



## CHAPTER-7

### HUMAN ENVIRONMENT INTERACTION

#### **NOTES:**

##### **Life in desert region**

Areas where the amount annual rainfall is less than 25 cm, very dry and do not support vegetation, such dry regions that are devoid of vegetation are called deserts. Deserts can be – hot deserts and cold deserts.

##### **Sahara – The hot desert**

Largest desert located in North Africa and extends from the Red sea to the Atlantic Ocean.  $\frac{1}{4}$  th of the region is covered with sand, the rest has mountains, plateaus and plains, sand dunes and oasis. The river Nile flows along the east and the river Niger along the west of the Sahara. Lake Chad is the only fresh water lake in the region.

**Climate:** In summer, the temperature shoots up to 55°C, while the winter temperature comes down to freezing point. Days are extremely hot and nights are extremely cold.

**Natural vegetation:** Most parts of Sahara remain barren. The plants are adapted to the hot and dry climate. They have long deep roots, waxy leaves and thorny surfaces. The leaves are smaller to prevent loss of water through transpiration. Cacti and date palms are main vegetation and eat by both people and animals.

**People:** Human is settled near oases. Farming is practiced near big oases. Egyptian cotton is grown in Egypt. People built thick walled houses with small windows to prevent heat. White and loose clothes are used to protect from heat. People are usually nomadic tribes. Camel is the most important animal and it can survive without food and water for long time.

Libya, Algeria and Egypt have exploited oil for development.

##### **Ladakh: The cold desert**

**Ladakh** is located in the eastern part of Jammu and Kashmir (now a union territory). There are two mountain ranges, Ladakh range and Karakoram ranges. Mt. Godwin Austin (K2) is the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest peak in the world. The river Indus flows through the central part of Ladakh. Some of the important mountain passes are Karakoram Pass and Zoji La Pass.

**Climate:** It is a rain shadow area of the south west monsoon. Heavy snowfall, climate is very harsh. Annual rainfall or precipitation is less than 25 cm.

**Natural vegetation:** Because of severe cold, vegetation cannot thrive. Lower reaches of the mountains elm, yew, cypress and willow trees are found. Hare, Kiang, wild sheep are found. Lizard is the only reptile found.

**People:** People are sturdy and hardworking. Wheat, barley, vegetables, apple, apricot, walnut and grapes are grown. Yak is an important animal and provides milk and wool. Pashmina wool from a special goat is the main source of income.

### **Life in tropical and sub tropical regions**

**Amazon basin:** The Amazon is the world's largest river in terms of volume of water. The river rises in the Andes Mountain, flow through Brazil and falls into the Atlantic Ocean.

**Climate:** Very hot and wet climate, annual rainfall of 200 cm. The duration of day and night is almost equal throughout the year.

**Natural vegetation:** The Amazon basin is a rainforest. The basin has green forests which remain luxuriant and evergreen. Trees are very tall and branches overlap. The forests are so thick that sunlight cannot penetrate. The important trees are ebony, rosewood, mahogany, rubber, cinchona.

**Wildlife:** It has two million species of insects, thousands of species of fish and 600 mammals, Jaguar, alligators, monkeys, anteaters, sloths.

**People:** Indigenous people are tribals, live along the river. They make their living by hunting, fishing, food gathering, shifting cultivation. They live in small thatched huts. Hammocks or swinging rest coaches are very popular in these places.

Advanced people live in villages, houses built of mud and wood. Subsistence farming is practiced.

In recent years, forests, are cleared to build towns, grazing, farming, coffee, maize and cacao are important crops. Now, cutting of trees in the Amazon Basin is becoming a serious problem.

### **Ganga- Brahmaputra Plain**

The Ganga -Brahmaputra basin lies in the northern part of India. Its length is about 2000 km. It is a huge depositional plain. Ganga Plain includes the states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal. The main tributaries of Ganga are Yamuna, Ghaghra, Gomti, Chambal and Son. The Brahmaputra plain is confined to Assam, with many riverine islands. It joins the Ganga in its lower course in Bangladesh, and forms a huge delta known as the Sundarbans.

**Climate:** Monsoon type of climate with hot summer. The rainfall is more than 200 cm in the Brahmaputra basin and in the eastern Ganga basin. Winters are cold and dry.

**People:** The Ganga – Brahmaputra basin has alluvial soils and these soils are very fertile. Farmers practice sedentary agriculture on small land holdings due to excessive pressure of population. Wheat and sugarcane are the main crops on the Eastern Ganga plain and the Brahmaputra plain.

The area is thickly populated with dense network of roads and railways. Delhi, the National Capital Territory, is located in the plain.

**Life in the temperate regions:** The temperate grasslands of the world, viz, Prairies, Veld, Steppes, Pampas and Downs are located between 30°C and 50°C latitudes in both the hemisphere in the interior of the continents.

**The prairies:** The prairies are found in the interiors parts of the U.S.A and Canada. They are flat fertile plains. Prairies are treeless.

**Climate:** Winter are severe with heavy snowfall. Summer are hot with temperature up to 20°C, rainfall is moderate, 40 cm annually.

**Natural vegetation:** Have short grass with no other vegetation. Trees are found near the river valleys.

**People:** Occupation of the people is cattle rearing and farming. Large cattle farms known as ranches are found.

Wheat is the main crop. The farms are big and equipped with machines, radio, telephone, television and internet, silos ( grain collecting sheds).

**The Veld:** It occupies the eastern part of the plateau of South Africa. It lies between the Drakensburg Mountains on the east and the Kalahari Desert on the west.

**Climate:** Moderate climate, summer is warm and wet, but the winter is cool and dry.

**Natural vegetation:** Grass is the natural vegetation. Scattered trees occur on elevations and course of streams.

**People:** Cattle rearing and mining are major occupations. Angora goats and Merino sheep are known for fine quality of wool.

Gold and coal are found near Johannesburg. Diamond mines of Kimberley are on the western borders.

Maize is the main food crop. The area is known as Maize triangle. Cotton, tobacco and fruits are other important crops.

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