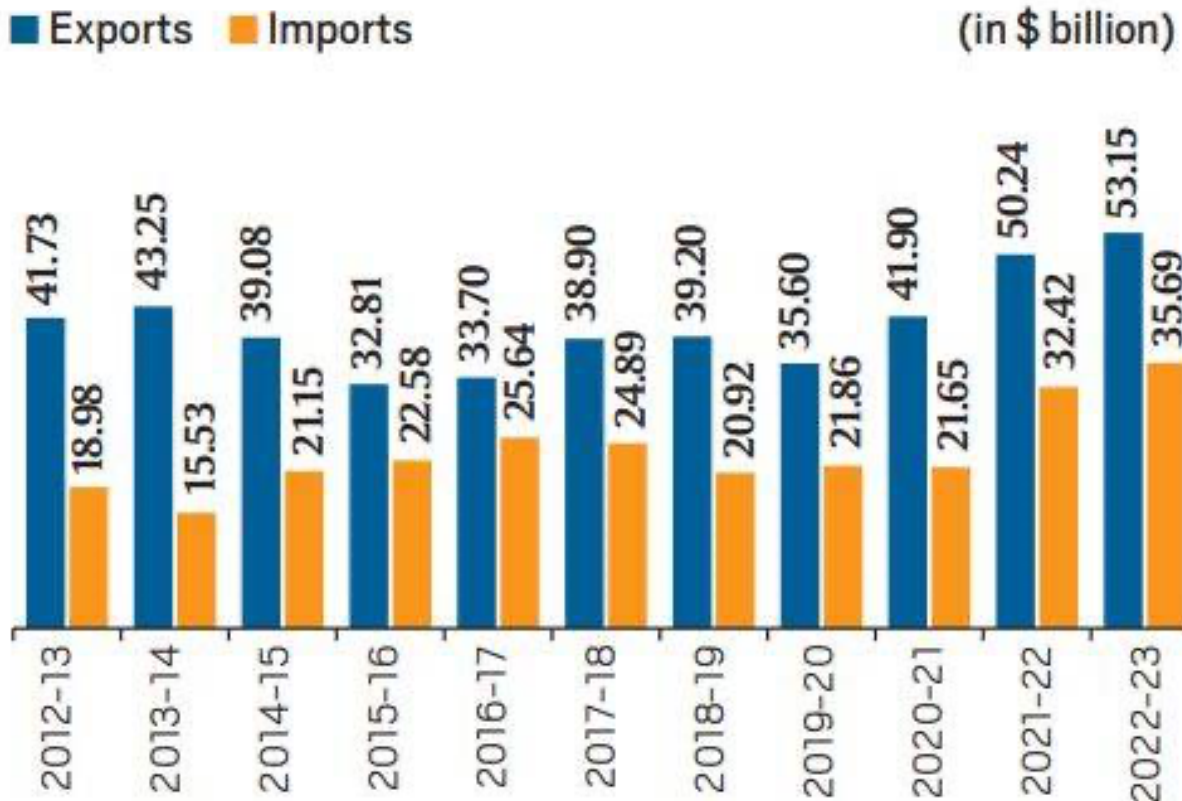


1. Indian Farm Exports

Topic: Economy

CHART

INDIA'S AGRICULTURAL TRADE



In News: Both agricultural exports from and imports into India have scaled new highs in the fiscal year that ended March 31, 2023.

More on the Topic

- Between 2013-14 and 2015-16, exports sharply fell from \$43.25 billion to \$32.81 billion. The basic driver was global prices.

India's Major export contributors:

- India's agri exports have, in recent times, been powered by three items: **Marine products, rice and sugar.**
- Marine product exports have grown steadily from 2013-14 to 2022-23.
- Rice exports have also gone up during this period.



- But it's been driven by non-basmati rice with the value of premium-priced basmati shipments actually declining.
- Basmati exports are mainly to the Persian Gulf countries and, to some extent, the US and UK.
- Non-basmati shipments are more diversified, with the destinations spread across Asia (Bangladesh, China, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Vietnam, UAE and Iraq) and Africa (from Senegal, Ivory Coast and Benin to Somalia and Madagascar).
- It's non-basmati that has made India the biggest rice exporter, ahead of Thailand.
- The boom in sugar exports has been more recent from a less quantity in 2017-18 to a higher quantity in 2022-23.
- Indian mills have built markets for both raw sugar (among refineries in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia and Iraq) and regular plantation whites (in African countries, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and China).
- The country has, in the process, emerged as the world's No. 2 exporter after Brazil.

Stagnant and Reduced Exports:

- Two items whose exports had registered substantial increases, only to falter in the last few years, are spices and buffalo meat.
- Spices exports being stagnant for since 2020 -21.
- **Raw Cotton and Oil Meals:** The drop has been even more for raw cotton, guar-gum and oil meals((a thickening agent used in extraction of shale oil and gas).
- Cultivation of genetically-modified Bt cotton and high global prices had enabled India to become the world's top producer (ahead of China) and No. 2 exporter (after the US) of the natural fibre. But with the yield gains from Bt tapering off and the regulatory regime not permitting new gene technologies, the country has turned from a net exporter to an importer of cotton.

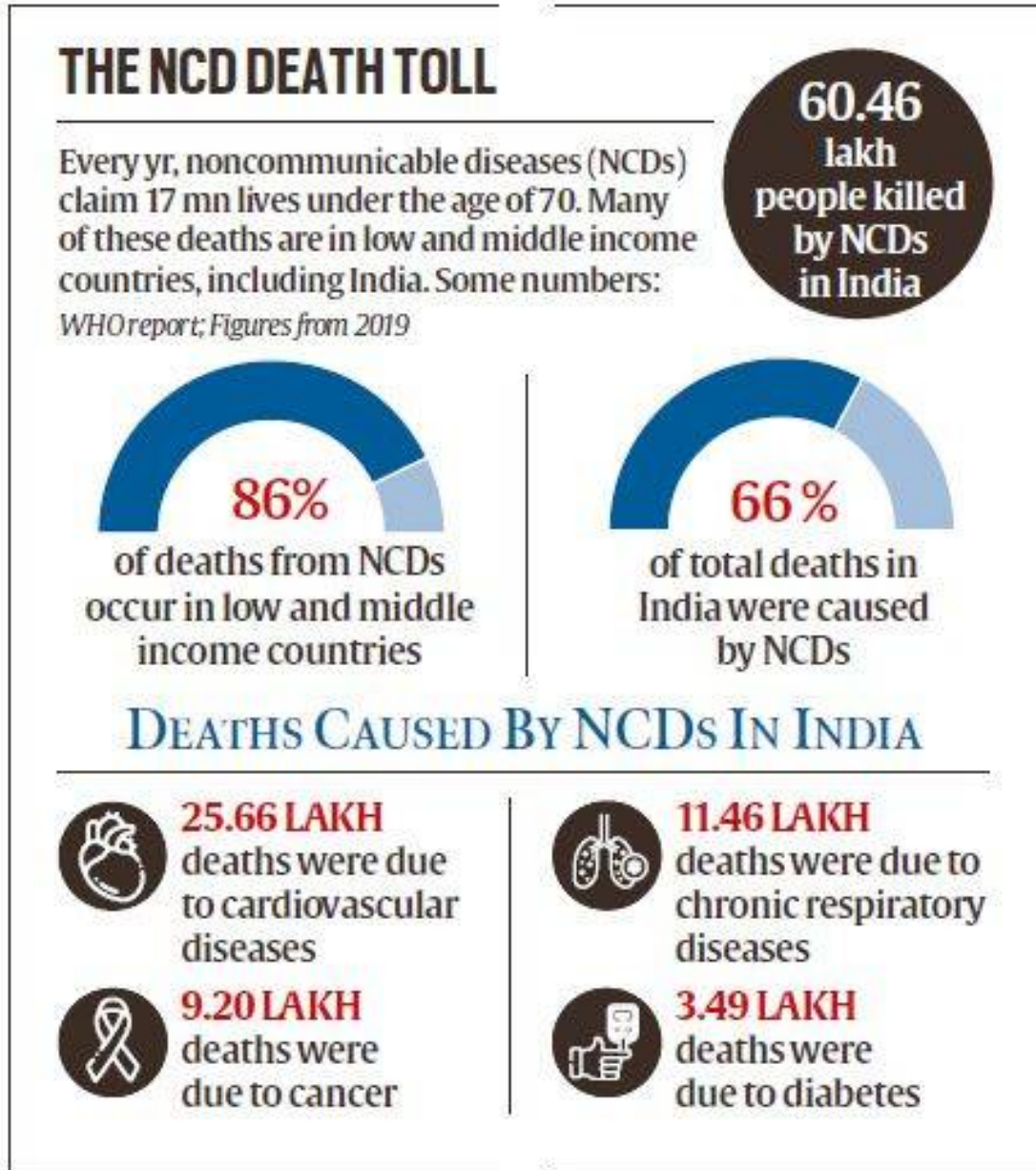
India's Agriculture Imports:

- India's imports of farm produce are dominated by a handful of items.
- The most significant is vegetable oils, whose imports have more than doubled in value terms, from 2019-20 and 2022-23.
- In quantity terms, imports have risen from 13.18 million tonnes (mt) in the 2019-20 oil year (November-October) to 14.03 mt in 2021-22.
- **Imports meet roughly 60% of India's vegetable oil requirements.**
- Import dependence is hardly 10% now in pulses, with the value of imports also coming down.
- On the other hand, **imports of spices, cashew and cotton – commodities where India has traditionally been a net exporter – have shown a rising trend.**
- Spice imports going up are a reflection of reduced price competitiveness (vis-à-vis Vietnam in pepper and Guatemala in pepper), while an outcome of stagnant, if not falling, domestic production in cotton.

Source: Indian Express

2. National Programme for Prevention & Control of Non Communicable Diseases

Topic: Government Policies



In News: The existing National Programme for Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and Stroke (NPCDCS) programme has been renamed National Programme for Prevention & Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (NP-NCD) amid widening coverage and expansion.



More on the Topic:

- The addition of many new diseases or disease-groups and new health initiatives have prompted the Central government to widen and rename its programme for control and prevention of non-communicable diseases (NCDs).
- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) has also decided to rename the portal which enables population enumeration, risk assessment, and screening for five common NCDs, including hypertension, diabetes, and oral, breast and cervical cancers of the population aged above 30 years.
- NPCDCS is being implemented under the National Health Mission (NHM) across the country.
- Under NPCDCS, **NCD Cells are being established at National, State and District levels** for programme management, and NCD Clinics are being set up at District and Community Health Centres (CHC) levels, to provide services for early diagnosis, treatment and follow-up for common NCDs.

India's NCD Burden:

- A study 'India: Health of the Nation's States - The India State-Level Disease Burden Initiative in 2017' by Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) estimated that the proportion of deaths due to NCDs in India have increased from 37.9% in 1990 to 61.8% in 2016.
- The four major NCDs are cardiovascular diseases (CVDs), cancers, chronic respiratory diseases (CRDs) and diabetes which share four behavioural risk factors – unhealthy diet, lack of physical activity, and use of tobacco and alcohol.

About Non Communicable Diseases:

- Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), also known as chronic diseases, tend to be of long duration and are the result of a combination of genetic, physiological, environmental and behavioural factors.
- The main types of NCD are cardiovascular diseases (such as heart attacks and stroke), cancers, chronic respiratory diseases (such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and asthma) and diabetes.
- NCDs disproportionately affect people in low- and middle-income countries, where more than three quarters of global NCD deaths (31.4 million) occur.

Source: PIB

3. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor

Topic: International Relations



In News: The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a part of the Belt and Road initiative, will be extended into Afghanistan.

More on the Topic:

- The move is expected to pave way for investment of billions of dollars for infrastructure projects in Afghanistan which is hit by sanctions and is facing an economic crisis.
- In Pakistan, Beijing is funding the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor — a package that includes mega projects such as road construction, power plants and agriculture. CPEC, also known as the One Road Project.



- It is part of China's Belt and Road Initiative, a global endeavour aimed at reconstituting the Silk Road and linking China to all corners of Asia.

About CPEC:

- CPEC is a 3,000-km long route of infrastructure projects connecting **China's northwest Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region and the Gwadar Port** in the western province of Balochistan in Pakistan.
- It is a **bilateral project between Pakistan and China**, intended to promote connectivity across Pakistan with a network of highways, railways, and pipelines accompanied by energy, industrial, and other infrastructure development projects.
- It is aimed to secure and **reduce the passage for China's energy imports from the Middle Eastern countries by avoiding existing route from the Straits of Malacca between Malaysia and Indonesia**, which in case of a war could be blocked and thus hampering the Chinese energy dependent economical avenues.
- In Pakistan, its aim is to overcome an electricity shortfall, infrastructural development and modernize transportation networks.

What India's Concerns Associated with China Pakistan Economic Corridor:

- India firmly and consistently opposes projects involved in CPEC, which are in Indian territory that has been illegally occupied by Pakistan.
- It passes through the **Pakistan-occupied Kashmir territory of Gilgit-Baltistan** – a claim opposed by Pakistan.
- If CPEC proves a success, will further consolidate the region's perception as internationally recognised Pakistani territory, **diminishing India's claim** over the 73,000 sq km piece of land which is home to more than 1.8 million people.
- There are possible Chinese military forces stationed in these areas.

Source: Hindu

4.Kali Tiger Reserve (KTR)

Topic: Environment and Ecology



In News: National Tiger Conservation Authority has stepped in over illegal resort in Kali Tiger Reserve.

More on the Topic:

- It is a protected area and tiger reserve.
- It is located in Uttara Kannada district, in Karnataka, India.
- The park is a habitat of Bengal tigers, black panthers and Indian elephants, amongst other distinctive fauna.
- The Kali River flows through the tiger reserve and is the lifeline of the ecosystem and hence the name.
- The tiger reserve is spread over an area of 1300 square kilometres.

National Tiger Conservation Authority:

- The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) is a **statutory body under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change**.
- It was **established in 2005** following the recommendation of the Tiger Task Force to ensure the conservation of tigers in India.



- The main objective of NTCA is **to protect and conserve the population of tigers in India** by ensuring a viable population of tigers, their prey base, and their habitat.
- The NTCA is **responsible for implementing the Project Tiger initiative**, which aims to conserve tigers and their habitat in India.
- The NTCA is also responsible for providing funds and technical support to tiger reserves in India, and for monitoring their progress in terms of conservation efforts.
- It also works to resolve human-tiger conflict issues, and to strengthen law enforcement against poaching and illegal trade of tiger parts.

Source: Indian Express

5. Transition bonds

Topic: Economy



In News: SEBI mandated additional requirements for issuance and listing of transition bonds to facilitate transparency and informed decision-making.

More on the Topic:

- Aptly named green bonds usually **provide a source of direct finance for pre-identified environmentally friendly projects.**, like solar power farms or sustainable waste management facilities. A company's total environmental profile and commitment to reducing its carbon footprint is often assessed before it is eligible for funding.



- **Blue bonds are a subset of green bonds and provide financing for projects related to ocean conservation**, for example, renewable energy infrastructure like offshore wind farms or sustainable marine and fisheries projects.
- **Sustainability-linked bonds are connected to long-term sustainability goals.** Funds from these bonds can be used for any project, provided certain sustainability improvements are met — such as reducing emissions by a set amount within a predetermined deadline.
- Transition bond is a class of debt instruments.
- **Transition bonds sit somewhere in between green and sustainability-linked bonds.** Like green bonds, the finance they provide is directed at a specific project.
- But, as with sustainability-linked bonds, the bond issuer isn't required to already be operating sustainably but is usually in the process of transitioning to lower-carbon operations — such as a fossil fuel project aiming to reduce its emissions.

Source: Business Standard

6. Bank for International Settlements (BIS)

Topic: Economy



In News: RBI and the BIS Innovation Hub have jointly announced the fourth edition of the G20 TechSprint.

More on the Topic:

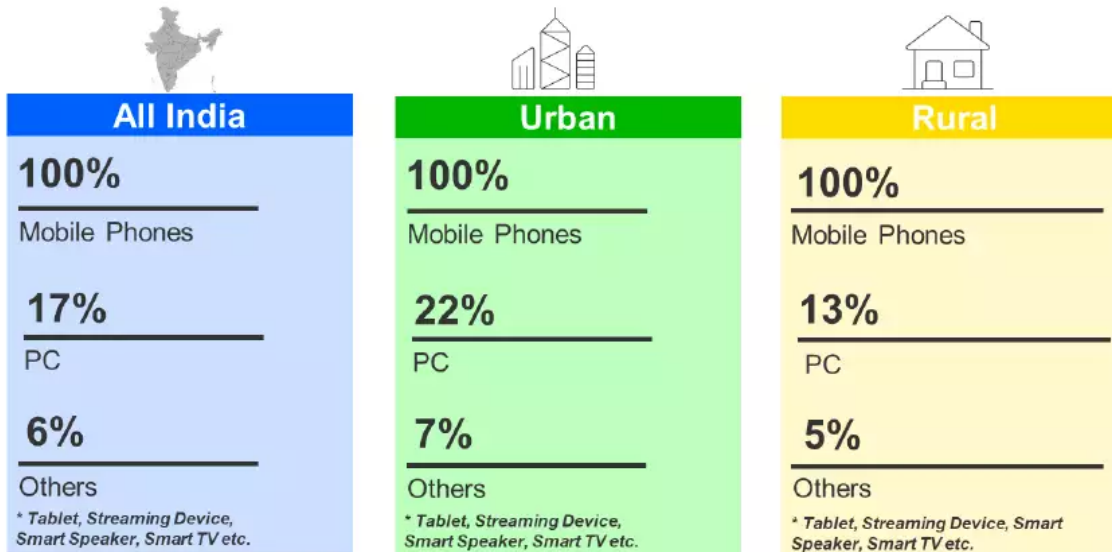
- RBI said that the 2023 TechSprint will focus on developing innovative technology solutions for cross-border payments.
- The competition is open for developers around the world.
- The Bank for International Settlements is an international financial institution owned by central banks including RBI.

- It "fosters international monetary and financial cooperation and serves as a bank for central banks".
- Its headquarter is in **Basel, Switzerland**.

Source: Business Standard

7. Internet in India Report

Topic: Reports and Indices



Base: Kantar ICUBE 2020, Active Internet Users, All India 622 Million, Urban India 323 Million, Rural India 299 Million

In News: Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) released Internet in India Report.

More on the Topic:

- The Internet in India Report 2022 showed that of the 759 million active users, 360 million belong to urban India and 399 million to rural India.
- The number of active internet users in India is expected to grow to 900 million from the current 759 million by 2025.
- Out of 759 million 'active' internet users, 399 million are from rural India. 56% of all new internet users in India will be from rural areas by 2025.
- Internet penetration in urban India is already at 71 percent.
- Bihar has the least internet penetration while Goa has the maximum.
- Mobile phones are the primary devices used to access the internet, with 100 percent of the 759 million users relying on them. However, there has been an increase in the use of other devices, rising from 8 percent in 2021 to 13 percent in 2022.

Source: Business Standard