

Current Affairs: 14.01.2022

India's forest & tree cover rose by 2,261 sq km in last 2 years: ISFR Report

Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav launched the 17th edition of the biennial 'India State of Forest Report (ISFR)' 2021 on January 13, 2022.

ISFR is released by the Forest Survey of India (FSI), every two years since 1987 to assess the country's forest resources.

Some of the key findings of the ISFR 2021:

- India's forest and tree cover rose by 2,261 square kilometers in ISFR 2021 as compared to the assessment of 2019.
- This includes an increase of 1,540 square kilometres in forest cover and 721 sq km increase in tree cover.
- The forest and tree cover in India is now 8,09,537 sq kms. Total forest cover is 7,13,789 sq kms, (21.71 percent of the geographical area) and tree cover is 95,748 sq kms (2.91 percent of the geographical area).
- The total forest and tree cover in the country is now spread across 80.9 million hectares, or 24.62% of the geographical area of the country.
- The top five states in terms of increase in forest cover are Andhra Pradesh (647 sq km), Telangana (632 sq km), Odisha (537 sq km), Karnataka (155 sq km) and Jharkhand (110 sq km).
- Area-wise, Madhya Pradesh has the largest forest cover in the country followed by Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Maharashtra.
- The top five States in terms of forest cover as percentage of total geographical area are Mizoram (84.53%), Arunachal Pradesh (79.33%), Meghalaya (76.00%), Manipur (74.34%) and Nagaland (73.90%).
- The mangrove cover in the country recorded an increase of 17 sq km as compared to the assessment of 2019. Total mangrove cover in the country now covers 4,992 sq km.
- Top three States in terms of increase in mangrove cover are Odisha (8 sq km), Maharashtra (4 sq km) and Karnataka (3 sq km) respectively.
- The total carbon stock in forest is estimated to be 7,204 million tonnes.
- This includes an increase of 79.4 million tonnes in the carbon stock of the country in 2021 as compared to 2019.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurates 11 new medical colleges in Tamil Nadu

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated 11 new government medical colleges and a new campus of the Central Institute of Classical Tamil (CICT) in Tamil Nadu on January 12, 2022 via video conferencing. The 11 new medical colleges have been established at an estimated cost of about Rs 4,080 crore. This includes around Rs 2,145 crore contribution by the Union government and rest by the Tamil Nadu government. The new Medical Colleges are built at Virudhunagar, Namakkal, The Nilgiris, Tiruppur, Thiruvallur, Nagapattinam, Dindigul, Kallakurichi, Ariyalur, Ramanathapuram and Krishnagiri. The new campus of Central Institute of Classical Tamil (CICT) with state-of-the-art infrastructure was inaugurated at Perumbakkam near Chennai. It has been constructed at a cost of Rs. 24 crore.

India's first heli-hub to be set up in Gurugram, Haryana

India's first heli-hub with all aviation facilities is proposed to be built at Gurugram in Haryana. This was announced by Haryana Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala.

The first of its kind heli-hub will have all facilities at one place for helicopters, such as heliport, hangars, maintenance of air taxis and chartered helicopters.



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The main purpose of this heli-hub is to put in place the landing and take-off points for various helicopter services for the national capital.

Kochi becomes country's first city to get water metro project

Kochi has become India's first city to have a water metro project, after the first in a series of battery-powered electric boats was launched in the city recently.

The new project will be operated by the Kochi Metro Rail Ltd.

The project will have an integrated water transport system with 15 identified routes and a fleet of 78 fast, electrically propelled hybrid ferries plying to 38 jetties.

It will connect 10 islands along the identified network of routes that span 76 km.

Adani Group inks MoU with South Korea's largest steelmaker POSCO to develop steel mill in Gujarat

Industrialist Gautam Adani-led Adani Group and South Korea's largest steelmaker POSCO have signed a non-binding memorandum of understanding (MoU) to explore business opportunities in India.

This includes establishment of a green, environment-friendly integrated steel mill at Mundra, Gujarat.

The estimated investment of the project is up to \$5 billion (approx. Rs 37,000 crore).

The non-binding MoU also intends to collaborate at the group business level in various other sectors such as renewable energy, hydrogen, and logistics in response to carbon reduction requirements.

UN projects India GDP at 6.5% in FY22 and 5.9% in FY23

The GDP growth forecast of India in fiscal FY2022 is estimated to grow at 6.5 percent as per the United Nations World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) 2022 report. Earlier this was estimated at 8.4%.

The WESP is a flagship report produced by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA).

UN has projected the growth rate for the fiscal 2023 (FY 2022-2023) at 5.9 percent.

On a calendar year basis UN has projected India's GDP as follows:

2021 – 9 percent

2022 – 6.7 percent

2023 – 6.1 percent

Globally, the economy is projected to grow at:

2021 – 5.5 percent

2022 – 4.0 percent

2023 – 3.5 percent

RBI approves appointment of Ittira Davis as MD & CEO of Ujjivan SFB

The Reserve Bank of India has approved the appointment of Ittira Davis as managing director & chief executive officer of (MD & CEO) of Ujjivan Small Finance Bank for a period of one year.

Davis will take charge of the extended tenure from January 14, 2022.

The post had been lying vacant since three-month following the sudden exit of incumbent Nitin Chugh.

Rocket scientist S Somanath appointed as new ISRO Chief to replace K Sivan

Senior rocket scientist S. Somanath has been appointed as the new Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Secretary, Department of Space.

Dr. Somanath replaces K. Sivan as ISRO Chief.

He shall take over the charge from January 15, 2022 for a tenure of three years.

Before this he was serving as the Director of the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) in Trivandrum, Kerala.

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“Indomitable: A Working Woman’s Notes on Work, Life and Leadership” by Arundhati Bhattacharya



Arundhati Bhattacharya, the former chair of the State Bank of India (SBI), has come out with her new book titled “Indomitable: A Working Woman’s Notes on Work, Life and Leadership”.

In this book, Arundhati narrates her life as a banker and the challenges she faced in a male-dominated industry.

She talks about her childhood, early education, college education and then her career into the State Bank of India(SBI).

The book has been published by Harper Business.

Armed Forces Veterans Day: 14 January

In India, the Armed Forces Veterans Day is observed each year on 14 January since 2017.

The day aims to acknowledge and honour the selfless devotion and sacrifice of our veterans in the service of the nation.

It is observed as a mark of respect and recognition of the services rendered by Field Marshal KM Cariappa OBE, the first Indian Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Armed Forces who retired on 14 January 1953.

2022 marks the 6th Armed Forces Veterans Day.