Editorial 1: Acclimatizing to climate Risks

Context
- Winter is going to be longer in some of the northern Indian regions due to the La Nina effect and 2021 shall be the hottest year recorded as per the forecasters.
- Rising temperatures have led to an increase in climate extremity.

Facts
- According to the Council on Energy, Environment and Water 75% of districts in India, housing half the population, were vulnerable to extreme climate risks.
- India had witnessed 250 extreme climate events between 1970 and 2005, but after 2005 it recorded 310 extreme climate events due to climate change.
- The intensity of floods has increased eightfold and events such as landslides and heavy rainfall occurrence have increased by 20 times since 1970.
- The frequency of cyclone has been doubled; drought prone areas have increased on an average of 13 times in the last two decades.
- 40% of Indian districts now show a swapping trend: flood-prone areas are becoming drought-prone, and vice-versa.
- India incurred losses exceeding $100 billion between 1990 to 2019.

Building climate resilience
- At the recent Climate Ambition Summit, the UN Secretary-General discussed the importance of adaptation and resilience to mainstream climate actions and tagged 2021 as a “make it or break it” year.
- To build climate resilience India has to take necessary steps.
- Firstly, it should create an Environment and Health De-risking Mission to increase emergency preparedness, purchase critical resources and build resilient infrastructure.
- India should improve its governance systems to counter the increasing frequency and intensity of extreme climate events by democratising the local climate and weather- related data and integrating risk projections in national, sub-national and district climate disaster plans.
- For the conservation of the ecosystem, we need to restore, revive, and recreate traditional climate-resilient practices, with a special focus on indigenous communities.
India also needs a comprehensive Climate Risk Atlas to provide a risk-informed decision-making toolkit to its policymakers at the national, state, and district level.

The atlas should help in identifying, assessing and projecting chronic and acute risks at a granular level to be better prepared against extreme climate events like urban heat stress, water stress, crop loss, vector-borne diseases, and biodiversity collapse.

It should also help in climate-proofing critical infrastructure and provide resilience and adaptation capabilities to business and communities.

Further Risk financing instruments, risk retention and identification tools should be supplemented by contingency and adaptation funds such as the Green Climate Fund.

It would enhance the public finance pool and provide efficient allocation across sectors at risk by mobilising investments on critical infrastructures and resilient community actions.

The Climate Ambition Summit also called for improving adaptation financing by 50% versus its current share of 20% of the total pool of climate financing.

India should play a pivotal role in attracting private investments into climate-proofing of infrastructure by focusing on adaptation-based infrastructure investment.

Conclusion

Ignoring the climate change shall be a disaster hence this year policymakers, industry captains and common citizens must make climate-proof choices.

Climate-resilient activities must be enhanced to avoid extremity of climate and plans have to be made for dealing with such disasters to avoid last moment panic.

Source

https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/acclimatising-to-climate-risks/article33465315.ece

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Editorial 2: Do not ignore the Women farmers

Context

In India agriculture is related only to men farmers ignoring the women farmers.

The gender gap in agriculture will further widen with the new farmers act passed.

Background

Women were the first who domesticated crop plants by gathering seed while men went out for hunting.
A Common misconception

- According to the agricultural census, 73.2% of rural women are engaged in farming activities but only **12.8% own landholdings**.
- According to the India Human Development Survey reports 83% of agricultural land in the country is inherited by male members of the family and less than **2%** by **female members of the family**.
- Due to the cultural, social, and religious forces, women are denied ownership of land.
- **81% of women agricultural laborers** belong to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes, becoming the largest contributor of casual and landless laborers.
- Government has termed **women Farmers as cultivators’** or ‘agricultural laborers’ but not ‘farmers’. Excluding them from all government schemes loans for cultivation, loan waivers, crop insurance, subsidies, compensation to their families in cases they commit suicide.
- As per the Mahila Kisan Adhikaar Manch (MAKAAM) notes, women in addition to non-recognition also have **unequal access to rights over land, water, and forests**.
- There is **gendered and unequal access to input**, market, support systems such as storage facilities, transportation costs, cash for new investments or for paying off old dues or for other agricultural credit-related services.

The farm laws

- The recent **law passed shall further increase the plight of women**.
- First is the **lack of any mention of MSP** (minimum support price) that protects farmers from exploitation. It highlights how women are barely able to understand or negotiate (written) agreements with **traders / corporate entities** that shall enter into agreements with the farmers to purchase their produce.
• Farmers will have **no bargaining power** in the corporatization of agriculture, where **corporate will decide the price of products** with **no safety net or adequate redressal mechanism** for the farmers.

• This would lead to **small marginal and medium farmers** selling their land to **big agro-businesses** and **become wage laborers**.

**Conclusion**

• **Its high time government recognizes women as farmers** and **reduces the gender gap in agriculture profession** which **contributes to the largest share in employment**.

• **There is a need for comprehensive farmer policy** to resolve the **distress of farmers** and **improve the agricultural economy** and government has to **give a rethink on subsidies** it provides as it is **not causing value addition**.

**Source**