

STATE
DAY
30 MAR
1949

STATE PROFILE · REPUBLIC OF INDIA

Rajasthan

India's largest state by area — a desert kingdom built by Rajput warrior clans, unified from 19 princely states into a single state in stages between 1948 and 1956, now racing to become India's solar-power capital atop the same Thar Desert that once made it forbidding.

6.85 Cr

POPULATION (2011 CENSUS)

3,42,239 km²

TOTAL AREA — LARGEST OF ANY INDIAN STATE

41

DISTRICTS, 7 DIVISIONS

#1

INDIA'S TOP SOLAR-POWER GENERATING STATE

Compiled August 2026 · Sources: Census of India, NITI Aayog, RBI, NFHS-5, PRS Legislative Research, Rajasthan government records

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At a Glance

Rajasthan is India's largest state by area — a land of Thar Desert dunes, Aravalli hills, and Rajput hill-forts, unified from 19 princely states and 3 chiefships between 1948 and 1956, the largest such merger in India's integration. It is best known globally for Jaipur, Jodhpur and Udaipur's palace tourism, but its 21st-century story is increasingly about becoming India's largest generator of solar power on the same desert land that long made it one of the country's poorest and most water-stressed states.

Jaipur

CAPITAL & LARGEST CITY

30 Mar 1949

RAJASTHAN DAY (GREATER
RAJASTHAN FORMED)

3,42,239 km²

TOTAL AREA — LARGEST OF ANY
INDIAN STATE

₹17.04 lakh Cr

GSDP, 2024-25 (CURRENT
PRICES)

928

SEX RATIO (2011) — AMONG
INDIA'S LOWEST

41 districts

7 DIVISIONS — REORGANISED
2023, PARTLY REVERTED 2024

“Rajasthan's integration folded 19 princely states and 3 chiefships into a single Indian state across seven stages between 1948 and 1956 — the largest number of constituent political units merged into any state in India's post-independence integration.

— Rajasthan Legislative Assembly, Integration of Rajasthan; rajras.in

Snapshot

Rajasthan is governed as a standard Indian state with a unicameral 200-seat Legislative Assembly, its politics alternating primarily between the BJP and Indian National Congress. It is home to the Thar Desert (covering roughly 70% of its land area), the ancient Aravalli Range (among the oldest fold-mountain systems on Earth), and a chain of Rajput-built forts and palace cities — Jaipur, Jodhpur, Udaipur, Bikaner, Chittorgarh — that make it India's most-visited heritage-tourism state. It carries some of India's most persistent development challenges (the lowest per-capita water availability of any state, one of the widest gender-literacy gaps, and a stone-mining silicosis health crisis), alongside one of the country's fastest-growing renewable-energy sectors, now the largest in India by installed solar capacity.

History

Rajasthan's history runs from an Indus Valley provincial capital in the desert sands near Hanumangarh, through eight centuries of Rajput clan warfare and Mughal alliance-making immortalised at Haldighati and Chittorgarh, to a princely-state integration so large it remains unmatched anywhere else in India — and a 2023 district reorganisation still being unwound as this report is written.

● c. 3000-1500 BCE

Kalibangan (Hanumangarh district, on the now-dry Ghaggar river) flourishes as a major Indus Valley/Harappan provincial centre, with both pre-Harappan and Harappan layers; famous for its fire altars and what excavators describe as the world's earliest attested ploughed field. Excavated 1960-69 by B.B. Lal's ASI team.

● 322-185 BCE

The region comes under **Mauryan** control; later, the **Gupta Empire** (320-550 CE) leaves its largest cache of surviving coins at Bayana, Rajasthan, before Huna invasions end Gupta dominance by around 485 CE.

● 1028-1459

Rajput clan-kingdoms rise across the region: the **Kachhwaha dynasty** founds Amber (1028), the **Rathore dynasty** founds Marwar (1226, capital moved to newly built Jodhpur in 1459), and the **Sisodia dynasty** founds Mewar (1326, capital Chittorgarh).

● 1303, 1535, 1568

Three separate **jauhars** (mass self-immolation by women and children to avoid capture) take place at Chittorgarh during sieges by Alauddin Khalji, Bahadur Shah of Gujarat, and Akbar respectively — among the most mythologised events in Rajput history, still commemorated at Chittorgarh's annual Jauhar Mela.

● 1562-1570

Raja Bharmal of Amber becomes the first Rajput ruler to ally with Akbar; his descendant Raja Man Singh I rises to Mughal command of campaigns from Afghanistan to Bengal. By 1570, Jodhpur, Bikaner and Jaisalmer accept Mughal suzerainty; Mewar, under Udai Singh II, refuses.

● 18 June 1576

The **Battle of Haldighati**: Maharana Pratap of Mewar, leading roughly 4,000 cavalry and 3,000 Bhil tribesmen, faces a 28,000-strong Mughal force under Raja Man Singh I. A tactical Mughal win, but Pratap escapes and Mewar is never fully annexed — he goes on to liberate most of Mewar except Chittor itself before his death in 1597.

● 18th century

Rajput states, initially inviting Maratha chiefs as mediators in succession disputes, are gradually reduced to paying Maratha tribute (chauth); by the century's end, continuous Maratha exactions leave the Rajput states financially and militarily exhausted.

● 1817-1832

Subsidiary-alliance treaties bring nearly all Rajput states under British paramountcy; the British establish the **Rajputana Agency** in 1832, headquartered at Mount Abu, overseeing 19 princely states, 3 chiefships and the British-administered district of Ajmer-Merwara.

● 18 Mar 1948 - 1 Nov 1956

Rajasthan is integrated in seven stages: the **Matsya Union** (Alwar, Bharatpur, Dholpur, Karauli, Mar 1948) merges into **Greater Rajasthan** (Bikaner, Jaisalmer, Jaipur, Jodhpur join, 30 Mar 1949 — celebrated as **Rajasthan Day**), then **United Rajasthan** (Sirohi added, 26 Jan 1950), before **Ajmer** (formerly a separate centrally-administered state) completes the merger on **1 November 1956** under the States Reorganisation Act — folding in 19 princely states and 3 chiefships in total, the largest such merger into any single Indian state.

● 2 Oct 1959

India's **Panchayati Raj** system of local self-government is launched at Bagdari village, Nagaur district, personally inaugurated by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru — Rajasthan becomes the pioneering state for a model later adopted nationwide.

● 2023-2024

CM Ashok Gehlot's government creates 19 new districts and 3 new divisions in March 2023 (33 → 50 districts) ahead of state elections; after BJP's Bhajan Lal Sharma becomes Chief Minister in December 2023, a review committee recommends a partial rollback, and in **December 2024** the state dissolves 9 of the 17 formed districts and all 3 new divisions, settling at the **current 41 districts across 7 divisions**.

“Maharana Pratap lost the Battle of Haldighati tactically, but he never surrendered Mewar to the Mughals — a distinction historians still cite as the clearest example of Rajput resistance surviving even total battlefield defeat.

— Satish Chandra, cited via rajras.in and Vajiram & Ravi

Government, Politics & Administration

Rajasthan's local self-government legacy runs deeper than most states': India's entire Panchayati Raj system was launched here in 1959, a full generation before it became national constitutional policy.

200 (59 reserved)

ASSEMBLY SEATS — 34 SC + 25 ST

25 + 10

LOK SABHA + RAJYA SABHA SEATS

50 sanctioned

RAJASTHAN HIGH COURT JUDGE STRENGTH (JODHPUR)

~11,150

GRAM PANCHAYATS STATEWIDE

Rajasthan's unicameral Legislative Assembly (Vidhan Sabha) has 200 seats on 5-year terms, with 59 reserved — 34 for Scheduled Castes and 25 for Scheduled Tribes. The state sends 25 members to the Lok Sabha and holds 10 Rajya Sabha seats (currently split 5 BJP–5 INC). A Delimitation Bill under discussion in 2026 would raise Rajasthan's Lok Sabha allocation from 25 to 30 seats, reflecting its continued population growth relative to other states — a change not yet in effect. Politics in Rajasthan has historically alternated between the BJP and Indian National Congress; **Bhajan Lal Sharma (BJP)** has served as Chief Minister since 15 December 2023, with Diya Kumari and Prem Chand Bairwa as Deputy Chief Ministers.

Judiciary: The Rajasthan High Court was inaugurated on 29 August 1949 at Jodhpur, its principal seat today, with a bench at Jaipur. At formation, five separate High Courts across the merging princely states (Jaipur, Jodhpur, Bikaner, Udaipur with a Kota bench, and Alwar) were consolidated, with judge strength reduced from a combined 20 to 6 by the time the Constitution came into force in 1950; benches at Udaipur, Bikaner and Kota were abolished the same year. The Court's current sanctioned strength is 50 judges (working strength around 42).

Panchayati Raj — where it all began: India's three-tier Panchayati Raj system of local self-government was launched nationally at Bagdari village, Nagaur district, on 2 October 1959, personally inaugurated by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru — more than three decades before the 73rd Constitutional Amendment (1992) made the model mandatory nationwide. Rajasthan's structure runs Zila Parishad (district) → Panchayat Samiti (block) → Gram Panchayat (village), today comprising roughly 33 Zila Parishads, over 340 Panchayat Samitis and around 11,150 Gram

Panchayats — figures that long predate, and were not fully redrawn by, the 2023-24 district reorganisation.

“India's Panchayati Raj system — the three-tier village self-government model now written into the Constitution itself — was born in a single village in Nagaur district in 1959, more than 30 years before it became a nationwide constitutional mandate.

— thelaw.institute; Rajasthan Panchayati Raj Act history

Geography & Districts

Roughly 70% of Rajasthan is Thar Desert, sealed off from the southwest monsoon by an Aravalli range old enough to predate complex life on Earth — and its internal map has been redrawn twice in three years, growing from 33 districts to 50 in 2023 before settling back to 41 in 2024.

3,42,239 km²

TOTAL AREA — LARGEST OF ANY INDIAN STATE

1,722m

GURU SHIKHAR — HIGHEST ARAVALLI PEAK (MOUNT ABU)

~70%

OF RAJASTHAN'S LAND AREA IS THAR DESERT

2 rivers

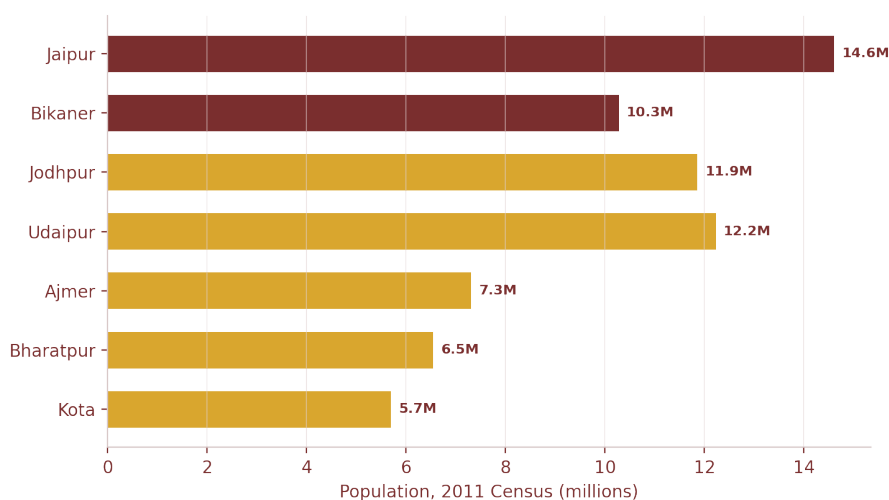
ONLY CHAMBAL AND MAHI ARE TRULY PERENNIAL

Rajasthan is dominated by the **Thar Desert (Great Indian Desert)** in its west and north — roughly 70% of the state's land area, concentrated in Jaisalmer, Barmer, Bikaner and Jodhpur districts, home to around 40% of the state's population. The **Aravalli Range**, one of the oldest fold-mountain belts on Earth (shaped over roughly 2 billion years, predating most of the planet's complex life), runs over 850 km through the state from southwest to northeast, dividing it into an arid northwest (~60% of the state) and a comparatively fertile southeast (~40%). Because the range runs parallel rather than perpendicular to the southwest monsoon, it fails to intercept rain-bearing winds — creating the rain shadow that produces the Thar in the first place. **Guru Shikhar** (1,722m), at Mount Abu in Sirohi district, is the range's highest peak and Rajasthan's only hill station. Of Rajasthan's rivers, only the **Chambal** and **Mahi** are truly perennial; the **Luni** (draining western Rajasthan from near Ajmer) turns saline downstream and empties into the Rann of Kutch, while the state's most consequential water intervention, the **Indira Gandhi Canal**, carries Punjab's Sutlej-Beas surplus 649 km into the desert's northwest.

Administrative Structure: A Map Redrawn Twice

Rajasthan's district map has been unusually unstable in recent years. In March 2023, the Gehlot government created 19 new districts and 3 new divisions, taking the state from 33 to 50 districts and 7 to 10 divisions ahead of that year's elections; only 17 of the 19 announced districts were actually operationalised. After a change in government, a review committee found many of the new districts lacked basic administrative infrastructure and staff, and in December 2024 the state dissolved 9 of those 17 districts and all 3 new divisions, settling at the **current structure: 41 districts across 7 divisions** (Ajmer, Bharatpur, Bikaner, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Kota, Udaipur). Eight of the 2023-created districts were retained: Beawar, Didwana-Kuchaman, Deeg, Khairthal-Tijara,

Kotputli-Behror, Phalodi, Balotra and Salumbar — each carved from an existing parent district and, since they postdate the 2011 Census, not independently enumerated in that count.



Population by division, aggregated from 2011 Census district data. Jaipur division is Rajasthan's most populous; Kota division its least.

District (2011 baseline)	Population (2011)	Sex Ratio	Literacy
Jaipur	6,626,178	910	75.51%
Jodhpur	3,687,165	916	65.94%
Alwar	3,674,179	895	70.72%
Nagaur	3,307,743	950	62.80%
Udaipur	3,068,420	958	61.82%
Sikar	2,677,333	947	71.91%
Barmer	2,603,751	902	56.53%
Ajmer	2,583,052	951	69.33%
Bharatpur	2,548,462	880	70.11%
Bhilwara	2,408,523	973	61.37%
Bikaner	2,363,937	905	65.13%
Jhunjhunu	2,137,045	950	74.13%
Churu	2,039,547	940	66.75%
Pali	2,037,573	987	62.39%
Sri Ganganagar	1,969,168	887	69.64%
Kota	1,951,014	911	76.56%
Jalore	1,828,730	952	54.86%
Banswara	1,797,485	980	56.33%

Hanumangarh	1,774,692	906	67.13%
Dausa	1,634,409	905	68.16%
Chittorgarh	1,544,338	972	61.71%
Karauli	1,458,248	861	66.22%
Tonk	1,421,326	952	61.58%
Jhalawar	1,411,129	946	61.50%
Dungarpur	1,388,552	994	59.46%
Sawai Madhopur	1,335,551	897	65.39%
Baran	1,222,755	929	66.66%
Dholpur	1,206,516	846	69.08%
Rajsamand	1,156,597	990	63.14%
Bundi	1,110,906	925	61.52%
Sirohi	1,036,346	940	55.25%
Pratapgarh	867,848	983	55.97%
Jaisalmer	669,919	852	57.22%

Figures reflect the 2011 Census under the original 33-district map. Eight further districts created in 2023 (Beawar, Didwana-Kuchaman, Deeg, Khairthal-Tijara, Kotputli-Behror, Phalodi, Balotra, Salumbar) were carved from the districts above and are not separately enumerated in the 2011 Census.

All 41 Districts by Division

Jaipur Division

Jaipur Capital; India's first planned city (1727), the "Pink City" since 1876; world's largest colored-gemstone trading hub.	Alwar Home to Sariska Tiger Reserve; birthplace of Hemu, the 16th-century Hindu emperor who briefly ruled Delhi.	Sikar Heart of the Shekhawati painted-haveli region; Rajasthan's #2 coaching hub ("Mini Kota") after Kota itself.
Dausa Historic Kachhwaha-dynasty seat predating Amber/Jaipur; now on the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway/DMIC corridor.	Khairthal-Tijara Carved from Alwar in 2023, retained in 2024; part of the NCR-adjacent Bhiwadi-Neemrana industrial belt.	Kotputli-Behror Carved from Jaipur in 2023, retained in 2024; sits directly on the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway/DMIC corridor.

Jodhpur Division

Jodhpur

The "Blue City"; founded 1459 by Rao Jodha; Mehrangarh Fort; gateway to the Thar Desert.

Barmer

Core Thar Desert district; site of the Mangala oilfield, India's largest onshore oil discovery (2004).

Jaisalmer

The "Golden City" of sandstone; Rajasthan's largest district by area; hosts the annual Desert Festival.

Jalore

Granite-quarrying belt; historic Rajput-Sultanate frontier fort town on the Marwar-Gujarat route.

Pali

Historic Marwar trading/textile town; upper Sabarmati river's short Rajasthan stretch passes through it.

Sirohi

Home to Mount Abu, Rajasthan's only hill station, and the UNESCO-caliber Dilwara Jain marble temples.

Phalodi

Carved from Jaisalmer in 2023, retained in 2024; historic Thar salt- and wool-trading town.

Balotra

Carved from Barmer in 2023, retained in 2024; textile dyeing/printing hub on the Luni river.

Udaipur Division

Udaipur

The "City of Lakes"; Mewar capital since 1559; Lake Palace and City Palace complex.

Chittorgarh

Original Mewar capital; site of the three legendary jauhars (1303, 1535, 1568) and Rana Kumbha's fort.

Bhilwara

The "Manchester/Textile City of Rajasthan" — ~50% of India's polyester-suited fabric production.

Rajsamand

Marble-quarrying district feeding Rajasthan's dominance in India's dimension-stone trade.

Banswara

Tribal-majority southern district in the "hundred islands" Mahi Bajaj Sagar belt bordering Gujarat/MP.

Pratapgarh

Youngest of the original 33 districts (2008); known for distinctive Thewa gold-and-glass jewellery art.

Dungarpur

Tribal Bhil-majority district in Rajasthan's wettest, most forested region (the Vagad tract).

Salumbar

Carved from Udaipur in 2023, retained in 2024; a historic Sisodia-clan jagir (estate) town.

Bikaner Division

Bikaner

"Camel City"; Junagarh Fort; India's National Research Centre on Camel; home of Bikaneri Bhujia.

Jhunjhunu

Shekhawati region's painted-haveli belt; historically a major source of Marwari merchant-community migration.

Sri Ganganagar

Rajasthan's northernmost district, bordering Punjab and Pakistan; the state's canal-irrigated "food basket."

Hanumangarh

Site of Kalibangan, a major Indus Valley/Harappan provincial centre on the dry Ghaggar riverbed.

Churu

Founded 1120 CE; gateway to the Thar's shifting golden dunes; a leading oilseed-producing district.

Ajmer Division

Ajmer

Dargah Sharif of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti, a major Sufi pilgrimage site; adjoins Pushkar.

Nagaur

Where India's Panchayati Raj system was launched in 1959; historic Nagaur Cattle Fair.

Tonk

Former Pathan (Afghan-origin) princely state, distinct from Rajasthan's mostly Rajput/Jat states.

Beawar

Carved from Ajmer in 2023, retained in 2024; a historic textile/cloth-trading town on the Ajmer-Merwara route.

Didwana-Kuchaman

Carved from Nagaur in 2023, retained in 2024; centred on the historic Didwana salt lake trade.

Bharatpur Division

Bharatpur

Former Jat princely state; home to Keoladeo Ghana National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage bird sanctuary.

Dholpur

Built the Dholpur-Sarmathura narrow-gauge railway (1905) to haul its distinctive red sandstone.

Karauli

Former princely state of the Matsya Union (1948), the first stage of Rajasthan's integration.

Sawai Madhopur

Home to Ranthambore Tiger Reserve, Rajasthan's flagship tiger habitat.

Deeg

Carved from Bharatpur in 2023, retained in 2024; site of the 18th-century Deeg Palace water gardens.

Kota Division

Kota

Chambal-river industrial town reinvented since the 1980s as India's "Coaching Capital" for NEET/IIT-JEE prep.

Bundi

Known for its stepwells (baoris) and Bundi school of miniature painting.

Baran

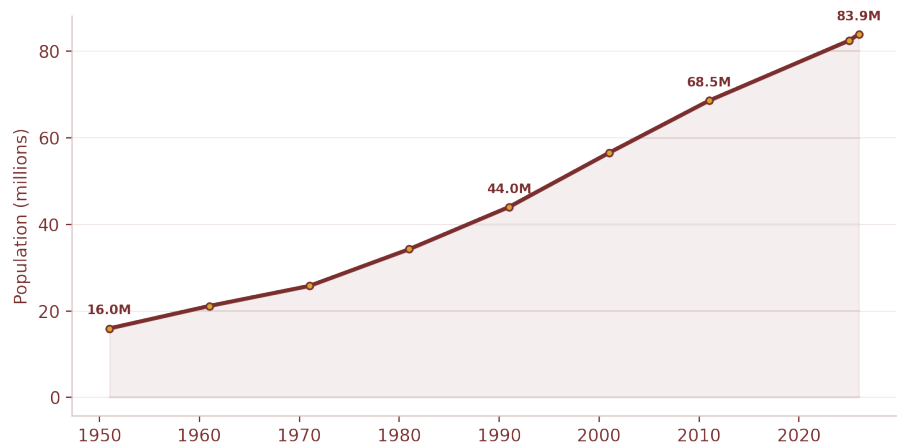
Home to the Sahariya tribal community, one of Rajasthan's most marginalised Scheduled Tribes.

Jhalawar

Rajasthan's southeasternmost district, with a distinct sub-tropical climate and teak forest cover.

Population & Demographics

Rajasthan's population has grown faster than the national average for decades, even as it has recorded, in the same period, one of India's steepest literacy climbs and one of its most persistent gender gaps.



Population growth, 1951–2026. Rajasthan grew roughly 5.3x over 75 years, consistently outpacing the national growth rate.

200/km²

POPULATION DENSITY (VS. 382 NATIONAL)

928

SEX RATIO (2011) — BELOW THE 943 NATIONAL AVERAGE

66.11%

LITERACY (MALE 79.19%, FEMALE 52.12%)

24.87% / 75.13%

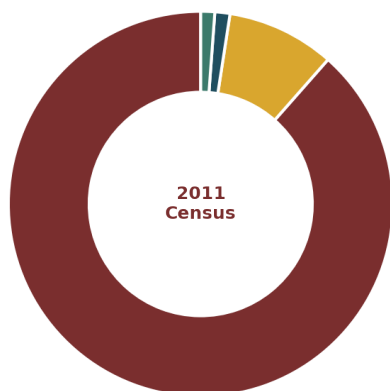
URBAN / RURAL SPLIT

888

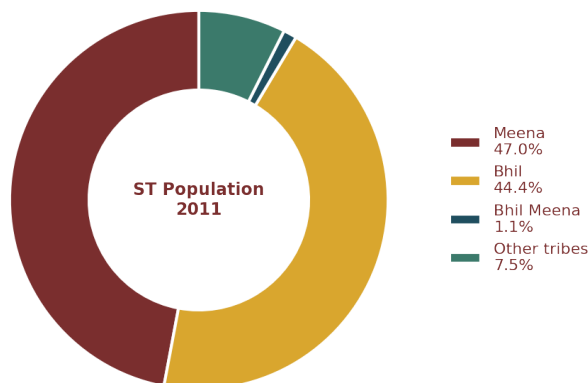
CHILD SEX RATIO (0-6 YRS), DOWN FROM 909 IN 2001

13.48%

SCHEDULED TRIBE SHARE OF POPULATION



Religion, 2011 Census. A large Hindu majority with a significant Muslim minority and a historically influential Jain merchant community.



Scheduled Tribe composition, 2011 Census. Meena and Bhil communities together account for over 90% of Rajasthan's ST population.

Rajasthan's 2011 population of 68,548,437 was 88.49% Hindu and 9.07% Muslim, with smaller but historically significant Sikh (1.27%) and Jain (0.91%) communities — the latter's influence far exceeding its population share, reflected in landmark sites like the Dilwara temples at Mount Abu and Ranakpur. Hindi is the official language, but the state is a patchwork of Rajasthani dialects with no single Census-recognised "Rajasthani" language: Marwari (largest, spoken across Jodhpur/Bikaner/Barmer), Mewari (Udaipur/Chittorgarh), Dhundhari (Jaipur/Dausa) and Harauti (Kota/Bundi) are the major regional tongues. Scheduled Tribes make up 13.48% of the population (9.24 million), overwhelmingly Meena (47.04% of the ST population, and India's largest single concentration of the community) and Bhil (44.38%) — together over 90% of Rajasthan's tribal population, concentrated in the southern Udaipur-Banswara-Dungarpur belt (Bhil) and the eastern Jaipur-Alwar-Karauli belt (Meena).

The sex ratio and literacy gap: at 928 females per 1,000 males (2011), Rajasthan sits below the 943 national average, and its child sex ratio (888, down from 909 in 2001) points to a persistent, worsening pattern of sex-selective practices in parts of the state. NFHS-5 (2019-21) survey data shows some improvement — sex ratio at birth rising from 919 to 929 — though NFHS figures use a different (household-survey) methodology from the Census and shouldn't be read as a direct, like-for-like replacement for the Census numbers above. Rajasthan's male-female literacy gap (79.19% vs. 52.12% in 2011, a 27-point spread) has long been among the widest of any Indian

state, even as the state posted India's single largest decadal literacy jump between 1991 and 2001 (38.6% to 60.4%).

Migration: Rajasthan is a net out-migrating state, one of four states (with Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh) that together account for half of India's inter-state migrants — with Delhi as the primary destination for government, construction, retail and household-service work, and Ahmedabad drawing significant labour migration from the southern tribal-belt districts.

“Rajasthan's literacy rate climbed from 38.6% to 60.4% in a single decade (1991-2001) — the largest ten-year literacy jump recorded by any Indian state — yet its male-female literacy gap remains one of the country's widest.

— Census of India; ResearchGate literacy-trend analysis

Culture, Festivals & Cuisine

Rajasthan's cultural calendar runs on camel and cattle fairs as much as religious festivals, its dance forms trace back to snake-charmer and tribal communities rather than royal courts, and its cuisine was engineered almost entirely around one constraint: a desert with barely any water or fresh vegetables.

Signature Festivals

The **Pushkar Camel Fair** (Kartik month, Oct-Nov, climaxing on Kartik Purnima) began as a 19th-century livestock-trading fair and remains the world's largest camel fair, held alongside ritual bathing in Pushkar's sacred lake. **Gangaur** (Chaitra month, Mar-Apr, an 18-day festival) honours Goddess Gauri's reunion with Shiva and is observed by married women praying for their husbands' longevity and unmarried women for a good match, most vividly in Jaipur, Udaipur and Jodhpur. **Teej**, a monsoon-season women's festival, shares Gangaur's marital-devotion theme. The **Jaisalmer Desert Festival** (February) and **Marwar Festival** (Jodhpur, Ashwin month) celebrate desert life and Rajasthani war heroes respectively, while the historic **Nagaur Cattle Fair** (Jan-Feb) remains one of Asia's largest livestock trading events.

Performing Arts & Craft

Kalbelia dance, performed by the Kalbelia (formerly snake-charmer) community — women in flowing black skirts with serpentine movements, accompanied by percussion and the poongi woodwind — was inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2010. **Ghoomar** originated as a Bhil-tribe dance honouring Goddess Saraswati before being adopted more widely as a bridal welcome dance, and saw a global pop-culture spike after its depiction in the 2018 film *Padmaavat*. The **Manganiyar and Langa** communities are hereditary Muslim folk musicians of the western desert who preserve centuries of court music and Sufi song under a traditional jajmani patronage system — Manganiyars serving Hindu patrons, Langas serving Muslim patrons. **Kathputli** string-puppetry, over 1,000 years old and traditionally performed by nomadic Bhat and Nat communities, is unusual among Indian puppet traditions for focusing on local hero folklore rather than the Ramayana or Mahabharata.

In visual art, the **Kishangarh school of miniature painting** produced its most famous work, *Bani Thani*, under 18th-century court artist Nihal Chand for Raja Sawant Singh. **Sanganeri and Bagru block printing** (Chippa-community crafts using natural dyes, GI-tagged in 2010) and Jaipur's **blue pottery** and **meenakari** enamel work (introduced in the 16th century via Lahore artisans invited to Mewar) round out a craft tradition still centred on the same towns that originated it centuries ago.

Cuisine

Dal baati churma traces to the Mewar-era practice of Rajput soldiers burying dough balls (baati) in desert sand before battle, retrieved and eaten baked with ghee on their return; churma reportedly originated when a cook accidentally poured sugarcane juice over baatis. **Laal maas**, a fiery yogurt-tomato mutton curry, began as a hunters' game dish. **Gatte ki sabzi** — gram-flour dumplings in a spiced gravy — exists specifically because fresh vegetables were scarce across the desert terrain. **Ghevar**, a honeycomb-textured disc-shaped sweet from royal Jaipur/Bikaner/Udaipur kitchens, is tied closely to the monsoon-season Teej and Raksha Bandhan festivals. **Pyaz kachori**, a spiced-onion fried pastry, is a Jodhpur origination now found statewide.

“Rajasthan's Kalbelia dance — performed by a community once known as snake charmers — is one of the few Indian folk-dance traditions with formal UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage recognition, inscribed in 2010.

— UNESCO ICH Decision 5.COM 6.16; Indian Culture government portal

Education & Research Institutions

Rajasthan's education story runs from a 1947 university founded weeks before Indian independence to Kota's unlikely transformation from a struggling industrial town into the nerve centre of India's entire engineering and medical entrance-exam coaching industry.

66.11%

LITERACY (MALE 79.19%,
FEMALE 52.12%)

1947

UNIVERSITY OF RAJASTHAN
FOUNDED (AS "UNIVERSITY OF
RAJPUTANA")

2008

IIT JODHPUR ESTABLISHED

₹5,000 Cr+

ESTIMATED ANNUAL SCALE OF KOTA'S COACHING INDUSTRY

The **University of Rajasthan** was established 8 January 1947 in Jaipur as the "University of Rajputana" (renamed in 1956), formed by federating colleges across the merging princely states under preparatory work led by Sir Mirza Ismail and Sir V.T. Krishnamachari; its first Vice-Chancellor was Dr. G.S. Mahajani. **MNIT Jaipur**, founded 1963 as a joint central-state regional engineering college, became a National Institute of Technology in 2002 and an Institute of National Importance in 2007. **BITS Pilani**, founded 1964 by industrialist G.D. Birla from a cluster of earlier Birla colleges (with an early MIT collaboration agreement), is among India's top-ranked private engineering universities. **IIT Jodhpur**, established 2008 and moved to its permanent 852-acre campus in 2017, and **IIM Udaipur**, founded 2011 as the 7th IIM and the youngest IIM to receive AACSB accreditation, complete Rajasthan's cluster of federally-designated "Institutes of National Importance."

Kota's coaching transformation: once an industrial town built around Chambal-river power and chemical/textile manufacturing, Kota reinvented itself from the 1980s onward as "the Coaching Capital of India" for NEET and IIT-JEE preparation, after the closure of a major local factory left instructors and infrastructure looking for a new purpose. The industry is now estimated at roughly ₹5,000-6,500 crore annually; Sikar, in the state's Shekhawati region, has emerged as a smaller "Mini Kota" second hub. Enrollment has fallen sharply from a peak of roughly 200,000 students to around 120,000 by 2024, amid tightened state regulatory scrutiny following student-welfare and suicide-prevention concerns.

“Kota's transformation from a struggling Chambal-river industrial town into the coaching hub that prepares hundreds of thousands of India's engineering and medical aspirants each year is now studied as one of India's most distinctive single-city economic reinventions.

— Sunday Guardian; Forbes coverage of Kota's coaching economy

Cities & Urban Areas

Rajasthan's cities are, almost without exception, former princely-state capitals that turned their forts and palaces into the backbone of an entire tourism economy.

JA Jaipur — State Capital

Population (city) 3,046,163 (2011), metro estimate ~4.6 million by 2026. Founded 1727 by Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II, designed by architect Vidyadhar Bhattacharya on a 9-block grid — widely called India's first planned city — and painted pink in 1876 to welcome the Prince of Wales. The walled city was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2019; the Jantar Mantar observatory holds its own separate UNESCO listing (2010). World's largest hub for cutting and trading colored gemstones, with gem/jewelry exports exceeding \$2 billion in FY2024-25. Jaipur's twin municipal corporations (split 2019-20) were merged back into a single body in March 2025.

JO Jodhpur — The Blue City

Rajasthan's second-largest city, population ~1.6 million (2025 estimate). Founded 1459 by Rao Jodha, 15th Rathore ruler of Marwar. Mehrangarh Fort sits atop a 400-ft sandstone ridge with walls up to 120 ft high across 1,200 acres. The indigo-washed old city gives Jodhpur its "Blue City" name, originally a Brahmin-household color said to deflect heat and repel mosquitoes. Gateway to the Thar Desert and home to a strategically important IAF western-sector air base.

UD Udaipur — City of Lakes

Population 422,784 (city, 2011), Rajasthan's 6th-largest city. Founded 1559 by Maharana Udai Singh II after Mewar's capital shifted from Chittorgarh following repeated Mughal sieges. The Lake Palace, built 1743-46 on Jag Niwas island in Lake Pichola, is now a Taj Group luxury hotel. Also called the "Venice of the East" for its network of artificial lakes.

KO Kota

Rajasthan's third-largest city, population 1,001,694 (2011), on the Chambal river. Once an industrial centre (oilseed, textile, chemical and precision-instrument manufacturing powered by the Jawahar Sagar Dam), now reinvented as "India's Coaching Capital" for NEET/IIT-JEE preparation, an industry estimated at roughly ₹5,000-6,500 crore a year. Twin municipal corporations (split 2019-20) merged back into one in March 2025.

AJ Ajmer

Population 542,321 (city, 2011). Home to the Dargah Sharif of Sufi saint Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti, built by Mughal emperor Humayun, drawing an estimated 150,000 pilgrims daily — among India's most-visited pilgrimage sites of any faith. Adjoins Pushkar (11 km away), home to one of India's few Brahma temples and a sacred lake.

BI Bikaner

Population 644,406 (city, 2011). Junagarh Fort, built in the 16th century by Raja Rai Singh, is notable among major Rajasthani forts for not sitting atop a hill and for never being captured. Home to the National Research Centre on Camel, Asia's only dedicated camel-research institute, and to Bikaneri Bhujia, the GI-tagged spiced snack.

MA Mount Abu

Rajasthan's only hill station, at 1,722m in the Aravalli Range, Sirohi district. Home to the Dilwara Jain Temples — five marble temples (11th-16th century) renowned globally for their carving — and Nakki Lake, reputedly India's first man-made lake.

The Economy

Rajasthan's economy has quietly become one of India's fastest-growing over the past decade, even as its per-capita income remains below the national average and its state finances carry a persistently elevated debt load.

₹17.04 lakh cr

GSDP, 2024-25 (CURRENT PRICES), UP 12.02%

7.82%

REAL GSDP GROWTH RATE, 2024-25

₹1,85,053

PER-CAPITA INCOME, 2024-25 — UP 11.04%, OUTPACING THE NATIONAL 8.7%

7th

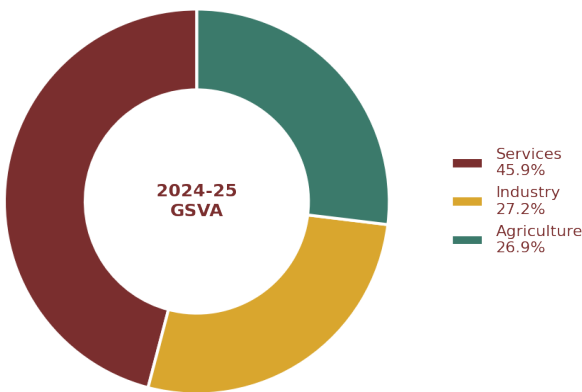
LARGEST STATE ECONOMY IN INDIA (~\$182 BILLION, 2023-24)

~38%

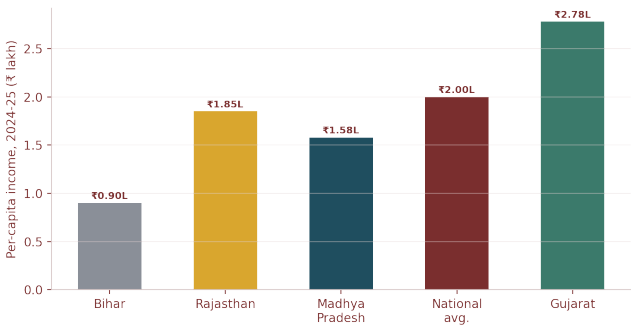
OUTSTANDING DEBT AS SHARE OF GSDP, 2025-26

4.3%

FISCAL DEFICIT TARGET, 2025-26 (ABOVE THE 3% FRBM NORM)



GSDP by sector, 2024-25. Services lead narrowly, but agriculture and industry both remain unusually large shares for a fast-growing state.



Per-capita income: Rajasthan vs. national average and peer states, 2024-25 (illustrative comparison figures).

Rajasthan's GSDP grew at a compound annual rate of roughly 10.65-11.31% between FY16 and FY26, moving it up to the 7th-largest state economy in India (about \$182 billion in 2023-24), with government and industry projections (PHDCCI) targeting \$351 billion by 2028-29. Its sectoral

composition is unusually balanced for a fast-growing state: services (45.92% of GSVA in 2024-25), industry (27.16%, driven heavily by mining, chemicals and manufacturing) and agriculture (26.92%, still a substantial share reflecting Rajasthan's position as India's top mustard and bajra producer). Per-capita income reached ₹1,85,053 in 2024-25, growing faster than the national average, though Rajasthan's absolute per-capita figure remains below the national average and ranks around 22nd among Indian states.

Fiscal position: Rajasthan's fiscal deficit is targeted at 4.3% of GSDP for 2025-26 (₹84,644 crore), above the 3% FRBM norm, driven substantially by capital spending; outstanding liabilities sit near 38% of GSDP, with interest payments consuming over 11% of total expenditure. The December 2024 "Rising Rajasthan" Global Investment Summit in Jaipur drew over 5,000 investors from roughly 35 countries and secured MoUs reported at approximately ₹35 lakh crore — Adani Group alone committed roughly ₹7.5 lakh crore — spanning cement, chemicals, aviation, renewable energy and skilling, a scale of committed investment the state government is counting on to help offset its structural fiscal gap over the coming decade.

“Rajasthan's per-capita income grew 11.04% in 2024-25, outpacing the national growth rate of 8.7% — yet its absolute per-capita income still ranks only around 22nd among Indian states, a reminder of how large a gap the state is still closing.

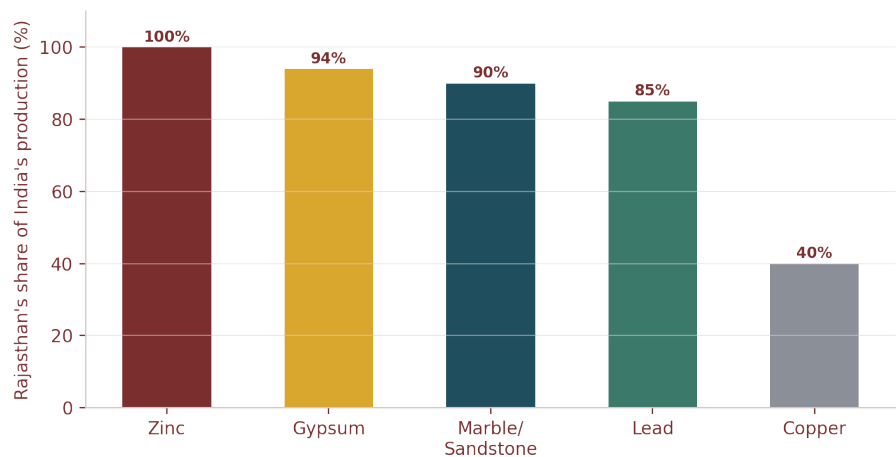
— NITI Aayog EAC-PM Working Paper; The BuckStopper

Industries & What Drives Them

Rajasthan runs on a genuinely unusual industrial mix for a desert state: it is simultaneously India's undisputed monopoly supplier of several minerals, its top solar-power generator, and the source of most of the world's guar gum used in American shale-gas fracking.

1 Mining & Minerals Industry

Rajasthan's Precambrian Aravalli-Delhi geology gives it 81 distinct mineral types — the most diverse mineral basket of any Indian state — including a near-monopoly on several: 100% of India's zinc, 85% of lead, 94% of gypsum, and 90% of marble/sandstone/slate production. Hindustan Zinc's Rampura Agucha mine (Bhilwara district) is the world's largest underground zinc-mining operation, with combined ore capacity across its Rajasthan mines of 18.25 million tonnes/year.



Rajasthan's share of India's national production for key minerals it dominates or monopolises.

2 Solar & Renewable Energy Energy

The Bhadla Solar Park (Jodhpur district) is India's largest and the world's 11th-largest solar park at 2,245 MW capacity across roughly 14,000 acres. Statewide, Rajasthan has overtaken every other Indian state in installed solar capacity (over 33 GW by mid-2025), and its Integrated Clean Energy Policy 2024 targets 125 GW of total renewable capacity by 2030.

3 Textiles (Bhilwara) Manufacturing

Bhilwara, the "Manchester of Rajasthan," grew from roughly 60,000 to nearly 1.5 million spindles and now accounts for around 50% of India's polyester-suiting fabric production, with a city-wide textile turnover estimated at ₹25,000 crore across 850+ manufacturing units.

4 Gems & Jewellery (Jaipur) Manufacturing

Jaipur is the world's largest hub for cutting and trading colored gemstones (emeralds, rubies, sapphires, tanzanite), a centuries-old craft advantage rooted in Mughal and Rajput court patronage; gem/jewellery exports exceeded \$2 billion in FY2024-25, and a new Jaipur Gem & Jewellery Bourse is being built as the world's first dedicated colored-gemstone trading exchange.

5 Agriculture: Mustard & Bajra Agriculture

Rajasthan is India's #1 producer of both mustard/rapeseed (concentrated in the northeastern districts) and bajra/pearl millet (44.86% of India's national bajra output), its semi-arid climate and light rainfall favouring these drought-tolerant crops over water-intensive alternatives.

6 Guar Gum Agriculture/Export

Rajasthan produces roughly 70-72% of India's guar crop, and India itself supplies 80-90% of the world's guar seed — making Rajasthan the dominant global source of guar gum, around 90% of which serves the American oil and shale-gas fracking industry. Export value swung from \$20 million (2003-04) to a peak of \$3.5 billion (2012-13) tracking the US shale boom.

7 Tourism Services

Rajasthan drew 23 crore domestic and 20 lakh international tourists in 2024 (up 28% and 19% respectively year-on-year), contributing an estimated 10% of state GSDP and over 2.5 million direct and indirect jobs — built almost entirely on its concentration of Rajput heritage forts, palaces and pilgrimage sites.

8 Oil & Gas (Barmer) **Energy**

The Barmer-Sanchor basin, discovered 2004, is India's largest onshore oil find; Cairn Oil & Gas's Mangala oilfield alone has produced over 535 million barrels of oil equivalent since 2009, and the Rajasthan block now contributes an estimated 20-25% of India's total domestic crude oil production.

9 Handicrafts **Manufacturing/Export**

Jaipur's blue pottery and Bagru/Sanganer's natural-dye block printing (GI-tagged 2010) are internationally recognised, eco-friendly craft exports built on artisan lineages dating back centuries under royal patronage.

Transport & Connectivity

Rajasthan's transport network is defined by distance rather than density — India's largest state by area needs unusually long rail and road corridors to connect its desert districts, and its newest artery, the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway, is still being completed through it.

373 km

OF THE DELHI-MUMBAI EXPRESSWAY RUNS THROUGH RAJASTHAN

3rd

HIGHEST NATIONAL HIGHWAY LENGTH OF ANY INDIAN STATE

6.16m

JAIPUR AIRPORT PASSENGERS, FY2024-25

1982

PALACE ON WHEELS LUXURY HERITAGE TRAIN LAUNCHED

Rail: Rajasthan's princely states built extensive narrow-gauge networks, most now closed or converted — the Dholpur-Sarmathura line, built 1905 to haul red sandstone, ran until its final closure on 31 March 2023. The **Palace on Wheels**, launched 26 January 1982 using coaches originally built for the rulers of Baroda and the Nizam of Hyderabad, remains one of India's best-known luxury heritage trains, a 7-night circuit through Jaipur, Ranthambore, Chittorgarh, Udaipur, Jaisalmer, Jodhpur, Bharatpur and Agra. Kota Junction sits on the Delhi-Mumbai trunk line, one of India's busiest rail corridors; Jodhpur and Ajmer Junctions anchor the state's western and central rail networks respectively, with Ajmer's branch to Pushkar Terminus serving one of India's most-visited pilgrimage routes.

Roads: Rajasthan has the third-highest National Highway length of any Indian state. The **Delhi-Mumbai Expressway**, India's longest expressway at 1,350 km overall, runs 373 km through Rajasthan's Alwar, Dausa and Bundi districts; a new 80 km Kota-Bundi stretch was inaugurated in December 2024, though full completion of the project has slipped from its original 2024 target toward 2027.

Air: Jaipur International Airport handled 6.16 million passengers in FY2024-25 (up ~11% year-on-year), making it Rajasthan's principal gateway; Udaipur's Maharana Pratap Airport (1.65 million passengers) and Jodhpur Airport (1.04 million) serve the state's other major tourism/business hubs, while the smaller Kishangarh Airport near Ajmer, part of India's regional UDAN connectivity scheme, has grown rapidly (up 71.5% in FY2024-25) on Pushkar/Ajmer pilgrimage traffic. Jodhpur also hosts one of the Indian Air Force's most strategically important western-sector air bases.

Environment, Wildlife & Biodiversity

Rajasthan has one of India's lowest forest covers, a direct consequence of its desert geography — but it also hosts one of conservation's genuine recent success stories, a tiger reserve that went locally extinct in 2004 and has since rebuilt a population of 50.

4.87%

FOREST COVER OF
GEOGRAPHICAL AREA (ISFR
2023) — AMONG INDIA'S
LOWEST

+394 km²

FOREST+TREE COVER GAIN
SINCE 2021 — 4TH-HIGHEST OF
ANY STATE

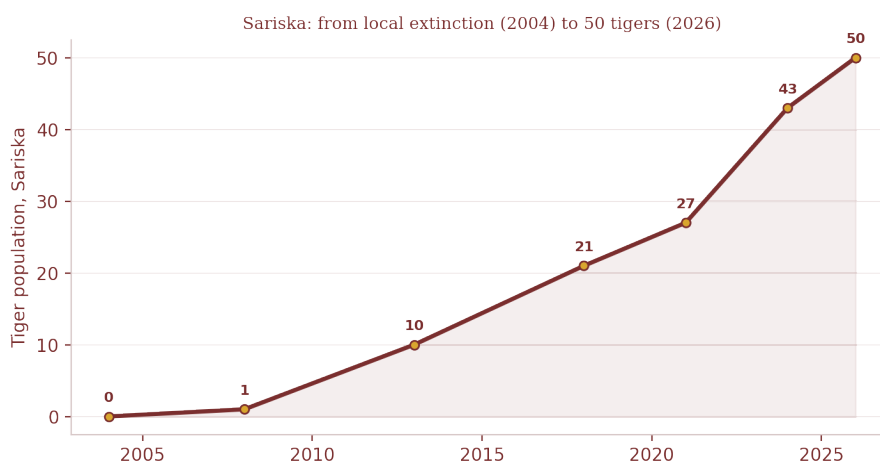
28.73 km²

KEOLADEO GHANA NATIONAL
PARK (UNESCO, 1985)

<150

GREAT INDIAN BUSTARDS REMAINING IN THE WILD NATIONALLY

Ranthambore Tiger Reserve (Sawai Madhopur, ~1,334 sq km notified area) is Rajasthan's flagship tiger habitat, its population estimated at 88-92 tigers in recent counts — roughly half of the state's total tiger population. **Sariska Tiger Reserve** (Alwar) is a landmark conservation case: after poaching wiped out its tigers entirely by 2004-05, Sariska became, in 2008, the first tiger reserve in the world to successfully rebuild its population purely through translocation from another reserve (Ranthambore) — growing from a single reintroduced tiger to around 50 by 2025.



Sariska's tiger population, from local extinction in 2004 to roughly 50 tigers by 2026 — the world's first tiger reserve rebuilt entirely through translocation.

Keoladeo Ghana National Park (Bharatpur), a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1985, packs some 370-400 recorded bird species into just 28.73 sq km of wetland and grassland, alongside 372 plant and 34 mammal species. **Desert National Park** (Jaisalmer/Barmer, 3,162 sq km, established 1981) is the last major stronghold of the **Great Indian Bustard**, one of the world's heaviest flying birds — a species reduced to fewer than 150 individuals nationwide since 2018, driven by hunting, habitat loss and, increasingly, collisions with power lines, a mortality driver the Supreme Court has directly addressed in rulings in 2021 and 2024. A tripartite recovery program (2024-2029) between the environment ministry, the Rajasthan government and the Wildlife Institute of India now combines captive breeding with habitat restoration.

Water and desertification risk: Rajasthan holds 13.88% of India's cultivable land but only 1.16% of its surface water and 1.70% of its groundwater — one of the sharpest land-to-water mismatches of any Indian state. Roughly 70% of the state's area is arid or semi-arid, over 60% faces chronic water stress, and groundwater extraction in western districts exceeds recharge by as much as 150%. Per-capita water availability has fallen from 1,867 m³ (2001) toward levels some projections put below 500 m³ by 2050, against a national average above 1,100 m³.

“Sariska is the world's first tiger reserve to have rebuilt its population entirely through translocation after local extinction — from zero tigers in 2004 to roughly 50 by 2026.

— ANI; Wildlife Institute of India project documentation

Problems Facing Rajasthan

Rajasthan's problems trace back, more consistently than in most Indian states, to a single root cause: not enough water, spread across too much land, for too many people and too much industry to share comfortably.

1 Water Scarcity

Rajasthan holds 13.88% of India's cultivable land but just 1.16% of its surface water and 1.70% of its groundwater — a structural mismatch with no easy fix. Only about 44% of rural habitations are classified as "fully covered" by drinking-water supply, among the lowest shares of any Indian state.

2 Chronic Drought

More than 60% of Rajasthan's districts fall in high drought-risk zones, with 11 classified as arid and Jaisalmer the driest of all. A Standardized Precipitation Index study of 1960-2009 found drought years ranging from 24 (Hanumangarh) to 32 (Barmer) out of that 50-year window — roughly every other year in the driest western tracts.

3 Sex Ratio & the Gender Literacy Gap

Rajasthan's child sex ratio fell from 909 (2001) to 888 (2011), a worsening trend despite some NFHS-5 survey-based improvement; its male-female literacy gap (79.19% vs. 52.12% in 2011) remains one of the widest of any Indian state.

4 Farmer Distress

Erratic, deficient monsoon rainfall across the state's arid and semi-arid geography leaves agriculture structurally exposed to crop failure; documented cases — such as a cold-wave crop loss in Rajsamand district — illustrate a recurring risk pattern for smallholder farmers with limited insurance or irrigation buffers.

5 Mining vs. Tribal & Pastoral Livelihoods

Extensive sandstone and marble quarrying in the Aravalli hills has converted parts of the range into rocky wasteland and pushed local water tables down 40-50 metres in some mining areas; villages such as Rooppura and Dhwala have organised since around 2010 to resist mining encroachment on common grazing land.

6 Fiscal & Debt Stress

Rajasthan's fiscal deficit worsened from 3.9% of GSDP (2024-25) toward a targeted 4.3% (2025-26), well above the 3% FRBM norm, with outstanding debt near 38% of GSDP and interest payments consuming over 11% of total expenditure.

7 Silicosis Among Stone-Mine Workers

Over 1.65 million families work in Rajasthan's stone quarrying sector, where silicosis prevalence in some mining clusters is estimated as high as 79%; one mine worker reportedly dies of silicosis every five days in the state, a toll that persists despite a dedicated state compensation policy.

Solutions & Policy Responses

Rajasthan's biggest policy bets all trace back to the same water-and-energy math: move more water into the desert, or generate so much solar power from the same desert that it funds everything else.

1 Indira Gandhi Canal Project

Originally the Rajasthan Canal (renamed 1984), this 649 km canal draws Punjab's Ravi-Beas surplus water via the Harike Barrage into Rajasthan's northwest, with a cultivable command area of roughly 19.63 lakh hectares and 1,800 cusecs reserved specifically for drinking water and industrial use — the single largest engineered response to the state's water-scarcity problem.

2 MGNREGA Implementation

Rajasthan was India's top-performing MGNREGA state for years (46 crore person-days in 2019-20), slipping to 2nd (36.5 crore person-days) by 2023-24 behind Tamil Nadu; the scheme remains a major rural safety net against drought-driven income loss, though recent wage-payment delays and eligibility restrictions have sharply reduced person-days generated in 2025-26.

3 Integrated Clean Energy Policy 2024

Targets 125 GW of total renewable capacity by 2030 (90 GW solar, 25 GW wind/hybrid, 10 GW hydro/storage) plus 2,000 ktpa of green hydrogen production, turning the same desert land that drives water scarcity into the state's largest new revenue engine — Rajasthan had already exceeded 33 GW of installed solar capacity by mid-2025, ahead of its own interim targets.

4 Silicosis Welfare Policy (2019)

Rajasthan was the first Indian state to adopt a dedicated silicosis detection, prevention and rehabilitation policy for mining and construction workers, providing ₹3 lakh one-time assistance, a ₹1,500 monthly pension, and ₹2 lakh to a deceased worker's family — disbursing ₹133.74 crore across 6,758 cases to date, though doctor shortages and certification delays remain documented implementation gaps.

5 Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor Nodes

Five DMIC investment nodes across Alwar, Jaipur-Dausa, Ajmer-Kishangarh, Rajsamand-Bhilwara and Jodhpur-Pali aim to convert the state's existing mineral and agricultural base into higher-value manufacturing, chemicals and knowledge-sector jobs — a structural response to farmer distress and the state's thin non-agricultural job base.

6 Sariska Tiger Translocation Program

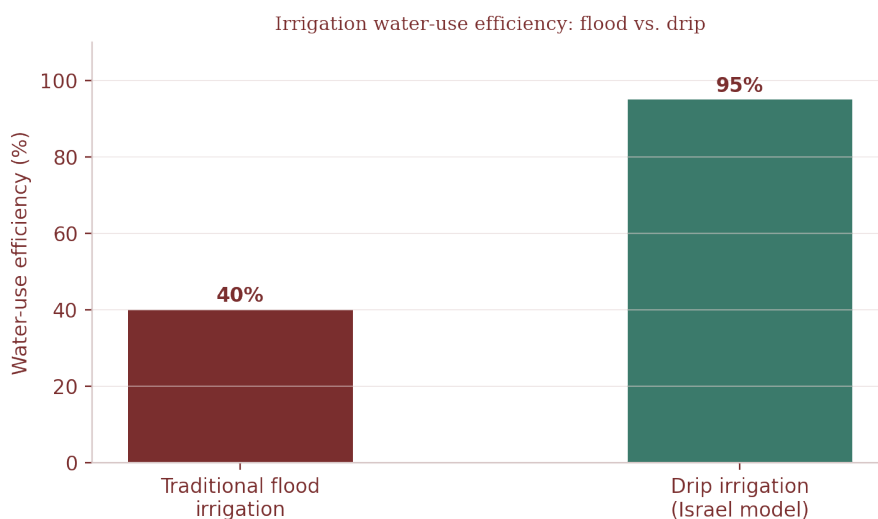
Following the 2004-05 poaching-driven local extinction, the Rajasthan Forest Department and National Tiger Conservation Authority ran the world's first successful reserve-wide tiger translocation from Ranthambore, rebuilding Sariska's population to around 50 tigers by 2025 — now a globally cited conservation case study.

What Rajasthan Can Learn From Other States & Regions

Rajasthan's specific combination of desert-scale water scarcity, a fast-scaling solar sector, and mining revenue sitting uneasily alongside tribal livelihoods has close analogues elsewhere, several with genuinely transferable, quantified lessons.

1 Israel — The Drip Irrigation Revolution

Since Netafim commercialised drip irrigation in 1965, Israel has moved 75% of its agriculture onto drip systems achieving 90-100% water-use efficiency (vs. roughly 40% for flood irrigation), lifting agricultural productivity 1,600% since 1950 while recycling over 75% of its wastewater for reuse. *Lesson for Rajasthan: expanding drip-irrigation adoption beyond its current pockets could meaningfully close the water-scarcity gap without requiring a single new canal.*



Water-use efficiency: traditional flood irrigation vs. Israel's drip-irrigation model.

2 Singapore — NEWater Reclaimed Wastewater

Singapore's NEWater program treats and reclaims wastewater to meet roughly 40% of national water demand today, targeting 55% by 2060 as its "Four National Taps" strategy scales up. *Lesson for Rajasthan: municipal wastewater reclamation in water-stressed cities like Jodhpur and Bikaner could reduce dependence on both groundwater and the Indira Gandhi Canal.*

3 China — The "Great Green Wall" (Three-North Shelterbelt)

Launched in 1978 across 13 provinces, China's afforestation program has planted over 31 million hectares, raising forest coverage in the project area from 5.05% to 13.84% and, in November 2024, closing the final 100-metre sand gap to complete a continuous 3,046 km green barrier against desert expansion. | *Lesson for Rajasthan: a similarly sustained, multi-decade afforestation commitment along the Thar's eastern fringe could slow desertification pressure on adjoining agricultural districts.*

4 Odisha — District Mineral Foundation Compliance

Odisha's District Mineral Foundation has collected ₹13,728 crore (India's highest) from mining royalties, with strict post-2021 central rules barring diversion of funds to the state exchequer or unrelated urban projects. | *Lesson for Rajasthan: as its own zinc, lead and marble mining districts generate DMF-style royalty income, tight, transparent ring-fencing rules — learning from Odisha's documented diversion problems — would help ensure funds actually reach mining-affected tribal and pastoral communities.*

5 Morocco — Noor Ouarzazate Solar Complex

Morocco's 580 MW Noor Ouarzazate complex uses concentrated solar power with thermal storage, generating power even after sunset, unlike Bhadla's purely photovoltaic model. | *Lesson for Rajasthan: incorporating CSP-with-storage capacity alongside its dominant photovoltaic buildout would improve grid reliability as the state scales toward its 125 GW renewable target.*

6 Germany — Energiewende Grid Transition

Germany grew renewables from 6.5% to over 58% of power generation between 2000 and 2024 while managing a full nuclear phase-out and a still-ongoing coal phase-out, targeting 75% renewables and 360 GW capacity by 2030. | *Lesson for Rajasthan: Germany's two-decade experience managing baseload and grid-stability challenges during a renewables transition is directly relevant as the state's own solar share climbs past 30 GW.*

7 Bhutan — High-Value, Low-Volume Heritage Tourism

Since 1974, Bhutan has deliberately capped tourist volume via a Sustainable Development Fee (currently \$100/day per visitor), earmarking the revenue directly for education, healthcare and rural livelihoods rather than maximising visitor numbers. *Lesson for Rajasthan: ongoing local disputes over whether Amer Fort's ticket revenue reaches surrounding heritage villages suggest the state could adopt a similar earmarked-revenue model to ensure tourism income reaches the communities maintaining these sites.*

Future Growth & Potential

Rajasthan's next decade rests on converting the same desert that has long constrained it into its biggest economic asset — provided its water and fiscal constraints don't outpace the investment now pouring in.

₹35 lakh cr

MOUS SIGNED AT THE DEC 2024
RISING RAJASTHAN SUMMIT

125 GW

RENEWABLE-ENERGY CAPACITY
TARGET BY 2030

5 nodes

DELHI-MUMBAI INDUSTRIAL
CORRIDOR INVESTMENT
REGIONS IN-STATE

~9.0 Cr

PROJECTED POPULATION BY 2036

Infrastructure pipeline: the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor's five Rajasthan nodes — Khushkhera-Bhiwadi-Neemrana, Jaipur-Dausa, Ajmer-Kishangarh, Rajsamand-Bhilwara, and Jodhpur-Pali-Marwar — are being built to leverage the state's existing mineral, agricultural and gem-trading base into higher-value manufacturing, chemicals and knowledge-economy jobs, complementing the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway's 373 km run through the state (see Chapter 11). December 2024's Rising Rajasthan Global Investment Summit secured MoUs reported around ₹35 lakh crore, with Adani Group's roughly ₹7.5 lakh crore commitment the single largest, spanning cement, chemicals, aviation, renewable energy and skilling.

Growth sectors: renewable energy is Rajasthan's clearest high-growth lane — already India's #1 state for installed solar capacity, with the Integrated Clean Energy Policy 2024 targeting 125 GW of total renewable capacity and 2,000 ktpa of green hydrogen production by 2030. Mining, gems and jewellery, and textiles remain durable existing strengths, while tourism's continued 2024 growth (up 28% domestic, 19% international) suggests room to move further upmarket following models like Bhutan's (Chapter 15).

Demographic dividend — and its risk: Rajasthan's population is projected to reach roughly 9.0-9.1 crore by 2036, growing faster than the national average and accounting for an estimated 7.2% of India's total population increase over 2011-2036. That young, growing population is a genuine economic asset only if the state's water, agricultural and urban infrastructure constraints (Chapters 12-13) are addressed in parallel — otherwise the same growth that could power Rajasthan's next decade risks deepening the water-scarcity and fiscal pressures already straining it today.

Notable Facts

A closing set of facts that capture Rajasthan's particular mix of desert constraint and royal-era grandeur.

- ✦ Rajasthan's integration into India (1948-1956) folded in 19 princely states and 3 chiefships — the largest number of constituent political units merged into any single Indian state.
- ✦ Jaipur, founded in 1727 and designed on a nine-block grid by architect Vidyadhar Bhattacharya, is widely regarded as India's first planned city.
- ✦ India's entire Panchayati Raj system of village self-government was launched at Bagdari village, Nagaur district, on 2 October 1959 — more than three decades before it became a nationwide constitutional mandate.
- ✦ Jaipur is the world's largest hub for cutting and trading colored gemstones, with exports exceeding \$2 billion in FY2024-25.
- ✦ Sariska Tiger Reserve is the world's first tiger reserve to have fully rebuilt its population through translocation after local extinction — from zero tigers in 2004 to roughly 50 by 2026.
- ✦ Rajasthan produces 70-72% of India's guar gum, roughly 90% of which is exported to serve the American oil and shale-gas fracking industry.
- ✦ The Kalbelia dance, performed by Rajasthan's formerly snake-charmer community, was inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2010.
- ✦ Rajasthan is India's #1 state for installed solar capacity, anchored by the Bhadla Solar Park (2,245 MW) — the world's 11th-largest solar installation.
- ✦ Kota, once a struggling Chambal-river industrial town, has become India's "Coaching Capital," an industry now estimated at ₹5,000-6,500 crore a year.
- ✦ The Great Indian Bustard, once found across Rajasthan's grasslands, has fewer than 150 individuals left in the wild nationwide since 2018 — nearly all of them in the state's Desert National Park.
- ✦ Rajasthan's district map changed twice in three years: from 33 to 50 districts in 2023, then partially reverted to the current 41 in December 2024.

Sources consulted for this report include the Census of India (2011, with subsequent projections), Rajasthan's state Economic Review and budget documents, NITI Aayog and RBI/EAC-PM data releases, the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4 and NFHS-5), India State of Forest Report (ISFR 2023), PRS Legislative Research budget analyses, Rajasthan Legislative Assembly records, UNESCO documentation, Ministry of Mines and MNRE data, and cross-checked Wikipedia and reputable news coverage (including of the 2023-24 district reorganisation and the December 2024 rollback). Figures marked "approx." or "estimated" reflect the most recent publicly available data at time of writing (2025-26) and may be revised as newer official data is released; where sources disagreed (for example on exact panchayat counts or investment-summit MoU totals), the most recent or most authoritative figure was used and the discrepancy is noted in text.