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The Northern Mountains

In this lesson, we will learn about :

- F Extent of the Himalayas
 F Greater Himalayas, Middle Himalayas and Shiwalik Hills
- F Importance of Himalayas
 F Different states lying in the region
- F Life of people living in the mountains.

The Northern Mountains include the Himalayas and the Karakoram ranges. The Himalayas are the highest mountain range in the world. The word Himalaya means the 'abode of snow.' They have the highest peaks of the world.

They remain covered with snow throughout the year. The Himalayan range extends from Kashmir to Arunachal Pradesh to a distance of about 2,500 km. Its width varies between 150 and 400 kilometres.



India : The Himalayas

The Himalayas can be divided into three parallel ranges. They are :

1. The Greater Himalayas (Himadri)
2. The Middle Himalayas (Himachal)
3. The Southernmost Himalayas (Shivaliks)

1. The Greater Himalayas is the uppermost range. It is also, called Himadri. Major peaks of this range are, Mt. Everest, Kanchenjunga and Annapurna.

Many brave people have risked their lives to climb the snow-covered peaks of the Himalayas. Tenzing Norgay of Nepal and Edmund Hillary of New Zealand were the first men to climb Mt. Everest in 1953. Mt. Everest is the highest mountain peak in the world with a height of 8848 metres. The first Indian woman to climb Mt. Everest was Bachendri Pal.



Bachendri Pal

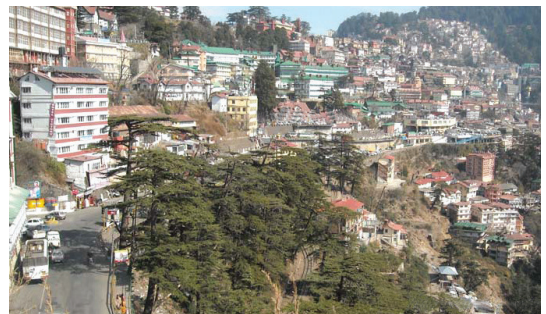


Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay

From the peaks, glaciers slowly move downwards. Glaciers are slow-moving rivers of ice that grow larger and larger while moving downwards from the

mountain tops. In the lower ranges, they begin to melt and become a source of major rivers like the Ganga, the Indus and the Brahmaputra. The Gangotri is the glacier from where the Ganga originates. All these rivers rise from this range and then flow towards plains in three different directions.

2. The Middle Himalayas run parallel to Greater Himalayas. The range is also called Himachal. The mountains gradually become low towards the south. The height drops to 3500 metres. There are many river valleys in this region. The mountain slopes are covered with thick forests of Deodar and Pine. Famous hill stations like **Shimla, Srinagar, Kangra, Kullu** and **Darjeeling** belong to these regions. These hill slopes and valleys receive heavy snowfall in winters. Summers in these places are very pleasant. People visit them during the summers.



Hill Station, Shimla



Hill Station, Kullu



Hill Station, Srinagar



Hill Station, Darjeeling

3. The Southernmost Himalayas or **Shivalik hills** lie to the south of the Himachal ranges. These hills get heavy rainfall so, there are thick forests in this range. These forests are home to many wild animals like **tigers, cheetal, sambhar** and crocodiles. The foothills of Shivaliks are called Terai. The Shivalik hills have an average height of 1500 metres above sea level.



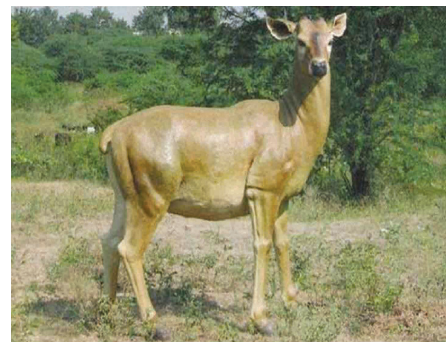
Shivalik Hills



Tiger



Cheetal



Sambhar

The North-Eastern branches of Himalayas include Naga, Garo, Khasi-Jaintia, Mizo and Lushai hills. They are covered with jungles. These hills receive very heavy rainfall. They are called Purvanchal.

Karakoram Mountains

Karakoram Mountains lie in the north-west of the Himalayas, beyond river Indus. These are situated in the northern part of Kashmir. Mt. K2 or Mt. Godwin Austen lies in the Karakoram range. It is 8,611 metres high.

Importance of Himalayas

The Himalayan mountains help us in many ways :

- └ The Himalayas guard our northern borders and so they play a great role in the defence of India. There are narrow gaps called passes in the mountains. Our army guards these passes.
- └ The Himalayas check the rain-bearing monsoon winds and cause heavy rainfall in many parts of our country.
- └ There are dense forests up to the altitude of 1500 metres. Many types of trees like fir, oak, pine and deodar are found here. Forests provide us with wood and other useful products.



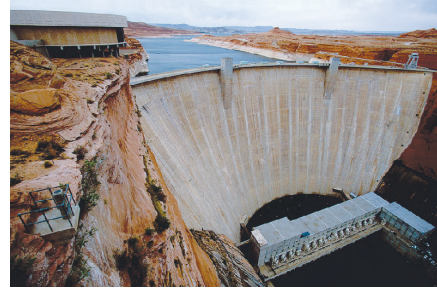
Forest



Cheetah



River



Dam

- └ Different types of animals are found in the Himalayan forests. They are yak, snow leopard, elephant, cheetah, tiger, rhinoceros, etc.
- └ Most of the famous hill stations of northern India like Srinagar, Kullu, Shimla, Nainital, Darjeeling and several others are visited by thousands of people from India and abroad.
- └ The melting of the snow during the summer season keeps the northern rivers full of water. They are the sources of major rivers like Brahmaputra, Ganga and Indus. Dams have been built across many rivers to produce hydroelectricity and to irrigate agricultural lands.
- └ The steep slopes, huge rocks and some of the world's highest peaks are sources of adventure and thrill to young people all over the world.

Do You Know?

The Bhakra Nangal Project produces hydroelectricity. It is built on the river Satluj.

The northern mountain region includes the states of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Northern West Bengal, Sikkim and North-Eastern states of Tripura, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram and Manipur.

The main occupations of the people are agriculture and cattle rearing. However, the people who live along this mountain range have different customs, languages, food, dress, etc.

Jammu and Kashmir

The valley of Kashmir is surrounded by snowcapped mountains. It is an extremely beautiful state. Tourists from all over the world visit the valley to enjoy its beauty. The houseboats in Dal Lake are floating houses for tourists providing the comforts of a home. We find a large number of houseboats and Shikaras moving around in Dal lake. Shikaras sell flowers and vegetables. Farming, weaving and wood carving are the main occupations of people in the state. Rice, wheat, maize, rajma, potatoes and vegetables are widely grown. Kashmir is famous for its apples and saffron. Saffron is added to the food to give it a special flavour. Fruit orchards which grow plums, cherries, walnuts and apples are abundant in this region. Some people are engaged in animal rearing or grazing. The wool of sheep is used for making beautiful shawls and carpets. Pashmina shawls of Kashmir are very famous all over the world. The Kashmiri people make delicate handicrafts of wood and metal.



Houseboats in Kashmir



A Kashmiri girl in traditional dress

It is very cold in winters so men and women wear loose, warm gowns called phirans, and keep kangri (a cane basket having earthen pot filled with burning coal) to keep themselves warm. They drink kahwa, a tea, to keep themselves warm. They like to eat rice, rajma, fish and meat. Rouf is their special dance. They speak Kashmiri, Urdu, Dogri and Ladakhi languages. They celebrate Shivratri and Eid. Srinagar is the capital city during summer and Jammu in winter. Gulmarg and Pahalgam are famous tourist spots while the **Amarnath cave** and **Vaishno Devi** shrine are popular pilgrim centres.



Amarnath Cave



Vaishno Devi shrine

Himachal Pradesh

Himachal Pradesh is also a very beautiful state. The Capital of Himachal Pradesh is Shimla. It has famous tourist attractions such as the hill stations of Kullu, Manali and Shimla. It lies in the lap of the Himalayas and has the same terrain and climate as Jammu and Kashmir. Most of the people are either farmers

or shepherds. They grow wheat, rice, maize and potatoes on terrace farms. Apples, grapes, peas and peaches are grown in the orchards. Besides farming, people are engaged in craft work like making wooden trays, walking sticks and other articles.



An apple orchard in Himachal Pradesh

The women wear kurta, churidar-salwar and a scarf on the head. The men wear a kurta, churidar pyjamas, long coats and a woollen cap with bright coloured border. The colourful cap worn by men in Himachal Pradesh is very popular in India. Dussehra is the most popular festival in the Kullu and Kangra valleys. Nati is the famous dance of Himachal Pradesh. People speak Hindi and Pahari.



People in Himachal Pradesh

Uttarakhand

The Himalayan mountains in Uttarakhand are called Kumaon and Garhwal Hills. Mussoorie in Garhwal and Nainital in Kumaon are important hill stations. The region attracts devotees to Gangotri, the source of the Ganga river

and Yamunotri, the source of Yamuna river. Badrinath and Kedarnath are famous pilgrim centres. People grow rice, maize and vegetables and also rear animals to get milk, meat and wool from them. Many people are employed in the Indian army. Dehradun is the capital of Uttarakhand. The Indian Military Academy (IMA) is situated in Dehradun.



Badrinath Temple

Sikkim

The state of Sikkim lies further to the East. Its capital is Gangtok. Kanchenjunga, the third highest peak in the world, is located in Sikkim. The border of Sikkim touches Nepal and Bhutan. This has led to a mixing of the two cultures. Most of the local people are followers of Buddhism. The people of Sikkim belong to Lepcha and Bhutia tribes. There are many Buddhist monasteries. Rumtek monastery is a landmark of Sikkim. Sikkim is known for its oranges and orchids. The people have great fondness for dance and music. Their mask dances are very interesting to watch.



Mask dance of Sikkim

Darjeeling

Darjeeling is the famous hill station of West Bengal. It is famous for its high quality tea which is produced on the hill slopes. The Tiger Hills is a famous tourist spot.

The North-Eastern States

In the eastern part of the Himalayan ranges are the North-Eastern states known as the seven sisters. They are Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram.

Arunachal Pradesh is the easternmost state of India. Here the sunrise is the earliest in the whole country. Many tribes live in this state. They have their own customs and speak their own languages. They grow rice, maize, millets, tobacco and oilseeds. The capital of Arunachal Pradesh is Itanagar.

Assam is the biggest state in the North-Eastern region. It is the leading producer of tea and oil in India. Assam is famous for its silk. The people speak Assamese. **Dispur** is the capital of Assam. Bihu dance festival is celebrated with pomp and joy.



A tea garden in Assam



Bihu dance

Meghalaya is located in the Khasi, Jaintia and Garo hills. Shillong, which is a beautiful hill station is the capital of the state. The state has rich deposits of coal. The Khasis and Garos are the main tribes living in the state.



Bamboo dance of Mizoram

Nagaland is located on the eastern side of Assam. **Kohima** is the capital city. Nagas who are the dominant tribe speak the Naga language. They wear colourful clothes. **Mizoram** lies in the eastern corner of India. The main population consists of tribals who follow Christianity. English and Mizo are the main languages spoken. The bamboo dance of Mizoram is very popular. Shifting cultivation is followed to grow rice and orange. Handloom cloth, bamboo, wood and cane articles are made in every house. **Aizawl** is the capital.

Manipur is situated to the south of Nagaland and has its own customs and traditions. The main occupation of the people is farming. Manipuri Dance is considered to be one of the most elegant dances of our country. **Imphal** is the capital of Manipur.

Tripura is surrounded on three sides by Bangladesh. **Agartala** is the capital. The main languages spoken by the people are Bengali and Kokborak. The latter is spoken by tribal people. The state produces rice and jute. Forest produce is used for making furniture and delicate bamboo items.



KEY WORDS

- L Terai — The foothills of the Shiwaliks.
- L Glacier — A very slow moving river of ice.
- L Phiran — A long, loose gown worn by men and women in Kashmir.
- L Kahwa — A special tea prepared and drunk in Kashmir.
- L Kangri — A small earthen pot with burning coal to keep body warm.
- L Seven Sisters — The seven states of north-eastern India.



THINGS I HAVE LEARNT

1. The Himalayas are the highest mountain ranges in the world.
2. It has three parallel ranges called Greater Himalayas, Middle Himalayas and Shiwalik Hills. At the foothills of the Shiwalik lies the Terai region.
3. Mt. Everest is the highest peak in the world.
4. Bachendri Pal was the first Indian woman to climb Mt. Everest.
5. The Himalayas are very useful to us.
6. The states located in high mountains are Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and North-Eastern states.
7. The Kashmir Valley is very beautiful.
8. Himachal Pradesh has many hill stations.
9. The north-east is a group of seven states. The seven states are known as seven sisters.



THINK AND ANSWER

A. Tick (✓) the correct answers.

1. Himadri is another name for
(a) Greater Himalayas (b) Middle Himalayas (c) Shiwaliks
2. Which region is famous for pashmina shawls all over the world?
(a) Kashmir (b) Himachal Pradesh (c) Sikkim
3. In which state are the Amarnath cave and Vaishno Devi shrine located?
(a) Uttarakhand (b) Jammu and Kashmir (c) Himachal Pradesh
4. Gangotri, Yamunotri, Kedarnath and Badrinath are the famous pilgrim centres. In which state are they located?
(a) Assam (b) Sikkim (c) Uttarakhand

5. Kanchenjunga is situated in the state of
 (a) Assam (b) Sikkim (c) Uttarakhand
6. Rumtek monastery is a famous landmark of
 (a) Sikkim (b) Uttarakhand (c) Assam
7. The main language of people of Tripura is
 (a) Bengali (b) Kokborak (c) Both of these
8. Which is the easternmost state of India?
 (a) Assam (b) Meghalaya (c) Arunachal Pradesh

B. Match the following columns.

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------------|
| 1. <i>Rouf</i> | (a) Himachal Pradesh |
| 2. <i>Nati</i> | (b) Sikkim |
| 3. Buddhists | (c) Dance |
| 4. Mizoram | (d) Jammu and Kashmir |
| 5. Phiran | (e) Kullu |
| 6. Dussehra | (f) Shifting Cultivation |

C. Fill in the blanks. Choose words from the box.

Pahari
 Vaishno Devi
 Sikkim
 Arunachal Pradesh
 houseboats
Hindi
Amarnath Cave
Assam

1. Kashmir is famous for its _____.
2. _____ and _____ are two pilgrim centres of Jammu and Kashmir.
3. People of Himachal Pradesh speak _____ and _____.
4. Kanchenjunga is located in _____.
5. _____ is famous for its tea.
6. Sunrise is earliest in _____.

D. Write the names of the capitals of these states.

- | | |
|----------------------|-------|
| 1. Jammu and Kashmir | _____ |
| 2. Assam | _____ |
| 3. Himachal Pradesh | _____ |
| 4. Nagaland | _____ |
| 5. Manipur | _____ |
| 6. Mizoram | _____ |

E. Write T for the true and F for the false statements.

1. Kashmir is famous for its apples and saffron.
2. Nati is the famous dance of Uttarakhand.
3. Most people of Sikkim belong to Lepcha and Bhutia tribes.
4. Darjeeling is famous for good quality of jute.
5. Bamboo dance of Assam is quite famous.
6. Sun rises earliest in Assam.

F. Answer these questions.

1. Name the three main ranges of the Himalayas.
2. Which major rivers originate from the Himalayas?
3. Name the prominent hills of the Purvanchal Himalayas.
4. Name the chief agricultural products of Kashmir.
5. Why do people visit pilgrimage centres?
6. Why are the Himalayan rivers perennial in nature?

[VALUE BASED QUESTION]

[HOTS]



MAP WORK

On a political outline map of India, locate, label and shade the Himalayan states. Mark their capitals also.



DO AND LEARN

G. Find out the names of unique wild animals and birds found in the Himalayan region. Collect their pictures. Paste them on a chart paper. Write two lines about each one of them.



SURF AND LEARN

www.trip-to-india.com/states/northindia-states.html.



LIFE SKILLS

SOCIAL & THINKING

Have you ever gone to a hill station? Write a letter to your closest friend describing the following features :

- ┆ location
- ┆ climate
- ┆ tourist spots
- ┆ food, dresses
- ┆ unique animals, birds.