Lancet Countdown Report 2023

Why in news?

A new report by the Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change warns of the severe health consequences of climate change in India.

Lancet Countdown Report
• The Lancet Countdown is global research collaboration that tracks the relationship between ***public health and climate change.***
• **2023 report**- It tracks the relationship between health and climate change across 5 key domains and 47 indicators.
• It warns that from 2018 to 2022, average summer temperature increased by 0.5°C compared to the 1986-2005 baseline average, with severe implications for public health.
• The report highlights the grave and mounting threat to health of further delayed action on climate change.
• It also emphasizes that COP28 could help deliver through commitments and action to accelerate a just transition.

What are the key highlights of the report?

- **Rise in temperature**- It poses a significant threat to lives, health and wellbeing, leading to an increased risk of death and heat-related diseases.
- **Vulnerable group at risk**- Due to elevated temperature older individuals, socio economically deprived communities, very young children, pregnant women and those with underlying health issues are particularly at risk.
- **Impact on health-**

Category	2013-22 vs 1986-2005 timeline
Children under age 1	43% increase in heatwave days
Adult over age 65	216% increase in heatwave days

- **Economic fallout**- Agricultural workers face the brunt experiencing 64% of potential hours lost and 55% of potential income loss.

  In 2022, India lost 191 billion labour hours due to heat, which was 54% more than in 1991-2000.

- **Urgent call for action**- The report stresses the critical need for immediate action, emphasizing the urgency of strengthening local health systems, adapting to climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Air pollution**- The report addresses the health impact of air pollution, attributing increasing deaths to small particulate matter (PM2.5) generate from human activities.
- **Energy transition**- Transition to renewable energy is identified as a crucial step to mitigate air pollution, reduce greenhouse gas emission and promote universal, affordable and clean energy.
- **Drought** - India's vulnerability to extreme weather events including drought is outlined impacting crop yields, livestock and food security.
- **Spread of diseases-** The suitability for the spread of infectious diseases like malaria,

dengue has increased due to climate change.

- **Local engagement**- The report emphasized the importance of locally relevant data and research to inform policies and enable government to take a leading role in championing health centered climate action.
- **Global collaboration-** The report gives a call for global collaboration to address the urgent challenges posed by the climate change.

To know about the unhealthy urban India click here

What lies ahead?

- *Climate negotiations* must drive a rapid and sustained shift away from fossil fuels, accelerate mitigation, and increase support for health adaptation.
- The *coordinated action* of health professionals, policy makers, corporations, and financial institutions is the need of the hour to ensure a thriving future.
- *Health-centred urban redesign* can promote safe active travel, reduce building and transport-based air pollution and GHG emissions, and increase resilience to climate hazards

References

1. TOI- India faces escalating health crisis
2. Lancet- Countdown on health and climate change report

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