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Unit-I

Northern Mountains

Let us Learn about

- Northern Mountains
- Trans-Himalayan Range
- Purvanchal Range
- Life in the Region
- Importance of the Himalayas

Gear Up

Read the following clues and answer the question that follows:

1. I am the highest peak of the world.
2. I am located in Nepal.
3. River Ganga originates here.



Who am I?

NORTHERN MOUNTAINS

The Northern Mountains include the Himalayas and the Karakoram Mountain Ranges. They stretch across the northern boundary of India. The Himalayan Range is the highest mountain ranges in the world. The word 'Himalaya' means 'the abode of snow'. Most of the Himalayan peaks remain covered with snow throughout the year. The Himalayan ranges in India stretch from Jammu and Kashmir in the north to Arunachal Pradesh in the north-east.

The Himalayas consist of three parallel ranges. They are:

- The Greater Himalayas (Himadri)
- The Lesser Himalayas (Himachal)
- The Outer Himalayas (Shivalik)



The Himalayan Ranges

Several **glaciers** originate from these mountains. Many rivers such as Ganga and Yamuna originate from these glaciers. Mt Everest (8,850 m approx) is the highest peak of the Himalayas. It is also the highest peak of the world and is located in Nepal. Kanchenjunga (8,586 m) and Nanda Devi (7,816 m) are the prominent peaks at the Indian part of the Himalayas.

The Greater Himalayas (Himadri)

Himadri, being the longest continuous mountain range, dominates a large section of the Himalayas. Himadri is the northernmost range. Its total length is about 2,500 km. It is between 150 km and 400 km wide and forms a natural boundary between India and China. It is the highest range with an average altitude of over 6,000 m. The range is always covered with snow as it receives heavy snow fall. At some places, huge masses of ice move down the mountain slopes which are called glaciers. When these glaciers reach the plains, they melt down and flow as rivers. Some of the highest peaks above 8000 m, including Mt Everest

Pit-Stop INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY

Make a list of the highest peaks of the Himalayas with their heights. You can take the help of the Internet to complete your task.

Info Pebble

The first men to climb Mt Everest were Tenzing Norgay and Edmund Hillary. The first Indian woman to climb Mt Everest was Bachendri Pal.



Mt Everest



Kanchenjunga

and Kanchenjunga, are found here. This range is a region of **perpetual** snow cover. Thus, vegetation like mosses and lichen are found in some parts. Farming is not possible in this region.



Kullu Valley

The Middle or Lesser Himalayas (Himachal)

The **Himachal** Range is located between Himadri and Shiwalik. It extends from west to east with an average altitude of 3,700 m to 4,500 m and a width of about 80 km.



glacier: a persistent body of dense ice which constantly moves under its own weight
perpetual: permanent

The Himachal is lower than Himadri. This mountain range has some beautiful valleys such as Chamba, Kullu and Kangra. The famous hill stations of Shimla, Mussoorie, Nainital, Almora and Darjeeling are located in this range. People from the plains visit these hill stations to escape the summer heat. Some important **mountain passes** like Rohtang and Zoji La of Himachal Pradesh are found in this region.



Kangra Valley

The Himachal Range has thick forests that are covered with pine, oak, deodar and fir trees. The climate of this region is suitable for cultivation. Winters are cold and summers are cool and pleasant. The lower slopes of these ranges have orchards. Tea plantations are found in the eastern part of this range.

The Outer Himalayas (Shivalik)

The name 'Shivalik' is a Sanskrit word which literally means 'belonging to Lord Shiva'.

The **Shivaliks** are the lowest and the narrowest range in the entire Himalayan system, lying at the southern part of the Himadri and the Himachal of the Himalayan Range. It has an average height of about 900–1,200 m and a width of about 10–50 km. The Shivaliks rise steeply from the Northern Plains of India and Pakistan and run parallel to the main ranges of the Himalayas. The Shivalik and the Himachal Ranges are separated by deep and narrow valleys called duns. Dehradun is one such example. These slopes are covered with thick forests and a variety of wildlife is found here. Much of the land is used for growing crops like rice, potatoes and maize.

Pit-Stop
INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY

Which range of the Himalayas is known for its hill stations? Name some other hill stations in this range besides the one given in the chapter.



Shivalik Range

TRANS-HIMALAYAN RANGE

The Trans-Himalayan Range lies to the north-west of the Himalayas, beyond the river Indus. This region consists of many mountain ranges like Karakoram Range, Pir Panjal Range of the Himalayas, the Zaskar Range and the Kailash Range. K2 or Mt Godwin Austin (8,611 m), the second highest peak in the world, is of the Karakoram Range. It is one of the greatest ranges of Asia.



Karakoram Mountain Range

PURVANCHAL RANGE

The Purvanchal Range lies along the eastern border of India. These ranges are not very high. Their average height is less than 3,000 m. They are covered with thick forests. The north-eastern hills include Garo, Khasi, Jaintia, Naga, Lushai and Mizo hills.

mountain pass: the gap between two mountain ranges.

Northern Mountains





Group Expedition

GROUP ACTIVITY

Work in groups and find out information about the climatic condition and the life of the people living in mountain regions.



Dal Lake



Nainital Lake

LIFE IN THE REGION

The Himadri region is very cold throughout the year. This makes it very difficult for people and animals to live here. Jammu and Kashmir, parts of Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim lie in this region. The Wular and the Dal are the two famous lakes in Jammu and Kashmir. Houseboats and *shikaras* are found here. Tourism is the main source of income in this region. The people of the state keep *Kangri*, a small pot with burning coal, under their loose outer garments to keep themselves warm. The main festivals celebrated here are Eid and *Shivratri*. Sikkim has people belonging to three main tribes—Lepcha, Bhutia and Nepali. Women in Sikkim wear a long skirt called *baku*. The place is famous for its orchids.

There are many beautiful hill stations in the Himachal range such as Shimla, Dalhousie, Kullu and Manali, which are also the major tourist spots. In the Garhwal and Kumaon regions of Uttarakhand, people are mostly farmers. Mussoorie and Nainital are the popular hill stations here. Darjeeling in West Bengal is known for its tea gardens. The climate in this region is suitable for orchards and tea plantations. Rice, maize, barley, fruits and vegetables are also grown here. Animals like sheep and goats are reared in the hills. In the Kullu region, people mostly speak Hindi. Dussehra is the main festival of this region.

Thick forests and a variety of wildlife are found in the Shiwalik range. Slopes of these mountains are used for terrace farming. Cattle rearing is common in the region. There are many wildlife sanctuaries and national parks in this region. Rice, potatoes and maize are commonly grown here.

IMPORTANCE OF THE HIMALAYAS

- High mountain ranges and peaks of the Himalayas act as a barrier against enemies and play an important role in the defence of our country. It also protects our country from the cold winds coming from Siberia.



Pragati Milestone

Tick (✓) the correct option:

1. The meaning of the term 'Himalaya' is 'abode of snow'.
2. The Himalayas consist of three parallel ranges.
3. The Wular and the Dal lakes are in Jammu and Kashmir.
4. Women in Manipur wear long skirts called *baku*.

Yes

No



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- The Himalayas prevent rain-bearing (monsoon) clouds from escaping northwards, beyond India. This causes rainfall in entire northern India.
- There are dense forests up to an altitude of 1,500 m. A rich variety of vegetation and wildlife are found in these forests.
- The Himalayas are the sources of major rivers like Ganga, Indus, Brahmaputra and their tributaries. These rivers make our land fertile.



Now I Know

- The Northern Mountains stretch across the northern boundary of India.
- The Himalayas have three ranges—the Greater Himalayas (Himadri), the Lesser Himalayas (Himachal) and the Outer Himalayas (Shivaliks).
- The Himalayas protect our northern borders. They also protect us from freezing winds blowing from the north and retain rain-bearing winds that cause rainfall throughout north India.



Let Us Practise

A. Multiple choice questions:

Tick (✓) the correct answer.

1. Orchards and tea plantations are found in:
(a) Himadri range (b) Shivalik range (c) Himachal range
2. The main source of income in the Himadri range is:
(a) Plantation (b) Tourism (c) Animal rearing
3. Karakoram mountain ranges lie to the:
(a) North-east of the Himalayas (b) South-east of the Himalayas
(c) North-west of the Himalayas

B. Fill in the blanks:

1. The mountain ranges in the north-east of India are called _____.
2. River Ganga originates from the _____ ranges.
3. _____ is a long skirt worn by women in Sikkim.
4. The _____ protect us from foreign invasions.
5. _____ are the lowest and the narrowest range in the entire Himalayan ranges.

C. Match the columns:

A

1. Himalayas
2. Purvanchal Range
3. Himachal Pradesh
4. Sikkim
5. Kullu

B

- (a) Baku
- (b) Dussehra
- (c) Three parallel ranges
- (d) covered with thick forests
- (e) Rohtang Pass

D. Answer the following questions:

1. What is meant by the word 'Himalaya'? Name three parallel ranges of the Himalayas.
2. What are 'duns'? Give an example.
3. Why is the Himachal Range of the Himalayas famous?
4. How would you summarise the life of the people in the Himadri region?
5. In which range of the Himalayas do you think crops are cultivated? Give reasons.

A. Project Work

Find out the vegetation and wildlife found in the Himalayas. Paste their pictures in a scrapbook. Also find the names of any two wildlife sanctuaries in the northern states of India where the Himalayas are located.

B. Map Skill

On an outline map of India, mark and label the following:

1. Three ranges of the Himalayas
2. Hill stations of the Himachal Range
3. The highest peaks of the Himalayas



HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skills)

How does the Himalayan Range play a role in controlling the climate of India?



Give It a Try

The Himalayan passes have influenced the political and cultural history of India. Discuss.



Life Skills

Why do you think life in the mountains is difficult? What are the reasons for sparse population in the mountains?



Weblinks

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tSjCN8MCN54>

<http://proof.nationalgeographic.com/2014/08/04/chasing-the-sacred-down-the-ganges-from-snow-to-sea/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mkPwEufhKo>

