Partner country of the month
India

Our **partner country in August** is difficult to sum up a few words. **India** is one thing above all: rich in contrast and versatile! In this huge country in South Asia, gigantic metropolises, ancient cultural sites, special landscapes and linguistic and cultural diversity await you. Here you can encounter everything, but certainly not boredom. There will be no lack of excursions and travel destinations in addition to your lectures. We would like to introduce you to some exciting aspects of the country and two of our partner universities in **New Delhi** and **Mumbai.**

GENERAL FACTS AND FIGURES

Capital: New Delhi

Population: 1.38 billion (as of 2020)

Establishment: 1947, with independence from Great Britain

Official language: Hindi and English (and 22 other officially recognized languages)

Currency: Indian rupee (INR)

Time zone: UTC+5:30

National holidays: - 26 January (Republic Day)

- 15 August (Independence Day)

- 2 October (Gandhi Jayanti)

BRIEF LANGUAGE LESSON

German	Hindi	Phonetic
Hello	**हलो**	haloo
Bye	**बाइ**	bai
Thank you	**धन्यवाद**	dhanyavaad
You're welcome	वेल कम	vel came
Yes	हाँ	haa
No	नहीं	nahin

India not only occupies seventh place in the world rankings in terms of area, but is also one of the most populous countries. With 1.3 billion people, India is even considered the largest democracy in the world. In its present form, the Republic of India has existed since 1947, when independence from Great Britain was achieved. In addition to the colonial period, however, India already looks back on several thousand years of history, which is still visible in numerous cultural sites and monuments.

Geographically, India has a lot to offer: In the north, the Himalayan mountains rise into the sky; in the south, the country is bordered by the sea. Sandy beaches, mountains, deserts and densely forested swamplands lie here next to densely populated metropolitan regions. The Indian north has a subtropical climate, whereas the south is more tropical. Throughout India, temperatures are pleasant even in winter, so your winter jacket can stay in your closet in Germany. The monsoon season, which begins in the late summer months, brings almost the entire annual precipitation. The scenic diversity of India is the habitat of many different animals. Famous are above all the Indian elephant, the endangered Royal Bengal tiger, leopards, water buffaloes and monkeys, which can sometimes stray into the cities.

In India's metropolises, many people come together who are very different culturally, linguistically and religiously. India's cities are known for this colorful coexistence. Hindi is the official language of India, but local authorities and regions have numerous other official languages. English, as the second official language, offers an easy way to communicate, for example in education. In the cities, millennia-old buildings meet modern neighborhoods and colorful bazaars. With the Taj Mahal, a 17th century tomb, you can even marvel at one of the seven wonders of the world! Many festivals accompany you through the year, for example the famous Holi festival. This is a Hindu spring festival, where people sprinkle each other with bright colors.

If you want to explore the different corners of the country, you can either take a domestic flight or take the night train. This is not only a cheaper option, but also allows you to get to know the country on the train route and get in touch with new people.

New Delhi

Strictly speaking, New Delhi refers only to the government part of the city built in 1911 by the British colonial government, which is part of the Delhi metropolis. At that time, New Delhi was supposed to replace the capital Calcutta and is still the seat of the Indian government, the parliament and important courts. The core of New Delhi is the government district located around Connaught Place. To be distinguished from this is Old Delhi, which can be recognized by the old city wall. The famous fort and palace complex from the Mughal Empire, the Red Fort, can be found in Delhi. In everyday language, New Delhi and Delhi are not so clearly distinguishable.

Today, the Delhi metropolitan region is one of the largest urban regions in the world, with a population of 28 million. New Delhi is located in the northern interior of the country on the Yamuna River. Here, colonial, traditional and modern buildings lie very close together. The newer part is sprawling and rather symmetrically arranged, while the old part has many small alleys with colorful bazaars. New Delhi is also home to the National Museum, which brings together India's culture and history under one roof, or the Gandhi Smriti, a museum about Mahatma Gandhi, the leading figure in the Indian independence movement. The Taj Mahal in Agra is nearby.

Jawaharlal Nehru University

At Jawaharlal Nehru University you can get to know the capital region up close. It is located in the south of the capital and is well connected to transport. JNU is considered India's leading university and has a good international reputation. It was founded in 1966. The university places particular emphasis on encouraging students to develop their own creative ideas.

JNU is divided into a large number of "schools" and "centres", which are dedicated to a specific area, but are strongly networked among themselves and exchange information. The semester here can be quite different than in Germany, because there is not so much emphasis on a major final exam, but rather on a constant learning process, which is associated with small assignments during the semester.

There are dormitories called hostels, which not only provide accommodation, but also create a nice living atmosphere among students with common rooms and sports facilities. There are many cultural clubs at the university, for example the Film Club or the Drama Club. They organize different events for students, for example the International Yoga Day. In this gallery you can get an insight into them.

You can get to know JNU here in the info video or take a virtual tour of the campus.

MUMBAI

Mumbai is the capital of the Indian state of Maharashtra and, with its important port, the economic centre of the country. The city itself is home to 12.5 million people, and many more live in the larger metropolitan region. Mumbai is located on the island of Salsette off the west coast of India, and the city centre lies directly on the Arabian Sea, where Mumbai's popular city beach awaits.

Due to colonial influences from Portugal and Great Britain, Mumbai was known as Bombay for a long time. In 1996, however, the original name was restored. The city's long history can be observed in the varied cityscape, which is characterized, for example, by British-influenced but traditional Mughal architecture.

The linguistic and cultural diversity of the people in Mumbai makes the city an important venue for Indian culture and music. Many Indian artists, musicians and dancers come to the city and perform its many bars and clubs. There are many museums and interesting buildings, bazaars and colorful neighborhoods in Mumbai. Worth a trip are the Elephanta Caves located just outside on Elephanta Island, which are also a UNESCO heritage site. These caves are a place of worship dedicated to the Hindu god Shiva. Here you can see countless sculptures and figures - also in elephant form.

Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research

The Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research, named after former politician Indira Gandhi, is a research institute focusing on development studies. It was founded in 1986 as a research institute and has since evolved into a small campus university with a few hundred students and faculty.

The institute looks at development issues from interdisciplinary and global perspectives and places great emphasis on active student participation. There are small group sizes and the exchange of faculty and students on campus provides a family atmosphere.

The university accommodates its faculty and students in dormitories (hostels) on the campus grounds. There you will also find the large library and many recreational facilities, such as a pool and other sports facilities. From a hill in Goregaon a bit outside the city centrethere is a beautiful view over Mumbai, which is however easily reached by public transport. Impressions of campus life, for example from the Holi Festival, can be found in this gallery.

Have we aroused your interest in an exchange to India? Then take a look at all the information about the universities in our Publisher and find out about your options.

You can find many tips and impressions about the exchange at IGIDR in the personal reports: WS19, WS19/20. All reports can be found here.

Applications for the following academic year are possible between 1 October and December. Further information about the application process can be found here.