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Human Environment Interactions: The Tropical and the Subtropical Region

Lesson at a Glance

Life in the Amazon Basin

- The Amazon Basin lies in the **equatorial region**. The river Amazon flows through this region. Numerous **tributaries** join the Amazon river to form the Amazon Basin.
- The river basin drains portions of Brazil, parts, of Peru Bolivia, Ecuador, Columbia and a small part of Venezuela.
- The climate of Amazon Basin is hot and wet throughout the year. It rains almost everyday. During day time temperatures are high but at night the temperature goes down.
- Thick forests are found in the Amazon Basin. As sunlight does not reach the ground, only shade tolerant vegetation grows here, for examples, orchids and bromeliads.
- The rainforest is rich in fauna. A variety of birds is found here. Apart from animals like monkeys, sloth, etc. various species of reptiles and snakes are also found in these forests.
- The Basin is also the home to thousands of species to insects.
- The people of Amazon Basin are mainly engaged in agriculture. They grow tapioca, pineapple and sweet potato. Their staple food is manioc. They also grow cash crops like coffee, maize and cocoa.
- The life of the people of the Amazon basin is slowly changing. In 1970 the Trans Amazon highway made all parts of the rainforest accessible. Aircrafts and helicopters are also used for reaching various places.
- Due to these developmental activities a large area of the rainforest has been disappearing annually in the Amazon Basin.

Life in the Ganga-Brahmaputra Basin

- The tributaries of rivers Ganga and Brahmaputra together from the Ganga-Brahmaputra Basin in the Indian subcontinent.
- The plains of the Ganga and the Brahmaputra, the mountains and

the foothills of the Himalayas and the Sundarbans delta are the main features of this basin.

- The area of the basin enjoys monsoon climate. The summers are hot and the winters cool.
- The basin area has a varied topography. The mountain areas of the basin have thin population. The plain area have thick population.
- Agriculture is the chief occupation of the people. The main crop is paddy. Some other crops like the wheat, maize, grain, millets etc. and some cash crops like sugarcane and jute are also grown.
- Tropical deciduous trees grow in the Ganga, Brahmaputra plain. Teak, sal and peepal are also found. The delta is covered with mangrove forests.
- The basin is rich in wildlife. A variety of fish is found here. Fish and rice is the staple food of the people living in the area.
- Several big towns and cities such as Allahabad, Kanpur, Varanasi, Lucknow, Patna and Kolkata are there in the Ganga-Brahmaputra plain.
- All the four means of transport are available here.
- Tourism is also an important activity of the basin. Tourists from different parts of the world come to see the Taj Mahal, Buddhists stupas, Imambara, wildlife sanctuaries etc.

TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED

9. 1. Answer the following questions briefly:
- (a) Name the continent in which the Amazon Basin is located.
 - (b) What are the crops grown by the people of the Amazon Basin?
 - (c) Name the birds that you are likely to find in the rain forests of the Amazon.
 - (d) What are the major cities located on the river Ganga?
 - (e) Where is the one-horned rhinoceros found?
- Ans.
- (a) South America.
 - (b) The people of the Amazon Basin grow tapioca, pine apple and sweet potato. Cash crops such as coffee, maize and cocoa are also grown.
 - (c) Name the birds that you are likely to find in the rain forests of the Amazon.

- (d) The major cities located on the river Ganga are Allahabad, Kanpur, Varanasi, Lucknow, Patna and Kolkata.
- (e) The one-horned rhinoceros is found in the Brahmaputra plain.

Q. 2. Tick the correct answer:

- (a) Toucans are a type of
 (i) birds (ii) animals
 (iii) crops.
- (b) Manioc is the staple food of
 (i) Ganga Basin (ii) Africa
 (iii) Amazon.
- (c) Kolkata is located on the river
 (i) Orange (ii) Hooghly
 (iii) Bhagirathi.
- (d) Deodars and firs are a type of
 (i) Coniferous trees (ii) Deciduous trees
 (iii) Shrubs.
- (e) Bengal tiger is found in
 (i) Mountains (ii) Delta area
 (iii) Amazon.

Ans. (a)—(i), (b)—(iii), (c)—(ii), (d)—(i), (e)—(ii).

Q. 3. Match the following:

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| (i) Cotton textile | (a) Assam |
| (ii) Maloca | (b) Terrace farming |
| (iii) Piranha | (c) Sericulture |
| (iv) Silk worm | (d) Slanting roof |
| (v) Kaziranga | (e) Ganga plain |
| | (f) Varanasi |
| | (g) Fish |

Ans. (i)—(f), (ii)—(d), (iii)—(g), (iv)—(c), (v)—(a).

Q. 4. Give reasons:

- (i) The rain forests are depleting.
- (ii) Paddy is grown in the Ganga-Brahmaputra plains.

Ans. (i) The rainforests are depleting because of the developmental activities that are going on at fast speed. The biologically diverse rainforests are being

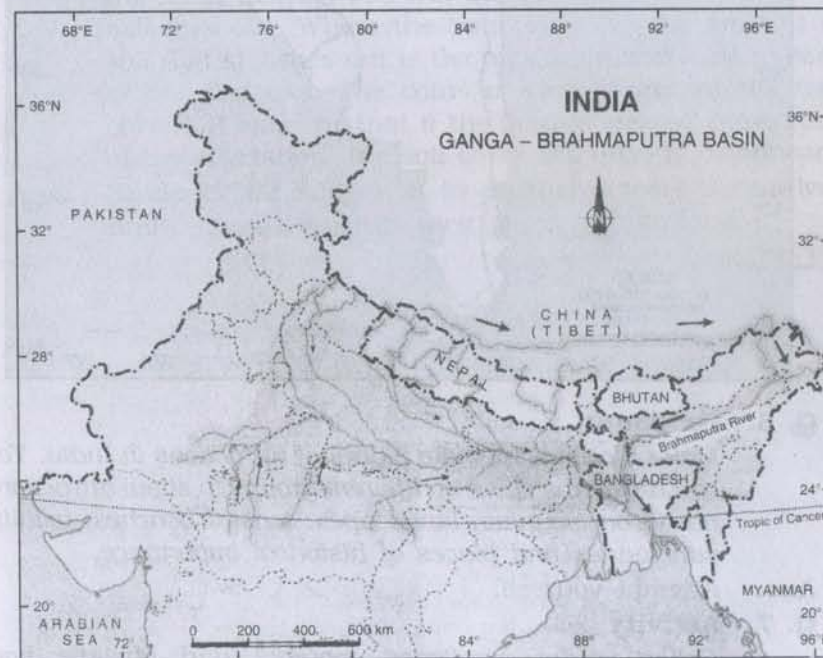
destroyed day by day. It is estimated that a large area of the rainforest has been disappearing annually in the Amazon basin. As a result the topsoil is washed away when the rains fall and the lush green forest turns into a barren landscape.

- (ii) The cultivation of paddy requires sufficient water. The Ganga-Brahmaputra plains fulfil this condition because they receive high rainfall.

Q. 5. Map skills.

- (i) On an outline map of the Indian sub-continent, draw the rivers Ganga and Brahmaputra from the source to the mouth. Also show the important tributaries of both the rivers.
- (ii) On the political map of South America, draw the equator. Mark the countries through which the equator passes.

Ans. (i)



(ii)



Q. 6. For fun:

Make a collage to show places of attractions in India. You can divide the class in different groups to show attractions based on mountain landscapes, coastal beaches, wildlife sanctuaries and places of historical importance.

Ans. Attempt yourself.

Q. 7. Activity

Collect under mentioned material and observe how destruction of trees effect the soil cover.

Material

- (i) Three small flowerpots or food cans (e.g., cold drinks tin cans),
- (ii) One big can with holes punched in the bottom (this will act as a sprinkling can),
- (iii) twelve coins or bottle caps
- (iv) Soil.

Steps

Take three small cans or pots. Fill them with soil till the top. Press the soil to make it level with the top of the can. Now put four coins or bottle caps on the soil of each can. Take the big can that has been punched with holes and fill it with water. You can also take the sprinkling can from your garden. Now, sprinkle water on the three cans. On the first can sprinkle water very slowly so that no soil splashes out. Let moderate amount of water be sprinkled on the second can. On the third can, sprinkle the water heavily. You will observe that unprotected soil splashes out. Where the 'rain' is heavy the amount of soil that splashes out is the maximum and least in case of the first can. The coins or caps represent the tree covers. It is clear that if the land is cleared completely of the vegetation, the soil cover will quickly disappear.

Ans. Students are suggested to do this activity themselves under the guidance of their parents/guardians.

