

6th Social Science Lesson 7 Notes in English

7] Understanding Diversity

Introduction:

- We come from different backgrounds, belong to different cultures, worship in different ways, yet we live together.
- This is known as diversity. India is a home to a civilisation that is **5,000 years old**.
- Different groups of people from different parts of the world were attracted towards India over the years because of its wealth.

Diversity in India:

- India is a home to a civilisation that is **5,000 years old**. Different groups of people from different parts of the world were attracted towards India over the years because of its wealth.
- Some came for trade with the local people and others were keen on invading its territory. So diverse races of people migrated into India by land and sea routes over time.
- Thus **the Dravidians, Negroids, Aryans, Alpines and Mongoloids** became part of the modern Indian race. Then, the people who migrated to India also moved to other parts of the country. This movement and migration of people is the reason for India's rich diversity.
- We will now study the diversity in India under the following broad headings: **land forms and lifestyles diversity, social diversity, religious diversity, linguistic diversity and cultural diversity**.

Land Forms and Lifestyle Diversity

- A continent is a very large area of land with various physical features such as **mountains, plateaus, plains, rivers and seas** and various types of weather patterns.
- India has all of them. India is known as a sub-continent. These features have an underlying influence upon the people who live in different landforms of the country.
- Physical and climatic features determine the economic activities of a region. People living in the plains thrive on agriculture, while people in the coastal areas take to fishing for their livelihood.
- In mountainous regions, rearing of animals is undertaken. Hilly landscapes are supported by favourable climatic conditions for the cultivation of coffee and tea.
- Diversity in landforms also impacts the flora and fauna of a region. The plant and animal wealth of a place depends upon the natural habitat and the climate that prevails in that region.

- **Food, clothing, occupation and livelihood** of the people is closely connected with the region's natural surroundings and climate.

Social Diversity

Interdependence and Co-existence

- A community is a place where people live together with a common interest or heritage. Our community is made up of **peasants, labourers, artisans, parents, teachers, students and many others**.
- For a comfortable livelihood, communities depend on each other.

Family and Society

- Families constitute the fundamental unit of a society. There are two types of families: **joint families and nuclear families**.
- Families live in a harmonious neighbourhood. Hundreds of neighbourhoods collectively form a village and thousands of them group together in a city.
- The needs of people and the interdependence of communities for amenities such as **water, food, electricity, education, housing** and so on bring us together to live in harmony.
- Though we are diverse in our cultural practices, we are united and interdependent socially.

Religious Diversity

- Our Constitution declares India to be a secular nation in which all religions are treated equally.
- The freedom of religion is our fundamental right. India is the birth place of many religions and has become the home of many others.
- **Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism, Jainism and Zoroastrianism** flourish in India. India is a land of festivals, where people from different religions engage in many colourful celebrations in different parts of the country and co-exist harmoniously.
- The wide variety of festivals celebrated in India is a true manifestation of its rich culture and traditions.
- Festivals like **Pongal, Deepavali, Holi, Vijayadhasami, AyudhaPuja, Navaratri, Durga Puja, Dussehra, Ganesh Chaturthi, Bihu, Kumbamela, Onam, Miladi Nabi, Ramzan, Christmas, Buddha Poornima, Mahavir Jayanthi, Guru Nanak Jayanthi and Rakshabandhan** are some of the festivals that denote the cultural diversity of India.

Linguistic Diversity

- According to census of India 2001, India has **122 major languages and 1599 other languages**.

- Four major Indian language families are Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, Austroasiatic and Sino Tibetan. Tamil is the oldest Dravidian language.
- Historically, the Portuguese, the Dutch, the British, the Danish and the French came to India for trade and their occupation of India or some parts of it has left behind a certain impact upon the culture and language of the people.
- Because the British ruled over the entire country for over three hundred years before independence in 1947, the English language gained prominence in India.
- In due course, English has emerged as an important language and a medium of instruction in schools and colleges. It is widely used in official communication and daily life.

Cultural Diversity

- The term '**culture**' refers to customs and practices of people, their language, their dress code, cuisine, religion, social habits, music, art and architecture.
- The culture of a group of people is reflected in their social behaviour and interactions. The group identity fostered by social patterns is unique to a group.
- Art and architecture are an integral part of every community. It develops as a part of culture and tradition of a community.
- Each of the 28 states and 8 Union territories of India has rich traditions and unique ways of artistic expression.

Popular Dances of India

- In ancient times, dance was considered as a way to celebrate, worship and also as a gesture of thanks giving and joy.
- Dances of India reflect its cultural richness. Music and dance go hand in hand. There are several styles of music practiced in India.
- The **Hindustani music, Karnatic music, Classical Tamil Music, Folk Music, Lavani, Ghazl** are some of them.
- There are songs from various languages composed by blending these different forms of music.

Unity in Diversity

- Though diversity is visible in every aspect of life in India, we are united by the spirit of patriotism.

- Symbols such as the National Flag and National Anthem remind us of our great nation and the need to stay united. Celebration of landmark events such as **Independence Day, Republic Day and Gandhi Jayanthi** every year brings us together and keeps the spirit of one nation alive within us.
- India has a multi-cultural society. India evolved as a single nation through common beliefs, customs and cultural practices.
- The freedom struggle and the drafting of our Constitution stands as example evidence to the spirit of unity of India.

More to Know:

1. The Constitution of India recognises **twenty-two** languages as official languages. The Government of India has declared Tamil **as the first classical language in 2004**. Apart from Tamil, five other Indian languages have been declared as the classical languages, by the Government of India.

2. Various Languages in India:

Top Five languages spoken in India (as per 2001 Census)	
Language	Percentage of total population
Hindi	41.03 %
Bengali	8.10 %
Telugu	7.19 %
Marathi	6.99 %
Tamil	5.91 %

3. About 60 percent of the total epigraphical inscriptions found by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) are from **Tamil Nadu**, and most of these are in the Tamil script.

4. Various folk dances of India:

Folk dances of India	
State	Popular dance
Tamil Nadu	Karagattam, Oyillattam, Kummi, Therukoothu, Bommalattam, Puliattam, Kolattam, Thappattam
Kerala	Theyyam and Mohiniattam
Punjab	Bhangra
Jammu and Kashmir	Dumhal
Gujarat	Garba and Dandia
Rajasthan	Kalbelia and Ghoomer
Uttar Pradesh	Raaslila and Chholiya
Assam	Bihu

5. **V.A. Smith** called India as an 'Ethnological museum', as a great variety of racial types exist.
6. India is known for '**unity in diversity**'. This phrase was coined by **Jawaharlal Nehru**, the first Prime Minister of independent India, in his book **Discovery of India**.
7. Mawsynram located in Meghalaya, is the land of highest rainfall.
8. Jaisalmer located in Rajasthan, is the land of lowest rainfall.