Geography · GS - I

Discuss the multi-dimensional implications of uneven distribution of mineral oil in the world.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2021	GS - I	Geography

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Geological distribution, West Asian reserves, oil-importing and exporting countries, energy security, OPEC, geopolitical competition, price volatility, resource curse, strategic chokepoints, environmental impacts, renewable energy transition.

Model Answer

Introduction

Mineral oil, or petroleum, is unevenly distributed because of geological conditions. Major reserves are concentrated in West Asia, while the United States, Russia, Canada and Brazil are also important producers.

Multi-dimensional Implications

- **Economic interdependence:** Importing countries depend on exporters for energy, creating trade relationships but exposing them to supply disruptions and price fluctuations.
- **Geopolitical competition:** Oil-rich regions acquire strategic importance. Conflicts and sanctions can disrupt supplies and affect global markets.
- **Influence of producer groups:** OPEC and its partners influence supply decisions, affecting prices and exporting countries' revenues.
- **Unequal development:** Oil wealth can finance infrastructure and welfare, but excessive dependence may encourage corruption, economic volatility and the resource curse.
- **Energy security:** Import-dependent countries such as India face inflation, pressure on trade balances and currency instability when prices rise.

- **Strategic infrastructure:** Pipelines, ports and chokepoints such as the Strait of Hormuz become crucial to international energy flows.
- **Environmental consequences:** Extraction and consumption contribute to greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution, habitat degradation and oil spills.
- **Energy transition:** Uneven distribution encourages diversification of energy sources, renewable energy investment and reduced dependence on imported fossil fuels.

Conclusion

Uneven petroleum distribution shapes global power relations, economic stability and environmental outcomes. Diversified supplies, international cooperation and a gradual clean-energy transition are essential for long-term energy security.