

# Timeline of India

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India has been home to several ancient civilizations and empires, some dating back to more than 2,000 BC. Culture and religions have flourished over the millennia, and foreign influence has ebbed and flowed.

**1858** - India comes under direct rule of the British crown after failed Indian uprising.

**1885** - Indian National Congress founded as forum for emerging nationalist feeling.



Image copyright Mahatma Gandhi steered India to independence

**Mahatma Gandhi's fading dream**

**BBC - History - Historic Figures Mohandas Gandhi (1869 - 1948)**

**1920-22** - Nationalist leader Mahatma Gandhi launches anti-British civil disobedience campaign.

## Independence

**1947** - End of British rule and partition of sub-continent into mainly Hindu India and Muslim-majority Pakistan. Hundreds of thousands die in communal bloodshed.

**1948** - War with Pakistan over disputed territory of Kashmir.

**1951-52** - Congress wins first general elections under leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru.

## Regional tensions

**1962** - India loses brief border war with China.



Image copyright GETTY IMAGES Image caption the rail network covers the length and breadth of India

**1965** - Second war with Pakistan over Kashmir.

**1966** - Mr Nehru's daughter Indira Gandhi becomes prime minister.

**1971** - Third war with Pakistan over creation of Bangladesh, formerly East Pakistan.

**1974** - India explodes first nuclear device in underground test.

## Democratic strains

**1975** - Indira Gandhi declares state of emergency after being found guilty of electoral malpractice.

**1975-1977** - Nearly 1,000 political opponents imprisoned and programme of compulsory birth control introduced.

**1977** - Indira Gandhi's Congress Party loses general elections.

**1980** - Indira Gandhi returns to power heading Congress party splinter group, Congress (Indira).

**1984** - Troops storm Golden Temple - Sikhs' most holy shrine - to flush out militants pressing for self-rule.



Image copyright GETTY IMAGES Image caption Indira Gandhi served four terms as prime minister

**1984** October - Indira Gandhi assassinated by Sikh bodyguards. Her son Rajiv takes over as prime minister.

**1984** December - Gas leak at Union Carbide pesticides plant in Bhopal. Thousands are killed immediately; many more subsequently die or are left disabled.

**1987** - India deploys troops for three years peacekeeping operation in Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict.

**1990** - Muslim separatist groups begin campaign of violence in Kashmir.

**1991** - Rajiv Gandhi assassinated by suicide bomber sympathetic to Sri Lanka's Tamil Tigers. Economic reform programme begun by Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao.

**1992** - Hindu extremists demolish mosque in Ayodhya, triggering widespread Hindu-Muslim violence.

## Rise of the BJP

**1996** - Congress suffers worst ever electoral defeat as Hindu nationalist BJP emerges as largest single party.

**1998** - BJP forms coalition government under Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee.



Image copyright GETTY IMAGES Image caption Tensions over Kashmir have brought India and Pakistan to war

**1998** - India carries out nuclear tests, leading to widespread international condemnation.

**1999 February** - Mr Vajpayee makes historic bus trip to Pakistan to meet Premier Nawaz Sharif and signs bilateral Lahore peace declaration. Tension in Kashmir leads to brief war with

Pakistan-backed forces in the icy heights around Kargil in Indian-held Kashmir.

## Population reaches a billion

**2000 May** - India marks the birth of its billionth citizen.



**2001** - A high-powered rocket is launched, propelling India into the club of countries able to fire big satellites deep into space.

Image copyright GETTY IMAGES Image caption Disputed Siachen, dubbed the world's highest battlefield

**2002 January** – India successfully test-fires a nuclear-capable ballistic missile – the Agni – off its eastern coast.

**2002 February** – Inter-religious bloodshed breaks out after 59 Hindu pilgrims returning from Ayodhya are killed in a train fire in Godhra, Gujarat. More than 1,000 people, mainly Muslims, die in subsequent violence.

## Congress returns

**2004 May** – Surprise victory for Congress Party in general elections. Manmohan Singh is sworn in as prime minister.

**2005 7 April** – Bus services, the first in 60 years, operate between Srinagar in Indian-administered Kashmir and Muzaffarabad in Pakistani-administered Kashmir.

Image copyright GETTY IMAGES Image caption The

Golden Temple at Amritsar is a place of pilgrimage for Sikh devotees



**2006 February** - India's largest-ever rural jobs scheme is launched, aimed at lifting around 60 million families out of poverty.

## Nuclear deal

**2006 March** - US and India sign a nuclear agreement during a visit by US President George W Bush. The US gives India access to civilian nuclear technology while India agrees to greater scrutiny for its nuclear programme.

Image copyright GETTY IMAGES Image caption Millions of Indians depend on the farming sector



**2007 April** - India's first commercial space rocket is launched, carrying an Italian satellite.

**2007 July** - Pratibha Patil becomes first woman to be elected president of India.

**2008 July** - Congress-led coalition survives vote of confidence brought after left-wing parties withdraw their support over controversial nuclear cooperation deal with US.

**2008 October** - India successfully launches its first mission to the moon, the unmanned lunar probe Chandrayaan-1.

## Mumbai attacks

**2008 November** - Nearly 200 people are killed in a series of coordinated attacks by the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e Taiba jihadist group on the main tourist and business area of India's financial capital Mumbai.



Image copyright GETTY IMAGES Image caption The 2008 Mumbai attacks were carried out by Pakistan-based gunmen

**2009 July** - Pakistan and India pledge to work together to fight terror, irrespective of progress on improving broader ties.

## Ayodhya ruling

**2010 September** - Allahabad High Court rules that the disputed holy site of Ayodhya should be divided between Hindus and Muslims; the destruction of a mosque on the site by Hindu extremists in 1992 led to rioting in which about 2,000 people died.

Image copyright GETTY IMAGES Image caption India tested its long-range Agni V missile in 2012



**2013 September** - A court sentences four men to death for the gang rape and murder of a student in Delhi the previous December - a case that led to violent protests across India and new laws against rape.

**2014 May** - The Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party and its candidate for prime minister, Narendra Modi, win parliamentary elections by a landslide.

**2014 September** - Visiting Chinese President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Modi unveil landmark

economic deals. China says it plans to build two industrial parks in India, as part of overall investment of twenty billion dollars in the next five years.



Image

copyright AFP/GETTY IMAGES Image caption India and Bangladesh signed a landmark border deal in 2015

**2015 September** - India launches its first space laboratory Astrosat in its biggest project since its Mars orbiter mission in 2014.

**2016 November** - In a surprise announcement, the government withdraws high denomination notes from circulation causing chaotic scenes at banks across the country as customers try to exchange old notes.

**2018 September** - Supreme Court strikes down a colonial-era law to decriminalize gay sex.

**2019 January** - Leaked government reports says unemployment rate rises to 6.1% - the highest since 1972-73, the earliest year for which comparable data is available.

**2019 February** - Clashes with Pakistan follow an attack by the Pakistan-based Jaish-e Mohammad jihadist group on security forces' convoy in Indian-controlled Kashmir.