

NATION, STATE AND GOVERNMENT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Nationalism is one of the important phenomena of our times. Most of the important states in the world have emerged as nation-states. The evolution of such a political organization, however, took a long period of time. In ancient times, human beings lived in communities. As material civilization progressed, people realized the advantages of a common economic and legal system, and formed themselves into political entities. Such voluntary co-operation among people was not enough to lead to an organized state. The state has evolved and grown from a crude form to the modern political organization over a long period of time. Over these years it has acquired various forms and functions in different countries. In this lesson you will read about the evolution of nation and nationality. You will also learn the meaning of the state and its relation with society, association and government.

2.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to :

- explain the concept of nation and nationality;
- analyse the state as a political entity with sovereign power;
- differentiate between state, society, government and nation; and
- explain the elements of the state and nationality.

2.3 NATION AND NATIONALITY

The term 'nationality' is derived from the Latin word 'Natus' which means born. Therefore in its derivative term 'Nationality' means belonging to the same racial stock or being related by birth or having blood relationship. This understanding of nationality, however, is erroneous. There is, today, not a single nation in the world whose people belong to the same racial stock. Every nation has mixed blood. It is very difficult to find racial purity because of increased facilities of fusion of blood due to immigration, inter-

caste and inter-racial marriages. The development of nationality is definitely a spiritual and psychological phenomenon, neither political nor racial. In the words of J.W. Garner, nationality is a culturally homogeneous social group, which is at once conscious of its unity.

According to Ramsay Muir, a nation may be defined as a body of people who feel themselves to be naturally linked together by certain affinities which are so strong for them to live happily together they are dissatisfied when disunited and cannot tolerate subjection to people who do not share the same ties.

2.4 DISTINCTION BETWEEN NATION AND NATIONALITY

The distinction between the terms 'nation' and 'nationality' is a thin one. According to Bryce, "the difference between the two is of political organization". A nationality is a nation in the making. As soon as a nationality secures political independence, it becomes a nation. A nationality by acquiring unity and sovereign independence becomes a nation. For example, Jews constituted a nationality, and when they got a separate homeland, i.e. Israel, it became a nation. Tamil minority in Sri Lanka claim that they are a separate nationality distinct from Sinhalese, but they can not be treated as a nation.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 2.1

Fill in the blanks.

1. Nation equals _____ plus _____.
2. According to Bryce, the difference between nation and nationality is of _____.
3. The development of nationality is a _____ and _____ phenomenon.
4. Nationality is derived from the Latin word _____.
5. It is very difficult to find racial purity today due to _____ and _____.

2.5 ELEMENTS OF NATIONALITY

"The idea of nationality is not easy to define for there is no measurable factor to which it can be traced". As it is a spiritual concept, a subjective idea, it is almost impossible to find out any common quality or definite interest which is everywhere associated with nationality. We cannot say with certainty that this particular element makes for a separate nationality. We can at best list out some factors which are not indispensable and still without some of which no nationality can truly exist.

(a) **Purity of Race** — Some writers put emphasis on racial purity. A certain degree of racial homogeneity acts as a cementing bond among the members of a group. People belonging to the same race tend to feel the common bond of nationality.

But racial purity should not be taken too far. Today due to immigration and intermarriage, purity of race is not easy to find. Today this phenomenon has become a myth. Purity of race at best can help only in infancy and not in the adulthood of a nation.

b) **Community of Language** — A common language is a medium of communication, it enables the people to express their culture and ideas in common literature.

Language is important but not indispensable. For example, the Swiss people speak different languages — French, German and Italian, but have developed a common sentiment of Swiss nationality.

(c) **Geographical Contiguity** — A fixed territory occupied by a people exerts natural influence on their mind and body. Some call their country their motherland or fatherland. But again the Jews who were scattered all over the world constituted nationality before the creation of Israel.

(d) **Community of Religion** - In the past religion played an important part in national unity e.g. England fought against the Spanish Armada largely due to, her determination to defend Protestantism. Today, however, the spirit of religious toleration has led to the secularisation. In India we have a strong bond of nationality through people have many faiths.

(e) **Common Political Aspirations** — The will to be a nation is regarded by some as the principle of nationality. In 1917 in the Paris Peace Conference, the acceptance of the principle of "Self-determination" took place

(f) **Other factors** — Another factor in the formation of nationality is the unity of economic interests. Mill said, "identity of political antecedents; the possession of a national history, and consequent community of recollections, collective pride and humiliation, pleasure and regret, connected with the same incidents of the past, e.g. in India the oppressive rule of the British kindled the flame of patriotism. Common historical experience, common tradition reflected in art and literature bind together members of a nationality by certain bonds.

While all the factors mentioned above help in the growth of a nationality, none of them is absolutely indispensable. In fact nationality is a subjective and spiritual sentiment which cannot be defined in terms of any one objective factor. The presence or absence of any one or more of these factors does not necessarily imply the presence or absence of a spirit of nationality.

INTEXT QUESTION 2.2

Fill in the blanks:

1. Nationality plus _____ makes a nation.
2. The factors which promote nationalism are _____
_____ and _____.
3. Common language among a group of people means common _____.
4. Common history helps the people to develop strong national _____.
5. Culture in its broad sense means _____.

2.6 THE STATE

The term "State" is the central to the study of Political Science. Yet it is wrongly used as a synonym for 'nation', 'society', 'government' etc. The term state is also used as 'state'

management' 'State aid' and so on. Also as the States of the Indian Union, or the fifty States that make the United States of America. But in Political Science, we use this term differently, it has a more specific and definite meaning.

As used in Political Science, the term state means an assemblage of people, occupying a definite territory, under an organized government and subject to no outside control.

A community is formed by people. Man is a social animal and cannot live alone. When people live together, they fulfill their social needs. But everybody is not good and kind only. There are all sorts of men and women, who exhibit various emotions such as pride, jealousy, greed, selfishness, and so on. According to Burke, "Society requires not only that the passions of individuals should be subjected, but that even in the mass and body, as in the individuals the inclinations of men should be thwarted, their will controlled and their passions brought into subjection". The best is to control human perversity by means of political authority. Therefore people are bound by rules of common behaviour. If these are broken then they can be punished. Society fulfills human being's need for companionship, the state solves the problem created by this companionship.

Therefore the state has certain essential elements like territory and its use of force. The state exists for the sake of good life. It is an essential and natural and as Aristotle says, "the State comes into existence originating in the bare needs of life and continues in existence for the sake of good life."

It is only within a state that an individual can rise to his or her best ability. If there is no authority, no organization and no rules, then society cannot be held together. The state has existed wherever human beings have lived in an organized society. The structure of the state has evolved gradually over a long period of time, from a simple to a complex organization that we have today.

Though the state is a necessary and universal institution, no two writers agree on its definition. There are different views on the nature of the state. Some view it as a necessary evil, some as an evil, some as a political system. We select a few definitions for you.

Woodrow Wilson called it, "The people organized for law within a definite territory." Harold Laski defines the state as "a territorial society divided into government and subjects, claiming within its allotted physical area, a supremacy over all other institutions". The best definition of state is given by Garner. He says: "State is a community of persons, more or less numerous, permanently occupying a definite portion of territory, independent, or nearly so, of all external control, and possessing an organised government to which the great body of inhabitants render habitual obedience." Thus Garner highlights four essential elements that constitute a state. These are: (i) people, more or less numerous; (ii) a definite portion of territory permanently occupied by people; (iii) an organised government which is habitually obeyed by the bulk of people; and (iv) independence, meaning sovereignty or supreme power.

Whatever agreement these writers may have over the definition, all of them agree in ascribing to the state three elements: people, territory and government. It is over the fourth element sovereignty that there is disagreement. But these writers attribute a special quality to the government. According to MacIver, it is endowed with coercive power. *Oppenheim* says it is sovereign. When the government is accorded a superior quality, it is really the quality of the state. "The essence of state is in its monopoly of coercive power."

“The sovereign is legally supreme over any individual or group and possesses supreme power.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 2.3

Fill in the blanks:

- 1 State is the highest form of organized _____
- 2 The essence of state is in its monopoly of _____
- 3 In political science the term state means _____ (complete this statement)
- 4 Give Woodrow Wilson's definition of the state.
- 5 What is Aristotle's explanation of the origin of the state ?

2.7 ELEMENTS OF THE STATE

As pointed out above, the state is made up of four essential elements. These are:

- (i) Population
- (ii) Territory
- (iii) Government
- (iv) Sovereignty

Let us briefly explain these four elements.

- (i) *Population* — The state is a human institution. Population and land are the starting point of any study of making in their organized groups. It is the *people who make a state*. Antarctica is not a state as it is without any human population. The population must be able to sustain a state. Difference in the size of population, other things remaining the same, does not make any difference in the nature of the state.

Plato and Aristotle's ideal was the Greek City State of Athens or Sparta. Plato fixed the number of people in an ideal state at 5040. Aristotle laid down a general principle that the state should be neither large nor small. It should be large enough to be self-sufficing and small enough to be well-governed. Rousseau put the number at 1000. This kind of fixation of number of people in a state is impossible in case of modern large nation-states.

The modern tendency is to have a large state for manpower. Countries like former USSR gave incentives to mothers of large families. In India over population is a major problem. China has enforced a one-child norm. Dictators like Mussolini had openly encouraged large population. There can be no standard size of population.

So no limit either theoretical or practical can be put on population. The quality of population is important. A state requires healthy, intelligent and disciplined citizens. They should be responsible and full of vitality.

- (ii) *Territory* — Just as every person belongs to a state, so does every square yard of earth. There is no state without a fixed territory, large or small, and no territory that is not part of a state. Living together on a common land binds people together. *Love*

for the territory inculcates the spirit of patriotism. Some call their country 'Fatherland' and some call it 'Motherland'. But, there is definite attachment with one's territory.

Without a fixed territory it would also be very difficult to conduct international relations. It is essential for identification if one state attempts to conquer and violate the territorial integrity of another.

Land, water and airspace comprise the territory of the state. The sovereignty of a state is exercised over its land, all rivers and lakes, mountains and planes and air space above the land. The sea up to a certain limit from a land border is also a part of the territory of the state. A state can be as large as Russia or very small like San Marino. The size of a state influences the form of government. For example, smaller states can have a unitary form of government, but for large states like India and the USA the federal system is the ideal.

(iii) *Government* - The purpose for which people live together cannot be realized unless they are properly organized and accept certain rules of conduct. The agency created to enforce rules of conduct and ensure obedience is called government. Government is also the focus of the common purpose of the people occupying a definite territory. It is through this medium that common policies are determined, common affairs are regulated and common interests promoted. Without a government the people will lack cohesion and means of collective action. There would be groups, parties and warring associations and conditions of civil wars and chaos. So there is a need for common authority and order where people live. This is the pre-requisite of human life. The state cannot and does not exist without a government, no matter what form a government may assume. The government is a must, though it may take any form. It may be a monarchy or democracy or dictatorship. It may be parliamentary government as in India or presidential as in the United States of America.

(iv) *Sovereignty* — A people inhabiting a definite portion of territory and having a government do not constitute a state so long as they do not possess sovereignty. India, till 1947, had all other elements but it was not a state because it was not sovereign. A state must be internally supreme and free from external control. Sovereignty has two aspects, internal and external. Internal sovereignty is the state's monopoly of authority inside its boundaries. This authority cannot be shared with any other state. The state is independent.

Its will is its own, unaffected by the will of any other external authority

Therefore every state must have its population, a definite territory, a duly established government and sovereignty. The absence of any of these elements deprives it, the status of statehood. So the term 'State' generally used for the 28 provinces of the Indian Republic is misnomer.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 2.4

Fill in the blanks:

- The four elements of the state are _____, _____, _____ and _____.
 - Plato fixed the number of citizens of the state at _____, and Rousseau at _____.
- Love for the territory inculcates the spirit of _____.

- 4 _____ and _____ comprise the territory of the state.
- 5 A unitary form of government is good for a small state and a _____ is ideal for big states.
- 6 The agency created to enforce rules of conduct is called _____.
- 7 Sovereignty has two aspects _____ and _____.

2.8 STATE AND GOVERNMENT

The government is the agency or machinery through which common policies are determined and by which common affairs are regulated. It is the visible manifestation of state authority. It consists of all the persons, institutions and agencies by which the will of the state is expressed and carried out. The state has authority inherent in itself, whereas the government has no inherent powers. It gets its structure, authority and power from the constitution of the state. The state is continuous whereas governments come and go. The state is abstract whereas the government is concrete. The government has three organs, i.e. the legislature, the executive and the judiciary. You can find them working in their respective areas but all in the name of the state. Thus, state and government differ from each other, though there can be no state without a government.

2.9 STATE AND SOCIETY

We must differentiate between state and society, otherwise we would be justifying state interference in all aspects of human life, thereby affecting human liberty. Aristotle saw no difference between state and society. A dictator will also not make any distinction between the two. For him, he is the government and he is the state. But, dictatorship is not a normal situation.

Society is the product of human beings' desire for association. State is sovereign, society is not.

It is the aggregate of all human relations. Society stands for the whole scheme of life (whether religious, political, social or cultural) has different purposes to complete the whole purpose of life. The political purpose is one of those purposes and it is performed by the state.

The geographical area of the state and a society may be the same and the membership may be the same but they differ in their origins, aims and functions. The state exists for the political purpose and *society for many*. The organization of the state, does not include all the social organization.

Society is natural and instinctive and the state is an artificial creation. Organization is not essential in society, it can be seen in organized form as well as in unorganized form. But, there can be no state without an organization called the government.

State has general rules of conduct known as laws. Violation of laws leads to punishment. Whereas rules of society are social norms and breaking these norms leads to social ostracization. The area of society is voluntary co-operation, its energy is goodwill and its method is *elasticity*. On the other hand, the area of the state is mechanical action, its energy is force and its method is rigidity. Society was already there prior to the state.

In fact, state has been created within the society. *State is the highest form of an organized society.*

In spite of all these differences, state and society are inter-connected and inter-dependent. Social conduct or the structure of society must conform to the laws of the state. It depends on the structure of the state and the form of government.

2.10 STATE AND ASSOCIATION

An association is defined as a group of people who are organized into a unity of will and common ends. Therefore an association must have a common purpose and should be organized. The state too is a group of people organized to satisfy human needs through common action. But there are some basic differences. For example, a state has a fixed territory and an association is not a territorial entity. Membership of a state is compulsory and that of an association is voluntary. The purpose and scope of an association is limited — whereas the sphere of the state's activity is all-inclusive. The state only, can use coercive power. The state can control the activities of the associations. The state can also create associations for fulfilling various functions, or ban or abolish some of these. Besides, the state is sovereign and the associations are not. The state can enforce its laws, associations can only plead with their members to abide by the rules

2.11 NATION AND STATE

The theory of "one nation one state" had its supporters in the past too, but it became the practical politics after World War I. Today by nation we mean the state plus nationality. A state need not always be a nation. For instance before World War I, Austria - Hungary was a state but not a nation because the heterogeneous people did not form a culturally homogeneous social group there. Thus the pre-condition of a nation is what Barnes calls *the unity of psychic life and expression.*

The state is a people organized for law within a definite territory and is sovereign both internally and externally whereas a nation is a group of people psychologically bound together and they share common joys and sorrows

Nation and state are distinct in meaning and connotation. The Scots and Welsh are different nationalities but both are members of the British State. States have also annexed nations, e.g. Alsace and Lorraine were part of Germany from 1870 to 1918, part of France from 1940-1945. Today they are part of France again.

A mere organization of people under one government does not make them a nation. Austria - Hungary before World War I was a state, not a nation. Inhabited by many nationalities there was nothing other than political bonds which could keep them together

So, what is a nation-state? It is a state made up of one nationality. In other words, when a people are bound together by common religion (Pakistan), common language (USA) or common heritage (India) they are nationals. If they possess an independent statehood also, they constitute a nation-state.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 2.5

Fill in the blanks:

1. Nationhood is _____ whereas statehood is _____.
2. An association has _____ functions.
3. Membership of a state is _____ but that of an association is voluntary.
4. The authority of the state is _____ whereas the government derives its authority from the _____ of the state.
5. _____, _____ and _____ are the three organs of the government.
6. _____ was not a nation-state.

WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

You have understood the meaning of Nation and Nationality. You have learnt about the elements which lead to the formation of a nationality like community of race, religion, language, geographical unity, a common market, common historical experience. You have also read about the meaning, origin, aims of the state, and elements. Finally, you know about state and government, state and society, state and association and state and nation. You know now that only the state can use coercive power. These are the basic objects of the study of political science. Political science is basically the study of human beings with relation to the organised state.

TERMINAL EXERCISES

1. Define the following terms:
(a) Nation (b) State (c) Association (d) Government
2. Name the elements which lead to the formation of Nationality and explain any two of them.
3. What is the state? Briefly explain the elements of the state.
4. Give any three differences between an association and the state.
5. What are the differences and points of inter-dependence between the state and society.
6. Are the following states? Give reasons in a single line for your answers.
(a) India (b) United Nations.
(c) Bihar (d) United States of America.

KEY TO ANSWERS

INTEXT QUESTIONS

2.1

1. unity, sovereignty
2. political organization
3. spiritual, psychological
4. natus
5. emigration, inter-racial marriages.

2.2

1. sovereignty
2. racial unity, linguistic unity, religious unity, geographical contiguity, common historical background, cultural unity.
3. common literature
4. sentiment (or bonds)
5. a way of life

2.3

1. society
2. coercive power
3. an assemblage of people, occupying a definite territory, under an organised government and subject to no outside control.
4. Woodrow Wilson defines state as "A people organized for law within a definite territory.
5. Aristotle says, the state comes into existence originating in the bare needs of life and continuing in existence for the sake of good life.

2.4

1. population, territory, government and sovereignty
2. 5040, 1000
3. patriotism
4. Land, water and airspace
5. federal form
6. government
7. internal and external

2.5

1. subjective, objective
2. limited
3. compulsory
4. inherent, constitution
5. legislature, executive and judiciary
6. Austria - Hungary.

HINTS FOR TERMINAL EXERCISES

1. Please refer to Section 2.7
2. Please refer to Section 2.5
3. Please refer to Section 2.6 and 2.7
4. Please refer to Section 2.10
5. Please refer to Section 2.9
6. (a) Yes : it is sovereign
(b) No : it is an association of sovereign states
(c) No : it is a unit of the Indian Union
(d) Yes : it is sovereign