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Wildlife

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Correspondent

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It is to be mentioned that every country of the world has been trying to create awareness among the natural lovers to protect, preserve and to conserve the forest wealth, flora and

fauna. But it is matter of grave concern that the rhinos of Kaziranga National Park have been facing great trouble. The poaching in KNP is increasing extensively.

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The forest department concerned should keep a vigilant eye on the poachers who have been using modern weapons to kill rhinos and they have links with international and poachers and have made a network.

The conscious people of Golaghat, Nowgong and several nature organisations such as SEENE, NEAT, Bonojatshna' have been adopting various activities against poaching and timber smuggling.

The Kaziranga National Park authority, forest department of Golaghat and Nowgong should work jointly with full cooperation of the neighbouring village people against the killing of rhinos and other illegal acts of the poachers and other destructive forces, people feel.

<http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=oct2311/state05>

Climate Change

Small is beautiful

Test by Public Eye on 10/21/11

...but it can also be fragile

By Kevin Rudd

As a neighbour to many small island developing states, Australia knows well their vulnerability to climate change. The very existence of countries like Kiribati, the Maldives and the Marshall Islands could be threatened by rising sea levels and more extreme storm surges resulting from global warming.

Yet these and other small developing states are the least responsible for climate change. Small developing states together account for less than one percent of global emissions, and produce an average of 3.3 metric tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions per capita compared to the world average of 4.6 tonnes.

Many small island and coastal states depend on the oceans for their food and livelihoods. Yet marine ecosystems and coral reefs worldwide are in decline due to overfishing and other destructive fishing practices. Ocean acidification and the impacts of climate change also threaten the long term survival of marine species.

Small developing states are especially exposed to natural disasters such as hurricanes, cyclones and droughts, some so severe that entire populations and economies are affected. The tsunami that hit Samoa in 2009 cost that country 22 per cent of its annual GDP.

The international community, over the next several months, has a chance to change the course of sustainable development.

The United Nations Climate Change Conference in Durban at the end of this year provides another opportunity to take concrete steps toward a global climate regime which includes legally binding mitigation commitments by all major emitters.

The international community will meet again just six months later in Rio de Janeiro for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, also known as the Rio+20 Summit. The Rio+20 Summit presents a further opportunity for the international community to set the world on a more sustainable course and to decide on practical outcomes that integrate the three pillars of sustainable development – the economic, social and environmental.

It is important that the global community makes the most of these opportunities.

The world's population is projected to reach 9 billion by 2050. Coupled with current economic trends, this could bring with it a tripling in consumption of basic natural resources.

Carbon emissions in 2010 were the highest in history, according to the International Energy Agency. And world primary energy demand is estimated to increase by 36 per cent between 2008 and 2035.

Australia knows well that the future prosperity of small developing states depends on global progress towards a more sustainable future.

The world needs to hear the concerns of small developing states to understand fully the challenges we all face. And the world needs to act to help small developing states build their resilience to the threats they face.

Next week, Australia will host the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Perth, with the themes “Building National Resilience, Building Global Resilience.” CHOGM will turn the international community’s attention to the importance of building resilience, particularly that of small states, to global crises.

In the lead-up to CHOGM, I will host a meeting of Commonwealth and Developing Small States Foreign Ministers bringing together a diverse range of states from every continent. The meeting will focus on the challenges particular to developing small states in combating climate change and achieving sustainable development, and identify how the Commonwealth can advance these priorities through national and international cooperation.

We will look to pass this message to CHOGM, to the G20 Summit in France in November, to the Durban climate change conference and to Rio+20.

As the United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon made clear in his address to the United Nations General Assembly last month, sustainable development is the imperative of our century.

Through our role in CHOGM and the G20, at Durban and Rio, Australia will be supporting small developing states to ensure that their voices are heard loud and clear.

*Honourable Kevin Rudd MP, is Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs

<http://www.publiceye.co.ls/2011/10/21/small-is-beautiful/>

The way land is used is vital

Express News Service, The New Indian Express

Bangalore | Posted on Oct 22, 2011 at 08:41am IST

BANGALORE: “Agriculture is not the backbone anymore. Due to increase in agricultural labour cost and less returns, agriculturists are looking at other ways to find returns,” said Former General Secretary of Karnataka Red Cross Dr N G Narayana at the valedictory function of a two day seminar on ‘Land Use and Globalization in India’.

“If one were to just travel from Bangalore to Mysore, one can find many agricultural lands converted into dhabas. This shows that the urban-rural population ratio has changed,” he

added, quoting a World Health Organisation figure that predicts a 50 per cent urban and 50 per cent rural population spread.

The two day seminar on Land Use and Globalization in India was organised by Indian Economic Association and Maharani Lakshmi Ammanni Social Science Research Centre.

The seminar discussed topics related to agriculture and land use, industries and land use, land use for afforestation, Gandhian thoughts on sustainable land use and so on.

“Our understanding of land use is very superficial. I was shocked to learn that 114 taluks in the state do not have industrial activity at all. I think every individual has to learn optimum use of land and a nurturing approach towards it,” said Jija Madhavan Hari Singh, IPS.

Former Minister of State in the Ministry of Planning M. V. Rajasekharan said that with such rapid increase in population, governments have to think of providing more security to people. “Gandhiji stated that policies have to be made keeping people in the centre. As the problem of population increases, delivering livelihood security becomes crucial,” he said.

He added that food security and nutrition security are important factors. “Sixty eight per cent of babies are said to be born of malnutrition-prone mothers. Tackling this problem requires agriculture, and agriculture requires fertile land,” he remarked.

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Food Security

Food security bill violates SC rulings, say court commissioners

Nitin Sethi, TNN Oct 17, 2011, 02.50 AM IST

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court commissioners in the food case have warned the Union government that their draft National Food Security Act falls foul of apex court orders on providing food and nutrition to the needy.

In a letter to the government, the principal advisor to the office of commissioners, Biraj Patnaik, noted that the draft violated several existing orders of the Supreme Court.

http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2011-10-17/india/30289219_1_apex-court-nfsb-priority-households

Some issues related to food security

Issues related to food insecurity have been hitting the headlines on a cyclical basis. These issues relate more to the unevenness of production and distribution systems and increasing

cost of production. The food security which bill aims to deal with these issues focuses more on the making foodgrain available to the weaker sections than in ensuring that production systems are stabilized. Questions have been raised as to how to maintain the productivity of dryland areas which contribute over a third of India's production. There are also issues related to deteriorating soil and water quality and rapid depletion of ground water (which is affecting highly productive areas). In the absence of an integrated and decentralized production system, the excessive centralization engendered by the commodification process (as promoted by market forces) has raised many questions regarding the efficacy of the distribution system proposed and whether such will actually reach the intended beneficiaries . In fact the massive food subsidy envisaged would in practise benefit the big producers and corporates. The need for promoting local food production and ensuring local food security can therefore not be undermined.

SPWD's work on System Rice Intensification (SRI) in Jharkhand and other initiatives at improving the productivity of agriculture are very relevant in this regard. SPWD has also facilitated Sarvodaya Ashram in Hardoi UP to take up Usar reclamation work in Hardoi district under the third phase of World Bank programme with UP Bhumi Sudhar Nigam.

SPWD is being supported by SDTT (Sir Dorabjee Tata Trust) to promote the practice of SRI in Jharkhand. SDTT through a tieup with NABARD has been able to expand the work considerably. Area coverage and number of farmers involved have more than doubled. While there are issues related to the rapid expansion of SRI, the experience so far has shown that practice of SRI has been able to increase food production by 50% while considerably enhancing fodder production as well. The network has been able to develop a robust MIS system that is being used to keep track of the performance of SRI in different agro-ecological and topographical conditions.

SPWD who had worked with Sarvodaya Ashram Hardoi, in UP to demonstrate that Usar reclamation work can be used to enhance food security also held to facilitate the Ashram take up work in Hardoi district under the third phase of World Bank programme with UP Bhumi Sudhar Nigam. The work in this phase focuses on leveling of fields to reduce application of gypsum and necessity for treating patches later. Double flushing recommended to ensure leveling is properly done.

- Creation of Site implementation committee and water user group (for four hectares, one pump private or community on 4 hectares of land). All records to be maintained by SIC. The WUA is the basic sub unit of SIC. This is later to be integrated into the water management committee of the panchayat.

- Self sustenance: Creation of SHGs with women's groups, facilitation of animal husbandry, depositing of money into SIC by beneficiaries to be used for maintenance.

As can be seen the focus of the third phase is the following:

Improve efficiency in the reclamation process thus reducing costs.

Institutional development for long term sustainability.

The process will help the remaining land lying barren in the District.

In parts of Rajasthan and Gujarat, SPWD has also been generating awareness of the integral relation between the natural resource, climatic conditions and the nature of the biodiversity in the region. The relevance of minor millets and practices related to moisture and nutrient management are also being highlighted. This knowledge is now being enriched with the latest scientific knowledge on conservation agriculture so that farmers would be encouraged to look at soil health issues as a precursor to better crop management.

This process is in its nascent stage, but there is increasing realization of its importance. Scientists too have begun to feel that the focus on commodification has led to a neglect of scientific practices to improve agricultural productivity in the context of the resource constraints facing agriculture. This is leading to an upward spiral in the cost of production. The enhancement of productivity by external inputs results in the benefits not going to the farmers who are struggling harder to stay where they are in the context of increased cost of living and expanding populations. There is a need to target subsidies better so that small and marginal farmers are assisted in this struggle to work more in harmony with nature.

Executive Director, SPWD, New Delhi

Forests

Orissa to drop encroachment cases against FRA beneficiaries

PTI | 09:10 PM, Oct 28, 2011

Bhubaneswar, Oct 28 (PTI) The Orissa government today asked forest and revenue officials to drop encroachment cases against tribals to whom land titles have been given under the Forest Rights Act. The decision was taken at a meeting chaired by Chief Secretary B K Patnaik, official sources said. The meeting decided that there was no point in continuing encroachment cases against persons who had been allotted forest land under the Act. "The cases must be dropped after due enquiry," Patnaik said. District Level Committees on implementation of FRA Act have been directed to ensure proper entries like landmark and sketch map on certificates of titles distributed under the Act, Patnaik said. The Orissa government has taken several steps to settle claims of tribals living in non-forest revenue land simultaneously as per the Orissa Prevention of Land Encroachment Rules or Orissa Government Land Settlement Act. "Land title certificates are being prepared in four sets to be kept with beneficiaries, tehsildars, divisional forest officers, district welfare officers and the Integrated Tribal Development Agency," Revenue minister S N Patro said. PTI AAM PC

<http://ibnlive.in.com/generalnewsfeed/news/orissa-to-drop-encroachment-cases-against-fra-beneficiaries/879168.html>

100,000 community foresters to help green India

Agartala, Oct 18, (IANS):

India will engage 100,000 educated youths to execute an ambitious Green India Mission (GIM) which seeks to increase the country's forest cover to 33 percent from 20 percent within 10 years, says a top forest official.

P.J. Dilip Kumar, director general of India's forest department, says that in order to cope with climate change threats, the central and state governments have decided to raise new forest cover on five million hectares under the GIM.

"India has to increase its present forest cover area of 20 percent (out of the total geographical area) to 33 percent within the next 10 years," Kumar told IANS in an interview here.

"To facilitate planning, execution and monitoring of the GIM at the village level, one lakh cadre of community foresters (CCF) would be employed from among educated community youths," he said.

The Rs.46,000 crore (\$9 billion) plan is one of the eight missions under the National Action Plan on Climate Change announced by the prime minister in June 2008.

The GIM document was prepared in June last year and the countrywide consultation is now on.

With 2011-12 being the preparatory year, GIM would be implemented by the Twelfth and Thirteenth Five Year Plans (2012-13 to 2016-2017 and 2017-18 to 2021-22).

"In view of the massive urbanisation and construction of houses and infrastructure, parks, grasslands, wetlands and open spaces across India would be in danger. Under the GIM, these areas would be protected," said Kumar. "Tough laws have to be enacted for everlasting protection of the open spaces."

According to the official, all parks, grasslands, wetlands and open spaces will be permanently demarcated and, in suitable cases, will be fenced by walls.

Kumar, who is also special secretary of the union forest and environment ministry, conducted a regional workshop on GIM here Sunday. Top forest officials of West Bengal and eight northeastern states took part in the day-long brainstorming session.

Before Agartala, such workshops were held in Bangalore, Jabalpur and Jaipur.

"One lakh Joint Forest Management (JFM) committees, thousands of self-help groups, gram panchayats and people's committees would be involved in the mission," he said.

Quoting the latest Forest Survey of India (FSI) report, released in 2009, the official said during 1997-2007, three million hectares of land had come under new forest cover across the country.

GIM also targets improvement of forest-based livelihood for about three million households living in and around forests.

"The mission is the first of its kind in India as it is aimed at the socio-economic development of tribals and other backward people and the protection of natural resources through the development of a participatory management of natural resources," he said.

According to the GIM document, on account of management of shifting cultivation areas under different agri-systems, the area under age-old 'jhum' or shifting cultivation had come down from 1.87 million hectares in 2003 to 1.2 million hectares in 2005-06.

Tribals in the hilly terrain of northeast and other areas have for generations been carrying out the traditional slash-and-burn method of cultivation, which has resulted in degradation of forest land and badly affected soil quality.

"The mission will support fallow management within the overall framework of socio-culturally valued, fast growing species managed by the communities," Kumar added.

GIM aims at enhancing carbon sinks in sustainably managed forests and other eco-systems, adaptation of vulnerable species and eco-systems to the changing climate and adaptation of forest-dependent locals in the face of climate variability.

"Satellite-based remote sensing and geo-imagery system would also be used for monitoring of GIM progress and implementation," he added.

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