



Pakistan's Devastating Floods

For Prelims: Geographical Phenomena, Flood, Trade between India and Pakistan.

For Mains: Causes of floods, Impact on life and economy.

Why in News?

India will be extending humanitarian assistance to Pakistan to deal with the Devastating **Flood** that occurred because of Pakistan's Monster **Monsoon**.

- The climate crisis is the prime reason for the devastating scale of flooding in Pakistan, which has killed more than 1,000 people and affected 30 million.

What is the Indian Assistance to Pakistan?

- The aid will be the first time since 2014 that India will be extending aid to Pakistan on account of a natural disaster.
- In the past, India **extended assistance to Pakistan for the floods in 2010**, and for the earthquake in 2005.

How has been the Bilateral Trade between India and Pakistan?

- In 2021, Pakistan allowed the import of cotton and sugar from India, partially reversing a two-year old decision to suspend all trade with India.
- The decision to cancel trade was taken by the Pakistan government in August, 2019, days after the Indian government **amended Article 370 and reorganised Jammu and Kashmir**.
- Over the years, India has had a **trade surplus with Pakistan, with much less imports than exports** and trade has always been linked to politics.
 - India's exports to Pakistan fell around 16% to USD 1.82 billion in 2016-17 as compared to 2015-16 after relations deteriorated **in the aftermath of the Uri terror attack and the Indian Army's surgical strikes** on militant launchpads in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir in 2016.
- Despite continuing tensions, trade between the two countries **grew marginally in subsequent years**.

What caused the Severe Flood in Pakistan?

- **Extremely Wet monsoon:**
 - The current flood is a **direct result of an extremely wet monsoon season** this year.
 - The same southwest monsoon that brings the bulk of India's annual rainfall causes rain in Pakistan as well.

- The monsoon season in Pakistan, however, is **a little shorter than in India**. That is because the **rain-bearing monsoon winds take time to travel northward from India into Pakistan**.
- There's been a **400% increase in average rainfall in areas like Baluchistan and Sindh**, which led to extreme flooding.
- **Extreme Heat:**
 - In May 2022, Pakistan consistently saw temperatures **above 45 degrees Celsius (113 Fahrenheit)**.
 - Warmer air holds more moisture — about 7% more per degree Celsius (4% per degree Fahrenheit) — and that eventually comes down, in this case in torrents.
 - Instead of just swollen rivers flooding from extra rain, **Pakistan is hit with another source of flash flooding**.
 - The **extreme heat accelerates the long-term glacier melting** then water speeds down from the **Himalayas** to Pakistan in a dangerous phenomenon called glacial lake outburst floods.
- **ENSO:**
 - The **El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO)** appears to be in its La Niña phase.
 - “La Niña is behaving very strongly in some metrics and is a significant factor for enhancing monsoonal rains.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Q. The frequency of urban floods due to high intensity rainfall is increasing over the years. Discussing the reasons for urban floods, highlight the mechanisms for preparedness to reduce the risk during such events. **(2016)**

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