

Q1) What are the factors that cause soil erosion. Is it a major issue in India? Discuss. Do you think that the ongoing agrarian crisis has been aggravated by the problem of soil erosion? Explain.

Ans) Soil erosion refers to washing away and removal of top layers of soil by agents of denudation like water, wind, glacier etc.

Factors leading to soil erosion are:-

- Rainfall :- Northern plains soil eroded by frequent flood in the region. Sudden nature of monsoon causes soil erosion.
- Topography : Steep slopes are more prone to erosion.
- Soil Quality: Soil texture, chemical composition and absorbing capacity also decides rate of erosion.
- Faulty agricultural practices such as shifting cultivation, indiscriminate use of fertilizers etc.
- Other anthropogenic factors like urbanization, over-grazing, deforestation and industrialisation.

It has been estimated that an area of over 80 million hectares or about one-fourth of our total area is exposed to wind and water erosion out of which 40 million hectares of land has undergone serious erosion.

About 21 million hectares are subject to severe wind erosion in Rajasthan and adjoining areas of Punjab, Haryana and Gujarat.

Relation between ongoing agrarian crisis and soil erosion :- Though there are various reasons behind ongoing agrarian crisis like high input prices, seed unavailability, lack of fund, market access etc, soil erosion is only aggravating it.

- Loss of important nutrients from the soil ultimately lowers the productivity thereby hurting farmers' profit.
- Nutrient quality degradation thus more use of fertiliser resulting in increasing expenditure on fertilisers, pesticides, insecticides etc.
- Loss of underground water recharge due to soil erosion.
- Widespread ravines in chambal basin.

Given the vitality of soil for agriculture, issues like soil erosion and degradation must be handled in effective way. Soil health card, organic farming, forestation enhancement using CAMPA fund, watershed management, contour ploughing, terrace farming, mulching are few progressive steps that should be adopted.

Q2) Which factors were responsible to cause the nations of Europe to engage in imperialist activities? What were their implications? Discuss. (250/15)

Ans2) Prior to 19th century, Europe's interactions with Asia and Africa had mostly been limited to holding trading posts on the continent. Content to make money from these commercial outlets, Europe usually didn't impose direct rule onto these areas. However, as the 19th century progressed, a shift occurred. In this period of new Imperialism, Europeans began to seek formal political control over foreign and overseas areas.

Five factors for imperialism by Europeans:-

Various motives prompt empires to seek to expand their rule over other countries or territories. These include economic, exploratory, ethnocentric, political and religious motives.

- Economic :- Imperial Governments and private companies under those governments, sought ways to maximize profits. Economic expansion demanded cheap labour, access to or control of markets to sell or buy products, and natural resources such as precious metals and lands, governments have met these demands by tribute or by plunder.
- Exploratory :- Imperial nations wanted to explore the territory, that was to them, unknown. Sometimes they did this for the purpose of medical or scientific research.
- Ethnocentric :- Imperial nations sometimes believed that their cultural values or beliefs were superior to other nations or groups. Imperial conquest, they

believed, would bring successful culture to inferior people.

- Political :- Patriotism and growing imperial power spurred countries to compete with others for supremacy. It's a matter of national pride, prestige and security.
- Religious :- During imperial expansion, religious people sometimes set out to convert new members of their religion, and thus, their empire.

Consequences of Imperialism :-

Imperialism is never considered as a good cause and effect. At first, ^{when} it occurs, it seems as a positive effect, but in the long run, it was a negative effect. All Africans and Asians were heavily exploited and were given no rights to do anything even though the mother countries gave them modern culture. Colonies inside colonies would fight because they wanted independence and have their own rule and government. The effects are many, but probably the most important effects were :-

- Natural resources of America, Africa and Asia were exploited.
- It founded the bases of industrialization and the European powers became rich.
- It created global powers like Great Britain which could have caused the World Wars to be global.
- It gave technology rise and it has led to development of modernity all over the world, health parameters, social parameters and economic parameters have enhanced after imperialism.

Q.3) American Revolution wouldn't have happened if there had not been an Age of Enlightenment.
Analyse. (250/15)

Ans) The difference between a 'Revolution' and just another war is, a revolution results in socio-political changes and also, a revolution is based on strong ideals.

The ideals of American Revolution were developed during 'the age of enlightenment' of Europe.

- American thinkers who directly influenced the revolution were influenced by the European thinkers. Americans such as Thomas Paine, Thomas Jefferson & Benjamin Franklin were just as much a part of the Enlightenment as Locke, Adams, Rousseau and Voltaire.

- Locke and Rousseau developed the social contract theory in which they determined that Government derived its power from the consent of the governed. Jefferson would use these words and others from Locke (life, liberty and property) to espouse the American promise of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

- Thomas Paine's Common Sense gave individuality to colonies and propounded that they have a right to rebel against the British Crown.

- Diderot created the first Encyclopedia, allowing many of the ideas of philosophers of the time to spread among masses.

- European enlightenment coined the idea of humanism, which put man as the center of Universe

rather than God. This led to formulation of protestant philosophy and capitalism. Adam Smith of Scotland spoke in favour of a free market economy, giving rise to laissez-faire and Capitalism.

- Voltaire spoke for the freedom of the press and the tolerance of religions. Drawing on France, the United States was sure to include tolerance of all religions in its founding documents, while also making sure to avoid the pitfalls of church involvement in governing.