Class VI

**GEOGRAPHY**

**The Realms of the Earth**

Our earth consists of land, air and water as the major physical elements. The earth can be divided into 4 realms (spheres).

1- **The Realms of Land(Lithosphere)**

The upper surface of the earth, consisting of a thin layer of rock material is called lithosphere. It is found, both in the continents and on ocean floors. The land surface varies in height from place to place.

**Continents**

The large continuous masses of land above the earth’s surface are called continents. The landmass is divided 7 continents. Which are - Asia- it is the largest continent covers about 29.6%of the earth’s total land area. In the north, it touches the Arctic Ocean, Pacific Ocean in the east and in the west. Ural Mountains and Ural Rivers separates it from Europe. Most populous countries-China and India.

Europe- it is located to the west of Asia. It covers 7%landmass.The Arctic Ocean lies to the north, the Mediterranean Sea to the south and the Atlantic ocean lies to the south of Europe. Advanced countries are- U.K, France, Germany

Africa- It is the 2nd largest continent. A narrow piece of land Suez Isthmus Joins it with Asia in the east. The Atlantic Ocean is on west and the Indian Ocean on its east. A vast land of Africa is a desert and a large area is covered with dense forests.

North America- 3rd largest continent lies in the Northern Hemisphere. The Atlantic Ocean lies to the east, the Pacific Ocean to the west and the Arctic Ocean in the north. It is linked with isthmus (strip of land) of Panama. Canada and U.S.A are two major countries.

South America- The larger part of it lies in the Southern Hemisphere. The Atlantic Ocean lies in the east of and the Pacific Ocean lies in the west. Amazon Basin, world’s largest basin lies here.

Australia (Island Continent) – it lies completely in the Southern Hemisphere. It is the smallest continent surrounded by the Indian Ocean in the west and the Pacific Ocean in the east.

Antarctica- It lies in the southern most part of southern hemisphere. It is stretched around the South pole up to the Antarctic Circle. It is covered with very thick sheets of ice and snow so it is not inhabited by human beings.

**Major landforms**

Mountains- A Mountain or a hill is an uplifted portion of the land surface. A hill is lower than a mountain. Most of the mountains are arranged in a line called a range. The old mountains do not have sharp peaks. The young mountains have sharp peaks.

Plateaus- A Plateau is like a tableland uplifted from its surrounding. The average height of a plateau is 600 metres above sea level. The plateau of Tibet is the highest plateau in the world , also called Roof of the World. Plateaus are the storehouse of minerals such as iron-ore, gold etc.

Plains- A plain is relatively low – lying flat land. The rivers carry away large volume of silt and sediments from the mountains and deposit them in plains area therefore plains are densely populated as they have fertile soil, supply of water and an ideal climate.

**Atmosphere – The Realm of Air**

Atmosphere is the vast expanse of air surrounding the earth on all sides. it contains several gases. Volume of Nitrogen in the air is 78%, Oxygen is about 21%, Carbon dioxide is 0.03%. The ozone layer in the atmosphere protects from harmful radiation of sun . The remaining gases are argon, hydrogen, helium etc.

Water vapours and dust particles are also present in the atmosphere.

Density of the air near the earth’s surface is the highest and decreases rapidly as we go higher.

**Hydrosphere-The Realm of Water**

Hydrosphere refers to the layer of water on the surface of the earth, below the surface of the earth and also in the air. Water covers 2/3rd of the total surface of the earth therefore the earth I s called the Watery Planet. oceans covers 71%of the total earth’s surface.

Four Oceans-1-The Pacific oceans is the largest and the deepest ocean. On the west it is bounded by Asia and Australia and on the east, by North and South America. It covers about 1/3rd of the earth’s surface.

2-The Atlantic Ocean covers about 1/6th of the total surface of the earth. Europe lies in its east and North America in the west.

3-The Indian Ocean is the only ocean which has been named after a country-India. It is bounded by the continents of Asia, Africa and Australia.

4-The Arctic Ocean lies within the Arctic Circle and has North Pole in the in the centre. Arctic ocean remains frozen for a larger part of the year. Asia, Europe and North America make their northern boundaries with this ocean.

**Biosphere**

Biosphere is a narrow zone, which is very close to the earth’s surface on the land, water and air. Biosphere exists where the upper part of the lithosphere, the lower part of the atmosphere and the hydrosphere come in contact with one another.. It is this sphere where 4 non-living elements – land, water, air and sunlight are present. Life exists only about 9km above the earth and about 11km below the ocean surface.

**INDIA-MY MOTHERLAND**

India is an vast country with an area of 3.28million square km. India ranks 7th among the largest countries after Russia, Canada, China, U.S.A., Brazil and Australia. India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan together form a distinct geographical unit popularly known as the Indian Sub-continent. India is 2nd most populous country in the world.

**India’s Location on the Globe**

India is situated in the Northern Hemisphere as it lies to the north of the equator. The Tropic of Cancer (23 1/2)N)passes through the middle of the country and divides it into equal two halves. Area lying in the north of the Tropic of Cancer is called sub-tropical India and the southern area is called tropical India.

In south, India is bounded by the Indian Ocean, the Arabian sea in the west and the Bay of Bengal in the east. SO the southern part of India is called Indian Peninsula.

**OUR NEIGHBOURS**

India’s land frontiers are about 15,200km. India shares its border with Pakistan and Afghanistan in the north-west. China, Nepal, Bhutan lies to the north. Bangladesh, lies in the east, Myanmar shares its boundary with Indian states in the north-east, SriLanka an island country in the south of India. India is separated with SriLanka by a narrow sea called the Palk Strait. Maldives, a country of group of islands is also our neighbor.

**INDIA’S EXTENT**

The north-south extent of the main land of India is about 3214km and the east-west extent of the country is about 2933km. The southernmost tip of the mainland of India is the Cape of Kanyakumari. Andaman and Nicobar Island group lies in the Bay of Bengal and Lakshadweep Islands lie in the Arabian Sea. Indra Point is the southernmost tip of the India lies in the Nicobar Island.

**THE SMILING FACE OF OUR COUNTRY**

India’s land features-

**The Northern Mountains-** There are several ranges of mountains. The Karakoram range on northern border of Kashmir. The k2 peak, world’s second highest peak lies here. Siachin Glacier, the largest glacier in the world lies here. The Himalayas extend in an arch shape from the north-west to the north east upto a length of about 2500km. there are three parallel ranges. The northernmost range is Himadri or the Greater Himalayas. To the south of Himadri lies the Himachal or the Middle Himalayan Range. The southernmost range is Shivalik range.

**THE NORTHERN PLAINS**

To the south of the Shivalik range, the great Northern Plains extend from Punjab to Assam. It has been formed by the Indus , Ganga and the Brahmaputra rivers and their several tributaries. Northern plains are divided into 3 basins on the basis of three major river systems. The Indus Basin,The Ganga Basin and The Brahmaputra Basin

**The Desert**

The Thar Desert, a rocky and sandy area covers a large part of Rajasthan to the west of the Aravalli Mountain Range. It is an arid land with very little annual rainfall.

**THE GREAT PLATEAU**

Towards south from the Great Plains, there is a triangular landmass known as the Great Peninsular Plateau. Its northern part is known as the Central Highland and the southern part is called the Deccan Plateau. It comprises of the Aravalli mountains, the Vindhya Mountains and several small plateaus. The entire plateau region is rich in minerals.

**The Coastal Plains**

The Eastern Coastal plains are very fertile due to the delta form by the river Mahanadi, Godavari Krishna and Kaveri. The northern part of this plain is known as Northern Circars and southern part known as Coromandal coast.

The western coastal plain is narrow, uneven, and rocky. Small rivers do not form any delta and flow swiftly into sea. The northern part of this plain called the Konkan coast and the southern part is the Malabar Coast.

**THE ISLANDS**

The Andaman and Nicobar Islands lie in the north-south direction, lie in the Bay of Bengal. They are large in size and some of them are of volcanic origin. The Lakshadweep Islands are located off the coast of the Kerala in the Arabian Sea. They are small in size.

**POLITICAL DIVISIONS**

India has been divided into 29 states and 7 union territories. The states of India have been organized mainly on the basis of the languages. The people of India have the spirit of tolerance and brotherhood. It is the largest democracy of the world.

**INDIA** -**THE LAND OF MONSOON CLIMATE**

India is called a land of **Tropical monsoon climate** because the Himalayan chain of mountains protects India from chilly cold winds blowing winds from the polar regions and provide the whole of northern India warm climate

In south India, the climate is hot and humid. The coastal areas have moderate climate as the ocean modifies the temperatures.

The north-east states experience heavy rainfall between june to September. On the other hand, the desert of Rajasthan gets very little rainfall.

**THE SEASONS OF INDIA**

There is a cycle of 4 seasons. 1-The Cold Weather- December, January and February are the months of cold weather.The wind in this season blow from land to sea. A little rainfall occurs in the north-western plains by the cyclonic winds from Pakistan.

2- The Hot Weather Season- The duration of the hot weather season is from March to May. May and June are the hottest month of the Year. The hot and dry wind Loo blow in the Northern Plains

3-The Advancing Monsoon- June to September is the period of this season. The winds now blow from sea to land and have a lot of moisture. It is the saeason of monsoon rain. The winds enter from south in the first week of June and move northwards and spread over the whole country within a month.

4-The Retreating Monsoon-The monsoon winds start retreating from the northern plains when temperature fall in the month of October & November.They retreat from the whole country by the end of November.

**NATURAL VEGETATION**

The natural vegetation of India may be divide in the five groups-

Tropical Evergreen Forest(Tropical Rain Forest)- They grow in the regions of heavy rainfall(200cmrainfall per year) . These forest are found in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, the Western Ghats and the North Eastern hilly parts. Magohany , rosewood, ebony and bambooare the trees found in the forest.

Tropical Deciduous Forest(Typical Monsoon Forest)- They grow in the areas ofwhere the amount of rainfall is between 100cm to 200cm.These forests are found in Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Orissa and the eastern Maharashtra , in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and the northern plains. Saal, teak, shisham, peepal, sandalwood and jamun trees are found here.

The Thorny Forests- They grow in the area which receives less than 50cm rainfall. These forests are found in rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana and western part of Gujarat. Thorny bushes, grass patches and cactus, kikar, babul, khair and date palms are found here.

The Tidal Vegetation or Mangroves- `These forests grow well in the low-lying delta regions . The delta regions of ganga, Mahanadi, Godavari, Krishna and Kaveri are flooded by tidal waves. Sundri is the important tree of these forests. That is why sundarban is the name given to the tidal forests of Ganga Delta.

The Mountain Vegetation- In the Himalayas Mountains, the vegetation changes as we go higher above the sea level. Saal, teak, shisham, oak, chestnut, chir are the trees found here.

**CONSERVATION OF FORESTS**

The cutting of forests causes many problems such as, increase in soil erosion, floods, landslides and extension of desert area. The forests are the source of various products like timber, wood for paper industry, valuable herbs resin, gum etc. Forests help in maintaining ecological balance. it is therefore necessary to conserve and protect the forest cover

**WILDLIFE**

India is rich in having a large variety of wildlife. These include mammals, reptiles, birds, fish and a variety of insects and worms. Many efforts are being made to protect and preserve the endangered species of wildlife. A number of wildlife sanctuaries and national parks have been set up all over India in order to preserve our rich wildlife.

Anew scheme for the conservation and protection of biological diversity has been undertaken. Many biosphere reserves have been set up in India.

**HISTORY**

**The Mauryas and The Sunga**

Chandragupta Maurya defeated Ghananda and established Mauryaan rule in 324B.C.

Sources of knowledge about Chandragupta- Indica written by Magasthenese, Puranas, Buddhist and Jain literature, Kautilya’s Arthashastra, Ashoka’s edicts on rock and stone pillars, Remains of the monuments.

The Mauryan Empire(321B.C.-297B.C.)

Chandragupta was the first Mauryan ruler who established his empire from north to south and east to west including . He established his capital at Patliputra. Chanakya(Kautilya) was Chandragupta’s guru and Prime Minister.

Bindusar succeeded Chandragupta in 297B.C. he ruled upto 272 B.C.He developed good relations with Greeks.

Ashoka(272B.C. to 232B.C.) succeeded his father in 272B.C. but was crowned in 269 B.C. He conquered Kalinga to complete his rule over almost the whole of India. The fierce of Kalinga war proved to be a great turning point in Ashoka,s life. He adopted Budhism and advised his sons and grandsons not to conquer new contries. They were advised to go for Dharma Vijay(winning the hearts of the people)

Administration

The Mauryan administration run under the guidance of Chanakya. The king was the head of the state and has supreme powers of military, judiciary and civil administration. He had a council of Ministers (Mantri Parishad)to advise and assist him. Amatya, Mahamatra Adhyaksha, Purohita, Senapati, Yuvraj were some of his officials in his court.The city administration was under Nagradhyaksh or Nagrik . He was helped by 30 members , divided into 6boards of 5 members each.The village administration was run by a group of officers.

Social Condition- Varna and Ashram systems of Rigvedic period were in practice. Kautilya outlined the duties of each Varna. Most people married within their own caste and followed their parental trade and profession.

Economic Condition- Agriculture was the base of village economy. Many dams, lakes and canals were constructed to rovide irrigational facilities.Sudarshan Lake was built by Chandragupta Maurya. Rootion f tradeand financial support was ensured by government officials. Cotton, wool, silk, jute spices and, ivory goods were the main items for internal and foreign trade.

Art and Architecture

Five types of architectural monuments were prevalent during that period- !-Palaces 2-Stupas 3-Caves 4- Pillars 5- Rock edicts.

Decline of the Mauryan Empire- The decline of Mauryan empire started after the death of Ashoka in 232B.C.Ashoka’s military policy of not conquering new countries was the reason for the downfall of his empire. Brihadratha was the last ruler of the Mauryan dynasty who was killed by his army chief, Pushya Mitra Sunga in 187B.C.

**NORTH INDIA AFTER MAURYAS AND SUNGAS**

**(1st century B.C. to 3rrd century A.D.)**

There were many invasions from Indo-Greeks, Sakas and Pratihans and Kushans. Kushan made India their home and settled here. Among the Indo-Greeks the most famous ruler were Menander and Haliodorus. The contribution of the Indo-Greeeks is in the field of natyashastra, coinage, sculptures, philosophy and trade.

The Shak(sakas) originally belonged to Central Asia. They into 5 branches and ruled in Punjab and Afghanistan. Their capital was Taxila, now known as Rawalpindi(in Pakistan)

Important rulers

Rudradaman(130-150A.D.) He issued silver coins on which his figure was engraved. He repaired Sudarshan lake in Kathiavar(Gujarat) to provide good irrigation facilities.

The Sakas rle was followed by Parthians and then by Kushans.

Kushans (78A.D. – 123A.D)belonged to the province of Kanes of western China.They extended their territoryies to Sindh, Punjab and the Greater part of the Gangetic basin.

Kanishka(78A.D.-101A.D.)- he was the most able and powerful Kushan ruler. He supported Buddhism. The 4th Buddhist council was held during his reign. During his period Ashvaghosh wrote Buddha Charita in Sanskrit. He started the Saka era in 78A.D. This era is now used by Indian Govt. as National era.

**EFFECTS OF CONTACT BETWEEN CENTRAL ASIA AND NORTH INDIA**

The Kushans introduced stitched clothes and the use of helmets. They were accepted as Kshatriyas and they worshipped Shiva and Vishnu.They were the first who issued round shape cons with images on both sides.

Art and architecture- Gandhar school of Art and Mathura school of Art were developed during this period. Te subject of sculptures was Indian but style was Greek . The Greek introduced Yavanika (curtain)on the stage in theatre.

Science and Technology

Indians updated their knowledge in astronomy and astrology . The term horoscope has been derived from the Greek term horasastra. Red pottery and use of burnt bricks also started

Language and Literature- There were give and take between Indian language, Greeks and other languages during this period. The scholar Patanjali wrote Mahabhasya during this period, which is a great study on evolution of words and grammar.

**GUPTA EMPIRE**

The Gupta empire was established by Sri Gupta in 275 A.D. He was succeeded by his son Ghatotkaccha Gupta. He ruled from 280A.D. to 319A.D.

Important rulers

Chandragupta-I succeeded his father Ghatotkaccha in the year 319A.D. and ruled upto 335A.D. He assumed the title of Mharajadhiraj.

Samudragupta-he succeeded his father in 335 A.D. sources of information to know about his period are –

1 Inscription on Ashoka’s pillar at Allahabad 2-Eran edict 3- Coins of Samudragupta 4-Prashasti by poet of his court Harisen

He was known for his long military campgains to north, east and south India. He is known as Napoleon of India.

Chandragupta ii- he succeeded his father Samudragupta in 375A.D. He assumed the title of Vikramaditya . He had many scholars, poets and artist in his court, known as Nav Ratna. Kalidas was a renowned poet of his court.

Administration

The king was all powerful. He had a council of ministers to advised him. The empire was devided into provinces known as bhuktis or desh governed by uparika-maharaja or Bhogpati. The bhuktis were devided into Vishyas and their head was known as Vishyapati

Social Condition

Joint family system was prevalent during this period.The condition of women was not so bad but it became worse later. Child marriage had started. Education limited to upper class.

Economic Condition

Inter state trade was carried on by land and river routes.

Pearls, diamonds, precious stones, garments, ivory products, indigo were main expot items. The imports included gold, silver, copper, tin, silk, horses etc. foreign trade was carried on with Brahmdesh, Java, Sumatra, Bali etc.

Agriculture was the main occupation of the people. The main crops were- wheat, rice, pulses, barley, sugarcane, cotton, jute, Vegetables etc.

RELIGION

Vaishnavism or Shaivism were followed by the people. They were followers of Buddhism and Jainism as well. Many sun temples were built. The king gave grants and donations to all religions.

Art an Architecture

The art and architecture during the Gupta period was highly developed in all branches. That are sculpture, painting, temple building. Metallurgy, musicetc. In starting there used to be one-room temples but later on , the size of the temples became larger.

Ajanta and Ellora caves present the best specimen of paintings and stone cut temples. Art and sculpture of this period was totally free from foreign impact.

LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Gupta period was the golden period for Sanskrit literature. Kalidas adorned the court of Chandragupta-ii. He wrote Abhijana-Shakuntalam, Kumarsambhava, Malikarjuna mitra, Raghuvansh, Meghdoot. Pt.Vishnu Sharma wrote Panchtantra (collection of tales with moral teaching). Pali, Prakrit and Tamil languages also developed during this period.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Astronomy, astrology, mathematics, medicine, chemistry and many other branches of science were well developed.

Aryabhatta , a great scientist and mathematician , proved that the earth moves round the sun on its axis. He wrote Aryabhattiyam on mathematics.

Charak, a physician wrote Charak Samhita and Sushrut, a surgeon wrote Sushrut Samhita.

Nagarjuna was the famous scholar of chemistry.

**THE ERA OF HARSHA**

After the fall of the Gupta dynasty, the Vardhman dynasty started their rule.

Important Rulers-

Prabhakarvardhan(580-605A.D.), Rajyavardhan(605-606A.D.), Harshvardhana(606-647A.D.)

Harshavardhan- he crowned as the king of Thanesar(Haryana) at the age of 16. 4 sources of information are-

1- contemporary inscriptions, coins and some rock edicts

2-Travel account of Hiuen-Tsang, a Chinese Traveller

3- Harshacharita written by banabhatta

4-Priyadarshika, Naganand and Ratnavali written by Harsha himself.

Administration

The king was all powerful. He was the head of judicial, civil administration and commander-in-chief of his army.His administration was similar to Guptas. The provinces were also known as Bhukti or desh, divided into vishyas or Pradesh. There were village panchayats which were headed by Gramik. He had a council of ministers to advised him.

Religion

In the beginning, Harsha was a devotee of Shiva and Surya. But after came in contact with Hiuen-Tsang , there was a greater impact of Buddhissm on him. Vaishnavism and Shaivasim were the popular sects of Hindusism. He used to give alms(dan) to poor and needy.

Social condition

The society was devided into 4 Varnas.Shudras did not have a good position in the society,they had to live outside the towns.

Economic Condition

Trade was well-flourished and Kapisha was the centre of international trade. Tamralipti was a famous port for foreign trade. Agriculture was the main occupation of the people. They had to pay 1/6th of the produce as tax.

Nalanda University was an international centre of education. It was situated near Patna.

After the death of Harsha in 647A.D. the Vardhman empire lost its glory.

**THE INDIAN RELIGIONS**

**HINDUISM**

Hinduism (sanatan dharma)is the oldest religion of the world as some of the god and goddesses worshiped today, were there in the Harappan civilization or even earlier to it. Hinduism believes in one supreme god who is present in every living thing-humans, plants, animals etc. Hinduism believes that there are 3 ways to attain Mksha – 1- Karma Yog @- Gyan Yog and 3-Bhakti Yog

Srishti is governed by three gods known as Tri-Deva Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh. Brahma is considered as- the creator, Vishnu – the preserver and Mahesh- - the destroyer.

Hindus Philosophy preaches that soul is immortal. It inever dies. When it leaves one’s body, it enters the other body, known as the birth and rebirth.It believes in Vasudhaiv Kutumbkam and Sarvadharma Sambhava(aii religions equal).

The four Vedas, the Puranas, the Upnishads, gita, Sanhita, Arnayaka, Brahman Grantha, Shruti, Smiriti, ramayan and Mahabharatetc. Scriptures give information about Hinduism.

**ZOROASTRIANISM**

It is the ancient religion of Iran. Zarathustra or Zoroaster, the prophet of Iran(Persia), founded this religion around 6th century B.C. The followers of this religion are known as Parsees.

Parsees believes that there is only one god AHUR MAZDA(the god of good forces that is light and wisdom). Evil is represented by Ahriman. This religion teaches to follow the right good deeds, right thinking, and right speech.

Their holy book is Avesta contains Gathas in praise of Zoroaster which are recited everyday.

**JUDAISM**

Judaism is the religion followed by the Jews or the Hebrews. The Hebrews first lived in Mesopotamia but later they migrated to Palestine. In 70 A.D. they left Palestine and settled in different parts of the world.

The Jews believes believe in one god JEHOVAH . they believed in coming of Messiah on the earth to purify the Jews and cleanse the world of all sins. Old Testament and the Apocrypha are their sacred books.

The Jewish temple is known as SYNAGOGUE.

**JAINISM**

There were 24 Tirthankars. The first tirthankar was Rishabh Dev. The 23rd Tirthankar was Parshva Nath.His teachings were-

1-to adopt non-violence 2-not to tell a lie 3- not to stael anything 4- not to own property.He preached to attain Moksha.

His spiritual successor was Mahaveer.His earlier name was Vardhaman born in 540B.C. After great meditation, he attained Kaivalya or supreme knowledge and known as Jindev and his followers were known as Jains.

Later Jainism was divided into two sections. Digambars who do not wear clothes and the Shvetambars who wear only white clothes.

Mahaveer suggests Triratna to attain Moksha-1-right faith 2- right action 3-right knowledge.

Kalpsutra in Sanskrit is the famous work of Jainism . It contains biographies of 23 Tirthankars .

**BUDDHISM**

Gautam Buddha was the founder of Buddhism. His real name was Siddharth. He was born in 563B.C. at Lumbini in Tarai of Nepal. At the age of 35 he got enlightenment in Gaya(Bihar) under a peepal tree and became Buddha.

He expressed 4 noble truths as the way to overcome desire. 1- This world is full of miseries.

2- All sufferings are caused by desires. 3- So, to remove the sufferings, one should overcome desires and attain Nirvana.

4- The desires can be removed by Ashtangika marg.

His teachings are compiled in Tripitakas.it contains rules for monks, sermons for the people and the Buddhist philosophy.

**CHRISTIANITY**

Jesus was the founder of Christian religion. He preached that there is only one God.God is great healer and he loves his people as their father.

He called himself the King of Jews. So he was considered as a rebel by Roman rulers. He was then nailed to cross and killed. Since then the cross has become a sacred symbol for the Christians. The sacred day of his death is called Good Friday. It is believed that Jesus Christ came back to life after 3days and then left for his heavenly a home. This event is celebrated as Easter every year. The birth of Christ is celebrated on 25th December as Christmas.

The Christian era was started from 1st A.D. the holy book of Christians is Bible. It has two parts- Old Testament and New Testament.

**CIVICS**

**DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNMENT**

**DEMOCRACY**

**Democracy is a form of government in which the people vote for representatives to govern on their behalf.**

In democracy the opinion of majority is accepted but the opinion of minority is also respected.

**Representative Democracy**

Under this system, people elect their representatives who govern on their behalf. This means, India, is indirectly governed by the people through their elected representatives like Panchs, Municipal Councillors, Members of Legislative Assemblies or Members of Parliament.

A democratic government is a government of the people, for the people and by the people.

**People’s Participation**

Participation of the people in the election process of the country is based on Universal Adult Franchise, which means all the citizens of India who are 18years of age or above are eligible to cast their votes, irrespective of caste, colour, creed, religion, region or languages.

When the term of government at any level expires, which is 5 years in India, general elections are held. At this stage again people decide whether to elect the same political party or candidate to rule or replace it by some other party in the next elections.

**How Do We Govern Ourselves**

For good governance and smooth functioning of various departments, the duties and responsibilities are performed by the government at three levels.

1- Government at the national level works for the whole country and is called the Central or Union government.

2- Government at the state level works within its own state territory.

3- the lowest level of government is at the village level. The Gram Panchayat come under this category.

**OUR RURAL GOVERNANCE**

The issues and problems of an area can be understood better by the local people. The solution to the local problems must be left to the people themselves. They would sit together at a common place, hold discussion and try to find their day to day local problems. In India , there is a self-governing body in every village or city to help and assist the people to meet their community needs.

Gram Panchayat- The Gram sabha is the general body of the village. All the mwen and women of the village who have attained the age of 18 years and are registered as voters, form the Gram Sabha. A Gram Sabha not only elects the members of Gram Panchayat but also elects its Pradhan(Sarpanch or Mikhiya) or the Head-man.

Functions of Gram Panchayat - To provide clean drinking water. Sanitation and public health and animal husbandry,Plantation of trees.Constrution and maintenance of village roads, street lights, wells, tanks, water ways and supply of quality seeds keeping record of births and deaths etc.

Sources of income- taxes and grants or aid from the government.

Nyay Panchayat- It is a form of village court. Usually 3or 4 villages have one Nyay Panchayat. Its members and the Sarpanch are elected by the village Panchayat. It can impose a fine of only upto rs. 100. But it can not send a person to jail.

Block Samiti or Panchayat Samiti-The local self body that works for the whole Block is called Block Samiti. It is known by different names like Khand Samiti, Panchayat Samiti, Kshetra Samiti, Prakhand Samiti etc. A Block is a link between the Gram Panchayat and the Zilla Parishad.There must be atleast two women membersa and four SC/ST members in a Panchayat Samiti.

Functions of a Panchayat Samiti-It looks after the developmental and welfare work of the villages of a particular block, gives advice to villagers related to agriculture,education, medicine, promote cottage industries, poultry and fishery.

Sources of income- taxes on water, land, shops, houses, fairs, expert servicesetc. And by getting grants from the state government.

Zila Parishad- It supervises and coordinates the work of all Block samities of the district and also of the gram Panchayats which are under them.Some elected members, the chairman of the block samities, members of LokSabha , rajya Sabha , Vidhan Sabha, Vidhan Parishad, representatives of SC and ST and women constitute a Zila Parishad.

Functions of Zila Parishad-It acts as a link between the State Government and the Block Samities, and Village Panchayat.

It informs about the working of local self governing bodies.It prepares a plans for over all development of the whole district, implement of 5 year plans and distribution of government funds to Block Samities is the responsibility of Zila Parishad.

Source of Income- the financial grant from the state government, rent of its properties and other taxes.

**OUR URBAN GOVERNMENT**

The 74th Amendment Act of 1992 has provided three types of urban local bodies. They are Nagar Panchayats for semi-urban areas, Municipal Councils or Nagar Parishad for cities with population between 20,000 to 10 lakh and Municipal Corporation for big cities like Delhi , Mumbai etc.

Nagar Panchayat

Towns which are smaller than a city but bigger than a village have a Nagar Panchayat.It is the smallest local body in urban areas. The Chairperson of a Nagar Panchayat is elected by the people and the Vice-Chairperson is elected by the members themselves.

Functions- to solve local problems and to provide better living conditions, to provide civic aminities like water and electricity, to ensure hygiene and healthcare facilities, to maintain parks, primary schools and public buildings, and to keep the record of birth and death.

Sources of income- taxes rent from municipal buildings and properties and grants from state government.

Municipal Council

Municipal Council is also called Municipal Boards or Municipal Committees. The numbers of members vary from 15 to 60 and are directly elected for 5 years. The Chairperson is elected directly by the people .An Executive officer, who is appointed by the state government looks after the general administration of the city.

Functions- ensures proper supply of drinking water, and electricity, maintain hygiene and sanitary conditions, maintenance of roads, bridges, markets etc., adopt measures to prevent epidemics and other infectiooucs diseases.etc.

Source of income- various taxes, rent from municipal buildings and also receives annual financial grant from state Government.

Municipal Corporation

The problems of big cities are more complicated in nature and are difficult to solve. There fore, the day-to-day work is looked after by various committees consisting of 5 to 12 members headed by a chairperson from the members. Municipal Corporation is headed by a chairperson who is called the Mayor or Mahapaur. A chief executive officer implements the decision of the Municipal Corporation. He is called a Municipal Commissioner.

Functions- Sanitation and cleanliness, vaccination and inoculations against diseases or epidemics, construction and maintenance of hospitals, roads, bridges, flyovers, community canters, parks etc., supply of fresh drinking water and electricity, firefighting services, Demolition of unsafe buildings, maintenance of orphanage, night shelters, cremation grounds /graveyards , cheap and convenient local transport services etc.

Sources of income- Taxes and annual financial grants and loans from the state government.

District Administration

India has 604districts. The Head of the district is called District Officer, a Deputy Commissioner or a District Collector or a District Magistrate. He is an officer of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) whose selection is made on the basis of an All India Competitive Examination.

Functions-to maintain law and e order in the district, to collect revenue, maintain land records and promote developmental activities, and to coordinate the activities of different departments in the district which are headed by special District officers.