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Coal India becomes third most powerful Indian company

State-run Coal India, CIL, has become the third most powerful Indian company with a total market capitalisation of 2, 09,671 crore rupees and is only lagging behind RIL and ONGC. The coal behemoth added another feather to its cap last week when it replaced IT giant Tata Consultancy Services to become the country's third most coveted firm.
CIL added 7, 611 crore rupees to its valuation, which on Friday stood at 2, 09, 671. 57 crore rupees.
According to market analysts, investors are optimistic about the stock and looking at the cash balance of the company it is likely that it may go for acquisitions either in the domestic space or overseas. International Neonatal Nursing Excellence Award for Indian nurse
A committed Indian nurse has been honoured with the first International Neonatal Nursing Excellence Award, in recognition of her commitment for working on the frontlines of newborn care in resource-challenged countries, where the majority of newborn deaths occur.
Rekha Kashinath Samant from Mumbai and Regina Obeng from Kumasi in Ghana were selected from nominations sent from all over the world to receive the award at the opening ceremony of the 7th International Conference of the Neonatal Nurses at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre in Durban.

Ahlu Sunna Waljama

Ahlu Sunna Waljama or Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama is a Somali paramilitary group consisting of Sufis and moderates opposed to the radical Wahhabi rebel groups al-Shabab and Hizbul Islam. They are fighting to prevent Wahhabism from being imposed on Somalia and protecting the country's Sunni-Sufi traditions and generally moderate religious views.

Ahlu Sunna Waljama'a became prominent in 2008, when it took up arms against al-Shabab after the radical group began destroying the tombs of the country's Sufi saints.

They have won large victories in central Somalia and control the majority of southern Mudug and Galgaduud and parts of Hiiraan, Middle Shabelle, Bakool and Gedo.

On March 15, 2010, the Somali government and Ahlu Sunna Waljama'a signed an agreement giving the militia control of five ministries, in addition to diplomatic posts and senior positions within the national security apparatus.In exchange, the militia would lend military support against al-Shabab.

Ban on Software Companies

Ban on Software Companies In United States of America (USA) as per the recent Executive Order by Governor of Ohio, no public funds should be spent on services provided off-shore (outside the United States).

The move against off-shoring is a concern to India, however, as per National Association of Software Services Company (NASSCOM) Indian IT industry do not foresee any significant impact as a result of this order since Federally funded projects represent a small fraction in the overall demand for off-shored services.

As per the inputs made available by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Department of Commerce, India's concerns have been taken up with the US side in the India-US Trade Policy Forum as well as in other Bi-lateral engagements with the US side.

Green India Programme

Green India Programme Under the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) announced by the Government of India, a "National Mission for a Green India" has been mooted as one of the eight missions. The mission document is under formulation.

As on 30.09.2010, about 12.86 lakh hectare of land including 7.22 lakh hectare of degraded forest land and 5.64 lakh hectare of non-forest land has been identified for raising Compensatory Afforestation in lieu of diversion of 11.10 lakh hectare of forest land for non-forest purposes. So far, Compensatory Afforestation has been achieved over 4.22 lakh hectare area only.

During the period from January 2005 to December 2008, about 2.42 lakh hectare of forest land was identified for Compensatory Afforestation in lieu of diversion of 1.12 lakh hectare of forest land for non forest purpose. Only 1,177 hectare Compensatory Afforestation has been undertaken during this period and no Compensatory Afforestation could be carried out from April, 2007 to March, 2009 due to non-release of money earmarked for the purpose. To resume the Compensatory Afforestation in the States and Union Territories, comprehensive guidelines have been framed and communicated and funds for undertaking Compensatory Afforestation is being released with effect from 10th July,2009.

Saxena Committee

The Ministry of Rural Development, on 12th August, 2008, constituted an Expert Group, which could advise the Ministry on the methodology for conducting the BPL Census for identification of rural households. The Expert Group under the chairmanship of Dr. N.C. Saxena submitted its report on 21st August 2009. The Terms of References of the Expert Group are :

(i) To recommend more suitable methodology to conduct the next BPL Census with simple, transparent and objectively measurable indicators for identification of BPL for providing assistance under the programmes of the Ministry of Rural Development.

(ii) To recommend institutional system for conducting survey, processing of data validation and approval of BPL List at various levels.

(iii) To recommend institutional mechanism to address grievances of public on exclusion/inclusion in the BPL List

(iv) To briefly look at the relationship between estimation and identification of poor and the issue of putting a limit on the total number of BPL families to be identified.

(v) Any other recommendation to make the exercise of BPL Census simple and acceptable.

The recommendations of the Expert Group include automatic exclusion of rural households from the BPL list, automatic inclusion in the BPL list and grading of remaining households. For automatic exclusion of rural households from the BPL list, the Expert Group recommended indicators such as ownership of land, ownership of motorized vehicles, ownership of mechanized farm equipment, regular employment and Income tax payers. The Expert Group recommended automatic inclusion of rural households from certain groups in the BPL list such as designated "Primitive Tribal Groups", designated "Maha Dalit Groups", single women headed households, households with disabled person as bread-earner, households headed by a minor, households dependent on alms for survival, homeless households and households with bonded labourers. The Expert Group recommended that remaining households may be ranked on a scale of ten based on caste, community, religion, occupation, educational status and age of head of Household.

The National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector (NCEUS) under the chairmanship Dr. Arjun Sengupta was constituted by the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises to examine the problems confronting enterprises in the Unorganized Sector and make appropriate recommendation to provide technical, marketing and credit support to the enterprises. According to the report on "Conditions of Work and Promotion of Livelihoods in the Unorganized Sector" submitted by the National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector (NCEUS) at the end of 2004-05, about 836 million or 77 percent of the population were living below Rs. 20 per day.

Poverty is a multi-dimensional issue and various experts/committees and institutions estimate poverty based on different perceptions/definitions. However, Planning Commission is the nodal agency in the Government of India to estimate poverty in the country. The latest poverty estimates released by the Planning Commission for 2004-05, based on 61st Round of NSS consumer expenditure data as recommended by the Expert Group under the chairmanship of Prof. Suresh D. Tendulkar, percent of the population living below the poverty line in the country was 37.2% in 2004-05.

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Post-Mughal period

Rise of the Sikh Power

Sikhism was founded by Guru Nanak Dev at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Guru Nanak was born on April 15, 1469 in the Western Punjab village of Talwandi. Even as a child, he was given to deep thinking with no interest in worldly life. At the age of thirty, he got enlightenment. Thereafter, he travelled almost the whole of the country and went over to Mecca and Baghdad, preaching his message. On his death he was followed by nine other Gurus in succession.

Guru Angad Dev Ji (1504-1552) was Guru for thirteen years (1539-1552). He created a new script gurmukhi and gave the Sikhs a written language. After his death Guru Amar Das Ji (1479-1574) followed in succession. He showed great devotion and made the langar an integral part of Sikhism. Guru Ram Das Ji took over as the fourth Guru, he composed hymns, which were later incorporated in the sacred writings. Guru Arjan Dev Ji became the fifth Guru of Sikhism. He built the world famous Harmandar Sahib, popularly known as the Golden Temple in Amritsar. He also compiled the holy Granth Sahib, a sacred religious book of the Sikhs. Guru Arjan Dev suffered martyrdom in 1606 and was followed by Siri Guru Hargobind, who maintained a standing army and symbolically wore two swords, representing spiritual and temporal power.

Guru Siri Har Rai, the seventh Guru was born in 1630 and spent most of his life in devotional meditation and preaching the teachings of Guru Nanak. He passed away in 1661 and ordained his second son, Harkishan as the Guru. Guru Siri Har Krishan Ji got enlightenment in 1661. He gave his life while serving and healing the epidemic-stricken people in Delhi. The place where he breath his last is the one where, the renowned Gurdwara Bangla Sahib stands in Delhi. Siri Guru Tegh Bahadur became Guru in 1664. When Mughal Governor of Kashmir resorted to forcible conversion of Hindus, Guru Tegh Bahadur decided to fight it out. Gurdwara Sisganj in Delhi stands at the place of Guru Sahib's martyrdom and Gurdwara Rakabganj at the site of his cremation. The tenth guru, Guru Gobind Singh, was born in 1666 and became guru after the martyrdom of his father Guru Tegh Bahadur. Guru Gobind Singh, at the time of his death invested the 'guru Granth Sahib' as the supreme head of the sikhs, thus bringing the practice of nominating a religious head to a grinding halt.

The Decline of Mughal Empire

The Mughal Empire started disintegrating with the death of Aurangazeb in 1707. His son and successor, Bahadur Shah Zafar, was already old when he took the throne and was confronted with one rebellion after another. At that time, the Empire was facing challenges from the Marathas and the British. The inflated taxes and religious intolerance weakened the grip of Mughal Empire. The Mughal Empire was split into numerous independent or semi-independent states. Nadirshah of Iran sacked Delhi in 1739 and exposed the fragility of the power of Mughals. The empire rapidly shrank to the extent of being reduced to only a small district around Delhi. Yet they managed to rule at least some parts of India until 1850s, although they never regained the dignity and authority of their early days. The imperial dynasty became extinct with Bahadur Shah II who was deported to Rangoon by the British on suspicion of assisting the sepoy mutineers. He died there in 1862.

This marked the end of the medieval era of Indian history, and gradually, the British paramountcy over the nation increased and gave birth to the Indian struggle for freedom.

Vijayanagar Empire

When Muhammad Tughlaq was losing his power in Deccan, the two Hindu princes, Harihar and Bukka founded an independent kingdom in the region between the river Krishna and Tungabhadra in 1336. They soon established their sway over the entire territory between the rivers Krishna in the north and Cauveri in the south. The rising powers of the Vijayanagar empire brought it into clash with many powers and they frequently fought wars with the Bahmani kingdom.

The most famous king of the Vijaynagara Empire was Krishnadeva Raya. The Vijayanagar kingdom reached the pinnacle of its glory during his reign. He was successful in all the wars he waged. He defeated the king of Orissa and annexed Vijaywada and Rajmahendri.

Krishnadeva Raya encouraged trade with the western countries. He had a cordial relationship with the Portuguese who had at that time established trade centres on the west coast of India. He was not only a great warrior, but was also a playwright and a great patron of learning. Telegu literature flourished under him. Painting, sculpture, dance and music were greatly encouraged by him and his successors. He endeared himself to the people by his personal charm, kindness, and an ideal administration.

The decline of the Vijayanagar kingdom began with the death of Krishnadeva Raya in 1529. The kingdom came to an end in 1565, when Ramrai was defeated at Talikota by the joint efforts of Adilshahi, Nizamshahi, Qutubshahi and Baridshahi. After this, the kingdom broke into small states.

Bahmani Kingdom

The Muslim kingdom of Bahmani was established by some nobles of the Deccan who revolted against the repressive policies of Sultan Muhammed Tughlaq. In 1347, Hasan became the king under the title Abdul Muzaffar Ala-Ud-Din Bahman Shah and founded the Bahmani dynasty. This dynasty lasted for about 175 years and had 18 rulers. At the height of its glory, the Bahmani kingdom extended from north of Krishna river up to Narmada, and stretched east-west from the coasts of the Bay of Bengal to the Arabian Sea. The rulers of Bahmani were often at war with the neighbouring Hindu kingdom Vijayanagar.

The most distinguished figure of the Bahmani kingdom was Mahmud Gawan, who was the principal minister of the state - Amir-ul-ulmra for over two decades. He fought many wars, subdued many kings and annexed many territories to the Bahmani kingdom. Within the kingdom, he improved the administration, organized finances, encouraged public education, reformed revenue system, disciplined army and removed corruption. A man of character and integrity, he was held in high esteem by the Deccani group of nobles, especially Nizam-ul-Mulk, and their machinations led to his execution. With this, started the decline of the Bahmani empire, which came to an end with the death of its last king Kalimullah in 1527. Thereafter, Bahmani Empire was disintegrated into five regional independent principalities - Ahmadnagar, Bijapur, Berar, Bidar and Golkonda.

Colonial era

Main article: Colonial India

Vasco da Gama's maritime success to discover for Europeans a new sea route to India in 1498 paved the way for direct Indo-European commerce. The Portuguese soon set up trading-posts in Goa, Daman, Diu and Bombay. The next to arrive were the Dutch, the British—who set up a trading-post in the west-coast port of Surat in 1619—and the French. The internal conflicts among Indian Kingdoms gave opportunities to the European traders to gradually establish political influence and appropriate lands. Although these continental European powers were to control various coastal regions of southern and eastern India during the ensuing century, they would eventually lose all their territories in India to the British islanders, with the exception of the French outposts of Pondicherry and Chandernagore, the Dutch port of Travancore, and the Portuguese colonies of Goa, Daman, and Diu.

The British Raj

The British East India Company had been given permission by the Mughal emperor Jahangir in 1617 to trade in India. Gradually their increasing influence led the *de-jure* Mughal emperor Farrukh Siyar to grant them *dastaks* or permits for duty free trade in Bengal in 1717. The Nawab of Bengal Siraj Ud Daulah, the *de facto* ruler of the Bengal province, opposed British attempts to use these permits. This led to the Battle of Plassey in 1757, in which the 'army' of East India Company, led by Robert Clive, defeated the Nawab's forces. This was the first political foothold with territorial implications that the British acquired in India. Clive was appointed by the Company as its first 'Governor of Bengal' in 1757. This was combined with British victories over the French at Madras, Wandiwash and Pondicherry that, along with wider British successes during the Seven Years War, reduced French influence in India. After the Battle of Buxar in 1764, the Company acquired the civil rights of administration in Bengal from the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II; it marked the beginning of its formal rule, which was to engulf eventually most of India and extinguish the Moghul rule and dynasty itself in a century. The East India Company monopolized the trade of Bengal. They introduced a land taxation system called the Permanent Settlement which introduced a feudal-like structure (See *Zamindar*) in Bengal. By the 1850s, the East India Company controlled most of the Indian sub-continent, which included present-day Pakistan and Bangladesh. Their policy was sometimes summed up as Divide and Rule, taking advantage of the enmity festering between various princely states and social and religious groups.

The first major movement against the British Company's high handed rule resulted in the Indian Rebellion of 1857, also known as the "Indian Mutiny" or "Sepoy Mutiny" or the "First War of Independence". After a year of turmoil, and reinforcement of the East India Company's troops with British soldiers, the Company overcame the rebellion. The nominal leader of the uprising, the last Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar, was exiled to Burma, his children were beheaded and the Moghul line abolished. In the aftermath all power was transferred from the East India Company to the British Crown, which began to administer most of India as a colony; the Company's lands were controlled directly and the rest through the rulers of what it called the Princely states. There were 565 princely states when the Indian subcontinent gained independence from Britain in August 1947.

During the British Raj, famines in India, often attributed to failed government policies, were some of the worst ever recorded, including the Great Famine of 1876–78, in which 6.1 million to 10.3 million people died and the Indian famine of 1899–1900, in which 1.25 to 10 million people died. The Third Plague Pandemic started in China in the middle of the 19th century, spreading plague to all inhabited continents and killing 10 million people in India alone. Despite persistent diseases and famines, however, the population of the Indian subcontinent, which stood at about 125 million in 1750, had reached 389 million by 1941

Indian Freedom Struggle (1857-1947)

In ancient times, people from all over the world were keen to come to India. The Aryans came from Central Europe and settled down in India.The Persians followed by the Iranians and Parsis immigrated to India. Then came the Moghuls and they too settled down permanently in India. Chengis Khan, the Mongolian, invaded and

looted India many times. Alexander the Great too, came to conquer India but went back after a battle with Porus. He-en Tsang from China came in pursuit of knowledge and to visit the ancient Indian universities of Nalanda and Takshila. Columbus wanted to come to India, but instead landed on the shores of America. Vasco da Gama from Portugal came to trade his country's goods in return for Indian species. The French came and established their colonies in India.

Lastly, the Britishers came and ruled over India for nearly 200 years. After the battle of Plassey in 1757, the British achieved political power in India. And their paramountcy was established during the tenure of Lord Dalhousie, who became the Governor- General in 1848. He annexed Punjab, Peshawar and the Pathan tribes in the north-west of India. And by 1856, the British conquest and its authority were firmly established. And while the British power gained its heights during the middle of the 19th century, the discontent of the local rulers, the peasantry, the intellectuals, common masses as also of the soldiers who became unemployed due to the disbanding of the armies of various states that were annexed by the British, became widespread. This soon broke out into a revolt which assumed the dimensions of the 1857 Mutiny.

The Indian Mutiny of 1857

The conquest of India, which could be said to have begun with the Battle of Plassey (1757), was practically completed by the end of Dalhousie's tenure in 1856. It had been by no means a smooth affair as the simmering discontent of the people manifested itself in many localized revolt during this period. However, the Mutiny of 1857, which began with a revolt of the military soldiers at Meerut, soon became widespread and posed a grave challenge to the British rule. Even though the British succeeded in crushing it within a year, it was certainly a popular revolt in which the Indian rulers, the masses and the militia participated so enthusiastically that it came to be regarded as the First War of Indian Independence.

Introduction of zamindari system by the British, where the peasants were ruined through exorbitant charges made from them by the new class of landlords. The craftsmen were destroyed by the influx of the British manufactured goods. The religion and the caste system which formed the firm foundation of the traditional Indian society was endangered by the British administration. The Indian soldiers as well as people in administration could not rise in hierarchy as the senior jobs were reserved for the Europeans. Thus, there was all-round discontent and disgust against the British rule, which burst out in a revolt by the 'sepoys' at Meerut whose religious sentiments were offended when they were given new cartridges greased with cow and pig fat, whose covering had to be stripped out by biting with the mouth before using them in rifles. The Hindu as well as the Muslim soldiers, who refused to use such cartridges, were arrested which resulted in a revolt by their fellow soldiers on May 9, 1857.

The rebel forces soon captured Delhi and the revolt spread to a wider area and there was uprising in almost all parts of the country. The most ferocious battles were fought in Delhi, Awadh, Rohilkhand, Bundelkhand, Allahabad, Agra, Meerut and western Bihar. The rebellious forces under the commands of Kanwar Singh in Bihar and Bakht Khan in Delhi gave a stunning blow to the British. In Kanpur, Nana Sahib was proclaimed as the Peshwa and the brave leader Tantya Tope led his troops. Rani Lakshmibai was proclaimed the ruler of Jhansi who led her troops in the heroic battles with the British. The Hindus, the Muslims, the Sikhs and all the other brave sons of India fought shoulder to shoulder to throw out the British. The revolt was controlled by the British within one year, it began from Meerut on 10 May 1857 and ended in Gwalior on 20 June 1858.

End of the East India Company

Consequent to the failure of the Revolt of 1857 rebellion, one also saw the end of the East India Company's rule in India and many important changes took place in the British Government's policy towards India which sought to strengthen the British rule through winning over the Indian princes, the chiefs and the landlords. Queen Victoria's Proclamation of November 1, 1858 declared that thereafter India would be governed by and in the name of the British Monarch through a Secretary of State.

The Governor General was given title of Viceroy, which meant the representative of the Monarch. Queen Victoria assumed the title of the Empress of India and thus gave the British Government unlimited powers to intervene in the internal affair of the Indian states. In brief, the British paramountcy over India, including the Indian States, was firmly established. The British gave their support to the loyal princes, zamindar and local chiefs but neglected the educated people and the common masses. They also promoted the other interests like those of the British merchants, industrialists, planters and civil servants. The people of India, as such, did not have any say in running the government or formulation of its policies. Consequently, people's disgust with the British rule kept mounting, which gave rise to the birth of Indian National Movement.

The leadership of the freedom movement passed into the hands of reformists like Raja Rammohan Roy, Bankim Chandra and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar. During this time, the binding psychological concept of National Unity was also forged in the fire of the struggle against a common foreign oppressor.

Raja Rammohan Roy (1772-1833) founded the Brahmo Samaj in 1828 which aimed at purging the society of all its evil practices. He worked for eradicating evils like sati, child marriage and purdah system, championed widow marriage and women's education and favoured English system of education in India. It was through his effort that sati was declared a legal offence by the British.

Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902) the disciple of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, established the Ramkrishna Mission at Belur in 1897. He championed the supremacy of Vedantic philosophy. His talk at the Chicago (USA) Conference of World Religions in 1893 made the westerners realize the greatness of Hinduism for the first time.

Formation of Indian National Congress (INC)

The foundations of the Indian National Movement were laid by Suredranath Banerjee with the formation of Indian Association at Calcutta in 1876. The aim of the Association was to represent the views of the educated middle class, inspire the Indian community to take the value of united action. The Indian Association was, in a way, the forerunner of the Indian National Congress, which was founded, with the help of A.O. Hume, a retired British official. The birth of Indian National Congress (INC) in 1885 marked the entry of new educated middle-class into politics and transformed the Indian political horizon. The first session of the Indian National Congress was held in Bombay in December 1885 under the president ship of Womesh Chandra Banerjee and was attended among others by and Badr-uddin-Tyabji.

At the turn of the century, the freedom movement reached out to the common unlettered man through the launching of the "Swadeshi Movement" by leaders such as Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Aurobindo Ghose. The Congress session at Calcutta in 1906, presided by Dadabhai Naoroji, gave a call for attainment of 'Swaraj' a type of self-government elected by the people within the British Dominion, as it prevailed in Canada and Australia, which were also the parts of the British Empire.

Meanwhile, in 1909, the British Government announced certain reforms in the structure of Government in India which are known as Morley-Minto Reforms. But these reforms came as a disappointment as they did not mark any advance towards the establishment of a representative Government. The provision of special representation of the Muslim was seen as a threat to the Hindu-Muslim unity on which the strength of the National Movement rested. So, these reforms were vehemently opposed by all the leaders, including the Muslim leader Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Subsequently, King George V made two announcements in Delhi: firstly, the partition of Bengal, which had been effected in 1905, was annulled and, secondly, it was announced that the capital of India was to be shifted from Calcutta to Delhi.

The disgust with the reforms announced in 1909 led to the intensification of the struggle for Swaraj. While, on one side, the extremist led by the great leaders like Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai and Bipin Chandra Pal waged a virtual war against the British, on the other side, the revolutionaries stepped up their violent activities There was a widespread unrest in the country. To add to the already growing discontent among the people, Rowlatt Act was passed in 1919, which empowered the Government to put people in jail without trial. This caused widespread indignation, led to massive demonstration and hartals, which the Government repressed with brutal measures like the Jaliawalla Bagh massacre, where thousand of unarmed peaceful people were gunned down on the order of General Dyer.

Jallianwala Bagh Massacre

Jalianwala Bagh massacre of April 13, 1919 was one of the most inhuman acts of the British rulers in India. The people of Punjab gathered on the auspicious day of Baisakhi at Jalianwala Bagh, adjacent to Golden Temple (Amritsar), to lodge their protest peacefully against persecution by the British Indian Government. General Dyer appeared suddenly with his armed police force and fired indiscriminately at innocent empty handed people leaving hundreds of people dead, including women and children.

After the First World War (1914-1918), Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi became the undisputed leader of the Congress. During this struggle, Mahatma Gandhi had developed the novel technique of non-violent agitation, which he called 'Satyagraha', loosely translated as 'moral domination'. Gandhi, himself a devout Hindu, also espoused a total moral philosophy of tolerance, brotherhood of all religions, non-violence (ahimsa) and of simple living. With this, new leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhash Chandra Bose also emerged on the scene and advocated the adoption of complete independence as the goal of the National Movement.

The Non-Cooperation Movement

The Non-Cooperation Movement was pitched in under leadership of Mahatma Gandhi and the Indian National Congress from September 1920 to February 1922, marking a new awakening in the Indian Independence Movement. After a series of events including the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre, Gandhiji realised that there was no prospect of getting any fair treatment at the hands of British, so he planned to withdraw the nation's co-operation from the British Government, thus launching the Non-Cooperation Movement and thereby marring the administrative set up of the country. This movement was a great success as it got massive encouragement to millions of Indians. This movement almost shook the British authorities.

Simon Commission

The Non-cooperation movement failed. Therefore there was a lull in political activities. The Simon Commission was sent to India in 1927 by the British Government to suggest further reforms in the structure of Indian Government. The Commission did not include any Indian member and the Government showed no intention of accepting the demand for Swaraj. Therefore, it sparked a wave of

protests all over the country and the Congress as well as the Muslim League gave a call to boycott it under the leadership of Lala Lajpat Rai. The crowds were lathi charged and Lala Lajpat Rai, also called Sher-e-Punjab (Lion of Punjab) died of the blows received in an agitation.

Civil Disobedience Movement

Mahatma Gandhi led the Civil Disobedience Movement that was launched in the Congress Session of December 1929. The aim of this movement was a complete disobedience of the orders of the British Government. During this movement it was decided that India would celebrate 26th January as Independence Day all over the country. On 26th January 1930, meetings were held all over the country and the Congress tricolour was hoisted. The British Government tried to repress the movement and resorted to brutal firing, killing hundreds of people. Thousands were arrested along with Gandhiji and Jawaharlal Nehru. But the movement spread to all the four corners of the country Following this, Round Table Conferences were arranged by the British and Gandhiji attended the second Round Table Conference at London. But nothing came out of the conference and the Civil Disobedience Movement was revived.

During this time, Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru were arrested on the charges of throwing a bomb in the Central Assembly Hall (which is now Lok Sabha) in Delhi, to demonstrate against the autocratic alien rule. They were hanged to death on March 23, 1931.

Quit India Movement

In August 1942, Gandhiji started the 'Quit India Movement' and decided to launch a mass civil disobedience movement 'Do or Die' call to force the British to leave India. The movement was followed, nonetheless, by large-scale violence directed at railway stations, telegraph offices, government buildings, and other emblems and institutions of colonial rule. There were widespread acts of sabotage, and the government held Gandhi responsible for these acts of violence, suggesting that they were a deliberate act of Congress policy. However, all the prominent leaders were arrested, the Congress was banned and the police and army were brought out to suppress the movement.

Meanwhile, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, who stealthily ran away from the British detention in Calcutta, reached foreign lands and organized the Indian National Army (INA) to overthrow the British from India.

The Second World War broke out in September of 1939 and without consulting the Indian leaders, India was declared a warring state (on behalf of the British) by the Governor General. Subhash Chandra Bose, with the help of Japan, preceded fighting the British forces and not only freed Andaman and Nicobar Islands from the Britishers but also entered the north-eastern border of India. But in 1945 Japan was defeated and Netaji proceeded from Japan through an aeroplane to a place of safety but met with an accident and it was given out that he died in that air-crash itself.

"Give me blood and I shall give you freedom" - was one of the most popular statements made by him, where he urges the people of India to join him in his freedom movement.

Partition of India and Pakistan

At the conclusion of the Second World War, the Labour Party, under Prime Minister Clement Richard Attlee, came to power in Britain. The Labour Party was largely sympathetic towards Indian people for freedom. A Cabinet Mission was sent to India in March 1946, which after a careful study of the Indian political scenario, proposed the formation of an interim Government and convening of a Constituent Assembly comprising members elected by the provincial legislatures and nominees of the Indian states. An interim Government was formed headed by Jawaharlal Nehru. However, the Muslim League refused to participate in the deliberations of the Constituent Assembly and pressed for the separate state for Pakistan. Lord Mountbatten, the Viceroy of India, presented a plan for the division of India into India and Pakistan, and the Indian leaders had no choice but to accept the division, as the Muslim League was adamant.

Thus, India became free at the stroke of midnight, on August 14, 1947. (Since then, every year India celebrates its Independence Day on 15th August). Jawaharlal Nehru became the first Prime Minster of free India and continued his term till 1964. Giving voice to the sentiments of the nation, Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said,

Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny, and now the time comes when we will redeem our pledge, not wholly or in full measure, but very substantially. At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. A moment comes, which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new, when an age ends and when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds utterance.... We end today a period of ill fortune, and India discovers herself again.

Earlier, a Constituent Assembly was formed in July 1946, to frame the Constitution of India and Dr. Rajendra Prasad was elected its President. The Constitution of India which was adopted by the Constituent Assembly on 26th November 1949. On January 26, 1950, the Constitution was came into force and Dr. Rajendra Prasad was elected the first President of India. .....**story end**

Geography of India

India covers 3,287,263 sq km, which extends from the Himalayas, the world's highest mountains, to the southern tropical rain forests. It is the seventh largest country in the world and the mountains and sea that surround India separate it from other parts of Asia. In the shape of a triangle, India's topography is greatly varied in that there although there are deserts and rain forests, much of it's land is comprised of fertile river plains and high plateaus. Some of the main rivers that flow through India are the Ganges, Brahmaputra and the Indus. These rivers start in the high mountains and carry down rich alluvial soil to the plains below, thus creating the fertile river plains.

India the seventh largest country in the world , is well marked with off from the rest of Asia by mountains and the sea, which gives the country a distinct geographical entity.It covers an area of 32,87,2631 sq.km. Lying entirely in the northern hemisphere the mainland extends measures 3214 km from north south between extreme latitudes and about 2933 km from east to west between extreme longitudes.It has a land frontier of about 15200 km.

The country lies between 8º4' and 37º6' north of the Equator and is surrounded by the Bay of Bengal in the east, the Arabian Sea in the west and the Indian Ocean to the south.The total length of the coastline of the mainland, Lakshwadeep group of islands and Andaman and Nicobar group of islands is 7,516.5 km.

Also,in the east lies the Bangladesh.In the north west Afganisthan and Pakistan border India.The Gulf of Mannar and the Palk Straits separate India from Sri lanka. The Andaman and Nicobar island in the Bay of Bengal and Lakshwadeep in the Arabian sea are parts of the territory of India.There are as many as 200 islands in Andaman alone, extending for 350km.There are 19 island in Nicobar group.

The Arabian sea consist of the Lakshadweep group. They are formed on a coral deposit off the Kerala coast .The southern most of this lies just to the north of the Maldive island which is an independent territory.

The Indian sub-continent is characterised by great diversity in its physical features. It may be divided into following physical units:

Physical

Himalayan Mountain

The Himalayas and the associated mountains arcs gridling the sub continent on the stretch in a consistent north west- south east direction for about 2400 km between the gorges of the indus and the Tsango-Bhramaputra.The section between the Indus and the Sutlej and the Kali is termed as Kumaon Himalayas. The other two sections between the Kali and the Tista and between the latter river and the Dihangare described as the Nepal and the Assam Himalayas.Kanchanjunga (8598 Mtrs) is the highest mountain peak in India.The Greater Himalayas which have an average altitude of 6000 m have within them almost all the prominent peaks such the Everest (8848m) , Kanchenjunga (8598m) Nanga Parbat (8126m) ,Nanda devi (7817m) and Namcha parbat (7756m).

The Indus-Ganga-Brahmaputra Plain

The great plain of india is formed by the Indus, ganga and the Brahmaputra rivers. the plain extends for 3200 km between the mouths of the Ganga and the indus, all along the foot of the mountain rim, with a width varying from 150 to 300 km. The longitudinal extent from the banks of the Ravi and the Sutlej to the ganga delta alone is of 2400km. The plain is narrowest in Assam and broadens towards the west . It is 160 km wide near the Rajmahal Hills and 280 km near Allahabad. The plains are alluvial in nature.

Peninsular plateau

Rising from the alluvial plains of uttar pradesh and Bihar, south of the Yamuna Ganga line, the great indian plateau extends towards the south to encompass the whole of Peninsula. With a general elevation of 600-900m,the plateau makes an irregular tringale with its concave base lying between Delhi ridge and Rajmahal hills and the Apex formed by Kanya Kumari . The outlying projections of the peninsular plateau presented by the Aravallis,Rajmahal and Shillong hills convey some idea of its original northerly limits.

The location of another fragment of the peninsular block in the Shillong plateau gives the indication of the possible connection. The Shillong Plateau a highly

Fishing nations wrangle in Paris over saving tuna

Chitra Singh Rajput

Fishing nations came under fresh pressure on Friday to cut Atlantic bluefin tuna quotas as negotiators got into the thick of annual wrangling over limits at talks in Paris.

With widespread uncertainty over how many fish are left to be caught, the United States urged a lower quota than last year and Japan called for a crackdown on unreported fishing which environmental groups say is rampant.

"When there is uncertainty in science we believe that it is important to err on the side of caution," U.S. Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere Jane Lubchenco told Reuters at the meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) in Paris.

"We believe that it is appropriate therefore to seek lower TACs (total allowable catches) for bluefin tuna for both sides of the Atlantic," she said.

The 48-member ICCAT, based in Madrid, meets every year to fix annual quotas for the giant fish popular with sushi-lovers. Talks started on Wednesday but were focused mainly on technical issues.

The European Union's position on quotas this year is unclear after EU ambassadors for Mediterranean fishing nations successfully pushed at a meeting in Brussels on Wednesday to shoot down an EU proposal on measures to protect the fish.

Prized by fishermen, Atlantic bluefin can grow to the size of a horse and fetch as much as $100,000 in markets like Japan, but their stocks have plunged by more than 80 percent since 1970s, according to western scientists.

ICCAT set an overall quota for 2010 of 13,500 tonnes of fish, which its scientific advisors said offered at least a 60 percent probability of rebuilding stocks by 2022.

ICCAT chairman Fabio Hazin said on Friday that in light of uncertainty over the size of stocks, due in part to illegal fishing, members should "apply the precautionary approach by setting a TAC that would take these factors into full account."

The warm-blooded bluefin tuna can weigh up to 650 kg (1,433 lb) and is found in the north Atlantic, the Gulf of Mexico and the Mediterranean, where captured fish are fattened in enclosures.

France, Italy and Spain catch most of the Atlantic bluefin consumed in the world and 80 percent of the haul goes to Japan.

Before EU members rejected its conservation plan, the European Commission had said a limit of 6,000 tonnes was needed for 2011 to give the fish a real chance of recovery, but it acknowledged that would be tough for fishermen.

"The decisions we have to take can sometimes be very hard for the fishing industry to accept," the head of the EU delegation, Pierre Amilhat, told the ICCAT conference.

Japan's delegation proposed that fishermen be forced to come up with plans for respecting quotas and that they would have to get ICCAT's backing before they could fish.

Conservation groups are out in force at the talks, which end on November 27. Greenpeace parked a car with a giant fake tuna on its roof near the venue where the talks are being held with "Save me" written along the side of the vehicle.

Sri Lanka president sworn

Suraj Singh Rajput

Sri Lanka's powerful president, Mahinda Rajapakse, vowed to turn his battle-scarred nation into the economic "wonder" of Asia as he was sworn in Friday for a second six-year term. At a ceremonial inauguration that included a march-past by thousands of troops and traditional drummers, Rajapakse said his handling of the economy would replicate his military success in defeating Tamil Tiger rebels last year. Sri Lanka's main opposition boycotted the celebrations saying that the week of festivities was a waste of public funds.

Rajapakse begins his fresh mandate in an unprecedented position of strength following a constitutional revamp two months ago that further extended his already substantial executive powers. With his personal popularity running high, family members in key government positions, the opposition divided and his only serious political rival in prison, the president's control over the island republic seems complete. In his pursuit of development, Rajapakse has shrugged off attempts by the West to link aid and investment to human rights and turned to other countries like China for help. He has unveiled a series of ambitious infrastructure projects, including a Chinese-funded, 1.5-billion-dollar port in the southern town of Hambantota.

He has also rejected allegations that the army may have been responsible for substantial civilian deaths during its final offensive against the Tamil Tigers, and dismissed calls for an international inquiry.

The central bank expects Sri Lanka's economy to grow 8.0 percent in 2010, up from 3.5 percent last year, and Rajapakse has promised to double GDP per capita to 4,000 dollars by the end of his second term in 2016.

The Supreme Court ruled that his inauguration should be delayed until the anniversary of his initial November 2005 presidential win. Rajapakse's main political rival, former army chief Sarath Fonseka, is currently serving a 30-month jail sentence after a court martial found him guilty of military procurement offences.

Fonseka's wife, Anoma, dashed coconuts at a Hindu temple in Colombo on Friday, seeking divine intervention to secure the release of her husband. With no visible political threat on the horizon, Rajapakse is able to look beyond even his second mandate thanks to the constitutional changes pushed through in September that also scrapped a two-term limit on the presidency.

Editorial
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US company launches first private space capsule

American company SpaceX on Wednesday successfully launched a space capsule into orbit, marking the first such attempt by a private enterprise that could pave the way for the future of space travel.

The Dragon spacecraft blasted off from Cape Canaveral, Florida atop the massive Falcon 9 rocket at 1543 GMT, and the bullet-shaped capsule entered orbit about 10 minutes later.

Next, the spacecraft was to circle the Earth twice before attempting a re-entry from low orbit and a splash landing into the Pacific Ocean, a risky operation that even the company said carried about a 70 percent likelihood of success.

A couple of glitches have already delayed the launch — first a crack in the engine nozzle was discovered on Monday, postponing the launch by a day. Then the first attempt Wednesday morning was aborted for unknown reasons just moments before liftoff.

The US space agency NASA signed a 1.6-billion-dollar contract with SpaceX in December 2008 under the Commercial Orbital Transportation Services (COTS) program to provide 12 spacecraft with cargo capacity of at least 20 tonnes to resupply the International Space Station (ISS) through 2016.

NASA has also signed a contract of 1.9 billion dollars with Orbital Space Corporation for eight launches of its Taurus II rocket starting in 2011.

President Barack Obama hopes the private sector will help fill the gap that will open when the space shuttle fleet is retired next year, and before a new generation of spacecraft is developed.

The three US shuttles — Discovery, Atlantis and Endeavour — will become museum pieces after a final shuttle mission to the space station in 2011.

Obama has proposed spending six billion dollars over five years to help the private sector develop reliable and affordable launchers to transport cargo and US astronauts to the International Space Station.

During the transition period, the United States will depend on Russian Soyuz rockets for access to the ISS.

Cote d'Ivoire expelled from Ecowas

Cote d'Ivoire has been suspended from a regional body representing 15 West African countries after its incumbent president and the leader of the opposition both claimed victory in the country's runoff poll.

The suspension was announced on Tuesday by Goodluck Jonathan, the Nigerian president and chairman of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), as President Laurent Gbagbo continued to ignore calls and pressure to step down following an election the UN says he lost.

Gbagbo's swearing-in on Sunday was quickly followed by that of Alassane Ouattara, the opposition leader, setting the stage for both men to lay claim to the highest office in the world's leading cocoa grower and fuelling fears of renewed civil war.

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is a regional group of fifteen West African countries, founded on 28 May 1975 with the signing of the Treaty of Lagos. Its mission is to promote economic integration. In 1976 Cape Verde joined ECOWAS, and in December 2000 Mauritania withdrew, having announced its intention to do so in December 1999.

dissected and jungly tract, descends in a deep slope towards the Surma valley.The northern outliers are represented by the Mikir and the Rengma hills.

Western ghats

The topography of the Deccan and the Karnataka Plateau is dominated by the Western Ghats, which stretch uninterruptedly to the southern tip of Peninsula.They have a general altitude of 900-1100 m but occassionally rise upto 1600 m or even more.Near Goa the highly dissected relief of the lava rocks is replaced by smoothly rounded hills of Granite and Gnesis.In this stretch the ghats dip but rise once again in the Nilgiris.Further south the continuity of the ghats is distributed by the palghat gap and the Shencottah gap.The Cardamom Hills may be regarded as the continuation of the Western ghats.

Eastern Ghats

The eastern Ghats are generally less impressive than theWestern Ghats and form a discontinous crest on the eastern peripheryof the plateau.They are repesented by an irregular line of hills, such as the Nallamalais, Velikondas,Palkondas and the Pachaimalais. This hills are often referred to as the northern hills in the northern sector,Cuddapah ranges in the middle and the Tamil nadu hills in the south.

The Coastal Plains and the Islands

The plateau is flanked by coastal plains of varid width extending from Kutch to Orissa. There are striking difference between the eastern and the western coastal plains; with notable exception of Gujarat the west coast has narrow alluvial margin interspersed by hillty terrain .It has indentation except in the south where the beautiful Lagoons introduce an element of diversity.

The eastern coast on the other hand has a wide plain with well developed deltas of the major rivers. The climatic transition between the south west monsoon regime of the north and the north -east monsoon regime of the south has given rise to interesting differences in the alluvial features in the two different stretches of the east coastal plain.

River System of India :

The rivers may be classified as follows :

The Himalayan

The Deccan

The Coastal

The rivers of the inland drainage basin

The Himalayan Rivers

The Himalayan rivers are generally snow-fed and flow throughout the year. During the monsoon months (June to September), the Himalayas receive very heavy rainfall and the rivers carry the maximum amount of water, causing frequent floods.

The Deccan Rivers

The Deccan rivers are generally rain-fed and, therefore, fluctuate greatly in volume. A very large number of them are non-perennial.

The Coastal Rivers

The coastal rivers, especially on the west coast, are short and have limited catchment areas. Most of these are non-perennial as well. The rivers on the inland drainage basin are few and ephemeral.

The Rivers of the Inland Drainage Basin

They drain towards individual basins or salt lakes like the Sambhar or are lost in the sands, having no outlet to the sea.

Climate

The Himalayan range in the north acts as the perfect meteorological barrier for the whole country.Even though it falls under Monsoon climatical category, the climate varies from one place to another.Also despite the country's size and its varied relief, the seasonal rhythm of the monsoon is apparent throughout.Some mountains are adjoined to the north by China Nepal and Bhutan.A series of mountain ranges separate India from Burma.Although much of northern India lies beyond the tropical zone, the entire country has a tropical climate marked by relatively high temperatures and dry winters.

Rainfall is very heavy in the north-eastern region, the western slopes of the Western Ghats and parts of the Himalayas, all of which receive over 2,000 mm annually. The eastern part of the peninsula, extending up to the northern plains, receives rainfall varying from 1,000 to 2,000 mm a year, while the area from Western Deccan up to the Punjab plains gets between 100 mm and 500 mm a year. Rajasthan , Kachchh and Ladakh have hardly any rainfall.The population of India crossed the billion mark at the turn of the millenium.

Natural Vegetation

The Himalayan region, which is rich in vegetative life, possesses varieties that can be found practically from the tropical to tundra regions. Only the altitude influences the distribution of vegetation. In the rest of the country, the type of vegetation is largely determined by the amount of rainfall. Outside the Himalayan region, the country can be divided into three major vegetation regions: the tropical wet evergreen and semi-evergreen forests, the tropical deciduous forests, and the thorn forests and shrubs.

Vegetation of the Assam region in the east is luxuriant with evergreen forests, occasional thick clumps of bamboo and tall grasses. The Gangetic plain is largely under cultivation. The Deccan tableland supports vegetation from scrub to mixed deciduous forests. The Malabar region is rich in forest vegetation. The Andaman and Nicobar Islands have evergreen, mangrove, beach and diluvial forests. Much of the country's flora originated three million years ago and are unique to the sub-continent.

Population

The population of India crossed the billion mark at the turn of the millenium. The mammoth census of 2001 is in the process of being compiled. In 1996, the population was 945 million with 73% in rural areas. In terms of population, India is the world's second-largest country, after China. 16% of the world's population lives in India. The average population density is 320 per sq km (in 1996), though it reaches 6,888 per sq km in the larger cities. In July 2003 it was 1,049,700,118 (est.)

Languages

India, according to a recent census has 1,652 dialects. Needless to say that most of them are only spoken dialects. The principal languages with rich literary heritage are :- Assamese, Bengali, English, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu.

Natural resources

Coal (Fourth-largest reserves in the world), Iron ore, Manganese, Mica, Bauxite, Titanium ore, Chromite, Natural gas, Diamonds, Petroleum, Limestone, Arable land

Environment-current issues

Deforestation, Soil erosion, Overgrazing, Desertification, Air pollution from industrial effluents and vehicle emissions, Water pollution from raw sewage and runoff of agricultural pesticides, Tap water is not potable throughout the country, Huge and growing population is overstraining natural resources.

India is a land of incredible diversity. The diversity of the Indian population is matched by the incredible physical diversity. The sixteen official languages of India, the five major religions, and the caste system create somewhat chaotic conditions for the nation. It dominates South Asian subcontinent; near important Indian Ocean trade routes.

Geography of the World

Universe and Solar System

In the vastness of the Universe, the Earth, the Sun and planets are tiny dots. The Sun is a single star in a Galaxy comprising 100,000 million stars.The Solar System is centred on the Sun. It consists of a star called the Sun and all the objects that travel around it. The Solar System includes : 9 planets (Mercury,

Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto), along with the numerous satellites that travel around most of them; planet-like objects called asteroids (hundreds of asteroids); chunks of iron and stone called meteoroids; bodies of dust and foreign gases called comets (thousands of comets); and drifting particles called interplanetary dust and electrically charged gas called plasma that together make up the interplanetary medium.The whole solar system by volume appears to be an empty void. This vacuum of 'space' comprises the interplanetary medium. The speed of the solar wind is about 400 kilometer per second in the vicinity of Earths' orbit.The Solar System originated in a primitive solar nebula–a rotating disc of gas and dust. It is from this rotating disc that the planets and the rest of the Solar System evolved. The Solar System is also tucked away in a corner of the Milky Way at a distance of about 30,000 to 33,000 light years from the centre of the galaxy.The Sun contains 99.85% of all the matter in the Solar System. The planets which condensed out of the same disk of material that formed the Sun, contains only 0.135% of the mass of the Solar System.Jupiter contains more them twice the matter of all the other planets combined. Satellites of the planets, comets, asteroids, meteoroids, and the interplanetary medium constitute the remaining 0.015%.

THE PLANETS

The bodies revolving around the sun (at the same time rotating on their imaginary axis) are called planets. They have no light of their own but shine by radiating the fight they receive from the sun. They all revolve around the sun in elliptical orbits. Until about 200 years ago only six planets were known. Three more planets were discovered later, the latest being Pluto (discovered in 1930). Nine planets can now be identified.MercuryMercury is the planet nearest to the sun. It rotates on its own axis in 56.65 earth days. It takes 88 days to complete one revolution round the sun. Thus it is the fastest planet in our solar system.VenusAlso known as the evening star and morning star, is the brightest object in the sky after the sun and the moon. It is slightly smaller than the earth and is the planet closest to the earth. It is also the hottest planet in our solar system and has a weak magnetic belt.MarsMars is the fourth planet from the sun and is the next planet after the earth. Being favorably situated, it is brighter than most of the stars and, is therefore, known as the Red Planet. It has two small satellites called Phobos (Fear) and Deimos (Terror).JupiterJupiter is the largest planet in our solar system. It is about eleven times larger than the earth. Its volume is one and half times the volume of all the planets combined together. The most conspicuous aspect about Jupiter is its Great Red Spot. It is also known as the giant planet because of its huge size.SaturnSaturn is an outer planet visible to the naked eye. Second in size to Jupiter, it is the least dense of all the planets. The most spectacular feature of Saturn is its system of rings. The ring system is made up of a variety of separate particles which move independently in circular orbits. It has 46 satellites. Titan is its biggest.UranusUranus is the seventh planet from the sun and is not visible to the naked eye. It was identified as a planet in 1781 by William Herchel. It has completed only two revolutions round the sun since its discovery, and takes about 84 terrestrial years to circle round the sun. It has 27 satellites.NeptuneNeptune is not visible to the naked eye but can be seen through a small telescope as a greenish star. It is eighth in position from the sun. This planet was discovered by J.G. Galle of Berlin in 1846. Till 1930, it was believed to be the farthest planet from the sun and the outermost in our solar system. It has eight satellites, and Triton and Nereid are the most con-spicuous of them.PlutoPluto is the youngest planet to be discovered in our solar system. It was discovered photographically by C.W. Tombaugh (USA) in 1930. It is the smallest planet in our solar system; slightly smaller than Mercury and visible only through a tele-scope. The duration of its revolution round the sun is the longest and it is, therefore, the slowest planet in our solar system.

SATELLITES

Satellite are bodies which revolve around the planets. All planets have one or more satellites, except Mercury and Venus. The moon is the earth's natural satellite. There are approximately 62 satel-lites in our solar system.In August 1989, the US Space probes Voyager-1 and Voyager-2 revealed six new satellites around Neptune which was earlier believed to have only two satellites.The MoonThe moon is the earth's natural satellite and is its nearest neighbour in space. It revolves around the earth while rotating on its own axis. Only 59% of its surface is directly visible from the earth. Of all satellites in the solar system, the moon is the largest in proportion to its primary body, that is, the earth. All other satellites have sizes below 1/8 the size of the mother planet. The moon is about 1/4 the size of its mother planet, the earth. It takes about 1.3 seconds for moonlight to reach the earth, whereas sunlight takes about 8 minutes and 16.6 seconds to reach the earth.The moon takes 27 days 7 hours 43 minutes and 11.47 seconds to complete one revolution of the earth. It rotates on its axis in exactly the same time. Hence, we see only one side of the moon.

THE EARTH

Modern theories on the formation of the Earth and other planets are of course based on the Copernican theory.The age of the Earth was a matter of speculation till very recent times. It was only about 200 years ago, that scientific enquiries were started by geologists. According to their deductions, based on the study of rocks, the age of the Earth is 4.6 billion years.Our knowledge of the internal structure of the Earth is derived from studies of earthquakes. The shock waves sent out by an earthquake indicate the physical nature of the regions through which they pass. These studies show that the centre of the Earth is a solid core–the Inner Core. The density of this core is about 13 g to the cubic centimeter. The Inner Core is about 1,370 km thick and is surrounded by an Outer Core of around 2,080 km. The Outer Core appears to be molten.The Outer Core is surrounded by the Mantle which has a thickness of around 2,900 km. The Mantle is topped by the crust of the Earth, which varies widely in thickness–from 12 to 60 km. At the centre or the Inner Core, that is at a depth of some 6,370 km, temperature goes upto some 4,000°C and pressure reaches nearly 4 million at mospheres.The mantle is important in many ways. It accounts for nearly half the radius of the Earth (2,900 km), 83% of its volume and 67% of its mass. The dynamic processes which determine the movements of the crust plates are powered by the mantle.Starting at an average depth of from 45 to 56 km below the top surface of the Earth, the mantle continues to a depth of 2,900 km where it joins the outer core. The mantle is a shell of red hot rock and separates the Earth's metallic and partly melted core (both the inner and the outer cores) from the cooler rocks of the Earth's crust.It is composed of sllicate minerals rich in magnesium and Iron. The density of the mantle in-creases with depth from about 3.5 gram per cubic centimetre to around 5.5 gram, near the outer core.The outer surface of the Earth is divided into 4 spheres:*Lithosphere* means the entire top crust of the Earth and includes not only the land surface but also the ocean floor.*Hydrosphere* is the water sur-face which includes the oceans, lakes and rivers. *Atmosphere* is the blanket of air that envelops the Earth. It covers both the land surface and the water surface.*Biosphere* is this sphere of life which spreads over all the three other spheres.Earth's MovementsThe earth has two types of move-ments, viz. rotation or daily motion and revolution or annual motion.The earth spins on its own im-aginary axis from west to east once in 24 h (in precisely 23 h 56 min and 40.91 s). It is also called diurnal or daily motion. The axis is an imaginary line which runs form north to south and passes through the centre of the earth. It always remains in-clined at an angle of 66½° to the plane of the earth's orbit.Effects of Rotation:(i) Occurrence of day and night.(ii) The position of a place on earth can be fixed.(iii) Change in the direction of wind and ocean currents.

ECLIPSES

When the light of the sun or the moon is obscured by another body the sun or moon is said to be in eclipse.Lunar Eclipse: The moon is said to be in eclipse when the earth comes between the moon and the sun, and this is called Lunar eclipse. The shadow cast by the earth on the moon is called an eclipse. Lunar eclipse occurs only on a full moon day. However, it does not occur on every full moon day because the moon is not in the same position in relation to the earth and the sun on every full moon day.Solar Eclipse: The sun is said- to be in eclipse when the moon comes between the sun and the earth. This is called Solar eclipse. There is either a partial or total obstruction of the sun's light when viewed from the earth. A solar eclipse occurs on a new moon day when the moon is in line with the sun. However, due to the inclination of the moon's orbit, a solar eclipse does not occur on every new moon day.

ATMOSPHERE

The atmosphere is a gaseous en-velope that surrounds a celestial body. The terrestrial atmosphere, by nature of its composition, control of temperature and shielding effect against solar radiation, makes life possible on earth. It covers both the land and the water surface. It is bound to the earth by the gravitational pull of the earth. The composition of the atmosphere changes as we go higher from the earth's surface. Upto about a height of 50 km from the earth, the atmosphere is composed of:Nitrogen 78.09%Oxygen 20.95%Argon 0.93%Minor gases (Carbon dioxide, hydrogen, neon, helium, methane, xenon, krypton, etc.) 0.03%After a height of 50 km above the earth's surface the atmosphere is made up of atomic oxygen (O2), ozone (O3), helium and hydrogen.Atmospheric LayersThese are the layers of air that lie above the earth's surface. The atmosphere of the earth is arranged into layers as accrued below, viz.Troposphere: The troposphere is the layer nearest to the earth's surface and extends from sea-level to a height of about 15 km. This region is the densest of all the atmospheric layers and contains water vapour, moisture and dust. In this region the temperature decreases as the height increases from the earth.Tropopause: Tropopause is the layer which separates the troposphere (lowest layer) from the stratosphere (upper layer).Stratosphere: This is the region of uniform temperature extending from an altitude of about 15km above the earth to a height of about 50 kill. It is free

from water vapour, clouds and dust.Mesosphere: This is a very cold region and lies above the ozone-rich layer of the stratosphere. It extends from 50 or 80 km above the earth's surface.Menopause: The Menopause separates the mesosphere from the next layer called the ionosphere.Ionosphere: The ionosphere lies immediately above the mesosphere and extends from 60 to 400 km above the earth's surface. This layer contains ionised (or electrically charged) air which protects the earth from the falling meteorites (shooting stars) as most of them burn out in this region. It also protects the earth from the harmful radiations of the sun. The ionosphere consists of 'D', 'E' and 'F' layers and includes the thermosphere and exosphere. Thermosphere: This is the middle layer of the ionosphere. It is the region of the atmosphere where the temperature is above 100°C.Exosphere: The exosphere is the uppermost region of the ionosphere and makes up the outer limits of the atmosphere. Here the gravity of the earth is exceedingly weak. The magnetic belt of the earth which is known as Magnetosphere, extends to about 64,000 km above the earth's surface. The exosphere is now considered as part of the magnetosphere. The outer boundary of the magnetosphere or the final boundary between the earth and outer space is known its magnetopause.The land surface of the earth is made up of immense land masses divided into seven continents and a great number of islands. Together, they cover about one quarter of the earth's surface.It is believed that originally there was only one land mass called Pangaea. This large land mass split into a northern mass Laurasia and a southern one called Gondwana Land. From these two land masses, the continents gradually drifted to where they are now located and the process is still continuing.

Physical Geography

Physical Geography also known as geosystems or physiography. It is one of the two major subfields of geography. Physical geography is that branch of natural science which deals with the study of processes and patterns in the natural environment like atmosphere, biosphere and geosphere, as opposed to the cultural or built environment, the domain of human geography.

Within the body of physical geography, the Earth is often split either into several spheres or environments, the main spheres being the atmosphere, biosphere, cryosphere, geosphere, hydrosphere, lithosphere and pedosphere. Research in physical geography is often interdisciplinary and uses the systems approach.

From the birth of geography as a science during the Greek classical period and until the late nineteenth century with the birth of anthropogeography or Human Geography, Geography was almost exclusively a natural science: the study of location and descriptive gazetteer of all places of the known world. Several works among the best known during this long period could be cited as an example, from Strabo (Geography), Eratosthenes (Geography) or Dionisio Periegetes (Periegesis Oiceumene) in the Ancient Age to the Alexander von Humboldt (Cosmos) in the century XIX, in which geography is regarded as a physical and natural science, of course, through the work Summa de Geografía of Martín Fernández de Enciso from the early sixteenth century, which is indicated for the first time the New World.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a controversy exported from Geology, between supporters of James Hutton (uniformitarianism Thesis) and Georges Cuvier (catastrophism) strongly influenced the field of geography, because geography at this time was a natural science since Human Geography or Antropogeography had just developed as a discipline in the late nineteenth century.

Two historical events during the nineteenth century had a great effect in the further development of physical geography. The first was the European colonial expansion in Asia, Africa, Australia and even America in search of raw materials required by industries during the Industrial Revolution. This fostered the creation of geography departments in the universities of the colonial powers and the birth and development of national geographical societies, thus giving rise to the process identified by Horacio Capel as the institutionalization of geography.

One of the most prolific empires in this regard was the Russian. A mid-eighteenth century many geographers are sent by the Russian altamirazgo different opportunities to perform geographical surveys in the area of Arctic Siberia. Among these is who is considered the patriarch of Russian geography: Mikhail Lomonosov who in the mid-1750s began working in the Department of Geography, Academy of Sciences to conduct research in Siberia, their contributions are notable in this regard, shows the soil organic origin, develops a comprehensive law on the movement of the ice that still governs the basics, thereby founding a new branch of Geography: Glaciology. In 1755 his initiative was founded Moscow University where he promotes the study of geography and the training of geographers. In 1758 he was appointed director of the Department of Geography, Academy of Sciences, a post from which would develop a working methodology for geographical survey guided by the most important long expeditions and geographical studies in Russia. Thus followed the line of Lomonosov and the contributions of the Russian school became more frequent through his disciples, and in the nineteenth century we have great geographers as Vasily Dokuchaev who performed works of great importance as a "principle of comprehensive analysis of the territory" and "Russian Chernozem" latter being the most important where introduces the geographical concept of soil, as distinct from a simple geological strata, and thus founding a new geographic area of study: the Pedology. Climatology also receive a strong boost from the Russian school by Wladimir Köppen whose main contribution, climate classification, is still valid today. However, this great geographer also contributed to the Paleogeography through his work "The climates of the geological past" which is considered the father of Paleoclimatology. Russian geographers who made great contributions to the discipline in this period were: NM Sibirtsev, Pyotr Semyonov, K. D. Glinka, Neustrayev, among others.

The second important process is the theory of evolution by Darwin in mid-century (which decisively influenced the work of Ratzel, who had academic training as a zoologist and was a follower of Darwin's ideas) which meant an important impetus in the development of Biogeography.

Another major event in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century will give a major boost to development of geography and will take place in United States. It is the work of the famous geographer William Morris Davis who not only made important contributions to the establishment of discipline in his country, but revolutionized the field to develop geographical cycle theory which he proposed as a paradigm for Geography in general, although in actually served as a paradigm for Physical Geography. His theory explained that mountains and other landforms are shaped by the influence of a number of factors that are manifested in the geographical cycle. He explained that the cycle begins with the lifting of the relief by geological processes (faults, volcanism, tectonic upheaval, etc.).. Geographical factors such as rivers and runoff begins to create the V-shaped valleys between the mountains (the stage called "youth"). During this first stage, the terrain is steeper and more irregular. Over time, the currents can carve wider valleys ("maturity") and then start to wind, towering hills only ("senescence"). Finally, everything comes to what is a plain flat plain at the lowest elevation possible (called "baseline") This plain was called by Davis' "peneplain" meaning "almost plain" Then the rejuvenation occurs and there is another mountain lift and the cycle continues. Although Davis's theory is not entirely accurate, it was absolutely revolutionary and unique in its time and helped to modernize and create Geography subfield of Geomorphology. Its implications prompted a myriad of research in various branches of Physical Geography. In the case of the Paleogeography this theory provided a model for understanding the evolution of the landscape. For Hydrology, Glaciology and Climatology as a boost investigated as studying geographic factors shape the landscape and affect the cycle. The bulk of the work of William Morris Davis led to the development of a new branch of Physical Geography: Geomorphology whose contents until then did not differ from the rest of Geography. Shortly after this branch would present a major development. Some of his disciples made significant contributions to various branches of physical geography such as Curtis Marbut and his invaluable legacy for Pedology, Mark Jefferson, Isaiah Bowman, among others.

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