called *Utkal Plain*.

Indian Islands

Island means a tract or a piece of land which is completely isolated and surrounded by water. Example of Indian Islands may be cited here as Andaman & Nicobar Islands, located in Bay of Bengal and Lakshadweep & Minicoy Islands, located in Arabian Sea.

Island Groups of Bay of Bengal

The Bay of Bengal island groups consist of about 572 islands. These are situated roughly between 6°N-14°N and 92°E -94°E. The two principal groups of islets include the Ritchie's archipelago and the Labrynth Island. The entire group of island is divided into two broad categories – the Andaman in the north and the Nicobar in the south. They are separated by a water body which is called the Ten-degree channel. It is believed that these islands are an elevated portion of submarine mountains. However, some smaller islands are volcanic in origin. Barren Island, the only active volcano in India is also situated in the Nicobar Islands.



Andaman and Nicobar Islands

<https://i.pining.com/236x/f5/b5/3e/f5b53e7ed711a8be658640f28084cc1c--andaman-and-nicobar-islands-port-blair.jpg>



Barren island

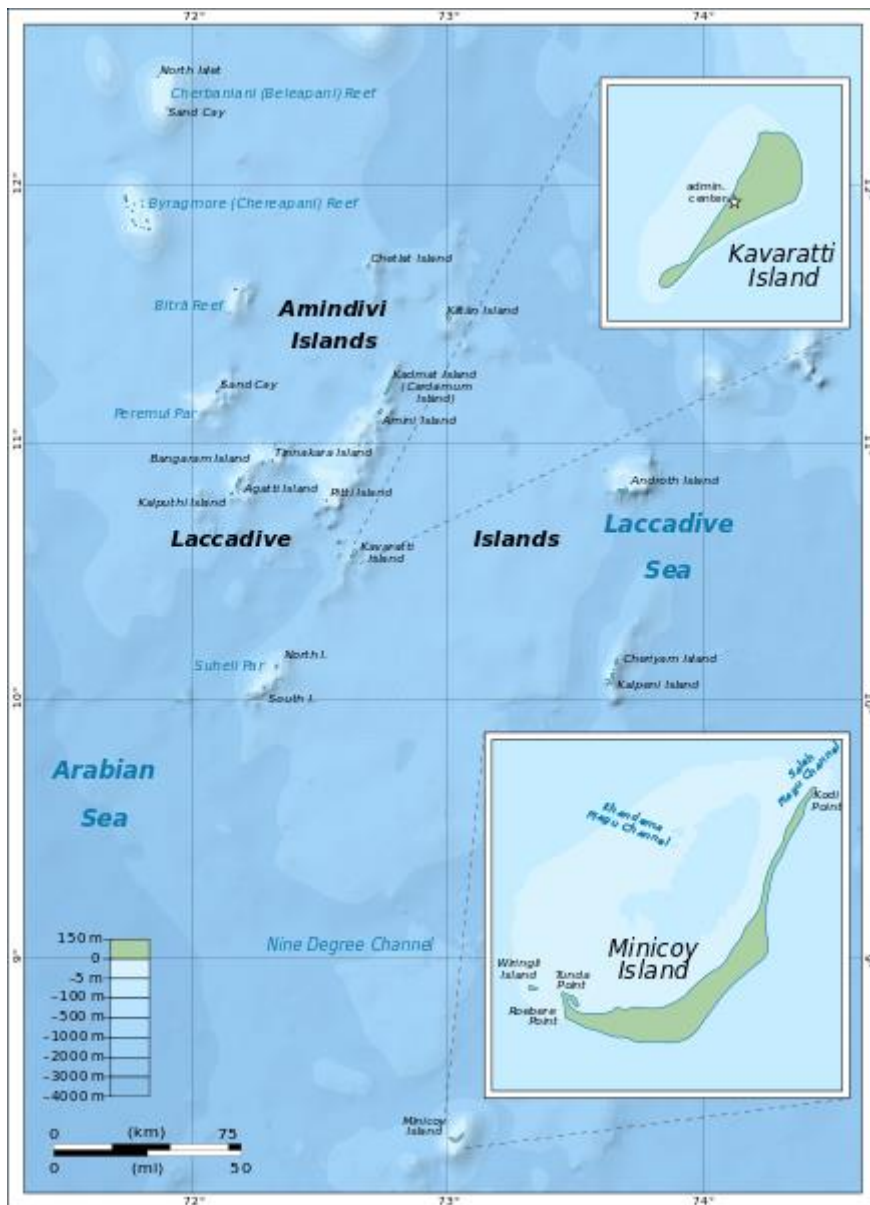
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/71/Barren_island.jpg

Some important mountain peaks in Andaman and Nicobar Islands are Saddle peak (North Andaman – 738 m), Mount Diavolo (Middle Andaman – 515 m), Mount Koyob (South Andaman – 460 m) and Mount Thuiller (Great Nicobar – 642 m).

The coastal line has some coral deposits, and beautiful beaches. These islands receive convectional rainfall and have an equatorial type of vegetation.

Islands of Arabian Sea

The islands of the Arabian Sea include Lakshadweep and Minicoy. These are scattered between 8°N-12°N and 71°E -74°E longitude. These islands are located at a distance of 280 km-480 km off the Kerala coast. The entire island group is built of coral deposits. There are approximately 36 islands of which 11 are inhabited. *Minicoy* is the largest island with an area of 453 sq. km. The entire group of islands is broadly divided by the Ten-degree channel, north of which is the Amini Island and to the south of the Canannore Island. The Islands of this archipelago have storm beaches consisting of unconsolidated pebbles, shingles, cobbles and boulders on the eastern seaboard.



Islands of Arabian Sea

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/0/0b/Map_of_Lakshadweep-en.svg/435px-Map_of_Lakshadweep-en.svg.png