

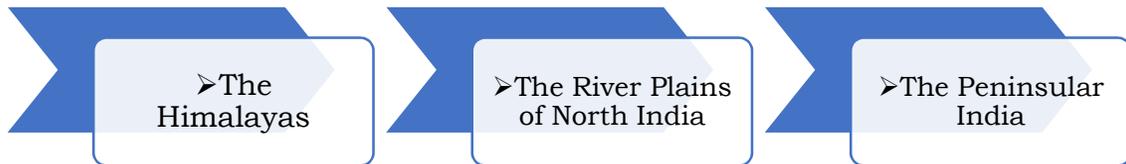
## Lesson2

# The Geographical Setting and Pre-Historic Cultures of India

### Summary

The history of the people is greatly conditioned by the geography and environment of the region in which they live. These determine the settlement pattern, population spread, food products, human behavior and dietary habits of a region. Different environmental conditions and varying availability of resources have resulted in distinct socio-economic and cultural formations in different regions. You will read about all these factors in this lesson which will help you to understand history better.

Based on geographical diversities, the subcontinent can be broadly divided into three main regions:



### The River Plains of North India

- The Himalayas also provide India with three river systems dominated by the Indus, the Ganges, and the Brahmaputra
- The Gangetic plains is divided into three sub-regions:
  - -Upper-Middle- Lower

### The Himalayas

- The Himalayas are the world's largest and the highest mountain ranges.
- These are approximately 2,400 kilometers long.

- In the north-western direction the broken Himalayan ranges contain the major routes linking the Indian plains with Iran & Central Asia through Afghanistan.

### Peninsular India

Peninsular India includes the Deccan plateau and the coastal plains of South India. It is divided into three major regions

- Maharashtra
- Andhra Pradesh
- Karnataka

## Influence of Environment

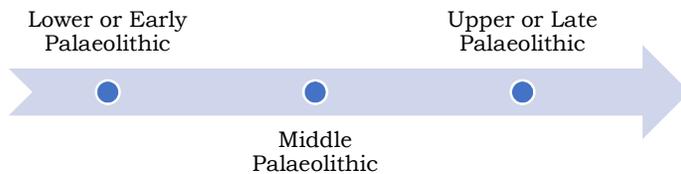
The environment mainly comprises of elements such as climate, landscape, rivers, species of plants and animals etc.

- The settlement of people in any region is very much dependent on its environmental conditions.
- A **semi-arid** region is advantageous to people for settlement purpose.
- The environmental conditions also determine the resource potential of a region.
- The subsistence pattern is also influenced by the environmental conditions.

## Prehistoric Cultures-

Prehistoric period is that period of our ancient past for which we do not have written records.

- Based on the different type of tools and techniques the stages of human development in prehistoric period are described as the:
  - Palaeolithic or Old Stone Age,



- Mesolithic or Middle Stone Age,
- Neolithic or New Stone Age.

Culture	Tools	Sites	Subsistence Pattern
Palaeolithic	-Hand axes	-Kashmir Valley and the Sohan Valley in Rawalpindi.	• Hunting animals and gathering fruits and roots.
	-Cleavers	-Luni river	• They led a nomadic life and migrated to places where plant and animal resources along with water were easily available.
	-Choppers	-Rivers Sabarmati, Mahi and their tributaries in Gujarat	
	-Flake tools or chipped pieces	-Nevasa on a tributary of Godavari and Patne in the	

		Tapti river system	
	-Burins and scrapers	-Bhimbetka	
		-Adamgarh in the district Hoshangabad	
		-The Belan Valley	
		-Meghalaya (Garo Hills)	
		-Attirampakkam in Chingleput region	
		-In Peninsular India, Palaeolithic tools have been	
		reported from Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka	
<b>Mesolithic</b>	Microliths	-Langhnaj (District Mehsana) in Gujarat - Bhimbetka (near Bhopal) in Madhya Pradesh	• The Mesolithic people still subsisted on hunting and gathering, but now there was a shift in the pattern of hunting from the big animals to the smaller animals.
		-Chopani Mando (near Allahabad in Belan Valley) in Uttar Pradesh	• Fishing and fowling also became important.
		-Birbhanpur (District Burdwan) in West Bengal	
		-Sanganakallu (District Bellary) in Karnataka	
		-Tuticorin in southern Tamil Nadu.	
<b>Neolithic</b>		- Mehrgarh	• The advent of agriculture marked a significant change in Neolithic phase and people cultivated crops like wheat, barley, rice, millet, lentils, etc.
The Neolithic culture had following characteristics:	-The Neolithic tools consist of the ground tools having smooth surfaces, and well-rounded and symmetrical shapes. -Different types of axes called 'celt'	-Burzahom and Gufkral	• Hunting remained an important occupation.
• Beginning of agricultural activities.		-The Belan Valley along the edge of	• The people domesticated animals like sheep, goat, cattle, etc.
• Domestication of animals.		Vindhyan plateau	
• Grinding and polishing of stone tools having sharper edges.		-Koldihwa and Mahagara	
• Use of pottery.			

## The Prehistoric Art

Rock Painting-Bhimbetka in Madhya Pradesh

Animals like boar, buffalo, monkey and nilgai are often depicted in these paintings

The social activities like the childbirth, rearing of a child and burial ceremony are also shown in the rock paintings

### **Evaluate Yourself-**

- Q. Write any two activities which made the early primitive humans different from the human beings we see today?
- Q. How did the primitive humans use the environment to sustain themselves?
- Q. On the map mark the Palaeolithic sites.