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Ancient History of Madhya Pradesh

Geographical Background of Madhya Pradesh

Madhya Pradesh, often referred to as the "Heart of India," is a landlocked state in central India known for its diverse landscapes, rich natural resources, and significant cultural heritage. Geographically, it occupies a central position in the Indian subcontinent and serves as a bridge connecting the northern and southern regions of the country. This article delves into the geographical intricacies of Madhya Pradesh, covering its location, topography, climate, river systems, soil types, vegetation, and biodiversity.

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1. Location and Boundaries

- **Latitude and Longitude**: Madhya Pradesh lies between 21°06' to 26°54' N latitude and 74°02' to 82°49' E longitude.
- **Borders**:
  - **North**: Uttar Pradesh
  - **East**: Chhattisgarh
  - **South**: Maharashtra
  - **West**: Gujarat and Rajasthan
- **Area**: The state covers an area of 308,252 square kilometers, making it the second-largest state in India by area.

---

2. Physiographic Divisions

Madhya Pradesh can be divided into several physiographic regions, each with distinct characteristics:

a. The Malwa Plateau

- Located in the western part of the state.
- Characterized by black cotton soil, ideal for agriculture.
- Elevation ranges from 300 to 600 meters above sea level.
- Key cities: Indore, Ujjain.

b. The Vindhyan Range

- Runs parallel to the Narmada River.
- Acts as a natural divide between the northern plains and the southern peninsular plateau.
- Composed mainly of sedimentary rocks.

c. The Satpura Range

- Lies south of the Narmada River.
- Known for its rugged terrain and dense forests.
- Includes prominent peaks like Dhupgarh, the highest point in the state (1,350 meters).

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d. The Narmada-Tapti Valleys

- Fertile plains formed by the Narmada and Tapti rivers.
- Known for their agricultural productivity.
- Hosts significant hydropower projects.

e. The Baghelkhand Plateau

- Located in the northeastern part of Madhya Pradesh.
- Composed of ancient igneous and metamorphic rocks.
- Home to Panna, famous for diamond mines.

f. The Bundelkhand Plateau

- Lies in the north-central region.
- Characterized by undulating terrain and rocky outcrops.
- Faces significant water scarcity.

---

3. Climate

a. Tropical Monsoon Climate

Madhya Pradesh experiences a tropical monsoon climate with three distinct seasons:

- **Summer (March to June)**:
  - Hot and dry, with temperatures often exceeding 40°C.
- **Monsoon (June to September)**:
  - Receives rainfall from the southwest monsoon.
  - Average annual rainfall: 1,000–1,600 mm.
  - Eastern parts receive more rainfall than western regions.
- **Winter (October to February)**:
  - Cool and dry, with temperatures ranging from 10°C to 25°C.

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4. River Systems

Madhya Pradesh is often referred to as the "state of rivers" due to its extensive river network. Major river basins include:

a. Narmada River

- Origin: Amarkantak Plateau.
- Length: 1,312 km, flows westward into the Arabian Sea.
- Known as the "Life Line of Madhya Pradesh."
- Supports agriculture, drinking water, and hydropower projects.

b. Tapti River

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- Origin: Satpura ranges.
- Flows parallel to the Narmada.

c. Chambal River

- Origin: Janapav hills near Indore.
- Flows northwards into Rajasthan and joins the Yamuna River.
- Famous for its ravines and gorges.

d. Betwa and Ken Rivers

- Tributaries of the Yamuna.
- Flow through Bundelkhand region.

e. Son River

- Origin: Amarkantak Plateau.
- Flows eastward into the Ganges.

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5. Soil Types

Madhya Pradesh has a variety of soil types, which influence its agricultural productivity:

- **Black Soil (Regur)**:
  - Found in the Malwa Plateau.
  - Ideal for cotton and soybean cultivation.
- **Red and Yellow Soils**:
  - Predominantly found in the Baghelkhand region.
  - Supports millets and pulses.
- **Alluvial Soil**:
  - Found in river basins.
  - Highly fertile and suitable for paddy cultivation.
- **Laterite Soil**:
  - Found in the Satpura and Vindhyan regions.
  - Low fertility but suitable for horticulture.

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6. Vegetation and Forest Cover

Madhya Pradesh is rich in natural vegetation and boasts one of the highest forest covers in India:

- **Types of Forests**:
  - Tropical Moist Deciduous Forests.
  - Tropical Dry Deciduous Forests.
  - Mixed Forests.
- **Forest Cover**: Approximately 77,482 sq. km (25% of the state's area).
- **Key Forest Products**:

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