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Q1

Forests precede civilizations and deserts follow them.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2024 · Essay · 125 marks · Philosophical and ethical quotes

Philosophical and ethical quotes

Core demand of the question

- Unpack forests as living capital; deserts as the bill after greed
- **One stand:** a civilisation that eats its shade will sit in sand
- Move through ecology, economy, culture, state, world. Keep one honest counter
- Close on trusteeship, not a tree-planting slogan

Revision summary

Not a full essay - a map.

- **Open with two photographs of one ridge. Stand:** spend the forest, inherit the sand.
- **Headings:** self, culture, economy, state, world, then one counter.

Earn **Gandhi** and Leopold (or **Tagore**) once each. Peg FRA or IPCC, not a data dump.

Close on trusteeship.

Note

This is a map, not the full 1,000-1,200 word essay.

Anecdote

- **A grandfather shows a boy a photograph of the same ridge:** teak then, later a mine, later a dust storm that entered the kitchen. The boy asks which picture is "progress". The old man says: the forest came first; the desert is what we left. The line is that album - not a poem about trees.

One stand

Civilisations grow in the shade of living systems. When we spend the forest as cash, the desert is not nature's revenge - it is the receipt. Write to keep the receipt in view.

Heading map**What the line is asking**

- **Forests:** soil, water, climate, food, a commons - not only timber.
- **Civilisations:** cities, farms, temples, ports that assumed a surplus of green.
- **Deserts:** barrenness after over-cut, over-graze, over-mine, over-heat - also a desert of meaning.
- **The order is a warning:** take the canopy, inherit the sand.

Self

- We buy shade as furniture and call it taste. That is a small desert in the house.
- A civil servant's first posting that signs a diversion without walking the ridge is the photograph's middle frame.

Society and culture

- **Sacred groves, Chipko, a village tank:** culture that treated the forest as kin, not inventory.
- When festivals need plastic and diesel more than a grove, culture has already started the desert.

Economy

- GDP counts the log; it is slow to count the aquifer the log was holding.
- **Green accounting, CAMPA, "compensatory" plantation that is a monoculture:** a fake forest after a real one.

State

- **Forest Rights Act 2006:** people who lived with the canopy vs a file that only sees reserved forest.
- EIA, a delayed notification, a wildlife corridor cut by a highway - the desert begins as a clause.

World

- **Amazon, Sahel, Himalayan springs:** the same sequence at planetary scale.
- Climate is the desert arriving on a timetable.

The counter

- **Not every clearing is a crime:** a farm, a rail, a hospital also feed a people. The line forbids eating the seed. Development that leaves a working canopy is still civilisation. A slogan that freezes the poor beside a teak board is another kind of desert.

Last paragraph

- **End on a habit:** walk the ridge before the signature; count water with the timber. **Gandhi's** trusteeship and **Article 48A / 51A(g)** are that habit in ethic and law. In the hall, grow each heading into a paragraph with one Indian case - this page is only the map.

Facts & figures

Gandhi

Trusteeship: we do not own the forest; we hold it. Use when a mine is sold as "nation".

Aldo Leopold

A land ethic: the ridge is a community, not a warehouse. One line, one scene.

Forest Rights Act 2006

Recognises forest dwellers as rights-holders - canopy with people, not people versus trees.

Art. 48A / 51A(g)

State duty and citizen duty to the environment - the legal shade of the line.

IPCC / Himalaya

Glacier and spring stress: a desert of water following a civilisation of extraction.

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