

Block 2

Interrogating Indian Society-I

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BLOCK 2 INTRODUCTION

In this **block 2 Interrogating Indian society I**, you will be introduced with a critical understanding of institutions such as caste, tribe, village town and city, Agrarian Classes, Industry and Labour,



UNIT 5 CASTE*

Structure

- 5.0 Objectives
- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Features of Caste System
 - 5.2.1 Segmental Division of Society
 - 5.2.2 Hierarchy
 - 5.2.3 Restrictions on Feeding and Social Interaction
 - 5.2.4 Civil and Religious Disabilities and Privileges of Different Sections
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- 5.3 Theoretical Approaches to the Understanding of Caste
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 - 5.3.2 Jajmani System
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 - 5.4.2 Measures to Prohibit Caste Discrimination
- 5.5 Let Us Sum Up
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5.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this Unit, you should be able to:

- define caste and describe its features;
- discuss the theoretical approaches to the understanding of caste;
- describe Jajmani system and its association with caste system;
- discuss major changes and the elements of continuity in the caste system;
- explain caste system's influence on Indian political system; and
- discuss the measures taken to reduce caste discrimination.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Caste is a system of social stratification. It lies at the root of Indian social structure. It involves ranking according to birth and determines one's occupation, marriage and social relationships. There is a prescribed set of norms, values and sanctions which govern social behaviour within caste.

Sociologists have defined caste (locally referred to as "jati") as 'hereditary, endogamous group, which is usually localised. It has a traditional association with an occupation and a particular position in the local hierarchy of castes. Relations between castes are governed, among other things, by the concepts of pollution and purity, and general maximum commensality that occurs within the caste' (Srinivas 1962). This is the definition of the ideal form of caste system.

* Contributed by Shaily Bhashanjaly

In reality, however, there are variations in the structure and functioning of caste system.

It is imperative to make a distinction between the theoretical formulation of caste system and its existential reality. Theoretically, caste stratification of the Indian society has its origin in the Varna system. This system literally means colour which was prevalent during the Vedic period. According to this doctrine of colour, the Hindu society was divided into four main Varnas : Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. A fifth category of untouchables lie outside the fold of the varna scheme. This was mainly based on division of labour and occupation. Members of each varna performed different functions like the priestly function rulers, fighters, traders and servile. The varna system is important because it provides an all- India macro structural scheme within which innumerable variations of castes are found. A varna may include different castes which may be divided into different sub-castes.

The concept of Varna is generally traced to the *Purusha Sukta* Verse system of the Rig Varna Veda. It said that Varna system originated by the sacrifice of the primeval being or Purusha. After the sacrifice, the Brahmana emerged from the mouth, the Kshatriya from arms, the Vaishya from thighs, and the Sudra from the feet. Thus, the four Varnas that emerged were considered to have a divine origin.

5.2 FEATURES OF CASTE SYSTEM

Ghurye (1962) an eminent sociologist, identified six features of caste system. These six features are:

5.2.1 Segmental Division of Society

The Hindu society is divided into different castes. Caste membership is determined by birth and not by selection and accomplishments. Hence, caste status is termed as being ascribed (by birth).

5.2.2 Hierarchy

Caste system has a specific scheme of social preference in which they are arranged in a social and ritual hierarchy. A sense of high and low, superiority and inferiority is associated with this gradation or ranking. The Brahmins are placed at the top of the hierarchy and are regarded as ritually pure or supreme. The untouchables, considered most impure, are at the lowest rung of the hierarchy. In between are the Kshatriyas, followed by the Vaishya. Thus, castes occupy a specific status in the overall framework of caste hierarchy.

5.2.3 Restrictions on Feeding and Social Interaction

Rules are laid down which govern the exchange of food which is also called commensality and social interaction between different castes. There are restrictions on the kind of food that can be eaten together, received or exchanged among castes. A Brahmin will accept “pakka” food, i.e., food prepared in ‘ghee’ from any community but he cannot accept ‘kachcha’ food i.e food prepared in water at the hands of other caste. Concept of pollution places severe restrictions on the extent of social interaction.

5.2.4 Civil and Religious Disabilities and Privileges of Different Sections

Each caste is considered to be more pure or impure than the other in the ritual sense of the term. The ideology of pollution and purity regulates the relationship between different castes significantly. There are several taboos practised by the superior castes to preserve their ceremonial purity.

Castes considered ritually impure were subjected to manifold disabilities. For example, they were forbidden to use public roads, public well or enter Hindu temples. The shadow of some castes were considered polluting, such as, in Tamil Nadu the Shanars or Toddy-tappers had to restrict their pace away to 24 steps from a Brahmin during the earlier times.

Each caste has its own customs, traditions, practices and rituals. It has its own informal rules, regulations and procedures.

5.2.5 Restrictions on Marriage

Endogamy or marriage within one's own caste or sub-caste is an essential feature of caste system. Generally, people get married within their own caste or sub-caste. However, there were a few exceptions. In some regions of India, the upper caste men could marry lower caste women. This kind of marriage alliance is known as hypergamy.

5.2.6 Lack of Unrestricted Choice of Occupation

Traditionally each caste was associated with an occupation. They were ranked higher and lower on the basis of ritual purity and pollution of their associated occupation. The Brahmins who occupied the uppermost rank were prescribed the duties of acquiring and teaching sacred knowledge and of performing sacrifices.

The above is a description of the essential features of caste system. However caste structure has several variations as found in its functioning in different regions of India. As a regional reality, one can see different patterns of caste-ranking, customs and behaviours, marriage rules and caste dominance.

Each caste had its own caste council or panchayat where the grievances of its caste members were heard. Caste panchayat was regulating the behaviour of the caste people according to the prescribed norms and sanctioned social behaviour. Headed by the elders of that caste, these councils had the power to excommunicate a member if he did not follow caste restrictions. They are distinct from village panchayats in that the latter, as statutory bodies, serve all villagers regardless of caste, although they operate on the same principles.

Box 5.1

Dumont is critical of those who tried to explain caste in terms of politico-economic factors where caste was seen as a system of domination and exploitation. He, for example, criticizes F.G. Bailey, who in his book on 'Caste and the Economic Frontier' (based on his field work in Orissa), has argued that there was a high degree of coincidence between politico-economic ranks and the ritual ranking of caste. This is a reflection of the general rule that those who achieve wealth and political power tend to rise in the ritual scheme of ranking. It is what is meant by saying that the ranking system of caste groups was validated by differential control over the productive resources of the village.

5.3 THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO THE UNDERSTANDING OF CASTE

Let us examine the attributional and interactional approach employed by scholars to the understanding of the caste system.

- i) The attributional approach to caste analyses caste in terms of the various immutable characteristics of caste. The sociologists such as G S Ghurye, J H Hutton, using this approach, define caste system through its significant features. The above section includes the six features of caste system as described by Ghurye.

In his book 'Caste in India', (Hutton) held that the central feature of the caste system is endogamy. Around this fact various restrictions and taboos are built up. The interaction among various castes do not violate these restrictions placed on the various castes. Another important feature of the caste system as seen by Hutton is the taboo on taking cooked food from other than their own castes. M N Srinivas chooses to study the structure of relations arising between castes on the basis of these attributes. Thus, he introduces a dynamic aspect of caste identity.

- ii) Interactional approach takes into account how castes are actually ranked with respect to one another in a local empirical context. According to Bailey caste dynamics and identity are united by the two principles of segregation and hierarchy. He feels that "Castes stand in ritual and secular hierarchy expressed in the rules of interaction". By secular hierarchy he meant the economic and political hierarchy, rituals being part of the religious system. The ritual system overlaps the political and economic system. Bailey (1957) explained his viewpoint with reference to village Bisipara in Orissa. He has shown how the caste situation in Bisipara is changed and becomes more fluid after Independence when the Kshatriyas lost much of their land. This caused a downslide in their ritual ranking as well. There was a clearly discernable change in the interaction patterns, such as, the acceptance and non-acceptance of food from other castes.

Marriot studied the arrangement of caste ranking in ritual interaction. He confirmed that ritual hierarchy is itself linked to economic and political hierarchies. Usually economic and political ranks tend to coincide. That is to say both ritual and non-ritual hierarchies affect the ranking in the caste order though ritual hierarchies tend to play a greater role.

Dumont added a new dimension to the study of caste in an interactional perspective. According to him the local context has a role in caste ranking and identity, but this is a response to the ideology of hierarchy which extends over the entire caste system. For Dumont caste is a special type of inequality and hierarchy is the essential value underlying the caste system. It is this value that integrates Hindu society. The various aspects of the caste, says Dumont are based on the principle of opposition between the pure and impure underlying them. 'Pure' is superior to the 'impure' and has to be kept separate.

Box 5.2

The effect of this participation on caste as an adaptive institution is clearly two fold: a conservative one on the internal social organization of caste which will tend to preserve its integrity to mobilise more effectively; and a more creative one in its external relations to other castes as they attempt to maximise their share of scarce resources to power, prestige and wealth, and evolve a “civil politics of primordial compromise”. For the very interdependence brought about by the market economy and democratic politics gives groups the power of contravailing the objectives of the others. The first effect will tend to conserve caste loyalties, the second to create broader ones. Thus Lynch concludes: “The very process of modernization itself brings forth and exacerbates the competing loyalties of citizenship and caste statutes in the struggle of a new state to become a nation.”

The theoretical position of caste in the analysis of Indian social systems is highly complex. It constitutes both a structural unit of social stratification as well as a system. The distinction between the two would depend upon the level of analysis involved. Sociologists who look across the cultural view of caste have, right from the beginning, associated it with an autonomous principle of stratification the bases of which are; institutionalized inequality, closure of social system in respect of social mobility, an elementary level of division of labour legitimized on ritual bases of reciprocity, and emphasis on quality (ritual purity or racial purity) rather than performance. In other words, caste is associated with an autonomous form of cultural system or world-view. The history of this view of caste goes far back in sociological literature (see Dubois 1906; Nesfield 1885; O’Malley 1932; Weber 1952; Kroeber 1930 etc.) and the trend still continues (see Berreman 1967; Barth 1960; Davis 1951; Myrdal 1968; etc.). The important assumption merely a variant of the principle of stratification which may be found working, not only in India, but in other societies too. An important implication of this view, as we find in the writings of Davis, A.R. Desai (1966) and Bose (1968) and others is that being a structural reality i.e. being part of the social structure caste would disappear when society in India evolves to a higher level (see Singh 1968) of industrialization. A simple understanding of the structural view of caste is that it forms an ideal type of stratification system and as such it could exist forever, either alone or in coexistence with other forms of stratification in societies. This viewpoint is held by sociologists who take a structural-functional rather than evolutionary-historical view of social stratification. (Singh, Yogendra 1997. Pp.32)

Thus a distinction can be made between sociologists who treat caste as a cultural phenomenon and those who define it as a structural phenomenon. Each of these positions has a further subvariation based on one’s view of caste: whether it is a particularistic phenomenon, Indian in substance, or whether it has universal properties. Thus four approaches emerge as logical classes once we distinguish between the two levels of theoretical formulation, that is, cultural and structural and universalistic and particularistic.

5.3.1 Caste and Class

In Indian society, caste and class as two different forms of social stratification have often been found to overlap with each other. Yogendra Singh (1997)

mentions that in India class is often subsumed by caste. While caste is perceived as a hereditary group, a social class is a category of people who share a similar socio-economic status in relation to other segments of their community or society. Andre Beteille (1965), on the basis of his study of caste and class in Sripuram in South India found that the relation between caste and class has been a dynamic one. In the traditional system, there was greater congruence between caste and class. But the class system has gradually been dissociating itself from the caste structure. One can now achieve a variety of class positions with different degrees of probability, whatever one's position in the caste structure may be. However, caste, class are also closely linked with the power structure which is reflected in terms of the ownership in ship of property, such as, land and political and economic standing in society.

Activity 1

From your own discussion with your family/friends make a list of characteristics which you believe to be related to caste. Discuss with other students at your study center.

5.3.2 Jajmani System

The term Jajmani System was introduced into the Indian social anthropology by William Wiser (1937) through his pioneering work, 'The Hindu Jajmani System'. In his study of a village in Uttar Pradesh, he discovered how different castes interacted with one another in the production and exchange of goods and services. It was found that, with some variations, this system existed throughout India.

Based on the agricultural system of production and distribution of goods and services, Jajmani system is the link between the landowning high caste groups and occupational castes. It could be said that the Jajmani system is a system of distribution whereby high caste land owning families are provided services by various lower castes such as carpenter, barber, sweeper, etc.

It is a system of economic, social and ritual ties between different caste groups in the village. Under this system there are patrons and service castes. Since caste has a traditional association with an occupation, the castes are interdependent on each other for securing multiple services.

The servicing castes are called *Kamins* while the castes served are called *Jajmans*. For services rendered, the servicing castes are paid in cash or in kind (grains, fodder, clothes, animal products like milk, butter, etc.). The Rajput, Bhumihaar and Jat are the Patron castes in the North and Kamma, Reddi, and Lingayat in the South. The service castes comprise barber, carpenter, blacksmith, washermen, leather-worker, etc. Relationship under Jajmani was permanent and hereditary. Oscar Lewis mentions that each caste group within a village is traditionally bound to give certain standardised services to the families of other castes. While the landowning high caste families receive services from lower castes and, in return, the members of low castes receive grains.

Jajmani system has undergone many significant changes in the past decades. In the village, not every caste participates in this system. In addition to the jajmani relation, there has always been contractual, wage labour type of ties between

the providers of goods and services and their buyers. Introduction of cash economy has also brought about changes, because payments in the jajmani system were in kind rather than in cash. New opportunities have come up in towns and cities, and many occupational castes have moved to cities to participate in these opportunities. The influence of life style, modern education, improved transport and communication has led to a decline in Jajmani system. Barter system of exchange is now almost extinct. Now payment is made in the form of cash. Broad changes in the caste system have also come in the way of the functioning of the traditional institution of Jajmani system.

Check Your Progress I

- 1) Define caste and mention at least three features of caste system in India.

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- 2) What is the meaning of attributional approach towards the understanding of caste? Use five lines to answer.

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5.4 CHANGE AND CONTINUITY WITHIN CASTE SYSTEM

By definition, caste system is viewed as a rigid and closed system of stratification. That is there is no movement or mobility from one caste status to the other. Social mobility is the process by which individuals or groups move, either upwards or downwards, from one social status to another in the social hierarchy. In reality, social mobility has been an important feature of caste system. This clearly means that caste system is a dynamic reality with flexibility in terms of its structure and function.

The concept of Sanskritization which is basically a process of social mobility was developed by M N Srinivas to describe the dynamic nature of the caste system. In his path-breaking study, *Religion and Society among the Coorgs* (1952), M N Srinivas explained caste mobility in terms of cultural emulation of the Brahmins by the local lower castes. He defined Sanskritization as “a process by which a “low” Hindu caste, or tribal or other group changes its customs, ritual, ideology and way of life in the direction of a high, frequently “twice-born” caste. Generally such changes are followed by a claim to a higher position in the caste hierarchy than that traditionally conceded to the claimant caste by the local community.” William Rowes’ study of the Noniya in Senapur village in eastern Uttar Pradesh shows the success of a middle level caste in acquiring

upward mobility through Sanskritization after achieving economic prosperity. A clear example of Sanskritization is the emulation of the practice of "twice-born castes" such as, vegetarianism by those so-called "lower castes". This paved way for mobility to occur within caste system. However, lower castes aspiring to climb upwards in caste hierarchy have to face hostility from the higher castes.

Along with Sanskritization, the process of Westernisation has also made social mobility possible. Westernization refers to all cultural changes and institutional innovations in India as it came into political and cultural contact with the western nations especially British. It includes establishment of scientific, technological and educational institutions, rise of nationalism, new political culture and leadership in the country. Many higher castes gave up traditional customs and adopted the life style of the westerners.

The process of industrialisation and urbanisation (migration of people from villages to cities) affected caste structure to a great extent. Industrial growth provided new sources of livelihood to people and made occupational mobility possible. With new transportation facilities, there was frequent communication. People of all castes travelled together and there was no way to follow the prevalent ideology of ritual purity and pollution between castes. Taboos against food sharing started weakening when industrial workers from different castes lived and worked together.

Urbanisation and growth of cities also changed the functioning of the caste system. Kingsley Davis (1951) held that the anonymity, congestion, mobility, secularism and changeability of the city makes the operation of the caste virtually impossible. Ghurye (1961) holds that changes in the rigidities of the caste system were due to the growth of city life. M N Srinivas (1962) holds that due to the migration of Brahmins to the towns, the non-Brahmins refused to show same respect to them which they showed before, and inter-caste eating and drinking taboos were also weakened. Quite significantly, the superiority of the Brahmins has been challenged, once considered a religious dogma and was based on birth, is no more so, as it was in the past.

Besides industrialisation and urbanisation, other factors which emerged after Independence in the country significantly affected the caste system. Various political and economic policies and reforms were initiated after Independence in the country which led to several changes after Independence. The socio-religious reforms and movements, merger of some states spread of modern education, growth of modern profession, spatial mobility and the, spread of market economy accelerated the process of modernisation and development. Consequently, changes and the process of social mobility in the caste system gained momentum.

There were occupational opportunities which were ritually neutral. Entry into these new occupations were based on the technical skills imparted through modern education. When people from different castes came together in modern occupational settings and had close interaction, it gave a serious blow to the ritual, heredity and hierarchical structure and aspects of caste.

Under the caste system, endogamy was the basis of mate-selection. The members of a caste or sub-caste were forbidden by non changing social laws to marry outside the group. But at present the Special Marriage Act, 1954 and the Hindu

Marriage Act, 1955 have removed restrictions of endogamy and declared inter-caste marriages as legally valid. Of late, several factors such as impact of western philosophy, co-education, working together of males and females of different castes in the same factory or office have contributed to an increase in the cases of inter-caste marriages, love-marriages and late-marriages and live-in-relationship.

Ram Krishna Mukherjee (1958) stated that both the economic aspect (change in occupational specialization) and the social aspect (adoption of higher caste customs, giving up polluting professions, etc.) of the caste system, have vastly changed the caste system. He said that change is more specific in urban areas where rules on social interaction and, caste commensalities have relaxed and civil and religious disabilities of lower castes have been lifted. There are scholars of the viewpoint that changes are taking place gradually within the caste system but they are not disintegrative of the system as a whole. Ghurye (1961) was of the opinion that caste has shed some of its features. He said, that “caste no longer rigidly determines an individual’s occupation but continues to prescribe its norms about marriage within the caste. One still has to depend very largely on one’s caste for help at critical periods of one’s life, like marriage, birth and death.” He believed that strength of the caste system in social life is as strong today as it was earlier. Although Andre Beteille has referred to the changes taking place in the caste system in terms of its structural distance between castes, style of life, commensality and endogamy. Scholars have also said that caste has lost its traditional elements of purity and pollution and became more of an identity group. (Sharma, K)

5.4.1 Caste and Politics

The phenomenon of dominance of one caste over the other was an important factor in the maintenance of the caste system. Traditionally, economic and political dominance coincided with the ritual dominance. According to Srinivas (1966) a caste is said to be dominant when it is numerically the strongest in the village or local area and it economically and politically exercises a great influence. Such factors combine to place a particular caste group in a position of political dominance.

Sociologists have undertaken political analysis in terms of caste and traced the political development of caste through time. They have analysed the role of caste and its linkage to politics to gain political power. The system of parliamentary democracy, adult franchise, democratic decentralisation and the system of Panchayati Raj have taken politics down to the grassroots level where caste becomes a prominent variable in electoral politics. The demands of organised party system in politics have brought about a coalition of castes. The caste-based politics has promoted caste and importance of caste in politics. The caste has been the mobilizing, as well as, the unifying factor for political gains, material welfare, social status and caste alliances. (See Kothari, R. (ed.) 1970: Caste in Indian Politics, Orient Langman, New Delhi)

The modern political system is universal by the Constitution and it does not take into account the caste factor in privilege but in practice, on the ground level, caste considerations have come to occupy a predominant position in the democratic political process. The Political consciousness on caste lines is evident

in references made to caste *sabhas* or caste associations and their role in Indian politics and political mobilization.

Rajni Kothari has examined the relationship between caste and politics. He found the factors of education, government patronage and expanding franchise have penetrated the caste system, affecting the democratic politics in the country. The Economic opportunity, administrative patronage rising consciousness, is changing social attitudes Recognition of new opportunities and the rising consciousness and aspirations have drawn caste into politics and political mobilisation.

The different parties and movements mobilise caste based status groups as resources for their political interest. Very often candidates are fielded by political parties on the basis of their caste identity. The caste provides a readymade system of mobilization and support for the organized party politics. There are various caste federations which provide an organised political platform to fight for their common course. For example, the Kshatriya Sabha of Gujarat is an illustration of an active caste federation. It consists of clusters of castes or Jatis, that functions like a caste- based political community. Thus, caste is a factor of political significance and it is closely interlinked with politics.

5.4.2 Measures to Prohibit Caste Discrimination

After Independence the spread of education and social reform movements played a significant role in emancipation of socially and economically backward castes and classes. It is through them and various other legal constitutional measures the discrimination based on caste and other factors was prohibited. Our Constitution is based on democratic values of equality, liberty and fraternity. It does not allow any discrimination. In order to fulfil the Constitutional mandate, several Acts were passed in the Parliament to end the exploitative and discriminatory practices against lower castes. The government of India has enacted laws to remove untouchability. It has also brought in many reforms to improve the quality of life of the weaker sections of society. Some of them are:

- i) the Constitutionally guaranteed fundamental human rights;
- ii) the Abolition of ‘untouchability’ in 1950;
- iii) the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 and
- iv) the Provision of reservation in educational institutions, employment and other opportunities;
- v) the establishment of the department of Social Welfare and National Commissions for the welfare of Scheduled Castes and Tribes and the Untouchability (Offences) Act, 1955, renamed as Protection of Civil Rights Act, in 1976.

The SC & ST Act, 1989 is one of the important measures to check, deter and prevent activities against them. There is also an Act, 2013 for the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation. This Act aims to prohibit the employment of manual scavenging, the manual cleaning of sewers and septic tanks without protective equipment, and the construction of unhygienic latrines. The Act seeks to rehabilitate manual scavengers and seeks to provide alternative employment to them.

Activity 2

Discuss with your friends about the legal measures and different steps that our Constitution provides to stop caste discrimination in Indian society. Write a report of a page and discuss it with your peer group at your study center.

The Constitution of India provides measures for protective discrimination under various articles to facilitate the process of creating an equalitarian society. The Constitution gives preferential treatment to Schedule Castes and Schedule Tribes. Thus reservation was a strategy to give them a share in power, politics, services, employment and in order to uplift them socially and economically. In 1950, the Constitution provided 12.5% reservation for SCs and 5% for STs but later in 1970, it was raised to 15% for SCs and 7.5% for STs. The reservation was provided in jobs, admission to educational institutions and central and state legislative assemblies. Accordingly, all state governments enacted laws to provide reservation for the SCs and STs in services and other areas in the state. There is special provision for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) made in the Constitution of India wherein the term OBC is used for them. Article 15(4) of the Constitution refers to them as 'socially and educationally backward classes of citizens'. Article 340, refers to them as 'socially and educationally backward classes'. Article 16(4) refers to them only as 'backward class of citizens'. Article 46 refers to them as educationally and economically weaker sections of the people'. These are several provisions laid down in different Articles in our Constitution for the advancement of Other Backward Classes or OBCs.

However, the issue of reservation is more complex, particularly at the all India level. The ground reality has shown many of the measures are not effective in improving the condition of the poor and deprived. The issue of criteria of reservation is, therefore, raised again, and again. There is the need for its assessment and policy formulation from time to time.

In the final analysis we observe that caste is losing the traditional functions, norms and structure because of the changes that have taken place in society but caste still exists. It is acquiring new 'avatar to suit the changed environment, condition and mind-sets.

The caste is modifying itself but is still persisting, particularly in the rural areas. In urban areas, caste is persisting in the form of complex networks of interest and class groups. However caste as a dynamic reality of Indian society has undergone many changes and yet there are elements of continuity. The caste system as an identity group exists as a unique social institution of Indian society.

Check Your Progress II

- 1) Discuss briefly how caste system has changed in contemporary India. Use about 10 lines to answer the question

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- 2) How does Indian Constitution helps protect the lower castes from discrimination? Use about 10 lines to answer this question.

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5.5 LET US SUM UP

We have explained briefly the characteristics of caste and its history. It is associated with hierarchy and existed in rural areas in the form of Jajmani system. In addition to hierarchy, caste system is characterized by segmental division of labour i.e. occupation, restrictions on commensality which is eating 'kachcha' or 'pucca' food together and social interaction, civil and religious disabilities, privileges of different sections, restrictions on marriage and the choice of occupations. The changes and the continuity within the caste system have been explained. The relationship of caste and politics has also been explained with special reference to the role of caste in the institution of Panchayati Raj. In the last part, measures to prohibit caste discrimination taken by the government during the framing of our Constitution are explained. In conclusion, the present status of the system of caste, changes and continuity within the system have been explained.

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IGNOU BDP material on (2017 (Reprint) ESO-12, Block 5 Caste and Class & *Society and Stratification*; Block 5 Explaining Caste in Indian Society ESO- 14

5.7 SPECIMEN ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress I

- 1) Caste divides Hindu Society into different segments based on their regional caste hierarchy of Jatis and subjatis within the all India dursian of Varma (or colour). This hierarchy is ascriptive in nature i.e. one is learn into that Varna or Caste and is based on ritual purity and pollution.
- 2) The attributional approach to understand caste system is based on the understanding of caste is terms of various attributes; such as hierarchy,

purity and pollution occupations, etc. This approach has been used by sociologists like G.S. Ghurye.

Check Your Progress II

- 1) Caste system is considered to be a closed system of stratification; unlike class. However, sociologists have found in their studies that social mobility in terms of movement of caste groups from lower to upper rank had always been there. But; after Independence the process of Sanskritization, Westernization and Modernization along with the changes brought about by a universal political system of democracy encoded in our Constitution helped bring faster changes in society. This led to changes in caste system but yet some rigid elements, such as, identity and its links to politics still continue to shape society in India.
- 2) Indian Constitution through its mandate of bringing about equality, liberty and fraternity for all citizens of India protects its citizens from being discriminated through certain Constitutional measures such as:
 - i) Abolition of undercastability
 - ii) Constitutionally guaranteed fundamental human rights.
 - iii) Reservation of seats for SC, ST and OBCs as measures of predictive discrimination to ameliorate their social and economic condition and bring about social justice and equality in society; and same others.

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UNIT 6 TRIBES*

Structure

- 6.0 Objectives
- 6.1 Introduction
- 6.2 Understanding Tribe
 - 6.2.1 Distinctive Characteristics of the Tribes in India
- 6.3 Socio-economic Conditions of Tribals in Central India
 - 6.3.1 Issues Relating to Access to Livelihood
 - 6.3.2 Agrarian Policies, Land Laws and Land Alienation among Tribals
- 6.4 Tribes and Forest
 - 6.4.1 Loss of Land and Livelihood
 - 6.4.1.1 Loss of Land and Livelihood in Pre-Independent India
 - 6.4.1.2 Loss of Land and Livelihood in Post-Independent India
 - 6.4.2 Regulations and Resistance
 - 6.4.3 New Kind of Struggle on the Issue of Land
 - 6.4.4 Tribal 'Unrest'
- 6.5 Let Us Sum Up
- 6.6 References
- 6.7 Specimen Answers to Check Your Progress

6.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this Unit, you should be able to:

- describe the distinctive characteristics of the tribes in India;
- discuss the socio-economic conditions of tribals;
- explain the agrarian policies, land laws and land alienation among Tribals;
- discuss the regulations and resistance; and
- describe the new kind of struggle on the issue of land.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit on “Caste” you learnt about “Caste” which is one of the most important institution in Indian Society. Here in this unit 6 “Tribes”, we have exclusively described the Tribes or “Jan Jati’s” in India.

Tribes in India have been studied and written about by many scholars. In this unit we shall discuss some of the major issues concerning the tribal communities in India. They are largely excluded from the mainstream of social life and are often deprived of their indigenous sources of livelihood. They are quite frequently uprooted from their socio-cultural traditions. They experience loss of their dignity and independence. The government policies have had both negative and positive impact on tribal societies resulting in varying tribal responses to these policies. The great deal of concern among the policy-makers continues to be for the tribal upliftment.

* Contributed by Thuanbina Gangmei, Delhi University

6.2 UNDERSTANDING TRIBE

Derived from the Latin term *tribus*, the term tribe means an inhabited place. It denotes a group of persons forming a community and claiming descent from a common ancestor. The term 'tribe' (Munshi, 2013) was used by the colonial government in India to categorize a large number of groups different from the term caste. The term tribe subsumes communities very different from one another in terms of demographic size, linguistic and cultural traits, ecological conditions and material conditions of living. The tribes are essentially 'primitive', and 'backward' in character. After independence, the term, 'Scheduled Tribe' (ST) came to be used to denote tribes who are scheduled as such under the Constitution of India. The tribal communities are distinguished from other communities by relative isolation, cultural distinctiveness and low level of production and subsistence. They are the native inhabitants. There are several terms used for them like 'adivasi' (first settler), 'vanvasi' (inhabitants of forests), 'vanyajati' (primitive people), 'Janjati' (folk people), and 'anusuchit jati' (ST).

W. H. R. Rivers defines tribe as "a social group of a simple kind, the members of which speak a common dialect, have a single government and act together for such common purposes as warfare." (Chaudhury, 1977)

The Census of India 2011 notifies Scheduled Tribes in 30 States of India. The number of individual ethnic groups notified as Scheduled Tribes is 705.

Box 6.1: The Tribals and the British Policy

The British policy towards the tribals had two major elements. Firstly, it favoured isolation of the tribal areas from the mainstream (Bhowmick 1980; Chaudhuri 1982). Thus was given the concept of 'excluded' and/or 'partially excluded areas'. Because the British tribal policy was political and colonial, the British administration feared, that if these tribals (bow-and-arrow armed tribals were often labeled as militant, unruly and jungle) were to have contact with the mainstream of Indian society, the freedom movements would gain further strength. In this background it seemed logical to them to isolate, administratively and politically, the regions that had predominantly tribal populations.

Secondly, at the level of reform, the British administration was interested in 'civilising' these people. In an ethno-centric assessment, the tribals were viewed at par with stage of bestiality. The classical theory of evolution, which had gripped academic attention in late nineties and early twenties, had treated the 'contemporary primitives' as the remnants or survivals of the early stages of humanity, savagery and barbarism. In the words of Sir, E.B. Tylor, these people inhabiting the hilly or forested terrain with sparse population and difficult communication were 'social fossils'; a study of whom would illuminate the prehistoric phases of human existence (IGNOU (Reprint): 2017 ESO-12 Block 6, Tribes in India)

6.2.1 Distinctive Characteristics of the Tribes in India

1) Definite common topography

Tribal people live within a definite topography and it is a common place for all the members of a particular tribe occupying that region. In the absence

of a common but definite living place, the tribals will lose other characteristics of a tribal life, like common language, way of living and community sentiment, etc.

2) **Sense of unity**

Sense of unity is an invariable necessity for a true tribal life. The very existence of a tribe depends upon the tribal's sense of unity during the time of peace and war.

3) **Endogamous group**

Tribal people generally do not marry outside their tribe and marriage within the tribe is highly appreciated and much applauded. But the pressing effects of changes following the forces of mobility have also changed the attitude of tribals and now, inter-tribal marriages are becoming more and more common.

4) **Common dialect**

Members of a tribal community exchange their views in a common dialect. This element further strengthens their sense of unity.

5) **Ties of blood -relationship**

Blood -relationship is the greatest bond and most powerful force inculcating the sense of unity among the tribals.

6) **Protection awareness**

Tribal people always need protection from intrusion and infiltration and for this a single political authority is established and all the powers are vested in this authority. The safety of the tribal is left to the skill and mental power of the person enjoying political authority. The tribal chief is aided by a tribal committee in the events of contingencies. Tribe is divided into a number of small groups and each group is headed by its own leader.

7) **Distinct political organisation**

Every tribe has its own distinct political organisation which looks after the interests of tribal people. The whole political authority lies in the hands of a tribal chief. In some tribes, tribal committees exist to help the tribal chief in discharging his functions in the interests of the tribe.

8) **Common culture**

Common culture of a tribe derives from the sense of unity, which depends on sharing a common language, common religion, common political organisation. Common culture produces a life of homogeneity among the tribals.

9) **Importance of kinship**

Kinship forms the basis of tribal social organisation. Most tribes are divided into exogamous clans and lineages.

10) **Egalitarian values**

The tribal social organisation is based on the principle of equality. Thus there are no institutionalised inequalities such as in the caste system or sex based inequalities. Thus men and women enjoyed equal status and freedom.

However, some degrees of social inequality may be found in case of tribal chiefs or tribal kings who enjoy a higher social status, exercise political authority and possess wealth.

11) Simple form of religion

Tribes believe in certain myths and a rudimentary type of religion. Further, they believe in totems—which is a symbolic object signifying objects having a mystic relationship with members of the tribe.

Check Your Progress I

- 1) Give the definition of tribe. Use about five lines for your answer.

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- 2) List at least two major characteristics of tribes.

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6.3 SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF TRIBALS IN CENTRAL INDIA

The tribal communities, especially in the central belt of India, are characterised by declining access to land and other resources due to land alienation and increased diversion of forest and other common property resources for development projects. As a result, a disproportionately high percentage of the tribal population has been displaced from their traditional pattern of livelihood without proper rehabilitation. (Sarap, 2017)

Of the total 104.3 million people belonging to various tribes (705), about four-fifths live in the heart of India comprising the states of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Odisha and West Bengal (Government of India, 2011). The socio-economic conditions of the tribals living in these states are, in several ways, different from those living in northeast India. That is, since these are predominantly forest-based areas with high concentration of poverty, the tribals in these regions stand, both socially and economically at a much lower level as compared to those in northeast India. The problem of poverty confronting them is multidimensional in nature including income, and human vulnerability. (Kannan & Raveendran, 2011; Radhakrishna 2015, and Sarap, 2017)

The adivasis living in the hinterland of the states are characterised by low level of asset holding, low level of human capital, lack of political participation in the decision-making process and no political voice (De Haan & Dubey, 2005). In

addition, they are subjected to multiple deprivations (Bakshi, Chawla & Shah, 2015) and human vulnerability. (Sarap, 2017). Major causes of tribal poverty are lack of access to secure productive resources, such as land, forests, other common property resources like grazing grounds, ponds, tanks etc. Most important is their insufficient participation in the decision-making process. The loss of entitlement to resources has not only affected their livelihood but also made them poorer. There is continuous erosion in their access to different types of resources on which the tribals depend for their livelihood. The level of poverty among the tribal communities central India is higher as compared to other regions. (Radhakrishna, Ravi & Reddy, 2013). They are marginalised because of land alienation and indebtedness (Sarap, 2017). There is distress sale of their agricultural and forest products by middlemen to the local traders. Even the tribal labour as marketed (Sarap & Springate-Baginski, 2013). The state-sponsored programmes have poor performance in tribal areas. Their performance in forms of human development like health education and training is ineffective (govt. of India 2014). The literacy rate among tribal communities is rising but at a slow pace, as compared to other communities in this nations. (Sarap, 2017) There is difference in the levels of literacy among different tribal communities in addition to the difference between male and female literacy rates of tribal people. The health indicators like infant mortality, morbidity, skilled health care, are the worst. Female-headed households can be seen amongst tribed community. The child poverty and disadvantage based by women are very high. The women themselves suffer from multiple burdens of being located in remote areas in disadvantaged groups. They receive insufficient access to education and quality of health care (De Haan 2004) The World Bank, 2011). The tribal households tend to be poorer inspite of various welfare programmes and some changes in their demographic, occupational and educational levels. (Kijima, 2006). The tribal dominated areas in central India are characterized by poor access to roads, markets, medical and educational facilities. The infrastructural deprivation of tribal areas increases both transportation and transaction costs of production and marketing of commodities, and creates difficulty in accessing basic services for the tribal people. The remoteness of tribal areas precipitates their commercial and transnational problems. This reduces the possibility the transformation of tribal economy. Given the low agricultural productivity and low returns for their labour (Kijima, 2006, see Sarap, 2017), the net surplus available to the tribal people is marginal or negative. The adivasi regions are rich in mineral and other resources but, historically, the tribal communities have been denied a share of this wealth. Such resources are owned by them as they are found under the land they possess but they are excluded from the use of small resources. They are not permitted to extract minerals and water resources for power generation and irrigation. As a result, they have been displaced and subjected to ‘adverse incorporation’, which has pushed them to the lowest rungs of the social hierarchy (Chatterjee, 2008). In tribal areas, there is absolute deprivation as a result of loss of land and habitats, and from the fragmentation of homesteads due to dams, mines and industries (Munshi, 2012, see Sarap, 2017). These adverse changes have led to dispossession of individuals and communities. There is also the relative deprivation resulting from lack of opportunities, that is, social exclusion from the processes and benefits of developmental programmes. There are number of factors including policies, as discussed below, responsible for decline in the conditions of livelihood of the tribal communities.

6.3.1 Issues Relating to Access to Livelihood

Access to the source of livelihood of the tribal people depends on sectoral institutional and governmental (supports). They should not only improve their sources of livelihood but also facilitate mainstreaming i.e bringing them closer to other people and integration of tribal communities with other communities and societies. There is also a need to enhance their capacities. The governmental policies including agrarian, forest and development policies are crucial for providing these communities with opportunities for their sustainable socio-economic development. (De Haan & Dubey, 2005)

6.3.2 Agrarian Policies, Land Laws and Land Alienation Among Tribals

The land as a major source of livelihood plays a direct and an indispensable role in agricultural production and prosperity but the agrarian policies of the states have been relatively ineffective in broadening the access to this source of livelihood to a large section of tribal population. The reason can be attributed to the fact that post independent.

Indian states have encouraged private property regime but the state property regime continued and the communal land tenure system was not accepted. As a result, land not settled as private property automatically became state property which included forestland also (Ekha, 2011; Kumar & Kherr, 2013; Sarap & Sarangi, 2010). Although the forestland was primarily owned by the tribal communities. In many adivasi areas, requisite surveys were never done. Thus, people's rights over vast tracts of land were never recognized, though the land was customarily owned by these tribal communities (Xaxa, 2007, Sarap, 2017). Further, the increasing pauperisation and marginalisation of peasantry has been affecting the livelihood of the tribals. The National Sample Survey Office data shows an increasing trend of landlessness among the tribal households, leading to their pauperisation. The percentage of households without any cultivated land (landlessness) has been increasing. It is noteworthy that the percentage of households that do not have cultivated or agricultural land increased from 28 per cent in 1987–88 to 39 per cent in 2011–12 (Karat & Rawal, 2014). Similarly, adivasi households that do not possess any land have increased from 13 to 25 per cent and such households that do not own any land have increased from 16 to 24 per cent during the same period (Sarap, 2017).

Check Your Progress II

- 1) Discuss briefly the socio-economic conditions of tribals from central India. Use five lines

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- 2) Do the tribals in central India have access to forest land?

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6.4 TRIBES AND FOREST

Some tribal groups practice hunting and food gathering as their sole occupation but majority of them are cultivators and agricultural labourers. The rest are engaged in household industry, construction work, plantation, mining and quarrying and in other services. A small section of them receives benefits from the protective measures of the government, such as, reservation in educational institutions, employment and political reservation but majority of them are marginalized by the process of so-called development of the last seven decades since independence (Munshi *ibid*).

Most tribal groups derive their livelihood from agriculture and forest as compared to non-tribal agricultural communities. Their dependence on the forest serves variety of purposes. The dependency on forest and other natural resources is substantial. Their agricultural activities are closely interlinked with the forest. The forest has been, and continues to be, a major source of food, timber for house construction and agricultural implements, fuel wood, medicines, and other necessities of everyday life. The leaves, fruits, flowers, roots, tubers from the forest constitute an important supplement to the otherwise meager diet of the tribals, especially during the lean season and periods of drought. Wild fruits, berries and honey are collected and eaten. The bamboo and timber are necessary for making agricultural and fishing tools. The herbs serve as medicines for several ailments; The oil and soap are also gathered from the forest. Around fifty to eighty per cent of food requirements of the tribals may, in fact, be provided by the forest. The sale of forest produce like bamboo, fuel wood, *tendu* leaves (leaves plucked from its shrubs used to wrap *bidil/cigarette*) and variety of nuts are important sources of income. The tribal people have the belief that gods and spirits reside in the forest, trees and animals. They are also their object of devotion. The forest resources are the major sources of material and spiritual existence of tribal communities (*ibid*).

There are several regulations passed in the mid-nineteenth century during the colonial rule; with the object to protect and regenerate forests for ecological reasons and to facilitate the production of timber on a sustainable basis, for both revenue and imperial purposes. The laws relating to the management of forests and forest produce were subsequently consolidated in the *Indian Forest Act of 1927*. This resulted in the large scale restriction on the removal of fuel wood and bamboos and prohibition of shifting cultivation. In many instances, grazing lands were included into 'unreserved' and 'protected' forests, thereby seriously affecting the existing grazing arrangements. The creation of a large scale of 'reserved' forests in India under the control of the state, supervised and managed by the forest department resulted in the restriction of the customary rights of the forest communities endangering their very survival. These communities suffered great hardships at the hands of forest officials who enforced the restrictions with great severity and even a minor breach of regulation was treated as a crime.

The forest management introduced by the British resulted in the enhanced commercial value of the forest and opened up an important source of revenue for the government. The increasing demand from urban centers, military cantonments and hill stations, from the railways, and the rising commercial value of teak and other minor forest produce added to the economic value of the

forests. The increased policing by the forest department inevitably resulted in more and more forest crimes and offences being committed by those dependent on the forest.

The land and forest under tribal control were brought under state control and management. During the colonial rule and after independence, lineage/ village ownership of land was not recognised. In addition, the non-recognition of shifting agriculture as a legitimate agricultural practice existed except in the north east. Paradoxically, the post colonial Indian state has continued with the colonial policy with the result that lakhs of shifting cultivators have no legitimate rights over the forests that have been their own for centuries.

The traditional rights of the tribal people over land and forest were neither recognised nor recorded. The creation of national parks and sanctuaries on forest lands further excluded these communities from their survival base. The conservation of the flora and fauna was recognised as an urgent need but the settlement of tribal rights to forest and its produce was not undertaken with sincerity and seriousness that it deserved and those who continue to use forest land were deemed 'encroachers', stripped of any security rights (ibid).

6.4.1 Loss of Land and Livelihood

There was loss of the source of livelihood since the tribals were kept away from the shifting cultivation as it was considered wasteful and destructive but the British government considered it as a source of regular revenue, and therefore, the tribals were encouraged to take up land for cultivation but on lower rates of assessment. However, the lack of agricultural implements, poor quality of soil, frequent crop failure and rigid revenue demands, often forced the cultivators, both tribals and non-tribals, to turn to money lenders to provide them with money at high rates of interest to buy seeds, consumption items, and even money to pay revenue to the government. In several parts, the trend of increasing indebtedness and transfer of land for cultivation to the money-lending classes increased. In this way, a powerful class emerged which amassed large amounts of land and wealth through combined activities of money-lending, trading and liquor selling. This trend reduced the tribals to the position of bonded labourers and tenants. Thus, from a low subsistence, the tribals became totally dependent on the landlord- money lenders, traders, shopkeeper, for their survival. The **exploitation and oppression** by the money-lending class not only reduced them to extreme poverty but also removed their self respect.

6.4.1.1 Loss of Land and Livelihood in Pre-Independent India

The necessary pre-condition for the dependence and bondage was the alienation of the adivasis from their means of subsistence, forest and land and other resources. Their alienation was almost complete by the end of the 19th century. In many parts of the country, the tribals joined the non-tribals to revolt against the local oppressors and administrators. They demanded land, forest rights, lower taxes, lower prices for food etc. In spite of the legislations preventing alienation among the tribals, they continue to lose their land and the sources of their livelihood.

6.4.1.2 Loss of Land and Livelihood in Post-Independent India

The decade following Independence were the decades of intense development planning in India. This was also the time of marginalization of tribal communities from mainstream development through the agenda of nation building centered around industrialization and urbanization. What accompanied this process was building of large dams, large industrial complexes, infrastructure, opening of mines and forest for the market and over exploitation of natural resources to satisfy the expanding urban and industrial demands in the tribal inhabited areas where most of the rich natural resources lie. The adverse effect this process on tribals in India has been reported by the International Alliances of Indigenous Peoples of the Tropical Forests. It was reported that the building of industries, mines, townships, dams, forest depots was both by decision and default imposed on the tribal people. The tribal communities carried the burden of the economic growth of the nation. The land acquisition, a piece of colonial legislation, used to acquire lands for the Crown. It was the power as a tool in the hands of the colonial state to take over the resources to divert their benefits to the advanced and advancing sections (Munshi 2013). More than 10 million people were displaced and lost all that they had and millions of tribal communities to the brink of ethnocide. There was a simmering discontent in almost the entire middle Indian found themselves pushed tribal belt, particularly on the issues of land and forest and their alienation from these. In some cases there was a near confrontation between the people and the state marked by intermittent eruption of violence. The tribal people are continuously losing command over their resources in almost all counts with utter disregard of their traditional rights over land and national resources. There was virtually forced displacement in favour of a variety of development projects (Munshi, 2013).

The public and private sectors undertakings, development projects and industries have contributed to the process of impoverishment of the tribals. The state which is supposed to protect their interest has immensely contributed to their exploitation. The depletion and destruction of forest have eroded the already fragile survival base of the tribal communities. The most affected are the tribal women who must now work harder to meet the fuel, water, food and fodder requirements of the family and their cattles. A large number of tribals are forced to migrate seasonally or permanently to other rural areas, urban fringes, or cities in search of work opportunities because of being deprived of their traditional sources of their livelihood. They constitute a large army of 'footloose workers, a part of the expanding unorganized sector, with little security and protection (ibid).

It is noteworthy that the situation in the north-east tribal belt differs from that of central and southern India. Except Tripura, Assam and Manipur, this region did not experience much migration even in colonial days. Although in more recent times, alienation of land and other resources has occurred. But it is not as widespread as in the rest of the country, in particular by the central tribal belt. The tribals in this region, according to Pathy, control the resources for their survival. The tribals are in majority in Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram and Meghalaya. They struggle here also but they have little to do with land alienation and expropriation of resources by the state. They focus more on their political involvement. (ibid).

The policy of globalisation and liberalisation has only accelerated the process of alienation of the tribals from their natural resources and created greater insecurity for them. The free movement of human resources, commodities, finance and technology across national, regional and local boundaries have adversely affected these communities. It is observed that large scale transfer of tribal land is going on. This alienates as them from their land. There is now moves to amend the fifth schedule and structure of forest management projects in order and is resources to include the interests of large private firms like the Indian Tobacco company in Andhra Pradesh. The Jindals have procured tribal land through *benami* transactions in Chhattisgarh for their steel plant. The Sahara Housing Limited grabbed 3,760 acres of tribal and forest areas in Maharashtra for a tourism project (ibid).

The government has effectively carried out a massive eviction of tribal people in order to clear the way for the big multinational mining companies and their Indian partners, who are coming to India to exploit its iron-ore, coal, bauxite uranium and other bio-diversity. The Odisha government has already given mining rights for iron and steel production to 35 companies, including a grant to POSCO and to large number of aluminium companies. Mining and quarrying has recently attracted a lot of attention. It has emerged as a major profit- making industry often combining force and fraud, legal and illegal means to carry out its activities. Although, mining areas are the site of violent political clashes between the local people on the one hand, and the private capital and the state on the other. The ecological destruction, loss of traditional livelihood of tribals and their displacement have a taken place. Chhattisgarh is one such site which has witnessed clashes between the local people and police. In fact, this place has also seen the massive state repression to crush the Maoist influence in the region. It is reported that in the first four and half decades after independence, mining had displaced about two and a half crore people, and less than 25 per cent of them had yet been rehabilitated. More than 50 per cent belonged to tribal communities. It was estimated that 1,64 lakh hectares of forest land has already been diverted for mining in the country (ibid).

The tribals protests led by Maoists have brought to the centre stage the problems of continuing illegal acquisition of land from scheduled areas by private interests as well as the state, and the resulting alienation of tribal communities from their resource base. The areas most politically volatile are those which are forested and rich in other natural resources, and which have been home for tribal communities (ibid).

Box 6.2: Impact of Industrialization

The installation of industries in Santal dominated areas was another very important factor of change and modernization. These industries provided jobs to both educated and illiterate and offered a new source of mobility. Moreover, these industries were free from one or another religious domination. They promoted caste-free and class-free occupation. A large number of Santal found jobs in them. These industries, having recruited local tribals; provided an opportunity to the people to further cement their traditional linkages: in fact, these industries were the 'world of kinsmen'. Santal identity was further strengthened by the tribal-workers.

The Fifth Schedule of the Constitution grants tribals complete rights over their traditional land and forests and prohibits private companies from mining on their land. Only a small number of tribals have benefitted from the welfare measures of the state. A small proportion of young adivasi men and women do not want to continue with their traditional lifestyle but majority of the tribals feel they are deprived of their traditional sources of livelihoods against their wishes. They are forced to take up employment which offer them little security and quality of life.

Thus, millions of tribals have been displaced in the last few decades making way for development projects, industrial activities, forest conservation and the processes of development to proceed unhindered. However, these developments are but all at the cost of tribals. The short-sighted policies of the states have resulted in destruction of natural resources and displacement. The experiences of the tribal communities can best be described as the 'loss of nerve.' After displacement, the resettlement of the tribals is a painful experience because the conditions in the resettlement sites are often so abysmal that the majority of the tribal people want to return to their villages, kin group, forest areas where they may feel satisfied. They may also like to move out of resettlement to work as casual labour in plantation and industries and as domestic servants, rickshaw-pullers and construction workers in the alien surroundings (Munshi *ibid*).

6.4.2 Regulations and Resistance

There has been, of late, a growing awareness of the environmental problems facing the country, especially the depletion of our forest resources. The conflict and tension is growing among contending tribal groups because of deprivation and lack of access to resources and power. (Guha, R. 2013).

The task of fulfillment of tribal 'rights'; and the loss of their control over their natural resources have evoked a sharp reaction from the tribal forest communities. There have been revolts in different tribal areas centered around the question of forests since the early days of forest administration. For instance, in Garhwal, the reservation of forests in 1913 was followed by extensive social movements in 1916 and 1921, coinciding with the first non-cooperation movement, engulfing large areas of Garhwal and Kumaon. These upsurges forced the government to de-reserve large forest areas. The discontent among the tribal people due to forest restrictions manifested in the unwillingness of the villagers to cooperate with the Forest Department in its task of forest conservation (*ibid*).

The state in many areas has made over some forests as village forests under the settlement for the use by villagers but the loss of community ownership of forests had effectively broken the link between man and forest. This alienation of man from forest can be compared to the alienation of the primary producer being separated from the means of production as conceived by Marx. As a result, there were sporadic forest movements in Tehri Garhwal since the early years of the century. This history of conflict and struggle can be seen essentially as emanating from alienation, property rights and obligation (*ibid*).

6.4.3 New Kind of Struggle on the Issue of Land

A new form of struggle on the issue of land has started within some of the tribal communities where the tribal women are struggling to gain ownership rights to

land. The denial of land rights to tribals/ adivasi women has been a matter of great concern. The studies by Kishwar on Ho tribal community (1987:200) argue that Ho men's increasing control over land and other income generation activities has resulted in 'greater exploitation of Ho women despite women's far greater contribution to the family's livelihood. There are instances of tribal women like the Santhals of Bihar who are supported by men from the tribal community to launch a campaign to fight for their right to land (Munshi 2013).

6.4.4 Tribal 'Unrest'

With increased forest exploitation, the forest tribal communities have experienced a progressive loss of their control over their habitat. This deprivation has been manifests in a series of movements. There has been intermittent uprisings in the fifties and sixties. Currently we find 'unrest' in most areas. These movements, ranging from Uttarakhand in the north to Jharkhand in the east and Thane/ Dhulia in the west, have been studied and reported. The increasingly militant struggles have centered around the question of regaining community control over land and forest. The state's reaction has been one of increased repression and the use of armed force to suppress these movements as was the case of the Gua firings of 1980. The state has given greater powers to armed forces, forest department and police bureaucracy (Guha, R.2013).

6.5 LET US SUM UP

In this unit you came to know the conditions of tribals in India. The meaning and characteristic of tribes was described. They have their own myths, legends, problems and the sense of identity with the natural resources such as the forests and the groves. We explained how the developmental programmes have adversely affected the tribal communities, including their traditional pattern of agriculture and natural sources of their livelihood. The demarcation of fencing of large tracts of reserved forest has enforced effective loss of control by the tribal forest-dwellers over their habitat and resources of their existence. The development of tribal communities and their natural resources base, their skills, practices, traditions, knowledge, aptitudes and wishes.

Check Your Progress III

- 1) Briefly explain the major livelihood awareness of tribal people in India.

Use ten lines

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- 2) How did the processes of globalisation and liberalisation affect the tribals living in the forests?

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6.7 SPECIMEN ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress I

- 1) The term tribe derives from the Latin word “tribers” which refers to an inhabited place. It signifies a group of persons who belong to a community claiming a common descent from a common ancestor. They all share the same language, cultural distinctiveness and relative isolation.
- 2) A sense of unity and a common dialect are two major characteristics of tribes.

Check Your Progress II

- 1) Tribal people especially belonging to central India faced land alienation and disruption of their traditional pattern of livelihood in the very process of development since large projects such as industrial and mining led their access to land being barred from them.
- 2) No the tribals in Central India lost their traditional rights to access the forest land during the colonial period as well as the contemporary times.

- 1) Some tribals were living on hunting and food gathering but a majority population were cultivators and agricultural labourers. Many were engaged in household industry, mining work, plantation etc.
- 2) In post-Independent India the processes of globalisation and liberalisation adversely affected the tribals whose customary rights on forest lands was lost leaving them deprived and pauperized and alienated from their environment. They were either working as labourers/minors/domestics etc. or were forced to migrate to the cities and other regions looking for source of livelihood.



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THE PEOPLE'S
UNIVERSITY

UNIT 7 VILLAGE, TOWN AND CITY*

Structure

- 7.0 Objectives
- 7.1 Introduction
- 7.2 Village and its Characteristics
 - 7.2.1 The Issue of Village Autonomy
 - 7.2.2 Village and its Social Structure
 - 7.2.3 The Jajmani System
 - 7.2.4 Changes in Village Power Structure and Leadership
- 7.3 The Village and the Wider Political System
 - 7.3.1 The Village in Pre-British India
 - 7.3.2 The Village in British India
 - 7.3.3 The Village in Contemporary India
- 7.4 Towns and Cities in India: Patterns of Urbanisation
 - 7.4.1 Definition of a Town or City
 - 7.4.2 Demographic Aspect
 - 7.4.3 Spatial Pattern
- 7.5 The Growth of Towns and Cities
 - 7.5.1 Migration
 - 7.5.2 Socio-Cultural Character
- 7.6 Problems Concerning the Current Process of Urbanisation
- 7.7 Let Us Sum Up
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7.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this Unit, you should be able to:

- describe the characteristics of village in India;
- delineate the dominant features of village social structure;
- define the process of urbanization and urban areas;
- discuss the characteristic of towns;
- outline the characteristics of cities; and finally;
- explain the features of social structure of towns and cities.

7.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit you had learnt about the distinctive characteristics of tribes in India. We described the socio-economic conditions and the changing livelihood of the Tribals in India. Here, in this unit, we will explain different aspects of village i.e. rural society and towns and cities which are part of the urban social structure of Indian society.

* Adapted from ESO-12, Society in India, by Archana Singh

The village, town and city are categories of human settlements. These categories are dependent on each other for economic, social and political purposes. Very often people from village migrate to towns and cities in search of new livelihoods and occupations. The villagers sell their agricultural products in nearby towns and cities and buy essential commodities which they cannot grow or produce themselves. They are dependant on towns and cities for many goods and services. The townsmen are also dependent on villages for food products like vegetables, food grains, milk, human labour etc. The point to mention here is that the categories of human settlement are inter dependent on each other for raw materials on villages, towns and cities produce other furnished goods which need higher technology and more organisation. Therefore, they are all dependent on each other but there are some distinctive features which separate them from each other. In this unit we will discuss about the features of these three categories of human settlements: village, town and city. This will enable students to have a clear understanding of these categories.

7.2 VILLAGE AND ITS CHARACTERISTICS

India is a country where majority of population lives in rural areas. According to 2011 Census, the country has 640, 887 villages. Most of these villages have less than 1000 residents. It is important to mention here that even in recent times, more than 69 per cent people live in the villages compared to 31 per cent urban dwellers. Therefore, we can say that India is a country of villages. As village is the basic unit of rural society and majority of Indian population is living in rural areas, to have a better understanding of Indian society it is imperative to explain to you the basic characteristics of Indian villages, their evolution, their nature and structure, culture and the rural way of life.

7.2.1 The Issue of Village Autonomy

In the early periods of the colonial rule in India, the studies by Henry Maine (1881), Charles Metcalfe (1833) and Baden-Powell (1896) gave an exaggerated notion of village autonomy. The Indian village was portrayed as a ‘closed’ and ‘isolated’ system. In a report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons England, Charles Metcalfe (1833), a British administrator in India, depicted the Indian village as a monolithic, atomistic and unchanging entity. He observed, “The village communities are little republics, having nearly everything that they want within themselves and almost independent of any foreign relations”. Further, he stated that wars pass over it, regimes come and go, but the village as a society always emerges ‘unchanged, unshaken, and self-sufficient’.

Recent historical, anthropological and sociological studies have however shown that Indian village was hardly ever a republic. It was never self-sufficient. It has links with the wider society Migration, village exogamy, movement for work and trade, administrative connection, interregional market, inter-village economic and caste links and religious pilgrimage were prevalent in the past, connecting the village with the neighbouring villages and the wider society. Moreover, new forces of modernisation in the modern period augmented inter-village and rural-urban interaction.

But despite increasing external linkages village is still a fundamental social unit (Mandelbaum 1972, Orenstein 1965). People living in a village have a feeling

of common identity. They have intra-village ties at familial, caste and class levels in social, economic, political and cultural domains. In fact, village life is characterised by reciprocity, cooperation, dominance and competition.

India is a country of ancient civilisation that goes back to the Indus Valley Civilisation, which flourished during the third millennium B.C. Since then except for a brief interlude during the Rig-Vedic period (Circa 1500-1000 B.C.) when the urban centres were overrun, rural and urban centres have co-existed in India. Rural and urban centres share some common facets of life. They show interdependence especially in the sphere of economy, urbanward migration, and townsmen or city dwellers' dependence on villages for various products (e.g. foodgrains, milk, vegetables, raw materials for industry) and increasing dependence of villagers on towns for manufactured goods and market. Despite this interdependence between the two there are certain distinctive features which separate them from each other in terms of their size, demographic composition, cultural moorings, style of life, economy, employment and social relations. (IGNOU: 1917: ESO-12 Unit: 2 Rural Social Structure, Pg. 35)

7.2.2 Village and Its Social Structure

Family is the basic unit of almost all societies. It is especially true in India where the very identity of a person is dependent on the status and position of his or her family and its social status.

Family in Rural India

Family is one of the most important social institution which constitutes the rural society. It caters to needs and performs functions, which are essential for the continuity, integration and change in the social system, such as, reproduction, production and socialization.

Broadly speaking there are two types of family : (a) nuclear family consisting of husband, wife and unmarried children, and (b) joint or extended family comprising a few more kins than the nuclear type. Important dimensions of 'jointness' of family are coresidentiality, commensality, coparcenary, generation depth (three), and fulfillment of obligation towards kin and sentimental aspect. Coresidentiality means that members of a family live under the same roof. Commensality implies that they eat together i.e., have a common kitchen. Coparcenary means that they have joint ownership of property. Further, generation depth encompasses three generations or more, i.e. grandfather, father and the son or more. Members of the family also have obligations toward their kin. Moreover, they have a sentimental attachment to the ideal of joint family.

Rural family works as the unit of economic, cultural, religious, and political activities. Collectivity of the family is emphasised in social life, and the feelings of individual and personal freedom are very limited. Marriage is considered an inter-familial matter rather than an inter-personal affair. It is governed by rules of kinship.

This is witnessed in the prevalence of the rules of **village exogamy and 'gotra exogamy'** in the North but not in the South. In the North, nobody is permitted to marry in his/her own village. Marriage alliances are concluded with the people from other villages belonging to similar caste. But no such proscriptions exist in

the South. Further, in the North one cannot marry within his/her own *gotra*. On the contrary, cross cousin marriage i.e., marriage between the children of brother and sister, is preferred in the South. Thus, there is a centrifugal tendency in North India, i.e., the direction of marriage is outward or away from the group. In contrast in South India we find a centripetal tendency in making marriage alliances and building kinship ties. In other words, marriages take place inwardly or within the group. (IGNOU: 2017: pp. 26-27) Another important characteristic of the village social structure was the 'jajmani system'.

You had learnt about this institution of village in Unit 5 Caste in this Block. In the next section we are going to explain about this social institution.

7.2.3 The Jajmani System

A very important feature of traditional village life in India is the '*jajmani*' system. It has been studied by various sociologists, viz., William Wiser (1936), S.C. Dube (1955), Opler and Singh (1986), K. Ishwaran (1967), Lewis and Barnouw (1956). The term '*jajman*' refers to the patron or recipient of specialised services and the term '*jajmani*' refers to the whole relationship. In fact, the *jajmani* system is a system of economic, social and ritual ties among different caste groups in a village. Under this system some castes are patrons and others are serving castes. The serving castes offer their services to the landowning upper and intermediate caste and in turn are paid both in cash and kind. The patron castes are the landowning dominant castes, e.g., Rajput, Bhumihar, Jat in the North, and Kamma, Lingayat and Reddi in Andhra Pradesh and Patel in Gujarat. The service castes comprise Brahmin (priest), barber, carpenter, blacksmith, water-carrier, leatherworker etc.

The *jajmani* relations essentially operate at family level (Mandelbaum, 1972). A Rajput land-owning family has its *jajmani* ties with one family each from Brahmin, barber, carpenter etc., and a family of service caste offers its services to specific families of *jajmans*. However, *jajmani* rules are enforced by caste panchayats.

The *jajmani* relationship is supposed to be and often is durable, exclusive and multiple. *Jajmani* tie is inherited on both sides i.e. patron and client (the *Jajman* and the *Kamin*). The relationship is between specific families. Moreover, it is more than exchange of grain and money in lieu of service. On various ritual occasions, such as marriage, birth and death, the service-castes render their services to their *jajman* and get gifts in addition to customary payments. In factional contests each side tries to muster the support of its *jajmani* associates. Hence the *jajmani* system involves interdependence, reciprocity and cooperation between *jati* and families in villages.

But the *jajmani* system also possesses the elements of dominance, exploitation and conflict (Beidelman, 1959 and Lewis and Barnouw, 1956). There is a vast difference in exercise of power between landowning dominant patrons and poor artisans and landless labourers who serve them. The rich and powerful *jajmans* exploit and coerce the poor '*kamins*' (client) to maintain their dominance. In fact, there is reciprocity as well as dominance in the *jajmani* system.

Further, it has been observed the especially after Independence in 1947, the *jajmani* system has weakened over the years due to market forces, increased

urban contact, migration, education and social and political awareness on the part of the service castes.

7.2.4 Changes in Village Power Structure and Leadership

Marginal changes of adaptive nature have occurred in power structure and leadership in villages after gaining independence due to various factors e.g. land reforms, panchayati raj, parliamentary politics, development programmes and agrarian movements. According to Singh (1986), upper castes now exercise power not by traditional legitimisation of their authority but through manipulation and cooption of lower caste people. The traditional power structure itself has not changed. New opportunities motivate the less powerful class to aspire for power. But their economic backwardness thwarts their desires. B.S. Cohn (1962), and Singh R. (1988) in his comparative study of twelve villages of India, found a close fit between land-ownership and degree of domination of groups. Now younger and literate people are found increasingly acquiring leadership role. Moreover, some regional variations also have been observed in the pattern of change in power structure in rural areas.

Check Your Progress I

- i) Tick mark the correct answer in the following multiple choice questions.
 - a) Who popularised the concept of ‘village autonomy’ in India?
 - i) Lord Wellesley
 - ii) Charles Metcalfe
 - iii) William Bentinck
 - iv) None of the above
 - b) Identify the important social institutions in rural India among the following.
 - i) Family
 - ii) Caste
 - iii) Village
 - iv) All of these
 - c) Family “jointness” in India is characterised by
 - i) coparcenary
 - ii) coresidentiality
 - iii) commensality
 - iv) all of these
 - d) Traditional cultural features of caste have radically changed in rural India with regard to
 - i) connubial dimension
 - ii) commensal dimension
 - iii) ritual dimension
 - iv) none of these

ii) Describe the jajmani system in about seven lines

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7.3 THE VILLAGE AND THE WIDER POLITICAL SYSTEM

Indian villages had been described by British administrators in the early nineteenth century as ‘**little republics**’ with their simple form of self government and, almost no interference from the higher political authority except for claiming a share in the produce of the land and demanding young men to serve in the wars. The villages functioned normally, unconcerned about who sat on the throne in the kingdoms of which they were territorially a part. They were also described as being economically self-sufficient having nearly everything that they wanted within themselves. This description of Indian villages is an over-simplified one. Yet it influenced the views of important scholars like Karl Marx and Henry Maine and Indian nationalists like Mahatma Gandhi. It was only after gaining Independence that some social anthropologists who made intensive field studies of Indian villages began to question the conventional description of the Indian village. On the basis of their findings they demonstrated that the Indian village has been a part of the wider society and civilisation and not “little republics” as described by British administrators.

7.3.1 The Village in Pre-British India

To say that in pre-British India (i.e. roughly covering the period just before the consolidation of British rule in India) the village was politically autonomous except for paying tax to the local chieftain or the king and providing him young men for his wars is incorrect. The relation between the king and his subjects was a complex one. The king performed several duties towards his subjects. He built roads, tanks and canals for irrigation. He also built temples and gave gifts of land to pious and learned Brahmins. He was the head of all caste panchayats and disputes regarding mutual caste rank were ultimately settled by him. This function was not confined to Hindu rulers, even the Mughal Kings and feudatory lords settled questions affecting a caste.

The villages in pre-British India were not passive in their relation to the State (mostly the princely states, also known as the Native States). They were certainly concerned about who sat on the throne. They would prefer a king who would protect them from thugs and marauding troops. If the king or chief belonged to a locally dominant caste, his caste fellows would come to his aid in a crisis.

The villages were not helpless in their relationship with rulers. Villagers could rebel and support a rival to the throne. Collective was another sanction available to villagers against oppression. The ruler was very often the loser when such

collective flights occurred. Since land was available for settlement while labour was scarce a ruler would find it difficult to get his land tilled and would lose revenue.

Thus the relation between the village and the ruler was a complex one and it is wrong to describe the village in pre-British India as a ‘little republic’. It must however be pointed out that due to the absence of roads and poor communication, the village did enjoy a considerable amount of autonomy as well as discreteness from the higher levels of the political system. The kings let the villagers govern themselves in day-to day matters.

The village panchayat formed mainly of the dominant caste exercised authority in local matters, settled inter-caste disputes and maintained law and order in the village.

7.3.2 The Village in British India

British rule changed the relationship between the village and the ruler. Political conquest was followed by the development of communications. This enabled the British to establish an effective administration. Government employees like the police, revenue official, and others, came to the village. The British established a system of law courts. Major disputes and criminal offences had to be settled in court. This greatly reduced the power of the village panchayat.

7.3.3 The Village in Contemporary India

Since Independence, the introduction of parliamentary democracy and **adult franchise** has made the village even more fully integrated with the wider political system. Villagers not only elect members of local bodies like the gram panchayat but also elect members of the state legislature and parliament. Regional and national political parties are active in the village doing propaganda and mobilising support for their parties. Government policies and programmes like the Community Development Schemes affect the village.

Although the village is a political unit with an elected panchayat to run the day-to-day administration, it is part of the district or *zilla*, which is part of the state. The state is part of the Indian Union. There is interaction between these different levels of the political system. (IGNOU: 2017, ESO-12 pp. 51-53)

Check Your Progress II

- i) Why was the village in pre-British India described as a ‘little republic’? Use about four lines for your answer.

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- ii) Explain why village is a 'little republic' was an over simplified statement. Use about six lines for your answer.

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7.4 TOWNS AND CITIES IN INDIA: PATTERNS OF URBANISATION

India passed through a phase of rapid urbanisation in the twentieth century. The modern urban centres perform diversified functions in terms of economic, administrative, political, cultural and so on. Here, it is very difficult to classify the towns and cities in terms of a single activity. Generally, people classify urban areas on the basis of some prominent socio-economic and political features. For example, people mention that there are historical cities like Delhi, Kolkata, Varanasi, Lucknow etc., industrial cities like Ghaziabad, Modinagar, Kanpur, Jamshedpur, Bhilai etc., religious cities like Mathura, Hardwar, Madurai, Allahabad etc. Cities reputed for film making, like Mumbai and Chennai, have a special appeal for a villager or a small-town dweller. In sociology, we discuss the pattern of urbanisation in terms of its demographic, spatial, economic and socio-cultural aspects. But before we take up these aspects, let us also briefly explain how we define a town in the Indian context.

7.4.1 Definition of a Town or City

In India, the demographic and economic indexes are important in defining specific areas as town or city. The definitional parameters of an urban area in India have undergone several changes and modifications over the years. The following definition of town adopted in 1901 census was used until 1961.

- a) Every municipality, cantonment and all civil lines (not included in a municipality), and
- b) Every other continuous collection of houses permanently inhabited by not less than 5,000 persons, which the provincial superintendent of census may decide to treat as a town.

The main criterion for describing any area or settlement as urban was its administrative set-up and size and not the economic characteristics. As a consequence of this definition many of the towns in reality were considered only as overgrown villages.

In 1961 the 'urban area' was redefined taking into account the economic characteristics in addition to other administrative and demographic features. The definition adopted in 1961 census was also used in 1971 and 1981. And it remained unchanged in 1991 and 2001 also. According to this definition an urban area is:

- a) a place which is either a municipal corporation or a municipal area, or under a town committee or a notified area committee or cantonment board,
- b) any place which satisfies the following criteria of:
- a minimum of 5,000 persons
 - at least 75 per cent of the male working population should be in occupations which are non-agricultural
 - a density of not less than 400 persons per square kilometer, and
 - a place should have certain pronounced urban characteristics and amenities such as newly found industrial areas, large housing settlements, places of tourist importance and civic amenities.

A slight change has taken place in this definition since 1961 and 1971. After 1991 and 1981 the workers in the occupation of forestry, fishing, livestock, hunting, logging, plantations and orchards, etc. which were earlier treated as industrial activity came to be recognized as agricultural activity in 1981 & 1991 to be counted as agricultural occupation.

Apart from well defined towns and/or cities, the outgrowths of cities and towns have also been treated as urban agglomerations. At the 1961 census, the concept of 'town group' was adopted to obtain a broad picture relating to urban spread. This was refined in 1971 with the concept of urban agglomeration to obtain better feedback in regard to urban continuity, process and trends of urbanisation and other related matters. This concept without any change or modification has remained operative till 2001 census. An urban agglomeration forms a continuous urban spread and normally consists of a town and its adjoining urban outgrowth or two or more physically contiguous towns together with contiguous and well organised outgrowths, if any, of such town. (*Census Report 2001*)

While describing the urban places, the Indian census records consistently employ population size to classify the urban area into six classes as shown in table 7.1.

Table 7.1: Classification of cities

Class I	with	1,00,000	and more	population
Class II	with	50,000	to	99,999
Class III	with	20,000	49,999
Class IV	with	10,000	19,999
Class V	with	5,000	9,000
Class VI	with	less than	5,000

In India, urban places with less than 1,00,000 population are referred to as "towns", while urban places with 1,00,000 or more population are referred to as "cities". Urban centres with more than one million population are categorised as metropolitan cities. The metropolitan centres are a class by themselves characterised by large-scale consumption, and large quantum of inflow of people, goods, services and information (Prakasa Rao 1982: 17). Having described how urban area in India is classified into various categories of towns/ cities, we now discuss some aspects of the pattern of urbanisation in India.

Activity 1

Identify the demographic size i.e. population of the village, town/city you live in and identify which class size it belongs to and write a report of one page on the infrastructure that it has, as well, as the other essential features which you think it needs. Discuss with other students at your study center.

7.4.2 Demographic Aspect

In India, population concentration has been one of the key features of urbanisation. The percentage of urban population has been little more than doubled from 10.8 per cent in 1901 to 23.3 per cent in 1981. And this has been almost tripled by 2001, when it has been recorded to be 27.8 per cent. The urban population of India as per the 1991 census is 217,177,625 and this accounts for 25.72 per cent of the total population. So far urban population of the country is concerned, only 25.85 million lived in towns in 1901 and by 1991 it increased by more than 8 times to 217.18 million. Out of the total population of 1027 million as on 1st March 2001, 285 million lived in urban areas. The net addition of population in urban areas during 1991-2001 has been to the tune of 68 million where as during the decade 1981-1991 it was 61 million.

Urban population has significantly increased in the post Independence period. For the forty years period from 1901 to 1941 the increase of urban population from 25.85 to 44.15 million has been quite modest compared to the 62.44 million of the next decade. There has been an increase of 115.05 million in urban population from 1941 to 1981. Note that 64.8 per cent of this population has grown in the two decades between 1961 and 1981. Similarly the urban population has almost doubled in the decades 1971 (109.11 million) to 1991 (217.18 million).

There was a slow growth (and also decline in 1911) in the proportion of urban to total population in the early decades (1901-21). This is mostly because of natural disasters and slow rate of industrial and economic development. The rapid growth of urban population during 1941-51 has been mostly due to partition of the country and other political reasons, which led to refugee migration in the urban areas. The steady increase in the urban population in the decades prior to 1981 came about not so much because of planned economic development and industrialisation, but due to imbalanced agricultural development. The annual rate of growth of urban population declined from 3.83 per cent during 1971-1981 to 3.09 per cent during 1981-1991. During the decade 1971-1981 the level of urbanisation increased by 3.43 per cent points. During 1981-1991 decade the increase has been only 2.38 per cent. The increase in the urbanisation further declined to 2.1 per cent points during the decade 1991-2001. As a consequence the annual rate of gain in percentage of urban population has also declined from 1.72 to 1.02 during the decade 1981-1991. This indicates that the tempo of urbanisation in India has slowed down since 1981. (IGNOU, 2017 (reprint) BDP, ESO-12, Block-1, Page 10)

The slow growth of rate of urbanisation; however; once again rose rapidly as per the 2011 census report. Due to higher economic growth and other factors; total population living in urban areas became 377 million or 31.1 per cent of the total population. (Bhagat, R.B. 2011)

7.4.3 Spatial Pattern

Spatial disparities have marked the Indian urban scenario. These disparities emerged mainly due to regional disparities, imbalanced population concentration and some times because of the change in the census definition of “urban areas”. In this context we need to mention about two concepts, namely over-urbanisation and sub-urbanisation.

i) Over-urbanisation

Towns or urban areas have certain limitations in accommodating population, providing civic amenities or catering to such needs as schooling, hospitals etc. Beyond certain optimum capacities, it becomes difficult for the town administration to provide facilities for the increasing population. Mumbai and Kolkata are two such examples of cities which have urban-population growth beyond their capacities to manage. This feature is refer to as over-urbanisation.

ii) Sub-urbanisation

Closely related to over-urbanisation of a town is a feature called sub-urbanisation. When towns get over-crowded by population, it may result in sub-urbanisation. Delhi is a typical example (among others) where sub-urbanisation trend is taking place around it. Sub-urbanisation means urbanisation of rural areas around the towns characterised by the following features:

- a) a sharp increase in the ‘urban (non-agricultural) uses’ of land
- b) inclusion of surrounding areas of town within its municipal limits, and
- c) intensive communication of all types between town and its surrounding areas.

Now, we can also look at some of the variations in spatial disparities found in the pattern of urbanisation in India.

7.5 THE GROWTH OF TOWNS AND CITIES

The growth of urban towns did not show a unidirectional progress in India. Because of the variation in the census definition of ‘urban’ areas the number of urban centres declined. Only 1,430 towns out of a total of 1,914 towns existing in 1901 survived till 1961. About 480 areas considered as towns in 1901 lost their urban status because of the new definition of town in 1961 census. It is for this reason that one can see the decrease in the number of towns to 2700 in 1961 compared to 3060 in 1951. For example, in Rajasthan there were 227 towns in 1951, whereas this number declined to 201 in 1981. Similar decline has also been noticed in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra. In the 1991 census 4,689 places were identified as towns as against 4,029 in 1981 census. Out of the 4,689 towns of 1991 as many as 2,996 were statutory towns and 1, 693 were census or non-municipal towns as against 2,758 and 1, 271 respectively in 1981. At the all India level, 93 of the 4029 towns of 1981 census were declassified and 103 towns were fully merged with other towns by statutory notifications of the concerned state/union territory administrations during 1981-1991. As many as 856 new towns were added to the urban frame of 1991. The maximum number

of towns declassified were from the states of Punjab (21), Karnataka (19), and Andhra Pradesh (13) and the maximum number of the statutory towns added in 1991 census was from Madhya Pradesh (91). However 2011 census which recorded a rise in urban population and urbanization rate of 27.7% in the whole country in 2001 to 31.1% in 2011; which is an increase of 3.3% per centage points.

During this census of 2011 also several villages were recognised as towns, there by increasing the number of towns in India.

ii) **Variation in Urbanisation among the States**

The pattern of urbanisation among different states in India shows an interesting feature of urban domination in some states. Five states namely Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh altogether accounted for 56 per cent (in 1961) to 55 per cent (in 1971) of the total urban population of India. In contrast the six states of Odisha (Orissa), Haryana, Assam (including Meghalaya), Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Nagaland account for 5 per cent (in 1961) to 5.5 per cent (in 1971) of the total urban population of India. In 1991 census some of the states having a higher proportion of urban population to the total population than the national average of 25.72 per cent were Maharashtra (35.73 per cent), Gujarat (34.40 percent), Tamil Nadu (34.20 per cent) and West Bengal (27.39 per cent). As per the Census 2001, Tamil Nadu (43.9 per cent) is the most urbanised state followed by Maharashtra (42.4 per cent) and Gujarat (37.4 per cent). The proportion of the urban population is lowest in Bihar with 10.5 per cent followed by Assam (12.7 per cent) and Odisha (14.9 per cent). Himachal Pradesh is the least urbanised states. These show that the urban domination in some states continues to exist even at the beginning of twenty first century.

Between 1961 and 1971 the pattern of **urban density** for Indian states shows somewhat similar trends. The states of West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Assam and Kerala have densities higher than the all India average of 2948 persons per sq. km in 1961. A similar trend was found in 1971 also. States of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Nagaland, Jammu and Kashmir, Orissa, Bihar and Rajasthan had densities less than the all India average of 2,048 in 1961. The 1971 census reflected the same trend that was seen in 1961, with respect to the above mentioned states. Urban density for Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Assam lessened, during 1961-71 decade, possibly because of outward migration of people. In the year 1991, the urban density was highest in the state of West Bengal followed by Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Haryana and Punjab. States of Tamil Nadu, Nagaland, Jammu and Kashmir, Orissa, Bihar and Rajasthan had densities less than the all India average of 3,370 in 1991 also. Thus when we look at the census figures we can see that the variation in terms of the urban density continued to the year 1991 almost unchanged.

iii) **Population concentration in the cities**

The population in the larger urban centres (with 1,00,000 or more) has constantly been growing in India. In 1981 more than 60 per cent of the urban population in India lived in this category of cities. By 1991 their rate

reached almost 65 per cent. Out of the total number of towns, according to the 1991 census, in 300 cities the population exceeds 1,00,000 each. These 300 urban agglomeration/cities account for 64.89 per cent of the urban population of the country. In the case of Maharashtra and West Bengal the share of Class I urban agglomerations/ cities in the urban population is high, being 77.85 per cent and 81.71 per cent respectively. Class I urban agglomeration/ cities contribute about two thirds of the urban population in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Meghalaya and Tamil Nadu.

iv) **Growth of Metropolitan Cities**

In India, Kolkata was the only city with a population of over a million in 1901. Mumbai crossed the one million mark by 1911. Till 1941 there were only these two cities in this category, i.e., with a population of over one million. Delhi, Chennai and Hyderabad entered into this category by 1951. Ahmedabad and Bangalore by 1961, and Kanpur and Pune by 1971. Lucknow, Nagpur and Jaipur by 1981 crossed the one million mark bringing the number of million-plus cities upto 12. At the time of 1991 census enumeration there were 23 metropolitan agglomerations/ cities with a population of more than a million each. The number almost doubled during the decade 1981-1991. Its number has been increased to 35 at the time of 2001 census. At the time of 1981 census 25 per cent of the total urban population was concentrated in the million-plus cities. By the year 1991 this has become 32.54 per cent. That means that these cities in 1991 accounted for roughly one third of the country's urban population and one twelfth of the country's total population.

In 1981 barring Delhi which forms part of the Union Territory of Delhi, the remaining 11 cities are located in 8 states. In 1991, the 23 metropolitan cities were scattered among 13 states in India. But their concentration was more in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Uttar Pradesh, each having 3 such metropolitan cities. Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh have two each and 7 were distributed among Bihar, Karnataka, Kerala, Punjab, Rajasthan, West Bengal and Delhi. In Kolkata the concentration of urban population was higher than other metropolitan cities for the decade 1971-81. This was followed by Bangalore, Chennai and Ahmedabad. The 23 metropolitan cities exhibited quite a diversified pattern of growth of population during 1981-1991. Of these metropolitan cities the highest growth of population was recorded in Visakhapatnam urban agglomeration (74.27 per cent) followed by Hyderabad urban agglomeration (67.04 per cent), both of which are in Andhra Pradesh. The lowest growth rate was recorded by Kolkata urban agglomeration (18.73 per cent) followed by Patna urban agglomeration. Kolkata urban agglomeration which occupied the prime position since 1901 in terms of highest concentration of urban population relegated to the second position in 1991 and Greater Mumbai which occupied the second position since 1901 has been moved to the prime position in 1991. Kolkata was followed by Delhi, Chennai, Hyderabad and Bengaluru. In 1988, while describing the glaring disparities that marked the Indian urban scene, the National Commission on Urbanisation stated two main aspects: (a) while the urban centres in India grew at an average rate of 46.2 per cent during the 1970s, the million-plus metropolitan centres had an

average growth rate of population only 29.6 per cent during the same period, and (b) the significant regional variation in the nature of urbanisation process. Indeed, spatially the pattern of Indian urbanisation has been highly localised. (IGNOU: 2017: pp. 67)

7.5.1 Migration

In the process of urbanisation in India, migration of the rural people to the urban areas has been continuous and is an important feature. The Urban Commission of India viewed rural urban migration to be “of vital importance for the development of rural areas”. The Commission again points out that besides releasing the surplus labour from the rural areas, for the landless labourers, *harijans* and *adivasis* these cities provide the opportunities, which are enshrined in our constitution. For these millions, our urban centres will continue to be havens of hope, where they can forge a new future (Mehta 1984: 1178).

In India, this increase in urban-ward migration is of fairly recent origin which began in the late 1930s. Of the total migrants in urban areas 20 per cent persons are displaced from Pakistan, 51 per cent from rural areas of the same state and 2.5 per cent from the rural areas of other states. An important feature of the immigrant stream in urban areas is its predominantly male character (Sarikwal 1978: 25).

Due to the increase of unemployment in the rural areas, surplus rural labour force gets pushed to urban centres with the hope of getting employment. The other factors, which have pulled sections of the rural population (including the affluent sections) toward the city, have been the expectation of a variety of glamorous jobs, good housing, medical, educational and communication facilities.

Here it is significant to note that industrialisation should not be taken as prerequisite for urbanisation, as the process of migration from village starts when a relative saturation point is reached in the field of agriculture. This is a result of an imbalanced land/man ratio in the countryside.

Activity 2

If you live in a rural area find out how many of your relatives in the village have migrated to the urban areas. After making this survey, write a note on the cause(s) of their migration.

Or

If you live in an urban area, visit your neighbourhood and write a short note on the reasons of migration of about twenty families in that area.

7.5.2 Socio-Cultural Character

In the process of urbanisation the towns and cities of India have achieved heterogeneous character in terms of ethnicity, caste, race, class and culture. In the urban areas there has always been coexistence of different cultures. Studies show that though various ethnic and/or caste groups have adjusted themselves with each other in the city, they have also tried to maintain their traditional

identity. The migrants have maintained distinctive cultural traditions in the towns. Various migrant groups have maintained their own cultural identity. N.K. Bose (1968: 66) points out that the migrants tend to cluster around people with whom they have linguistic, local, regional, caste and ethnic ties. A study by Jagannathan and Haldar (1989: 315) on the pavement-dwellers in (Kolkata) Calcutta shows that they retain close ties with kinship and caste groups for socialising and transmitting or receiving information from the village. Thus cultural-pluralism has been an important socio-cultural dimension of the urbanites.

Many of the Indian towns have a “mixed” character, i.e., they are the capital cities, centres of trade and commerce, important railway junctions etc. In these types of cities we find a “core” area which consists of the old inhabitants (Srinivas 1986). This area is the oldest in the city and on its fringe we find the new immigrants. The pattern of residence of this “core” population shows a close relation to language, caste and religion. Bombay is cited as an example of this type of city.

Lynch (1974) also points out that in many Indian cities, especially in the traditional cities like Agra, neighbourhoods have remained homogeneous in terms of caste and religious groups. There the Jatavs are concentrated in particular areas called *mohallas* (ward). But changes have taken place mostly because of politicisation, spread of education, and occupational diversification. But D’Souza (1974) noticed that in the planned city like Chandigarh neighbourhood has not been developed on the basis of ethnicity, common interest and other similarities. In this city the religious activities, friendship and educational ties are often outside one’s own neighbourhood.

Social stratification has taken a new form in the urban society. It is assumed that with urbanisation caste transforms itself into class in the urban areas. But caste systems do exist in the cities though with significant organisational differences. Ramkrishna Mukherjee demonstrates that people in Kolkata rank themselves in terms of caste-hierarchy. Stratification has also taken place on the basis of occupational categories. For example, Harold Gould (1965) points out that the *rikshawalas* of Lucknow belonging to several religious and caste groups exhibit uniformity in the pattern of interaction and attitudes in respect to their common occupation. Again it has been found that caste has not played a significant role in determining the choice of occupation in the urban areas. But it is important to note that both the caste and the class have their respective importance based on time and space and situational focus (Rao 1974: 275).

Marriage and family are two important aspects of social life. In the urban areas caste norms have been flexible with regard to the selection of mates. There have been increasing opportunities for the free mixing of young men and women. Again the voluntary associations have encouraged inter-caste marriages. As a result there have been more inter-caste and inter-religious marriage in the urban areas than earlier. Though it has been pointed out that joint families are breaking down in the urban areas, studies conducted in several parts of the country also suggest that joint families do exist in the cities among certain castes like Khatri of Delhi and Chettiars of Madras (for details see Kapoor 1965, Singer, 1968).

Cities of India have to be studied in the context of cultural heritage. In the cities many little traditions have been brought in by the migrants and the great traditions have also achieved dimensional change. It has been pointed out that many forms

of the great traditions are modified in the modern cities. Milton Singer (1968) shows that “the intellectual and ritualistic approaches to God are being discarded in favour of the devotional approach, which is more catholic and suited to urban conditions in Madras (Chennai) city. Technological innovations like microphone, cinema, automobile, etc. are used in promoting religious activities. Religious activities are not on decline in the metropolitan city of Madras (Chennai) but these are being modernised”.

7.6 PROBLEMS CONCERNING THE CURRENT PROCESS OF URBANISATION

The current process of urbanisation has faced many problems in different parts of India. The most important of these has been the development of slums, in the urban areas. Slum population accounts for a substantial share of urban population in all types of cities in India. Even a planned city like Chandigarh has not escaped slums. The percentages of the slum population in Kolkata, Mumbai and Chennai are 32, 25 and 24, respectively. Slums are characterised by substandard housing, over crowding and lack of electrification, ventilation, sanitation, roads and drinking water facilities. Slums have been the breeding ground of diseases, environmental pollution, demoralisation, and many social tensions. Crimes, like juvenile delinquency, gambling, have also increased in number in slum areas. Signs of poverty are most visible in these places. A graphical representation of a slum is shown in Figure 7.1.

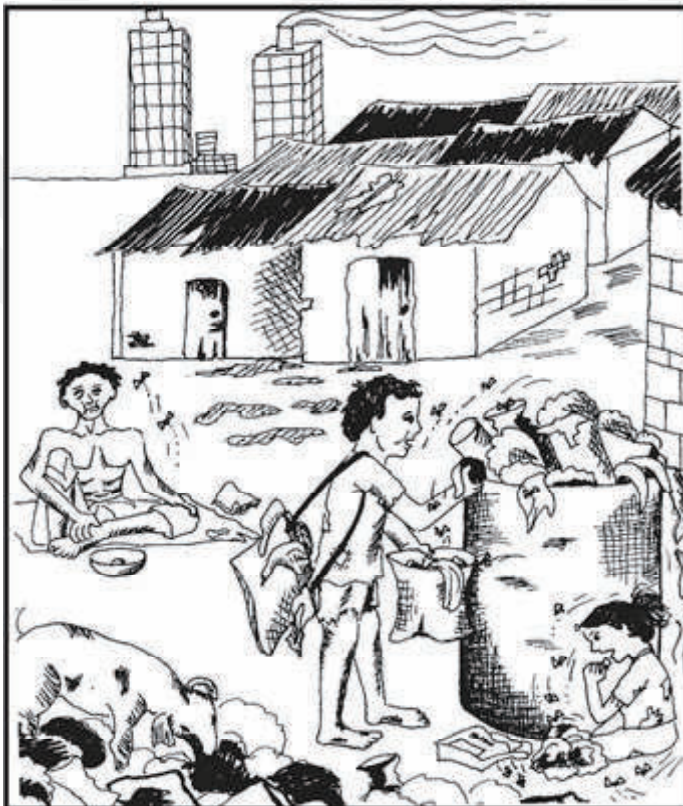


Fig. 7.1: Poverty and slum

Lack of housing has been another important problem in the process of urbanisation in India. This problem has been acute in cities with over a million population. Related to housing there have been problems on the planned use of urban land. The lack of adequate housing has been very marked especially for

the lower income group and for the urban poor. In the light of the gravity of this problem, the government has passed the Urban Land Ceiling Act, Rent Control Act etc. The National Commission on Urbanisation has also recommended that at least 15 per cent of all new developments should be earmarked for the use of the economically weaker sections of the urban population.

Absence of planned and adequate arrangements for traffic and transport is another important problem in majority of urban centers in India. Though various new modes of transport and advanced technology have been used in our metropolitan cities to facilitate the movement of the people, these have remained insufficient to cope with the growing population there. Similarly, the extent of facilities medical, sanitation, drinking water, power-supply have remained insufficient in a majority of the urban centers in India.

The Urban Development Policy of India has been formulated to ensure that the urban centers play a positive role in national and regional development, to promote the **rural-urban continuum** and to replace the regional disparities. The Five Year Plans of the government of India had included various programmes pertaining to housing, slum clearance, slum improvement, land acquisitions and development.

The Sixth Plan placed special emphasis on development of National Capital Region (NCR) to de-concentrate economic activity from the core of Delhi into regional towns (Rao 1983). The concept of NCR aims to bring better regional parities in the process of economic development and social change in a vast area around Delhi. It has been formulated in order to meet the growth and expansion needs of the capital. The plan covers integrated development of about 30,000 sq. km in the Union Territory of Delhi and parts of Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. A statutory body has been constituted through an enactment of Parliament in 1985 and a draft regional plan has since been prepared for the development of NCR (Government of India 1987: 597). The resource base of the National Capital Region Planning Board (NCRPB) includes budgetary allocation through plan provision and institution borrowing in the form of line of credit, priority sector loans from financial institutions and market borrowings in the form of taxable and tax-free bonds as extra budgetary resources. The Ninth plan provision for NCRPB was Rs. 200 crore and during the Ninth plan the board had envisaged Internal and External Budgetary resources of Rs. 3120 crore, to be mobilised from the capital market. The NCRPB has facilitated the development of infrastructure facilities in different cities of the region including roads, bridges, water supply, sewerage disposal facilities etc. In recent years government has planned to help urban people especially poor to build houses under different housing schemes. Idea of smart cities have also been developed

Check Your Progress III

- i) What is the trend in the flow of urban population in India? Tick mark the correct answer.
 - a) A steady increase
 - b) A state of stagnation
 - c) Both of the above
 - d) None of the above

- ii) Fill in the blank space in the following sentence by selecting one of the option given below.

The spatial feature of urbanisation in India has been

- a) localised
- b) balanced
- c) localised and balanced
- d) neither localised nor balanced

- iii) Explain, in four lines, the concept of National Capital Region.

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7.7 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have discussed the basic features of village, town and city. We have also looked into the concept of village in detail and tried to explain nature and social structure of a village. We have defined towns and cities. We discussed their central features. We have given finally the growth and social structure of a city; along with the problems that it faces, such as, slums rise in crime etc. We have mentioned the consequences of urbanisation and the government schemes to help the people to solve their problems, such as, homelessness, employment for weaker sections etc.

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7.9 SPECIMEN ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress I

- i)
 - a) (ii)
 - b) (iv)
 - c) (iv)
 - d) (iv)
- ii) The 'jajmani' system is found in Indian villages. It is the relationship between patrons and clients, or *Jajman* and *Kamin* of different castes, generally within a village. It is a process of exchange of goods and services between castes. Some castes are patrons and some are clients. It is an inherited relationship. The jajmani rules are enforced by caste panchayats in rural India.

Check Your Progress II

- i) The village enjoyed a considerable amount of autonomy as well as discreteness from the higher levels of the political system. The king let the villagers govern themselves in day-to-day matters. This situation was also necessitated by the absence of roads and poor communications.
- ii) To consider the village as a 'little republic' is incorrect because the king performed a number of functions in relation to the village like building some roads and canals, providing protection from thugs and marauding troops and being the final authority for settling disputes regarding caste rank and so on. The villagers were not passive and unconcerned as to who sat on the throne. They would rebel against a bad king and provide help to a ruler who belonged to their caste.

Check Your Progress III

- i) a
- ii) a
- iii) The concept of National Capital Region has been formulated to meet the growth and expansion needs of the capital city of Delhi. For integrated development of Delhi, the region includes 30,000sq.k.m. of Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

UNIT 8 AGRARIAN CLASSES*

Structure

- 8.0 Objectives
- 8.1 Introduction
- 8.2 Agricultural Activities and Agrarian Classes in India
 - 8.2.1 Capitalist Agrarian Class Structure in India
 - 8.2.2 Non-Capitalist Agrarian Class Structure in India
- 8.3 Let Us Sum Up
- 8.4 References
- 8.5 Specimen Answers to Check Your Progress

8.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit, you shall be able to:

- describe the nature of agrarian classes in India;
- discuss the various approaches of defining agrarian classes in India; and
- explain the production relations in Indian agriculture.

8.1 INTRODUCTION

You learnt about three different categories of human settlement, “Village, Town and Cities” in the previous unit. In this unit we will explain to you the basic nature of agrarian classes in India. Societies are classified by sociologists in terms of class structure based on predominant economic activities, such as, industrial and agrarian activities. As these activities suggest, the industrial production dominates economic activities of industrial societies and agricultural production predominates economic activity in agrarian societies. Colonialism gave rise to societies in which a peculiar mixture of both is witnessed which complicates the situation. India is one such country where mixture exists and economic activities are conditioned by both social and economic factors. Therefore, sociologists and economists have studied Indian agriculture and agrarian social structure. In Indian society agriculture is still a predominant economic activity. In this backdrop, this unit will discuss various theoretical positions on nature of agriculture and agrarian classes in India. The scholars belonging to various schools of thought have come out with their own views in this regard.

8.2 AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND AGRARIAN CLASSES IN INDIA

There is an ongoing and unresolved debate on what is the nature of agricultural activities and the agrarian classes in India. The debate has gone into two directions namely (i) Indian agricultural production is completely capitalist in nature; (ii) Indian agriculture is not completely capitalist in nature, but semi-feudal. Both

these positions have a bearing on how we see the agrarian class structure in India. Despite their differences, a common theme running through this debate is that both of them address the nature of transformations i.e. the changes in Indian agriculture since British colonial rule. Let us discuss them one by one.

8.2.1 Capitalist Agrarian Class Structure in India

The question of the development of capitalism in Indian agriculture has been one of the prime site of contention or debate among Indian scholars. Ashok Rudra and Utsa Patnaik are the social scientists whose writings have generated a debate on whether Indian agriculture has capitalist class relations. Both of them maintain the position that class relations in Indian agriculture are capitalist in nature, although both of them differ on the parameters or dimensions of defining capitalist class relations in Indian agriculture.

Ashok Rudra (1978b) states that contrary to the general tendency of dividing the farmers in three categories – small, middle and big, there are only two classes in Indian agriculture:

- i) big landowners and
- ii) agricultural labourers

This means that there is a class of agricultural capitalists (big landowners) and a class of agricultural labourers and wage workers. The capitalists belong to the ruling class. They rule over the rest in agriculture. The following are the characteristics of the capitalist and pre-capitalist class relations:

Capitalist class relations	Pre-capitalist class relations
1) Surplus extracted from the labour freely sold in the market. The labour is considered commodity in the production process.	1) Surplus extracted through extra-coercion. Labour is not freely available. It is unfree and it is not a commodity to be sold for money.
2) Surplus realised through the exchange in a commodity exchange process.	2) Surplus appropriated directly without intervention of any market.
3) Surplus re-invested giving rise to a continued process of accumulation of capital and ever-expanding production.	3) Surplus goes into the luxury consumption and in different unproductive investments, leaving no or little stock of productive capital to be used for the expansion of production.
4) Pursuit of profit leads to changes in the organic composition of capital and a continuous process of technological advancement.	4) Use of technology remains limited in production.

The first parameter in this table refers to the argument that the commercialisation of Indian agriculture by colonials has given rise to wage-labour as commodity which is seen as not only a necessary but also a sufficient criterion for defining Indian agriculture having capitalist relations of production. Wage-labour means that the landowners buy the labour of landless peasants or those who work on the lands of landowners with money. In this sense the labour is a commodity to

be sold for money like any other commodity. To understand this peculiar nature of wage-labour in a capitalist class structure, it is imperative to differentiate it from pre-capitalist character. In the pre-capitalist nature of agriculture, labour was not a commodity to be sold for money. For instance, in slavery the slave was not 'free' to sell his/her labour. The *slave* did not sell his/her labour to the slave owner like labourers in the capitalist agriculture sell their labour to landowners. The slave is sold to his/her owner together with his/her labour. S/he is a commodity, just like any other commodity, which can pass from the hands of one owner to that of another. S/he is herself/himself a commodity. But his/her the labour is not his/her commodity. The serf sells only a part of his/her labour. S/he does not receive a wage in return from the owner of the land; rather the owner of the land receives a tribute from him/her. The serf belongs to the land and turns over to the owner of the land the fruits of his/her labour. The free labourer, on the other hand, sells himself and, indeed, sells himself piecemeal in a capitalist system of agriculture. (Marx, 2010: 203)

Box 8.1: Factors of Social Change in Rural India

Dreze and Sen (1997: p.17) say that both 'Zamindari Abolition' and the development in agricultural practices in Western Uttar Pradesh were two episodes, not very dramatic in their impact in themselves (compared with for e.g. land reforms and productivity growth in other developing regions, including parts of India) they do define the broad parameters of change in the economic circumstances of the bulk of the population. The land reforms limited the powers of large feudal landlords, and gave ownership rights to a vast majority of tenant, farmers who previously did not own land.

Another feature which is referred to as a distinct characteristic to define class relations in Indian agriculture as capitalist by Ashok Rudra is the accumulation of productive capital through reinvestment of the surplus appropriated by the owners of the means of production. Generation and appropriation of surplus is a characteristic of every society based on private property. The generation and the utilisation of the surplus differs in different systems. The feudal appropriator typically utilises the surplus for purposes of consumption. The surplus supports his/her excesses in luxury. Contrary to this, the capitalist appropriator typically utilises the surplus for re-investment with a view to expanding reproduction which, is a means to the end of continuously expanding the volume of profit. The typical pattern of capitalist production is ever-expanding reproduction the consequence of relentless pursuit of profit. (Rudra, 1978: 918) You must have read in your school text books how Indian kings used to enjoy a lavish life by spending their surplus in luxury consumption without resorting to the idea of reinvesting the treasure that they had. It is because of this only that temples in ancient and medieval India have emerged as treasure vaults. Whereas today when you look at big capitalists you will see that their treasure is not kept in some vaults but reinvested in various forms to further enhance their capital. In fact the items that people offer in temples, such as, hair and other expensive items offering in Tirumala temple are put into business and exported across globe. Similarly you might have felt tempted to go and pluck fruits from mango or lychee bagan or orchard when you visit remote agricultural lands in India. Your excitement would have gone down finding it out that it is not allowed to pluck fruits from trees. The simple reason behind this is that those fruits are not grown for the purpose of local consumption but to be sold in market. This is a

very basic way of understanding the difference between the utilisation of surplus in capitalist and pre-capitalist structure.

Furthermore, there are certain other typical features associated with capitalist relations of production. Thus, in expanded reproduction, an ever-expanding volume of profit is associated with changes in the organic composition of capital which in its turn reflects increasing substitution of human labour by machine and a process of ever-continuing technological change. (Rudra A 1978:916) You must have witnessed the sight of a farmer using a tractor to harvest the crop and tube well to irrigate. This use of technology is also seen giving rise to capitalist relations.

Contrary to Rudra's conceptualisation as given above, Utsa Patnaik (1976) lists the following agrarian classes in India:

Exploiting Classes

- i) Landlord
 - a) Capitalist
 - b) Feudal
- ii) Rich Peasant
 - a) Proto-bourgeois
 - b) Proto-feudal

Exploited Classes

- iii) Poor Peasant
 - a) Agricultural labourer operating land
 - b) Petty tenant
- iv) Fulltime Labourer

She uses two criteria to define these economic classes: possession of the means of production, and the exploitation of labour. She says that in agriculture, such as, in India, the two poles are readily identified: the landless and near landless who possess no or little means of production. They are mainly or wholly dependent on working for others. The land-lords and capitalists concentrate sufficient means of production. They do not labour themselves but live on employing others. She states that no single index can capture class status with absolute accuracy. The use of outside labour relative to the use of family labour, would be the most reliable single index for categorising the peasantry. The use of outside labour relative to the use of family labour becomes the reliable index for classifying classes in Indian agriculture simply because those who concentrate the means of production and labour in their hands would rely on exploiting the labour of others while those with little or no means of production (landless and near landless) would be obliged to work for others.

Patnaik while distinguishing between the exploiting classes (landlords and rich peasants) and the exploited classes (poor peasants and labourers), further specifies two different divisions on the basis of the predominant form of exploitation i.e. wages or rent. She explains the features of these classes as follows: (Thorner 1982: 1993-1999)

Landlord: in the case of big landowners, whether feudal or capitalist, family members do not perform manual labour in major farm operations. Supervision or operating machinery, is not considered manual labour.

Rich peasants: they do participate in manual work, however, their resource position is such that appropriation of others' labour is at least as important as use of family labour. The middle peasantry is primarily self-employed since on the average the resources per capita just suffice to employ adequately the supply of family labour and to provide a living 'at a customary subsistence level'.

Poor peasant: the poor peasant family must hire out its members for wages or lease in land no matter how much is the wage or rent. Typically these families 'cannot make ends meet and have to depress consumption standards below customary levels'.

Full-time labourer: the same is true of full-time labour families. Some of these may own small strips of land which they do not cultivate but lease out. The labour equivalent to the rent received is not large enough to balance.

If you look at Rudra's classification of agrarian classes in India, you will find that he does not see any contradictions between those big landowners who operate with capitalistic features and those who operate along feudal lines despite acknowledging the coexistence of both. Patnaik acknowledges the capitalist and feudal landlords by making a distinction that the capitalist landlord hires labour greater than rent whereas feudal landlord hires labour at most as high as rent. Secondly, Rudra rejects the distinction between landlords and rich peasants which Patnaik acknowledges. Rudra rejects this distinction on the basis of participation in the manual work of cultivation. In India, he maintains that this criterion is negated by the caste factor. There are instances where even very small and impoverished landholders will not take to the plough because they belong to upper castes. On the contrary, you will find that women members of families possessing several hundreds of acres of land do not hesitate to drive their own tractors in Punjab. The class of big landowners is a 'single class' and also 'a hybrid class'. 'Hybrid class' means that they are partly feudal and partly capitalist. Rudra refers to it as the 'ruling class in Indian agriculture'. Apart from the big landowners and agricultural labourers, the rest of the population is disregarded by Rudra for not constituting or belonging to any classes. This classlessness results from the fact that, while they have contradictions among themselves, they do not have clear contradictions with the two principal classes. The classlessness can also emerge due to the fact that the contradictions are of a subsidiary nature. Only the struggle between the two main classes 'can provide the motive force for any changes in the agrarian structure'. (Thorner, 1982a:1995)

Both Rudra and Patnaik, though differ on the criterion used to define classes, make similar point regarding the exploiting and exploited classes. Rudra highlights the class contradiction whereas Patnaik talks about class exploitation. So you can see that the two who opened up the debate on the capitalist class relations in Indian agriculture can be seen as weaving a thread of class exploitation leading to class contradictions. The class relations in Indian agriculture are then defined in terms of two opposing poles. Rudra's theorisations are based on the survey study of 261 farms in eleven districts of Punjab in 1968-69 whereas

Patnaik carried a field work in 1969 covering 66 big farmers in five states – Orissa, Andhra, Mysore, Madras and Gujarat.

After Rudra and Patnaik, John Harriss provides a version of the capitalist class structure in Indian agriculture on the basis of his field work in Tamil Nadu. “He defines his classes according to two criteria – size of production resources (including land) in relation to household livelihood requirements, and labour relations.” (Thorner, A 1982: 1996) Harriss classifies the agrarian classes as follows:

- i) **Capitalist farmers:** they have assets with which they can realise four times more than what is required for basic livelihood. They can employ a permanent labour force and they do not contribute personally beyond a very little family labour.
- ii) **Rich Peasants:** they have characteristics similar to capitalist farmers except that they are substantially dependent upon family labour.
- iii) **Independent middle peasants:** they have assets yielding 1-2 times household requirements. They employ principally family labour and may sometimes engage in wage labour for others.
- iv) **Poor peasants:** they do not have assets to cover their livelihood requirements. Therefore, they depend primarily upon wage labour. They consist of marginal farmers and agricultural labourers.

Activity 1

Visit any nearby area where people are engaged in agricultural activities and find out the class differences among them based on ownership of land other property etc. on the lines of caste and class. Write a report of one page and match your answer with the theorisations provided in this unit as well as the report of other students at your Study Center.

Check Your Progress I

- a) Compare your answer with those of the answers given at the end of the unit.
 - 1) What is the opinion of scholars like Ashok Rudra on capitalist agricultural classes in India? Discuss in 10 lines

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2) How does John Harriss define the capitalist class structure in agriculture in India?

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8.2.2 Non-Capitalist Agrarian Structure in India

Instead of using pre-capitalist expression we are using the expression non-capitalist to highlight the fact that those who argue for semi-feudal or semi-feudal semi-colonial modes of production do not deny the thesis that capitalism has made headway in Indian agriculture and its class formations which is self evident in the use of the word 'semi'. The expression pre-capitalist does not highlight the impact of capitalism. The non-capitalist positions imply that India has witnessed limited and distorted development of capitalism.

Semi Feudal

The first eminent scholar to speak of semi-feudal is Amit Bhaduri. On the basis of a survey which he had conducted in the year 1970 in 26 villages of West Bengal, he concluded that "the dominant character of existing production relations in these villages can be best described as 'semi-feudal'. (Bhaduri A 1973: 120) He says that the term 'semi-feudalism' means that "the existing relations of production have more in common with classic feudalism of the master-serf type i.e. the European relation of the Landlord and the serfs. relations than with industrial capitalism." (Bhaduri 1973: 121) He listed four prominent features of these semi-feudal relations: **share-cropping; perpetual indebtedness of the small tenants; concentration of two modes of exploitation, namely usury and land ownership in the hands of the same economic class; and lack of accessibility to the market for the small tenant.** Before we discuss the respective agrarian classes, let us first explain these features without which the classification of agrarian classes in semi-feudalism will not make any sense.

Sharecropping: In the method of sharecropping the "landowner leases out his land for at least one full production cycle and the net harvest is then shared between the tenant and the landowner on some legally stipulated basis." Bhaduri says that the system of tenancy is usually not so simple but involve a set of complicated issues varying from case to case such as "(i) whether the tenant also has some land of his own or works entirely on other people's land, (ii) whether the tenant supplies any working or fixed capital or the entire amount is supplied by the landowner and (iii) how secure the tenancy right is in practice." Based on this criterion, Bhaduri discusses two categories of kishan and agricultural labourer. Based on his study of sharecropping in West Bengal, Bhaduri says that there are various categories of sharecroppers in West Bengal. The least privileged category is called kishan. Kishans do not have any land ownership. They have security of tenancy of not more than one production cycle. He makes a distinction between kishans and agricultural labourers on two grounds. First, "the agricultural labourer works on a daily or weekly wage basis

(paid in cash or in kind or in both) and finds employment on land typically only during agricultural peak seasons. Thus, while the sharecropper has obvious economic interest in increasing the production from land, the agricultural labourer working on a contract wage basis has no such direct interest and has to be supervised closely. Secondly, a kishan, unlike most agricultural workers, may have a tiny plot of land of his own. But so long as his major source of income is not from his own land but from cultivating other people's land, and also he has little or no capital to carry out production, he may be classified as a kishan." (Bhaduri 1973: 121-122) These are really the desperately poor section of the peasantry in West Bengal.

Sharecropping is seen as an institution by Dipankar Gupta whose existence shows that capitalism has not yet appeared in all its virility. According to him capitalism has not developed uniformly in India. (Thorner 1982 b: 2062)

Perpetual Indebtedness: According to Bhaduri, kishan is almost always heavily indebted. "A substantial portion of the kishan's legal share of the harvest is taken away immediately after the harvest as repayment of past debt with interest, thus reducing his actual available balance of the harvest well below his legal share of the harvest. This does not usually leave the kishan with enough food to survive from this harvest to the next and the serious problem of survival from harvest to harvest can only be overcome by borrowing for consumption. This perpetuates the indebtedness of the kishan based on his regular requirements of consumption-loans. This is an essential element in the model of semi-feudalism." (1982: 2062) You must have heard about farmers' suicide in Vidharbha and other parts of our country. Perpetual indebtedness is one of the prominent reasons for their suicides.

Landowner as the Lender of Consumption-loans: In addition to the perpetual indebtedness of the kishan, there is another important factor which gives a definite character to semi-feudalism. This character is that the lender of the consumption-loan is also the kishan's landowner. The local term used for such landowners who also carrying out lending activities simultaneously is *jotedar*. This makes the position of kishan more vulnerable as he/she is leasing out the land to the same man to whom he/she is perpetually indebted. This reduces kishan virtually to a serf like condition because he/she is tied to *jotedar* so long as the *jotedar* wants. Kishan is unable to move out in the search of a new landlord without settling his/her debt. Additionally, the aspect of loyalty plays an important role in letting kishan unfree. The kishans live under the fear that S/he may not enjoy with the new landlord the same credit-worthiness which the current landlord has. Thus the feudal element of tying a kishan to a particular landowner operates indirectly through these methods. Although, legally, the kishan is free to move. On the other hand, the semi-feudal landowner exploits the kishan both through his traditional property right on land and through usury and both these modes of exploitation are important features of this type of semi-feudal agriculture.(Bhaduri, 1973: 122-123) You may watch one of the classical Hindi film 'Mother India' which highlighted this aspect in the story of the film.

Box 8.2: 'Green Revolution' and Social Mobility

During the 1960's and 1970's the adoption of modern agriculture practices in western Uttar Pradesh and their subsequent diffusion in other parts of Haryana

and Punjab regions came to be known as 'Green Revolution'. It led to a general prosperity of the region. Yogendra Singh (1988: 5) points out that "The Green Revolution" signifies not merely growth in agricultural production but also the use of new technology and new social relationship in production processes. These developments make this phase of changes in rural economy and society distinctive. A new interaction among technology, social relationship and culture is now taking place in rural society. This has resulted in social mobility, emergence of new power structure and modes of exploitation of the deprived classes. It has generated new contradictions in society.

Inaccessibility to the Market: The severity of the exploitation of the kishans in the hands of landowners in semi-feudal economic relationship increases when the rate of interest on loans is too high. You will find ample cases of this kind in many villages of Bengal and Bihar. There are two main factors which can explain the reasons of extraordinarily high rate of interest. First, the kishan is usually not credit-worthy in any commercial banking sense because s/he has no asset to borrow against. His only lender is usually his landowner. The landowner lends money to kishan against the future harvest. Kishan has to borrow money from the landowner on his terms and conditions. The landowner use all extra-economic coercive methods to further exploit kishan. This shows that kishans have no access to the 'capital market'. Secondly, the kishan also does not usually have access to the 'commodity market' as a seller of his/her product. Unlike a proper trader, s/he cannot usually take advantage of price fluctuations in selling his/her harvest. On the contrary, the kishan himself/herself is a victim of such price fluctuations. You might have heard the plight of farmers in India where they were compelled to destroy their harvest for not getting fair prices in the market. Price fluctuations are one of the prominent means of exploitation of the farmers. This plight is heightened if you know that kishans typically borrow from landlords at a time when the current market prices are high, while they are supposed to pay back just after the harvest when the market prices are at their lowest. All that the jotedar (i.e., landowner-cum-lender of paddy) does, is to make a forward contract of repayment in kind calculated at current market prices. This often implies a high rate of interest. (Bhaduri, 1973; 123) Bhaduri explains this with an illustration by recalling an actual example that he came across: the price of a 'maund' of rice (about 82 pounds) just after the harvest was Rupees 20 in the local village market which rose to Rupees 60 in about three months' time when this particular peasant borrowed. His jotedar used current market prices to fix repayment in kind, so that for each 'maund' of rice borrowed at the high price season, (Rupees 60/Rupees 20) - 3 'maunds' of rice had to be paid back just after the harvest, implying a 200 % own rate of interest over a few months! While this example is a rather extreme one, it does provide a clue to the observed high rate of interest on consumption-loans. "The inaccessibility of the kishan to the modern 'capital market' coupled with his lack of access as a seller in the 'commodity market', in the sense of not being able to take advantage of price fluctuations-explain largely the observed high rate of interest on consumption-loans. The kishan's lack of access to the modern 'capital market' places him almost entirely at the mercy of his landowner who fixes the timing and the terms of repayment according to his own advantage. The result is an exceedingly high own rate of interest on consumption-loans which in turn makes usury an important additional source of income to the semi-feudal landowner." (Bhaduri 1973: 123 124)

Pradhan Prasad furnishes data in support of Bhaduri’s formulations from his field work conducted in Purnea, Saharsa and Monghyr districts of Bihar where he surveyed 2000 households in 1970 and 1972. Unlike Bhaduri, Prasad claims that “his ‘semi-feudal’ model is by and large, valid for the most part of rural India” cited in Thorner 1993: 1999). He provides the following array of agrarian classes. (Thorner 1982)

- i) **Top peasantry**, including land-lords, who deem physical labour even on their own lands below their dignity - upper castes.
- ii) **Middle and poor-middle peasantry**, who do manual work on their own farms but do not labour for others. The middle peasants hire in agricultural labourers; the poor-middle do not – these are essentially middle-caste Hindus (i.e., backward castes other than scheduled tribes).
- iii) **Agricultural labourers**, a size-able number of those who have small operational holdings. These are drawn mostly from scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and some middle caste Hindus.

Prasad makes a sharp distinction between the middle peasants, whose landholdings have increased and whose overall economic position has become stronger over the past thirty years, and the top peasants. There is a conflicting relationship between the ‘rising’ middle castes and the ‘traditionally dominant’ top peasants consisting of upper castes. He also speaks of an ‘emerging contradiction’ between the ‘landlords, cultivators and big peasantry on the one side and the poor peasantry on the other’. This antagonistic relationship arises out of semi-feudal ‘bondage’. He predicts the disintegration of the semi-feudal set-up to be replaced by ‘another contradiction between new upper caste Hindu kulaks and the poor peasantry’. He also predicts that the landlords and big peasants will forswear their earlier resistance to modernisation and ‘will take steps to dynamicise their cultivation. (Thorner, 1982a: 1996)

However, one of the features of semi-feudal theorisation is that all the scholars who take position that agriculture is semi-feudal highlight the role of caste. But this did not receive much attention among those who are the advocates of the position that there exists capitalist agrarian class in India. The scholars of the thesis of capitalism and semi-feudalism in agriculture highlight the aspects of exploitation and contradiction in their analysis of agrarian classes in India.

Activity 2

Watch Hindi feature films – ‘Mother India’ and ‘Do Bheegha Zameen’ on internet and list out the elements of semi-feudalism in Indian agriculture. Compare your list with those of other students at your Study Center.

Chek Your Progress II

- 1) What are the core characters of semi-feudalism?

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- 2) Compare the core characteristic of capitalism and semi-feudalism in Indian agriculture.

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8.3 LET US SUM UP

You have studied the nature of agrarian classes in India through the debate on capitalism or semi-feudalism in Indian agriculture. You learnt about the nature of agrarian classes in India and the agricultural activities. Here the debate regarding the capitalist classes and semi-feudal classes were also explained to you through the contribution of research in different regions of India by eminent scholars like, Ashok Rudra, Utra Patnaik, Amit Bhaduri and others. You have been introduced to the proponents of both the positions and how they outline various categories of agrarian classes and the parameters that they use to defend their respective positions.

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8.5 SPECIMEN ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress I

- 1) According to Ashok Rudra, the farmers in India instead of being divided into small, middle and big category should be divided into two classes of (i) big land owners and (ii) the agricultural labourers. Thus, for him there are a class of agricultural capitalist and a class of agricultural labourers and wage workers. The big land owners are the ruling classes in Indian agriculture.
- 2) John Harriss defines the capitalist class structure in Indian agriculture on the basis of two criteria, (i) Size of the production resources (i.e. land) in relation to household livelihood requirements and labour relations. His study is based on his field work in Tamil Nadu. He classifies the agriculturalists as (i) capitalist farmers (ii) rich peasant; (iii) Independent middle peasants; and (iv) the poor peasants.

Check Your Progress II

- 1) The core characteristics of semi-feudalism are as given by Amit Bhaduri who believes that in some regions of India, such as, 26 villages of West Bengal the existing relations of production are similar to the feudal relation of the European landlord and serf or master and serf of the pre-capitalist era. He identified the semi-feudal features like, share cropping, perpetual indebtedness of the small tenants, concentration of two exploitative classes of usury and land ownership in the hands of the same economic class; and the lack of accessibility of the small tenant to the market.
- 2) The core characteristic of the agrarian class structure in India for both the capitalist agrarian class, as well as, semi-feudal agrarian class advocates is the exploitative and contradiction ridden nature of agrarian society.

UNIT 9 INDUSTRY AND LABOUR*

Structure

- 9.0 Objectives
- 9.1 Introduction
- 9.2 Concept of Industry
- 9.3 Industry and its Types
- 9.4 Evolution of Industries in India
 - 9.4.1 Ancient Industries
 - 9.4.2 Medieval Industries
 - 9.4.3 Modern Industries
 - 9.4.3.1 Introduction of Modern Industries During British Period
 - 9.4.3.2 Industries After Independence
 - 9.4.3.3 Post-Liberalization Industries
- 9.5 Different Outcomes of Industrial Policies
- 9.6 Nature of the Labour Force
 - 9.6.1 Formal and Informal Employment
 - 9.6.2 Origin of Trade Unions in India
 - 9.6.3 Labour Welfare and Legislation
- 9.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 9.8 References
- 9.9 Specimen Answers to Check Your Progress

9.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this Unit, you should be able to:

- describe concept of industry and its types;
- explain the evolution of industries in India;
- discuss nature of labour force, and its types;
- describe Trade Unions in India, and finally;
- explain the labour welfare measures and legislations.

9.1 INTRODUCTION

You learnt about the different agrarian classes in India and their features in unit 8 Agrarian Classes. Here in this unit we will explain to you about the concept of industry, the different types of Industry. When we speak about different types of industries in India, we also focus on its historical evolution. How different types of tools and technological development helped evolve modern industries in post colonial times. When the British brought their technologies in India such as, the railways, post and telegraph etc. We have explained about the nature of labour force in India. How initially most of the factory workers, mill workers came from the neighbourhood districts and regions. Later due to spread of information,

people from remote areas of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, and so on, started migrating to the different states and/or regions where these factories/industries needed more labour force. We give examples of textile mills etc. and then the origins of trade unions in India. Finally, we speak about the labour welfare measures and legislations.

9.2 CONCEPT OF INDUSTRY

Industry may be defined as the collective large-scale manufacturing of goods in well-organized plants with a high degree of automation and specialization. Although, this is a common conceptualisation of industry but it can also include other commercial activities that provide goods and services such as agriculture, transportation, hospitality and similar other services. The Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 defines 'industry' as any business, trade, undertaking, manufacturing or calling (calling or avocation in English also means job or occupation of a person, such as, a teacher or doctor) of employers including any, service, employment, handicraft or industrial occupation or avocation of workmen.

An industry exists only when there is relationship between employers and employees, the former is engaged in business, trade, undertaking, manufacturing calling of employers while the latter i.e. the employees are engaged in the calling, service, employment, handicraft or industrial occupation and a vocation as workers.

9.3 INDUSTRY AND ITS TYPES

When we discuss the nature and concept of industries we are generally discussing about various types of industries that exist. Here we will give you the details of some of the types of industry:

1) **Primary Industries**

By Primary industries we are referring to those that extract raw materials (which are natural products) from the land or sea e.g. oil, iron ore, timber, mining, quarrying, fishing, forestry and farming. They are all examples of primary industries.

2) **Secondary Industries (sometimes referred to as manufacturing industry)**

These industries involve manufacturing of raw materials, into products such as, soaps, garments, toys etc. by manual labour or machines.

Secondary industries often use assembly line production like a car factory. Here the conveyor belt system first introduced by Ford car companies in America to produce cars are a good example. This led to the alienation of the industrial worker on the one hand but a boost to the capitalist owners, on the other. This kind of industrial production can be seen as the new Industrial society's emergence.

3) **Tertiary Industries (sometime referred to as Services' industry)**

These industries neither produce raw material nor make any product. Instead they provide services to the people and industries. Tertiary industries can include services such as, doctors, dentists, banks, etc.

4) **Quaternary Industries**

These industries involve the use of high tech industries.

People who work for these companies are often highly qualified within their field of work.

Research and development companies are the most common types of businesses in this sector.

5) **Quinary**

These industries involve those that control the industrial and government decision-making processes.

These industries includes industry executives, management, bureaucrats and elected officials in government. Policies and laws are made and implemented at this level.

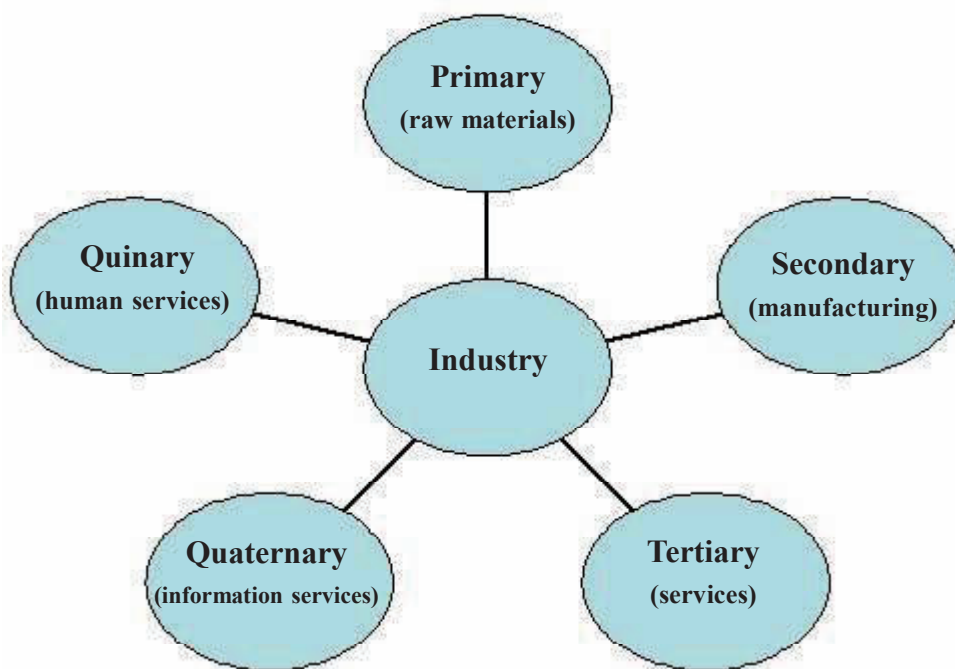


Fig. 9.1: Types of Industry

9.4 EVOLUTION OF INDUSTRIES IN INDIA

The history of industrial development in India can be highlighted through three periods: Ancient Industry, Medieval Industry, and Modern Industry.

9.4.1 Ancient Industry

In the ancient or primitive period industry can be understood to have included those works which were performed by human beings when they were dependent on very simple tools and methods to live life in forests or deserts etc. In this period no systematic industry had developed. Thus main concern of people during these days was merely to acquire food and physical protection. The means, which were adopted by them to meet these ends, were symbolic of their industrial effort. For food the primitive people used to hunt animals and gather wild

vegetables and fruits. For hunting he/she employed bow and arrow and certain instruments made by sharpening stone. All primitive weapons were made either of wood or stone. These weapons were symbolic of industrial development of that period. Besides, making fire by friction of stone or bamboos was industrial miracle of that era. Here we are talking of primitive people who had lived in caves and forests in the ancient period.

9.4.2 Medieval Industry

During the medieval period there was sufficient development of industry. In this period the signs of industry became quite visible in the efforts of human beings. A number of manually operated machines were fabricated. Humans also began using animal power to meet their ends. The signs of industrialisation, production of goods in excess of consumption i.e. surplus food grains and other products began and stocking of these came in evidence at this time. The exchange of goods and division of labour also came into vogue. As a consequence of this, different industries started operating separately. For example, blacksmiths, carpenters and weavers set up independent units. Thus, began the specialisation of jobs. The artistic spirit of the artisans was awakened. The medieval industrial age in the West can be divided into three distinct industrial systems. This division was based on the nature of the industrial system. These industrial systems are the Feudal System, Guild System and Domestic System.

9.4.3 Modern Industry

The emergence of modern industry in India is generally associated with the second half of the 19th century when there was a movement of merchant capital into industry. During the late 19th century, an Indian businessman owned a complex of modern industries which sprang up in western India. The cotton mills of Bombay and Ahmedabad are the examples. This development was subsequently followed almost half a century later by modern industry between the two world wars. This is the beginning of modern industrial development in India. The process of industrialisation is a process through which industrial and manufacturing capacity is created and advanced with improved technologies year by year and becomes the principal basis of a given economy. Historians have seen industrialisation and the industrial revolution as the beginning of the modern period of history, associating with the revolution and the maturation of the capitalist mode of production. Traditionally historians have seen England as the first workshop of the world where a series of conditions facilitated the articulation of capitalist enterprise that could rely on a dependable home market and an expanding foreign one. The emergence of capitalist relations in agriculture, the expansion of trade and the development of technology and movement of capital towards industry and innovation meant that England by the end of the 18th century was experiencing the first industrial revolution. The same period saw the emergence of the British colonial regime in India where by the end of the 18th century, a series of developments were beginning to tie the two economies in a relationship of subordination by the colonial rulers and exploitation of India's wealth to feed their own industries took place. India went through a process of de-urbanisation and destruction of its own thriving art, commerce, handicrafts etc. And this led to overburdening of the agricultural sector when a large scale migration took place to the villages to seek out their living.

There are generally two types of industrialization, one based on large scale industry that is capable of generating rapid increases in labour productivity, and therefore in average income. It does so by means of capital intensive technology and efficient organisation of resources. Small scale industry, the other type, on the other hand tended to be more labor intensive and did not have the potential to generate the same level of employment. In India large scale industrial development after independence especially occurred, but only in a limited way and reasons for this were a combination of the impact of colonial policies and the availability of cheap labour and the relative scarcity and costs of capital.

Check Your Progress I

- i) Define and discuss the concept of industry in about 5 lines.

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- ii) List the types of industries that you have learnt about.

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9.4.3.1 Introduction of Modern Industries During British Period

The long term decline of Indian trade and its replacement by British imports of cheap textiles combined with price depression (i.e. falling of prices) in the Indian economy in 1830's and 40's have been seen as inaugurating a period of 'deindustrialisation' by which was meant a decline in local or domestic artisan industries. Whether or not there was de-industrialisation has been a contentious debate, the details of which are not the focus here. However, the evidence that we do have on employment would seem to suggest that the emergence of modern industry in the 19th and 20th centuries did not lead to the decline in artisanal industries.

Factories needed workers. With the expansion of factories, this demand increased. In 1901, there were 584,000 workers in Indian factories. By 1946 the number was over 2,436, 000. Where did the workers come from? In most industrial regions workers came from regions and the districts around these areas and artisans who found no work in the village went to the industrial centres in search of work. Over 50 per cent workers in the Bombay cotton industries in 1911 came from the neighbouring district of Ratnagiri, while the mills of Kanpur got most of their textile hands from the villages within the district of Kanpur. Most

often millworkers moved between the village and the city, returning to their village homes during harvests and festivals. Over time, as news of employment spread, workers travelled great distances in the hope of work in the mills. From the United Provinces, presently Uttar Pradesh for instance, they went to work in the textile mills of Bombay and in the jute mills of Calcutta. Getting jobs was always difficult, even when mills multiplied and the demand for workers increased. The numbers seeking work were always more than the jobs available.

9.4.3.2 Industries after Independence

During the post-independence period examples of traditional industries increased by about 25 per cent in a period of five years ending in 1953, but of modern industries like motor, diesel engines, batteries, transformers, radios and manufacturing various other goods and services experienced a growth of over 100 per cent in the same period. Since then, other capacity and output have been increasing at a proportionate pace. During this period a number of institutions and agencies like the Industrial Finance Corporation and the State Finance Corporation were established in order to help the growth of industry. One of the most important innovations in the industrial field after Independence has been the introduction of the Five Year Plans and the direct participation by the government in industry as expressed in the “Industrial Policy Resolution” of 1948. Since then the nation has been following a mixed pattern of economy or the public and the private partnership in economic development. This dual approach to industry became more effective when in 1956 the “New Industrial Policy Resolution” was published. According to this, industries were divided into three categories i.e. the A, B, and C categories. Under category A fall those industries which only the government can handle.

- A - Some of these are the atomic energy, electrical, iron and steel.
- B - Category B comprise those industries which are in private hands but may be progressively taken over by the state like the road and sea transportation, machine tools, aluminium, chemicals including plastics and fertilizers, ferro alloys and certain types of mining.
- C - Under category C the remaining industries come which are left to the private sector, such as, agriculture, hotel, entertainment etc.

9.4.3.3 Post-Liberalization Industries

The mixed economy had helped the country in the initial phases to develop the heavy industries like, steel plants-Bhilai and Rourkela for example; Atomic energy and petroleum etc. for which private sector could not enter. This era was also known as ‘permit raj’ since during this phase government had complete control over the industrial development projects. Many private bodies/agencies could enter only after getting appropriate certificates or permits. Often, it is said that a lot of delay as well as ‘block money’ passed hands to get one’s papers cleared. This is also reason for discouraging private initiatives during this period. It was after 1990’s that a new phase in Indian economy was introduced by the government when the economy became liberalised, privatised and globalised i.e. LPG to a far greater extent. This phase also led to the opening up of the economy and entry of foreign investment became relatively easier.

The industrial policy in India may be explained following different periods: (i) pre-reform period before 1991 and (ii) post-reform period after 1991. The pre-1991 industrial policies created a climate for rapid industrial growth in the country. It had helped to create a broad-base infrastructure and basic industries. A diverse industrial structure with self-reliance on a large number of items had been achieved. At the time of independence the consumer goods industry accounted for almost half of the industrial production. In 1991 such industries accounted for only about 20 per cent. In contrast capital goods production was less than 4 per cent of the total industrial production. In 1991, it had gone up to 24 per cent. Industrial investment took place in a large variety of new industries. Modern management techniques were introduced. An entirely new class of entrepreneurs has come up with the support system from the government, and a large number of new industrial centers have developed in almost all parts of the country. Over the years, the government has built the infrastructure required by the industry and made massive investments to provide the much-needed facilities of power, communications, roads etc. A good number of institutions were promoted to help entrepreneurship development, provide finance for industry and to facilitate development of a variety of skills required by the industry.

9.5 DIFFERENT OUTCOMES OF INDUSTRIAL POLICIES

However, the implementation of industrial policy suffered from shortcomings. As mentioned earlier, it is argued that the industrial licensing system has promoted inefficiency and resulted in the high-cost economy. Licensing was supposed to ensure creation of capacities according to plan priorities and targets. However, due to considerable discretionary powers vested in the licensing authorities the system tended to promote corruption and rent-seeking. It resulted into discouragement of entry of new enterprises and adversely affected the competition. The system opposite to its rationale favoured large enterprises and discriminated against backward regions. Government announced a number of liberalisation measures in the industrial policy of 1970, 1973 and 1980. However, the dramatic liberalisation efforts were made in the industrial policy, during 1991.

India's New Industrial Policy announced in July 1991 was radical compared to its earlier industrial policies in terms of objectives and major features. It emphasised on the need to promote further industrial development based on consolidating the gains already made and correct the distortion or weaknesses that might have crept in, and attain international competitiveness. (Ministry of Industry, 1991). The liberalised Industrial Policy aims at rapid and substantial economic growth, and integration with the global economy in a harmonised manner. The Industrial Policy reforms have reduced the industrial licensing requirements, removed restrictions on investment and expansion, and facilitated easy access to foreign technology and foreign direct investment (FDI). It helped introduce Public Private Participation or PPP in different industries, such as, the Realty Sector Government on its own could not provide housing and office development on its own to all. Therefore, Private Builders with their investments entered the market. Realty sector or industry provides heavy source of employment to people at the same time infrastructure development needs are also fulfilled.

9.6 NATURE OF THE LABOUR FORCE

The persons who are either working and employed or seeking employment or available for work but unemployed during the reference period together constitute the labour force. Labour force participation rate (LFPR) is defined as the number of persons in the labour force per 1000 persons. Overall, the labour force increased from around 337 million in 1991 to around 488 million in 2013. There is an expansion of 151 million in labour force in roughly 22 years. Employment level more or less followed the same trend as shown by the labour force but employment level fell short of the labour force throughout the period, creating a consistent gap between the two. In other words, more number of people entered the labour force than the avenues of employment available to them. Employment in India witnessed an increase to 488 million in 2013 as compared to 337 million in 1991.

India is considered as an emerging economy but the employment condition in the country still remains poor. Overall, labour-force to population ratio (in the age group 15 years and above) at 56 per cent is low in India compared to nearly 64 per cent for the rest of the world. The low participation in India is largely because the female labour force participation rate is dismally low at 31 per cent which is the lowest in the world and the second lowest in South Asia.

Even today the large proportion of workers engaged in agriculture (about 49 per cent) contribute a mere 14 per cent to the GDP. In contrast, the service sector which contributes 58 per cent of the GDP barely generates 27 per cent of the employment, and the share of manufacturing in both employment (13 per cent) and Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (16 per cent) is much lower than in East Asian and South-East Asian countries. The reasons for this lies is due to low levels of Industrialisation in India and also jobless growth. Therefore very few people are able to get employment in the formal sector. This unbalanced pattern of growth is not an experience of the fast growing economy. In addition to this, an overwhelmingly large percentage of workers (about 92 per cent) are engaged in informal sector of employment and a large majority of them have low earnings with limited or no social protection. This is true for a substantial proportion of workers in the organised sector as well. Over half the workers are self-employed, largely with a poor asset-base. Around 30 per cent are casual labourers seeking employment on a daily basis. About 18 per cent of those employed are regular workers, and amongst them less than 8 per cent have full-time regular employment with social protection.

Activity 1

Visit a local factory, cottage industry or an industry in your neighbourhood. Speak to some of the officials/workers working there and get information regarding the different functioning or operations. Write a report of a page on the employment and organisation of this factory/manufacturing unit and compare it with other students in your study center.

The vast majority of workers in India are in informal jobs such as, vegetable vendors, tea stall owners etc. There has been a shift out of agriculture but construction has absorbed more workers than other sectors in recent years. Majority of these are unskilled labourers. What is more serious is that, most of

the new jobs being created in the formal sector are actually informal because the workers do not have access to employment benefits or social security such as, pension or medical etc.,. In addition, notable disparities i.e. differences in the labour force participation rates of men and women continue to persist.

9.6.1 Formal and Informal Employment

The distinction between the formal and informal sectors is crucial for understanding the employment relationship. Workers in the formal sector are engaged in factories and commercial and service establishments and are under the purview of legal regulation. About 70 per cent of the workers in this sector are employed in government, quasi-government, and public sector enterprises. The private sector provides employment to only 29 per cent of the labour in the formal sector. Wages of formal sector workers are substantially higher than those engaged in the urban informal sector. One study shows that the average wage of a formal sector worker is 4 or 5 times higher than the wages in the informal sector. Moreover, a range of labour laws, provide security of jobs, health facilities and retirement benefits.

International Labour Organisation (ILO) defines “informal sector” as consisting of units engaged in the production of goods and services with the primary objective of generating employment and incomes to the persons concerned. The units operate at small level with low level of organisation with little or no division between labour and capital as factors of production. In such sector, labour relations is based mostly on casual terms of employment, kinship or personal and social relations rather than contractual arrangements with formal guarantees. In India, the National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector (NCEUS) made an important distinction between organised or formal and unorganised or informal employment. The unorganised workers consist of those working in the unorganised enterprises or households – based industries. They do not get social security benefits from the employers. They are not regular workers for example, tea-stall owners; ‘paan’ sellers, balloon and toys manufacturers etc.

There are also workers in the formal sector without any regular employment and social security benefits. Such workers have dominant share of informal employment in manufacturing, construction and trade (wholesale and retail). They account for about 76 per cent of all workers. About 84.7 per cent of jobs in the economy are in the informal sector, 4.5 per cent in the public sector, 2.5 per cent in the private corporate sector and 8.4 per cent in the ‘formal’ household sector. More than 90 per cent of women workers are concentrated in informal sector. The women are found to be over-represented in the informal sector because of flexibility, in the home-based work like these of domestic servants, cooks etc. It is advantageous to them given their other needs and demands upon their time in the form of unpaid labour. The work in the informal sector is less remunerative and the conditions are inferior to the organised sector. They lack economic security and legal protection. Therefore there is much greater vulnerability of workers who are outside the reach of labour legislation or trade union organisation due to absence of workers’ rights and social protection. The women workers in particular, are in more vulnerable positions than their male counterparts.

9.6.2 Origin of Trade Unions in India

The trade unions are the product of large scale industrialisation, concentration of industries and industrial problems. Before the advent of modern industrialisation there were personal contracts between the employers and the workers (as the industries were run in the homes and with the tools of the employer, Also in ancient India, as well as, medieval periods there was the system of Guilds which produced number of arts, sculptures, jewels, handicrafts as per the traditional norms. These Guilds were very famous (especially in the South of India). So there was no need to have any machinery for determining their relationship as in the modern industries. But under the modern factory system the personal contact lost its weight due to setting up of large scale industrial units, with concentration in towns and cities with the heavy use of machinery. The interest of employers to reduce the cost of production, to meet the demand of competitive market and to maximise their profits make the employers or industrialists use more and more technologically advanced devices of production and sophisticated machines. This process contributes further to restrict the employer, employee relationship. Simultaneously, such a progress has given rise to a new class of disinterested workers i.e. workers whom Karl Marx calls alienated, (i.e. they are not having any personal satisfaction in creating commodity as they are only putting one nail or part of the total commodity such as, a car or washing machine etc.) who are dependent on their wages for their livelihood.

The trade union of workers represent the workers to protect their interest, livelihood conditions and which formally creates conditions to integrate them. These form a link between the workers and industrial establishments. They provide the institutional base to the workers to put forward their point of view. They represent the organised mode of protest to safeguard their interests. They channelise the workers' protests in a disciplined manner. They are the essential bargaining institution of workers in the organised trades. This is also in the interest of the employer that the membership of the union should be as wide as possible. They are interwoven with the economic advancement of the country.

The trade union movement in India was born after the end of the 1st World War, when there was an outburst of Industrial strike. The first union was started in Madras in 1918. It was known as the **Madras Textile Union**. It did excellent work in representing the grievances of workers but in 1921 the law was made in favour of the employers who obtained an order from the Madras High Court to restrain the activities of the union. The event focussed the attention of the public to have trade union legislation which did not exist till then in the country. It was at this time (1920) that **All India Trade Union Congress** was established as a central organisation of labour. The association of workers received impetus from the ILO (International Labour Organisation).

The Indian Trade Union Act of 1926 conferred a legal and corporate status on registered trade unions and granted them certain immunities with regard to trade disputes. The act makes provision specifying the conditions governing the registration and the rights and privileges accorded to registered unions. The act also allowed the funds of the registered unions to be spent for the conduct of trade disputes and for the provision of benefits to its members.

After independence, the country was plunged into growing unemployment. The high hopes of providing services to the workers for securing higher wages,

better conditions and amenities from the national government were shattered. The workers found it necessary to struggle hard even to retain what they had obtained earlier. A series of strikes swept the country and the working days lost during the period were the highest ever recorded in the country. The disunity in the trade union ranks was aggravated by the starting of four central organisations (list given below) during the period. The local level trade unions, firm-level or industry-level trade unions were affiliated to larger organizations or union federations. The larger federations in the country represent labour at the National level. They are known as **Central Trade Union Organisations**. To acquire its status, a trade union federation must have a verified membership of at least 500,000 workers who are spread over a minimum of four states and four industries (including agriculture). List of Central Trade Union Organisations are:

- 1) All India Central Council of Trade Unions
- 2) All India Trade Union Congress All India United Trade Union Centre
- 3) Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh
- 4) Centre of Indian Trade Unions
- 5) Indian National Trade Union Congress
- 6) Labour Progressive Federation
- 7) National Front of Indian Trade Unions
- 8) Self Employed Women's Association
- 9) Trade Union Coordination Centre
- 10) United Trade Union Congress

Activity 2

Read a book on some of the well known Trade Union leaders of India and write an essay of two pages on their contributions to the welfare of the labour force in India. Compare your essay with those of other students at your Study Center.

9.6.3 Labour Welfare and Legislations

The objective of Labour Legislation is two-fold namely: (i) to improve the service conditions of industrial labour by providing them the basic amenities of life and (ii) to bring about industrial peace that could in turn accelerate productive activity of the country resulting in its prosperity.

Under the Constitution of India, labour is a subject in the concurrent list where both the Central and State Governments have right to enact legislations. This has resulted into a number of labour laws that have been enacted catering to different aspects of labour namely, occupational health, safety, employment, training of apprentices, fixation, review and revision of minimum wages, mode of payment of wages, payment of compensation due to workmen who had injuries or death or on disablement, bonded labour, contract labour, women labour and child labour, resolution and adjudication of industrial disputes, provision of social security such as provident fund, employees state insurance, gratuity, provision for payment of bonus and regulating the working conditions for workers. The labour laws derive their origin, authority and strength from the provisions of the

Constitution of India. The relevance of the dignity of human labour and the need for protecting and safeguarding the interest of labour as human beings has been enshrined in Chapter-III (Articles 16, 19, 23 & 24) and Chapter IV (Articles 39, 41, 42, 43, 43A & 54) of the Constitution of India keeping in line with Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of State Policy. Labour law reforms are an ongoing and continuous process and the government has been introducing new laws and amending the existing ones in response to the emerging needs of the workers in a constantly dynamic economic environment.

Labour welfare is a broad concept referring to the state of living of an individual or a group as workman within and outside of premises of factory, in an acceptable interaction with the total environment-ecological, economic and social harmony. Terms such as workers welfare, labour welfare and employee welfare are normally used as substitute of each other for addressing various facilities and benefits provided to employees in addition to their pay. The aspect of labour welfare constitute both the social and economic aspects of welfare. It plays a significant role in industrial relations for welfare and productivity. The National Commission on Labour says that “the model of labour” welfare is essentially dynamic. Its interpretation changes from country to country with respect to economic development and the socio-economic empowerment and development of labour class”. It can be said that labour welfare denotes all those activities of governmental authorities, employers, voluntary organisations and trade unions which help labour class to live well under better social conditions, and to be more productive. It constitutes provisions for the improvement of social conditions, safety, health, well-being and industrial productivity of the labour. Generally labour welfare work could be bifurcated into five sections given below:

- 1) statutory provision by different legal legislations enforced by central government,
- 2) welfare measures given by state government agencies,
- 3) welfare measures given by employers,
- 4) welfare measures forced by trade unions, and
- 5) various welfare activities acted upon by the voluntary social agencies.

The central and state governments have also laws enacted and the schemes established for providing social security and welfare of specific categories of worker. The most significant social security laws enacted are the following: i) The Employees Compensation Act, 1923, ii) The Employees State Insurance Act, 1948, iii) The Employees Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1953, and iv) The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961, v) The Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972.

As part of labour law reforms, the government has taken steps for drafting four Labour Codes on Wages; Industrial Relations; Social Security and Welfare; and Safety and Working Conditions respectively, by simplifying, amalgamating and rationalising the relevant provisions of the existing 44 Central Labour Laws.

Box 9.0: Datta Samant: A Trade Union Leader and his Political Career

Datta Samant grew up in Deobag on the Konkan coast of Maharashtra, hailing from a family of middle-class Marathi background. He was a qualified M.B.B.S. doctor from G.S. Seth Medical College and K.E.M. Hospital, Mumbai and practised

as a general physician in Pantnagar locality of Ghatkopar. The struggle of his patients, most of whom were industry labourers in Textile mills of Bombay inspired him to fight for their cause. He spent much of his early years in the locality of Ghatkopar a locality in Mumbai, in the state of Maharashtra. From the early 20th century, the city's economy was characterised by major textile mills, the base of India's thriving textile and garments industry. Hundreds of thousands of people from all over India were employed in working in the mills. Although a trained medical doctor, Samant was active in trade union activities amongst mill workers. He joined the Indian National Congress and its affiliated Indian National Trade Union Congress. Gaining popularity amongst city workers, Samant's name was popularly known as *Doctorsaheb*.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the Mumbai-Thane industrial belt witnessed successive working class strikes and protests, with multiple trade unions competing for the allegiance of workers and political control. These primarily included George Fernandes, the Centre for Indian Trade Unions. Samant rose to become one of the most prominent INTUC leaders, and grew increasingly militant in his political convictions and activism. He enjoyed success in organising strikes and winning substantial wage hikes from companies. He ignored the company's statistics and business information, and consistently refused to settle on compromise concessions. In 1972 elections, he was elected to the Maharashtra Vidhan Sabha, or legislative assembly on a Congress ticket, and served as a legislator. He was arrested in 1975 during the Indian Emergency owing to his reputation as a militant unionist, despite belonging to the Congress party of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Samant's popularity increased with his release in 1977 and the failure of the Janata Party coalition, with which many rival unions had been affiliated. This increased his popularity and widespread reputation for putting workers and their interests before politics.

In late 1981, Samant was chosen by a large group of Mumbai mill workers to lead them in a precarious conflict between the Bombay Millowners Association and the unions, thus rejecting the INTUC-affiliated Rashtriya Mill Mazdoor Sangh (RMMS) which had represented the mill workers for decades. Samant was requested by mill workers to lead. He suggested that they wait for outcome of initial strike action. But workers were too agitated and wanted a massive strike. At the beginning of which an estimated 200,000–300,000 mill workers walked out, forcing the entire industry of the city to be shut down for over a year. Samant demanded that along with wage hikes, the government should scrap the Bombay Industrial Act, 1947 and de-recognise the RMMS as the only official union of the city industry. While fighting for greater pay and better conditions for workers, Samant and his allies also sought to capitalise and establish their power on the trade union scene in Mumbai.

Later life and assassination

Samant was elected on an independent, anti-Congress ticket to the 8th Lok Sabha, the lower house of the Indian Parliament in 1984; an election that was otherwise swept by the Congress under Rajiv Gandhi. He would organise the *Kamgar Aghadi* union, and the Lal Nishan Party, which brought him close to communism and Indian communist political parties. He remained active

in trade unions and communist politics throughout India in 1990s. At the time of his death he was not a member of parliament. On 16 January 1997, Samant was murdered outside his home in Mumbai. (www.wikipedia.com, dated 31-12-2018)

Check Your Progress II

i) Describe briefly the nature of labour force in India using about 10 lines.

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ii) How did the trade union emerge in India? Discuss.

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iii) Mention at least two legislations to protect the labour force working in the organised sector.

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9.7 LET US SUM UP

The present unit explains about the concept of industry and its types. It traces the evolution of industries in India and the rise of modern industries in India from the colonial period. The changes taken place in the post Independence period till the period of liberalisation in 1991 have also been discussed.

The nature of the labour force, formal and informal employment, that is, the organised and the unorganized sectors of economy have been described, the trade union and labour welfare measures and legislations have also been examined in the context of a fast developing economy. Different legal measures and Constitutional protection given to the industrial workers help to improve their lives.

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9.9 SPECIMEN ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress I

- i) Industry is defined as the collective large-scale manufacturing of goods in well-organised plants which has a high degree of automation and specialisation. This is one aspect of understanding an industry. However, another aspect of industry includes production of goods and services as well, such as, agriculture, beauty industry, film industry, etc. An industry exists when there is a relationship between employers and employee. Employers are engaged in business, trade, manufacturing as a vocation but the employees are engaged in providing their labour force in the process of production.

- ii) There are five different types of industries, such as:
- 1) Primary
 - 2) Secondary
 - 3) Tertiary Service
 - 4) Quaternary; and
 - 5) Quinary

Check Your Progress II

- i) Labour force constitutes persons who are either working and/or employed or seeking employment or are available for work but are unemployed during the period when they are referred to or are counted. Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) is defined as the number of persons in the labour force per 1000 persons. Therefore, we see an overall rise of number of persons in the labour force during different periods of time. An overall growth of labour force can be seen in India. It increased from about 337 million in 1991 to around 488 million in 2013. India's employment rate in Industry is comparatively low at 56 percent which is largely due to less women in the labour force in India.
- ii) The trade unions emerged in the context of presence of large scale industrialisation, concentration of industries and industrial problems. Earlier the home based industries or even traditional guild systems that existed in India, only face to face employer employee relation existed. But when modern factory system emerged the personal touch lost its weight. The interest of employers lies in achieving the target output whereas the workers interests are left unheeded or suppressed. Thus, the trade union of workers originated to represent, the workers, to protect their interests, livelihood conditions in towns and cities.
- iii) The most significant social security laws enacted by the central and State governments are:
- 1) The Employers Compensation Act, 1923;
 - 2) The Employers Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1953.