

SOUTH ASIA

INDIA



AREA 3,287,263 sq km
POPULATION 1,189,173,000
MONEY Indian rupee
CAPITAL New Delhi

THE world's highest mountains appear on this map, including Mount Everest. The Himalayas form a great mountain chain which joins on to other high mountain areas, such as the Hindu Kush.

More than 1400 million people live in south Asia. The deserts and mountains do not have many people, but the river valleys, plains and plateaus are crowded. **Afghanistan, Bhutan and Nepal** are rugged, mountainous countries.

Bangladesh is very different: it is mostly flat, low-lying land where the great rivers Ganges and Brahmaputra reach the sea.

Pakistan has very little rain, but the River Indus is used to irrigate crops.

India is the largest country. It stretches 3300 kilometres from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin. Most people live in the villages, but towns and cities are growing fast and are overcrowded. There are many modern factories, and India makes more films than any other country.

Sri Lanka (once called Ceylon) is a mountainous island off the coast of India.

The Maldives are a chain of low, flat, coral islands in the Indian Ocean.



▲ **Wool for carpets.** This lady in northern India is winding wool which will be used to make carpets. She sits in the courtyard of her house, where the ploughs and pots and pans are also kept.

TEA PLANTATIONS



Tea is an important crop in the hills of Sri Lanka where nights are cool, and there is plenty of rain. Women pick the new young leaves from the bushes (as shown on the stamp). The leaves are then dried and crushed, and packed into large tea chests for storage.

'Ceylon Tea' is one of Sri Lanka's most important exports. Where does the tea you drink come from?



SRI LANKA



AREA 65,610 sq km
POPULATION 21,284,000
MONEY Sri Lankan rupee

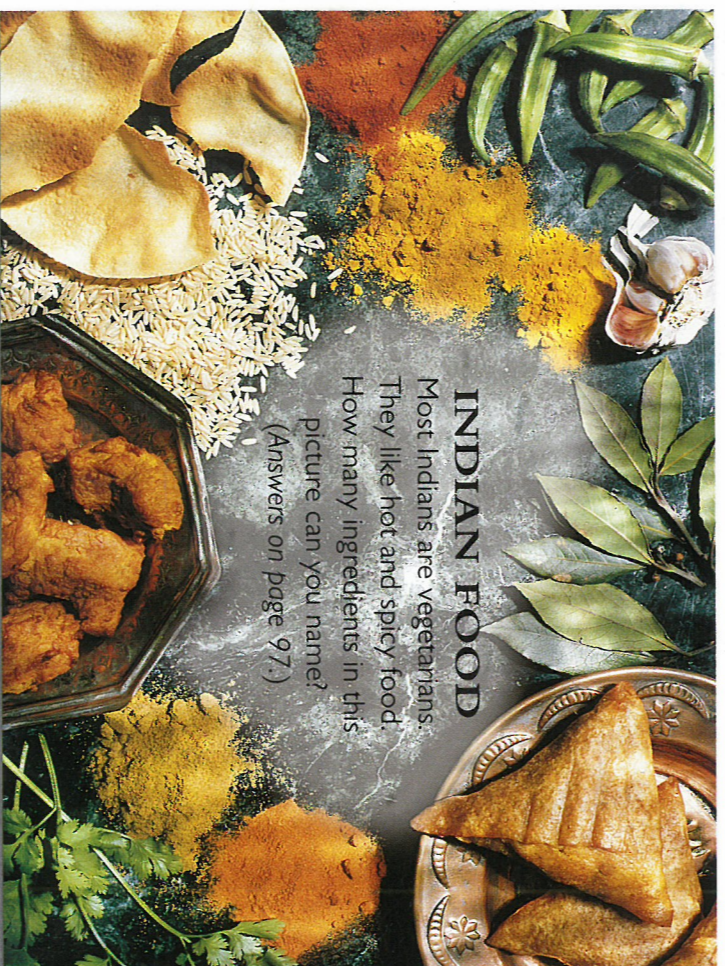
PAKISTAN



AREA 796,095 sq km
POPULATION 187,343,000
MONEY Pakistani rupee
CAPITAL Islamabad

INDIAN FOOD

Most Indians are vegetarians. They like hot and spicy food. How many ingredients in this picture can you name? (Answers on page 97.)



AFGHANISTAN



AREA 652,090 sq km
POPULATION 29,835,000
MONEY Afghani

NEPAL



AREA 147,181 sq km
POPULATION 29,392,000
MONEY Nepalese rupee

SOUTH ASIA



▶ **Planting rice, Kashmir, India.** These men are planting out rice seedlings in the wet soil.

is flat, and where the weather is hot and wet. In a good year, rice grows in the wet fields and is ready for harvesting after four or five months. If the monsoon fails and there is a drought, the seedlings will shrivel up; too much rain and the seedlings will drown. If the rice crop fails, many people go hungry. Where irrigation is available, the farmer can control the water supply and may be able to grow two rice crops a year.

▶ **The Markhor is a rare goat with curled horns that lives in the mountains of Pakistan and Afghanistan.**

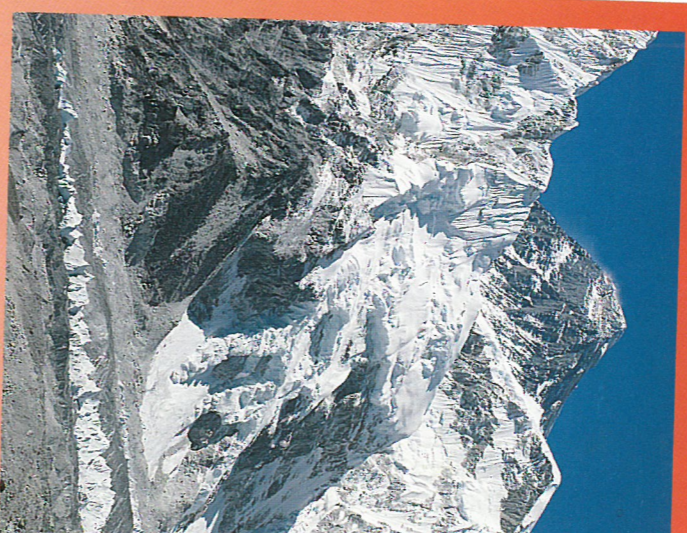


Religion is very important in the lives of people in south Asia. **Hinduism** is the oldest religion, and most people in India and Nepal are Hindus. **Buddhism** began in India, but only Sri Lanka and Bhutan are mainly Buddhist today. **Islam** is the religion of most people in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh. There are many Muslims in India, too. Many **Sikhs** live in northern India; there are also **Christian** groups in all these countries.

Rice is an important food crop in south Asia. It grows best where the land



MOUNT EVEREST



Mount Everest is the world's highest mountain – 8850 metres above sea level. It was not climbed until 1953.

Everest is on the border of Nepal and Tibet (now part of China) – find it on the map in square D2. It is called 'Sagarmatha' in Nepalese, and in Chinese it is known as 'Qomolangma' (Queen of Mountains). The photograph shows a glacier below the icy summit, and the bare rock that climbers have to cross. At this height, the air is very thin, so climbing is very hard and most climbers carry oxygen with them.