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Mains Practice Questions

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Q. Monsoon has wide ranging impacts on Socio-Economic Life in India. Substantiate. (250 words)

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Approach:

- Elaborate the meaning of monsoon climate in brief.
- Discuss the positive and negative impacts of monsoon on Socio-economic life in India.
- Enumerate the imminent challenges to the pattern of monsoon climate.
- Conclude by giving solutions to achieve reliability and sustainability in life.

Introduction

Monsoon connotes the climate associated with **seasonal reversal in the direction of winds**. The reversal of wind occurs due to the pressure difference caused by differential heating and cooling of landmass and water bodies.

India receives south-west monsoon winds in summer and north-east monsoon winds in winter. South-west monsoons bring intense rainfall to most of the regions in India and north-east monsoons bring rainfall to mainly south-eastern coast of India.

Body

Impacts of monsoon on life in India

Positive Impacts

- **Unity due to monsoon climate:** The monsoon regime emphasises the unity of the vast stretches across India. For example, the climate of Kerala and Tamil Nadu in the south are so different from that of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar in the north, and yet all of these have a monsoon type of climate which encourages more or less the common ways of living.
- **Economic life:** Monsoon is that axis around which the entire agricultural cycle of India revolves. About 64 percent of the people of India are directly dependent on agriculture for their livelihood.
- **Recharges dams and aquifers:** Monsoon rain helps recharge of rivers, dams and reservoirs, which is further used for the generation of hydro-electric power.
- **Diversification of crops:** Regional variations in monsoon climate help in growing various types of crops. Due to this a large variety of crops are available in India which are exported to different parts of the world.
- **Cultural diversity:** Regional monsoon variation in India is reflected in the **vast variety of cuisine, attire and housing pattern**. This makes India a highly culturally diverse country.
- **Ecological diversity:** Also, great ecological diversity has flourished mainly due to monsoon type of climate.

Negative impacts

- **High dependence on erratic monsoon:** Agricultural prosperity of India depends very much on timely and adequately distributed rainfall. If it fails, agriculture is adversely affected particularly in those regions where means of irrigation are not developed.
- **Soil erosion and degradation:** The summer rainfall due to south west monsoon comes in a heavy downpour leading to considerable run off and soil erosion. Also, Sudden monsoon burst creates problem of soil erosion over large areas in India.
- **Highly concentrated rainfall:** The average annual rainfall in India is about 125 cm, but it has great spatial variations. Around three fourths of the total annual rainfall is received during four months June to September and other months mostly remain dry. This variability of rainfall **simultaneously brings droughts and floods** every year in some parts of the country affecting the large scale social and economic life of the country.
- In hilly areas sudden rainfall brings **landslides** which damages natural and physical infrastructure subsequently **disrupting human life economically as well as socially.**

Imminent Challenges

Monsoon climate is woven into the fabric of Indian social, economic, and political thought in a way that it is not elsewhere. But recently issues of climate change, global warming and increasing pollution have become critical to such a climate and threatens our sustainability.

Conclusion

- The population in India is continuously increasing and to ensure food (including water) security to the population, a large part of the monsoon water which is currently unutilized should be held at suitable locations for irrigation and power generation purposes.
- We need to invest more resources in better prediction of Monsoon forecast in order to achieve reliability and sustainability.
- Thus, the need is to take collective steps to mitigate the risks of climate change, global warming and increasing pollution as we live in a shared world with a shared future.