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**Major Physiographic divisions of India**

**The Himalayan Mountains**

• It is geologically young and structurally folded mountains which run along the northern borders of India.

→ The ranges run from west (from Indus) to east direction (to the Brahmaputra) covering a distance of about 2,400 Km representing loftiest peaks in the world.

• Width varies from 400 Km in Kashmir to 150 Km in Arunachal Pradesh. Altitude (Height) variations is greater in the eastern half than those in the western half.

• Longitudinal divisions of Himalayas:

→ The Great or inner Himalayas or the '*Himadri*'

→ The lesser Himalaya or '*Himachal*'

→ The Shiwaliks

• The Great or inner Himalayas or the '*Himadri*':

→ It is the northernmost range and most continuous range consisting of the loftiest peaks with an average height of 6,000 metres.

→ It contains all the famous peaks. The folds are asymmetrical in nature.

→ The basic part of this Himalayas is composed of granite.

→ It is perennially snow bound, and a number of glaciers descend from this range.

• The lesser Himalaya or '*Himachal*':

→ It lies south of the Himadri forms the most rugged mountain system.

→ It is mainly composed of highly compressed and altered rocks.

→ The height varies between 3,700 and 4,500 metres and the average width is of 50 Km.

→ Longest and most important ranges are PirPanjal range and Dhaula Dhar and the Mahabharat ranges.

→ Famous valley of this range are the Kashmir, the Kangra and Kullu Valley in Himachal Pradesh. → Also, this range is famous for hill stations.

• The Shiwaliks:

→ This is the outermost range of the Himalayas.

→ They extend over a width of 10-50 Km and have a height varying between 900 and 1100 metres.

→ It is composed of unconsolidated sediments brought down by rivers from the main Himalayan ranges.

→ These valleys are covered with thick gravel and alluvium.

• The longitudinal valley lying between lesser Himalaya and the Shiwaliks are known as Duns.

→ Dehra Dun, Kotli Dun and Patli Dun are some of the well-known Duns.

• Himalayas divisions on the basis of regions from east to west (divisions have been made by the river valleys):

→ Punjab Himalayas: The part of Himalayas lying between Indus and Satluj. From west to east respectively, regionally known as Kashmir and Himachal Himalaya.

→ Kumaon Himalayas: The part of the Himalayas lying between Satluj and Kali rivers.

→ Nepal Himalayas: The part lying between Kali and Tista rivers.

→ Assam Himalayas: The part lying between Tista and Dihang rivers.

• The *Purvachal* or Eastern hills and mountains:

→ The mountain ranges of Eastern India. It is marked by the Brahmaputra.

→ The Himalayas bend sharply to the south and spread along the eastern boundary of India after the Dihang gorge.

→ These hills running through the north-eastern states i.e., Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, and eastern Assam states and are mostly composed of strong sandstones which are sedimentary rocks.

→ Hills are covered with dense forests. It comprises the Patkai hills, the Naga hills, Manipur hills and the Mizo hillass

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Study Material

• Introduction

• Major Physiographic divisions

→ The Himalayan Mountains

→ The Northern Plains

→ The Peninsular Plateau

→ The Indian Desert

→ The Coastal Plains

→ The Islands

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• This theory explained that upper part of earth called crust divided into seven major and some minor plates called tectonics plates.

Major and Minor Plates of earth

• The movement of these plates builds up stresses within the plates and also the continental rocks above which results in folding, faulting and volcanic activity.

• The movements can be classified into three types broadly:

→ Convergent Boundary: When some plates come towards each other, form convergent boundary. It may lead to either collide and crumble, or one may slide under the other.

→

• The uplift of Himalaya from Tethys sea and settling of the northern flank of the peninsular plateau created a large basin.

→ In due time, gradually the basin got filled with deposition of sediments by the rivers flowing from the mountains in the north and the peninsular plateau in the south which created a flat land of extensive alluvial deposits known as northern plains of India.

• Geologically, the Peninsular Plateau are most stable land blocks as it was one of the ancient landmasses on the earth’s surface.

→ The Himalayas and the Northern Plains are the most recent landforms.

→ The Himalayan mountain form an unstable zone as it has very youthful topography with high peaks, deep valleys and fast flowing rivers.

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