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Journey From Primitive Man to Settled Life

Jaybeer and his family were going from Gandhinagar to Jamnagar in train. Sitting near the window he saw trees, bullock carts, camel carts, rickshaw, bus, tractor etc. He asked his uncle, “When did this transportation start ?” His uncle put his hand on his back and said, “Train started in our country approximately 150 years back. Among all the vehicles which you are seeing on road, the bullock cart is oldest. Before it, thousands of years back man didn’t have any means of transportation. He used to go from one place to another place on foot.”

Primitive man-Nomadic life

Primitive man means people of very old time. Approximately twenty lakh years ago, he led a nomadic life and spent his time by hunting. This stage of humans is called ‘Hunter and Gathers.’ He used to gather his food by hunting animals like deer, fishes and birds. Other than this they collected roots and fruits for their food.

It was not that easy. Sometimes wild animals attacked them. Moreover, some of the animals were fast in running. So it was not easy for primitive man to catch them. Thus, primitive man used to wander from one place to another in search of food. Thus he learned which fruits and roots to eat and which not to eat as many of them were poisonous.

Animals like deer, sheep, goat were easy to hunt so primitive man used to wander from one place to another in search of them. Moreover, water being essential for life they used to settle near the sources of water.

Places of Human Habitation of Primitive man in India

Archaeologists, anthropologists and historians have together found out many places of habitation of primitive man. Along with it they have also found out information about implements used by them. They used implements and weapons made of stone and wood. Sometimes they even used implements made up of bones. Since the lives of hunter-gatherer and wanderers are associated with stone technology, this time is called ‘Palaeolithic’.



2.1 Stone Age Weapons

The stones shown in fig. 2.1 were used to cut vegetation and to scrape the skin of animals. Primitive man used peel of the tree and skin of animals to cover his body.



Map of stone age human habitation in India



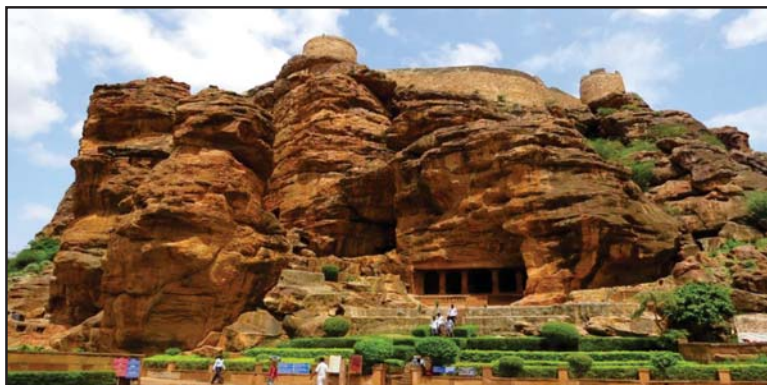
2.2 Archeological Places

Look carefully at the places marked in the map.

You will find that at many places of India, the primitive man might have lived. Few places are shown in the map, but there are evidence of their habitat in many places in India.

They preferred to stay in good and large places where stones, wood and water were found. They lived in natural caves to protect themselves from rain and wild animals. Several such places have been found in Vindhya mountains in Central India. Such type of places have also been found in the region around Narmada river. Bhimbetka (Madhya Pradesh) has been found, which was an excellent place of human habitation. In its caves, near about 500 images of birds, deer, wooden spear, trees, humans etc., drawn by the primitive men have been found, which are drawn with the help of natural colours.





2.3 Cave of Bhimbetka

Discovery of fire and wheel and their Uses :

Ruins of ashes, found in the caves of the primitive man in Kurnool in South India, indicate that they were familiar with fire. As per historians, approximately 11,000 years ago, humans started using fire. Use of fire had revolutionized their life because with the help of it they could cook the meat and eat, get light and protect themselves from wild animals.

Discuss

- Even today, is it possible to think about our life without fire ?
- Initially discovery of wheel would have brought which changes in human life ?

Other than fire, wheel also revolutionized their life. They learnt to make wheel from tree trunk and thick wood.

Changing Environment

Around 12,000 years ago, there was a widespread change in the atmosphere of the world. Due to increase in temperature, vegetation and grass field started growing in many areas of the world. As a result, number of grass eating animals (herbivores) like deer, sheep, goat etc. increased. Primitive man certainly got benefits of it. They started studying these animals' behaviour and thus their mental development started.

They came in contact with grass, trees, vegetation as well as wheat, barley and other grains due to climate change. By using stones, women, men and children collected grains. Because of this curious instinct, slowly agriculture started in India. People started using stones to grow grains. They started growing grains near the banks of the rivers and constructed their houses made up of mud, thatch (hay) and other materials in the near by areas. As a result of it their nomadic life came to an end and started a settled life. The first companion or friend of his settled life was a dog. Besides, he was also familiar with sheep, goat, cow, buffalo, pig etc. Gradually they started adjusting with them too. These animals protected them from wild animals. Thus, they associated with animal husbandry also along with farming. However research is being carried out to find out how long he had been using animals to get milk.



Settled Life : Food, Shelter, Clothing

Early life and pastoral activity transformed primitive man's life into settled life. We know that agricultural land can not be left out because it takes some time for crops to grow, it needs water and crops have to be harvested when grains are ready. This process led to the beginning of settled life in India. He also started making earthen pots for the storage of grains. As the wandering life came to an end, there was a widespread change in their food habits, clothes and shelter. Along with wheat, barley, meat they started eating fish and fruits found near their settlements. He lived in houses made up of mud, thatch and other such materials. He did agriculture. He made farming implements of stone, which included spade, chisel and sickle. The following table shows us the places in India where grains, shelter, weapons and remains of animals have been found.

	Grains, Settlements, Weapons, animals	Places
(1)	Wheat, barley, sheep, goat, stone implements	Mehrgarh (Presently in Pakistan)
(2)	Rice, bones of animals	Koldihava (Uttar Pradesh)
(3)	Rice, Sheep, goat, stone implements	Mahagadha (Uttar Pradesh)
(4)	human settlement, Rhino	Langhnaj (Gujarat)
(5)	Wheat, lentil, dogs, pit-houses	Burjhom and Gufkral (Kashmir)
(6)	Buffalo, Bull, implements	Chirand (Bihar)

We get information about their human settlements and cattle-rearings from places like Burjhom, Gufkral, Hurangi, Mehrgarh, Langhnaj and Bhimbetka, which were discovered by our archelogists. From places such as Mehrgarh and Inamgaon, we even get information about their houses and farming. They used to grow grains like barley and bajra.

Sharp stone implements have been found from places like Mehrgarh and Inamgaon. These might have been used for farming.



2.4 Mehrgarh

Mehrgarh may be considered to be the oldest village of ancient India. You see Mehrgarh in the map. Farming of barley and wheat started from here. They reared sheep and goat. They did farming



and stored grains. Bones of animals have also been found here. They lived in rectangular houses. Small barns have also been found in these houses.

According to the evidences found in Mehrgarh they honoured the dead by burying them. Many such evidences have been found here. Evidence has been found at one place that goat was also buried along with man. This suggests their belief that there is life after death also.

In the same way, a place named Inamgaon has been found in Maharashtra, from where, remains of dead bodies of children have been found. They lived in round shaped houses, reared cattle and did farming of bajra and barley.

Exercises

1. Choose the correct alternative and write correct answer :

- (1) How was primitive man's life ?
(A) Nomadic life (B) Settled life
(C) (Town) Urban settlement life (D) (Village) Rural settlement life
- (2) Which weapon was not used by primitive man to hunt animals ?
(A) Gun (B) Stone weapons
(C) Weapons made of bones (D) Wooden weapons
- (3) In which state is Bhimbetka situated ?
(A) Madhya Pradesh (B) Gujarat (C) Bihar (D) Uttar Pradesh
- (4) Which activities were not started by primitive man ?
(A) Farming (B) Cattle rearing (C) Grain-storage (D) Industries

2. Answer the following questions in short :

- (1) Why did the need for settled life arise ?
- (2) Which types of changes are brought by use of fire in human life ?
- (3) Which type of crops were grown by primitive man ?
- (4) Which animals were reared by primitive man ?

3. State whether the following statements are True or False :

- (1) Primitive man started rearing violent animals, with the beginning of settled life.
- (2) Stone implements were used in Stone age.
- (3) Primitive man has drawn pictures of lion and tiger in Bhimbetka.
- (4) Natural colours have been used in caves of Bhimbetka to draw pictures.

