

There is a vital difference between the empire building of pre-capitalist times and that of capitalist times.

- pre-capitalist conquerors pillaged and exacted tribute. But did not interfere with the economic bases.
- In contrast British colonialism which was based on a capitalist system directly interfered to ensure greatest profit and benefit to British capitalism. (Imperialism and capitalism combine)
 - Capitalism and neo-colonialism is on the evidence as well -- China and debt trap policy.
- **Every policy was geared towards the strengthening and expansion of British capitalism.**
 - **Changed the law of the land**
 - changed not just land ownership laws but decided even what crops ought to be grown and what ought not to be -- **rise of plantation agriculture, cash crops**
 - meddled with the manufacturing sector.
 - **altered the way production and distribution of goods took place. -- integration of markets via railway**
 - It entered into the forests.
 - **Forest Acts that changed the lives of tribals, pastoralists.**

Colonialism also led to considerable movement of people. It led to movement of people from one part to another within India.

- people from present day Jharkhand moved to Assam to work on the tea plantations.
- **newly emerging middle class** particularly from the British Presidency regions of Bengal and Madras moved as government employees and **professionals like doctors and lawyers moved to different parts of the country.**
- People were carted in ships from India to work on other colonised lands in **distant Asia, Africa and Americas.**
 - After 1834 till 1920, ships left from the ports of India on regular basis carrying people of various religions, gender, classes and castes destined to work for a minimum of five years on one of the plantations in Mauritius. For many decades, the recruiting ground was centred in Bihar, in particular, in districts, such as Patna, Gaya, Arrah, Saran, Tirhoot, Champaran, Munger (Monghyr), Bhagalpur and Purnea.
- Today many of their descendents are known as people of Indian origin.

Contradiction of modernity in colonial india: Colonialism led to the growth of an English educated Indian middle class. They read the thinkers of western enlightenment, philosophers of liberal democracy and dreamt of ushering in a liberal and progressive India. And yet, humiliated by colonial rule they asserted their pride in traditional learning and scholarship.

In North eastern part of India, colonial control over forests were used to subjugate people.

Colonialism is not just a topic in history but something which lives on in complex ways in our lives even today.

- parliamentary democracy
- Bureaucracy, military, police, judicial institutions
- people of indian origin who went to different countries as indentured labourers.
- various issues such as rise of communal consciousness, caste becoming political identity have colonial roots.
- division of country into three parts -- India, Pak, later Bangladesh profoundly affected the subcontinent.

Features and growth of capitalism:

- Capitalism is an economic system in which the means of production are privately owned and organised to accumulate profits within a market system.
- Capitalism in the west emerged out of a complex process of European exploration of the rest of the world, its plunder of wealth and resources, an unprecedented growth of science and technology, its harnessing to industries and agriculture.
- **Western colonialism was inextricably connected to the growth of western capitalism.**
[elucidate.]

Nation states are closely associated with the rise of nationalism.

The principle of nationalism assumes that **any set of people have a right to be free and exercise sovereign power.**

URBANISATION AND INDUSTRIALISATION

- **Industrialisation refers to the emergence of machine production, based on the use of inanimate power resources like steam or electricity.**
- Over 90 per cent of people in the west live in towns and cities, where most jobs are to be found and new job opportunities are created.
- In India the initial impact of the same British industrialisation led to more people moving into agriculture. [de-industrialization in India.]
- Industrialisation is not just about new machine based production but also a story of the growth of new social groups in society and new social relationships.
 - rise of **middle class**
 - **dilution of caste's importance** especially in urban area -- anonymity provided by urban areas.
 - Differentiation along economic class.
 - **New powerful groups who own capital and means of production.** Entrepreneurs become more powerful.

- **Cities had a key role in the economic system of empires.**
 - Coastal cities such as Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai as port cities
 - link between primary economic centres in Britain and periphery in India
 - Cities in this sense were the concrete expression of global capitalism
 - decline of old centres of trade such as Murshidabad, and rise of new cities (Kolkata, Mumbai, Madras)
 - Kolkata was made out of three villages (named Kolikata, Gobindapur, and Sutanuti) by the river Hugli
- Plantation adversely affected Indian labourers. Were forced to do the work. Harsh conditions. Labour system was akin to indentured labour.

Early industrialisation and urbanisation in the modern period were governed by colonial interests.

Elucidate.

INDUSTRIALISATION IN INDEPENDENT INDIA

- the issue of economic exploitation under colonial rule was a central issue
- The Swadeshi movement strengthened the loyalty to the national economy.
- Indian nationalists saw rapid industrialisation of the economy as the path towards both growth and social equity.
- Development of **heavy and machine-making industries**, **expansion of the public sector** and holding of a **large cooperative sector** were considered very important.
- "these days the **biggest temple and mosques and gurdwara is the place where man works for the good of mankind**" - J L Nehru

National Planning committee of 1938:

In 1938 a National Planning Committee with **Jawaharlal Nehru as the Chairman** and K.T. Shah as the general editor was set up by the Indian National Congress.

The Committee started functioning in 1939, but it could not make much headway as the chairman was arrested by the British and the war broke out. Notwithstanding these obstacles, 29 sub-committees divided into eight groups were set up to deal with all aspects of national life and to work in accordance with a predetermined plan.

The major areas on which the Committee focussed its attention were:

- (a) Agriculture and other sources of primary production
- (b) Industries or other secondary sources of production
- (c) Human factor: labour and population
- (d) Exchange and finance

- (e) Public utilities: transport and communication
- (f) Social services: health and housing
- (g) Education: general and technical
- (h) **Woman's role in a planned economy**

Several reports were published by 1948–49. The Planning Commission was set up in March 1950 by a resolution of the Government of India, which is defining the scope of the Commission's work.

Impact of cities on villages:

- **demographic changes** due to migration of men from villages to cities in search for employment
- villages in the vicinity of a city becomes part of growing sub-urbanization. **Land became costly.**
- **Peri-urbanization in some areas.**
 - Peri-urban areas are zones of transition from rural to urban land uses located between the outer limits of urban and regional centres and the rural environment.
 - dispersive urban growth that create hybrid landscapes of fragmented and mixed urban and rural characteristics.

In 2011, 31.16% of India's population i.e., 377.10 million people, were living in 7,935 towns.

Understanding **social structure**, as a 'continuing arrangement of persons in relationships defined or controlled by institutions' and '**culture**' as '**socially established norms or patterns of behaviour**'.

Cultural Development during colonial rule:

- **Social reform movements** during 19th and 20th century.
- four processes of **sanskritisation, modernisation, secularisation and westernisation** has shaped in some sense modern cultural practices in India.

Factors affecting social change in colonial India:

- New technologies speeded up **various forms of communication**. The printing press, telegraph, and later the microphone, movement of people and goods through steamship and railways helped **quick movement of new ideas**.
- **Christian missionaries** reached remote corners of present day Nagaland, Mizoram and Meghalaya.
- **Social organizations** were formed
 - The All-India Muslim Ladies Conference (Anjuman-E-Khawatn-E-Islam) was founded in 1914. [and many many more -- just write down whatever you have learnt from spectrum]
- **public media like newspapers and journals**
- New ideas of liberalism and freedom, new ideas of homemaking and marriage, new roles for mothers and daughters, **new ideas of self-conscious pride in culture and tradition emerged**
- The **value of education** became very important.

- **Colonial laws and institutions.** [write arguments from Shekhar BandoPa..]
- **19th century reform initiated a period of questioning, reinterpretations and both intellectual and social growth**
 - Jotiba phule recalled the glory of pre-Aryan age while others like Bal Gangadhar Tilak emphasised the glory of the Aryan period
 - Some highlighted liberal traditions of vedic period while others like periyar contested it
 - Women's education was highlighted by some in ancient period but others contested that this was only in privileged few
 - For some the concerns were confined to the problems that the upper caste, middle class women and men faced.
 - For others the injustices suffered by the discriminated castes were central questions
 - For some social evils had emerged because of a decline of the true spirit of Hinduism. For others caste and gender oppression was intrinsic to the religion. [former opinion held by Gandhi ji, latter held by Babasaheb Ambedkar]

SANSKRITISATION: termed coined by M N Srinivas:

- process by which a 'low' caste or tribe or other group takes over the customs, ritual, beliefs, ideology and style of life of a high and, in particular, a 'twice-born (dwija) caste'.
- Its influence can be seen in language, literature, ideology, music, dance, drama, style of life and ritual.
- In regions where the non-Sanskritic castes were dominant, it was their influence that was stronger. This can be termed the process of 'de-Sanskritisation'
- Srinivas argued that, "the Sanskritisation of a group has usually the effect of improving its position in the local caste hierarchy.
- the aspiration or desire to be like the higher placed group occurs only when people become wealthier.
- **Criticism of sanskritisation** as a concept:
 - criticised for exaggerating social mobility or the scope of 'lower castes' to move up the social ladder because it **leads to no structural change but only positional change of some individuals.**
 - ideology of sanskritisation accepts the ways of the 'upper caste' as superior and that of the 'lower caste' as inferior
 - 'sanskritisation' seems to justify a model that rests on inequality and exclusion
 - since sanskritisation results in the adoption of upper caste rites and rituals it leads to practices of secluding girls and women, adopting dowry practices instead of bride-price and practising caste discrimination against other groups, etc. [But this did happen. Sati practices grew among lower caste too due to sankritization.]
 - the effect of such a trend is that the key characteristics of dalit culture and society are eroded.
 - it seems to suggest that adoption of such traditions and rituals was flattering imitation of

upper caste. But many times it was defiant assertion by lower caste. Going to temple was assertion of their rights as Hindus which was denied to them due to caste hierarchy.

A crucial result of the Backward Classes Movement was to emphasise the role of **secular factors** in the upward mobility of caste groups and individuals. [explain]

- Rise of socialist parties, which are also caste based parties, since JP movement of 1975.
- Bahujan ideology -- **development and dignity** became an issue.
- **issue of jobs, education -- demand of reservation** ; role of Mandal commission.
- **rise of 'dominant caste' due to partial land reforms.**

WESTERNISATION

- westernisation as “the changes brought about in Indian society and culture as a result of over 150 years of British rule, the term subsuming changes occurring at different levels...**technology, institutions, ideology and values**”.
- emergence of a westernised sub-cultural pattern through a minority section of Indians who first came in contact with Western culture.
- Westernisation does involve the imitation of external forms of culture. It does not necessarily mean that people adopt modern values of democracy and equality.
- In present time, American influence is more visible. [Pop culture-- music, Hollywood; Food habits: KFC, MacDonald's, Starbucks etc.]

West influenced Indian art and literature. Artists like Ravi Varma, Abanindranath Tagore, Chandu Menon and Bankimchandra Chattopadhyaya were all grappling with the colonial encounter.

Often westernisation among the middle class makes **generational difference more complex**. [issue of generation gap.]

Srinivas suggested that **while 'lower castes' sought to be Sanskritised, 'upper castes' sought to be Westernised**. In a diverse country such as India this generalisation is difficult to maintain.

Modernisation:

In the early years, modernisation referred to improvement in technology and production processes. Increasingly, however, the term had a wider usage. It referred to the path of development that much of west Europe or North America has taken. Basically it is a distinct break from past in so far as values, ideologies, behaviours, norms in society are concerned.

features of Modernity understood sociologically:

- local ties and parochial perspectives give way to **universal commitments and cosmopolitan attitudes**; (**Localism vs universalism**) -- development of nationalism was result of this. [now

globalism due to influence of globalization]

- truths of utility, empiricism, and **science** take precedence over those of the emotions, the sacred, and the non-rational. -- **rise of rationality** and **belief in science** over faith.
- **individual** rather than the group be the primary unit of society and politics -- rise of **individualism**.
- the associations in which men live and work be based on **choice** not birth -- increase in **freedom**.
- mastery rather than fatalism orient their attitude toward the material and human environment;
- **identity be chosen and achieved, not ascribed and affirmed**;
- **work be separated from family, residence, and community in bureaucratic organisation"**

Plurality and a tradition of argumentation have been defining features of 'traditions' in

India. [Quote Amartya Sen's The Argumentative Indian]

- settling issues with debates quite common throughout Indian history -- Shastrarth; Adi Shankara debated with other philosophers of this time. Akbar's debate in Ibadat Khana with different scholars.

In the modern west, secularisation has usually meant a process of decline in the influence of

religion. It has been an assumption of all theorists of modernisation that modern societies become increasingly secular. [This is where concept of secularism becomes different in Indian context. In India, religion is all too important. It is a major determinant of our ethics, morals, behaviours. So, we need to conceptualize secularism more as way of tolerance for diverse religions rather than pushing religion to private sphere and creating secular public sphere as is the case in western notion of secularism -- such as France.]

Rituals have also secular dimensions as distinct from secular goals. They provide men and women with occasions for socialising with their peers and superiors, and for showing off the family's wealth, clothing and jewellery. (This can be called **secularization of rituals -- rituals are losing their religious importance and gaining secular content**. Religious values remain mainly symbolic. Show of wealth, status, making friends are chief goals.)

secularisation of caste:

- In traditional India caste system operated within a religious framework. **Belief systems of purity and pollution were central to its practice.**
- Today it often functions as **political pressure groups**. Contemporary India has seen such **formation of caste associations and caste based political parties**. They seek to press upon the state their demands. Such a changed role of caste has been described as secularisation of caste.
 - Bahujan movement -- movement consisting of OBCs, SC, ST and minorities.
 - Demand for reservation based on caste identity.
 - Socialists parties after JP movement in 1975 were mobilising people along caste lines. [Caste

as a pressure group]

Politicians mobilise caste groupings and identities in order to organise their power. ...Where there are other types of groups and other bases of association, politicians approach them as well. And as they everywhere change the form of such organisations, they change the form of caste as well. (case of **identity politics**)

Democracy of two types:

- direct
- representative

Democracy ought to involve people more regularly and should not just mean casting a vote every five years. [concept of participatory democracy and decentralised democracy] [**Daily democracy requires daily citizenship**]

Participatory democracy is a system of democracy in which the members of a group or community participate collectively in the taking of major decisions. [**Gram Sabha** in PRI is an example of this.]

Is democracy just about political freedom? Or is it also about economic freedom and social justice? Is it also about equal rights to all irrespective of caste, creed, race and gender? And if that is so how can such equality be realised in an unequal society?

"Society has been aiming to lay a new foundation as was summarised by the French revolution in three words, **fraternity, liberty and equality**. The French Revolution was welcomed because of this slogan. It failed to produce equality. We welcomed the Russian revolution because it aims to produce equality. But it cannot be too much emphasised that in producing equality, society cannot afford to sacrifice fraternity or liberty. **Equality will be of no value without fraternity or liberty**. It seems that the three can coexist only if one follows the way of the Buddha." - **Dr. Ambedkar**. [to elucidate the remark made by Babasaheb, highlight how **communists countries have reduced liberties in order to achieve equality and how capitalists countries have seen unfettered inequality in order to promote liberty**]

Even as India fought for its independence from British colonialism a vision of what Indian democracy ought to look like emerged. As far back as in **1928**, **Motilal Nehru and eight other Congress leaders drafted a constitution for India**. In **1931**, the resolution at the Karachi session of the Indian National Congress dwelt on how independent India's constitution should look like. The **Karachi Resolution reflects a vision of democracy that meant not just formal holding of elections but a substantive reworking of the Indian social structure in order to have a genuine democratic society**. [In Indian context, **democracy and social transformation are two sides of same coin**.]

Preamble of the Indian Constitution seeks to ensure not just political justice but also social and economic justice. Equality is not just about **equal political rights but also of status and opportunity**.

Karachi Congress Resolution, 1931 Swaraj as conceived by the Congress should include real **economic freedom** of the masses. The Congress declares that no constitution will be acceptable to it unless it provides or enables the Swaraj Government to provide for:

- Freedom of expression, association and meeting.
- Freedom of religion.
- Protection of all cultures and languages. [secularism, minority rights]
- All citizens shall be equal before the law.
- No disability in employment or trade or profession on account of religion, caste or sex.
- Equal rights and duties for all in regard to public wells, schools, etc.
- All to have right to bear arms in accordance with regulations.
- No person to be deprived of property or liberty except in accordance with law.
- Religious neutrality of State.
- **Adult Suffrage.**
- Free compulsory primary education.
- No titles to be conferred.
- **Capital punishment to be abolished.**
- Freedom of movement for every citizen of India and right to settle and acquire property in any part thereof, and equal protection of law.
- Proper standard of life for industrial workers and suitable machinery for settlement of disputes between employers and workers and protection against old age, sickness, etc.
- All labour to be free from conditions of serfdom.
- Special **protection of women workers.**
- Children not to be employed in mines and factories.
- Rights of peasants and workers to form unions.
- Reform of system of land revenue and tenure and rent, exempting rent and revenue for uneconomical holdings and reduction of dues payable for smaller holdings.
- **Inheritance tax on graduated scale. [This can be one way of reducing income inequality due to capitalism.] [There was a form of inheritance tax till 1985 in the form of estate duty]**
- Reduction of military expenditure by at least half.
- No servant of State ordinarily to be paid above Rs 500 per month.
- Abolition of Salt tax.
- Protection of indigenous cloth against competition of foreign cloth.
- **Total prohibition of intoxicating drinks and drugs.**
- Currency and exchange in national interest.
- **Nationalisation of key industries and services, railways, etc.**
- Relief of agricultural indebtedness and control of usury.

- **Military training for citizens.** [NCC]

Some of the **social justice** issues in early decades of independent India: right to employment, to social security, land reforms to property rights, to the organisation of panchayats.

Babasaheb's defence of directive principle: "The Draft Constitution as framed only provides a machinery for the government of the country. It is not a contrivance to install any particular party in power as has been done in some countries. Who should be in power is left to be determined by the people, as it must be, if the system is to satisfy the tests of democracy. But whoever captures power will not be free to do what he likes with it. In the exercise of it, he will have to respect these Instruments of Instructions which are called Directive Principles. He cannot ignore them. He **may not have to answer for their breach in a court of law. But he will certainly have to answer for them before the electorate at election time.** What great value these directive principles possess will be realised better when the forces of right contrive to capture power."

The impact that culture, religion, and caste have on the **urban-rural divide**, **rich-poor divide** and the **literate-illiterate divide** is varied. Deeply stratified by caste and poverty, there are groupings and sub-groupings among the rural poor. The urban working class comprises a very wide range. Then, there is the well-organised domestic business class as also the professional and commercial class. The urban professional class is highly vocal.

Contestation of different interest on social scene in India is also reflective of its diversity.

There is a **difference between law and justice.**

- The **essence of law is its force. Law is law because it carries the means to coerce or force obedience.** The power of the state is behind it.
- The **essence of justice is fairness.**

Any system of laws functions through a hierarchy of authorities. The basic norm from which all other rules and authorities flow is called the Constitution.

Expansionary right: (Under **purposive interpretation of constitution**): The terse words of Article 21 recognising the right to life and liberty have been interpreted as including all that goes into a life of quality, including livelihood, health, shelter, education and dignity. In various pronouncements different attributes of 'life' have been expanded and 'life' has been explained to mean more than mere animal existence. These interpretations have been used to provide relief to prisoners subjected to torture and deprivation, release and rehabilitation of bonded labourers, against environmentally degrading activities, to provide primary health care and primary education.

In 1993 the Supreme Court held that Right to Information is part of and incidental to the Right to

Expression under Article 19(1) (a).

Reading Directive Principles into the content of Fundamental Rights. The **Supreme Court read the Directive Principle of “equal pay for equal work” into the Fundamental Right to Equality under Article 14** and has provided relief to many plantation and agricultural labourers and to others.

The Constitution is not just a ready referencer of do's and don'ts for social justice. **It has the potential for the meaning of social justice to be extended.** Social movements have also aided the Courts and authorities to interpret the contents of rights and principles in keeping with the contemporary understanding on social justice. [right to privacy -- Puttaswami judgement, Olga Telis -- Rights of slum dwellers etc.]

IDEALS OF PANCHAYATI RAJ

- to ensure at the village or grass root level a functioning and vibrant democracy.
- to prevent hindrance to democratic participation on grounds of gender, caste and class
- Why did constitution did not mention Panchayati Raj initially:
 - **Dr. Ambedkar** argued that local elites and upper castes were so well entrenched in society that local self-government only meant a continuing exploitation of the downtrodden masses of Indian society
- **Gandhi's view on local governance:** each village as a self-sufficient unit conducting its own affairs and saw **gram-swarajya** to be an ideal model to be continued after independence.
- **73rd Constitutional Amendment:** this act provided constitutional status to the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). It is compulsory now for local self-government bodies in rural and municipal areas to be elected every five years.
- The 73rd and 74th amendments to the Constitution ensured the **reservation of one third of the total seats for women in all elected offices of local bodies in both the rural and urban areas.** Out of this, 17 per cent seats are reserved for women belonging to the scheduled castes and tribes.
 - There are approximately **13.45 lakh Elected Women Representatives (EWRs)** in PRIs which constitute 46.14% of total Elected Representatives (ERs).

The following powers and responsibility were delegated to the Panchayats:

- to prepare plans and schemes for economic development [principle of **subsidiarity**]
- to promote schemes that will enhance social justice [women empowerment, social mobility, removing caste based inequalities]
- to levy, collect and appropriate taxes, duties, tolls and fees. [financial decentralization -- more effective resource mobilization as well as utilization]
- help in the devolution of governmental responsibilities, especially that of finances to local authorities. [democratic decentralization]

Goals of **social justice, economic development, good governance** -- all can be achieved through PRIs if we enable them to function upto their potential.

The development activities of panchayats include the construction of roads, public buildings, wells, tanks and schools. They also promote small cottage industries and take care of minor irrigation works. Many government schemes like the Integrated Rural Development Programme (**IRDP**) and Integrated Child Development Scheme (**ICDS**) are monitored by members of the panchayat, MGNREGA too.

Social welfare responsibilities of the Panchayats include the maintenance of burning and burial grounds, recording statistics of births and deaths, establishment of child welfare and maternity centres, control of cattle pounds, propagation of family planning and promotion of agricultural activities.

The main income of the Panchayats is from **tax levied on property, profession, animals, vehicles, cess on land revenue and rentals.**

Nyaya Panchayats have been constituted in some states. They possess the authority to hear some petty, civil and criminal cases. They can impose fines but cannot award a sentence. These village courts have often been successful in bringing about an agreement amongst contending parties. They have been particularly effective in punishing men who harass women for dowry and perpetrate violence against them.

Van-Panchayats: Members of the van-panchayats develop nurseries and nurture tree saplings for planting on the hill slopes. Members also police nearby forests to keep an eye on illegal felling of trees. The Chipko movement, where women hugged trees to prevent them from being cut, had its beginnings in this area.

Mahila Samakhya an NGO working towards Rural Women's Empowerment.

All the three major ethnic tribal groups, namely, the Khasis, Jaintias and the Garos have their own traditional political institutions that have existed for hundreds of years. These political institutions were fairly well-developed and functioned at various tiers, such as the village level, clan level and state level. For instance, in the traditional political system of the **Khasis** each clan had its own council known as the '**Durbar Kur**' which was presided over by the clan headman. Though there is a long tradition of **grassroot political institutions** in Meghalaya, a large chunk of tribal areas lie outside the provisions of the 73rd Amendment. This may be because the concerned policy makers did not wish to interfere with the traditional tribal institutions. [To accomodate these diverse traditions govt enacted PESA act 1996.]

- however, respecting traditional councils should not lead to perpetuation of inequalities within

those societies -- naga tribal councils exclude women, in matrilineal tribes of Meghalaya ancestral property is not shared equally among siblings; such inequitable arrangements create their own set of problems.

Democratisation is not easy in a society that has had a long history of inequality based on caste, community and gender. [Elucidate]

- lack of inclusion of certain social groups
- gender inequality leads to lack of representation of women in several aspects of public life
- The Gram Sabha members are often controlled by a small coterie of rich landlords usually hailing from the upper castes or landed peasantry

Political parties:

A political party may be defined as an organisation oriented towards achieving legitimate control of government through an electoral process.

Political Party is an organisation established with the aim of achieving governmental power and using that power to pursue a specific programme.

Political parties are based on certain understanding of society and how it ought to be. In a democratic system the interests of different groups are also represented by political parties, who take up their case.

Interest Groups [or pressure groups] are organised to pursue specific interests in the political arena, operating primarily by lobbying the members of legislative bodies.

- All groups will not have the same access or the same ability to pressurise the government.
[Business class has more lobbying power.]

There is a close connection between agriculture and culture. [Elucidate in context of India]

Agricultural land is the most important productive resource for a great many Indians. Land is also the most important form of property. But land is not just a 'means of production' nor just a 'form of property'. Nor is agriculture just a form of livelihood. **It is also a way of life.** Many of our cultural practices and patterns can be traced to our agrarian backgrounds.

Most of the **New Year festivals in different regions of India** – such as **Pongal in Tamil Nadu, Bihu in Assam, Baisakhi in Punjab and Ugadi in Karnataka** to name just a few – actually celebrate the **main harvest season** and herald the beginning of a new agricultural season.

Both the **culture and social structure in rural India are closely bound up with agricultural and the agrarian way of life.** [Upper caste are also landowning caste whereas lower caste are mainly landless labourers. Gendered structure in agriculture.]

But there is acute **inequality in landholdings of households.** Again, **differentiation in landholding is**

correlated along the line of caste, gender. Women are usually excluded from ownership of land, because of the prevailing patrilineal kinship system and mode of inheritance. By law women are supposed to have an equal share of family property. In reality they only have limited rights and some access to land only as part of a household headed by a man.

The term **agrarian structure** is often used to refer to the structure or distribution of landholding. . Access to land largely determines what role one plays in the process of agricultural production. **Medium and large landowners** are usually able to earn sufficient or even large incomes from cultivation but agricultural labourers are more often than not paid below the statutory minimum wage and earn very little.

Tenants(cultivators who lease their land from landowners) have lower incomes than owner-cultivators. Because they have to pay a substantial **rent** to the landowner – often as much as 50 to 75 per cent of the income from the crop.

So rural society shows a complex of class and caste structure. But the relationship is not straightforward between them. In most areas the highest caste, the Brahmins, are not major landowners, and so they fall outside the agrarian structure although they are a part of rural society. [when we talk of class identity-- then we mainly consider economic position in society. In rural India upper caste person is more likely to be landowning person and hence, his economic position is in relative upper class in rural economy.]

Major landowning groups belong to the upper castes. In each region, there are usually just one or two major landowning castes, who are also numerically very important. Such groups were termed by the sociologist M.N. Srinivas as **dominant castes.**

Village and caste are dynamic social systems which are fluid, resilient and adaptive to changing social forces. Effects of Sankritisation, westernization, Globalization, caste based politics, and dominant caste are different forces in it.

- How has rural society achieved mobility?
 - dominant caste phenomenon
 - Caste based political parties post-JP movement.
 - Affirmative action
 - Sanskritization
 - Migration to urban areas.
 - Dalit assertion of identity -- Dalit literature.

Examples of dominant landowning groups are the **Jats** and **Rajputs** of U.P., the **Vokkaligas** and **Lingayats** in Karnataka, **Kammas** and **Reddis** in Andhra Pradesh, and **Jat Sikhs** in Punjab, **Yadavas** in

Bihar.

A large number of artisans such as potters, carpenters, weavers, ironsmiths, and goldsmiths are found in rural areas.

The diversity of occupations in rural India was reflected in the caste system, which in most regions included specialist and **'service'** castes such as Washermen, Potters, and Goldsmiths. ['caste as social division of labour' -- This may have strengthened Gandhi's belief in possibility of self-sufficient village republics -- [my conjecture]]

Most of the marginal farmers and landless belong to lower caste groups. In official classification they belong to the Scheduled Castes or Tribes (SC/ STs) or Other Backward Classes (OBCs). **In many regions of India, the former 'Untouchable' or dalit castes were not allowed to own land and they provided most of the agricultural labour for the dominant landowning groups.**

Typically the upper and middle castes also had the best access to land and resources, and hence to power and privilege. This had important implications for the rural economy and society. In most regions of the country, a 'proprietary caste' group owns most of the resources and can command labour to work for them. Until recently, **practices such as begar or free labour were prevalent in many parts of northern India.** [Begar has been outlawed in India via article 23]

THE IMPACT OF LAND REFORMS

Under the British, the zamindars were given more control over land than they had before [via creation of private property ownership and its recognition by state.] [many tribal revolts due to passing away of lands into the hands of Dikus -- outsiders -- merchants and moneylenders.]

One result of this zamindari system was that agricultural production stagnated or declined during much of the period of British rule. For peasants fled from oppressive landlords and **frequent famines** and wars decimated the population.

Permanent settlement, ryotwari system, mahalwari system during colonial time. [created further differentiation in landholding pattern]

Post-Independence scenario:

- programme of planned development that focused on agrarian reform as well as industrialisation.
 - low productivity, dependence on imported food grains, and the intense poverty of a large section of the rural population.
- **From the 1950s to the 1970s, a series of land reform laws were passed** – at the national level as well as in the states.

- The **first important legislation was the abolition of the zamindari system**, which removed the layer of intermediaries who stood between the cultivators and the state.
 - Of all the land reform laws that were passed, this was probably the **most effective**.
- However, zamindari abolition did not wipe out landlordism or the tenancy or sharecropping systems, which continued in many areas. **It only removed the top layer of landlords in the multi-layered agrarian structure.** [while its removed the feudal structure patronised by colonial power, it did not abolish the sub-infeudation which had existed in informal manner.]
- Among the **other major land reform laws** that were introduced were the **tenancy abolition and regulation acts**. They attempted either to **outlaw tenancy altogether** or to **regulate rents to give some security to the tenants**
- In **West Bengal and Kerala**, there was a radical restructuring of the agrarian structure that gave land rights to the tenants.
- The **third major category** of land reform laws were the **Land Ceiling Acts**. These laws imposed an **upper limit on the amount of land that can be owned by a particular family**
- According to these acts, the **state is supposed to identify and take possession of surplus land (above the ceiling limit) held by each household**, and **redistribute it to landless families and households in other specified categories, such as SCs and STs**.
- But in most of the states these acts proved to be **toothless**. There were many **loopholes** and other strategies through which most landowners were able to escape from having their surplus land taken over by the state. - **'benami transfers'** – which allowed them to keep control over the land (in fact if not in name)
 - In some places, some rich farmers actually divorced their wives (but continued to live with them) in order to avoid the provisions of the Land Ceiling Act, which allowed a separate share for unmarried women but not for wives. (Haha)
- **The Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013**
 - **Section 24** was in news due to conflicting interpretation of this provision by SC.
- Forest Rights Act 2006.
- the **agrarian structure**, although it has changed substantially from colonial times to the present, remains highly unequal. **This structure puts constraints on agricultural productivity.** **Land reforms** are necessary not only to boost agricultural growth but also to eradicate poverty in rural areas and bring about social justice. (**use as conclusion**)
 - Tenants are not able to access credit=> low investment in agriculture => lower productivity => lower output leading to lower income.
 - Farmer indebtedness. [**52% households are indebted**]
 - Feminization of agriculture labour but lack of land title in women's name creates major constraint. As they can not access credit.
 - **Fragmentation of landholding creates another constraint.**

THE GREEN REVOLUTION AND ITS SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES

- **Phases of green revolution: first phase (1960-70s)**
 - a government programme of agricultural modernisation
 - funded by international agencies that was based on providing **high-yielding variety(HYV) or hybrid seeds** along with **pesticides, fertilisers, and other inputs, to farmers.**
 - sufficient water was necessary for the new seeds and methods of cultivation
 - targeted mainly at the **wheat and rice-growing areas.**
 - only certain regions such as the **Punjab, western U.P., coastal Andhra Pradesh, and parts of Tamil Nadu**, received the first wave of the Green Revolution package
- **Positive impact:**
 - Agricultural productivity increased sharply
 - India was able to become self-sufficient in foodgrain production for the first time in decades.
 - a major achievement of the government and of the scientists who contributed to the effort. [M S swaminathan]
 - employment and wages for agricultural workers did increase in many areas, because the demand for labour increased. [migration of Bihari labourers to Punjab, Haryana]
- **Negatives:**
 - adverse **environmental impacts.**
 - negative social effects (**Q: The ultimate outcome of the Green Revolution was a process of 'differentiation', in which the rich grew richer and many of the poor stagnated or grew poorer.** Explain.) [Answer below]
 - primarily the **medium and large farmers who were able to benefit from the new technology**
 - **inputs were expensive**
 - small and marginal farmers could not afford to spend as much as large farmers to purchase these inputs.
 - **Farmers and peasant dichotomy of India**
 - Peasants largely practice subsistence agriculture.
 - Farmers can produce surplus and reach market with their produce
 - It was the farmers who were able to produce a surplus for the market who were able to reap the most benefits from the Green Revolution and from the commercialisation of agriculture that followed.
 - in the 1960s and 1970s, the introduction of new technology **seemed to be increasing inequalities in rural society.**
 - Green Revolution crops were highly profitable
 - Well-to-do farmers who had access to land, capital, technology, and know-how, and those who could invest in the new seeds and fertilisers, could increase their production and earn more money
 - **in many cases it led to the displacement of tenant-cultivators.** For **landowners** began to

take back land from their tenants and cultivate it directly because cultivation was becoming more profitable.

- This made the **rich farmers better off, and worsened the condition of the landless and marginal holders.**
- the **introduction of machinery such as tillers, tractors, threshers, and harvesters (in areas such as Punjab and parts of Madhya Pradesh)** led to the displacement of the service caste groups who used to carry out these agriculture-related activities
- This process of displacement also **increased the pace of rural-urban migration.**-
Distress migration
- **rising prices and a shift in the mode of payment of agricultural workers from payment in kind (grain) to cash, actually worsened the economic condition of most rural workers.**
- the worsening of **regional inequalities.** The areas that underwent this technological transformation became more developed while other areas stagnated.
 - the **Green Revolution was promoted more in the western and southern parts of the country**, and in Punjab, Haryana, and western U.P., than in the eastern parts of the country
 - agriculture in states such as **Bihar and in eastern U.P.**, and in dry regions such as Telengana, remain to be relatively undeveloped.
- Regions which benefited from green revolution are also the regions that continue to have an entrenched 'feudal' agrarian structure, in which the landed castes and landlords maintain power over the lower castes, landless workers and small cultivators.
- **The sharp caste and class inequalities, together with exploitative labour relations, in these regions has given rise to various kinds of violence** (including inter-caste violence) in recent years.
- **Traditional knowledge system of agriculture, like the many traditional varieties of seeds that were developed over the centuries by farmers, is being lost as hybrid**, highyielding, and genetically modified varieties of seeds are being promoted as more productive and 'scientific'. [Unsustainable practices are creeping while traditional systems are losing the race. Need to learn from innovative indigenous systems like **Kuttanad rice farming of Kerala, Koraput agriculture system of Odisha**]
- In most of the Green Revolution areas, **farmers have switched from a multi-crop system, which allowed them to spread risks, to a mono-crop regime**, which means that there is nothing to fall back on in case of crop failure. [increased risk in farming -- link to farmer's suicide]
- **second phase is currently being introduced in the dry and semi-arid regions of India**
 - there has been a significant shift from dry to wet (irrigated) cultivation, along with changes in the cropping pattern and type of crops grown
 - **Increasing commercialisation** and **dependence on the market in these areas (for instance, where cotton cultivation has been promoted) has increased rather than reduced**

livelihood insecurity, as **farmers who once grew food for consumption now depend on the market for the incomes.**

- **In market-oriented cultivation, especially where a single crop is grown, a fall in prices or a bad crop can spell financial ruin for farmers.**
- **way forward:**
 - Traditional method with indigenous knowledge should be promoted.
 - zero budget natural farming
 - organic farming
 - Evergreen revolution following sustainable practices.
 - **Rainbow revolution** -- integrated farming approach;
 - development of horticulture, livestock, fisheries, etc. along with food crops.

TRANSFORMATIONS IN RURAL SOCIETY AFTER INDEPENDENCE

- an increase in the use of agricultural labour as cultivation became more intensive;
- a shift from payment in kind (grain) to payment in cash;
- a **loosening of traditional bonds or hereditary relationships between farmers or landowners and agricultural workers (known as bonded labour);**
 - and the **rise of a class of 'free' wage labourers'**
- The change in the nature of the relationship between landlords (who usually belonged to the dominant castes) and agricultural workers (usually low caste), was described by the sociologist Jan Breman as a shift from 'patronage to exploitation'.
 - Such changes took place in many areas where agriculture was becoming more commercialised, that is, where **crops were being grown primarily for sale in the market.**
 - The transformation in labour relations is regarded by some scholars as indicative of a transition to **capitalist agriculture.**
 - capitalist mode of production is based on the separation of the workers from the means of production (in this case, land), and the use of 'free' wage labour.
 - farmers in the more developed regions were becoming more oriented to the market. As cultivation became more commercialised, these rural areas were also becoming integrated to the wider economy. This process increased the flow of money into villages and **expanding opportunities for business and employment.**
- **The overall outcome of these efforts at 'rural development' was not only to transform the rural economy and agriculture, but also the agrarian structure and the rural society itself.**
 - more connected to market.
 - free wage labour
 - capitalist agriculture.
 - greater differentiation.
- One way in which rural social structure was altered by agricultural development in the 1960s and 1970s was through the enrichment of the medium and large farmers who adopted the new

technologies. **(Green revolution)**

- In several agriculturally rich regions, such as coastal Andhra Pradesh, western Uttar Pradesh, and central Gujarat, well-to-do farmers belonging to the dominant castes began to invest their profits from agriculture in other types of business ventures. This process of diversification gave rise to new entrepreneurial groups that moved out of rural areas and into the growing towns of these developing regions, giving rise to new regional elites that became economically as well as politically dominant.
- the spread of higher education, especially private professional colleges, in rural and semi-urban areas, allowed the new rural elites to educate their children – many of whom then joined professional or white collar occupations or started businesses, feeding into the expansion of the urban middle classes.
- in areas of rapid agricultural development there has been a consolidation of the old landed or cultivating groups, who have transformed themselves into a dynamic entrepreneurial, rural-urban dominant class
- **But in areas with less impact of green revolution, such as Bihar, eastern UP, changes have not taken place to the same extent.**
- But the **areas, like Kerala have undergone different changes.** Changing technologies in agriculture process of development, in which **political mobilisation, redistributive measures, and linkages to an external economy (primarily the Gulf countries)** have brought about a substantial transformation of the rural countryside.
 - Far from the rural being primarily agrarian, the rural in Kerala is a mixed economy that integrates some agriculture with a wide network of retail sales and services, and where a **large number of families are dependent on remittances from abroad.** [In 2020, Kerala had 1 lakh crore remittance.]
- **growth of migrant agricultural labour**
 - Labourers migrate also due to the **increasing inequalities in rural areas from the mid-1990s,** which have forced many households to **combine multiple occupations to sustain themselves.**
 - As a livelihood strategy, men migrate out periodically in search of work and better wages, while women and children are often left behind in their villages with elderly grandparents.
 - landless workers do not have many rights, for instance, they are usually not paid the minimum wage
 - **migrants are more easily exploited and can be paid lower wages than local workers.**
 - The **largescale circulation of labour** has had several significant effects on rural society, in both the receiving and the supplying regions.
 - **effects on rural women:**
 - in poor areas where male family members spend much of the year working outside of their villages, **cultivation has become primarily a female task.** Women are also emerging as the main source of agricultural labour, leading to the **'feminisation of**

agricultural labour force.

- The **insecurity of women is greater** because they earn lower wages than men for similar work [gender wage gap]
- While women toil on the land as landless labourers and as cultivators, the **prevailing patrilineal kinship system**, and other **cultural practices** that privilege male rights, largely **exclude women from land ownership**.

GLOBALISATION, LIBERALISATION, AND RURAL SOCIETY

The **liberalization** policy entails participation in the World Trade Organisation (**WTO**), which aims to **bring about a more free international trading system and requires the opening up of Indian markets to imports**.

- Indian farmers have been exposed to competition from the global market.
- incorporation of agriculture into the larger global market – a process that has had direct effects on farmers and rural society (Elucidate)
 - **Growth of contract farming:** in some regions such as Punjab and Karnataka, farmers enter into contracts with multinational companies (such as **PepsiCo**) to grow certain crops (such as tomatoes and potatoes), which the companies then buy from them for processing or export. In such '**contract farming**' systems, the company identifies the crop to be grown, provides the seeds and other inputs, as well as the knowhow and often also the working capital. In return, **the farmer is assured of a market because the company guarantees that it will purchase the produce at a predetermined fixed price**.
 - **Critical Analysis of contract farming:**
 - contract farming appears to provide financial security to farmers, it can also lead to greater insecurity as farmers become dependent on these companies for their livelihoods.
 - **Loss of indigenous methods of agriculture.** Contract farming has sociological significance in that **it disengages many people from the production process and makes their own indigenous knowledge of agriculture irrelevant**. So, even if they initially benefit from it, in a generation or two they will lose their own knowledge systems and hence they will have to remain dependent on others for production process. Today, even an illiterate peasant has significant knowledge about agriculture and production methods of various crops.
 - **Effect on food security: Contract farming of export-oriented products such as flowers and gherkins also means that agricultural land is diverted away from food grain production**
 - **contract farming caters primarily to the production of elite items**, and because it usually requires high doses of fertilisers and pesticides, it is **often not ecologically sustainable**.
- **Other effects of globalization of agriculture:**

- **entry of multinationals into this sector as sellers of agricultural inputs such as seeds, pesticides, and fertilisers.**
- **government has scaled down its agricultural development programmes**, and 'agricultural extension' agents have been replaced in the villages by agents of seed, fertiliser, and pesticide companies.
- **increased dependence of farmers on expensive fertilisers and pesticides**, which has reduced their profits, put many farmers into debt, and also created an ecological crisis in rural areas.
- the phenomenon of **farmers' suicides** have risen:
 - The spate of farmers' suicides that has been occurring in different parts of the country since 1997–98 can be linked to the 'agrarian distress' caused by structural changes in agriculture and changes in economic and agricultural policies. : **Matrix events:**
 - the changed pattern of landholdings;
 - **changing cropping patterns, especially due to shift to cash crops;**
 - **liberalisation policies that have exposed Indian agriculture to the forces of globalisation;**
 - **heavy dependence on high-cost inputs;**
 - **withdrawal of the State from agricultural extension activities to be replaced by multinational seed and fertiliser companies;**
 - **decline in state support for agriculture;** and individualisation of agricultural operations.
 - Such distress is compounded by the changing culture in rural areas, in which increased incomes are required for marriages, dowries and to sustain new activities and expenses, such as **education and medical care**
- **Suicides of farmers** is basically associated with **debt**, as well as, **natural disasters**, resulting in the failure of agricultural produce. Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, Gram Uday se Bharat Uday Abhiyan and National Rurban Mission are some of the schemes of the Government of India, which may provide unified help to farmers all over

Social features associated with industry:

- urbanisation,
- loss of face-to-face relationships that were found in rural areas where people worked on their own farms or for a landlord they knew, and their substitution by **anonymous professional relationships** in modern factories and workplaces.

Alienation of workers from job: Industrialisation involves a detailed division of labour. **People often do not see the end result of their work because they are producing only one small part of a product.**

The work is often repetitive and exhausting. Yet, even this is better than having no work at all, i.e., being

unemployed. **Marx called this situation alienation**, when people do not enjoy work, and see it as something they have to do only in order to survive, and even that survival depends on whether the technology has room for any human labour.

Positives of industrialization:

- **greater equality:**
 - caste distinctions do not matter any more on trains, buses or in cyber cafes.
- Urbanization
- more freedom- freedom of choice.

Negatives of Industrialization:

- older forms of discrimination may persist even in new factory or workplace settings -- **even urban space can be structured along caste, class, religious lines**. [enclaves in urban areas;]
- economic or income inequality is growing in the world. [**Oxfam report**]
- **domination of upper caste men in well-paying professions like medicine, law or journalism.**
- **Women often get paid less than men for similar work.** [gender wage gap] [women's participation in labour force is lower in Urban India than rural India. [in rural areas 26.4%, in urban areas at around 20.4%.]

Philosophical discussion on industrialization:

While the early sociologists saw industrialisation as both positive and negative, by the mid 20th century, under the influence of modernisation theory, industrialisation came to be seen as inevitable and positive. Modernisation theory argues that societies are at different stages on the road to modernisation, but they are all heading in the same direction. Modern society, for these theorists, is represented by **the West.**

According to the **convergence thesis put forward by modernisation theorist Clark Kerr**, an industrialised India of the 21st century shares more features with China or the United States in the 21st century than it shares with 19th century India. (**critically analyse.**)

- For:
 - same obsession with technology
 - youth of all these countries have similar aspirations - good education, jobs, entrepreneurship.
 - effects of globalization leading to **homogenization**. - influence of Hollywood on all these countries
 - Indian Yoga being adopted in west.
 - **Increasing connectivity bringing people closer.**
- Against:
 - distinct challenges of these countries- India still faces extreme poverty, caste challenges etc.
 - Cultural assertion growing in all these countries with right-wing tilt. [But it has different

sociological factors rooted in country's specific social conflicts.]

- Economy is just one part of modernization. Complex process of socio-cultural characteristics of these countries bring out the differences in process of modernization.
- [components of **modernization matrix: culture, language, tradition, technology**]- discuss changes on all these points.

THE SPECIFICITY OF INDIAN INDUSTRIALISATION

- In developed countries, the majority of people are in the services sector, followed by industry and less than 10% are in agriculture (ILO figures).
- In India, in 1999-2000, nearly **60% were employed in the primary sector (agriculture and mining), 17% in the secondary sector** (manufacturing, construction and utilities), and **23% in the tertiary sector** (trade, transport, financial services etc.)
- the sector where the maximum people are employed is not able to generate much income for them. Skewed distribution.
- In developed countries, the majority are formally employed. **In India, over 50% of the population is self-employed, only about 14% are in regular salaried employment, while approximately 30% are in casual labour**
- the organised sector consists of all units employing ten or more people throughout the year. These have to be registered with the government to ensure that their employees get proper salaries or wages, pension and other benefits. **In India, over 90% of the work, whether it is in agriculture, industry or services is in the unorganised or informal sector.**
- **very few Indians have access to secure jobs with benefits. Of those who do, two-thirds work for the government. This is why government jobs are so popular.**
- The government has laws to monitor conditions in the unorganised sector, but in practice they are left to the whims and fancies of the employer or contractor. [for example: minimum wage act, inter-state migrants workmen act etc.]

INDUSTRIALISATION IN THE EARLY YEARS OF INDIAN INDEPENDENCE

- The first modern industries in India were cotton, jute, coal mines and railways. (before independence)
- After independence, the government took over the **'commanding heights of the economy.'** This involved defence, transport and communication, power, mining and other projects which only government had the power to do, and which was also necessary for private industry to flourish.
- In **India's mixed economy policy**, some sectors were reserved for government, while others were open to the private sector.
- the government tried to ensure, through its licensing policy, that industries were spread over different regions (**regional balance**) [policies like Freight equalization policy were intended for this