

FORMATION OF KERALA SOCIETY AND CULTURE

MODULE-1 PHYSIOGRAPHICAL FEATURES OF KERALA

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KERALA

- - Located on Malabar coast of south-west India
- 1st November 1956 by State Reorganization Act
- Area – 15005 sq.miles
- Boundaries – Karnataka(North & North-East)
 - Tamil Nadu (South & South –East)
 - Arabian sea (West)
 - Western Ghats (East)
- Highest literacy rate
- 3% of India's population
- Highest life expectancy – 78 (females) 75 (males)
- UNICEF & WHO- 'Baby Friendly State'

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

- Narrow strip of land lying b/w Arabian sea & Western Ghats in the Southern most part of Indian Subcontinent
- Geographically isolated – contacts with other parts of India through passes in the mountain ranges
- Isolation led to the development of an independent political & cultural tradition
- **Topography** – 3 zones – **Low land / Coastal tracts, Midland / Plains, Highland / Hilly Area**

LOW LAND / THE COASTAL TRACT

- Comprised of beach, coconut groves and settlements bordering the coast
- Meeting place of sea, rivers & back waters
- Soil – sandy & fertile
- Long coastal line with 41 rivers flowing to Arabian sea
- Several inlets to sea –shipping & fishing – numerous ports
- Ports – Muziris, Tyndis, Nelkinda
- Main industries – fishing, coir production
- coconut trees

THE MIDLAND/ PLAIN

- B/W coastal area & highland
- Has rivers, garden lands & homesteads (purayidams)
- Widespread Cultivation – coconut, areacanut, paddy, tapioca, sugarcane, vegetables....
- Based on climate– monsoon

HIGHLAND / HILLY AREA

- Part of Western Ghats
- Dense forest
- Fertile soil
- Spices –tea, coffee, ginger, cardamom, rubber....
- Spices attracts foreigners to Kerala

SOILS

- Laterite soil – majority
- Coconut – sandy soil
- Paddy – alluvial soil

MINERALS

- Not rich in mineral resources
- Iron ore – Malabar
- Neendakara – Monozite
- Quartz & quartzite – all over Kerala

MOUNTAINS

- **Western Ghats** – eastern side – natural fort – from south to north
- From Kozhikode to Vavul mountains – Nilambur – Palakkad – Palakkad pass – Anamala – Neliampathy – Pothundy – Sabarimala – Agastyamudi – mahendramudi – Aruvamozhi
- MINOR GHATS: Ezhimala in North - Kannur – as a point of direction of ships

PASSES

- Western Ghats – natural barrier – outside contact through **passes**
- **Important passes**
 - **Palakkadan pass** –Kerala with Tamil Nadu
 - **Aruvamozi pass** - Kerala with Tamil Nadu
 - **Cherambadi pass** Kerala with Coorg
 - Periya pass** – Kerala with Mysore
 - **Thamarassery pass** – Kerala with Mysore
 - Bodinaikkanur pass** – connects Idukki with Madhurai
 - Aryankavu pass** – Kollam with Tirunalveli

ARABIAN SEA

- Long coastline – naval tradition – several natural ports – attracts travelers & traders from other parts of world ancient period onwards – Jews, Christians, Muslims reached Kerala
- **SEA ROUTES**
- **Trade contacts**
 - **Ancient period** – Mediterranean world, Persian Gulf region, South East Asia, Rome
 - **Modern period** – The Portuguese, The Dutch, The French The English
 - -forts at Thalassery, Anjengo etc – as evidence

RIVERS

- 44 rivers – 41 flowing to Arabian sea from Western Ghats – remaining 3 flows to east (Kabani, Bhavani, Pampa) tributaries of Kaveri
- Largest – Periyar – Sivagiri hills
- Second largest – Bharathapuzha - Anamalai
- Third – Pampa
- Smallest - Ayiroor

LAGOONS / BACKWATERS

- Formed by actions of waves, shore currents, creating low barrier islands across the mouths of many rivers flowing down from western ghats
- Lie near to sea
- Astamudi – Kollam dist- most preserved lake
- Vembanad, Sasthamkotta, Kayamkulam

MONSOON

- Rainy phase
- South – west monsoon – June – september
- Winds reaching southern point of Indian peninsula, divided in to 2 parts – Arabian sea branch & Bay of Bengal branch
- Arabian sea branch first hits western ghats
- South west monsoon locally known as ‘ Edavapathy’
- North east monsoon –october to november – ‘Thulavarsham’ – afternoon rain accompanied by thunder