

Enviro Monitor

February 2019

Climate change



- NE glaciers may vanish by 2100 if warming unchecked
- Environment Minister releases publication depicting steps taken by India to combat climate change
- Climate change will wipe out the Sundarbans in 50 years

Waste management



- E-waste touches 48.5m tonnes, Norway, Switzerland top producers
- NTPC, EDMC sign MoU for waste management

Forest resources



- Supreme Court puts on hold its order to evict forest dwellers
- More than 15,000 acres of forest ravaged by fire in Bandipur
- Skewed development gobbles up 2,39,572 ha forest
- Delhi Economic Survey: Green cover up but very dense forests thinning

Water stress



- Delhi at epicentre of global groundwater crisis
- Madurai bags top prize in national water awards



NE glaciers may vanish by 2100 if warming unchecked, finds study. More than a third of the glaciers in the Hindu Kush Himalayan mountain range, the "water tower" of Asia, will vanish by the end of this century even if global warming is contained at 1.50 degree Celsius in the best case scenario, warns a report compiled by 210 experts. The study says the eastern Himalayas could face a near-total loss of glaciers, around 95%, if global warming goes unchecked. The glaciers in east Himalayas that feed

northeast NE) India.

Environment Minister releases publication depicting steps taken by India to combat climate change.

The Centre the publication titled *India - Spearheading Climate Solutions* highlighting actions taken by the country to combat climate change. The publication highlights India's achievements towards climate action and the country's preparedness for future. The ministry's overview of its climate actions features the government's flagship schemes -- UJALA for LED lights distribution and UJJWALA for distributing clean cooking stoves to women below poverty line - and the country's leadership role in setting up International Solar Alliance.

Major Initiatives

- National Action Plan on Climate Change
- National Adaptation Fund on Climate Change
- Climate Change Action Programme State Action Plan on Climate Change
- International Solar Alliances
- Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation

Climate change will wipe out the Sundarbans in 50

years. A recent [study](#) published by Australia's James Cook University alerts that the next 50 years could see the destruction of the Sundarbans, home to the Royal Bengal tiger, by climate change and rising sea level. For the study, the researchers drew on digital simulations of the low-lying Sundarbans for tiger and prey species, as well as estimates of climatic trends from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

[The Times of India](#), 11 February 2019 | [Business Standard](#), 12 February 2019 | [CN Traveller](#), 14 February 2019



E-waste touches 48.5m tonnes, Norway, Switzerland top producers.

The [Global E-Waste Report](#) estimates e-waste to have reached 48.5m tonnes in 2018. E-waste is worth \$62.5bn annually, which is more than the GDP of most nations. More than 120 countries have an annual GDP lower than the value of the

growing pile of global e-waste.

NTPC, EDMC sign MoU for waste management. The East Delhi Municipal Corporation (EDMC) signed MoU with the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) for the disposal and management of solid waste in its jurisdiction. NTPC will be setting up an integrated waste management plant which will have a capacity to process 2,000 MT of garbage. The plant will have a waste to energy component to generate electricity as well as composting of waste to generate CNG.

[The Hindu](#), 2 February 2019 | [The Times of India](#), 11 February 2019

E-waste Generation (numbers in kg per capita)	
TOP 5	
Norway	28.3
Switzerland	26.3
Denmark	25.9
UK	23.9
Iceland	23.4
BOTTOM 5	
Nigeria	0.4
Ethiopia	0.5
Afghanistan	0.6
Nepal	0.8
India	1.5



Supreme Court puts on hold its order to evict forest dwellers. The Supreme Court has put on hold its own February 13 order for the eviction of 1 million tribespeople and others who allegedly encroached on forest lands. A bench led by justice Arun Mishra kept its order in abeyance until July 10, the next date of hearing on the matter, and directed 19 states to file affidavits detailing the number of people whose claims for the right to live in forests had been rejected and the process adopted for rejecting them.

More than 15,000 acres of forest ravaged by fire in Bandipur. The immensity of the fire that has ravaged Bandipur is becoming clearer with two satellite data analyses indicating that the extent of forests burnt could be over 15,000 acres. The summary report by the National Remote Sensing Centre, Hyderabad states that 24.49 hectares were affected on February 23, 1,808.64 hectares on February 24, and 4,419.54 hectares on February 25. This translates to a total of nearly 15,450 acres. burnt area assessment using Sentinel 2 satellite data was carried out based on the tone, texture, shape and association of the burnt patches. There were 127 fire counts in Bandipur between February 21 and 25, as per the report.

Skewed development gobbles up 2,39,572 ha forest. In the last fifteen years (2003-2018), India lost nearly 2,39,572 hectares of forest land due to various developmental activities such as mining, thermal power plants, and dams besides road construction. Eight States — Punjab, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Kerala, Arunachal Pradesh and Rajasthan — accounted for half of the total green land diversion of 1,60,878 hectares of forest land during the period. In other words, the annual rate of diversion of forest land for infrastructure projects has been at 15,971.48 hectares. Punjab topped the forest land diversion list, reporting loss of 60,658 hectares of forest area followed by Madhya Pradesh (23,726 ha) and Uttarakhand (15,532 ha), according to the report on '*Status of forests in India*,' which was tabled in Parliament recently.

Delhi Economic Survey: Green cover up but very dense forests thinning. The total forest and tree cover in the capital increased to 305.4 sq km in 2017 from 299.8 sq km in 2015. The green cover has increased from around 20.2% during 2015 to 20.6% in the two years. However, both "very dense" forest cover and "medium dense forest" cover has declined. According to the report, the very dense forest cover has declined from 6.9 sq km to 6.7 sq km, while the medium dense forest cover has dropped from 57.1 sq km to 56.2 sq km. "Very dense forest cover has more than 70% canopy, medium dense forest cover has a canopy of 40% to 70%.

[The Pioneer](#), 20 February 2019 | [The Hindu](#), 26 February 2019 | [Hindustan Times](#), 28 February 2019



Delhi at epicentre of global groundwater crisis. Recent research by the National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI) has shown that the largest groundwater depletion in the world is happening in northern India. Delhi is the epicentre of this fast-developing crisis. With the surge in population and shrinking of surface water resources, the

level of water in underground aquifers in the region is falling by over 10 cm per year, research has shown.

Concerned over the state of groundwater in India, the government has entrusted NGRI to look for new aquifers in the country.

Madurai bags top prize in national water awards. Madurai district received the first prize in the National Water Awards 2018 for rejuvenating and creating new water bodies. Ernakulam district in Kerala received the second position among south Indian states in the category which included districts from Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Goa, Pondicherry and Lakshadweep. [The Times of India, 20 February 2019](#) | [The Times of India, 24 February 2019](#) | [The Times of India, 26 February 2019](#)