

# ALLAMA IQBAL OPEN UNIVERSITY, ISLAMABAD

## Department of Commerce

|                |                                    |                     |             |
|----------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Course Title:  | Commercial Geography               | Course Code:        | 1428        |
| Level:         | ADC (Associate Degree in Commerce) | Semester:           | Autumn 2026 |
| Assignment No: | Assignment - 1                     | Total / Pass Marks: | 100 / 50    |

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**Question 1: Define commercial geography. Also, explain the importance of economic and commercial geography in detail.**

### Answer

#### 1. Definition of Commercial Geography

Commercial Geography is a specialized branch of Economic Geography that systematically studies the spatial distribution of commercial activities, trade routes, production centers, and the exchange of commodities and services across regional, national, and international boundaries. It examines how geographical factors - such as climate, topography, natural resource endowments, soil fertility, accessibility, and human demographics - influence the extraction of raw materials, industrial manufacturing, transport networks, and market consumption patterns.

While general geography deals with the physical features of the Earth, Commercial Geography specifically connects the physical environment with global business dynamics. It addresses fundamental economic questions from a spatial perspective: Where are raw materials extracted? Why are specific industries located in particular regions? How do trade corridors connect producers with consumers? And what geographical advantages dictate international trade dominance?

#### 2. Core Scope and Concepts of Commercial Geography

- \* **Commodity Geography:** Analysis of primary goods (minerals, agricultural produce) and manufactured items regarding their production sites, transport, and international demand.
- \* **Transport and Logistics Geography:** Evaluation of maritime routes, motorways, railway networks, and aviation hubs that facilitate the seamless movement of goods.
- \* **Trade and Market Geography:** Study of bilateral and multilateral trade agreements, export-import flows, tariff zones, and consumer market demographics.
- \* **Industrial Location Analysis:** Application of spatial theories (e.g., Alfred Weber's Industrial Location Theory) to understand why factories setup near raw materials, energy sources, or consumer markets.

#### 3. Importance of Economic and Commercial Geography

Understanding Economic and Commercial Geography is paramount for corporate leaders, policy makers, urban

planners, and economists. The key aspects of its importance are detailed below:

- \* **Strategic Business and Locational Decision-Making:** Commercial geography provides crucial spatial insights for businesses when selecting plant locations, warehouse distribution nodes, and retail outlets to minimize transport overheads and maximize market accessibility.
- \* **Efficient Resource Utilization and Allocation:** By mapping the spatial distribution of natural resources (such as minerals, fertile arable land, and water bodies), nations can optimize resource extraction, prevent environmental degradation, and plan sustainable economic expansion.
- \* **Global Trade and Supply Chain Management:** In an era of hyper-globalization, understanding trade geography helps multinational enterprises navigate international shipping routes, seaport logistics (e.g., Suez Canal, Strait of Malacca, Gwadar Port), and geopolitical trade corridors.
- \* **Formulation of Industrial Policies and Special Economic Zones (SEZs):** Governments utilize economic geography to establish targeted industrial zones, export processing zones (EPZs), and trade corridors (such as CPEC) near strategic transport hubs and raw material centers.
- \* **Regional Economic Development and Poverty Alleviation:** Commercial geography highlights regional economic disparities. Identifying underdeveloped areas allows governments to invest in infrastructure, encouraging balanced growth across rural and urban landscapes.
- \* **Mitigating Spatial and Environmental Constraints:** It enables economic planners to evaluate natural risks - such as floods, droughts, terrain ruggedness, and climate change - and devise resilient supply chain frameworks.

**Question 2: Describe the location of Pakistan, write the names of its major physical regions, and explain the northern mountainous region.**

## Answer

### 1. Geographical and Strategic Location of Pakistan

Pakistan occupies a pivotal geographic position in South Asia, acting as a natural bridge between South Asia, Central Asia, the Middle East, and Western China. Geographically, Pakistan extends between latitudes 23.5 N to 37 N and longitudes 61 E to 75.5 E, covering a total area of approximately 881,913 square kilometers.

- \* **China (North-East):** Shares a ~592 km border through the Karakoram Pass, connecting Pakistan to Western China via the Khunjerab Pass (CPEC Gateway).
- \* **Afghanistan (North-West & West):** Shares a ~2,670 km border (Durand Line), serving as Central Asia's transit route to the ocean.
- \* **Iran (South-West):** Shares a ~909 km border, providing energy connectivity and overland trade opportunities.
- \* **India (East):** Shares a ~2,912 km border extending from Kashmir to the Arabian Sea.
- \* **Arabian Sea (South):** Provides a ~1,046 km coastline with deep-sea ports (Karachi, Port Qasim, Gwadar) opening into vital international maritime trade corridors.

### 2. Major Physical Regions of Pakistan

Pakistan's diverse topography is classified into five primary physical regions:

- \* **1. The Northern and Western Mountains:** Comprising the towering mountain systems of the Himalayas, Karakorams, and Hindu Kush in the north, and Safed Koh, Sulaiman, and Kirthar ranges in the west.
- \* **2. The Western Plateaus:** Including the resource-rich Balochistan Plateau and the dissected Potohar Plateau.
- \* **3. The Indus Plains:** Divided into the fertile Upper Indus Plain (Punjab) and Lower Indus Plain (Sindh), along with the active Indus Delta.
- \* **4. The Desert Regions:** Encompassing the Thar Desert (Sindh), Cholistan and Thal Deserts (Punjab), and Kharan Desert (Balochistan).

\* **5. The Coastal Belt:** Stretching along the Arabian Sea, divided into the Sindh Coast and the Makran Coast.

### 3. Detailed Analysis of the Northern Mountainous Region

The Northern Mountainous Region of Pakistan represents one of the world's most formidable alpine ecosystems, where three of the world's greatest mountain ranges - the Himalayas, Karakorams, and Hindu Kush - converge.

\* **The Karakoram Range:** Located in Gilgit-Baltistan along the Chinese border. Home to K2 (Godwin-Austen, 8,611m) - the world's 2nd highest peak - and massive glaciers including Siachen (76 km), Biafo, Baltoro, and Batura.

\* **The Himalayan Range:** Extending south of Karakoram, divided into the Sub-Himalayas (Siwalik), Lesser Himalayas, and Great Himalayas. Nanga Parbat (8,126m), known as the 'Killer Mountain', marks its western anchor.

\* **The Hindu Kush Range:** Extending westward into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Afghanistan. Its highest peak in Pakistan is Tirich Mir (7,708m) in Chitral.

\* **Economic & Strategic Significance:** Functions as Pakistan's primary freshwater reservoir (headwaters of the Indus River system), major eco-tourism hub (Hunza, Skardu, Swat), climate barrier against cold Central Asian winds, and critical CPEC transport corridor.

### Question 3: Define Human economic activity and describe its classification.

## Answer

### 1. Definition of Human Economic Activity

Human economic activity encompasses all purposeful actions undertaken by individuals, households, enterprises, and governments to produce, process, distribute, exchange, and consume goods and services for earning a livelihood and satisfying human wants under condition of scarce resources.

### 2. Five-Tier Classification of Economic Activities

Modern economic geography categorizes economic activities into five distinct tiers based on complexity, value addition, and spatial characteristics:

\* **1. Primary Economic Activities (Extraction):** Direct extraction, harvesting, or exploitation of natural resources from the Earth without significant processing. Examples include agriculture, livestock rearing, commercial fishing, forestry, and mining. Workers are historically termed 'red-collar' workers.

\* **2. Secondary Economic Activities (Manufacturing):** Transformation of raw materials derived from primary activities into finished or semi-finished manufactured goods through processing, refining, assembly, and construction. Examples include cotton textile spinning, steel manufacturing, cement production, and food processing ('blue-collar' workers).

\* **3. Tertiary Economic Activities (Services & Commerce):** Provision of non-material services, commercial trade, logistics, and professional facilitation to consumers and industries. Examples include transportation (road, rail, shipping), banking, insurance, retail trade, healthcare, and tourism ('pink-collar' and 'white-collar' workers).

\* **4. Quaternary Economic Activities (Information & Knowledge):** Knowledge-based activities focused on information processing, research and development (R&D), software engineering, financial consultancy, data analytics, and higher education ('white-collar' / knowledge workers).

\* **5. Quinary Economic Activities (Executive Decision-Making):** Top-tier decision-making, policy formulation, and strategic leadership in government, multinational corporations, universities, and scientific institutions. Involves high-level evaluation and visionary governance ('gold-collar' workers).

| Category  | Core Focus                | Key Examples              | Role in Development         |
|-----------|---------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Primary   | Resource Extraction       | Farming, Fishing, Mining  | Foundation of raw materials |
| Secondary | Value Addition / Industry | Textiles, Steel, Cement   | Drives industrialization    |
| Tertiary  | Service Delivery          | Transport, Banking, Trade | Facilitates commerce        |

|            |                        |                                  |                            |
|------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Quaternary | Knowledge & R&D        | Software, Analytics, Biotech     | Drives innovation & tech   |
| Quinary    | High Leadership Policy | CEOs, Ministers, Research Chiefs | Shapes strategic direction |

**Question 4: Define Economic Geography of Pakistan. Explain the major industry and economic zones of Pakistan.**

## Answer

### 1. Definition of Economic Geography of Pakistan

The Economic Geography of Pakistan is the analytical study of the spatial distribution, organizational structure, and geographical patterns of Pakistan's economic resources, agricultural production, industrial hubs, commercial trade corridors, and labor force across its provinces and administrative territories.

### 2. Major Industries in Pakistan

- \* **Textile and Garments Industry:** The backbone of Pakistan's industrial manufacturing and exports (>60% of total export earnings). Major manufacturing clusters are located in Faisalabad ('Manchester of Pakistan'), Karachi, Lahore, and Multan.
- \* **Surgical Instruments and Sports Goods:** Centered in Sialkot, this world-renowned export cluster produces high-precision surgical tools and hand-stitched match balls (e.g., FIFA World Cup balls).
- \* **Cement and Construction Industry:** Utilizes abundant limestone and gypsum reserves in the Salt Range, Margalla Hills, and Sindh. Key plants are located in Hattar, Taxila, Daud Khel, and Karachi.
- \* **Fertilizer and Chemical Industry:** Essential for agricultural productivity; relies heavily on natural gas feedstock. Major hubs in Daharki, Sheikhpura, and Rahim Yar Khan.
- \* **Automobile and Heavy Engineering:** Concentrated in Karachi (Port Qasim, Korangi) and Lahore, manufacturing motorbikes, cars, tractors, and heavy machinery.

### 3. Major Economic and Industrial Zones in Pakistan

- \* **Karachi Industrial Cluster (Sindh):** Includes S.I.T.E (Sindh Industrial Trading Estate), Korangi Industrial Area, and Port Qasim Zone. Represents Pakistan's largest industrial concentration with sea access.
- \* **Faisalabad Industrial Node (Punjab):** Houses Value Addition City and M-3 Industrial City, specializing in spinning, weaving, textile printing, and chemical processing.
- \* **Special Economic Zones (SEZs) under CPEC:**
  1. Rashakai SEZ (KPK): Focuses on trade with Afghanistan & Central Asia.
  2. Allama Iqbal Industrial City (Faisalabad): Large-scale manufacturing hub.
  3. Dhabeji SEZ (Sindh): Strategic industrial zone near Karachi seaports.
  4. Gwadar Free Zone (Balochistan): Deep-sea port trading and processing enclave.

**Question 5: What do you know about the natural resources of Pakistan? Explain the types of mineral resources in different regions of Pakistan.**

## Answer

### 1. Overview of Natural Resources in Pakistan

Pakistan is endowed with a rich array of natural resources, including vast fertile river basins, river systems, extensive mountain networks, varied climatic zones, and significant mineral wealth.

### 2. Major Types and Regional Distribution of Mineral Resources

Pakistan's minerals are broadly categorized into Metallic, Non-Metallic, and Energy Minerals:

**\* A. Metallic Mineral Resources:** 1. Copper and Gold: Huge deposits at Reko Diq and Saindak in the Chagai District of Balochistan (one of the world's largest unexploited copper-gold reserves).

2. Iron Ore: Found at Kalabagh (Punjab), Chiniot, and Kirana Hills, as well as Dilband (Balochistan).

3. Chromite: Located at Muslim Bagh (Zhob District, Balochistan), Malakand, and Kohistan.

**\* B. Non-Metallic Mineral Resources:** 1. Rock Salt: World's 2nd largest rock salt deposit at Khewra Salt Mine (Salt Range, Jhelum), plus Kalabagh and Warcha.

2. Gypsum: Abundant reserves in Salt Range, Kohat, Mianwali, and D.G. Khan; vital for cement and soil treatment.

3. Marble and Granite: Premium quality white and colored marble in Mohmand, Swat, Khyber District, and Chagai (Balochistan).

4. Limestone: Extensively quarried in Margalla Hills, Salt Range, and Hyderabad for cement production.

**\* C. Energy / Fossil Fuel Minerals:** 1. Coal: Massive lignite coalfields at Thar (Sindh) with over 175 billion tons of reserves, plus Salt Range and Lakhra coal mines.

2. Natural Gas: Major fields at Sui (Balochistan), Mari, Badin, and Qadirpur.

3. Crude Oil: Extracted primarily from the Potohar Plateau (Tutu, Meyal, Balkassar) and Lower Sindh (Badin, Hyderabad).