

Summary: Economies

Economic Progress

Most people in South Asia live in rural areas that have developing economies. Farmers depend on traditional farming methods to survive. In the 1960s and 1970s, Afghanistan strengthened its economy. Then it was invaded by the Soviet Union. A civil war followed. Today, Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries.

Agriculture is a major part of the economy in Bangladesh. Important cash crops are rice, jute, and tea. Irrigation has reached many farms. But monsoon rains bring floods and disaster to many farmers.

Bhutan and Nepal have been modernizing their economies. They have built roads that allow the transport of goods and people, especially tourists. The Maldives is one of the poorest nations. Its workers fish or build or repair boats. Tourism is an important industry.

South Asia's Economy

Pakistan is the richest country in South Asia. Half of its workers are employed in agriculture, forestry, and fishing. Important industries are fabric and clothing, sugar, paper, tobacco, and leather.

Sri Lanka depends on agriculture and tourism. Its most important agricultural product is rice, followed by tea, rubber, and coconuts.

Although some regions of India have valuable resources, millions of Indians are very poor. Many small farmers practice subsistence farming, growing only enough food to live on. Rice and wheat are India's important crops. There is a growing information technology industry.

In the 1960s, the Green Revolution introduced to farmers varieties of grain that were more productive, the use of pesticides, and different farming methods. Indian farmers grew more rice and wheat than they needed. They set aside the extra in case of a poor growing season or exported it. The Green Revolution has had negative results, too. Chemicals have damaged the land and polluted rivers. The cost of new methods is too high for some small farmers.



Before You Read

Find and underline each vocabulary word.

jute *noun*, a fibrous plant used to make twine, bags, sacks, and burlap

information technology *noun*, technology that includes computers, software, and the Internet

Green Revolution *noun*, the introduction of more productive grains to farmers in developing nations beginning



After You Read

REVIEW How might the monsoon season affect a subsistence farmer?

Underline the sentence that tells how the monsoon season might affect a subsistence farmer.

REVIEW What was a consequence of the Green Revolution in India?

Highlight the sentences that tell about the consequences of the Green Revolution in India.