

## **Rapid Fire Current Affairs**

## MoD & FSSAI Promote Millets & Healthy Eating in Armed Forces

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the <u>Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)</u> have signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** to promote the use of millets and healthy eating practices among the **armed forces**.

Millets are small-seeded annual grasses that are **rich in nutrients, drought-resistant, and suitable for semi-arid regions. India is the largest producer of millets** in the world, and contributes to 20% of global production. **India's Millet Revolution** is a movement that seeks to increase awareness of the **health and environmental benefits of millets**, promote traditional agricultural practices, and support small-scale farmers.

Read more: Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), India's Millet Revolution

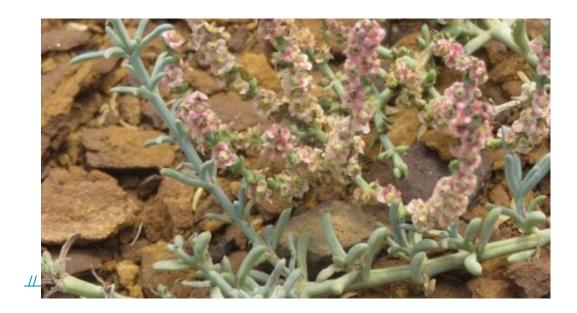
## Rural and Urban India Almost Equally Affected by PM 2.5

An analysis by **Climate Trends** revealed that **rural and urban areas in India experienced equally poor levels of ultrafine particulate matter (PM) 2.5** in 2022. This questions the **government's focus on urban areas for controlling <u>air pollution</u>. The study also highlighted the higher impact of PM 2.5 on rural populations in terms of <b>reduced lifespan**. The **National Clean Air Plan (NCAP) primarily invested in urban areas,** neglecting rural regions without pollution monitoring or mitigation measures. Experts emphasize the need for a wider monitoring network and policies to address pollution in rural India.

PM 2.5 is an atmospheric particulate matter of diameter of fewer than **2.5 micrometres, which is around 3% the diameter of a human hair.** It causes respiratory problems and reduces visibility.

Read more: Air Pollution in India & NCAP, particulate matter (PM) 2.5

New saline-tolerant plant species found in Kutch



**Gujarat Ecological Education and Research (GEER) Foundation**, located in **Gandhinagar**, has made an exciting discovery. The researchers has identified a previously unknown species of **saltwort** named **Salsola Oppositifolia Desfontainia**. This particular **saltwort** is a perennial shrub that thrives in **salty, dry to semi-dry habitats** within the **Kutch district**. This species belongs to the **Amaranthaceae family**. This species is **succulent shrub** that can grow one to two metres tall and have a smooth, cylindrical, woody base.

According to the recently published **Plant Discoveries 2022**, which was released in **June** 2023, a significant report states that the species **Salsola oppositifolia Desfontainia**, previously found in Italy, **Northern Africa**, **Palestine**, **Spain**, and **Western Sahara**, has been discovered in India for the first time. This discovery was made based on specimens collected from **Khadir Bet**, **located in the Kutch region of Gujarat**.

## **IFSCA and IIML-EIC Collaborate to Support Financial Innovation**

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) has been signed between the <u>International Financial Services</u> <u>Centers Authority (IFSCA)</u> and <u>IIML-EIC</u> (Enterprise Incubation Centre) at the Indian Institute of <u>Management Lucknow (IIML)</u> to establish a collaborative framework between IFSCA and IIML-EIC to support and facilitate <u>FinTech</u> and <u>TechFin</u> entities.

**IFSCA**, as the **regulatory authority**, holds the responsibility for the development and regulation of **international financial services** within the **International Financial Services Centre (IFSC)**. This specialized financial jurisdiction is considered distinct from the rest of India. The IFSCA has been established in 2020 under the International Financial Services Centres Authority Act, 2019. It is **headquartered at GIFT City, Gandhinagar in Gujarat** 

**IIML-EIC** is a not-for-profit organization, registered. It was established with an objective to nurture high-performance start-ups, especially in the fields of Big Data Analytics, Artificial Intelligence, etc.

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