**GEOGRAPHICAL ASSETS OF AFRICA’S SOUTH OF SAHARA.**

**The Sahel** is a semi-arid region that spans from the Atlantic Ocean on the west to the Red Sea on the east of Africa’s continent. Countries such as Mali, Sudan, Niger, Chad, Burkina Faso are part of the Sahel.

**The Sahel** landscape consists of semi-arid grassland savannas and occasional tree cover. Humidity is low in the Sahel. The rainfall patterns greatly influence vegetation and agricultural activity. The Sahel receives 100mm to 600mm of rainfall annually. In the Sahel, Agricultural communities thrive around rivers and oases where rainfall is abundant while nomadic pastoralists roam in semi-arid grasslands for grazing of their cattle.

Gold is found in Mali, Burkina Faso and Mauritania while petroleum is dominantly mined in Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria. Niger is the world’s largest supplier of Uranium. It is mined close to the twin mining towns of Arlit and Akokan 900km northwest of the capital, Niamey.

**The Horn of Africa** is located to the East of the African continent and is named ‘the horn’ as its topographical shape resembles that of the horn of a rhino. It consists of Ethiopia, Somali, Eritrea, Djibouti, Sudan, South Sudan and partly Kenya.

Lowlands in the Horn are dry because of the tropical monsoon effects. The tropical monsoon originates from the west resulting in seasonal rainfall in the Sahel. Moisture of the monsoon is lost even before reaching the Horn. The coastline of the Horn of Africa is bordered by the Gulf of Aden, Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. The Ogaden desert is a semi-arid region found in Eastern Ethiopia.

**The Cushite community** dominate the Horn of Africa most notably the Oromo people. The Oromo were originally pastoralists but after intermarrying with the Sidamo and Ambare they adopted sedentary agriculture (Begna Dugassa, 2021). The Oromo people mainly grow coffee making the area one of the largest producers of coffee today.

**The Congo Basin Rainforest** is also a geographical asset of Africa’s south of Sahara. The rainforest is the world’s largest carbon sink and thus it is important that its ecological function is maintained. (Seay, 2022)

**The Great Rift Valley**, another asset, stretches from the Middle East to Mozambique. The two major rift systems are the Gregory rift and the Western rift. The divergence of tectonic plates during the formation of the rift valley led to volcanic mountains i.e.; Mt Nyiragongo, Mt Nyamuragira, Mt Kenya, Mt Kilimanjaro, Ol Doinyo. These volcanic mountains are either active, dormant or extinct. The most recent eruption being that of Mt Nyamuragira in 2011 (Adventures). The rift valley was formed in a process known as rifting where the African plate split into two, the Nubian plate to the west and the Somali plate to the east, due to tectonic forces which result in stretching and thinning of the earth’s lithosphere. As the plates pull apart the crust becomes thinner leading to volcanic activity were magma rises to fill the space leading to formation of the rift valley. (The Great Rift Valley: Everything You Need to Know)

The weathering of rocks over time leads to fertile soils that provide suitable conditions for agricultural activities. The rift valley is also rich in minerals such as soda ash that is mined in Lake Madadi. Other minerals such as fluorspar mined in Kerio Valley and diatomite mined in Kariandusi have led to the development of industries which in turn build up the economy of the region.

**PROBLEMS AND LIMITATIONS FACED BY AFRICA’S SOUTH OF SAHARA.**

1. Numerous warfronts and corruption by the administrators of the region have led to low exploitation of valuable minerals hindering growth of the region’s economy.
2. Climate change has led to unpredictable seasons of precipitation thus posing a risk to agricultural activities, considering that the area is largely semi-arid, leading to food insecurity.
3. Diseases and famine affect most pastoral communities in the region with minimum to no support by the governmental bodies.
4. In areas such as the Ethiopian highlands, overgrazing and deforestation hassled to soil erosion.
5. Volcanic eruptions lead to killing of people and destruction of property. The volcanic activity releases gases that lead to acid rains (Brodowicz, 2024).
6. Illegal logging, poaching of wild animals and air pollution in the Congo rainforest has led to increased amounts of carbon in the atmosphere.
7. Landslides and rockfalls in the rift valley have led to destruction of property and loss of lives.
8. Flooding in various rivers of the region due to rising water levels has led to displacement of many communities that economically depended on the water systems.

**GEOGRAPHICAL ASSETS OF SOUTH ASIA.**

**South Asia is located on the Indian plate** and consists of countries such as India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan.

The **Himalaya mountains** are found in South Asia. In the Himalaya is the world’s tallest mountain, Mt Everest(8849m) followed by K2(8611m) which is the second tallest mountain in the world. The Himalaya mountains were formed as a result of tectonic collision between the Indian and Eurasian plate. It is said that the two plates are still colliding up to date and thus the height of the mountains keeps increasing. K2 though the second tallest peak is the deadliest and is said that one out of four climbers die yearly.

The **Indus, Ganges and Brahmaputra** rivers form a lowland region in South Asia and provide water for irrigation on farms and are fishing sites. The Ganges River, located in India is sacred for the Hindu religion and is the third largest river on earth measured in terms of water output. According to the Hindu it is an embodiment of goddess Ganga, daughter of Himalaya.

 **Thar desert** also known as the Great Indian desert is an arid region to the north western part of the Indian subcontinent. Thar desert is located in Pakistan and India. Sand dunes in Thar desert are as a result of sediments from alluvial plains. The sand in the desert is highly mobile due to winds occurring before the monsoon. R.Luni is the only river in Thar desert. Salt lakes in the desert such as Kuchaman and Pachpadra collect water during monsoon and dry up afterwards. During the southwestern monsoon the desert receives annual rainfall from 100mm to 500m. (Thar Desert, 2024)

South Asia also has islands such as the **Maldives and Sri Lanka**. The Maldives is an archipelago of islands which was formed as a result of volcanic action on the sea floor. Volcanic action formed a fringing reef followed by a barrier reef and subsequently a toll was formed. The Maldives is a thriving tourism and tuna fishing center where it is estimated over 2 million tourists visit the country each year (History, 2024). Sri Lanka has coastal landforms such as beaches, bays lagoons, headlands and coral reefs that attract tourists. Sri Lanka also has plains and central highlands. The plains are a traversed low ridge that decreases in altitude as it approaches the coast. The highlands have a highly divided terrain that includes an arrangement of escarpments (Geography of the Indian Subcontinent- Sri Lanka). Escarpments such as the Haputale escarpment are physical barriers to transport and communication in the area.

**Deccan plateau** located in southwestern India was formed due to tectonic activity. An enormous fissure on the earth’s crust led to a massive eruption of lava. The deposition of lava led to the formation of the plateau.

**South Asia** accounts for 2.04 billion of the earth’s population. It is the most populous and densely populated region on earth. South Asia accounts for 90% of Hindus, 95% of Sikhs and 31% of muslims. The two main languages are Indo – Aryan Dravidian.

**PROBLEMS AND LIMITATIONS OF SOUTH ASIA.**

1. The **unpredictability of the monsoon** winds leads to flooding hence destruction of property.
2. **Melting glaciers of the Himalaya** lead to unstable water levels in water bodies thus causing destruction of property and hampering of economic activities in cities that border the water bodies.
3. **Mountain climbing** is a sport loved by many but in the Himalayan Mountains **death of mountaineers** is often imminent, e.g. recently Joshua Cheruiyot Kirui a Kenyan climber died while attempting to be the first African to reach the Mt Everest summit.
4. **Climate change** has led to desertification thus adversely affecting agricultural activities in South Asia.
5. **Excessive pollution of rivers** such as the Ganges and the Indus have led to death of fish species and water borne disease to the low-income families that depend on the water domestically.

**GEOGRAPHICAL ASSETS OF EAST ASIA.**

 According to the Physical Geography of East Asia(2015) Russia, China, Japan, North Korea, South Korea and Taiwan are part of East Asia. Mountains such as the **Himalaya and the Kunlun Shan** are found on the western landscape of this region. Numerous mountain ranges, high peaks and valleys found in the East Asia are known as Pamirs. Kunlun Shan and Tian Shan are mountains found in China. Shan is the Chinese word for mountain. Altay mountain form a natural barrier between Mongolia and China. Himalayan mountains has the highest peak in the world, Mt Everest(8849m) and spans between the border of China and Nepal. Changbai mountains of Manchuria extends into the Korean peninsula. Mount Fuji also found in East Asia is a dormant volcano rising above the central plain of Honshu Island. It is a spiritual symbol of the Japanese people.

**Between Himalaya and Kunlun Shan is Xizang, the world’s highest plateau**. The Xizang plateau also known as the Tibet plateau and the Mongolian plateau have grassy vegetation that is suitable for grazing.

The **Yellow and Yangtze Rivers** flow from the Xizang plateau to the fertile plains in eastern China. Yellow river derived its name from to its nature of carrying tons of fine, yellowish- brown top soil called loess. River Yangtze is Asias longest river and the world’s third longest river flowing for 3965 miles and empties in the ocean at Shanghai. These rivers are used for transport and agricultural activities.

The **monsoon winds bring rain to the coastal area of East Asia**. The moist winds do not reach the interior of East Asia leading to formation of Gobi and Taklimakan desert.

Japan and Taiwan were formed by volcanic activity that was caused by tectonic movements. These plate movements led to volcanic eruptions and violent earthquakes. Japan is situated in a place called the ring of fire which is a circle of volcanoes bordering the Pacific Ocean. Japan has 50 active volcanoes. **Earthquakes that occur on the sea bed are known as tsunamis**. They occur when oceanic plates collide with each other due to tectonic forces and one plate slides under the other.

There are large deposits of oil in south China’s sea and Taklimakan desert. Coal deposits are also found in northeastern part of China and mined in the Korean peninsula and in Mongolia. North Korea also boasts of Iron ore deposits and tungsten. The fishing industry is a major economic booster in East Asia. Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and China have the biggest deep sea fishing industries.

**Normads of Mongolia** have been one of the few communities to withstand the harsh climate conditions of East Asia. They herd across the high grasslands and live in tentlike structures called Yurts.

The southeastern quarter of East Asia has a humid subtropical climate, with warm or hot summers and heavy rains from the pacific monsoon. The northeastern quarter including the northern parts of Korea and Japan has a cooler and humid continental climate.

**PROBLEMS AND LIMITATIONS FACING EAST ASIA**.

1. **Tsunamis and earthquakes** cause deaths most significant incident being that of 1993 that happened in Okushiri, Japan.
2. The **monsoon winds** cause flooding during rainfall and droughts as the moist winds don’t reach the inlands hence leading to destruction of property and food insecurity respectively.
3. **Lack of arable land** due to extensive semi-arid conditions has led to low agricultural activities.
4. The **mountain ranges act as physical barriers** which has made it difficult to construct transport and communication infrastructure.
5. The coastal region of east Asia is **prone to cyclones** especially in China which destroy infrastructure in coastal cities.
6. **Climate change** which has led to desertification has posed a challenge to nomads of Mongolia as the struggle to find pasture for their cattle.
7. **Pollution of water bodies** has affected industrial fishing in east Asia as the countries heavily depend on fishing to grow their economy.

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