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SE Computer Shift-I

HSS Activity-2

**Cultural Diversity of India**

Culture is defined as a people’s way of life. It also entails how they dress, how they speak, the type of food they eat, the manner in which they worship, and their art among many other things.

Indian culture, therefore, is the Indians’ way of life. Because of the population diversity, there is immense variety in Indian culture. The Indian culture is a blend of various cultures belonging to belonging to diverse religion, castes, regions follow their own tradition and culture.

**Unity in Diversity:** India is a land of unity in diversity where people of different sects, caste and religion live together. India is also called the land of unity in diversity as different groups of people co-operate with each other to live in a single society. Unity in diversity has also become strength of India.

**Secularism:** The word secularism means equality, impartiality, etc. towards all religion. India is a secular country, which means, equal treatment of all the religions present in India.

Kerala:

Kerala, southwestern coastal state of India. It is a small state, constituting only about 1 percent of the total area of the country. Kerala stretches for about 360 miles (580 km) along the Malabar Coast, varying in width from roughly 20 to 75 miles (30 to 120 km). It is bordered by the states of Karnataka (formerly Mysore) to the north and Tamil Nadu to the east and by the Arabian Sea to the south and west; it also surrounds Mahe, a segment of the state of Puducherry, on the northwestern coast. The capital is Thiruvananthapuram (Trivandrum).

History:

Kerala is first mentioned (as Keralaputra) in a 3rd-century-BCE rock inscription left by the Mauryan emperor Ashoka. In the last centuries BCE this region became famous among the Greeks and Romans for its spices (especially pepper). During the first five centuries CE the region was a part of Tamilakam—the territory of the Tamils—and thus was sometimes partially controlled by the eastern Pandya and Chola dynasties, as well as by the Cheras. In the 1st century Jewish immigrants arrived, and, according to local Christian tradition, St. Thomas the Apostle visited Kerala in the same century (see St. Thomas [Mar Thoma] Christians).

Cultural Life:

The cultural heritage of Kerala reflects extensive interaction with diverse communities from antiquity to the present. With an array of ancient Hindu temples with copper-clad roofs, later mosques with “Malabar gables” (triangular projections at the rooftops), and Baroque churches from the Portuguese colonial era, the state’s architecture offers a chronicle of the social, spiritual, and political history of the area. Other characteristically Keralan art forms include intricate paintings on wood, thematic murals, and a remarkable variety of indoor and outdoor lamps (from which the state has earned the sobriquet “Land of Lamps”).

Literature and learning, in both Tamil and Sanskrit, have flourished since the 2nd century CE; meanwhile, the Malayalam language, though an offshoot of Tamil, has absorbed much from Sanskrit and also has a prolific literature. Notable names in Malayalam poetry are Tunchattu Eluttaccan and Kuncan Nampiyar among classical poets and Kumaran Asan and Vallathol in the 20th century. In 1889 Chandu Menon wrote Indulekha, the first outstanding novel in Malayalam, for which he received a certificate from Queen Victoria. Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai, who produced hundreds of works before his death in 1999, has remained among the most widely read Malayali novelists.

Most traditional dances of Kerala pertain to the great Indian epics—the Mahabharata and the Ramayana—or to the honouring of specific Hindu deities. In kathakali, the classical martial dance-drama of Kerala, male performers portray both male and female characters. By contrast, the bharata natyam dancing, dating to early Tamil times, is practiced exclusively by females.

Health and welfare:

The state maintains a relatively high standard of health service. A comprehensive health insurance plan is available for workers in a number of professions, and free medical treatment is offered in many hospitals, health centres, and dispensaries. Among the top priorities of government health schemes have been the establishment of health care facilities in rural areas, the promotion of family planning, prevention of blindness, and control of communicable diseases such as leprosy, tuberculosis, and malaria.

Education:

Kerala has one of the most advanced educational systems and highest levels of literacy in India. Elementary education is compulsory between the ages of 6 and 14. There are primary, middle, and secondary schools, as well as polytechnical and industrial training institutes, arts and science colleges, and professional colleges. Kerala also has several universities, including the University of Kerala (1937) in Thiruvananthapuram, the University of Calicut (1968) in Kozhikode, Cochin University of Science and Technology (1971) in Kochi, and Kerala Agricultural University (1971) in Thrissur.

Economy:

Agriculture is the state’s main economic activity. Commercial plantings on less than half of the total land under cultivation earn a sizable amount of foreign exchange but have necessitated the importation of food for local consumption. Kerala’s principal cash crops are rubber, coffee, and tea, which are cultivated in plantations on the slopes of the foothills, as well as areca nut, cardamom, cashew nut, coconut, ginger, and pepper. The major food crops are rice, pulses (e.g., peas and beans), sorghum, and tapioca. Commercial poultry farming is well developed.

Government And Society:

The structure of the government of Kerala, like that of most other states of India, is determined by the national constitution of 1950. Appointed by the president of India, the governor is the head of the state and functions on the advice of the chief minister, who is the head of the Council of Ministers. The state has an elected unicameral Legislative Assembly (Vidhan Sabha). The High Court in Ernakulam (near Kochi) is headed by a chief justice; appeals from the High Court may go to the Supreme Court of India. Below the High Court are district courts, subdivisional courts, munsifs’ (subordinate judicial officers’) courts, and munsif-magistrate courts. In addition, there are family courts and other courts that handle particular types of cases.

At the local level, the state is divided into districts, which in turn are subdivided for revenue purposes into talukas (subdivisions) and villages. Since the mid-20th century, Kerala’s political experience has largely been one of instability, with a proliferation of political parties and coalition governments.