

UPSC Syllabus Topic GS paper3- environment- climate change.

Climate Change induced Temperature Rise – IMD's 2023 report is a wake-up call

India faced significant climate challenges in 2023, showcasing concerning trends that impacted various sectors and the population at large. The India Meteorological Department's retrospective painted a grim picture:

Temperature Surge: 2023 ranked as the second warmest year since 1901, with temperatures averaging 0.65°C above the long-term mean.

Heavy Rainfall: December 2023 witnessed a staggering 60% excess rainfall, notably wet across most regions except the north and Northeast.

Tropical Turmoil: Six tropical storms hit the Indian Ocean, a marked increase, with three intensifying into severe cyclonic storms, signifying a surge in extreme weather events.

El Nino Influence: Unusual weather patterns, partly attributed to El Nino, highlighted the broader impact of climate change, elevating global temperatures.

The consequences of climate change on India are projected to be severe:

Economic Impact: Reports foresee a potential 2% GDP loss by 2050, with half the population facing lowered living standards. Key sectors like agriculture and construction could suffer reduced productivity due to rising heat stress.

Employment Concerns: The World Bank predicts a staggering 40% of global job losses by 2030 due to declining productivity caused by heat stress, impacting India significantly.

Impact on Vulnerable Populations: The poorest sections face the brunt, evident in soaring prices of essential commodities like tomatoes, onions, potatoes, chili, and cumin, disrupted by erratic weather patterns affecting production.

Addressing these challenges requires concerted efforts:

Carbon Intensity Reduction: Speeding up strategies to cut carbon intensity in GDP by 2030 is imperative due to escalating climate challenges.

Funding Allocation: Adequate funds need allocation for both mitigating and adapting to climate impacts, ensuring preparedness and resilience.

Renewable Energy Focus: Prioritizing renewable energy sources over thermal power is crucial to meet 2030 targets and diminish dependency on coal, contributing to mitigating climate change effects.

Tackling these issues demands swift and comprehensive action, integrating policy, investment, and public engagement to safeguard against escalating climate threats.

UPSC Syllabus Topic : GS paper3 – Indian Economy – Effects of liberalization on the economy.

Shift in India's Trade Policy – Reverse India's trend of trade barriers going up

The global trade landscape has undergone significant shifts, marked by a decline in free trade and a rise in protectionism:

Protectionist Trends: Western nations are increasingly imposing trade barriers, indicating a departure from the principles of free trade.

Challenges in International Bodies: The World Trade Organization (WTO) is grappling with enforcing global trade rules, impacting its effectiveness in facilitating fair trade practices.

Geopolitical Fragmentation: There's a visible geopolitical divide challenging the unified global trade system, with a shift toward bilateral deals over a cohesive multilateral framework.

India's trade policies have evolved due to these changes:

Tariff Adjustments: India, after initially lowering import tariffs in the 1990s, has raised them again, signaling a move towards protectionist measures.

Trade Imbalances: India's trade deficits with FTA partners like ASEAN (exceeding 300%), South Korea (160%), and Japan (138%) have amplified concerns about the imbalance between exports and imports. Exiting the RCEP in 2019 was a step to mitigate trade imbalances and reduce reliance on Eastern economies, especially China.

Shifting Focus: India has redirected its attention post-2019 towards forging free trade agreements with Western and West Asian economies, moving away from RCEP to mitigate trade imbalances and entice global value chains.

A suggested path forward for India's trade strategy involves:

Tariff Reduction: Lowering tariffs could enhance competitiveness, drawing global value chains and fostering a more open trade environment.

Addressing Trade Deficits: By better integrating into global markets and boosting domestic industries' competitiveness, India can work towards reversing the escalating trade deficits with ASEAN, South Korea, and Japan. This strategy aims to bolster exports and overall economic health.

The challenge lies in balancing protectionist measures with a global outlook, enabling India to navigate trade complexities while optimizing opportunities for growth and sustainability.