PRÉCIS AND DRAFTING

Full Marks : 100

Time : 3 hours

The figures in the margin indicate full marks for the questions

1. Give a précis of the following passage and add a suitable title to it : 45+5=50

Mining companies are dumping more than 180 million tonnes of hazardous mine waste each year into rivers, lakes and oceans worldwide, threating vital bodies of water with toxic heavy metals and other chemicals poisonous to human beings and wildlife. The amount of mine waste dumped annually is 1–5 times as much as all the municipal waste dumped in US landfills in 2009.

Mine processing wastes, also known as tailings, can contain as many as three dozen dangerous chemicals including arsenic, lead, mercury and processing chemicals such as petroleum bi-products, acids and cyanide. Waste rock, the extra rock

that does not contain significant amount of ore, can also generate acid and toxic contamination. The dumping of mine tailings and waste rock pollute waters around the world, threating the drinking water, food supply and health of communities as well as aquatic life and ecosystems.

In a world, where climate change, ocean acidifications, overfishing and recurring tragedies like the Gulf of Mexico oil spill are already disrupting water and food supplies, polluting the world's waters with mine tailings is unconscionable and the damage it causes is largely irreversible. No feasible technology exists to remove and treat mine tailings from oceans.

There is but one workable solution : Mining companies must stop dumping into natural bodies of water. In some cases, safer waste management options exist : putting dry waste in lined and covered landfills (a process called dry stocking) and putting tailings back into the pits and tunnels the ore came from (called backfilling). In other cases, even land-based tailings disposal is too risky. Some places, where companies want to dump tailings are simply inappropriate for mining and should be no

dumping zones. The protection of such areas must be coupled with more efficient use of metal and support for sustainable development and livelihoods that do not endanger communities' health and safety.

A number of nations have adopted prohibitions or restrictions on dumping mine tailings in natural bodies of water. Nations with some restrictions on dumping including the United States, Canada and Australia—are home to major mining companies that use practices internationally that they wouldn't be allowed to use at home. Even these national regulations, however, are being eroded by amendments, exemptions and loopholes that have allowed destructive dumping in lakes and streams.

Non-governmental initiatives to promote responsible mining by corporations can play an important role in helping close regulatory loopholes. Civil society organizations working to encourage more responsible mining are calling on mining companies to end water-based tailings dumping. In turn, the mining industry as a whole must share our collective responsibility to protect water and aquatic ecosystems by pledging not to dump mine wastes in Earth's most precious resource : water.

(Turn Over)