

Unit - 7

Exploring Continents

Africa, Australia and Antarctica



Learning Objectives

- ▶ To study the Geographical location of the continents of Africa, Australia and Antarctica
- ▶ To learn the physical setting, climate and drainage of the continents
- ▶ To understand the nature of the flora and fauna of the continents
- ▶ To identify the major resources and economic activities
- ▶ To develop the mapping skill



Introduction

A teacher handling class VIII entered the classroom and asked the students what they were talking about. The class monitor told the teacher that the students were talking about the ODI match between Australia and South Africa. The teacher said to the students, "Well today we will learn many things about them in this lesson".

Africa

Location and size

Africa is the second largest and second most populous continent after Asia. It stretches from 37°21' North latitude to 34° 51' South latitude and from 17°33' West longitude to 51°27' East longitude. It spreads over an area of about 30.36 million square kilometres (20.2% of the world's land area). The equator passes through the middle of Africa and cuts into two equal halves. It is the only continent through which the major latitudes such as Tropic of

Cancer, Equator and Tropic of Capricorn pass. Its north-south extent is 7623 km and east-west extent is 7260 km. The Prime Meridian passes near Accra the capital of Ghana in the West of this continent. Africa is located in all the four hemispheres.

The great explorers David Living Stone and H.M. Stanley were the first to explore the interior parts of this continent. The sources reveal that the early human ancestors have lived in Africa for more than 5 million years. Africa is nicknamed as the "**Mother Continent**" as it was the oldest inhabited continent on Earth. The diverse geographical condition of the Continent is the main reason for heterogeneous culture and home of several ethnic groups in Africa.



Africa is called a Dark Continent. In the beginning the interior of Africa was largely unknown to them. The European explorer Henry M. Stanley was the first to use the term the "**Dark Continent**" (1878).