

State and Nation

The State is a geographic feature which we visualize on the political map, state is defined as the legal entity that holds sovereignty over territory and is generally held to have wide administrative power. It is a type of political organization that occupies a wide defined area in which people live with an independent political identity. Nowadays, most land surface has been politically organized. The purpose of the political institutions in a state is to exert control over population and area. The earliest state emerged about 5000 years ago in Mesopotamia, Egypt and somewhat later in the Indus river valley and the Hwang Ho valley of China. The growth of population increased economic complexities and consciousness has led to the formation of modern state. Modern state took root in Europe around 1500 A.D. As the European view of the world changed with the age of discovery people began thinking in terms of geometrics property of land areas. The territorial division of the earth's land surface became an important method by which government identified and control population and resources. This is how the state has appeared (or come into existence of the earth's surface).

The state is an organization of people and space on the political level. Every state is a part of land and humanity. No state can exist without territory (part of the earth's surface) and no territory can be formed into without people. Each state represents a somewhat unique structure with respect to the nature. (i.e. the physical attributes) of the territory, in respect of the changes brought into the landscape through the process of man's occupation of territory as well as with regard to its relationship with other states in the world. The chief elements which constitute the structure of any state.

- 1) An expanse of territory delimited by boundaries
- 2) Effective administrative machinery through which diverse regions of the political area are bound together.
- 3) A resident population
- 4) An economic structure.
- 5) A written constitution, legal and judiciary system.
- 6) An organized defence mechanism.
- 7) A circulatory system of transport and communication lines.

These are the fundamental requirements (sometimes components) in the structure of every state on the basis of the fact state may be defined as the surface of the earth's surface politically organized by a resident population and having a control over the area. State is a fully sovereign entity. Sovereignty is the most fundamental characteristics of modern state.

Nation

In non geographical literature, the term state and nation are used interchangeably. In Political Geography however these two terms must be clearly distinguished. A state is made up of area with its resources (of people) and often effective mechanism of government. The term nation denotes a community of people bound together by a general sense of belonging to common sharing of certain historical memories, tradition, language, religion, culture and common political aspiration.

A nation unlike a state is not an organized government although it is territorial in nature; it does not involve territorial sovereignty. The concept of Nation is political one. John S. Mill (1861) defined as A portion of mankind united among themselves by a common sympathy which do not exists between them and any other, which makes them cooperate with each other more willing than any other group of people and desire to be under the same government. In other words, a nation denotes a group of people with a strong sense of belonging together. Generally the people of a nationality should speak a common language and follow the same religion for eg: French Nationality, but it is not necessary that people belonging to a nation should have common language or religion.

The sovereign state of Canada has two official languages that of Switzerland for yet there is Canadian Nation or a Swish Nation. This would suggest that common language is not essential for nation building .In the same way we can say that common religion is not essentially important to form a single nation.