



The smiling face implies complete satisfaction and bliss. It is used as a shy grin in response to a nice compliment or something great that has happened.

# I am Indus

Sometimes, it is good to go with the flow

We all know Indus as one of the primary rivers providing fresh water to the northern regions of the Indian subcontinent. However, nobody knows the real story of Indus - how it came about, from seeing the oldest civilization growing on its banks to spilled blood mixing in its water on a nation's partition. Read on as this mighty river shares its story.

## I for Indus

I derive my name from the Sanskrit word 'Sindhu', which means a large water body, a sea or an ocean. High up in the lap of pristine mountains of the mighty Himalayas, located in southwestern Tibet, glacial snow melts and trickles down to form small rivulets. These rivulets join up to form a stream, which meets with other streams and as more streams join in, it becomes large enough to be called a river. This is when I first open my eyes to the world and I am called the 'lion river' or the Indus. Snow fairies from the nearby mountain glaciers bless me with the water drops of eternity and I flow on...

## Born to give birth

Born in the lap of mighty peaks, little did I know that I was to be the progenitor of the greatest civilization in the world - The Indus Valley civilization. Many a kingdoms have flourished on my banks, many a trades have exchanged hands and histories created on the lands I meandered through. I have been worshipped since ages and my fertile lands have filled countless bellies and fed endless mouths. Come with me, and let's trek the mighty mountains that feed me and tread my vast plains, where I still flow on...

## My highs and lows

First of all, let me introduce you to my neighbours: lake Mansarovar and river Brahmaputra. They are located at my birthplace in southwestern Tibet. Well, this is where my sojourn begins and I am playful, cheerful and mischievous. My waters are warm, my waves are playful and tides are high. My flow and ebbs are controlled by seasons. The winters are dull and slow me down, while the rains make me swell with pride and joy.

My journey is a really long and arduous one. To be exact - 2,280 km, out of which for 1,114 km I amble through India. You see how much I travel! I saunter through deep gullies and gorges, swathes of vast, lush green fertile valleys and agricultural plains. It is from Leh that I enter India and my friend Zaskar district meets me. I then ramble into Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and as I enter the plains in Punjab, five other friends of mine, namely Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas and Sutlej, also join me in my journey towards the sea.

I complete my journey on land and prepare to join Arabian Sea. There, I form the Indus River Delta, home to the largest arid mangrove forest. I love this part of my journey and wish that it lasts forever. But, a river never stops, so I flow on...

## The width of my myth

In Rigveda, they have named me 'Sindhu', which means a river which has fertile fields and gives the precious gift of life. Remember the famous sufi song - 'O Lal meri pat rakhiyo bhala Jhulelallan'? Do you know who is Jhulelal worshipped in these hymns? It's me 'The Indus'. They also call me Varuna - The God of rivers. I am the one who killed the infamous tyrant 'Mirkshah'. Mythological legends have it that I was born to teach the value of unity, peace and harmony to the world. Teaching humans these vital lessons, satiating their thirst with my pristine waters on either side of the border of India and Pakistan, I flow on...

## I am a river, a life giver

It's weird but true that in spite of me being the river God, my valleys receive scanty rainfall. That's why my farmers love me. I am the main source of water for their crops. I am the lifeline of Sindh, Pakistan and Punjab. My waters irrigate their vast farmlands and along with my five friends in Punjab, I produce food for many. In Pakistan, not only am I the main source of drinking water but also have supported their heavy industries in modern times. Similar to how I supported the metallurgy industry of Indus Valley civilization. Some 200 diverse life forms thrive in my waters, and they range from reptiles to amphibians to fish and even microorganisms. My waves are the only home for the Indus River Dolphin, which swims in my shallow waters. You can find them all alive and kicking in my territories. As I breathe life into life forms, I flow on...

## It's me

**I am:** Indus, meaning 'Father of all rivers'  
**Aka:** Sindhu or The Lion River  
**Born in:** South western Tibet  
**Height:** 2,280 Km  
**Parents:** The mighty Himalayas  
**Friends:** Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas and Sutlej  
**Children:** Indus valley civilization and Indus river delta  
**Favourite animal:** Indus River Dolphin  
**Favourite song:** Duma Dum Mast kalandar  
**Favourite place:** Arabian Sea  
**I wish for:** Humankind to live peacefully



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## My story in a capsule

Once there was a fertile area, and it interested many conquerors. In the 10th century AD, a tyrant called Mirkshah started severely torturing the natives of the land. He once called the local Sindhis who were Hindus and ordered them to convert to Islam or accept death. They begged

for lenience and were given forty days. The Sindhis begged Varuna, the God of Water to come to their aid. For forty days, all of them did penance. They prayed, fasted, sang songs, grew their hair and wore no new clothes in praise of Lord Varuna. After forty days, the Lord

was pleased. He declared he would save them from Mirkshah, by taking birth as a mortal in Mata Devki's womb. The child was named "Jhule Lal" and destroyed Mirkshah with the overflow of water in his kingdom and this child was apparently called "Indus".

## People do give a "dam(n)"

Human beings are such strange animals. Do you wonder why? First, they first divided the land into two nations- India and Pakistan. Then, they fought over my waters and eventually, divided me also. I have heard that they call it the Indus Water treaty signed in the year 1960, by India and Pakistan over the sharing of my waters and the construction of dams on my banks. I have also come to know that they still fight over who gets the larger share. It does leave me with a heart filled with sorrow and despair. For I am the creator of life and the nurturer. I was known to have been brought on this earth to spread smiles

and joys. Through my long and strenuous journey, I am able to tide over everything - steep slopes, mighty rocks, barriers et al. How I wish I was able to tide over this unceasing human animosity too. Hey, now that you know so much about me, I would really want you to tell them that they should not fight in my name because I am the symbol of harmony and unity, not war and violence. I am the Indus, the Sindhu, the mighty lion. I was born for peace and love. I was born for growth and fertility and I wish to flow on...

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