

Revision Notes

Class - 6 Social Science (Political Science)

Chapter 1 - Understanding Diversity

Understanding Diversity

- People call India a miniature version of the world. Just like across the world you will come across people of different tastes, likes-dislikes, cultures and religions, in India too we come across various kinds of people.
- It's a Beautiful Mixture of Similarities and Dissimilarities.

The Story of Sameer Ek and Sameer Do

- The book tells a painful story of two Sameers.
- One is a school-going student and the other is a newspaper seller. Every morning, the school-going Sameer is urged by the newspaper seller Sameer to buy his newspaper. A few days later they became friends.
- The newspaper seller Sameer has not been in the school ever. He does not know what a "subject" is. He proudly proclaims that he has been working since he was a little child. Yet he has not lost his smile. When he learns that the name of the school going boy is Sameer too, he finally says that the school goer is Sameer Ek and he is Sameer Do.
- However, a few days later riots erupted in his hometown Meerut. He looks visibly sad and reveals that he is a Muslim Sameer and all his family members live in Meerut.
- Next day, Sameer Do was not there to greet Sameer Ek. Sameer Ek never saw his namesake ever again from that day forth.

The Difference Between Sameer Ek and Sameer Do

- The story of Sameer Ek and Sameer Do is a story of hope as well as sadness.
- Sameer Do is a newspaper seller who is a poor fellow who was not fortunate enough to enroll in the school. Sameer Ek goes to school and knows English as well.
- Sameer Ek is a Hindu whereas Sameer Do is a Muslim.
- Sameer Ek was a native of Delhi whereas Sameer Do had his family in Meerut.

Caste System in India

- In India, different people belong to different castes.
- According to the caste system, each caste is assigned a certain job. In ancient times, it had been mandated that people of a caste have to go on performing the work assigned to them. They can't perform the work of another caste.
- This system creates inequality because the so-called "lower" caste people have to go on performing low paid jobs.
- So it was considered not necessary for a sweeper to learn rocket science because according to the caste system he has to go on sweeping.

Diversity & Inequality

- Diversity is good and we praised it, but the story of Sameer's shows that differences can be really bad at times. So why did we praise diversity then? That's because there is a difference between diversity and inequality.
- Diversity is the differences in culture, language, religion, caste, tastes, clothing style, eating habits etc. But inequality is the differences in the resources that people have.

- Some people have enough resources to lead a comfortable life. But some people might not have enough resources like money, house etc to live a life of comfort.
- These differences in resources are unwelcome. In class VII, you will read how sometimes diversity is related to inequality. But we should know this, diversity in itself is not bad.

Diversity in India

- India is a land of diverse cultures and terrain. Not only the people but also the regions these people live have a huge variation once you move across India.
- Before the development of trains, aeroplanes, bus, car etc people used to travel from one place to another through ships, horses, camels and also on foot.
- They used to move in search of new land or new locations or places where they could live and settle. Because travelling took a lot of time, they used to stay at one place for a longer period of time.
- Some other people also had to leave their places when any drought or famines occurred and they didn't have enough food whereas some people moved for work and some left because of war.
- Thus, people used to adapt with respect to the new geographical area and this leads to diversity.
- For example, Ladakh in the northern part of India has a cold climate and remains frozen in winters. The people of Ladakh follow Buddhism as their religion and their occupation involves cattle rearing and farming.
- On the other hand, there is Kerala which is in the southern part of India and remains hot throughout the year. The people of Kerala follow Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. Their occupation is farming too but the crops they grow are different from the ones grown by the people of Ladakh.

- Even the terrain of India shows a huge diversity. The northern part is all mountains and the central part is all a plateau. There are deserts in the west and valleys in the east. There are beaches, mangrove forests, etc. according to the region you are visiting.
- Though the two locations of Kerala and Ladakh are different from each other but at the same time they have some similarities as well. They both were influenced by the Arab as well as Chinese traders. The geography of the regions influenced their language, food habits, clothes, religions, trade, etc.

Unity in Diversity

- Diversity is said to be the strength of India.
- People having diverse backgrounds took part in the freedom struggle against the Britishers.
- People united against the Britishers and won the struggle.
- Song as well as symbols which are said to have emerged during this struggle acts as a reminder of respect for diversity.
- The song mentioned in the chapter was written after the Jallianwala Bagh massacre and was sung in the memory of the brave people.
- The National flag was used in the struggle against the Britishers as a symbol of protest.
- The term “Unity in Diversity” was actually coined by the first Prime Minister of the country i.e Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.
- Even the national anthem of India shows the unity of India despite being of diverse cultures. It was composed by a poet from Bengal i.e Rabindranath Tagore, who dedicated it to the people of India. The national anthem is respected by people all over India, irrespective of their language, culture or religion.