

CLASS 6 SOCIAL SCIENCE

Chapter 5 - India, That Is Bharat

Exam-Preparation Notes

1. India and Bharat

The Constitution of India begins with the words: “India, that is Bharat, shall be a Union of States.” Thus, India and Bharat are two names for the same country.

The name Bharat has a long history and is found in ancient Indian traditions and texts.

Remember: Names used for a region should be understood according to their language, historical period and context.

2. Why Do Places Have Different Names?

- Different languages may use different names.
- Different communities may use different names.
- Names may change over long periods.
- Travellers and writers from other regions may use their own forms of a name.
- The geographical area associated with a name may also change over time.

Exam Point: Study a historical name along with its source, period and geographical context.

3. Bharat - A Historical Name

Bharat is an ancient name associated with the Indian subcontinent and appears in ancient Indian literary traditions. The meaning and geographical extent associated with historical names should be understood according to the particular source and period being studied.

Important: Do not assume that the area referred to by an ancient name always had exactly the same boundaries as present-day India.

4. India - The Historical Name

The name India has a long historical association with the region. It is connected historically with the Indus River. Different languages and peoples used different forms of names associated with the Indus and the region beyond it.

Simple connection: Indus River → names associated with the Indus → India

5. Importance of Geography

To understand India's history, we also need to understand its geography. Important geographical features include the Himalayan mountain ranges, northern plains, peninsular plateau, coastal regions, Indian Ocean, Arabian Sea, Bay of Bengal, rivers and other landscapes.

These features have influenced the lives and movements of people.

6. Himalayas and Their Importance

The Himalayas form a major mountain system in the north of the Indian subcontinent. They have influenced movement, settlement, climate, rivers and interactions between regions.

Exam Point: Geographical features can influence human activities and historical developments.

7. Rivers and Human Life

Rivers have played an important role in human history. People have often settled near rivers because rivers provide water, support agriculture and can facilitate movement and communication.

Flow Chart: River → Water + Fertile Land → Agriculture → Settlements → Growth of Communities

8. Seas and the Indian Ocean

The Indian subcontinent is surrounded by water on three sides. The major water bodies are the Arabian Sea to the west, the Bay of Bengal to the east and the Indian Ocean to the south.

- Maritime travel
- Trade and exchange of goods
- Movement of people
- Cultural interaction

The Indian Ocean helped connect communities in the Indian subcontinent with people in other regions.

9. Geography and Human Movement

Movement of people through history was influenced by mountains, rivers, plains, seas, deserts, climate, resources and trade routes.

Examples: Rivers and fertile plains supported settlement and agriculture; mountain passes could provide routes for movement; seas enabled maritime travel and trade.

10. India as a Land of Many Regions

The Indian subcontinent contains mountains, plains, plateaus, deserts, forests, coastal areas and islands. Different environments have contributed to different livelihoods and ways of life.

Region/Environment	Possible influence on human activities
Fertile plains	Agriculture and dense settlements
Coastal regions	Fishing and maritime activities
Mountain regions	Distinct livelihoods and movement through suitable routes
Desert regions	Adaptations to dry conditions and specialised livelihoods

11. Unity and Diversity

Different parts of the Indian subcontinent have different landscapes, climates, languages, food habits, clothing, occupations and cultural practices. At the same time, people and communities have interacted through travel, trade, migration, pilgrimage and cultural exchange.

12. Historical Sources

To understand how people in the past viewed India or Bharat, historians use different kinds of sources.

- Written sources: literary texts, inscriptions, manuscripts and travellers' accounts.
- Archaeological sources: coins, buildings, pottery, tools, sculptures and other artefacts.

Flow Chart: Historical Question → Find Sources → Study Evidence → Compare Sources → Understand Context → Interpret the Past

13. Travellers' Accounts

Travellers who visited different parts of the Indian subcontinent sometimes recorded what they observed. Their accounts can provide information about places, people, customs, geography, trade and society.

But remember: A traveller's account represents what that person saw, understood or chose to record. Historians therefore compare it with other evidence.

14. Why Historical Context Matters

When studying an ancient source, ask:

- When? When was the source created?
- Where? What geographical region does it describe?
- Who? Who created or wrote it?
- Why? Why was it created?
- What? What exactly does it say about the region?

These questions help historians interpret sources accurately.

15. Ancient and Modern Boundaries

Historical geographical descriptions should not automatically be equated with modern political boundaries. Political boundaries and the areas controlled by kingdoms changed over time.

Remember: Ancient geographical description ≠ automatically today's political map.

16. Geography and History - Important Connection

Physical Geography → Human Movement → Settlement → Agriculture & Occupations → Trade & Exchange → Cultural Interaction → Historical Development

17. Important Terms

Term	Meaning
Bharat	An ancient name associated with the Indian subcontinent.
India	A name historically associated with the region connected with the Indus.
Subcontinent	A large, distinct part of a continent.
Geography	Study of places, physical features and human relationships with them.
Historical source	Evidence used to study and understand the past.
Inscription	Writing recorded on a durable surface.

Traveller's account	Description recorded by a person who travelled to a region.
Chronology	Arrangement of events according to time.
Context	Circumstances surrounding an event or source.

18. Important Exam Questions

Q. What does “India, that is Bharat” mean?

Ans. It means that India and Bharat are two names for the same country. The expression appears in the Constitution of India.

Q. Why should historical names be studied in their context?

Ans. Because the meaning and geographical extent associated with a name can vary according to the period, source and geographical context.

Q. Why are rivers important in the study of history?

Ans. Rivers provide water and fertile land and have supported agriculture, settlements, movement and other human activities.

Q. How have seas influenced India's history?

Ans. Seas and the Indian Ocean have supported maritime travel, trade, movement of people and cultural exchange.

Q. Why should we not use a modern map alone to understand ancient India?

Ans. Modern maps show present-day political boundaries. Historical regions and political boundaries changed over time, so ancient India must be understood using historical sources and context.

Q. Why are travellers' accounts useful?

Ans. They can provide information about places, people, customs, geography, trade and society observed by travellers.

Q. Why should travellers' accounts be compared with other sources?

Ans. A traveller may have visited only certain places and may have had a particular perspective. Comparing sources helps develop a better-supported understanding.

Q. How has geography influenced human life in India?

Ans. Mountains, rivers, plains, deserts and seas have influenced settlement, agriculture, occupations, movement, trade and cultural interaction.

19. Competency-Based Revision Example

A historian discovers an ancient text describing a region between mountains and the sea. The historian should identify the source, find when it was written, study the geographical description, compare it with other sources, consider the context, and then develop a supported interpretation.

Key Learning: Never jump from one description directly to one conclusion.

20. Quick Revision Sheet

- India and Bharat are two names for the same country.
- Bharat has ancient historical and literary associations.
- India is historically connected with the Indus.

- Geography has strongly influenced human life and history.
- Mountains, rivers, plains and seas affect movement and settlement.
- The Indian Ocean has supported trade and cultural connections.
- Historical names must be studied according to source, period and context.
- Ancient geographical descriptions should not automatically be equated with modern political boundaries.

Final Memory Map: Names → Historical Sources → Geography → Human Connections → Historical Understanding