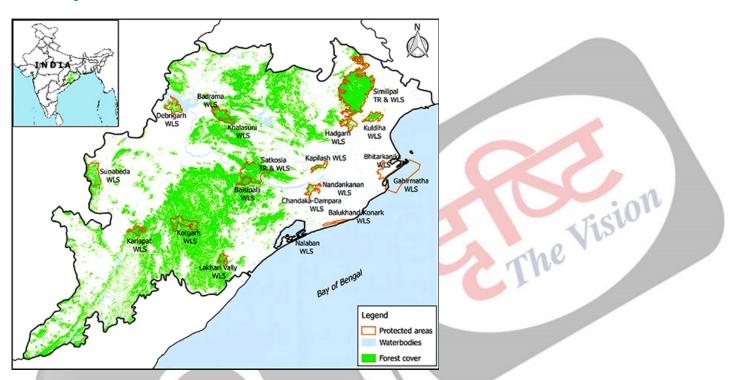


Rapid Fire Current Affairs

Country's Worst Forest Fires in Odisha



According to the Forest Survey of India (FSI) data, forest fires continue to rage in Odisha after the state recorded 642 large fire incidents in March 2023 — the highest in the country during the period. A sudden jump in the incidents of fires across Odisha resulted in a massive loss of flora and fauna in the state's forests.

Odisha has recorded **871 large forest fires** since November 2022. This is also a national record for the season, official data showed. It was **followed by Andhra Pradesh (754)**, **Karnataka (642)**, **Telangana (447) and Madhya Pradesh (316)**. In 2021, 51,968 forest fire incidents occurred in the state. Massive fires had broken out in <u>Similipal National Park</u> in the Mayurbhanj district, which is one of the major biospheres of <u>Asia</u>.

Forest fire is also **called bush or vegetation fire or wildfire**, it can be **described as any uncontrolled and non-prescribed combustion or burning of plants** in a natural setting such as a forest, grassland, brushland or tundra, which consumes the natural fuels and spreads based on environmental conditions (e.g., wind, topography).

Read More: Forest Fire: Causes, Classification, Incidents in India & Measures Taken



March 10 is annually observed as the Raising Day when the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) was set up under the Union ministry of Home Affairs.

CISF is one of the seven Central Armed Police Forces in India and is responsible for providing security to various public sector undertakings, airports, and other important installations. The CISF was set up under the act of the Parliament of India on March 10, 1969. Since then, CISF Raising Day is being celebrated on March 10 each year. However, in 2023, the date was revised (12th Vision March).

Read More: Central Armed Police Force (CAPF)

Centers of Excellence Under MIDH

Under Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), Centers of Excellence (CoEs) are being established in various States through Bilateral Cooperation or Research Institutes. These CoEs serve as demonstration and training centres for the latest technologies in the field of horticulture. 3 CoEs that have been approved include:

- CoE for Kamlam (Dragon Fruit) at Bengaluru, Karnataka
- CoE for Mango and Vegetables at Jajpur, Odisha
- CoE for Vegetables and Flowers at Ponda, Goa

MIDH is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for the holistic growth of the horticulture sector covering fruits, vegetables and other areas. Under MIDH, the Government contributes 60% of the total outlay for developmental programmes in all the states (except Northeastern and Himalayan states where GOI contributes 90%) & 40% is contributed by State governments.

Read More: Status of the Horticulture Sector in India

First Woman to Lead Army Unit Near China border (Ladakh)

Recently, a woman officer, Colonel Geeta Rana has for the first time, taken over the command of an independent unit in the sensitive Ladakh sector where India and China have been locked in a lingering border row.

In January 2023, the army for the first time deployed a woman officer, Captain Shiva Chouhan, at Siachen, the world's highest and coldest battleground. It also deployed its largest contingent of 27 women peacekeepers in Sudan's disputed region of Abyei, where they are performing security-related tasks in a challenging mission as part of the United Nations Interim Security Force (UNISFA).

One of the turning points for women in the military came in 2015 when the Indian Air Force (IAF)

decided to induct them into the fighter stream for the first time.

Read More: Representation of Women in Armed Forces

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