



Rapid Fire Current Affairs

MoD & FSSAI Promote Millets & Healthy Eating in Armed Forces

The **Ministry of Defence (MoD)** and the [Food Safety and Standards Authority of India \(FSSAI\)](#) 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 air pollution**. The study also highlighted the higher impact of PM 2.5 on rural populations in terms of **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



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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 **[International Financial Services Centers Authority \(IFSCA\)](#)** and **IIML-EIC (Enterprise Incubation Centre)** at the **Indian Institute of Management Lucknow (IIML)** to establish a collaborative framework between **IFSCA** and **IIML-EIC** to support and facilitate **FinTech** and **TechFin** 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.