1. What do you understand by the term diaspora? What are some of the approaches to understand diaspora?

**Ans:** Diaspora means “to scatter” in Greek, but today we use the term to describe a community of people who live outside their shared country of origin or ancestry but maintain active connections with it. A diaspora includes both emigrants and their descendants. While some people lose their attachment to their ancestral homeland, others maintain a strong connection to a place which their ancestors may have left generations ago. Many Americans come from mixed heritage and therefore can claim membership in multiple diaspora communities.

Many diaspora groups are working to achieve greater impact and a stronger voice in matters that relate to their countries of origin. Diaspora communities make vital but often unrecognized contributions to the progress of their countries of heritage. They share goals with governments, businesses, and NGOs, including:

- Broad-based economic growth;
- Thriving civil society;
- Widespread participation in good governance;
- Access to global markets for skills and financial capital;
- Robust trading partnerships;
- Growing participation in science, technology and communication innovations.

2. Describe the migration patterns of Indian diaspora in colonial India.

**Ans:** India has not enacted any laws or regulations relating to the status of asylum seekers and refugees. Instead, those persons are governed by the general Foreigners Act of 1946. In most cases, recognized refugees do not have the right of free movement in India and are not entitled to work.

Indian law requires every person entering the country to have proper documentation denoting permission from Indian authorities. Without such permission, a person is at risk of deportation as an illegal entrant.

This situation is problematic for most refugees who often do not have passports, let alone Indian visas. The South Asia Human Rights Documentation Centre reports that although the Extradition Act of 1962 provides some protection to refugees facing extradition, this act does not provide real safeguards for the majority of refugees in India whose removal falls under the category of expulsion rather than extradition.

Eminent jurist Rajeev Dhavan reports that on the positive side, the Supreme Court and various High Courts extend constitutional rights to refugees and migrants. However, following the Law Commission’s 47th Report of 2000, the Foreigner Act was made stricter to treat “illegal entrants” harshly, irrespective of the circumstances underlying their migration.

Only specific refugee groups such as the Tibetans and Sri Lankan Tamils are recognized and supported directly by the Indian government. Other refugees, such as those from Afghanistan, Iraq, and Somalia, have to obtain a “refugee status determination” directly from UNHCR. For this purpose they must travel to the UNHCR office in New Delhi, where UNHCR assesses whether they fall within the definition of a refugee.

When reform of the Indian Citizenship Act of 1955 was discussed in 2003, the Standing Committee on Home Affairs stated the following about refugees:

"India has large population and land-population ratio has decreased over the period of time. Employment opportunities are not available due to increase of population manifold. In such a situation, the country is unable to undertake additional burden of refugees from other countries. Keeping in view the economic and population reasons, citizenship cannot be granted to the refugees who have come on or after 25 March 1971."