

CHAPTER-20

KINDS OF SOCIETIES



After studying this chapter you learn :

- Make a list the different types of society.
- Understand the features of different types of societies.

We do not get to see the same kind of society everywhere. Various aspects like lifestyles, culture, customs and traditions, professions etc., differ from place to place. We can see even now many people of the cowherd-community making a living by hunting and gathering roots and tubers. Similarly, when we go to rural areas, we can see innumerable sheep, cattle, other pet animals, and also green fields stretching as far as the eye can see. We can also notice clusters of houses, isolated houses, farmers carrying ploughs, women carrying water in pots from wells.

In cities like Bangalore, Hubli, Mumbai and Delhi we see roads teeming with traffic, noisy crowds, vast suburbs and slums. We can also come across people wearing different kinds of clothes, factories spewing smoke, tall buildings, universities and huge hospitals.

This means that society is not the same everywhere. It is of different forms in different places. Hence we classify societies into different kinds. These are:

- 1 hunting and food-gathering society
- 2 cattle-rearing society
- 3 farming society
- 4 industrial society

1. Hunting and Food-Gathering Society

This is the simplest and the oldest of all forms of human societies. This society is very small, comprising very few people, and adopts a nomadic life style. The weapons they use are – axe made

from stone, spear, dagger etc. These people hunt wild animals for their survival. They also gather fruits, seeds, roots, tubers and vegetables grown wild in the forest. They do not have any desire to earn money. They lead lives sharing everything with others.

Features of this society

- 1 This society comprises very small and scattered groups of people. It never has more than 40-50 people.
- 2 Since this society keeps on moving from place to place, the people have to move to a new place in search of food when it is scarce in one place.
- 3 People in this society do not desire to earn wealth. There is no concept of wealth in their society. Whatever they get, they share it with one another.
- 4 The whole society is bound together by means of relationships. There is no personal identity. Family and relationships are the only mutually related institutions.
- 5 Since there are no political institutions, there are no categories of the rulers and the ruled here.

2. Cattle-Rearing Society

The society which rears herds of cattle for its livelihood is a cattle-rearing society. Here the people satisfy their needs by hunting, cattle-rearing, food-gathering. Even today we can see cattle-rearing societies in parts of Africa and Central Asia.

Features of this society

- 1 These societies are comparatively big and consist of several hundreds to thousands of people. For example: The Bhaktiyari community has about 5000 to 1,50,000 people.
- 2 These societies can be usually seen on grasslands, hilly regions, deserts and areas not suitable for agriculture. These are the areas congenial for cattle-rearing. That is the reason their main occupation is cattle-rearing.

- 3 In this society, the one who possesses the largest number of cattle becomes more powerful than the others. He is considered rich and becomes the leader of the group. As rich families go on progressing, they lead to the birth of leadership in society. This leads to inequality in society.

3. Farming society

A farming society depends on cultivation of vast areas of land for the livelihood. People make use of animals to plough the land.

Features of this society

- 1 A 'Farming Revolution' began with the invention of the plough around 3000 B.C.E. With this, the production of food too increased. Food production increased much more when animals were used to draw the plough.
- 2 Cultivation is the main occupation in the farming society. Hence people stayed in the same place. With this permanent settlement of people, villages took shape.
- 3 Since increased food production was possible in the fields, it was not necessary for everyone to work there throughout the day. Therefore, majority of the people engaged themselves in other activities. As a result, cities evolved, and their population too increased significantly.

4. Industrial Society

The society which depends on industries that manufacture products with the use of science and technology is called an industrial society.

Features of this society

- 1 New inventions transformed the society totally. The steam engine, internal combustion engine, electric energy, nuclear energy and others have brought about and are bringing wide-ranging social and economic transformation.
- 2 Many people migrate to cities where industries are established. Therefore, the population in cities increases.

- 3 Division of labour is needed to run industries. Division of labour involves division of the work according to the skills of the workers. In the industrial society, we see division of labour in all aspects.

EXERCISES

I Fill in the blanks with suitable words :

- 1 The members of the hunting society used _____ weapons.
- 2 In farming _____ is used for ploughing.
- 3 Division of tasks according to skills is called _____.

II Answer the following questions :

- 4 What is meant by 'Cattle-rearing' society?
- 5 What do you mean by 'Farming society'?
- 6 What is meant by 'Industrial society'?
- 7 What are the kinds of societies?

III Answer the following in four-five sentences each :

- 8 Describe the life style in the hunting and food-gathering society.
- 9 Mention the features of the cattle-rearing society.
- 10 Explain the features of the farming society.
- 11 Describe the features of the industrial society.

IV Activities :

12. Compare and contrast the lifestyle of urban & rural people area with help of teacher.
13. Sit in groups, discuss the concept of an ideal society.
