PHYSIOGRAPHY OF INDIA - Comprehensive Notes

1. Introduction

India exhibits diverse physiographic features shaped by tectonic processes, plate movements, erosion, deposition and climatic influences. The present relief features are primarily the result of the interaction between the Indian Plate and the Eurasian Plate.

2. Major Physiographic Divisions of India

- The Himalayan Mountains
- The Northern Plains
- The Peninsular Plateau
- The Indian Desert
- The Coastal Plains
- The Islands

3. The Himalayan Mountains

Formed due to the collision of the Indian and Eurasian plates, the Himalayas represent young fold mountains. They are divided into: • Himadri (Greater Himalaya) • Himachal (Lesser Himalaya) • Shiwalik (Outer Himalaya) Significance: Climatic barrier, source of perennial rivers, biodiversity hotspot.

4. The Northern Plains

Formed by alluvial deposits of the Indus, Ganga and Brahmaputra river systems. It is one of the most fertile and densely populated regions of the world. Sub-divisions: Bhabar, Terai, Bhangar, Khadar.

5. The Peninsular Plateau

Oldest and most stable landmass of India composed of igneous and metamorphic rocks. Divided into: • Central Highlands • Deccan Plateau Important features: Western Ghats, Eastern Ghats, Black soil region (Deccan Trap).

6. The Indian Desert (Thar)

Located in western Rajasthan. Characterized by sand dunes, low rainfall, and ephemeral streams like Luni.

7. The Coastal Plains

Divided into Western Coastal Plains (Konkan, Kannad, Malabar) and Eastern Coastal Plains (Northern Circars, Coromandel Coast). Important for ports, agriculture and fishing.

8. The Islands

Andaman & Nicobar Islands (volcanic origin) in the Bay of Bengal. Lakshadweep Islands (coral origin) in the Arabian Sea.

9. Schematic Map of Major Physiographic Divisions