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Location and Extent of Andhra Pradesh

Andhra Pradesh, located in the southeastern region of India, is a state known for its rich cultural heritage, economic significance, and geographical diversity. This article delves into the precise location and extent of Andhra Pradesh, highlighting its strategic importance, geographical boundaries, and features that define its place in the Indian subcontinent.

Geographical Location

Andhra Pradesh lies in the southeastern part of India, between **12°41'N to 19°07'N latitude** and **77°00'E to 84°40'E longitude**. This strategic location places the state within the tropical belt, granting it a diverse climate, fertile soils, and significant natural resources.

Extent of Andhra Pradesh

1. **Area**:
   - Andhra Pradesh spans an area of **162,968 square kilometers**, making it the seventh-largest state in India by area.
   - After the bifurcation in 2014, the state of Andhra Pradesh comprises the residual regions excluding Telangana.
2. **Length and Breadth**:
   - The state extends approximately **700 km from north to south** and around **350 km from east to west**, showcasing its elongated geographical spread.
3. **Coastline**:
   - Andhra Pradesh has the **second-longest coastline in India**, measuring about **974 km** along the Bay of Bengal. This long coastline is pivotal for trade, fishing, tourism, and the state's economic growth.

Boundaries

Andhra Pradesh shares borders with five Indian states and one large water body:

1. **North**: Odisha and Chhattisgarh.
2. **Northwest**: Telangana.
3. **West**: Karnataka.
4. **South**: Tamil Nadu.
5. **East**: Bay of Bengal.

Strategic Importance of Location

1. **Proximity to Coastal Waters**:
   - The state's long coastline facilitates international trade and maritime connectivity.
   - Major ports like **Visakhapatnam Port** and **Krishnapatnam Port** enhance the state's role in India's trade networks.
2. **Centrality in South India**:
   - Andhra Pradesh's location connects northern India with the southern peninsula, making it a key transit hub.
3. **Agricultural Potential**:
   - The state’s fertile river valleys, particularly along the **Krishna** and **Godavari** rivers, enhance its significance as an agricultural powerhouse.
4. **Economic Zone**:
   - The coastal region contributes significantly to India's **Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)** in the Bay of Bengal.

Physiographical Divisions

1. **Coastal Plains**:

- The eastern part of the state along the Bay of Bengal is characterized by flat terrain and fertile soils.
- Major cities such as **Visakhapatnam**, **Vijayawada**, and **Kakinada** are located here.

2. **Eastern Ghats**:
   - These discontinuous mountain ranges run parallel to the coast, adding to the state's biodiversity.
   - Araku Valley, a prominent hill station, is situated in this region.
3. **River Basins**:
   - The **Krishna** and **Godavari** rivers flow through the state, creating lush riverine plains.
4. **Rayalaseema Plateau**:
   - Located in the southwestern part, this region is semi-arid but plays a significant role in agriculture and mining.

Climatic Influence

Andhra Pradesh's geographical location exposes it to a variety of climatic conditions:

1. **Tropical Monsoon Climate**:
   - The state experiences hot summers, significant monsoon rainfall, and mild winters.
2. **Cyclonic Activity**:
   - Its location along the eastern seaboard makes it prone to cyclones, particularly during the northeast monsoon.

Natural Resources

The strategic location and extent of Andhra Pradesh endow it with abundant natural resources:

1. **Minerals**: Limestone, bauxite, and mica are extensively found in the state.
2. **Water Resources**: The Godavari and Krishna rivers are lifelines for irrigation and drinking water.
3. **Marine Resources**: Its vast coastline supports a thriving fishing industry and aquaculture.

Transport and Connectivity

1. **Road Network**:
   - Andhra Pradesh is well-connected by a network of national highways, including **NH16**, part of the Golden Quadrilateral.
2. **Rail Connectivity**:
   - Major railway junctions like **Vijayawada** play a pivotal role in linking southern and northern India.
3. **Airports**:
   - International airports in **Visakhapatnam** and **Vijayawada** connect the state globally.
4. **Ports**:
   - The coastline houses major ports like **Visakhapatnam**, which is a key hub for cargo and naval operations.

Economic and Strategic Implications

1. **Industrial Growth**:
    - The location supports industrial hubs in sectors like IT, pharmaceuticals, and agro-processing.
2. **Tourism**:
    - The state's historical sites, beaches, and hill stations attract domestic and international tourists.
3. **Defense**:
    - Its strategic coastline is crucial for India's maritime defense and monitoring activities in the Indian Ocean.

Physiographic Divisions of Andhra Pradesh

Andhra Pradesh, located on the southeastern coast of India, boasts a diverse topography that significantly influences its climate, agriculture, and economy. The state can be broadly divided into three distinct physiographic regions:

1. **Coastal Plains:**

- **Extent:** Stretching along the Bay of Bengal, the coastal plains cover approximately 35% of Andhra Pradesh's land area. They extend from Icchapuram in Srikakulam district in the north to the Pulicat Lake in Nellore district in the south.
- **Characteristics:**
    - **Fertile Alluvial Soil:** Formed by the deposition of sediments from major rivers like the Godavari, Krishna, and Penna, these plains are characterized by rich alluvial soil, making them highly fertile and suitable for agriculture.
    - **Deltas:** The Godavari and Krishna rivers form extensive deltas, supporting a wide variety of crops like rice, sugarcane, tobacco, and cotton.
    - **Lagoons and Lakes:** The coast is dotted with lagoons and lakes, such as the Kolleru Lake, which is a haven for biodiversity.
    - **Coastal Erosion:** Some areas face challenges like coastal erosion and saltwater intrusion due to the Bay of Bengal's influence.

2. **Eastern Ghats:**

- **Extent:** Running parallel to the coastline, the Eastern Ghats cover about 13% of the state's area.
- **Characteristics:**
    - **Elevation and Composition:** These hills are generally lower in elevation compared to the Western Ghats and are composed of ancient crystalline rocks.
    - **Discontinuous Ranges:** Unlike a continuous chain, the Eastern Ghats are marked by discontinuous ranges and hills, interspersed with fertile valleys.
    - **Forest Cover:** The hills are home to significant forest cover, supporting diverse flora and fauna.

- **Mineral Resources:** The region is rich in mineral resources like limestone, bauxite, and manganese.
- **Tribal Population:** The Eastern Ghats are also home to a significant tribal population, who have unique cultural traditions and practices.

3. **Deccan Plateau:**

- **Extent:** Covering the largest portion of Andhra Pradesh, the Deccan Plateau accounts for about 52% of the state's area.
- **Characteristics:**
  - **Elevated Terrain:** This region is characterized by elevated terrain, ranging from rolling hills to plateaus.
  - **Rocky Terrain:** The soil is generally less fertile compared to the coastal plains, with predominantly red and black soils.
  - **Semi-Arid Climate:** The region experiences a semi-arid climate with lower rainfall, making agriculture dependent on irrigation.
  - **Drought Prone:** Some areas are prone to droughts, posing challenges for agriculture and water resources.
  - **Mineral Deposits:** The Deccan Plateau is rich in mineral deposits like iron ore, diamonds, and asbestos.

Impact of Physiography:

The diverse physiography of Andhra Pradesh significantly influences various aspects of the state:

- **Agriculture:** The fertile coastal plains are the state's agricultural heartland, while the Deccan Plateau relies on irrigation for cultivation.
- **Climate:** The Eastern Ghats influence rainfall patterns, creating a rain-shadow effect in the Deccan Plateau.
- **Economy:** The coastal region supports fishing and port activities, while the mineral-rich Eastern Ghats and Deccan Plateau contribute to industrial development.
- **Culture:** The varied terrain has led to diverse cultural practices and traditions across different regions of the state.

Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh

The Eastern Ghats, a discontinuous range of mountains along the eastern coast of India, hold significant geographical, ecological, and cultural importance. Andhra Pradesh, a state situated in the southeastern part of India, is home to a substantial portion of this mountain range, with unique landscapes and biodiversity. This article provides a detailed exploration of the Eastern Ghats in Andhra Pradesh, covering their geographical features, biodiversity, economic significance, and conservation challenges.