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शक्तिउत्थानआश्रमलखीसरायबिहार

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ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Question 6:

What are the functions of the environment?

ANSWER:

The environment performs the following four dynamic functions:

- 1. Offer Production Resources:** Environment provides us with wide tangible resources like minerals, water and soil. These are the gifts of nature. These resources act as an input for converting natural resources into productive and useful things. In other words, environment provides input for production that enhances human life qualitatively.
- 2. Sustains Life:** Environment provides us with vital ingredients like sun, soil, water and air that are necessary for the survival of life. Absence of these essential elements implies absence of life. It supports biodiversity.
- 3. Assimilates Waste:** The activities of production and consumption generate waste. This waste in the form of garbage is absorbed by the environment automatically.
- 4. Enhances Quality of Life:** Environment includes surroundings such as rivers, oceans, mountains and deserts. It provides scenic beauty that man admires in life and adds to the quality of human life.

Question 7:

Identify six factors contributing to land degradation in India.

ANSWER:

Degradation of land refers to the gradual but consistent loss of fertility.. This is emerging as a serious concern in the context of environmental issues in India. The following are the factors that contribute to land degradation in India:

- a. Soil Erosion:** The removal of upper layer of the soil caused by agents like strong winds or floods is termed as soil erosion. The top most layer of the soil carries major and essential nutrients like nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium. Consequently, the loss of this layer deteriorates the quality and productivity of land.

b. Alkalinity and Salinity of Soil: The salinity and alkalinity is caused by the problem of water logging. Water logged on the top layer of soil absorbs all the nutrients present in the soil, thereby, reducing its fertility.

c. Deforestation: The growing population along with their ever growing demand lead to large scale destruction of forest cover. The reduction of forest coverage leads to soil erosion that in turn causes climate change

d. Shifting Cultivation: The practice of shifting cultivation and subsistence farming carried by the small and the marginal farmers result in the replenishment of soil nutrients and, hence, its fertility.

e. Excessive use of Fertilisers: The excessive use of chemical fertilisers, insecticides and pesticides lowers the quality and fertility of soil.

f. Desertification: The spread of deserts in arid and semi arid areas is referred to as desertification. It occurs due to overgrazing of the animals. This results in the reduction of lush green areas that in turn leads to replenishment of soil fertility.