

CHAPTER 11

JAPAN



You must have often heard about Japan. Electronic goods like tape-recorders, TVs and video players manufactured in Japan are famous all over the world. You might even have seen some of these appliances.

Japan is a very small country. Most of it is hilly, and covered with forests. There is very little agricultural land and it has very few minerals. Yet, Japan is today one of the richest nations in the world. Japan manufactures a variety of goods and sells them all over the world. In this chapter

we will see how the people of Japan have developed their industries despite several limitations.

As you can see in this picture, the Japanese are a very courteous people. Have a look at the other pictures in this chapter and make a list of the topics that are likely to be discussed in this chapter.

Where is Japan ?

- *Locate Japan on the map of Asia. In which direction of India is Japan situated?*
- *Can we go to Japan by bus or train?*
- *Japan is surrounded by oceans and seas. What are their names? Look them up in the map of Asia.*
- *Which are the neighbouring countries of Japan?*

Like Indonesia, Japan is also made up of several islands. Many of them are tiny islets and four of them are big islands - Hokkaido, Honshu, Kyushu and Shikoku. Locate them in Map 2.

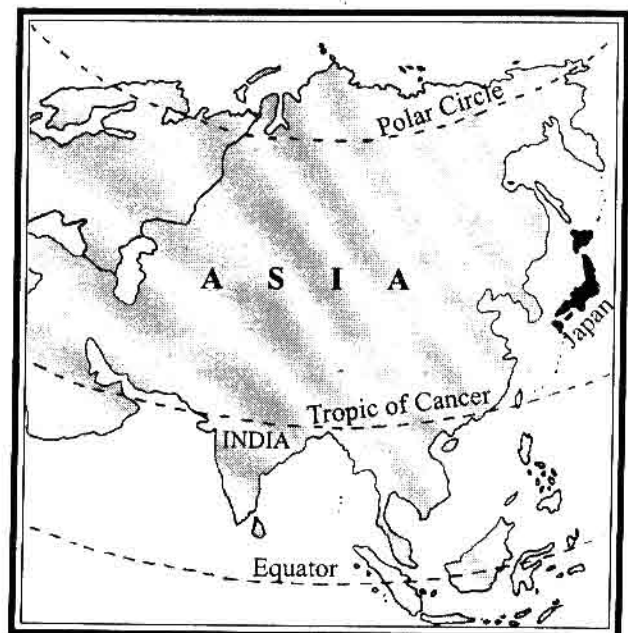
The Four Seasons

Now let us see where Japan is located on the earth's surface. You found Indonesia on the Equator. Now see how far to the north Japan lies from the Equator. Generally, tropical regions (which lie close to the Equator) are

warm all through the year. As we move away from the Equator towards the North Pole or the South Pole, it gets colder and colder.

Japan is far north of the Equator, in the temperate region. Like other countries in this

Map 1. Position of Japan in Asia



region, Japan has warm and cold seasons. Actually, temperate countries like Japan have four seasons in a year. What are these four seasons?

During **Winter**, in December-January, it gets very cold in Japan. Sometimes it rains in winter. It snows in the northern islands like Hokkaido and the whole region is covered with snow. From March onwards it is **Spring** season. Snow melts and it becomes less cold. Flowers begin to bloom everywhere. After that, **Summer** extends from May to August. In Japan it also rains in summer. Remember, we also get rain in July-August. In Japan agricultural activities begin in summer. From September to November it is **Autumn** season. The weather gets slightly cold. The leaves of the trees turn yellowish and reddish in colour and begin to fall. It is also called 'Fall' because the leaves fall on the ground. Crops get ready to be harvested in this season.

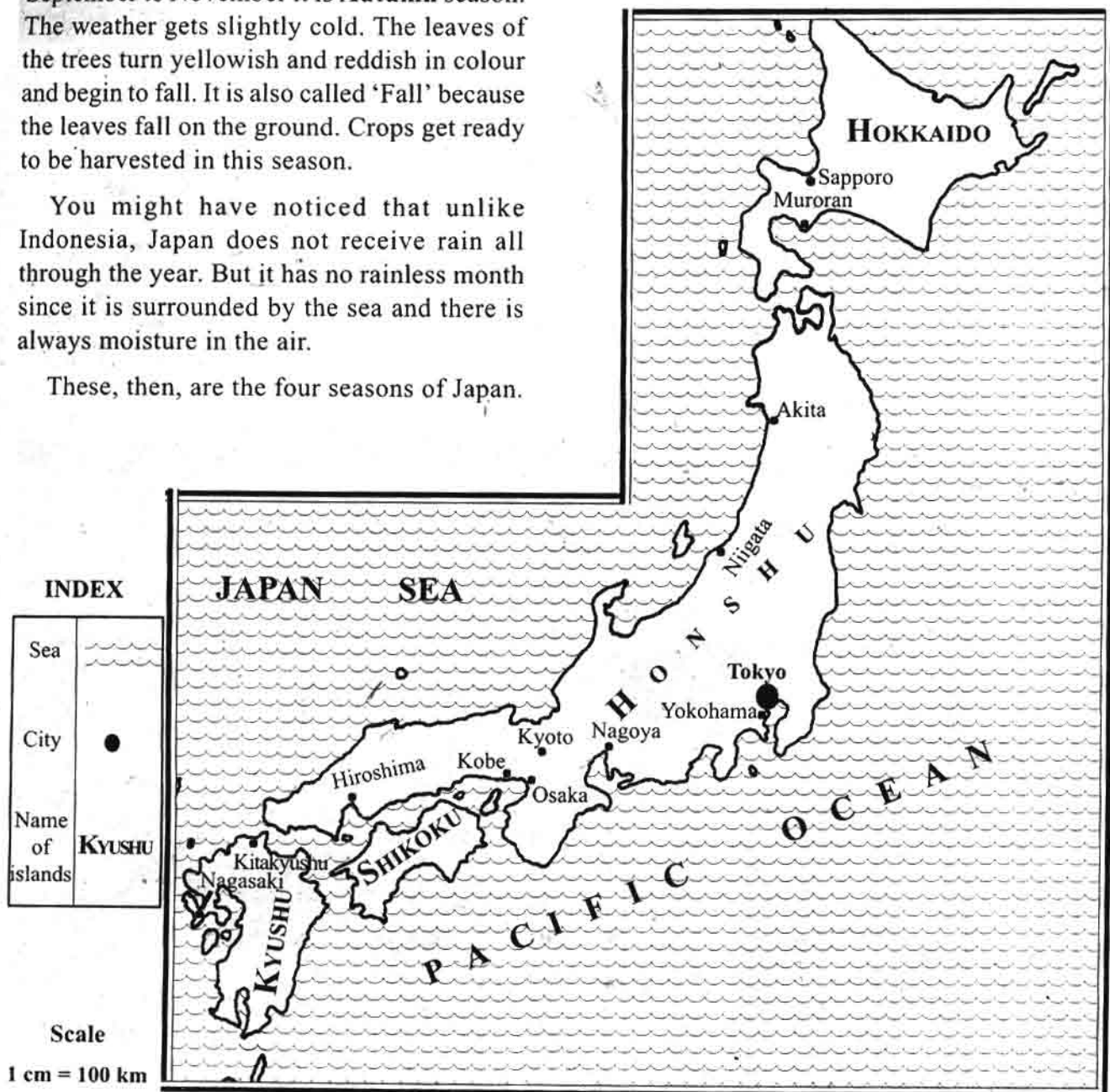
You might have noticed that unlike Indonesia, Japan does not receive rain all through the year. But it has no rainless month since it is surrounded by the sea and there is always moisture in the air.

These, then, are the four seasons of Japan.

- *Indonesia has summer _____ while Japan has summer _____. (throughout the year, for a few months)*
- *Agricultural work begins in _____ season in Japan and in _____ season crops are ready for harvest.*
- *Japan gets rain in _____ season.*

Madhya Pradesh also has a summer and winter season. But the climate is different from that of Japan. Look at a globe and locate the position of Japan and Madhya Pradesh.

MAP 2. JAPAN



- Which among these is located nearer to the Equator?
- Which place would get colder during winter and which place would get hotter during the summer?

Mountains and Volcanoes

Like Indonesia, Japan, too, is a country of mountains and volcanoes. How does Japan look? You can get an idea of the terrain of Japan by looking at fig. 2. The mountains, valleys and plains of Japan are shown in the picture.

- Look at the picture and select the correct statements -
 - Japan is a country of islands.
 - Japan is a country of hills.
 - Japan is a plateau.
 - Japan has wide plains.
 - Japan has volcanoes.
- Locate the volcanoes in the picture and mark them with a 'V'.

Look at the picture and say where people would be living in Japan. Even though Japan is mostly hilly, there are small plains between the mountains and the sea coast.

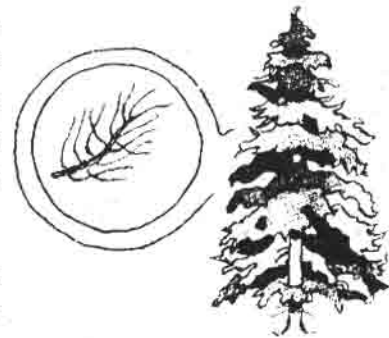
- Locate the plains and mark them with a 'P'.

Most of these plains have fields and settlements. There are big cities also. Plains are the most densely populated areas of Japan.

- Look at the map of Japan and find out which cities are located on which island. Write down the names of the important cities of each island.

Forests

You have seen that there are many mountains in Japan. Most of them are covered with forests. Here are some pictures of the trees of Japan. We do not see such trees around us, but they can be found in the Himalayas. These trees grow in regions where it is cold throughout the year. These trees, have long, pointed, needle-like leaves and are known as coniferous trees.



Such trees can be found on

Fig. 3. Coniferous Tree and its Leaves



the high mountains of Japan and on the island of Hokkaido. These regions are cold all through the year, and also experience snowfall. But such trees are not found in other areas.

Trees with broad leaves are found in regions which are less cold. The trees mainly found in the forests of Japan are birch, maple, etc. - the

broad-leaved trees of cold regions. In these forests, during autumn, the trees shed their leaves. They remain bare all through the winter. New shoots emerge in March, and soon the trees are laden with new leaves.



Fig. 4. Broad-leaved Tree of the Temperate Region

AGRICULTURE IN JAPAN

From the mountains and forests, let us move towards the fields of Japan. Fig. 5 on the next page shows the plain next to the mountains. You can see the fields filled with water. These are paddy or rice fields.

Since the plains of Japan are very small and

densely populated, people cultivate the mountain slopes also. These slopes are very steep and stony, making cultivation difficult. So terrace cultivation is carried out on the gentler slopes of hills where there is some soil.

You can see such terraced fields on the hill in the picture. You have already read about terrace cultivation in Indonesia. In this picture, you can see some women working on the slopes.

- *Can you guess what they are doing?*
- *What has been planted on these hill slopes?*

Tea grows very well on hill slopes because tea shrubs need a lot of water which should also flow off easily. Fruit trees also grow very well on these slopes. Mulberry trees are grown in plenty. Silk worms eat mulberry leaves and grow into cocoons. The shell of the cocoon is made of silken fibres. Silk cloth is woven out of threads made from these fibres. Japan manufactures a lot of silk cloth.

We just read about cultivation on the hill slopes of Japan. Let us see what grows on the plains of Japan.

From June to September, Japan gets rainfall and strong sun in the southern parts. This

FIG. 2. A VIEW OF JAPAN



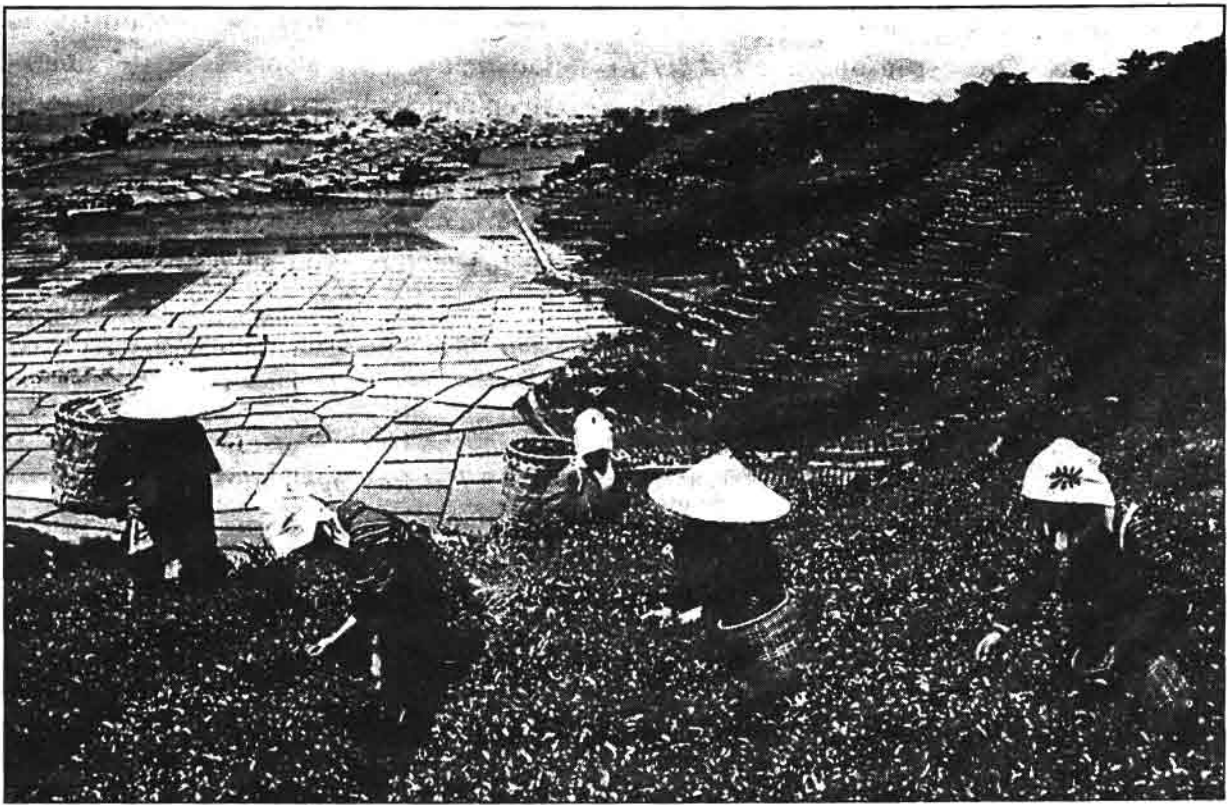


Fig. 5. Cultivation on the Slopes and Plains of Japan

season is suitable for the cultivation of paddy. Paddy grows in India, too, during the same season. In the southern part of Japan, rice grows very well, much better than in the northern parts of Japan. This is because the north is the colder region, and gets less rain. A different variety of rice is grown in some parts of the colder regions. Other crops of Japan are wheat, barley, rye, potatoes and some vegetables. They grow in regions where it is not very cold and cultivation is possible.

Small Farmers, Small Fields and Small Machines

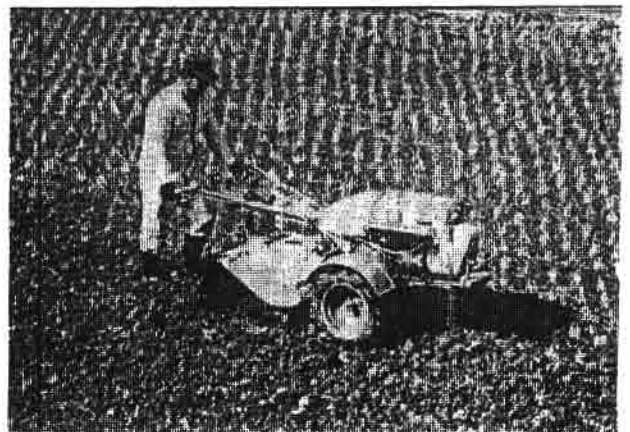
Most farmers in Japan are small farmers who do not own much land. Most of them own less than one hectare of land. So their fields are small in size. Moreover, because of terrace cultivation, the fields are very tiny.

Look at figs. 6, 7 and 8. See what kinds of machines are used to plough the field, to transplant rice seedlings and to harvest the crops. These machines are especially suited to small fields. Generally many people are needed to plough, transplant seedlings and harvesting. But in these pictures, you can see only one person carrying out the entire work



Fig. 6. Transplanting Machine

Fig. 7. Ploughing Machine



on the field with the help of small machines. Agricultural work in Japan is usually carried out by small farmers themselves without the help of hired workers.

- *Give two reasons why the farmers of Japan do not use machines like tractors and harvesters.*
- *Why do small farmers in India not use such small machines?*

Most of the agricultural work in Japan is done by machines. Very few people are involved in agriculture. Many people work in factories because they get higher wages there. Even in a farmer's family, most people go to work in factories except for one person who stays at home to look after the fields.

Import of Food Grains

The output of agriculture in Japan is very high, but it is still insufficient to meet the needs of the whole country. The population is dense and a large part of the land cannot be utilised for cultivation. So, Japan imports grain, meat, milk, etc.

- *Despite high agricultural production, why does Japan have to import food?*
- *Write four important points about agriculture in Japan.*
- *Why are agricultural labourers not needed in Japan?*

Fig. 8. Harvesting Machine

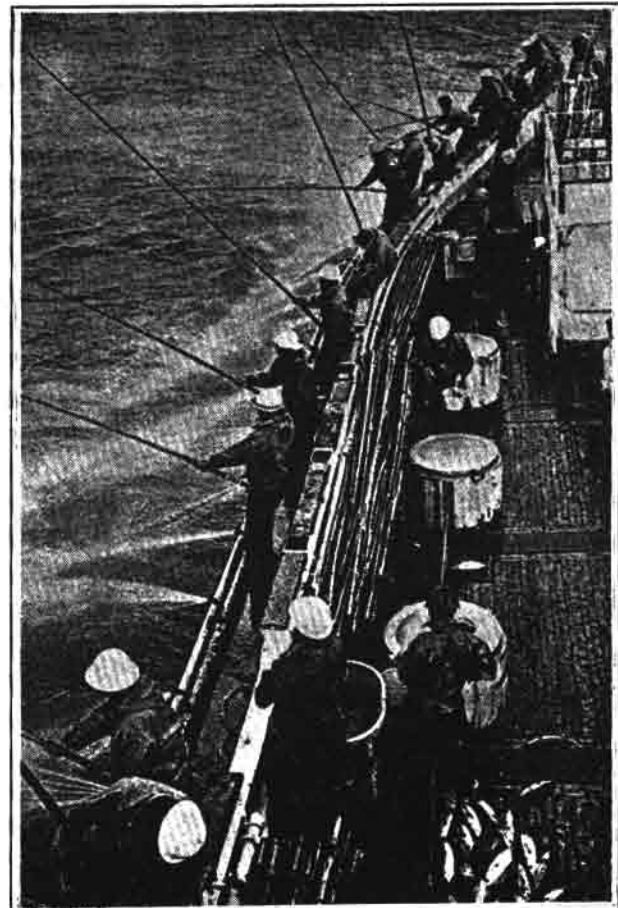


Fisheries

Japan is surrounded by seas, in which there is a lot of fish. Hence, fishing is an important occupation in Japan. They have a good water transport system, so it is very easy to go from a settlement on one shore to another. People go in big ships travelling great distances in order to fish (see fig. 9). There are many industries in Japan based on fishing. There are factories for tinning fish, extracting oil from fish, etc. Oil from some varieties of fish is used in the manufacture of medicines. Japan exports tinned fish and cod liver oil to many other countries.

Fishing is a major occupation in India, too. Most of the fish we get in the markets of Madhya Pradesh are caught from rivers and tanks. However, in the coastal areas of India there are a large number of fishing communities who catch fish from the seas. You will read about them in later classes.

Fig. 9. These ships are not only used for fishing, but for drying, canning and extracting oil from fish



INDUSTRIES OF JAPAN

We have seen the plains, mountains and sea coasts of Japan, and have talked about the forests and fields there. Let us now read a bit about the factories of Japan. Japan is famous for its industries. There are various industries in Japan. Map 3 shows the principal industrial centres of Japan and the main products manufactured in these centres.

Tokyo is the capital city of Japan. Adjoining it is Yokohama city. See in the map how many industries are located here.

• Look at Map 2 and say which industries are located near these cities -

Tokyo _____ Yokohama _____

Kobe _____ Osaka _____

Kitakyushu _____

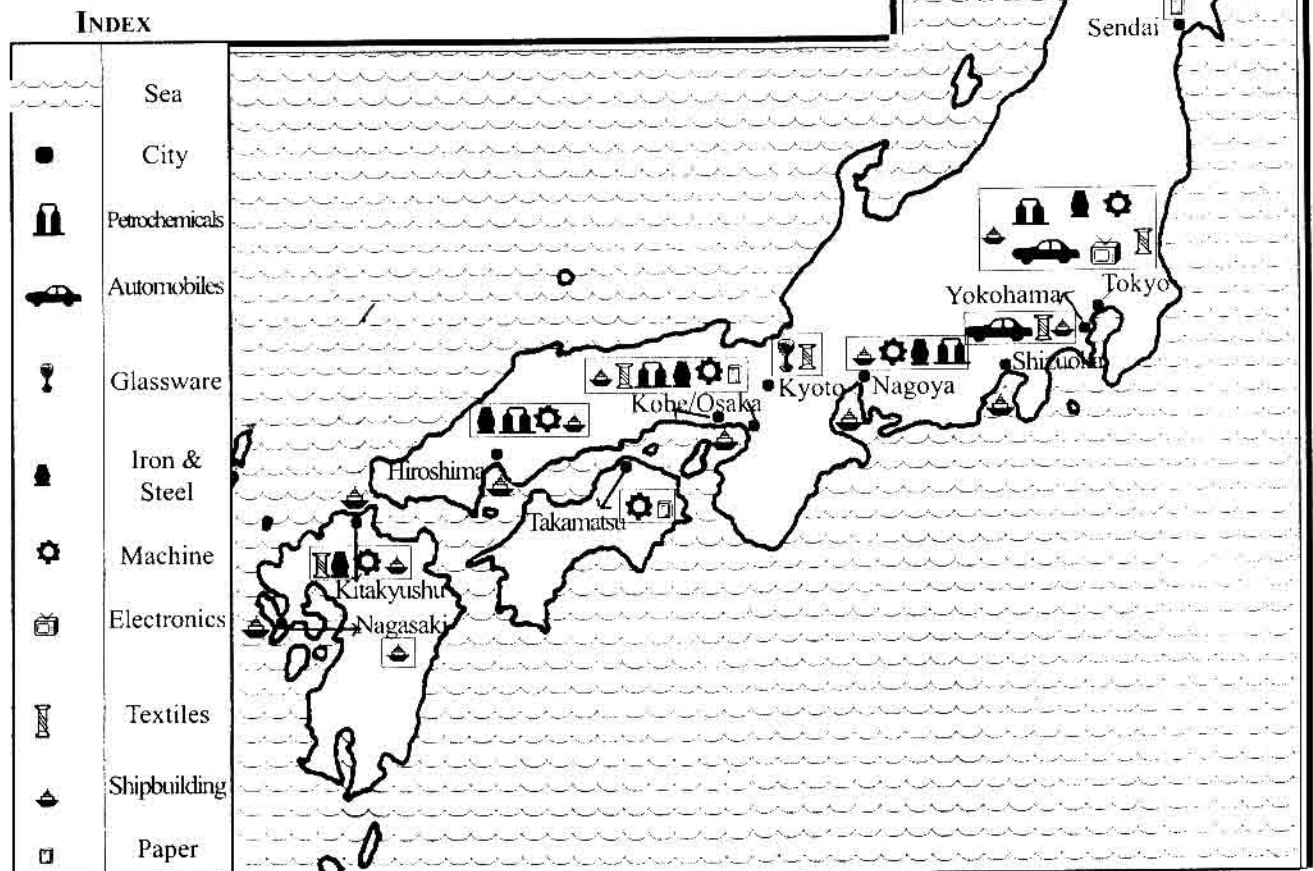
Problem of Raw Materials

Many industries flourish in Japan, but they do not have sufficient raw materials for them in Japan itself. Necessary minerals like coal, iron and copper are obtained from Japan's own mines. But Japan has to depend on other

MAP 3. INDUSTRIES OF JAPAN

Scale: 1 cm = 125 km.

(Note: Hokkaido island is not shown in this map.)



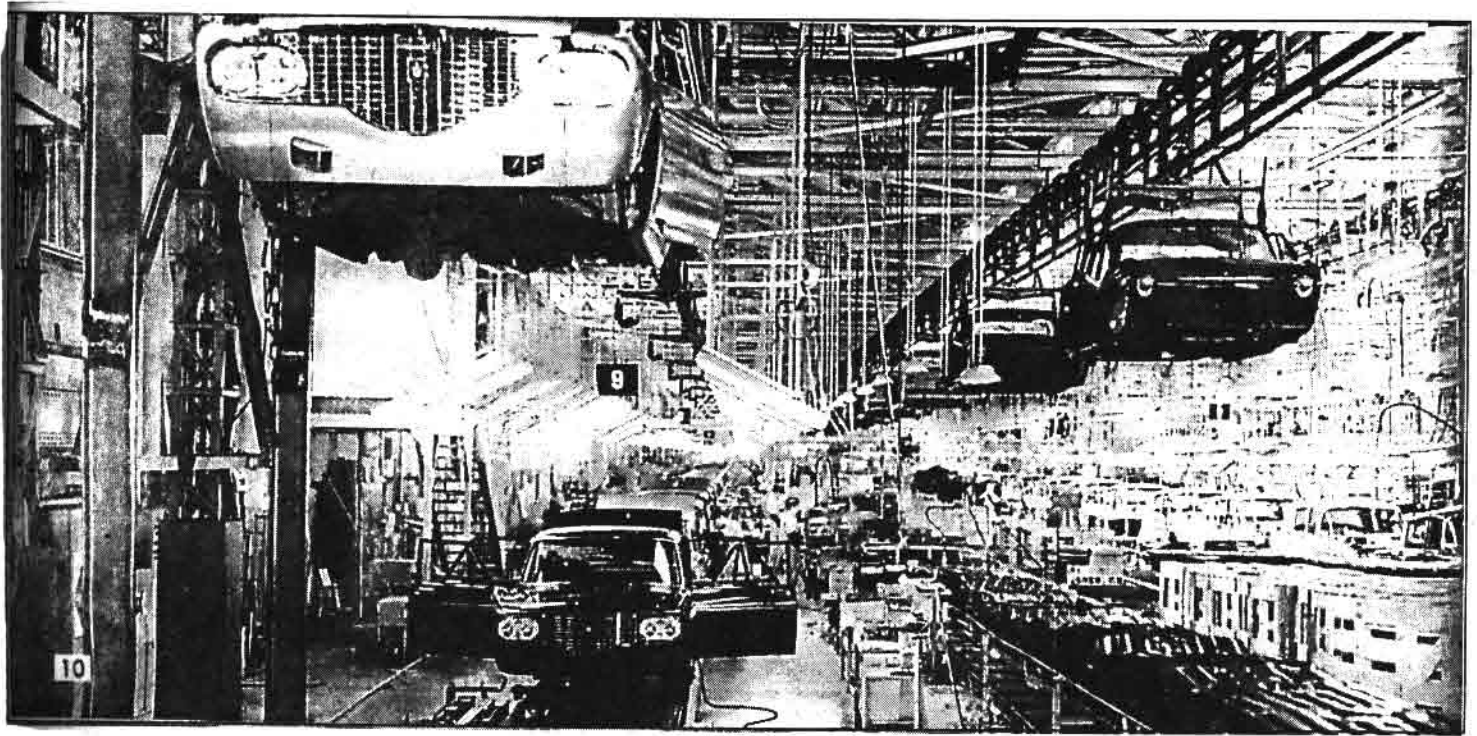


Fig. 10. Inside an Automobile Factory

countries for many other raw materials. In turn, Japan exports manufactured goods to other countries.

• Fill in the table given below -

<i>Imported Items</i>	<i>Purpose of Import (For fuel / for food / for industries)</i>
1. Mineral Oil	
2. Petrol	
3. Copper	
4. Tin	
5. Iron Ore	
6. Coal	
7. Cloth	
8. Meat	
9. Fodder	
10. Cotton	
11. Soyabean	
12. Wheat	
13. Timber	

• What food items does Japan purchase from other countries? Why do they need

to import these items?

- Why does Japan need minerals, petrol, copper and coal from other countries? What are these minerals used for?

The Japanese use the imported raw materials to make vehicles, steel, ships, tape-recorders, computers, clothes, plastic goods, etc. They export these items to other countries.

A Country Dependent on Trade

Japan has many industries, but the necessary raw materials are inadequate. Most of the raw materials (like iron ore, copper, coal, mineral oil, cotton, etc) are imported from other countries. The industrialists of Japan purchase raw materials from all over the world, manufacture goods in their factories and sell them in different countries of the world. In this way, they are able to make use of the resources of other countries.

You may recall that their agricultural production is also insufficient for their requirements and the Japanese import foodgrains. They exchange their manufactured products for foodgrains. If Japan were to end its trade relations with other countries, there would not even be enough food for its people!



Fig. 11. A Bay and Port in Shikoku

Transport - Railways and Waterways

Transport is an important factor in exporting and importing goods. The railways and roadways of Japan are highly developed. Trains in Japan travel at a very high speed.

The coast of Japan is very irregular. If you look at the map of Japan you will see many gulfs and bays. 'Gulf' is the name given to a part of the sea surrounded by land on three sides. India also has some gulfs like the Gulf of Cambay.

- **Locate 5 gulfs or bays on the Japanese coast in Map 1, and mark them with a 'G'.**

There are excellent ports situated in the gulfs in Japan. For good ports, there should be deep water near the shore where ships can be anchored. Since a gulf is enclosed by land on three sides, there is protection from strong winds, storms and water currents. If you look carefully at the map of Japanese industries, you will notice that most of them are located near gulfs.

A large number of people are engaged in industrial production. People in villages also work in the factories located in cities. Most of them travel long distances every day to reach their factories. Thousands of people in the towns also travel to the factories every day and return in the evening. Motor vehicles and

railways are very important for this purpose.

Industrial Pollution

You have seen that thousands of factories are located in small regions in Japan. Due to these industries, water and air are getting more and more polluted every day. The smoke from the factories contains poisonous gases. The waste water from factories pollutes the nearby rivers, canals and even the sea. Since the factories are close together and congested, the problems are getting worse.

This sort of pollution causes many diseases to human beings and animals. Several years ago, the people of Minamata city suffered from a strange disease. They began to be struck by a kind of paralysis. In 1969, about 45 people died due to this disease. On investigation, it was found that the root of this disease was the waste water from one of the factories. This waste water contained poisonous chemicals, and the fish which came in contact with that water also became poisonous. People who ate the fish got paralysed due to the poison. Today, this disease is known as the Minamata disease.

Similarly, the poisonous wastes from another factory got mixed with river water and ruined the water. Since this river was used for irrigation, the crops also became poisonous. People who ate that rice developed a pain in their bones and slowly began to die.

Nowadays, diseases caused by pollution are on the increase in Japan. Efforts are also being made to control such pollution.

PEOPLE OF JAPAN

Japanese is the language of Japan. They follow Buddhism and Shintoism as their religion. The traditional dress of the Japanese is the *kimono*, though most people wear pants and shirts or skirts.

Japan has several big cities with many factories. Due to scarcity of land most cities

EARTHQUAKES

Earthquakes are frequent in Japan. When the rocks in the interior of the earth move, they cause tremors on the surface of the earth. This is known as an earthquake. The walls of buildings also shake. Trees are uprooted, buildings, roads, railway lines, electric poles - are damaged or destroyed.

Earlier, the Japanese used to make wooden houses. They can withstand earthquakes better than

concrete buildings which develop cracks very easily. Even if wooden houses collapse during earthquakes, it is not very dangerous and there is not much damage. Wooden houses can be constructed again with the same wood. Recently the Japanese have started to make new kinds of concrete buildings which cannot be easily destroyed during earthquakes.



Fig 12. An industrial area in Japan

are densely populated. Most of the houses are small in size. They do not keep much furniture like chairs and tables.

The Japanese give much importance to the education of children. You can see here the picture of a well equipped school (Fig. 13). The children are learning science by doing experiments in groups of four.

EXERCISES

1. Which are the four seasons of Japan?
Write two sentences about each season.
2. What are the similarities and differences between the seasons of Japan and India.
3. The climate of Japan is very different from the climate of Indonesia. But it has some similarities with the climate of India. What is the reason for this?
4. You have read about agriculture in the mountains in many chapters - in Pahavadi, in Indonesia and in Japan.
What sort of cultivation is possible in the mountains? What are the problems encountered in such cultivation? What are the crops grown there? Write 10-15 sentences on these points.
5. Mention four main points about the industries of Japan.
6. How many sub-titles are given in this chapter? Count them.
7. What is the crop of the northern part of Japan? Under which sub-title will you find the answer?
8. What is a gulf? What is the importance of a gulf? Answer in only four sentences.
9. Where are trees with needle-like leaves found?



Fig. 13. A science class room in Japan