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**TYPES AND PATTERNS OF RURAL SETTLEMENT**

Inhabitants of the rural settlement depend for their livelihood upon the exploitation of the soil, small fishing, quarrying, mining forestry caps etc. A typical village has secondary workers supplying services to the primary group of farmers and farm labourers e.g. shopkeepers, teachers, clergymen, the publican, postmaster, smith and garage proprietor. Besides, the village consists of a part of retired people and a part of younger people who live in the village but go to work in a neighbouring town as urbanism is fast becoming a new way of life. The proportion of population in each of these classes bears to the total village population, which varies with the kind of farming characteristics of the locality, the quality of the soil, the attractiveness and accessibility of the site and its place within the general settlement pattern.

The main factors influencing the rural settlements are :

1. Nature of the topography
2. Local weather conditions
3. Quality of the soil
4. Nature of surface and subsurface water
5. Pattern of landholding
6. Social organization

Depending on the size, the rural settlements classified as Hamlets are rural settlements consisting of few houses only, true village communities, villages and large villages. True village communities are just ancient and long settled villages where in extreme cases, no personal property exists and everything belongs to the community of peasants. Such village communities are seen in India, Malaya and France.

Besides agricultural villages, there also exist forest villages, mining and quarrying villages, fishing villages, villages chiefly supported by the tourist industry, dormitory villages serving nearby towns and industrial villages. Each has its own characters :

1. Many industrial and mining villages are unprepossessing which suffer from ugly and drab surroundings.
2. Fishing and tourist villages are more attractively situated and in many cases possess the charm and interest of historical buildings.
3. Most dormitory villages are either new or consist largely of modern housing estates. In all such settlements, occupations are much more specialized than in towns and such typical urban functions as administration and wholesaling are rarely present. The number of villages in a country and the role played by villages in the social and economic context is profound. In India around three fourth of the population live in more than six hundred thousand villages and most of these support a population of less than five hundred. It is estimated that two out of every three persons still live in villages or in hamlets and scattered dwellings all over the world.

## **Types of Rural Settlements**

Any settlement in which most of the people are engaged in agriculture, forestry, mining and fishery is known as rural settlement. It is often called an agricultural workshop. Most of the world's settlements are rural and they are stable and permanent. They are of three types:

**1. Compact Settlements:** A compact settlement is based on farming. These are mostly found in highly productive alluvial plains like Indo-Gangetic Plains, the Hwang Ho Valley, Valley o Nile. The houses are compact and congested with narrow plains.

The size of these settlements depends on the nature and resources of the surrounding country. They have a high degree of segregation and differentiation of the upper and lower castes. Compact settlements are also found in hunting and fishing communities.

**2. Semi-Compact Settlement:** Semi-Compact is a transitional phase in the growth of compact settlement. The emergence is because of the difference of semi-arid regions from humid regions and marginal productive land to that of fertile land.

Increase in population causes villages to grow in number of houses. These houses occupy open spaces and lead to semi-compact settlement which ultimately acquires a nucleated settlement.

**3. Dispersed Settlement:** These are generally found in hills, plateaus and grasslands. These are found in areas where it is essential that the farmer should live on his own land. Overpopulation is one of the reasons for dispersed settlement.

If a part of the population left a village to found a new one they often found dispersed rather than a new village. Dispersed settlements are relatively recent in age like Steppe grasslands of Kazakhstan.

### **Patterns of Rural Settlement**

Pattern of settlement is defined as the relationship between one house or building to another. It can be identified by reading and observing a local scale map. The pattern of settlement deals with compact and semi-compact only, as dispersed has its own shape. The socio-cultural factors like caste structure or a functional need of people has a close bearing on its shape and size. The rural settlements are classified under following patterns: Rectangular, Linear, Circular, Semicircular, Star-like, Triangular, and Nebular Pattern. The settlement is linear in valleys and mountainous areas, rectangular in fertile plains, circular near the lakes and ponds, triangular at cross roads and in exceptional cases it resembles the nebular form and on river terraces it is star-type.

**a. Rectangular Pattern:** This is the most common pattern observed in rural settlements. Rectangular settlements are developed over flat, fertile, alluvial plains and wide valleys. The streets in rectangular settlements are straight and at right angles to each other. The examples of this are villages in Sutlej-Ganga plain, planned settlements of Germany, Malaysia, Israel, France, etc.

**b. Linear Pattern:** The houses are aligned along the sides of a road, railway line, river, canal or valley. The physical restrictions associated with these sites give rise to the linear pattern. The example of it can be settled along the roads of Ganga-Yamuna plain and in valleys in Alps and Rocky mountains.

**c. Circular and Semi-circular Pattern:** Settlements along seacoasts, around lakes, over mountain-tops and along meandering rivers, develop circular or semi-circular patterns. The population is mostly engaged in fishing, salt production and tourist services like boating, providing boarding and lodging.

**d. Star-shaped Pattern:** At places where roads converge, radial or star-shaped settlements develop. The new parts of settlement grow along the roads in all directions. The examples of it can be plains of Yangtze-kiang, Punjab in India, and parts of Northwest Europe.

**e. Triangular Pattern:** Points, such as the meeting place of rivers give rise to a triangular pattern of settlements.

**f. Nebular Pattern:** It is a circular pattern developing all around a centre. This centre could be anything ranging from a temple to a landlord's house, etc. Rural settlements can be classified based on the size and pattern or shape.