**Patriotism**

Patriotism is devotion to one’s country, and readiness to serve it and to defend it against its enemies. The word ‘patriotism’ comes from the Latin word, patria, which means ‘fatherland’.

In a very narrow sense, patriotism may mean one’s love for the geographical area which one regards as one’s native land. In this sense even some wild animals have a kind of patriotism, for they mark out their own “territories” into which they don’t allow other animals to trespass. Lions and tigers do this do this conspicuously. Even some domestic dogs do this.

But to human beings, patriotism is not such a narrow concept. To them, ‘patriotism’ embraces also the people of the country. This is the patriotism that has been extolled by poets from time immemorial, down through the ages to our own day.

A true patriot’s ambition is to make his country great, prosperous, and powerful. He obeys the just laws of his country, and is always ready to sacrifice his own life to defend the honour and freedom of his country. He makes his own old Roman maxim, “Duleet decorum est propatria mori” (It is sweet and proper to die for one’s fatherland)

Patriotism, however, should never degenerate into ultra nationalism. The kind of patriotism is called ‘jingoism’, or ‘chunvinism’. This is an extreme and unreasonable belief that one’s own country is superior to all others, coupled with a bellicose attitude towards them. The Germans under Hilter, the Italians under Mussolini, and the Japanese under Emperor Hirohito embraced this pernicious philosophy. The inevitable consequence was defeat in war and national humiliation.

In the modern context, however, when high-speed means of transportation and communication have, in a metaphorical sense, shrunk the world into a tightly-knit neighbourhood community, the concept of patriotism or devotion to a limited geographical area, appears to be dismally narrow- minded and outdated.