Silk Self Reliance

Why in news?

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The recent Union Budget announcement of a rise in customs duty on import of raw silk from five per cent to 15 per cent has brought cheer to silk farmers in the southern states.

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How will the rise in customs duty benefit the domestic industry?

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- It will directly benefit farmers and reelers, as this will stabilise the price of cocoons and raw silk in the domestic market.
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- Second, our imports will get reduced and, thereby, it will be an encouragement and inspiration for local rearers to go for import substitutes and buy bivoltine silk.
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- It will also boost production-gradable silk in the domestic market, as the increase in duty will bring down the dependence on imported raw silk.
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- The rise in import duty will also encourage farmers to take up sericulture on a larger scale and contribute towards quality raw silk production and attaining self-sustenance.
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- In total, we are aiming to eliminate imports by 2022.
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What is the present demand for silk and the domestic production?

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- About 5,700 tonnes, particularly bivoltine mulberry silk of international quality, mainly from China.
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- India is the largest consumer of raw silk in the world.
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- Consumption was 28,733 tonnes in 2011-12, while our production was 23,060 tonnes.
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- Of this, mulberry silk output aggregated 18,272 tonnes (79.2 %). The remaining 4,788 tonnes (20.8 %) was Vanya silk.
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- The balance of the requirement was met through imports.
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What is the Central Silk Board doing to bridge the gap between demand and supply?

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We have set a target of producing 32,000 tonnes of raw silk, an increase of 39% over the current production during the 12th Five Year Plan.

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The government has planned to encourage silk farmers through various programmes - Cluster Promotion Programme, Catalytic Development Programme, Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana and others.

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Source: Business Standard

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