

Chapter- 7

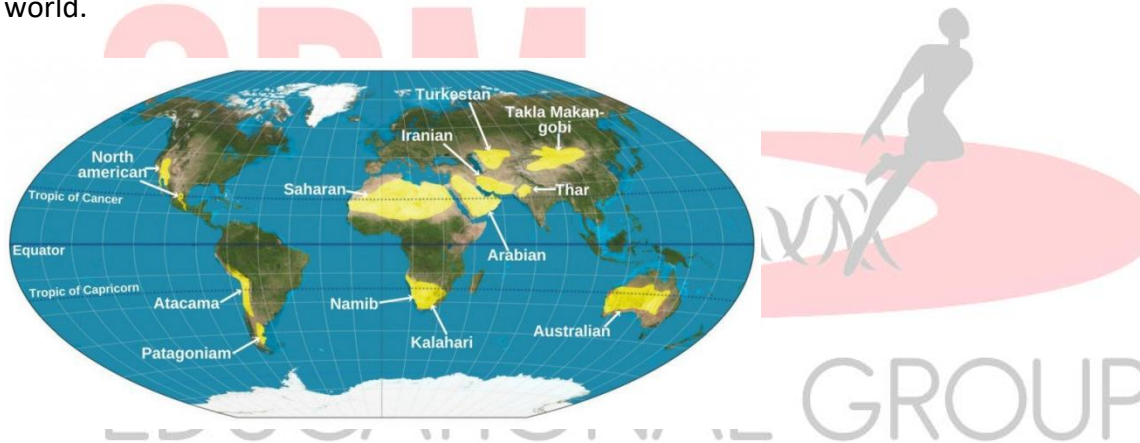
Saudi Arabia - The Land of Hot Sands

STUDY NOTES

Let's Learn

A desert is an area which receives scanty rainfall. Deserts cover about one-fifth of the land area of the world.

There are various types of deserts. Those, that are found between 15° to 30° north and south of the equator are **hot deserts**; for example, Sahara Desert in Africa, Thar Desert in India and Mexican Desert in Mexico. The world map given below shows the major hot deserts of the world.



The second type of desert is the **temperate desert**, such as the Gobi Desert. The third type of the desert is the **cold desert**, which is found between the Poles and the Arctic and Antarctic circle, for example, the Tundra in Russia.

Saudi Arabia

In this lesson, we shall study about a hot desert country Saudi Arabia.

Location, Land and its Geography

Saudi Arabia lies in south-west Asia. It occupies most of the Arabian Peninsula. It is sandwiched between the Persian Gulf and the Red sea. The Tropic of Cancer passes through it. The countries that surround Saudi Arabia are Jordan, Iraq and Kuwait in the north, Qatar, United Arab Emirates and

Bahrain in the east, Oman, Yemen and the Arabian Sea in the south. The Red Sea lies to the west of this country.



A major portion of Saudi Arabia (in the west) is high with mountains. As we move east towards the Persian Gulf, the land slopes gently. The **Najd plateau** lies in the east of the mountains. Three of Saudi Arabia's driest and treeless deserts lie on the borders of the plateau. They are **An Nafud** in the north, **Dahua** in the east and **Rub-al-Khali** in the south. **Haso**, an oil rich province stretches along the Persian Gulf.

Oasis:

AL-AHSA OASIS



Saudi Arabia is dry with very scanty rainfall. Hence, shortage of water is a constant problem. Water is available only in oases (singular: oasis). An oasis is a fertile place in a desert, where water is available. There are no permanent rivers or lakes in the desert. It is only after the rains that wide gullies that carry rainwater are seen. They are called **wadis**.

Climate:

Saudi Arabia has an extremely hot climate. Very often, it experiences the world's hottest temperature at 52°C. The summer season is from May to September. The weather is very hot and dry during the daytime but the nights are cooler. The winter season is from October to April. It is warm in the daytime but as the glaring sun sets, the land shows a fall in temperature and nights become cold. In the coastal areas, the temperature is mild. Rainfall is very scanty (even less than 25 cm).

Plant Life:

In Saudi Arabia, only plants that can live and survive the heat and water shortage can grow. Most of the plants have long roots that go deep into the ground in search of water. Various types of cacti grow here. Cacti have thorns instead of leaves so that there is less loss of water through evaporation. Date palms are found in oases. In big towns, date palm plantations are found. In addition, fruits, vegetables and crops like wheat, barley, cotton, rice, tobacco and ragi are grown around the oasis.

**Animal Life:**

The most useful and important animal found here is the camel. It is called the **ship of the desert**. The other animals that are found here are **ostrich, oryx, gazelles, baboons, hyenas and ibexes**.





The People and Lifestyle:

Saudi Arabia's rich petroleum reserves have made its people prosperous. Towns and cities have grown rapidly and people enjoy a modern and comfortable lifestyle. The people mostly live in towns and work as traders, executives and in factories.

People in villages have a simple lifestyle. They earn their livelihood by tending flocks of sheep, goats and camels. Many people still lead a nomadic lifestyle as they move in search of green pastures. They live in tents made of animal hide or cloth and pitch them near pastures and call it home. One such group of **nomads** is called **Bedouins**. The long rows in which they move with their belongings and camels are called **caravans**.

Traditional Costumes:

The Arab men wear long sleeved one piece robe that covers their body. Since the robes are loose, the men do not feel warm. They wear a cotton head turban, which stays in place because of a ring woven from camel hair. People in cities wear traditional as well as modern European outfits. The costume for men is called the **thawb** and that of women is called **aba**.



Industry and Trade:

Saudi Arabia is one of the largest producers of petroleum in the world. Many petroleum refineries have been set up here. Almost the entire income of the country comes from the export of petroleum. In addition, **cement, petrochemicals, iron, steel and fertilizer industries** have been developed. **Jubail and Dammam**, on the east coast are the areas of high industrial development. On the west coast, **Yanbu** is highly industrialised. Small-scale industries have also been developed. These include **textiles, leather, soap and handicrafts**. Mining as an industry is also gaining importance.

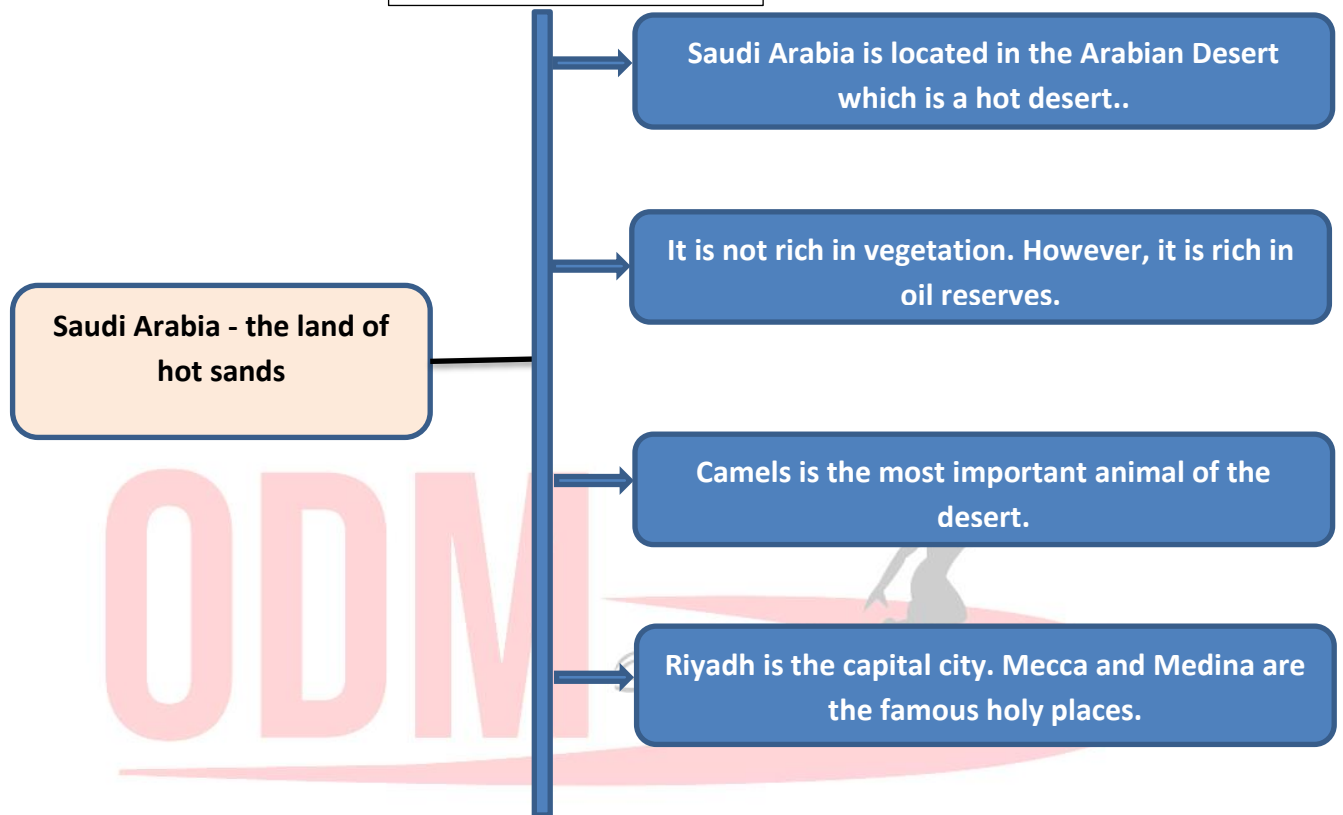


Important Cities:

Saudi Arabia is an enchanting place with both old and new cities. All the new cities are well equipped with modern facilities. **Riyadh** is the capital of the country. It is a modern town with sky-scrapers, beautiful parks, markets, schools, colleges and hospitals. The roads are very broad and lined with palatial buildings and air conditioned government buildings.

Mecca and **Medina** are holy cities of the Muslims. Muslims from all over the world visit these cities. Saudi Arabia is an example of a country whose government has exploited the natural resources well, set up industries connected with the resources and converted a barren desert land into a rich and prosperous country.



MEMORY MAP

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Let's know more / *Changing your Tomorrow* ▲

Write in one word

- Which is the largest hot desert in the world?
- Which hot desert lies in India?
- Name one desert plant.
- Which tribe lives in the deserts of North Africa?
- Name a cold desert.

Let's Do**A. Write T for true and F for false sentences.**

1. Saudi Arabia has a temperate climate as most of it lies in the Temperate Zone.
2. Most people in Saudi Arabia are nomads.
3. Nights in Saudi Arabia are hot.
4. Sand dunes are hills of sand that remain fixed in their places.
5. In an oasis, underground water comes up to the surface.
6. The main income of Saudi Arabia comes from petroleum.
7. Saudi Arabia has a very modern society.

B. Give one word answers for the following.

1. The capital of Saudi Arabia: _____
2. Hills of sand that keep shifting because of strong winds: _____
3. Nomads of Saudi Arabia: _____
4. The most important pilgrim centre of the Muslims: _____
5. The main natural resource of Saudi Arabia: _____

Understand and Answer*Changing your Tomorrow***C. Answer the following questions.**

1. Describe the climate of Saudi Arabia.
2. What kinds of plants grow in the deserts of Saudi Arabia?
3. What is a (a) peninsula, (b) oasis?
4. What is the importance of oases for the people living in the desert regions of Saudi Arabia?
5. Why is Saudi Arabia such a rich country?
6. Who are Bedouins?
7. How did Bedouins traditionally earn their living?

8. Why is Saudi Arabia important for the Muslims of the world?

Teacher's Note

Write an essay on the topic, "A world without oil."

Improve your G.K

- ◆ The Arabian Peninsula is the largest peninsula in the world.
- ◆ Antarctica is the largest desert/cold desert in the world.
- ◆ Liquid Petroleum is also called 'Liquid Gold'.
- ◆ More than 30 % of Saudi Arabia's population consists of foreign workers.

ANSWER KEY

Let's know more

Write in one word

- Sahara Desert
- Thar Desert
- Cactus
- The Tuareg
- Arctic desert

Let's Do

A. 1. F

2. T

3. F

4. F

5. T

6. T

7. F

B.1. Riyadh

2. Sand dunes
3. Bedouins
4. Mecca
5. Petroleum

Understand and Answer

C.1. Climate of Saudi Arabia:-

- i. The climate of Saudi Arabia is hot and dry.
 - ii. The Tropic of Cancer passes through the middle of Saudi Arabia.
 - iii. This country receives very little rainfall.
 - iv. Humidity is very low and the Sun shines bright and hot throughout the year.
 - v. Nights are cool during summer and very cold during winter.
2. Very few plants can grow in a desert climate. Like -
- Plants which can withstand the hot and dry conditions, can be seen growing in the desert regions of Saudi Arabia.
 - Some plants have thick stems that store water.
 - The leaves of desert plants usually have a waxy coating or they are reduced to spines or thorns. This helps reduce water lost from the leaves.
 - Cactus have wide network of roots close to the surface which allows them to absorb rain water quickly.
 - Other plants, like acacia, have long roots that can reach water sources deep below the ground.
3. a. Peninsula - A peninsula is a piece of land jutting out into the sea. It is surrounded by water on three sides.

b. Oasis - Fertile area formed in the desert by underground water that comes to the surface is called an oasis.

4. Importance of oases-

- Oases are a vital part of life in the arid and semi-arid climate.
- They are the only source of freshwater.
- Al - Hasa, Saudi Arabia, is an important farming region in the Arabian Peninsula.
- The area produces rice, corn, date etc.
- Oases also provide water and a habitat for insects and small animals as well as a pit stop for migrating birds.

5. Saudi Arabia is a very rich country. This is because of the vast deposits of petroleum in the country. The money earned by selling petroleum to other countries has been used to build modern cities such as Riyadh and Jeddah. The government of Saudi Arabia has used the natural resources found in the country very intelligently to benefit the people.

6. Nomadic Arabs living in the desert in tents are called Bedouins.

- Main occupation - rearing cattle
- Move from place to place - in search of pastures
- Live in - tents made of animal skin

7. The Bedouins sell animals and their products at market places in villages and buy food grains, dates and other things to earn their living.

8. Saudi Arabia is important for the Muslims of the world because Islam was founded in Saudi Arabia by Prophet Mohammed. Millions of Muslims from all over the world come to Mecca and Medina, the most important pilgrim centre of the Muslims.