

# India



» INDIA IS NOT SURE WHAT THE FUNGAL GROWTH IN THE CENTER OF ITS FLAG IS.



» THE TRADITIONAL SARI IS WORN BY INDIAN WOMEN IN VARIOUS STYLES, INCLUDING WRAPPED AROUND THE WAIST, DRAPED OVER THE SHOULDER, OR TIED AROUND A STREET POLE IN HOPES OF SURVIVING THE ONCOMING FLOOD.



## Please Hold While We Die Of Malaria

Mired by rising poverty levels, polluted groundwater that threatens the lives of millions, and a rapidly crumbling infrastructure, the nation of India has every intention of addressing these problems just as soon as it finishes telling Midwesterners how to install Windows XP on their home computer.

The world's leading technical-support provider, India is far too busy trying to figure out why someone in Utah can't get their screensaver to work to deal with any crises of its own.

In fact, despite the rampant spread of infectious disease and other complications resulting from less than adequate living conditions, the biggest challenge India currently faces is helping a 42-year-old mother of three set up her brand-new fax machine over the phone.

With roughly 30 million citizens working in the troubleshooting field, Indian men and women are qualified to assist everyone but themselves. They fix slow Internet connections while sitting waist-deep in sewage, reassure anxious customers that everything will be fine with their hard drive between cholera-induced fainting spells, and listen to iPod-related complaints while fending off giant, football-sized rats.

In 2006, the construction of a new transportation system was postponed, and national elections were once again delayed after India spent six hours trying to help a Michigan couple start up their computer, only to realize they hadn't plugged it in.

## PEOPLE » PRAYING TO THE GODS OF WASTE MANAGEMENT



Bhopal  
Many Indian homes today feature indoor gutters.

The second-most populous nation in the world, India is home to 1.1 billion citizens, 30,000 backed-up sewers, and a single, broken septic tank.

A deeply spiritual people, Indian men and women are filled with almost as much faith as they are parasites, and have nearly as many gods as they do reasons to pray.

Devout Hindus spend years trying to cleanse their souls of earthly impurities, and decades trying to cleanse their flesh of dirt, grime, waste, caked-on layers of mud, and refuse.

Hindu citizens deem the cow to be a sacred figure. Cows hold a privileged place in Indian society, and along with government officials, doctors, and other members of the nation's elite, possess free reign to defecate openly in public. To have a cow empty its bowels in one's home is considered an honor. To have a cow empty its bowels in one's toilet, however, is considered a blessing.

The people of India speak English as their official language for government affairs, 64,000 dialects of Hindi as their official language for social affairs, and Spanish if a Verizon customer presses 2 now.

While traveling by railway remains the

easiest way to commute to work, Indian men often complain about the quality of service, with trains never seeming to derail on time. local lines suddenly going express off a bridge when they're scheduled to crash into a nearby tunnel, and construction work regularly leaving thousands of passengers late for important appointments in their next life.

Although still viewed as an outdated practice, India's tradition of arranged marriage has evolved in recent years, with parents today in charge of choosing their son's future wife, as well as his future mistress, marriage counselor, divorce lawyer, and second wife.

Weddings in India are known for their festive atmosphere, with every family member taking part in the ceremony.

After the bride is dragged down the aisle by her father, relatives come together to hold down the screaming body during the reading of the vows. Once rings have been exchanged, and the crying has finally come to a stop, the newlywed couple shares in their first and last kiss as husband and wife.



## RELIGION » TAKING IT ONE LIFETIME AT A TIME



Seeking answers to life's most difficult questions, Westerners pray to Khandarohi, the Hindu God of Tech Support.

### Millions Of Gods

There are over 330 million Hindu gods. Each deity represents a small component of the Supreme Being Brahman, ranging from knowledge (*Saraswati*) to unity (*Skanda*) to the ability to diffuse awkward situations (*Rashirenko*) to that feeling you get when you're driving a rental car (*Namarishna*).

### One Religion Fits All

Hindus may choose to worship any of the religion's gods. If one cannot find the deity that suits him, he can visit one of India's

many Make-Your-Own-God temples. Just combine all your favorite virtues, pick a name, and decide how many arms it will have.

### Karma

Belief that if one is good, good things will come to him, and that if one is okay, okay things will come to him.

### Reincarnation

Hindus believe in the constant cycle of birth, life, death, and rebirth. By their fifth lifetime, most Hindus can't even remember what their name is.

### Brahman

The supreme Hindu god is Brahman, a formless deity who defies intellectual description and can be present anywhere... even right behind you.

### The Bindi

Hindu women traditionally apply a red dot, or "bindi," to the area between their eyebrows. This area, known as the *agnya*, is the central location of concealed wisdom, latent energy, and the eyes of 50 strangers on the bus.

