West Bengal

Multiple Choice Questions :

a) The highest mountain peak of West Bengal is —
(i) Sandakphu (ii) Phalut (iii) Tegesh Hill (iv) Dongkya
Ans- (i) Sandakphu

b) The term Duars is derived from the term —
(i) dua (ii) dash (iii) doosh (iv) dasha
Ans- (iii) doosh

c) One of the neighbouring states in the east of West Bengal is —
(i) Sikkim (ii) Assam (iii) Bhutan (iv) Bangladesh
Ans- (ii) Assam

d) Most of the West Bengal is covered by —
(i) Laterite soil (ii) black soil (iii) Alluvial soil (iv) Red soil
Ans- (iii) Alluvial soil

e) The older dune in the sandy coastal plain is —
(i) Digha dune (ii) Shankarpur dune (iii) Kanthi dune (iv) Tajpur dune
Ans- (i) Digha dune

Write True or False :

a) The Ayodha hills in the Ganga delta has the highest peak called Gosaipahari.
The Ayodhya hills in the Ganga delta has the highest peak called Gosaipahari. False

b) Moderate temperature and sandy areas are ideal for the growth of tea bush.
Moderate temperature and sandy areas are ideal for the growth of tea bush. False

c) Ghoom is the highest railway station in India.
Ghoom is the highest railway station in India. True

d) Bolepur is famous for terracota works.
Bolepur is famous for terracota works. False

Fill in the blanks :

(a) Western Plateau region's hills are locally called _____
Western Plateau region's hills are locally called

(b) Rivers of North Bengal are _____ fed rivers.
Rivers of North Bengal are snowfed rivers.

Answer in one or two words :

a) Which river in West Bengal is known as 'river of sorrow'?
Ans- Damodar

b) Due to which wind rainfall is mainly caused in West Bengal?
Ans- South-west monsoon wind

c) Name the longest river of West Bengal.
Ans- Teesta

d) Name the principal crop of West Bengal.
Ans- Rice

e) Which name is given to Jute for earning a lot of foreign exchange?
Ans- Golden fibre

Match the column

a) Cash crop	i) Chhotanagpur Plateau
b) Saline soil	ii) Aswines Thar
c) Autumn	iii) Jute
d) Tal	iv) Sundesban
e) Western Plateaus	v) Marshes
a) Cash crop	iii) Jute
b) Saline soil	iv) Sundesban
c) Autumn	ii) Aswines Thar
d) Tal	v) Marshes
e) Western Plateaus	i) Chhotanagpur Plateau.

Answer the following :-

1) State the boundary of West Bengal.

Ans- West Bengal is bounded by Sikkim in the north, Bhutan in the north-east, nepal in the north-west, Bihar and Jharkhand in the west, Assam and Bangladesh in the east and Odisha in the south-west. Bay of Bengal bounds on extreme south.

2) Describe the course of River Ganga.

Ans- The river Ganga rises from Gomukh of the Gangotri glacier in Garhwal, Himalayas. Initially known as Bhagirathi, it meets the river Alaknanda near Dev Prayag and takes the name Ganga. After flowing through Uttar Pradesh and Bihar it enters West Bengal. It bifurcates into two parts near Giriyan of Murshidabad. One part flows eastwards as Padma River and enters Bangladesh. The other flows as river Bhagirathi southwards towards Bay of Bengal. In Hooghly district the river is also known as Hooghly. The main distributaries are Jalangi, Mathabanga, Churni, Ichamati and Bhairav.

3) What are Nor-westers?

Ans- Nor-westers are the cyclonic storms occuring in Bay of Bengal coast which is locally called Kalbaishaki in West Bengal. It occurs during summer afternoon influenced by severe low pressure on land. It is accompanied by thunderstorms, heavy rainfall and cumulonimbus clouds. The major parts of South Bengal District are affected by Kalbaishaki.

4) Classify rivers of West Bengal. Describe the characteristics of any one of them.

Ans- The rivers of West-Bengal can be sub-divided into the following:
(a) Snowfed
(b) Rainfed
(c) Tidalfed

(a) Snowfed – The rivers which are flowing through Northern Mountains region and Terai-duars Plain are known as snow-fed rivers. The major rivers are Tista, Torsa, Jhaldhaka, Mahananda, Sankosh and Raidhaka.

The main characteristics of this group includes:
(i) These rivers are south-flowing. They flow through mountainous region.
(ii) They have high velocity in their courses.
(iii) They are the tributaries of river Jamuna. Except Mahananda other rivers join with Jamuna in Bangladesh.
(iv) They are ideal for hydel power generation.

5) Classify crops according to season.

Ans- According to season crops may be grouped as—
(a) Kharif crop
(b) Rabi crop

(a) Kharif crop – The crops sown during summer and harvested during early winter is known as Kharif crops. Ex- Rice and Jute

(b) Rabi crop – The crops sown during early winter and harvested in

early summer are known as Rabi crops. Ex- wheat, oilseeds etc.

6) State the characteristics of Mangroove Trees.

Ans- The characteristics of Mangroove Trees are:

(a) They have pneumatothores.

(b) They have spike like root which help them to stand straight against high tide.

(c) The trees also passes stilt like roots for drilling purpose.

(d) They are evergreen and hardwood in nature.

7) State the advantages and disadvantages of Mountain Soil.

Ans- The advantages and disadvantages of Mountain Soil are as follows:

Advantages:

i) It is rich in humus.

ii) It is acidic in nature.

Disadvantages:

i) Mountain soil is severely affected by soil erosion, thus the soil layers is removed and makes the soil infertile.

8) State the location and vegetation of Plain region.

Ans- Plain region is found in the districts of Nadia, Murshidabad, and 24 Parganas North and South.

Vegetation in this region includes humid deciduous forests. Trees like Banyan, Sal, Teak, Amla, Sisham, Sandalwood etc. is found here.

9) What is industry?

Ans- The secondary economic activity in which raw materials from differen

sources (agriculture, mining) are transformed into useable items or products with the help of advanced technology, human labour, machinary etc. is known as industry.

10) What is plantation crop. Give example.

Ans- The perennial crops which are cultivated in the large estates, with the help of efficient human labour, technology and capital investment etc. are called plantation crops. Ex- Tea, Coffee.

Long Answer Questions :

1) Divide West Bengal into different physiographic divisions. Describe any one of them.

Ans- The physiography of West Bengal is divided into the following -

(a) Northern Mountains
(b) Western Plateaus
(c) The Plains

Western Plateaus :

Western Plateau region comprises of the districts of Purulia, Bankura, parts of Birbhum, Bardhaman, east medinipur and west midnapur. The plateau region is a part of Chhotanagpur Plateau which is known as the store house of minerals because it is having huge reserves of variety of minerals. The hills of this region are Ayodhya Hills in Purulia district, Susunia and Bihariinath in Bankura districts. Panchet hills in Purulia and Baghmundi hills in Ayodhya Hills. The highest peak of this region is Baragaburu situated on Ayodhya Hills. The

average height of this region is 300-400 metres. The slope of this region is from west - east. The entire region consists of hard metamorphic rocks. The major rivers flowing through this region are river Damodar, river Ajoy, river Mayurakshi, river Rupnarayan, River Bankeshwar and river Subarnarekha.

2) Name the classifications of Plains of West Bengal. Discuss any one of them.

Ans- Plains of West Bengal may be classified into —

(a) Terai duars
(b) Northern Plains
(c) Rarh Plains
(d) Ganga Plains
(e) Sandy coastal Plains

Northern Plains: The region between the south of Terai plains and the north of river Ganga is known as northern plains. This comprises of the districts of Jalpaiguri, southern part of Kochbihar and Malda. It is believed that this region has been formed by filling up of low lands and lakes by the silt brought down by the Himalayan rivers. It slopes from north to south. The northern part is 75m high and southern part is 30m high. It is known as Ganga-Brahmaputra doab as it lies between the rivers Ganga and Brahmaputra. It is further sub-divided into three groups:

(i) Tal: 'Tal' means 'low land' or 'lakes'. The low lying areas spread over the entire region are referred to as 'Tal'. They are often flooded during rainy season. They are made up of rich alluvial soil or silt hence are very fertile.

(ii) Barendra Bhumi: The undulating land on the eastern side of river Mahananda is known as Barendra Bhumi. This region is

is made of old silt. This is comparatively higher than the adjacent region and comprises many domes and isolated hills.

(2) Diyara: The south western part of Malda lying south of river Kalindi is known as Diyara. It is made of rich new silt.

3) Describe the seasons of West Bengal.

Ans- The climate of West Bengal is hot, wet tropical monsoon type. The seasons keep on changing so fast that due to diverse climate characteristics, West Bengal has been designated as the 'State of endless seasons'. The Indian Metarological Department divides climate of West Bengal into four seasons.

(a) Summer (March to May)- Due to northward movement of the Sun from March, temperature of West Bengal starts increasing. Excluding Darjeeling hilly region the rest of West Bengal becomes quite hot. Average temperature in April is 40°-44°C. Asansol is the hottest place of West Bengal. Cyclonic storms called Nor-westers occur in South Bengal. This may result in few torrential showers in West Bengal.

(b) Rainy Season (June-September): The moisture laden south-western monsoon winds cause a great amount of rainfall in West Bengal during this time (average 125-200 cm). The maximum rainfall occurs in Buxa-Doars (455 cm) while Mayureshwar of Birbhum receives the least amount of rainfall (95 cm). The wettest district is Alipurduar while the driest is Bankura.

(c) Autumn (October-November): During this time temperature remains mild hot and change in direction of monsoon winds is noticed. Local disturbances called 'Ashwina Jhar' occur during time. High pressure exists over the land surface during this time.

(d) Dry and Cold winter (December – February) : Due to southward movement of the sun, the temperature of West Bengal starts reducing rapidly. High pressure exists on land, hence North-eastern monsoon winds starts blowing from land to sea. The winds are dry and cause no rainfall. Average temperature remains 10°-16°C for the rest of West Bengal, while in the hilly region it is 0°-4°C. Sometimes extremly cold winds from north and north-western would reduce the temperature conditions of West Bengal. On the basis of western disturbances temperature would increase slightly.

4) State the distribution of Rice, Jute and Tea in West Bengal.

Ans- The distribution of Rice, Jute and Tea in West Bengal is :

(a) Rice : In Bengal paddy is cultivated mostly everywhere. But it predominates in the districts of Purba Medinipur, Purba and Paschim Bardhaman, North and South 24 Parganas, Nadia, Uttar Dinajpur, Dakshin Dinajpur, Murshidabad, Birbhum, Bankura etc. Purba and Paschim Bardhaman is the leading producer of paddy in West Bengal.

(b) Jute : Plenty of jute is cultivated in almost all the districts of West Bengal, namely North and South 24 Parganas, Hugli, Nadia, Purba Medinipur, Purba Bardhaman, Malda, Uttar and Dakshin Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri including Alipurduar and Koch Bihar.

(c) Tea : Innumerable tea gardens have developed on the hills of Darjeeling and Kalimpong district and on the slope of Terai-Duars of Alipurduar, Jalpaiguri, Koch Bihar districts. Recently, tea gardens have developed in Uttar Dinajpur and on the Ayodhya hill of Purulia district.

5) Discuss the geographical condition for cultivation of tea in West Bengal.

Ans- Tea is a plantation crop. Innumerable tea gardens have developed on the hills of Darjeeling and Kalimpong districts, also in the districts of Jalpaiguri and Koch Bihar.

The ideal geographical conditions are :

1) Physical conditions -

(a) Climate -

i) Temperature : Average temperature of 16°-20°C is ideal for tea plantation. This temperature is available on the Darjeeling mountainous region.

ii) Rainfall - Tea is a water loving crop. Very high rainfall i.e. 150-250 cms of average rainfall is suitable for its cultivation, which is a characteristic feature of most parts of North Bengal.

(b) Soil - Mountain or Podsol soil favours tea cultivation, so it is found in abundance in the Terai-duars and mountainous region of West Bengal.

(c) Relief - This crop requires hilly slopes for its healthy growth as water logging is not tolerated. So it is cultivated on the hills of North Bengal.

2) Cultural Conditions -

(a) Labour : Tea is labour intensive crop. Large no. of human labour is required for plucking leaves. Mainly women and child labour are engaged.

(b) Capital : Tea is a plantation crop so huge capital is required for its cultivation and maintainance. Big business groups and

industrialists invest in it.

(d) Fertilizer : For better production chemical fertilizers are needed in tea gardens and insecticides are required to protect the plants from poisonous insects.

(d) Cover crop : Tea plants cannot tolerate the direct sunlight so mostly banana trees are used as cover crops to shelter these plants for their healthy nourishment.

6) State the geographical condition necessary for rice cultivation.

Ans- Rice is the most important food crop of West Bengal. It is mainly cultivated in Ganga-Delta, Rarh and Northern Plains.
The major factors for rice cultivation are :

1) Physical Conditions —

(a) Climate —

(i) Temperature : Moderate – High temperature is required for the cultivation of rice. During sowing period the temperature should be 27°-30°C average. In ripening season 35°C atleast. These suitable temperature is available almost in all parts of West Bengal.

(ii) Rainfall : Heavy rainfall (100-150 cm annual average) is good for best quality rice production. The south-west monsoon winds bring heavy amount of rainfall in West Bengal.

(b) Soil – Rice is best suited in fertile alluvial soil. Thus, Ganga-Delta Plain is best suited is best suited for rice cultivation because many river deposit alluvium on their banks.

(c) Relief : Rice cultivation is ideal in low-lying region. Thus lower

Ganga-delta plain of West Bengal is good for rice cultivation.

2) Cultural Conditions –

(a) Labour – Rice is a labour intensive crop. Cheap and efficient labours are available in this density populated state.

(b) Fertilizers – For better production chemical fertilizers are needed in rice fields and to protect the crops from poisonous insects insecticides are required.

(c) HYV seeds – At present, the farmers use HYV seeds like Jaya, Ratna for better rice production.

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7) Explain the influence of monsoon winds on the climate of West Bengal.

Ans- West Bengal is influenced by both the south-west monsoon as well as north-west monsoon. Monsoon winds blow throughout the year from the southwest during summer and spring and from the north-east during autumn and winter. The winter is cold and dry due to retreating monsoon winds coming from snow-covered mountain regions. The rainy season follows a hot moist summer. Autumn marks the time of change of direction of monsoon winds. The maximum rainfall occurs due to the south-west monsoon winds (average yearly rainfall 175-200 cm). The monsoon winds are very fickle minded. Sometimes they come early whereas sometimes they are late. The season of West Bengal depend on monsoon winds.

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8) Discuss the climatic regions of West Bengal.

Ans- The climate of West Bengal is hot, wet, tropical monsoon type. Seasons keep on changing very fast due to climatic characteristics

The climatic region of West Bengal can be categorized into four groups.

(a) Climate of hilly region: This region comprises of Darjeeling district and northern part of Jalpaiguri district. Cold weather persists here almost throughout the year. January is the coldest month when average temperature lies between 2°-8°C. Some areas experience snow fall.

(b) Climate of plateau region: This region comprises of entire Purulia and the western parts of Barddhaman, Medinipur, Birbhum and Bankura. Climate is of extreme type, basically rough and dry. Dryness is the result of distance from the sea. Average summe temperature lies between 40°-45°C.

(c) Climate of plains of North Bengal: Siliguri sub-division of Darjeeling, maximum parts of Jalpaiguri, Koch Bihar, North and South Dinajpur and Malda fall under this region. Average temperature remains around 12°C. This region experience nor-westers more than the hilly regions. Relative humidity is high. Average rainfall is 932.9 cm more than hilly region.

(d) Climate of plains of South Bengal: The region comprises of Murshidabad, Nadia, North and South 24 Parganas excluding the coastal region. This region is comparatively hotter than rest of the state. Daily range of temperature is not very big due to influence of coastal breeze. Nor'westers are common during summer. Average annual rainfall is 150-200 cm.

9) Discuss the physiography of Rarh Plains.

Ans- The flat land in between Bhagirathi-Hugli river in the east and the plateau in the west is known as Rarh Plain. The region

also includes the plains of Purba, Paschim Medinipur, Bankura and Bardhaman.

Rarh Plain is made up of silts and alluvium deposited by the rivers which flow from the west (75 m) to the east 10 m following the slope of the land. In the east floods are common and consequently, lowlands are formed.

Rivers like Mayurakshi, Damodar, Ajay, Rupanarayan and Kangsabati are flowing through the Rarh regions and finally joins the Bhagirathi-Hugli as tributaries. These rivers are rainfed and they have originated in the plateau of the west. Hence they become dry except the rainy season. They often flood in rainy season as their beds are swallow. The plain consists of Lateritic soil.

10) Describe the factors for the development of Iron and Steel plant in West Bengal.

Ans- Durgapur and Burnpur-Kulti are the centres for Iron and Steel plants in West Bengal. Iron and steel industry is one of the important metallurgical industry. The factors responsible for development of these industries are :

(a) Availability of raw materials - Major raw materials are iron-ore and coal. Iron-ore is available from Singhbum district of Jharkhand and coal is obtained from Raniganj and some other places. Moreover Manganese, limestone are obtained from Gangpur in Orissa.

(b) Supply of water - Plenty of water is available from river Damodar

(c) Supply of electricity - Huge amount of electricity for the steel plant of Durgapur is available from adjacent Durgapur power station. However Damodar Valley Corporation also supply hydroelectricity.

(d) Port facility - The high quality steel produced in Durgapur Steel plant are exported through Kolkata and Haldia port to other parts of the world. The machineries and also the raw materials are imported through these ports.

(e) Transport facility - There is a good network of roadways and railways in Durgapur and Asansol - Kulti which provide connection with other parts of the country. National Highways No. 2 and 22 connect these cities with other metropolitan cities of India. The Eastern Railway and South - Eastern Railway headquarters in Sealdah and Howrah provide good connection throughout the country.

(f) Labour Supply - The dense population of West Bengal and other neighbouring states provide skilled and cheap labour for the Iron and steel plant.

(g) Capital Investment - Huge capital is required for the development of steel plant which is provided by the big industrialists and also the state government.

(h) Demand and Market - There is a huge demand of steel products in the country and abroad. Thus Durgapur Steel Plant have a good market for steel goods in different parts of country.