

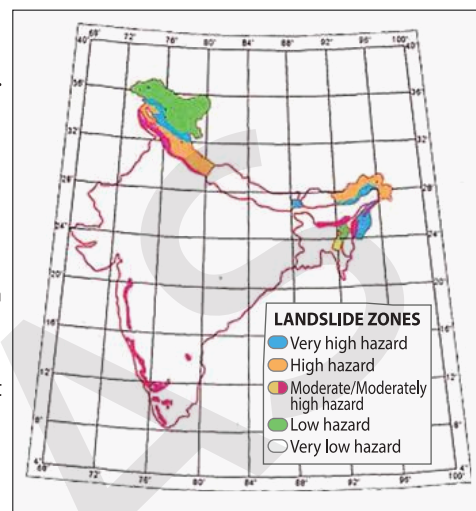
NEWS TODAY

LANDSLIDE IN PETTIMUDI HILLS IN IDUKKI DISTRICT, KERALA

- Landslides are defined as the **mass movement of rock, debris or earth** down a slope.
- **Factors:**
 - > **Natural:** Prolonged spell of rainfall, Steep slopes, Highly weathered rock layers, Seismic activity etc.
 - > **Man-made:** Deforestation leading to soil erosion, Mining and quarrying, Land use pattern etc.
- According to Geological Survey of India, over **12% of India's land area** is susceptible to landslides.
 - > It affects especially Himalayas (tectonically active), North Eastern hill ranges, Western Ghats, Nilgiris, Eastern Ghats and Vindhyas, in that order.
- **Impact:** It causes havoc to the settlements downstream, economy, life, property etc.

NDMA Guidelines on Management of Landslides:

- **Landslide Hazard Zonation:** It covers aspects of reliability and validation of landslide zoning maps in Indian scenario and proposes future plan of activities for landslide zoning.
- Landslide **Monitoring and Early Warning System**
- Setting up of **institutional mechanisms for generating awareness** and preparedness about landslide hazard
- **Construction of retention wall** to stop land from slipping
- **Increase in the vegetation cover** is an effective way to arrest landslide.
- **Establishment of an autonomous national Centre** for landslide research, studies and management

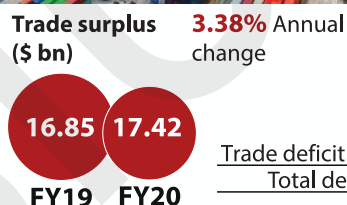


INDIA HAS TRADE DEFICIT WITH 9 OF TOP 10 COMMERCE PARTNERS

- Amid **plans to boost domestic manufacturing** and drastically **cut down on incoming goods**, data shows that India continues to import more from almost all major trade partners than it exports. (see infographic)
- > However, India has maintained a **surplus of more than \$17 billion with US**, its largest trading partner.
- **Reasons for trade deficit:** With Saudi Arabia and Iraq, rising oil Import; with UAE tighter norms for diamond trading after successive scams in the sector, slipping market share for Indian apparels and lower export of refined petroleum; lack of diversity in India's trade relations etc.

Recent steps taken to boost exports/reduce import dependency

- To boost credit to export sectors, **RBI has enhanced sanctioned limit** under priority lending norms.
- Aatmanirbhar Bharat to provide across sector reforms
- Government has **announced Nirvik (Niryat Rin Vikas Yojana) scheme** to provide enhanced insurance cover and reduce premium for small exporters.
- **Increase in tariff on goods coming from China** to cut down on non-essential imports.



SHIFTING THE BALANCE

Importing more from	Trade deficit in FY19 (\$Billion)	Trade deficit in FY20 (\$Billion)	Annual change (%)
China	53.56	48.65	-9.16
UAE	0.34	1.40	311.00
Saudi Arabia	22.91	20.62	-9.99
Hong Kong	4.98	5.96	19.67
Iraq	20.58	21.86	6.21
Singapore	4.70	5.82	23.82
Germany	6.25	5.06	-19.04
South Korea	12.05	10.81	-10.29
Indonesia	10.57	10.93	3.40
Trade deficit with above nations	118.40	113.70	-3.97
Total deficit with all nations	184.00	160.77	-12.63

Source: Commerce Department

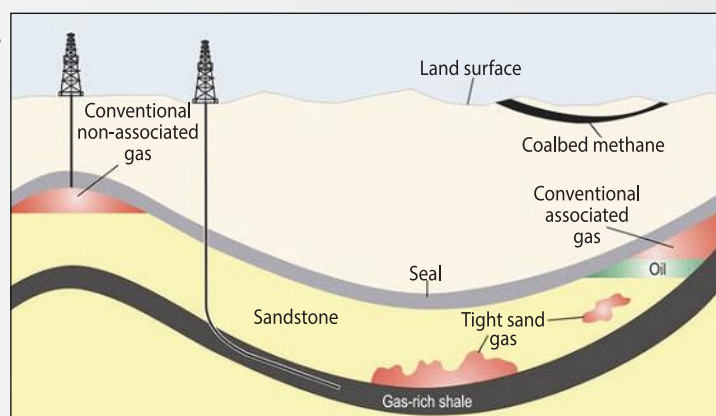
LACK OF UNIFORMITY IN CLEARANCE OF PROPOSALS HURTING SHALE EXPLORERS

- A shale gas exploration plan, by Great Eastern Energy Corporation Limited (GEECL), has been rejected by Environment Ministry citing **that production of Coal Bed Methane (CBM) and shale gas drilling are technologically different activities**. Earlier a similar proposal had been accepted by the ministry.
- Also in 2018, government approved **Policy Framework for exploration and exploitation of Unconventional Hydrocarbons** such as Shale gas, CBM etc.
 - > This policy made a **shift from 'One hydrocarbon Resource Type' to 'Uniform Licensing Policy'** which is presently applicable in Hydrocarbon Exploration & Licensing Policy (HELP) and Discovered Small Field (DSF) Policy.
- This lack of uniformity is hurting the investments in shale gas exploration.

About Shale gas

- Shale gas refers to **natural gas that is trapped within shale formations** i.e. fine-grained sedimentary rocks that can be rich sources of petroleum and natural gas.
 - > While CBM is a form of **natural gas that is trapped in the carbon structure of coal seams**.
- Over the past decade, a combination of **horizontal drilling** and **hydraulic fracturing** has allowed access to **large volumes of shale gas** that were previously uneconomical to produce.

Reserves are identified in Cambay, Krishna – Godavari basin, Cauvery, Gondwana basin, Upper Assam, Indo-Gangetic basin.











DELHI GOVERNMENT LAUNCHED AN ELECTRIC VEHICLE (EV) POLICY

- It aims to boost city's economy, reduce pollution levels and generate employment in the transport sector.
- It offers financial incentives for buying EVs. Also, a state EV fund to bear all expenses related to the policy will be set up along with an EV board.

Promotion of EV in India

- > **Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid & Electric Vehicles in India (FAME India) Scheme** by Department of Heavy Industry. Presently, Phase-II of FAME India is being implemented.
- > **GST on EVs has been reduced** from 12% rate to 5%.
- > **Exemption to Battery Operated Transport Vehicles and Transport Vehicles running on Ethanol and Methanol fuels from requirements of permit.**
- > Budget 2019-20 announced provision of additional income tax deduction of Rs 1.5 lakh on the interest paid on loans taken to purchase EV.
- > Ministry of Power has allowed **sale of electricity as 'service' for charging of electric vehicles** which would provide a huge incentive to attract investments into charging infrastructure.

ELECTRIC CARS INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES	
ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
CHEAPER MAINTENANCE 	PRICED HIGHER 
REDUCED EMISSIONS 	NOT ENOUGH CHARGING STATIONS 
REDUCED NOISE 	RECHARGING TAKES LONG 
SAFER TO DRIVE 	SHORT TRAVELING DISTANCE 

NEW EDUCATION POLICY REFLECTS IDEAS OF RABINDRANATH TAGORE ON EDUCATION: PM

- Rabindranath Tagore was a humanist and he wanted to uplift human values and cultures through proper education curriculum.
- **Tagore's view on Education**
 - > Three cardinal principles of his educational philosophy are **Freedom, creative self-expression and active communication with nature and man.**
 - > **Childhood ought to be a time of self-learning**, outside the rigid and restricting discipline of the schooling system set up by the British.
 - > **Teachers had to be imaginative**, understand the child, and help the child develop her curiosity.
 - > **Education should help develop sensitivity** in a student by directly experiencing nature.
 - » Curriculum should revolve organically around nature with classes held in open air, under trees, to provide for a spontaneous atmosphere.
 - > In his vision of education moral man is placed above the commercial man, but **education that promotes economic success and benefits is not devalued.**
 - > Education is that social process by which **man attains physical progress and spiritual wholeness**
- **Difference of Opinion with Gandhiji:** Gandhiji was highly critical of Western civilisation and its worship of machines and technology. Tagore wanted to combine elements of modern Western civilisation with best within Indian tradition.

ALSO IN NEWS

PM Awas Yojana (Urban) - PMAY(U)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recently, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs approved the construction of around 10.28 lakh houses under the PMAY(U) taking the total number of houses sanctioned so far under the scheme to 1.06 crore. • PMAY(U) was launched in 2015 which intends to provide housing for all in urban areas by year 2022. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > It provides Central Assistance to the implementing agencies through States/UT for providing houses to all eligible families/ beneficiaries against the validated demand for houses for about 1.12 cr.
SEZ-based solar manufacturers oppose basic customs duty (BCD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solar equipment makers have pointed out that local solar factories in SEZs will have to shut down if the government levies a BCD on the import of solar cells and modules without providing a level-playing field to these manufacturing units. • If the BCD is imposed, those in the domestic tariff area who buy cells and modules from the SEZ units will have to pay the duty under the 2005 SEZ Act. • BCD is a type of duty or tax imposed under the Customs Act, 1962. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > It varies for different items and the Central government has the power to reduce or exempt any goods from the charges.
Leopard poaching in India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A recent study by TRAFFIC India revealed that of the total of 747 leopard deaths between 2015-2019 in India, 596 were linked to illegal wildlife trade and poaching. • Highest poaching incidents were reported from Uttarakhand and Maharashtra. • Threat: increasing habitat destruction, human-wildlife conflict and illegal trade. • IUCN conservation status: Vulnerable • TRAFFIC is a leading NGO working globally on trade in wild animals and plants in the context of both biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.
Kavkaz 2020 (Caucasus-2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is the Russian strategic command and staff exercise. India will take part in the Russian Kavkaz 2020 next month. • The invitees for the exercise also include China and Pakistan apart from other member-states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).
6th National Handloom Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is celebrated on August 7 every year since 2015. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > It marked Swadeshi movement which was started on this date in the year 1905. • On this occasion, Union Minister of Textiles launched <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > the Mobile App & Backend Website for Handloom Mark Scheme (HLM). The Handloom Mark is being promoted to provide collective identity to the authentic handloom products. > "My Handloom" portal for individual weavers as well as other organizations for applying for various benefits under the various handloom schemes like Block Level Clusters.

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