

Life in the Mountains

The Northern mountains include the Himalayas and the Karakoram mountain ranges. Most of the peaks in these mountains are covered with snow throughout the year.

THE NORTHERN MOUNTAINS

Himalaya means the abode of snow. The Himalayas extend from Jammu and Kashmir in the west to Arunachal Pradesh in the east.

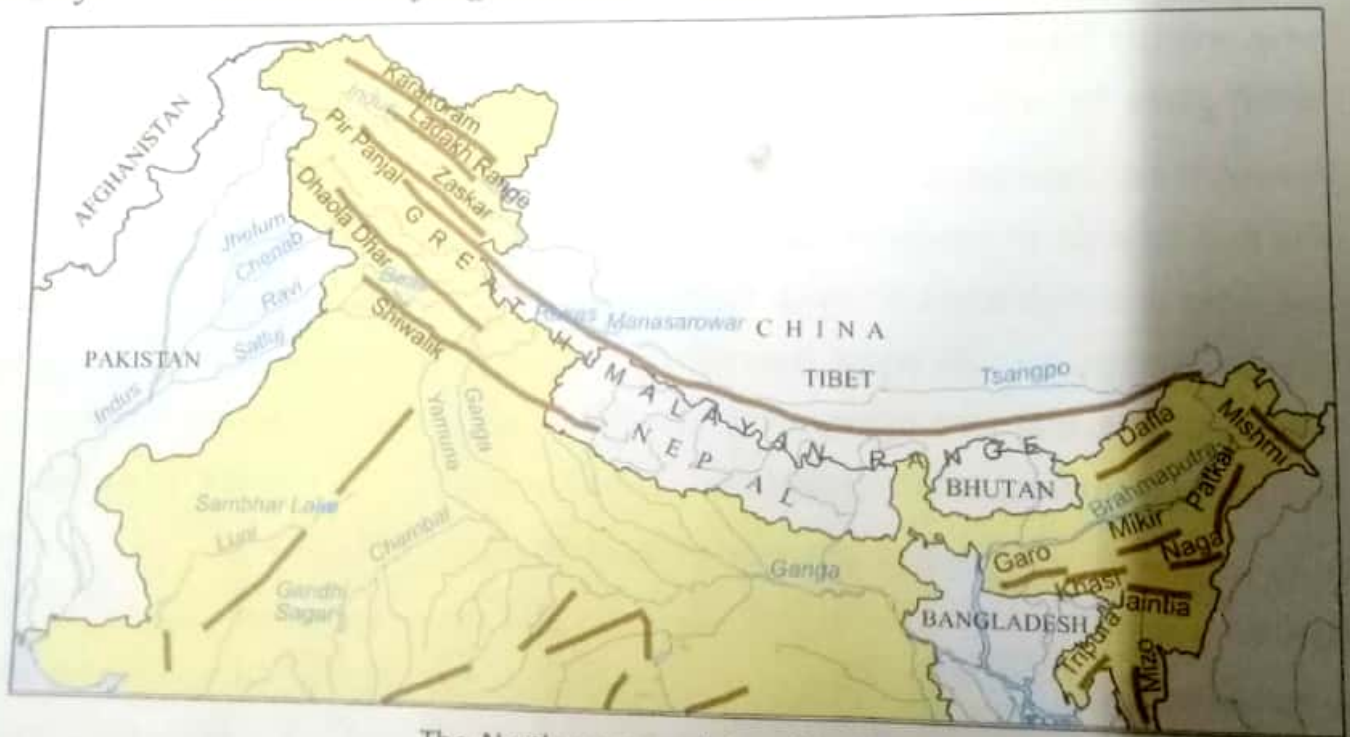
The Mount Everest, the highest peak in the Himalayas, is also the highest peak in the world. It is 8,848 m high. It is in Nepal. Other well-known peaks in the Himalayas are the Kanchenjunga, Nanda



Mount Everest is the world's highest peak.

Devi and Annapurna.

Many brave men and women have risked their lives to climb the snow-covered peaks of the Himalayas. Sherpa Tenzing Norgay and Sir Edmund Hillary were the first to climb Mount Everest.



The Northern mountains of India



The Greater Himalayas have snow-covered peaks.

Bachendri Pal was the first Indian woman to climb Mount Everest.

The Himalayas consist of three parallel ranges. They are

- ◆ the Greater Himalayas.
- ◆ the Lesser Himalayas.
- ◆ the Outer Himalayas.

The Greater Himalayas

The Greater Himalayas are also known as Himadri. They consist of high snow-covered peaks. Glaciers originate from these mountains. The Ganga, the Indus, the Yamuna, the Satluj and the Brahmaputra rivers originate from these glaciers.

Only grasses grow in this region during the short summer season. Animals like snow leopard, Alpine bear, the *bharal* (sheep) and mountain goat are found here.

The Lesser Himalayas

The Lesser Himalayas are also known as Himachal. They lie to the south of the Greater Himalayas. Hill stations, such as Shimla, Nainital, Manali and Darjeeling



River Satluj originates from the Greater Himalayas.

are located in this region.

The Lesser Himalayas are pleasant during summer. Thus, the hill stations are popular tourist resorts. Snowfall occurs during winter.

The slopes of the Lesser Himalayas are covered with thick forests of pine, fir and deodar. Fruits such as apples, pears, cherries, plums, peaches and apricots are grown here.

The mountain slopes of the Lesser Himalayas are cut to make large flat steps to grow crops. This is known as step or terrace farming. Rice, maize, barley, potato and lettuce are cultivated in these steps.

Farmers rear sheep for wool. They



Shimla is a hill station in the Lesser Himalayas.



Terrace farming

make wool during winter, when they cannot work in their fields. Craftsmen make toys, boxes, ashtrays, and carved wooden furniture and statues.

In some places it is difficult to travel from one part of a mountain to another. In such places, passes are useful. Banihal Pass, Rohtang Pass, Shipki La and Nathu La are some important passes.

The Outer Himalayas

The southernmost range of the Himalayas is called the **Shiwalik** or the Outer Himalayas. These ranges consist of low-lying hills. The Shiwalik receive heavy rainfall. These ranges are covered with thick forests. Wild animals such as leopards, tigers,



Purvachal ranges are located in north-east India.

cheetals, elephants, sambhars and bears are found in these forests.

Importance of the Himalayas

The Himalayas help us in many ways.

- ◆ It protects us from the cold winds coming from the north.
- ◆ It also forms a barrier for the monsoon winds. As a result the monsoon winds cause rainfall in the mountains and in the foothill region. Without the Himalayas, much of our country would have been a cold and dry desert.
- ◆ It forms a natural wall which is difficult to cross. Thus, they guard our northern borders from enemies.
- ◆ The Himalayan forests give us valuable wood. Many wild animals live in these forests.
- ◆ Many rivers originate in the Himalayas. They carry water throughout the year. They flow into the plains of northern India and make the land fertile.

THE NORTH-EASTERN HILLS

In the north-east are the **Purvachal** ranges. These hill ranges are not very high. They are covered with thick jungles. The north-eastern hills include Garo, Khasi, Jaintia, Naga, Lushai and Mizo hills.

The north-eastern part of India has seven states. **Arunachal Pradesh** is the largest state. People here live in stilt houses. This protects them from rain and snakes.

Rice, maize, millets and oranges are

grown in Nagaland. The Nagas wear shawls of different designs. We can tell the tribe a Naga belongs to from the design of her/his shawl.

Farming and weaving are the main occupations of people in Manipur. They also make beautiful articles from bamboo, cane and leather. The Manipuri dance is very popular.

Mizoram means 'land of the hill people'. Agriculture is the main occupation of the people. Most Mizos know how to read and write.

Rice and jute are the main crops grown in Tripura. Bamboo is also grown. It is used to make handicraft items. Agartala is the capital city.



Manipuri dance is very popular.

Meghalaya gets the heaviest rainfall in the country. Garo, Khasi and Jaintia tribes live here. They grow rice, jute, potatoes, sugarcane, pineapples and oranges. Shillong is the capital city and a popular hill station.

New Words

GLACIER slow moving river of ice

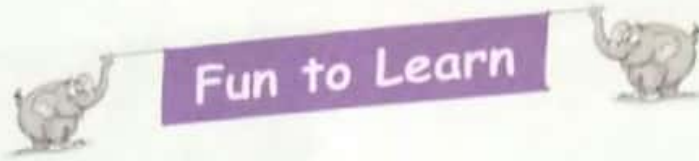
PASS natural or man-made passages through which one can travel from one mountain to another

STILT poles on which a house is supported

Let Us Revise

- ◆ The Northern mountains consist of the Himalayas and the Karakoram ranges.
- ◆ The Himalayas have three ranges—the Greater Himalayas, the Lesser Himalayas and the Outer Himalayas.
- ◆ The Himalayas protect us from the cold winds coming from the north. They also cause rainfall.
- ◆ Garo, Khasi, Jaintia, Naga, Lushai and Mizo hills make up the Purvachal ranges in the north-east.





A. Fill in the blanks.

- The _____ and the _____ mountain ranges make up the Northern mountains.
- The first Indian woman to climb Mount Everest was Geeta Himalayas.
- Nainital is a hill station located in the _____ Himalayas.
- The Outer Himalayas are also known as the Shivalik.
- The mountain ranges in the north-east are called _____.

B. Tick (✓) the correct answer from the brackets.

- (Mount Everest/Nanda Devi) is the highest peak in the world.
- Glaciers are found in the (Greater/Outer) Himalayas.
- (Shivalik/Rohtang) is a mountain pass.
- (Meghalaya/Arunachal Pradesh) is the largest state in the north-eastern part of India.
- The Garo, Khasi and Jaintia tribes live in (Meghalaya/Manipur).

C. Answer these questions.

- Name the three parallel ranges in the Himalayas.
- What is terrace farming? Name the crops cultivated in the terraces.
- Write about the Outer Himalayas.
- How do the Himalayas help us?
- Name the important hills of the Purvachal range.



Fun to Do

- Find out about two hill stations mentioned in this lesson from your school library or the Internet. Write five lines about each of them.
- Find out about the traditional dresses of the people living in the Northern mountains and the north-eastern hills.