



# ENVIS NEWSLETTER

WWF-India ENVIS Centre (NGOs & PARLIAMENT)

## EDITORIAL BOARD

**Dr. G. Areendran**  
Coordinator-ENVIS Programme,  
WWF India

**Dr. Dipankar Ghose**  
Head-Eastern Himalaya and Terai Programme

**Mr. Kiran Rajashekariah**  
Sr. Coordinator,  
Policy & Programme Development

**Ms. Moulika Arabhi**  
Programme Coordinator,  
Centre for Environmental Law

### ENVIS Team :

**Dr. G. Areendran**  
ENVIS Coordinator, ENVIS Centre, WWF-India  
**Ms. Preeti Bathla**  
Programme Officer, ENVIS Centre, WWF-India  
**Mr. Rajeev Kumar**  
Programme Officer, ENVIS Centre, WWF-India  
**Mr. Sandeep Kumar,**  
Programme Assistant, ENVIS Centre, WWF-India  
**Mr. Prashant Chaudhary**  
Data Entry Operator, ENVIS Centre, WWF-India

### Contributors:

**Mr. Krishna Raj**  
Sr. Programme Officer, IGCMC, WWF-India  
**Ms. Sraboni Mazumdar**  
Programme Officer, IGCMC, WWF-India  
**Ms. Madhushree Munsri**  
Programme Officer, IGCMC, WWF-India  
**Mrs. Gita Warriar**  
Library & Documentation Officer, WWF-India  
**Ms. Kanchan Puri**  
Intern, IGCMC, WWF-India  
**Mr. Ranjeet Bisht**  
IT Expert, WWF-India

### Published by:

ENVIS Centre, WWF-India  
172-B, Lodi Estate, New Delhi - 110 003  
Tel: + 91-011-41504793/4791,  
Fax: +91-011-41505779/4795/24691226  
E-mail: gareendran@wwfindia.net ,  
wwf@envis.nic.in  
http://www.wwfenvis.nic.in/Default.aspx

*All queries, feedback and further details regarding the specific subjects/environmental issues are invited from individuals, organizations and institutions etc.*

## Honored members of the WWF-India Advisory Committee for the period from 2010-2012

**Dr. Nilkanth Ghosh**  
Statistical Advisor, MoEF  
Chairman, Advisory Committee

**Shri. Ravi Singh**  
Secretary General & CEO, WWF-India  
Member, Advisory Committee

**Dr. Indrani Chandrasekharan**  
Advisor (E&F), Planning Commission  
Member, Advisory Committee

**Dr. Sanjay Gahlout**  
DDG, NIC  
Member, Advisory Committee

**Shri R.K. Goel,**  
Inspector General of Forests, MoEF  
Member, Advisory Committee

**Mrs. Madhumita Biswas**  
Joint Director, MoEF  
Member, Advisory Committee

**M. Ahmedullah Ph. D.**  
Head, Botanic Garden of Indian Republic,  
MoEF  
Member, Advisory Committee

**Shri Narain Dass**  
Deputy Secretary, MoEF  
Member, Advisory Committee

**Dr. A. Lahri**  
Member, Advisory Committee

**Prof.(Retd.) P. B. Mangla**  
Member, Advisory Committee

**Dr. D. C. Uprety, F.N.A. Sc.**  
Emeritus Scientist  
Member, Advisory Committee

**Dr. G. Areendran**  
Director-ENVIS Programme, WWF-India  
Member Secretary, Advisory Committee

Printed By : India Enterprises : 9810559753 Designed By : Sanjay Sharma : 9891056084



From the Editor's desk,

Dear all,

For years, environmental degradation was discussed as a hypothesis- a threat in the distant future. Now it is increasingly regarded as a clear, observable fact. This sudden shift means that all of us must start thinking about the ways it will affect us, our loved ones, our property and our economic prospects. We must think and then act accordingly so as to promote conservation practices.

This newsletter provides a rapid glance on the actions being taken by government departments, parliamentary deliberations on Environmental issues and important activities carried out in the recent past by various non-governmental organization, institutions / universities.

This time, this newsletter has been given a new look in terms of its content presentation. Subject wise analysis cum overview of activities on Environment in the quarter January - March have been presented.

The significant Government initiatives, proposals and decisions as reported by print media are selectively highlighted. A section on Parliament includes statistical & graphical representations of Parliamentary discussions during the Budget Session of Parliament, 2010.

This edition informs us about the workshops/symposia and seminars conducted on environmental issues during January - March, 2010 and the upcoming events for the period of April-June, 2010.

It is hoped that through this edition all stakeholders would be informed about protection and conservation of our natural environment.

**Dr. G. Areendran**  
Coordinator-ENVIS Programme  
WWF-India

|                                                                                                                  |       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Overview of Environment                                                                                          | 2     |
| Subject wise analysis of activities carried out by various Environmental NGOs                                    | 3-7   |
| Subject wise analysis of Parliamentarian's concern on Environment                                                | 8-13  |
| Subject wise analysis of Government's approach on Environment                                                    | 14-23 |
| Statistical representation of total no. of questions addressed in both Houses of Parliament during the year 2009 | 23-25 |
| Events on Environment                                                                                            | 25-27 |



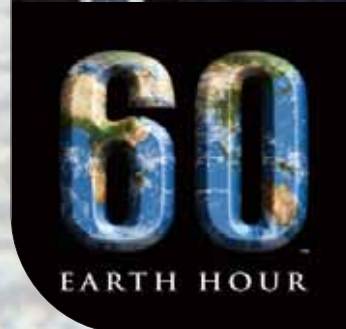
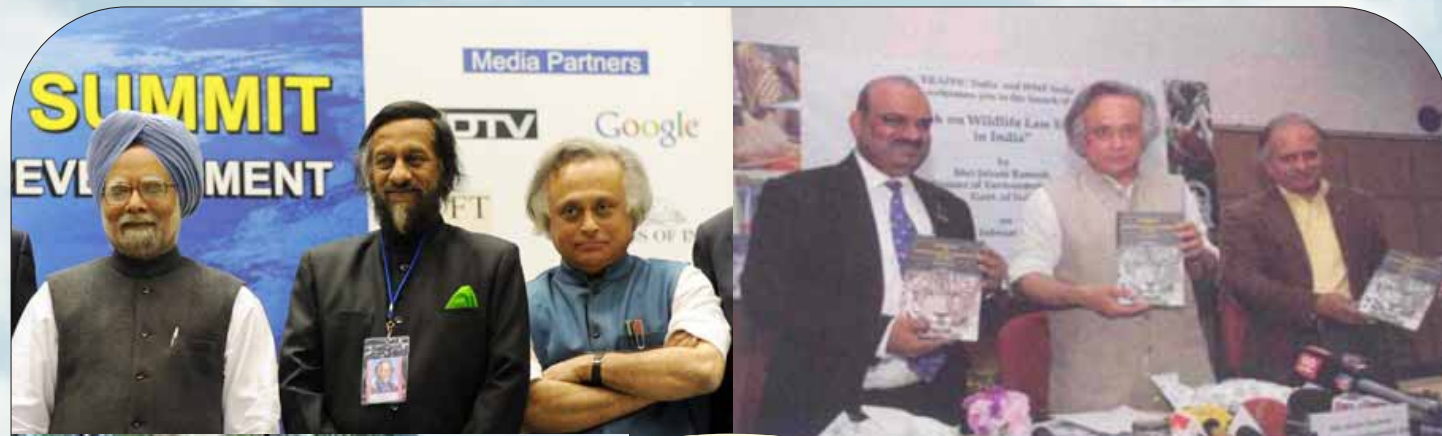
Supported By  
Ministry of Environment & Forests,  
Government of India



जहाँ है हरियाली।  
वहाँ है खुशहाली।।

### Disclaimer

The data and content on the ENVIS newsletter is made available with the sole purpose of providing information and is not meant for commercial use and purposes. The information on the newsletter has been obtained from different national & regional newspapers across the country.



**Overview of Environment (January-March, 2010)**

Year 2010 has been declared as the International year of Biodiversity marking its commitment to save and conserve the biodiversity on Earth.

Environment Conservation has gained a lot of attention now days. Policies, laws and plans are being formulated by the Government in the view of protecting the environmental damages. Even common people are concerned about changing environment & working towards its conservation. This quarter has witnessed a significant number of activities carried out by various environmental NGOs and presented a clean picture of parliamentarian's concern for environment. Also it highlighted, the decision taken by government under various Sectors of Environment.

Some of the major issues highlighted in this quarter includes government concern towards use of agriculture practices for biofuel production, launching of Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission, Solar India, states unity towards the discard of Bt brinjal cultivation, contradictory views on Copenhagen accord, IPCC's glaciers mistake controversy, President's urge for conserving energy, drives to make Ganga & Yamuna pollution free, launch of Earth Hour 2010 and a dedicated website for tiger conservation by WWF.

To evaluate it more, it was seen that the predominant concern of government bodies was to make the Ganga & Yamuna river pollution free. Other than this, it also seemed to be worried about saving its national animal tiger. This year is also entitled as the "Tiger Year" 2010. To talk about parliamentarian, the major issues highlighted by them includes the cultivation of Bt-Brinjal, Copenhagen accord and wildlife conservation. Issue related to Biosafety of Bt. Brinjal, global warming & Climate change, River cleaning, Water conservation and wildlife conservation were highlighted by the different Non Government Organizations in appreciable way. Apart from this, many NGOs were seen organizing various environment awareness events / drives all over the country.

However, for many of us, the year began on a sad note with the loss of Billy Arjan Singh, a friend and a staunch guardian of the tiger. The call for conservation of the tiger will miss Billy's voice, a void that cannot be filled. At the meeting of the National Board of Wildlife on 18th March, 2010, chaired by the Prime Minister, a one minute silence was observed in Billy's memory at the beginning of the proceedings. People will always remember Billy and respect his life by continuing to work for all that he dedicated his life to.



## Upcoming Environmental Events in the Country

**Title:** National Workshop on "Solid and Liquid Waste Management" (Kerala Environment Congress 2010)  
**Date:** 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> May, 2010  
**Venue:** Thiruvananthapuram  
**Organized by:** Dr. Babu Ambat, Executive Director, Centre for Environment and Development, TC 10/2071(2), Thozhuvancode, Vattiyookavu, Thiruvananthapuram - 695013, Kerala

**Title:** Seminar on Challenges in Biodiversity Conservation  
**Date:** 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 2010  
**Venue:** Pushpa Gujral Science City Jalandhar-Kapurthala Road Kapurthala, Punjab  
**Organized by:** Dr. Rajesh Grover, Principal Scientific Officer, Pushpa Gujral Science City (PGSC), SCO 60-61, 3rd Floor, Sector 34-A, Chandigarh-160022

**Title:** National Seminar on Indian Environmental Issues in 21st Century" (Copen Hagen Summit -2010)  
**Date:** 25<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> May, 2010  
**Venue:** Ch. Charan Singh University, Campus, Meerut  
**Organized by:** Registrar, Ch. Charan Singh University, (Deptt. of Political Science), Meerut-250004, U.P.

**Title:** Golden Jubilee National Symposium on 'Plant Diversity-Utilization and Management'  
**Date:** 27<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> May, 2010  
**Venue:** Department of Botany, University of Kerala, Kariavattom, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala  
**Organized by:** Registrar, University of Kerala, (Department of Botany), Kariavattom, Thiruvananthapuram 695034, Kerala

**Title:** Seminar on Conservation of Medicinal Plants and their Sustainable Utilization Kamrup District of Assam  
**Date:** 5<sup>th</sup> June, 2010  
**Venue:** Town Futuri, Dist-Kamrup Assam  
**Organized by:** Mr. Mobarque Hussain, an

Chairman, MAN & WILD, Vill/Post- Futuri, Via Bijoynagar, Dist-Kamrup, Assam 781122

**Title:** Student Conference in Conservation Science-Bangalore  
**Date:** 16<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> June, 2010  
**Venue:** Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore  
**Organized by:** Prof. R. Sukumar, Chairman, Centre for Ecological Sciences Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore-560012, (Karnataka)

**Title:** Workshop on Bio-Diversity Conservation to Women & Panchayat Leaders  
**Date:** 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2010  
**Venue:** Meerut, U.P.  
**Organized by:** Mr. Satpal, Secretary, Parth Gram Vikas Samiti, Village Pipli Kheda, Po.-Kharkhoda, District Meerut, U.P.

**Title:** Green Chemistry and Sustainable Environment  
**Date:** 7 to 8 July 2010  
**Venue:** Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu, India  
**Website:** <http://www.holycrossindia.ac.in/news.php>  
**Contact name:** Dr. Felicia Rajammal Selvarani  
 The rapidly increasing worldwide demand for environmentally friendly chemical products and processes requires the application of novel and cost-effective technologies to pollution prevention. Green Chemistry is an emerging new approach focus  
**Organized by:** Holy Cross Collegee  
**Website:** <http://www.holycrossindia.ac.in/news.php>

**Title:** Environment and Climate change Conference for Students and Teachers of Asia  
**Date:** 13th -15th July, 2010  
**Venue:** Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India  
**Organized by:** Association of Deep Sea Going Artisanal Fishermen  
**Introduction:** The program in 2010 for Asian students and teachers by ADGSAF on "Environment and Climate Change" aimed at creating awareness among the young learners

and their mentors and cultivating active involvement in the protection of the environment  
**Website:** <http://www.deepscaindia.org/index.as>

**Title:** International Conference on Environmental Pollution, Water Conservation and Health (ICEPWCH2010 and Health (ICEPWCH2010)  
**Date:** 29th -31st July, 2010  
**Venue:** Bangalore, Karnataka, India  
**Organized by:** Department of Zoology, Bangalore University, Jnana Bharathi, Bangalore - 560 056  
**Introduction:** The Conference is being organised as apart of Centenary celebrations of the department of Zoology, Bangalore University. Coinciding with the main event we are also organising a satellite symposium on applied physiology, genetics.  
**Website:** <http://icepwh2010.blogspot.com/>

**Title:** National Conference on Recent Trends in Environmental Toxicology  
**Date:** 4th to 5th August, 2010  
**Venue:** BEED, Maharashtra, India  
**Organized by:** Milliya Arts, Science and Management Science College  
**Introduction:** The conference intends to provide for a platform for discussion among the researchers and scholars regarding the latest trends in the field on environmental sciences.  
**Website:** <http://www.milliyascollege.org/>

**Title:** International Conference on Environmental Challenges: A Global Concern  
**Date:** 15th to 16th October, 2010  
**Venue:** Jalandhar, Punjab, India  
**Organized by:** Dr. Mrs. Atima Sharma, Kanya Maha Vidyalaya, Jalandhar  
**Introduction:** Conferences like ICEC-10 are vital to bring the concern of environment management on a platform to be able to evolve ways and methods of improving the situation of poverty, climate change, global warming, deforestation etc.



Non Governmental Organizations work actively with mass media and government bodies, showing linkages between environmental, economic and social issues. They actively raise awareness among the public of their rights & possibilities and help the public in defending their right for a healthy environment. In this quarter, the main concern of the NGOs remained the fight against Bt. Brinjal cultivation in India. NGOs like CSE openly opposed the Copenhagen accord having stringent emission cuts for the developing Nations. TERI received funds from the Environment and Forest ministry to conduct meetings of the IPCC and this organization also hold its 10<sup>th</sup> annual flagship event, the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit (DSDS) in New Delhi. International NGO, WWF-India, launched 2 major awareness campaigns this quarter- "Save our Tigers" and "Earth Hour 2010". Besides this, it also organized many educational and awareness programs like World Wetland Day on 2<sup>nd</sup> February & 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Earth Day, in Delhi and other states like Jammu & Kashmir. WWF-India's Partnership Programme was also launched on India's republic day Weekend in Delhi. Other than these big NGOs, many grass root NGOs were highlighted in the media based on their activities for conserving Environment. It can easily be seen that most of these NGOs are engaged in Wildlife conservation activities.

### Biosafety

**Genetically Modified Crops:** NGOs working for safer environment like Greenpeace and Coalition of GM Free India showed their concern by protesting against Bt. Brinjal and by preparing "world's biggest baingan ka bhārtha" under a campaign. Greenpeace-India launched a unique campaign by preparing the "World's biggest baingan bhārtha" in Delhi to garner support for its opposition to the commercial planting of the genetically engineered vegetables in India. They believed this to be an exciting way to persuade Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh to protect Indian Brinjal. The NGO said that while US-backed companies say Bt brinjal will be free from pests, but Indian farmers have successfully grown brinjal for thousands of years without this toxic gene. Moreover, if Bt brinjal is grown in India, it may contaminate traditional brinjal farms, thus, tainting India's food supply forever (*The Pioneer, 29 January*). Martyr's Day this year also marked a nationwide protest against Bt. Brinjal. Fasting and candlelight vigils were part of protests. "Satyagraha" was aimed at persuading the government into not going ahead with Bt brinjal cultivation. A nationwide fast was organized by the coalition of a GM Free India, an umbrella organization representing groups and individuals opposing genetically modified crops. In the Capital, the fast was held at Jantar Mantar. The protesters marched to Rajghat. In other parts of the country, the fast was observed before statues of Mahatma Gandhi (*Mail Today, 30 January*).

### Climate Change and Meteorology

*Discussions on climate change:* The Centre

for Science and Environment (CSE) Director Ms Sunita Narain called upon the government not to sign and endorsed the Copenhagen accord. According to CSE analysis, the accord did not stipulate any stringent emission cut targets for developed nations and India by agreeing to the accord do not gain anything but allow industrialized countries like the US "an easy way out" (*The Statesman, 9 January*). Greenpeace welcomed the position taken by Ministers of BASIC, a grouping of Brazil, South Africa, India and China to continue negotiations to clinch a fair and ambitious climate agreement within the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change (*The Hindu, 26 January*).

**Reports on Climate Change:** The UN's Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) – a panel of 2,500 best climate scientist of the world-accepted that it had made a huge goof-up in its fourth assessment report on climate change and withdrew its assertion that the Himalayan glaciers ran the risk of being wiped out by 2035. IPCC's lack of rigor also became clearer from the fact that it shunned reports in peer-reviewed science reports listed in well known journals, and instead lifted reference from a report by WWF, that supported strong action on climate change. (*Times of India, Jaipur, 21 January*).

### Energy Studies:

**Energy conservation:** The Energy and Resource Institute (TERI), after submitting the energy security paper to the prime minister in June 2009, came up with the action plan to implement the key elements. It suggested incentivizing

energy efficiency in industries and said the incentives could be in the form of upfront capital, especially for the small and medium industries and performance-based subsidies. TERI believes that energy efficiency could help India reduce the electricity shortages and cut down its non cooking coal imports (*Business Line, Asian Age, 22 January*).

### Environmental Conservation

**Funds for Environment:** The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) got funds from the Environment and Forest ministry to conduct meetings of the Inter Governmental Panel on climate Change (IPCC), the United Nations body. Apart from these meetings, the funds will be used to employ staff and setup secretariat support and communication facilities for the IPCC office in India.

### Environment Education, NGOs and Media

Numerous Education programmes, awareness campaigns and seminars took place in this quarter. The biggest event of this quarter remained the launch of "Earth Hour 2010" and "Save Our Tigers" Campaigns. Both these campaigns were the initiatives of WWF-India.

**Environmental Awards:** Dr. Sunita Narain, Director of Centre for Science and Environment, was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award at the

fifth National Convention of the Annex College of Management Studies at Swabhumi, Kolkata. She spoke on some key issues of the recently concluded Copenhagen Summit and their implications in the Indian context. The Best CSR Organization of the Year award went to the NGO National Entrepreneurship Network (*The Statesman, 5 January*). The Energy Resource Institute (TERI) also received "The Corporate Citizen of the year" at the ET Awards this quarter. While receiving the award it's Director-General RK Pachauri said that TERI is functioning not only at the level of providing policy analysis, but also in villages to bring about major transformation technologically (*Economic Times, 12 January*).

**Studies on Environment:** IPCC was once again attacked, this time by the British Daily Telegraph, for its forecast about the loss of Amazon forests because of "even a slight reduction in precipitation", which was referred from a journal that was not peer-reviewed. According to the paper, the two 'expert' authors of WWF cited in the IPCC report are not Amazon specialists. The World Wildlife Fund (*WWF study on Sunderbans cautioned that rise of 28 centimeter in sea levels will engulf 96 per cent of tiger's habitat in the region (The Tribune, 25 January)*). The findings, though specific for Bangladesh, may be a cause of concern for India as well because the Sunderbans are spread across India and Bangladesh having same ecosystem and tiger population. WWF warned that days are numbered for much of the sensitive Sunderbans eco-system and in 60 years vast tracts of the rare mangrove forests, home to the Bengal tiger, will be inundated by the rising sea. The World Wide Fund for Nature's alarming report on the future of Sunderbans, titled "Sea Level Rise and Tigers": predicted impacts to Bangladesh's Sunderbans Mangroves, had been published in the journal, "Climatic Change" (*Times of India, New Delhi, Ahmadabad, 23 February*).

**Events on Environment:** An initiative of the Telecommunication giant "Aircel" in Partnership with WWF-India launched the "Save our Tigers" media

campaign on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2010. It helped in increasing awareness about the need to save tigers. This campaign successfully raised the public profile of the critical issue of Tiger conservation by involving some of India's well known celebrities including sport persons (*PANDA- WWF-India's Newsletter, January-April, 2010*). Since its launch, Stripey, the baby tiger in the video became highly popular. The campaign site had 56,400 members till February 7. Five Facebook groups sprung up, with hundreds joining every hour. Celebs who took on the tiger cause with a passion are MS Dhoni, Abhishek Bachhan, Lara Dutta, Aamir Khan, Hritik Roshan and John Abraham (*The Hindustan Times, 7 February, DNA, Indian Express, Mumbai, 27 March*). This campaign bagged the Big Bang Award, initiated by the Bangalore Ad Club, for Best Multimedia Campaign of the Year (*Hindustan Times, 3 March*). Along with this, WWF-India also celebrated World Wetland Day on 2<sup>nd</sup> February and marked the date of signing of the convention on wetlands in 1971, in the Iranian city of Ramsar on the shores of the Caspian Sea. It organized many educational and awareness programmes in Jammu & Kashmir, in keeping with the theme "Wetlands, Biodiversity & Climate Change". The key activities comprised symposium, panel discussions, slogan writing, essay writing, short story writing, original song writing and painting competitions which saw participation from J & K (*PANDA- WWF-India's Newsletter, January-April, 2010*).

TERI organized its 10<sup>th</sup> annual flagship event, the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit DSDS from 5-7 February 2010 in New Delhi, at Hotel Taj Palace. The summit was inaugurated by Dr. Manmohan Singh, the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, in the presence of heads of state/ government from Bhutan, Finland, Greece, Norway, Quebec and Slovenia. The summit witnessed the first major gathering of world leaders in New Delhi-post Copenhagen conference –to discuss actions to meet the challenges of climate change and come up with a plan of action to succeed in getting an

agreement at Mexico (*Economic Times, Times of India, 4 February*). Department of Botany of Dhing College, in collaboration with NGO Green Guard and Aryabhata Science Centre, organized a three day UGC-sponsored national workshop on 'Field work' in environmental studies' from February 18. The themes of the workshop were documentation of various environmental assets like river, forest, grassland, hill, mountain etc., study of common plants, insects, birds, etc., study of simple ecosystem and study of local polluted sites (*Assam Tribune, Guwahati, 27 February*).



Earth Hour, organized by the World Wildlife Fund, is intended to pressurize governments to act on slowing down the

global warming. Earth Hour 2010 was organized five months after world leaders meeting in Copenhagen failed to agree on concerted action to slow the emission of the greenhouse gases that cause climate change. Huge media coverage was arranged for March 27 event (*Hindustan Times, 6, 10 March*). Actor Abhishek Bachchan was chosen as the Brand ambassador for the campaign this year. Buoyed by the success of Earth Hour on March 28 last year, an enthusiastic Delhi government announced it would hold its own earth hours every month on the last working Friday. With enthusiasm dipping for both the campaign's strength and the public response, the government finally decided to keep it simple, and annual. Environment Secretary Dharmendra said that if it is repeated too often, it may lose its seriousness. It will now officially remain an annual event (*Indian Express, 9 March*). Media gave a commendable support for the success of Earth Hour 2010. Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit switched off the lights at India Gate at 8.30 p.m. as a symbolic show of support to the cause. Soon after the first lights were turned off at India Gate, the country saw the lights getting off on several heritage sites like Qutub Minar in Delhi, the iconic Gateway of India in Mumbai and the Victoria Memorial in Kolkata. Many ancient and modern

marvels, most well known buildings in each city, banks, offices of public and private sectors companies, local cafes, schools, official residences of Chief Ministers, Universities and even the Indian Military Academy took part in delivering this powerful message of individual action to inspire change towards a better lifestyle. As soon as the lights were turned off across the nation on the evening of 27<sup>th</sup> March, India united with the world to make a stand on climate change by being a part of this largest global action in recent history. This year the Earth Hour India Campaign also received "WOW paradigm of the year" award (Free Press Journal, Mumbai, The Hindu, Times of India, Business Line, Indian Express, The Statesman, Hindustan Times, 28 March, PANDA- WWF-India's Newsletter, January-April, 2010). The Amateur Astronomers Association Delhi set up four telescopes in the lawns of India Gate for people to come and watch the stars. According to astronomers, the time between 8.30 p.m. to 9.30 p.m. is the best time to see stars as it will be relatively darker than other nights. The SPACE (Science Popularization Association of Communicators and Educators) ran Great Indian Star Count during the Earth Hour to "promote a sense of how much more we can see in the night sky at a time when the light pollution around us gets distinctly reduced" (Free Press Journal, Mumbai, 28 March).

Unfortunately this time, Earth Hour got embroiled in a fresh controversy. As per the Amitabh Bachchan's blog, a few hours before the show, an audio visual featuring Abhishek was removed and banner posters bearing his photograph as Ambassador was stopped from being displayed! He claimed that Abhishek was sidelined during the Earth Hour event at India Gate (Hindustan Times, The Hindu, Times of India, Asian Age, Political & Business Daily, The Pioneer, The Statesman, The Tribune, Economic Times, Mail Today, New Delhi, The Pioneer, Lucknow, DNA, Hindustan Times, Times of India, Jaipur, Deccan Herald, Bangalore, The Hindu, New Indian Express, Chennai, The Telegraph, The Statesman, Kolkata 29 March). The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) distanced itself from the controversy and thanked

Abhishek Bachchan for the 'support' but said the actor's role was 'technically over' (Indian Express, March 30)

Other than this the Delhi Cycling Club organized a 11-km-long cycle rally dubbed "Climate Bicycle Ride" between Ambedkar Nagar and Moolchand to raise awareness about climate change and to promote cycling as healthy and eco-friendly way of commuting short distances (The Hindu, 22 March).

**Forest Conservation**

The major concern of NGOs as highlighted in the media during the quarter (Jan-Mar) remained restricted to the Protection of existing Forest in the country and preventing further degradation. These NGOs were also actively engaged in the Plantation drives.

**Afforestation and Plantation**

**Activities:** Samanwita Yuva Tirtha (SYT), the youth body of the Asom Sathra Mahasabha, and Brothers, an NGO had planned to plant 25 lakhs saplings in schools, colleges, roadside areas, government land, naamghars, satras, etc in Assam. They started in June 2009. The two organizations have planted 9000 saplings so far in Marigaon and North Lakhimpur Districts (Assam Tribune, 9 January).

**Protection of Forests:** Awaz Foundation, a Mumbai based NGO suggested seven- points to save the city's depleting forest cover to the civic body's superintendent of gardens. These suggestions came after the Bombay High Court passed an order that suggestions should be given for reforestation or planting of tress. NGOs suggestions to the Bombay Municipal Corporation were:

1. Procuring of modern machinery and equipment for pruning branches without destroying the trees.
2. Procuring and planting more trees throughout the city, including trees requiring minimal water and attention, in accordance with standards to be framed for the number of trees required in a particular area, type of trees etc.
3. Appointment of necessary staff

and officers for enforcement of provisions.

4. Appointment of a vigilance committee and/or appointment of necessary staff/ officers for ensuring imposition of the penalties and punishment as provide under the Act.
5. Engaging professionals for planting of trees, identifying types of trees that can sustain in Mumbai's climate, and encourage effective follow-up mechanisms etc.
6. Take over maintenance of gardens/Parks/Playgrounds, so that no schemes such as 'adoption' and 'caretaker' are required. This would also ensure adherence to the planting of correct types of trees.
7. Space to be maintained around trees to be mandated and member of the Tree Authority are to ensure the same, every time a road is built around a tree.(Hindustan Times, Mumbai 22 February)

**Fresh and Marine water Conservation**

During this quarter, various environmentalist and activist groups, whether associated with any NGOs or not, were found organizing campaigns to save Ganga and Yamuna River.



**R i v e r Conservation:** Environmentalist, led by chipko movement leader S u n d r l a l

Bahuguna, launched "Save Himalaya, Save Ganga, Save Life" campaign at Har-ki-pauri in Haridwar on the event of maha kumbh (Political & Business Daily, 15 January). Representatives of six NGOs who had set up the 'Love Ganga Project' in Kolkata, came together to launch an initiative to prevent the River Ganga from pollution and eventual 'death'. They basically work towards building awareness among the users to ensure fruitful implementation of "Clean Ganga Mission" launched by the National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA) with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh at the helm (Deccan Herald, Karnataka, 17 January).



Yamuna clean-up campaign 'Meri Dilli Meri Yamuna' was initiated by the spiritual leader and founder of Art of Living, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar cleaning up the ITO ghat. The campaign was launched at Purana Qila on 28 February (Mail Today, The Statesman, Hindustan Times, 1, 18 March). The campaign saw a week-long cleanliness drive of the eight Yamuna Ghats. Hundreds of volunteers and members of more than 80 NGOs participated in the Meri Yamuna Meri Dilli Drive.

**Health and Sanitation**

One study conducted by Dehradun based NGO, "People Science Institute (PSI)", revealed a thrilling truth that Ganga water is unsuitable for bathing and the polluted water poses a health hazard to those taking a dip during Kumbh Mela. Apart from this, Delhi based Centre for Science and Environment has found that many plastic toys contain toxics chemicals that can cause serious health disorders besides causing allergies if exposed to beyond safe levels.



**H e a l t h Hazards:** Dehradun-based People Science Institute (PSI) recently found

the Ganga water unsuitable for bathing after conducting the study. The NGO claimed that the water does not meet the standards for bathing set by the Central Pollution Control Board because of the continuous discharge of untreated wastewater and effluents from various drains into the river. The river water samples taken at Saptrishi, Har-Ki-Pauri and Jagjeetpur showed fecal coliforms counts of 1000.1500 and 7.5 million per 100 ml which well above the prescribed CPCB standard of 500 MPS/10ml (Times of India, Mail Today, 18, 19 January).

Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) found most of the plastic toys contain dangerous phthalates-a family of chemicals that can cause serious

health disorders such as allergies, asthma, skeletal defects, damage male reproductive system and impair lungs of children, if exposed to beyond safe levels. Phthalates are chemicals used to soften plastic, so soft and inflatable toys can be more dangerous for children (Times of India, 16 January).

**Pollution**

NGO "The Society for Child Development" found an innovative way to curb pollution from Temples or rivers like Yamuna in Delhi.

**Measures to Curb Pollution:** The NGO "The Society for Child Development" decided to take up the task of making natural colors from the flower waste and it will rope in mentally challenged adults for the purpose. These colors will then be sold during the festival of Holi (The Tribune, 15 February).

**Water Pollution:** TERI organized a National Workshop on Water Conservation and Water Quality Challenges: Towards Adaptive Strategies, on the World Water Day. During the workshop, Dr P. Indira Devi, from the department of agricultural economics of the Kerala Agriculture University, warned that irrigated water in India is over-contaminated with pesticides, thus making it largely unusable. This leading agricultural expert warned that Indian farmers are routinely using pesticides, which are banned in the West (Asian Age, 23 March).

**Water Management**

The primary focus of various NGOs under water management was to conserve water in this quarter.

**Water conservation:** A private company and an NGO that works for water conservation launched the Water of Life initiative or the Jal Sanchay Abhiyaan in Delhi. This public-private sector partnership project is supported by the Bhagidari initiative of the Delhi government with implementation support from the Delhi Jal Board, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi, Delhi

Development Authority and Central Groundwater Board (Hindustan Times, 14 March). One community group Marathi Vidhayan Parishad (MVP) tied up with the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) to create awareness against wastage of water. Representatives of MVP went to colleges, schools and housing societies and gave lectures on water conservation (Hindustan Times, Mumbai, 23 March).

**Rainwater Harvesting:** National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development conducted an experiment to co evolve and refine the technique of rainwater harvesting in the Sunderbans, along with the NGO Beliachandi Aastha Nari Kalyan Kendra. In order to discuss this unique experiment, it organized a colloquium on February 2, 2010 in Kolkata. The Sunderbans Development Board, Central Groundwater Board, Nimpith KVK and WWF are working together on a project to manage and rejuvenate water resources in the area (Business Line, 4 February).

**Wildlife Management**

Many animals had been focused upon in this quarter. But as this year was marked as "Tiger Year 2010", majority of the media coverage was about tiger conservation efforts being taken by various wildlife NGOs. WWF India launched "Save the Tigers" campaign as discussed in previous section. WWF had categorized tiger as the most endangered species. WWF-India also reintroduced 63 Gharials into a part of upper Ganga for Gharial Conservation.

**Tiger Protection:** This New Year, WWF categorized tiger as the most endangered species. The world has lost 95 percent of the nine main tiger subspecies in the last century. China is the biggest market, for tiger parts. Tigers killed in India were being sold in the neighboring country said an NGO Wildlife Protection Society of India and Environment (WPSI) Investigation Agency (Hindustan Times, New Delhi, Assam Tribune, Guwahati, Hindustan Times, Lucknow, Hindustan Times, Jaipur, Hindustan Times, Chandigarh, Hindustan Times, Patna, 5, 6 January). This year has

also been designated the International Year of Biodiversity by the United Nations So, WWF has created a list of 10 critically important endangered animals that will need special monitoring over the next 12 months and Tiger top this list (*Deccan Herald, 19 January*).

The national website, **tigernet.nic.in**, was launched on January 6, 2010. It is the first consolidated database on wildlife crime related to tiger and other protected species within the tiger reserve. Tiger Reserve directors and chief wildlife wardens will now have key to crucial and instantaneous information on tiger deaths, seizure or recovery of poached tiger parts, and postmortem results on this National software system. The software was developed with TRAFFIC India, WWF-India (*Indian Express, 6 January*).

In another news, Rajasthan forest department sent a letter to the Delhi government, seeking permission for relocation of several sambar deers from the Delhi Golf Club to Ranthambore National Park's buffer areas, as two tigers strayed out of the Ranthambore National Park in search of Prey in January. The Rajasthan forest department is working in conjunction with a Delhi-based NGO, SOS Wildlife, on this issue (*Indian Express, 16 February*). As per the data released by Wildlife Protection Society of India (WPSI), habitat for tigers and elephants has shrunk by 15-20 per cent in the last two decades. Problem of shrinking habitats is more in reserve with good wildlife population such as Corbett Tiger Reserve leading to man-animal conflict. As many as 31 elephants and five tigers have died because of these conflict in the past year (*Hindustan Times, 10 March*).



The World Wide Foundation (WWF) in association with Manah Ever Welfare Society (MEWS) has undertaken an ambitious plan to preserve Manas National Park-cum-Tiger Project through development of the condition of the fringe villages (*Assam Tribune, Gumbati, 7 March*). Bollywood icon Amitabh

Bachchan decided to lend his face and voice to the cause of saving the majestic tiger from getting extinct and agreed to become ambassador of "Save Our Tigers" campaign initiated by WWF-India, NDTV and Aircel (*The Hindu, The Tribune, 26 March*).

**Bird Conservation:** Declining of Sparrows population was one of the key issues highlighted during the quarter. Question was raised by a newspaper "Mumbai Mirror" regarding the vanishing population of Sparrows from Mumbai. The city has seen a stark depletion in the number of small-size "common birds". Dr Asad Rahmani, Director, Bombay Natural History Society cites habitat destruction and the indiscriminate use of pesticides and herbicides as the main causes of this depletion (*Mumbai Mirror, Mumbai, 3 January*). After Mumbai, Delhi celebrated World House Sparrow Day, a first of its kind event that tried addressing the problem and looked for a solution. Organized by the Nature Forever Society in collaboration with the Bombay Natural History Society, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ecosystem Foundation of France, Avon Wildlife Trust of UK and several other organizations, the event focused specifically on how to revive the numbers of house sparrow in the city (*Times of India, 20 March*).

**Other Wild life Conservation:** WWF-India's work on conserving endangered Gharial continued with the reintroduction of 63 juvenile Gharials in the river Ganga at the Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary, Uttar Pradesh, this year in January. This initiative is part of an effort to establish a resident breeding population of Gharials at a favorable location in the Ganga (*PANDA- WWF-India's Newsletter, January-April, 2010*).

The police and wildlife activists seized 40 monitor lizards – the fall in the endangered species bracket in Delhi. Wildlife SOS, a Delhi-government partner NGO in wildlife protection initiatives, took the 40 fully grown lizards in their possession for releasing them in wild (*Hindustan Times, Indian Express, New Delhi, 13 January*).

Wildlife Trust of India (WTI), supported by its partner International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), purchased nearly 25 acre Kollegal (Edayarhalli-Dossasampige) elephant corridor from private ownership and transferred to the state government. This will facilitate free movement of nearly 1,000 elephants and other wild species without any human interference through the Kollegal corridor in Karnataka (*Source: Political & Business Daily, The Pioneer, 16 January*).

Sandeep Behera, a scientist associated with the formulation of the action plans to save dolphins and a freshwater species coordinator in World Wildlife Fund (WWF) said that excessive use of pesticides and insecticides for agriculture has destroyed the natural habitat of dolphins in the Ganga (*DNA, Mumbai, 25 March*).

In order to save snakes, scorpion and other poisonous creatures which strayed near human habitations, a villager from Sirsa, Haryana, had set up an organization and named "Snake Friends Organization" in his district. Members of this organization reach the place on phone call if any such creature is noticed, capture it and leave it safely in uninhabited places and jungles (*The Tribune, 22 February*).



Last but not the least, Hon'ble Minister of Environment and Forests, Jai Ram Ramesh launched Traffic India's "Handbook on Wildlife Law Enforcement in India" on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2010 at WWF-India Secretariat in New Delhi. The book is authored by Samir Sinha, Head Traffic-India and was published with support from WWF-India. The handbook is a comprehensive and detailed publication on wildlife trade and crime, conceived after several discussions with senior enforcement officials and experts (*PANDA- WWF-India's Newsletter, January-April, 2010*).

## Parliament

Some of the major issues highlighted in this quarter were Food security, Introduction of GM crops, Solar energy, Water conservation techniques, climate change, tiger conservation etc. Plans of creating "Solar Valleys" across the country were considered to deal with increasing Pollution and exhausting fossil fuels. Ministers of around 10 states had opposed the plans of introducing GM crops in India. One of the major controversy during the quarter was IPCC report on melting Himalayan Glaciers, which was proved wrong by the report issued by MoEF on climate change.

Issues related to environment clearance delay afforestation, river conservation were also discussed Tiger Conservation Planning e.g. launching of tiger information website, various campaign programe, newsletter launching etc. also took place.

### Agriculture



**Food security:** World Food Price Winner Dr. M.S. Swaminathan, eminent agriculture scientist and Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), said that developing seawater

farming and below sea water techniques are vital for combating climate changes like storms and famines. He said Kuttanad, one of India's 25 Ramsar sites, could be a suitable spot for an international below sea-level research and extension centre. He also acclaimed that this centre could feed not just Indian mouths, but those in its neighborhood like Bangladesh, Maldivers and SriLanka too (*Financial Express, 8 January*).

### Alternative Technologies

**Solar power:** Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission, Solar India, was finally launched by Hon'ble Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, after discussions at various levels of the government for years. The initiative was a part of the eight missions of National Action Plan on Climate Change. The plan aims at making the country a global leader in solar energy with installed solar generation capacity of 20,000 mega watts by 2022, 1, 00,000 mw by 2030 and 2, 00,000 mw by 2050. The present solar power output in the country is 500MW. Dr. Singh also called for the creation of "solar valleys" across the country and appealed private investor to view the national Solar Mission as a business opportunity (*Economic Times, Business Standard, Deccan Herald, 12, 23 January*).

**Geothermal Energy:** An India-Iceland workshop on renewable energy was organized in the capital on January 15, 2010, elucidating on how geothermal

energy was the energy of the future. The Minister for New and Renewable Energy, Dr. Farooq Abdullah in the workshop said that bilateral co-operation with Iceland is essential to make progress in geothermal energy development. He also listed out likely areas for cooperation between the two countries including technology transfer in deep drilling reservoir assessment and setting up of geothermal demonstration power plant. The chief guest at the inaugural session was Dr Olafur Ragnar Grimsson, President of Iceland. Ms, Preet Kaur, Minister of state for External Affairs and Dr. R.K. Pachauri, Director General, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and Chairman, Intergovernmental panel on climate Change, also participated in the workshop (*Business Line, Asian Age, 16 January*).

### Biosafety



**Protest against Genetically Modified Crops:**

Kerala government's Agriculture Minister Mullakkara Ratnakaran called upon the people of the state to join the nationwide protest being organized by NGOs on January 30 to protect farming, health and environment. The Minister told that the decision of the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee favoring the release of Bt Brinjal for cultivation in the country lacked transparency (*The Hindu, 23 January*). In one incident, Union Minister of State for Environment and Forests Jai Ram Ramesh faced angry protests at the consultations on Bacillus thuringiensis (BT) brinjal at the Central Research Institute for Dry land Agriculture. After hearing a large no. of farmers, social activists, scientist,

doctors, representatives of NGOs and farmer and consumer organizations, Mr. Ramesh said he would announce his decision on the first GM food crop in the country on February 10 (*The Hindu, The Tribune, The Pioneer, Political & Business Daily, Business Line, Financial Chronicles, Financial Express, Business Standard, 1 February*). On the event of final public hearing on Bt brinjal in Bangalore on February 6, 2010, the Andhra Pradesh government joined Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, West Bengal, Bihar and Tamil Nadu in seeking a postponement of commercial cultivation of the controversial GM product. The three-and-half-hour debate saw the minister lose his temper when he was accused by one of the participants of being an "agent" of biotech giant Monsanto (*Financial Express, The Tribune, Business Standard, Economic Times, Mail Today, 7 February*).

**Socio-economic assessment studies on Bt brinjal:** Union Minister of Environment and Forests Mr. Jai Ram Ramesh's decision came a day ahead of Schedule. He imposed a "moratorium" on the commercialization of Bacillus thuringiensis (Bt) brinjal until such time as long-term scientific studies could establish its safety impacts on human health and the environment. On the other hand, Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar strongly came in support of the introduction of what would have been India's first GM food crop (*Business Standard, Economic Times, Financial Express, Business Line, Mail Today, 10 February*). After the decision on Bt Brinjal, a section of scientific community accused the Minister of holding biased public consultation on the same. They criticized him for putting on hold commercialization of Bt brinjal (*Business Standard, 12 February*). One of the member of the sub-committee and the director of the Tata Institute of

Social Sciences, in a communication sent to Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh informed that though commercial release of genetically modified (GM) brinjal has been put on hold, a proposed study to assess the vegetable's need and possible socio-economic impact on farmers was never done since the Ministry of Environment and Forests had set up a Bt brinjal Technical Review Committee early in 2007 (*Business Standard*, 13 February).

**Bt Brinjal – YES or NO?** - As the Prime Minister received a strong note from Union Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar suggesting that ad hoc decision on GM foods would demoralize Indian scientists and jeopardize R&D crucial to food security. He stepped in to make it clear that Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh will not have the last word on the introduction of Bt Brinjal or any GM (genetically modified) food. The paper informed that recommendations of the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee and the Review Committee of Genetic Manipulation on the safety of transgenic crops would now be considered by a new team — the PM, Agriculture, S&T and Environment & Forests Ministers — rather than be left to Environment & Forests to decide unilaterally (*Indian Express*, February 23).

To justify his freeze on Bt brinjal, Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh claimed that the Bt gene would "destroy the medicinal properties of brinjal", which is used in several "traditional" forms of medicine. This claim, too, is being contested by experts as Ramesh comes under increasing pressure from within his government (*Indian Express*, *The Hindu*, *The Statesman*, *Business Standard*, *Mail Today*, 24 February).

After a meeting called by Prime Minister with Jairam Ramesh and his chief detractors, agriculture minister Sharad Pawar and science & technology minister Prithviraj Chavan, Prime Minister's office issued a statement that essentially backed the environment minister's stand. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh finally decided to go along with the view that the introduction of Bt brinjal should wait till safety tests

are completed and consensus developed on the crop (*Economic Times*, *Business Line*, *Mail Today*, 25 February).

**Climate Change and Meteorology**

**Copenhagen Accord:** Union Minister of State for Environment and Forests Jairam Ramesh said the accord has certain inbuilt hazards and the developing world, especially India, has to be wary on those accounts. The foremost risk can be the demand to end of the Kyoto Protocol by the developed countries (*Economic Times*, *New Delhi*, *Economic Times*, *DNA*, *Mumbai*, 1 January). Inaugurating the 97<sup>th</sup> annual session of the Indian Science Congress, Dr. Singh expressed his dissatisfaction with the outcome at the recent climate change summit at Copenhagen (*The Hindu*, *Hindustan Times*, *Financial Express*, *Economic Times*, *Asian Age*, *Indian Express*, *Mail Today*, *Financial Chronicles*, 4 January).

The group of four major emerging economies Brazil, South Africa, India and China expressed their intention to communicate information on their voluntary mitigation action to the United Nations Framework Convention on climate change (UNFCCC) by January 31. The decision was taken at the second Ministerial-level meeting of the basic group of countries. The basic member had already announced a series of voluntary mitigation action for 2020, with India declaring to reduce its green house gas emission intensity upto 25 percent (*The Hindu*, *Indian Express*, *Financial Express*, *Business Standard*, *Asian Age*, *Business Line*, *Financial Chronicles*, *The Tribune*, *The Pioneer*, *Economic Times*, *New Delhi*, *Deccan Herald*, *Bangalore*, *Indian Express*, *Economic Times*, *Mumbai*, 25 January).

Mr. Jairam Ramesh, in a letter to Danish Minister for climate and Energy, urged Denmark to restart negotiations on climate change in the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) process, in the run-up to the Conference of Parties (COP)-16 scheduled to be held in Mexico (*The Hindu*, *Economic Times*, 29 January).

Finally in March, the news of India agreeing to be part of the Copenhagen

accord came as its climate allies China, Brazil and South Africa continue to remain associated with it. Basic countries were instrumental in framing up the accord in the Danish Capital city Copenhagen on December 18. Union minister of environment Jairam Ramesh said India's listing in the accord is conditional. Furthermore, the accord a political document and not a legally binding one; the accord is not a separate track for negotiations outside the UNFCCC and the purpose of the accord was to bring consensus in the on-going two track process. The two tracks, on which talks will continue from April 2010, are the Long Term Cooperative Action on climate change and extending Kyoto (*Hindustan Times*, 10 March). Also, the minister announced that India will be able to meet the target of cutting carbon intensity by 20 to 25 per cent of the 2005 level by 2020 without affecting growth. He called for balancing economic growth and environment sustainability while planning a roadmap for an eight to nine per cent growth rate (*Asian Age*, 21 March). Finally, Union environment minister Jairam Ramesh reiterated that India will resist all attempts by the United States and other industrialized countries to move climate change talks out of the United Nation's multilateral process (*Business Standard*, *Business Line*, *Mail Today*, *Political & Business Daily*, *Times of India*, *Economic Times*, *Financial Chronicle*, *The Tribune*, 22 February).



**BASIC Group Meet:**

Regarding the submission of action plans to UN

Framework Convention on Climate Change, Minister of State for Environment and Forests Jairam Ramesh said India will forward its domestic goals on climate change as its action plan under the Copenhagen Accord to the Conference of parties (COP) of the UNFCCC by January 31. Ramesh also wrote to the BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India and China) group to have a meeting in New Delhi in the third week of January (*Business Standard*, 7, 11 January). Environment ministers of Brazil, China, South Africa and India

flagged off their weekend consultation in New Delhi with a meeting with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. Prime Minister Singh asked that the "unity and solidarity" that the Basic countries displayed at Copenhagen in formulating the accord be maintained (*Economic Times*, *The Pioneer*, *Hindustan Times*, *Asian Age*, 24 January). Brazil, South Africa, India and China (BASIC) said collectively that the Copenhagen Accord cannot be a basis for drafting a legally binding climate change treaty in Mexico in 2010 but admitted that it could serve as an input. While group said it would stick to the January 31 deadline to communicate about its mitigation action plans to The UNFCCC secretariat, Prime minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh questioned the legal status of the Copenhagen Accord and expressed strong reservation over Danish Premier Lars Lokke Rasmussen and UN Chief Ban-KI-Moon. Dr. Singh expressed his unhappiness over their insistence for definitive follow-up action to the accord before January 31 deadline (*Asian age*, *Mint*, 25 January).

**IPCC:** Union Minister of Environment and Forest Mr. Ramesh cleared, on the comment Voodoo Science by IPCC, that their ministry had issued a report that the glaciers have not retreated abnormally, as warned by IPCC report. He said the new report had clearly justified their position (*The Pioneer*, *Lucknow*, *The Hindu*, *Mail Today*, *The Statesman*, *Mail Today*, *The Pioneer*, *Indian Express*, *Times of India*, *New Delhi*, *Indian Express*, *Mumbai* 19 January). After getting involved in IPCC controversy, Delhi Government's once favorite Climate ambassador, Dr. R.K Pachauri is no more on the list of hopefuls likely to head the prime minister's national solar mission (*DNA*, *Mumbai*, *Political & Business Daily*, *New Delhi*, 28 January, 1 February). Basic Nations, in support of IPCC over its Himalayan Glacier goof up, said that Scientists can make a mistake, but one mistake does not make the science less important (*The Pioneer*, 25 January). Speaking at the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit, organized by RK Pachauri's The Energy and Resource Institute (TERI), Hon'ble Prime Minister lauded Pachauri for his "able and far sighted leadership" in

getting TERI its "well deserved respect and international acclaim", but it did not endorse Pachauri's complaint that he was victim of conspiracy (*The Times of India*, 6 February). Prime minister's special envoy on climate change Shyam Saran defended Pachauri and said Dr. Pachauri should not step down from his post (*Financial Chronicles*, 9 February). Regarding the Government point of view on IPCC chairman, Mr. Ramesh and Hon'ble Prime Minister certified their faith in Dr. Pachauri and said that they will fight any attempt to unseat him. UN Secretary General Ban-Ki-moon, too gave Dr Pachauri full backing. Dr. Pachauri in the support he has got, said that the IPCC has instituted an inquiry. It will reveal the entire thing once the probe is completed (*Economic Times*, *The Pioneer*, *The Hindu*, *Hindustan Times*, *New Delhi*, *Deccan Herald*, *Bangalore*, 16 March). It was reported that Ramesh also planned to restore his ministry's scientific moorings through a global advisory network group on environmental sciences, a Network Group on Environmental Sciences, a national environmental sciences fellow's programme, an expert committee to enhance the scientific capacity of MOEF and an Action Plan to enhance forestry science (*The Tribune*, 5 February).

**Climate Change Prospective:** Indian National Network for Climate Assessment (INCCA)'s first report – an emission inventory of green house gasses of anthropogenic origin of India for 2007 will be released on May 11 while a comprehensive 4X4 assessment of key sectors agriculture, health, water and forest and key geographic hotspots North East, Indian Himalyan region, Western Ghats and coastal areas will be released in November, 2010 (*The Tribune*, 5 February). INCCA, a network-based programme had segmented India into four sectors of agriculture, water resources, biodiversity and health. It had also divided the country into the Himalayan ecosystem, Western Ghats, coastal areas and the North East (*Business Standard*, 7, 11 January). According to Secretary to the Ministry of Earth Sciences Shailesh Naik, India Meteorological Department (IMD) is reported to be working on the development of a model that can

forecast the subtleties of the phenomenon with a fair degree of accuracy into the next five or 10 year. Addressing a session on 'Science Programme for the Country' at the 97<sup>th</sup> Indian Science, Mr. Naik said that this would help India plan ahead in agriculture, which is depended a lot on weather and climate (*The Hindu*, 4 January). An expert group headed by Dr Kirit Parikh was constituted by the planning commission to recommend how India can move towards a low-carbon economy to combat climate change threats. Environment minister Jairam Ramesh said the Group will prepare a detailed roadmap for a low carbon growth strategy without compromising country's economic growth (*Financial Chronicles*, *Mint*, *Hindustan Times*, *Financial Express*, *Business Line*, 5, 11 January).

**Energy Studies**

**Energy Conservation:** Motivated by the savings made at the President's Estate over the past 24 months alone by switching over to energy efficient practices, President Pratibha Patil urged all State Governors to consider and adopt the Rashtrapati Bhavan model of energy conservation in their respective Raj Bhavans. While pointing out that the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy has agreed to offer all possible assistance, including financial, for implementation of programmes to conserve energy and reduce carbon emissions, she suggested that all Raj Bhavans, State Assemblies and Secretariats should take up the offer and lead in energy conservation. The president wants the benefits of water conservation, waste recycle, solar energy and composting to be replicated at large and in Raj Bhavans across the country (*The Hindu*, 25 January).

**Environment conservation**

**Biodiversity:** In response to the constant reminder from the West Bengal Government to the centre on increased intensity of cyclones and erosions, leading to disappearance of certain islands (which threatens the existence of the Sunderbans), Union Environment Minister, Mr. Jairam

Ramesh planned to visit the Sunderbans on January 12 to look into its protection and long-term ecological sustainability. Mr. Ramesh also talked about establishing national Institute for mangrove Research in the Sunderbans area to provide a scientific approach in preserving the country's mangroves (*Business Line, 6 January*).

**Green drive:** The Minister for New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) Mr. Farooq Abdulla at the national conference for GRIHA in New Delhi said that the Government has decided to build new Central Government and PSU Buildings, that will meet at least three star rating under GRIHA (Green Rating for Integrated Habitat Assessment). He said that it is time to work towards a world free of fossil fuels (*Business Line, 6 January*).

Seeking to show his government's commitment to "combating global warming and climate change", the Finance Minister, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee proposed a slew of measures. These include:

1. Onetime grant to set up effluent treatment plants
2. Full excise exemptions to electric car makers
3. Introduction of 'soleckshaw'
4. Solar powered rickshaw
5. Extra funds for clean energy and National Ganga River Basin Authority
6. Concessional excise duty of 4 per cent to solar powered rickshaws manufactured by the CSIR that would run on batteries.
7. Central excise duty exemption to rotor blades for wind energy generators.
8. Import of compostable polymer had been exempted from basic customs duty.
9. Clean Energy Cess on coal produced in India as well as on imported in India as well as on imported coal at a rate of Rs 50 per ton
10. A concessional customs duty of 5 per cent to machinery instruments, equipment and appliances for the initial setting up of photo voltaic and solar thermal power generating units

11. Central excise duty on LED lights reduced from 8 per cent to 4 per cent.
12. The allocation for National Ganga River Basin Authority has been doubled to Rs. 500 crore.

A special golden jubilee package of Rs. 200 crore has also been proposed to deal with erosion of beaches in Goa and for increasing the green cover of the state (*The Statesman, The Pioneer, The Tribune, Business Standard, Indian Express, Hindustan Times, New Delhi, 27 February*).

**Future perspective:** The Ministry for Environment and Forests was reported to be negotiating an integrated coastal zone management project worth \$ 200 million with the World Bank, of which \$ 50 million will be allocated for the estuarine islands of the Sunderbans. Union Minister of State for Environment, Jairam Ramesh said that the funds will be employed for eco tourism development, coastal erosion protection, improvement of the livelihood of the people construction of cyclone shelters, electrification projects and building capacity of universities and institutes that provide technical support (*The Hindu, 14 January*). Jammu & Kashmir Minister for Forests, Main Atlatf replied to a question of Moulvi Iftikhar Hussain Ansari (PDP) in the assembly in Jammu about formulating an environment policy to regulate development activities in eco-friendly basis by the Jammu and Kashmir Government (*Financial Chronicle, 3 March*). Environment Minister, Mr. Jairam Ramesh said that the Government will table a Bill in Parliament in the monsoon session for setting up the NEPA. NEPA will subsume the work of the Central Pollution Control Board and will also handle the licensing work of providing no-objection certificates to applicants seeking environmental clearance (*Business Line, 17 March*).

Apart from this, the Economic Survey, tabled in Parliament, states that India's Five Year Plans include a strategy low-carbon sustainable development. According to the Planning Commission's estimates, emission

intensity declined by 17.6 per cent between 1990 and 2005, and a further 20-25 per cent reduction is possible (*Asian Age, 26 February*).

**Environmental Education, NGOs and Media**

**Studies on Environment :** The Minister of Environment and Forests Mr. Jairam Ramesh said that a study on equity of exiting carbon space in the atmosphere had been commissioned and it will be crucial in determining the quantum or reduction in the emission of greenhouse gases (GHG). A paper was asked to prepare on the same and was expected to be submit in April (*Business Line, 8 February*).

**Workshops and Seminars:** India will host an international tiger conference on February 14 to highlight the steps being taken to save the endangered animal which is on the brink of extinction. This was stated by Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh at a function after launching the website on the database of wildlife crime related to tigers (*The Pioneer, 7 January*).



Two-day National Workshop on Conservation of Ganga Dolphins was organized in Patna. The workshop identified two critical stretches of river in Bihar that has enough breeding potential. Chief Minister Nitish Kumar emphasized on the need of proper action plan for conserving dolphins and training fishermen. Speaking on the occasion, chairman of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), R.R Reeves said that stopping incidental killing of dolphins is the biggest challenge (*Hindustan Times, Patna, 24 February*)

**EIA**

**Environment Clearance:** All the discussion in the Government revolved around the delay in Environmental clearances to a number of projects

because of Environment ministry. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh asked Planning Commission to come up with a process that can give faster environment clearances to infrastructure projects, after three ministers complained to him about delays (*Hindustan Times, 25 March*). Media reported that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had constituted a five member ministerial committee to review and clear pending infrastructure projects that were stuck because of the Environment Ministry's insistence that they lacked appropriate clearances (*Indian Express, 26 March*). In contradiction to this news, came news from Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh, where he denied about any such ministerial panel to give environment clearances, and said his ministry would continue to give approvals to infrastructure projects (*Business Standard, 27 March*). On the issue of providing early Environmental clearances, Mr. Ramesh said the environment impact assessment of the projects would have to be prepared in two years with outer limit of three years. It is only after this process, including that of public hearings, is completed that a final decision would be taken by the environment ministry on granting environment clearance (*Hindustan Times, 27 March*).

In a yet another news, he blamed the State governments for the delays in forest clearances for coal mining projects (*The Hindu, 27 March*).

Jairam Ramesh could be facing a lot of heat from his cabinet colleagues over infrastructure projects in reserve forests, but a plenty of support from leading environmentalists had backed him. He said that three acts-the Environment Protection Act, the Forests Conservation Act and the Wildlife Protection Act- are the trishul (trident) of his dharma. He added that even Hon'ble Prime Minister had made it very clear that "All these Acts should be followed and they can't develop infrastructure and sacrifice ecological security" (*Mail Today, 27 March*). The minister also added that no fast-tracking is possible in providing Environment and Forest clearances that had led to infrastructure projects delays. According to him, 35 per cent of coal mining areas across the country are located in 'no go' zones, where

environmental clearances cannot be given (*Financial Chronicle, 30 March*).

**Forest Conservation**

**Afforestation Drives:** The Union Forest and Environment Minister, Mr. Jairam Ramesh at 10th Editors Conference on Social Sector Issues 2010, expressed confidence over the inclusion of Sikkim into the exclusive list of Himalayan States receiving 'green bonus' from the fiscal as a compensatory measure for conserving forests that act as carbon sinks (*Business Line, January 20*). Assam State Minister Tarun Gogoi called for public awareness about forest conservation to maintain ecological balance in Assam. Releasing a coffee-table book—'incredible Dibru-Saikhowa National Park'—at the State Secretariat conference hall, Gogoi laid stress on good marketing strategy to increase tourist inflow into the State (*The Sentinel, Guwahati, 3 February*).

**Conservation Acts and Policies:** The Environment Ministry accused the Karnataka government of violating Forest act by allowing mining in 5,000 sq.km of reserved forest. In his letter, Mr. Ramesh made it clear that while the state government may have approved the proposal to throw open reserved forests for mining. The final authority lies with the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests as per the Forest Conservation Act, 1980 (*Economic Times, 24 February*). He further added that 35 per cent total coal fields in the country lay in heavily forested or ecologically fragile areas and should be barred from mining. Ramesh informed that his ministry had conducted a study of the coal fields using satellite pictures, based on which, they had identified the "go" zones and "no-go" zones (*Indian Express, 27 March*).

**Fresh and Marine water conservation**

**Ganga river conservation:** Union Minister of Environment and Forests, Mr. Jairam Ramesh said that the centre plans to save the river by making it "nirmal" (clean) and "aviral" (free flowing) by 2020. He added that World Bank has also committed at least one billion dollars for assistance in cleaning up the heavily polluted Ganga in the first phase. The clean-up involves building

modern sewage treatment; revamping drains and other measures to improve the quality of the badly polluted rivers. He informed that a proposal to the 13<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission had been made stating that the costs of operating and maintaining sewage treatment plants (STPs) along the Ganga River be borne by the Centre (*The Pioneer, Lucknow, 1 January*). According to a notification of the Union Ministry for Forests and Environment, an authority is required in each state, where Ganga flows for assigning the task of formulating a river basin management plan, besides regulating activities aimed at prevention, control and abatement of pollution in the river to maintain its water quality. Regarding the same, Patna High Court asked the Bihar state government to file a reply to a petition alleging that Bihar was yet to set up an authority to conserve the Ganga (*Hindustan Times, Patna, 13 March*).

**Yamuna river conservation:** The Minister admitted that while there is no dearth of funds for river cleaning projects, the Union and State governments needed to pay more attention to river cleaning projects to make them viable (*The Hindu, 25 February*). Following the report of the Central report of the Central Pollution Control Board that the river is full of so much excreta that its water resembles that of a drain, Union Environment and Forests Minister Jairam Ramesh had called a high level meeting to review the status of the projects related to cleaning of the Yamuna (*The Pioneer, 9 March*).

**Health and Sanitation**

**Hazardous Waste:** Union Minister of Environment Jairam Ramesh warned against the growing menace of hazardous waste entering the food chain. He talked about National Plan for Remediation Projects (NPRP) being set up with Rs. 300 Crore assistance from the World Bank. He further added that in the next five years, the NPRP would take up the storage, treatment and disposal of environmental waste dump sites. He informed that two major sites are being set up in Andhra Pradesh and another eight in West Bengal (*Asian Age, 13 March*).

**Pollution**

**Industrial Pollution:** The Union Environment & Forest Minister, Jairam Ramesh sanctioned Rs 220 Crore under the National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) for providing sewerage system and sewage treatment plants in the selected 5 towns of Punjab namely Nawanshahr, Banga, Jalandhar, Phagwara and Phillaur (*Political & Business Daily, 30 January*). Environment and Forests Minister Jairam Ramesh said that he hopes the environment cess proposed by Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee would be utilized for clean-up activities in the 88 critically polluted industrial clusters identified by the Environment Ministry. From April 1, all vehicles would have to comply with Euro-IV emission norms across 13 major cities. Euro-III emission norms would be applicable across the country later this year (*Business Standard, Asian Age, 13 March*).

**Water management**

**Water Conservation:** Launching the regional knowledge hub for water and climate change adaptation in south Asia at The Energy and Research Institute (TERI), Water Resource Minister P.K Bansal emphasized the centrality of water to economic growth and life. Expressing concern about depleting water reserves and the urgency of efficient water management, he reminded that while India fed 17% of the world's population it had access to only 4% of the world's water reserves (*Times of India, 5 February*). Addressing a conference on "Water Management of the Ancient Tamils". Tamilnadu Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi stressed on the need for better water management and schemes to harvest rainwater, reiterating experts' warning that a water crisis would lead to major problems in the world (*The Hindu, 29 March*).

**Wildlife Management**

**Tiger Conservation:** Media clipping for the quarter January to March, 2010 clearly showed the main concern of Environment and Forest Ministry to conserve the endangered cat- Tiger. At the starting of this year Ramesh inaugurated India's first dedicated website [www.tigernet.nic.in](http://www.tigernet.nic.in) to report on

every big cat mortality be it within the 37 tiger reserves in 17 states or outside. This website is the outcome of collaboration between the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) and Traffic-India, at WWF-India. Besides the Website, Ramesh also launched a bi-monthly newsletter of the NTCA called "Stripes", which is billed as one of the Government's "communication strategies" given the importance accorded to the national animal (*The Pioneer, Political & Business Daily, 1, 2, 7 January*). Ministry of Environment and Forests was reported to consider the aid from the World Bank for moving forest dwellers out of tiger reserves and the issue was expected to be discussed with conservationists (*Indian Express, 5 January*). Because of the continuous pressure from the wildlife experts and official had forced Minister of State for Environment Jairam Ramesh, who was keen to access the World Bank funds, to shelve the plan (*The Pioneer, The Hindu, New Delhi, Economic Times, Mumbai, 7 January*).

Road Transport and Highways Minister Kamal Nath finally proposed an alternative route that circumvents the Pench Tiger Reserve to complete the North-South corridor. Earlier, his ministry had suggested widening an existing 18-metre road passing through the reserve, but this was opposed by the Environment Ministry because it endangers the tigers' natural habitat in Pench. The new route will not only protect the reserve but also serve as a vehicle for economic development of the region (*Indian Express, 16 February*). A cabinet decision by Karnataka's BJP government to open up the state's forests, including the Bandipur tiger reserve, for mining had evoked a stern warning from Environment and Forests Minister Jairam Ramesh. In a letter to Karnataka chief minister B. S. Yeddyurappa, Ramesh said that disturbing any forest land can be done only with the prior permission of the ministry of Environment And Forests (*Mail Today, 1, 5 March*).

The Union Minister of Environment and Forests, Jairam Ramesh wrote letter to Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and asked him to shift a tiger and a tigress from Ranthambore National Park (RNP)

to Sariska in coordination with the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) (*Mail Today, 15 March*). Environment minister Jairam Ramesh also wrote to Uttarakhand chief minister Ramesh Pokhriyal not to permit any more resorts around Corbett. He also persuaded Manmohan Singh to monitor whether state governments are taking steps to protect the sanctity of reserves (*DNA, Mumbai, 22 March*).

Hon'ble Prime Minister was reported to personally take up the matter of unnatural deaths of tigers in various national parks of the country in some of the concerned states. Chairing the fifth meeting of the National Board of Wildlife (NBWL) at his official residence, the Prime Minister mooted the formation of a conservation foundation in each of the protected areas (PAs) on the lines of the tiger foundations being set up in each tiger reserve. Union Environment and Forests Minister Jairam Ramesh said Prime Minister Manmohan Singh will also talk to state governments on the delay in notifying buffer zones in protected areas which was having a negative impact on wildlife (*Deccan Herald, Bangalore, The Tribune, New Delhi, 21, 22, March*).

The West Bengal Forest Minister Ananta Roy admitted that the ongoing tiger census in the Sunderbans may not yield accurate results as the big cats often strayed into the Bangladesh side of the forest (*The Hindu, Asian Age, 27 March*). The Madhya Pradesh Forest Minister Sartaj Singh told the Assembly that the tiger population has declined over the years in the national parks and wildlife sanctuaries (*Asian Age, 27 March*).

Union Minister of State for Environment Jairam Ramesh hoped that India would become a pioneer in reducing the use of animals in experiments by adopting alternative methods. Inaugurating a national conference of the Committee for the Purpose of Control and Supervision of Experiments on Animals (CPCSEA), Mr. Ramesh said that India must refine technology and replace animals in experiments (*The Hindu, The Tribune, 16 January*).

**Government**

With the declaration of Year 2010, as "Tiger Year", Government seemed to be most interested in conserving its national animal first. This quarter witnessed some of the landmarks in Tiger conservation steps. Other than this, News like constitution of Tiger protection foundation, launch of wildlife census, Increase in the number of tiger population in some reserves and opening of new tiger reserves in the country had flooded the newspapers all across the country. Promotion of Solar Energy & other renewable Energy were also witnessed during this quarter. Issues related to Water conservation, Forest Conservation and pollution prevention were well highlighted in the media. Along with this, environmental awareness campaigns organized to promote environment conservation.

**Agriculture**

**Biofuels and Biodiesel Production:** The predominant concern of the Government Bodies during the quarter January to March remained the use of Agricultural practices for the bio fuel production. Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), the country's biggest oil marketing company, is looking to acquire 50,000 hectares of wasteland in Uttar Pradesh for plantation of non-edible oilseeds, such as jatropha and karanja for biodiesel production (*Business Standard, 5 January*). A reduction of 10-15 per cent in smoke density had been observed with the use of biodiesel blends during the extensive field trials, conducted by IOC using five and 10 per cent biodiesel blends in collaboration with Indian Railways and Haryana Roadways. The Union Cabinet last month approved a national policy on biofuels that aims to implement 20 per cent blending of biodiesel with diesel and ethanol with petrol by 2017 (the current rule is 5 per cent).

**Alternate Technology**

**Solar Power:** Development of one solar city in India, use of more and more renewable resources and implementation of Green Cess on Industries by Karnataka were the main focus of Government in the quarter January-March. Haryana Renewable Energy Development Agency (HAREDA) has initiated a programme of installation of solar photovoltaic (SPV) street lighting systems in villages having 50% or more concentration of SC population (*Financial Express, Business Line, 5 January*). Haryana govt initiated the process of registration of developers of small-scale solar photovoltaic (SPV) rooftop power plants to be included under the National Solar Mission (NSM). HAREDA said two types of solar power projects will be included under the NSM. These include

large capacity (above 3 mw) projects and small scale (up to 500 kw and 1mw-3mw) connected to the grid (*Financial Express, 29 March*). While the Delhi Government on its part already gives a heavy subsidy on solar energy equipment, the Centre had also done its part in the Budget 2010 proposals, thereby giving a boost to the generation as well as consumption of clean solar energy in the Capital. Union Budget 2010 had opened a world of opportunities for solar equipment manufacturers by reducing the customs duty on solar panels by 5 per cent and had also waived off the excise duty on solar photovoltaic panels (*Political & Business Daily, 8 March*). Jammu and Kashmir government under its *Green Campaign* will light up 191 remote and mountainous hamlets with solar energy (*Political & Business Daily, 17 March*). One of the significant news that came in *Business Line* on 5 January was that India and Japan had decided to jointly develop one solar city in India. The project aims to reduce a minimum of 10 percent of its projected demand of conventional energy by the end of five years through energy efficiency measures and generation from renewable energy installations. The Government has, so far, given in-principle approval to 34 cities in the country to be developed as solar cities.

**Renewable Energy promotion:** Railway Ministry asked its officials to consider the potential of accessing subsidy schemes and fiscal incentives offered under the wind power programme as well as the National Solar Mission for use for renewable energy in the sector (*Business line, 19 January*). In order to raise funds for supporting renewable energy initiative, Karnataka Government was reported to go before the State power regulator seeking permission to impose a "Green Cess" on industries (*The Hindu, 30 January*). Haryana government had formulated

Rs 85-crore project for setting up 50,000 family size biogas plants to harness the potential of generating biogas for cooking and organic manure in the field (*Financial Express, 8 February*). Also, Gujarat Industrial Investment Corporation (GIIC), a state PSU, decided to launch a Gujarat 3-G (growth, golden jubilee celebration and green initiatives) fund worth Rs. 5,000 Crore. The state government determined to ensure supply of funds to the companies willing to go for latest technologies necessary for adoption of renewable sources of energy (*Economic Times, Mumbai, 16 March*).

Some of the other major news includes exploration of ways by Coal India (CIL) to earn carbon credits from its mining operations. Projects to capture ventilation air methane (VAM) from coal blocks were reported to be set up by CIL (*Economic Times, 12 March*). ONGC registered its first CDM project on renewable energy with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) with effect from March 01, 2010. It is a 51 MW wind power project located at Bhuj in Gujrat (*Times of India, 16 March*).

**Biosafety**

**Genetically Modified Crops:** All over India, people are concerned about the new varieties of transgenic crops being experimented in India, such as Bt brinjal, Bt rice etc. This quarter showed a clear picture of the BT crop market in India. Most of the states discarded the use of Bt Brinjal. A US based Biotech firm, "Monsanto" studied the effects of Bt brinjal on Health and revealed that GM food can damage liver and kidneys. The findings came to light after Monsanto was forced to publish its raw data on safety tests by anti- GM campaigners. This adds to the evidence that GM crops may damage health as

well as be harmful to the environment (Mail Today, 23 January).



Ten State government (Mizoram, Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Gujarat, Punjab and Rajasthan) decided not to allow Bt. Brinjal at a conference in Kerala organized by the agriculture department and biodiversity board of the state government in Thiruvanthapuram (Business Standard, 4 February). Biosafety aspects of the Bt brinjal was also a major issue of concern among concern Govt departments. Director of Public Health, S. Elango asked for clarification on the bio-safety of Genetically Modified (GM) mosquitoes being developed by researchers globally to combat vector-borne diseases such as malaria, chikungunya and dengue (The Hindu, 23 February).

**Climate change and Meteorology**

The discussion during this quarter revolved mainly around the demand for more information about climate change, especially Controversy on IPCC reports, Himalayan blunder by IPCC, resignation issue of IPCC Chief R.K. Pachauri, global warming including its impacts, conferences and panels for discussion of related issues etc. This quarter witnessed a huge pile of controversies associated with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

**Basic Meet:** At the start of this year, a top Chinese official called for a meeting of China, India, Brazil and South Africa- the BASIC group - to coordinate their positions once again (The Hindu, 4 January).

**IPCC:** The IPCC expressed "regret" over "poor application of well-established procedures" in substantiating an estimated rate of recession and date for disappearance of the Himalayan glaciers. The United Nations body admitted that in drafting the paragraph in question, the clear and well-established standards of evidence,

required by the IPCC procedures, were not applied properly (The Hindu, Asian Age, Business Standard, MINT, Business Line, Hindustan Times, Mail Today, Economic Times, New Delhi, Indian Express, Lucknow, 21 January). On the other hand, VK Raina, who spearheaded the 'A State-of-the-Art Review of Glacial Studies, Glacial Retreat and Climate Change', demanded an apology from IPCC chief RK Pachauri "in writing" and said that all other scientists associated with the report should be "dumped in dustbin" (The Pioneer, Lucknow, 19 January). Syed Iqbal Hasnain, the man behind the alarmist report of Himalayan glaciers getting disappeared by 2035, blamed the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) expert who had included the information in an IPCC report. He said that he has not mentioned any date or year on the likely disappearance of Himalayan glaciers. Author M.B. Lal has in turn answered that Hasnain's 1999 statement had made it to the British magazine Scientist, from there to a 2005 report of WWF and from there to the IPCC report (Free Press Journal, Mumbai, The Telegraph, Kolkata, 21 January).

All this controversy brought in the rumor of Dr. Pachauri resignation from IPCC Chairmanship and that strong action being taken against the scientist. But Dr. Pachauri ruled out both the rumors saying erroneous forecast about Himalayan glaciers had not hurt its credibility and that he never had the intention of resigning (The Telegraph, Kolkata, 24 January). He said he has to complete the fifth assessment report which is scheduled for 2013 and in future performance of every lead author will be under scrutiny (Economic Times, Times of India, Financial Express, Indian Express, Hindustan Times, 24 January). Pachauri admitted that this glacier mistake has damaged the panel's credibility (Economic Times, 4 February) but on the other hand he refused to apologies for a false claim made in by the UN climate change panel headed by him by saying he can't be personally responsible of every word in a 3000 page report (Hindustan Times, 4 February).

Government stepped forward to



support Dr. Pachauri after he agreed to accommodate one Indian scientist from the environment ministry in the IPCC Bureau as the chair's nominee while preparing the panel's fifth assessment report (Economic Times, The Tribune, Asian Age, Times of India, Business Standards, Mail Today, The Hindu, 5 February). UN top climate change officials firmly back intergovernmental panel on climate change (IPCC) and its chairman, Dr. Pachauri and Yvo De Boer, Executive secretary of the United National Framework Convention on Climate Change. Boer described Dr. Pachauri as a "Tall Tree that can collect lot of wind (of criticism) (Hindustan Times, Financial Express, Financial Chronicles, The Pioneer, 5 February). The European Union also came out in support of IPCC chaired by Indian scientist Dr. Pachauri by saying that the row over misleading data cannot be the basis to challenge an IPCC document. Ms. Teresa, Spain's secretary of state for climate change and the president of EU council of Environment Ministers asserted that they fully support IPCC report. However, she conceded that adequate quality control of information is required for a scientific report of this nature, while offering help for the same. (Asian Age, The Hindu, 7 February).

In order to fill the gaps in the scientific knowledge and relevant data, India has agreed to provide the institutional inputs to the UN (IPCC's) 5th assessment report. The Union Environment Ministry, in October 2009, had set up the Indian network for climate change assessment (INCCA) to generate indigenous climatic data. The INCCA is expected to come out with a comprehensive report in November after concluding its 4X4 assessment in four sectors- agriculture, water, natural ecosystem, biodiversity and health – for four regions – North East, The Indian Himalayan region, the Western Ghats and the coastal areas (Business Line, Asian Age, 5 February).

In the last days of February, 2010, an announcement came by UN that an independent board of scientists will be

appointed to review the world's top climate science panel, which has been accused of sloppy work (Business Line, Hindustan Times, Mint, Economic Times, Asian Age, Political & Business Daily, Times of India, 27 February). One of the world's most credible scientific Netherlands-based group agreed to the U.N.'s request to review the panel's work. It will not go over all the vast amount of data in climate science but will instead look at focus on how the panel does its job, in light of the unsettling errors that have surfaced recently (Times of India, Financial Chronicle, Asian Age, MINT, 12 March).

The government might have backed Dr. Pachauri, but it had also sent a long and detailed advisory on how the panel could improve its operations (Times of India, 25 March). The Government also suggested to the Inter Academy Council introduction of RTI "Right to Information" to the U.N.'s climate change system (The Hindu, 25 March). At the end of this entire episode, Dr. Pachauri, chief of the UN's climate change body had apologized for his organization's handling of complaints about errors in the IPCC's report. The chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) also apologized for describing Indian government report that challenged the IPCC's claims about the rapid melting of Himalayan glaciers as "voodoo science" (Financial Express, Mumbai, Indian Express, New Delhi, 28 March).



**Emission Cut Targets:**

In a bid to cut the carbon emission, the

Expert Group on Low Carbon Economy will chalk out a road map by September. The 26-member group, headed by former planning Commission member Mr. Kirit Parikh, held its first meeting and expected to come up with an interim report soon (Financial Chronicle, Business line, 21 January). In the end of January, India submitted emission cut proposal of bringing down its GDP by 20-22% by 2020 as compared to 2005 to U.N. (The Hindu, 31 January) excluding agriculture sector (Hindustan Times, 31 January, Economic

Times, Indian Express, Business Line, Business Standard, 1 February). The Union government made it clear in its document to United Nations Frame work convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) that this cut off figure is voluntary and not legally binding (Mail Today, 3 February)

**Funds for climate change:** The newly-formed climate change department of the Gujarat government received its first budgetary allocation. The state government has provided Rs 100 crore in Budget 2010-11 for the department, which was set up in 2009, to address the challenge posed by global warming. The state has earmarked Rs 10 crore for Climate Change Trust Fund to be set up to conduct research, development and commercialization of green technology (Economic Times, 26 February).

**Studies on Environment:** One more expert opinion about the Himalayan glaciers at the end of this Quarter came from ISRO. The retreat of Himalayan glaciers and loss in a real extent were monitored in selected basins in J&K, Himachal Pradesh, Uttaranchal and Sikkim, under a programme on space-based global climate change observation by Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) and it showed that Himalayan glaciers retreated by 16% in the last nearly five decades due to climate change (Times of India, 28 March).

India sailed on the first Southern Ocean expedition to study climate change and its impact on life, after the Copenhagen meet (Times of India, 4 January).

**Disaster Management**

**Mapping of flood prone areas:** It was informed by a newspaper that in 2010 India plans to start Rs 125-crore World Bank-assisted flood hazard level estimation project for identifying flood-prone areas all along its 5,500-km coastal mainland to combat disasters. It will produce a .5 metre elevation contour map (1:10,000 scale) to delineate hazard line up to a width of 7 km from shoreline on landward side. Flood level will be estimated from existing tide gauge date (at every port) and will be based on return interval or

100 years. Also, Erosion line will be estimated by comparing time series shoreline date and a 3-D digital elevation model will be developed. This will put India in the league of US and UK.

**Energy Studies**

**Energy Conservation:** Growing electricity bills these days is a major problem to all big and small corporate houses, which increase overheads to intolerable heights. Everyone is fighting hard to reduce the same. The Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), which spends Rs 30 Crore over electricity bills every year, was reported to adopt energy efficiency measures in next few months. It will be replacing the 40W bulbs with retrofit type T5 bulbs and CFL lamps in hospital buildings, office buildings, dispensary and health centres (Times of India, 11 March).

Government has been continuously talking about energy savings and looking for the most efficient ways to use the available resources and maximize the benefits. In this direction, a study by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) found that India can save 75.36 billion kilowatt hour of power every year simply by using energy efficient BEE star-labeled appliances. The study found that using energy efficiency appliances such as BEE-rated refrigerators, air-conditioners, lights and fans could reduce the monthly electricity bill by 28 to 38 per cent (Hindustan Times, 16 March).

**Environment Conservation**

**Biodiversity Conservation:** As the year 2010 was declared as International Year of Biodiversity, to mark its commitment to biodiversity conservation, India is all set to host the 11<sup>th</sup> COP to the CBD in October 2012. India is all prepared to take the lead in pushing for a single legally binding treaty for access to and benefit sharing of biological resources at the 10<sup>th</sup> Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to be held at Nagoya, Japan, in October, 2010. The convention established three main goals conservation of biological diversity, sustainable use of its component, and

fair and equitable sharing of the benefits from the use of generic resources. This meeting will discuss the adoption of an international protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) (The Hindu, Business Standard, The Pioneer, Financial Chronicles, Economic Times, New Delhi, Business Standard, Kolkata, 5 January).

In February starting, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) signed the minutes of discussion (MoD) with the Sikkim government to assist in the state's biodiversity conservation & Forest management projects. The main objective was to improve livelihood of the local people, who are dependent on forests, by promoting sustainable biodiversity conservation, afforestation & income generation activities, including ecotourism for community development (Economic Times, Kolkata, 10 February).

A Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel, to recommend steps and help government to preserve, conserve and rejuvenate the ecologically sensitive and significant region has been set up by MoEF. The initial task of the panel will be to assess the current ecological states of Western Ghats region and to demarcate areas within the region that should be earmarked for notification as ecologically sensitive zones under the Environment (Protection) Act 1986. It is estimated that the Western Ghats, spread across six states of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Goa, Maharashtra and Gujarat, neutralize 4 million tons of carbon equivalent to 14 million tons of carbon dioxide annually. This accounts for 10 per cent of the total greenhouse gas emissions neutralized by the India's forests. (Business Line, 5 March).

**Illegal Mining:** In this quarter, Government took some strict decisions to stop illegal Mining with the aim of protecting Environment. The Haryana government told the Supreme Court that there is no going back on its decision to cancel all mining leases for major minerals in the Aravalli hills as these had been executed mostly to extract minor minerals and that too without undertaking ecological rehabilitation measures. It was categorical that no mining would be

allowed in the following areas:

- Areas which have already been operated in the past and on which restoration and Rehabilitation work is yet to be carried out
- Within one kilometer of Delhi-Haryana border
- Within a distance of 2 km from eco-sensitive zone of Badkhal lake
- Areas close to habitation and natural water bodies
- Areas in close proximity to high traffic volume Gurgaon - Faridabad Road
- Areas with good and healthy vegetation cover

The state said it has demarcated only 600 hectares in Faridabad for mining of minor minerals even at the cost of losing huge revenue. It has also proposed an extensive rehabilitation plan in the Aravalli and a detailed proposal has been submitted before the special bench of the Supreme Court (Times of India, Hindustan Times, Indian Express, 13 March).

**Green Games:** With the national capital all set to host the 2010 Commonwealth Games, Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit appealed to Delhiites to come forward and help municipal bodies in keeping the city clean (The Hindu, 15 March). Also, to make these upcoming Games a real green event, 424km of the Capital's roads was reported to be laid anew with international recycling, plastic use and micro surfacing technologies (The Hindu, 13 February)

**Environment Education, NGO and media**

**Environment Awareness Campaigns:** A number of awareness campaigns were launched with the support of Government. To start with, Gujarat government launched a state-wide campaign to create awareness on climate change and its impact on environment and human life. The Gujarat Ecology Commission (GEC) under the state department of Forests and Environment was the nodal agency for the campaign. The idea of the campaign was to educate the masses about climate change and to tell them what they can do at individual level to

reduce its impact (Business Line, February 24).

With an aim to increase the participation of common people, the Commonwealth Games organizing committee organized a function to celebrate '200 Days-to-Go' at India Gate. On the eve of the World Water Day, a "Signature Campaign" was arranged to develop a sense of ownership towards the environment and water conservation. Jute bags were also distributed to 200 Days-to-Go event spectators in order to encourage the use of eco-friendly materials over plastic bags (The statesman, March 22).

A three day three-day national seminar on 'Applications of Biotechnology & Development of Bihar' was organized at the Birla Institute of Technology. The participatory scientists and academicians emphasized the need to create an institute dedicated to biotechnology research and product development in the state. Prof. R.K. Sinha of Patna University drew attention to the pollution in Ganga River because of excessive use of fertilizers (Hindustan Times, Patna, March 25, 2010).

EIA

Some environmentalists passionately oppose every kind of development threatening the environment at whatever scale - low or high. Sometimes government is accused of delaying the process of providing environmental clearance to developmental projects. Should we stop all kinds of development or do we have to look at things in a more realistic way? Do we need development at the cost of Environment? Government in this quarter has addressed the complaints of illegal Mining, formulated new norms for environment clearance and even alleged of delaying clearances.

**Environmental Clearance:** Police found illegal mining from the nearby Aravalli Hills and tree-felling in this Capital's only protected Asola Bhatti Sanctuary (Indian Express, March 16).

Ridge Management Board (RMB)

denied giving green clearance to Municipal Corporation of Delhi's plan to create a new garbage disposal dump at the abandoned Bhatti mines area in the Ridge. MCD said the Bhatti mine area, if reclaimed, could meet the requirement of disposal of municipal solid waste of Delhi for the next 25 years. A proposal was submitted before RMB for allotment of this land for Engineered Sanitary Landfill site. On RMB's recommendation, an environment impact assessment (EIA) study was carried out by MCD to find out the suitability of Bhatti mines as an SLF site that fell close to the Asola Sanctuary. The EIA study clearly indicates that Asola Sanctuary fell outside the demarcated SLF site at Bhatti mines and the RMB has in principle cleared the proposal. (Times of India, 16 March).

After facing allegations of delaying project approvals, Environment Ministry implied that it would hence forth not take more than two to three years to give its approval for infrastructure projects (Hindustan Times, March 26). The Ministry of Environment and Forests came out with new norms for environmental clearances. The Ministry decided that from July all final environment impact assessment reports-essential for any clearance- must be prepared only by agencies accredited by the National Accreditation Board of Education and Training and the quality Council of India. Consultants must include an accreditation certificate with the report. The Ministry has also decided to put a time limit on the validity of the terms of reference issued to undertake detailed assessment reports, effective from April (The Hindu, March 26).

**Forest Conservation**

**Forest Cover:** Forests are among the first casualties as human populations explode. An insatiable thirst for land has shrunk India's forest cover alarmingly. In this case, a rejoicing news came from the India State of Forest Report 2009 that despite pressing needs for land in various developmental projects, the national Capital ranks third in terms of percentage of geographical area under tree cover after Lakshadweep and

Chandigarh. The report said that while the forest cover increased slightly by 14 sq km, the capital city's tree cover rose by 16 sq km from 107 sq km to 123 sq km during the two-year period, mainly due to plantation drive by state government. Delhi's forest and tree cover have increased to 176.58 sq km between 2005 and 2007, thereby constituting 20.2 per cent of the total geographical area of the capital city (The Pioneer, 4 January).

**Forest Conservation:** In order to maintain the trend Delhi's chief minister Sheila Dikshit asked school children to take care of the trees to help in improving surviving rate. Dikshit was speaking at the inaugural function of a four-day Annual Eco-meet at National Bal Bhavan in the Capital. Dikshit lauded role of people in making Delhi a pollution-free city up to some extent (The Pioneer, 13 January). Responding to the urgent need to stop the depletion, Delhi government increased the penalty amount for cutting trees to Rs 28,000 from a mere Rs 1,000/-. Earlier People, who wanted to cut a tree for some reason, had to take permission and deposit Rs 1,000 per tree as security money with the government. Half the money was refunded after planting 10 saplings for cutting each tree. The amount has now been increased to Rs 28,000, 50 per cent of which will be refunded (Hindustan Times, The Pioneer, Indian Express, February 25).

**Afforestation Programmes:** On the other hand, the Thirteenth Finance Commission (TFC) has recommended a special fiscal incentive to states for promoting Afforestation. The fund would be available during 2010-15 and the centre can distribute this amount among the states that perform well. For the five-year period between 2005-10, it had earmarked Rs 1,000 crore for maintenance of forests by states. The TFC has appointed The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and the Indian Institute of Forest Management, Bhopal, to study the possible ways of sustainable development with environmental responsibility (Economic Times, 27 January).

In the end of March, Chief Minister



Sheila Dikshit launched a greening project in east Delhi and said efforts are being made to implement such steps at all construction sites in the capital. Dikshit planted saplings on the occasion of World Forestry Day. Finance Minister Ashok Kumar Walia was also present on the occasion. (The Pioneer, 22 March). With Rs. 1.8 Crore a forestation fund in its kitty, the Delhi Government set a target of completing plantation of saplings by the monsoon-end at 52 hectares of land in Aya Nagar in South Delhi (Political & Business Daily, 26 March).

**Fresh and Marine Water Conservation**

In this quarter, it can be easily noticed that a good weightage had been provided to Fresh and marine water conservation. Be it the steps taken to revive the lakes and rivers or drives to conserve them, a lot of effort is being made to conserve the fresh water bodies especially Yamuna and Ganga River. The Ministry of Environment & Forests (MoEF) launched a massive National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) to revitalize 38 key Indian rivers. The NRCP will address the issue of cleaning the Ganges, the Yamuna, Mahananda, Gomti and the Damodar rivers. The NRCP will put in place sewage treatment plants, including steps to intercept and divert sewage. Low cost sanitation projects and the setting up of crematoria will also be given importance. The ministry is also planning to start a major afforestation project along the banks of the rivers as part of this beautification campaign (Asian Age, 12 January).

**Reviving Yamuna River:** Yamuna is immensely important for the economic, ecological and basic needs of the region and people. Sadly, over the years, it has become one of the most endangered waterways in India. More than half of 3.6 billion tones of untreated sewerage produced in Delhi everyday flows into Yamuna. More than 60 per cent of the water needed by the Delhi region is dependent on Yamuna. Numerous

attempts have been made but with little success, and doubt still persists about what will happen in future. Still govt is trying to invigorate the river. Delhi Lieutenant-Governor Tejendra Khanna said there are plans to make concentric layers or sub-zones on the riverbed. "There will be three layers on the riverbed," he said. "At the heart of the riverbed, alongside Yamuna, will be a biodiversity zone. There will be no construction here, and visitors will not be allowed to enter. The next layer will be the 'interactive zone' — while heavily forested, people will be allowed to enter this area. "The last zone, farthest from the river, will be permitted to host recreational activities." At least 3,000 hectares of approximately 10,000 hectares of the riverbed had been "lost" to construction. So, Ruling out canalization of the Yamuna, main aim would be to "preserve as much of the riverbed as possible". He said there are 20 "experimental wells" on the riverbed to study the pollution levels and the feasibility of cleaning the river (*Indian Express*, 26 January). Also, the Delhi Jal Board's ambitious interceptor sewer project to clean up the Yamuna moved a step closer towards realization. The Expenditure Finance Committee of the Union Finance Ministry has agreed to sanction Rs.460 crore towards the project for setting up interceptor under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission and a loan of Rs.800 Crore has been sanctioned by the Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO). The project will take four years to complete. The project envisages making the Yamuna a zero-sewage zone. Filth and sewage will be intercepted and treated before releasing it into the river. All the sewage from the minor drains will be tapped into the three major drains -- Najafgarh, Supplementary and Shahdara -- and then will be treated before being discharged into the Yamuna (*The Hindu*, January 27). After working towards cleaning the Yamuna since 1993 in two phases of the Yamuna Action Plan, the government is now proposing Yamuna Action Plan-III (YAP-III), seeking a loan of Rs 833 Crore from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Meanwhile, Delhi Jal Board (DJB) — the implementing agency for

YAP in the river's 22-km stretch in Delhi — has received an extension of another year to finish work on YAP-II. The earlier deadline for completion of YAP-II was extended from November 2009 to March 2010. The Ministry of Environment and Forests and JICA have now agreed to extend the term of YAP-II till March 2011 (*Indian Express*, 5 March). Performance reviews of the Yamuna Action Plan (YAP) describe it as "well-conceived and implemented" but go on to punch holes in many aspects of its functioning. The Yamuna River Development Authority (YRDA) constituted by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and headed by Delhi lieutenant governor Tejendra Khanna came up with the draft bill which states that the upper riparian states of Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh too be made accountable in ensuring that there is a prescribed release of water into the Yamuna in order to make it a "running" river instead of the "standing" one that it has been reduced to at present. The idea for the legislation for clean Yamuna came in the backdrop of the failure of Yamuna Action Plan. (*Asian Age*, 15 March).

**Conserving Ganga:** Rs 315.34 crore scheme was sanctioned by the National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA) in order to check pollution in river Ganga in Uttar Pradesh's Allahabad district (*Business Line*, 11 February). World Bank (WB) proposed a project of over a thousand Crore rupees to the UP Government to clean the mighty river Ganga by improving the quality of effluents discharged into it at different places. The proposed project targets three cities of UP-Varanasi, Kanpur and Allahabad-where domestic and industrial discharge into the river is the maximum (*The Pioneer*, 4 March). The union urban development ministry approved the DDA's plan for the river better known as "O" Zone plan. DDA expected to notify the same in 1 month. With this, Proposals to build stadiums, cultural centres and commercial buildings will now jettison. No new permanent structure will be allowed. Instead of this, large chunks of land will be earmarked for biodiversity parks, Butterfly Park and for planting trees. Temporary structures can be allowed

and walkways are to be built. Also the congested Yamuna Bazaar area will be cleaned up and redeveloped (*Times of India*, 18 March). A report of the Planning Commission submitted to the Supreme Court said that even achieving a 100% sewage treatment plant utilization would end up cleaning just one third of the total waste generated in the Ganga Basin. The report titled, "Report on utilization of funds and assets created through GAP in states under GAP" was filed in the apex court, which is monitoring the Ganga Action Plan in its bid to ensure that the river is kept clean (*Times of India*, *The Pioneer*, 18 March). Ganga won't have to bear the burden of unidentified corpses and carcasses anymore, at least in Rishikesh. Garhwal commissioner Umakant Panwar had submitted an interim report to the Uttarakhand government, about the state irrigation department's illegal practice of dumping unidentified corpses and carcasses on the banks of the Ganga, a few kilometers downstream from Rishikesh. He has asked the police to maintain of record of the dead bodies, conduct post mortem and perform their last rites (*Mail Today*, 24 March).

**Wetland conservation:** Jammu and Kashmir's Chief Minister Omar Abdullah called the help of various expert groups to revive the Wullar Lake. He while presiding over a meeting for Wullar conservation, said besides being a historic lake, Wullar Lake is important for being eco-friendly for the Kashmir valley. Therefore, expert groups should be involved in the execution of the Wullar conservation plan (*The Tribune*, Sri Nagar, 15 January). He also called for a holistic approach to protect and preserve the state's wetlands and water bodies. "We are the depositories of famous water bodies and rare species of flora and fauna", he said laying stress on effective maintenance and management of biodiversity of Jammu and Kashmir (*Greater Kashmir*, Sri Nagar, 3 February). Furthermore, Wetland management wing of the wildlife department reveals that Kashmir's four premier wetlands attraction for migratory birds from across the globe have witnessed 28 to 50% shrinkage over the years. The area under okarsar wetland has reduced from

13.75sq km to five sq km, shalbugh is down from 16sq km to six to seven sq km, Haigam from 14sq km to 4 to 5 sq km and Mirgund from 4 sq km to 2 sq km. (*Greater Kashmir*, Sri Nagar, 3 February). Lakes and waterways development authority informed that the Dal-Nageen Conservation and Management project had been implemented in September 2005 under the National Lakes Conservation plan of the Union Ministry of Environment is likely to be completed by March 2013 (*Business Line*, *Political & Business Daily*, 29 March).

A committee was formed under the name and style of Deepor Beel Conservation Movement to launch a worldwide campaign for saving Deepor Beel, the lone Ramsar Site water body of Assam, at a function at Gauhati University (GU) with four voluntary groups of the NE region (*Assam Tribune*, Guwahati, 8 March). And finally Ghaziabad (MCG) claimed to have brought down the pollution levels of the Hindon River after exactly a year. With the completion of first phase of the Hindon-cleaning project, the statistics with the MCG shows the level of Biological Oxygen Demand which was 45 milligram/liter (mg/l) earlier, has come down to 9.6 mg/l in January. The Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD) in Hindon was 180 mg/l earlier, and came down to 36 mg/l (*Indian express*, 15 March).

#### Health and Sanitation

**Clean Drinking Water:** This October, athletes coming to the commonwealth games will be getting water of "First world" standards at the commonwealth games village. Delhi Jal Board has contracted Wabag India to provide clean and safe water for the Games. The agreement includes building a new water treatment plant exclusively for the Village, as well as providing potable water of "first world" standards (*Times of India*, 18 March).

#### Pollution

**Plastic Bag Ban:** News highlighted in this quarter mainly depicts that government is set to reduce all type of

pollution, be it water pollution or air pollution or pollution from e-waste etc. Government has imposed fine on violating the ban on the use and distribution of Plastic bags. To make the ban more effective, Delhi government will approach the Cabinet for an amendment of Plastic Bag (Manufacture, Sales and Usage) and Garbage (Control) Act 2000 and the January 2009 notification under which use of plastic bags is prohibited in the city (*Times of India*, *Indian express*, 9, 26 March). At present, the penalty for using plastic bag is imposed by courts under the Environment Protection Act, which has been a slow process of preventing offences. The move aims at penalizing offences immediately and moves away from court-based penalties (*Indian express*, 26 March).

To support the drive, New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) launched an awareness drive to ensure complete implementation of the ban on use of plastic bags in its area. Other than holding surprise checks, the council also begun a campaign called 'No to Use Plastic Bags'. The NDMC plans to sensitize residents, traders and students and ask them to use jute, cloth and paper bags. A circular has been issued by the health department to restaurants and eating joints forbidding the use of plastic bags. Similar circulars have been issued to sanitary inspectors of all NDMC areas, resident welfare association, market traders associations, school, colleges, corporate houses and government and non-government organization (*Indian Express*, 16 March).

Central Pollution Control Board study said that bio-plastic bags, also known as compostable bags, do not really "degrade" in the environment and poses a hazard similar to regular plastic bags. Unlike regular plastic bags, biodegradable plastic bags are made of organic raw material with a marginal amount of non organic additives (*Hindustan Times*, 12 January).

**E\_waste:** As Delhi has decided to go green and will become more eco-friendly, there will be bins for e-waste across the city. New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) planned to place bins

and build e-waste collection centers across the city (*Political & Business Daily*, 15 March).

**Combating pollution:** Also, the new projects and expansion of existing projects in highly polluted industrial areas were put on hold till August by the Delhi Government, after an environmental assessment by the Central Pollution Control Board and IIT found immense air, water and land pollution there. The moratorium had also been imposed on industrial clusters in Anand Parvat, Naraina, Okhla and Wazirpur which lie on the Nazafgarh drain basin and have exhausted their environmental capacity over the years. Construction and expansion in at least 22 industrial clusters in Ghaziabad and six in Noida in Uttar Pradesh has also been put on hold as they have been identified as critically polluted clusters. Noida Phase I, II, III, Mohan Nagar, Rajinder Nagar, Kavi Nagar, Loni, Road Nagar and Bulandshahar Road industrial areas are some of the clusters where further expansion has been banned (*Political & Business Daily*, 17 March). In a other news in Asian Age, the municipality of Ahmadabad plans to implement the new engineered waste disposal technology which allows scientific capping of the landfill site to convert methane into electricity. The National Jawaharlal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission (JNURM) has sanctioned Rs. 8.41 Crore for the implementation of this scheme in Ahmadabad (*Asian Age*, 15 March).

**Rising Pollution:** After Delhi, Gujarat has earned the dubious sobriquet of the most polluted state, according to the latest report of the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB). According to this data, there are seven states in the country which account for 80% of the total hazardous waste generated and Gujarat tops this list followed by Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh (*Financial Express*, 23 March).

To discuss about water pollution in this quarter, World Bank President, Robert B Zoellick recently met the Minister of State for Environment and Forests offering a commitment to explore the provision of long term financing and

knowledge assistance for the critical national programme to clean and conserve the Ganga. If the results of a sample study of Gangajal made by scientist is to be believed the river has turned into a sewerage system receiving millions of litres of undesired chemicals every day at different points in its stretch passing through the State. The bacterial load has also increased alarmingly by many folds. Some of the Ghats situated in the State capital have become biologically unhealthy even for a dip. A team from environmental biology laboratory of Patna University (PU) found the Buddha Ghat to be the worst affected stretch. Dr. RK Sinha of Zoology Department of PU said chemical fertilizers and pesticides runoff from agricultural fields, mainly, diary area, adds to the Ganga's woes. Being non-degradable in nature, they accumulate in the fat rich tissues of fishes and dolphins, undergo biological magnification, leading to the animal's death. The aquatic fauna faces serious threat. Bio-magnification of chemicals like DDT, malathion and aldrin is about 16,000 times in fishes and 12, 00000 times more in dolphin tissues in comparison to the water they survive in, he said (*Business Standard, Patna, 24 January*). Researchers at the People's Science Institute (PSI) in Dehradun found that the Ganga at Haridwar contains high concentration of faecal coliforms, a type of bacteria originating in faeces that can cause several health hazards. The water quality at Har-ki-Pauri, the ghat that attracts most pilgrims, did not meet the standards for outdoor bathing set by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB). Therefore, a dip in Ganga here, especially during the Maha Kumbh Mela, may wash away the sins but leave us with skin diseases, stomach bugs and a host of other health problems (*Deccan Herald, Bangalore, 2 March*).

**Water Management**

**Drinking water schemes:** Water conservation is another area that needs attention. Scarcity of water has been plaguing many states for a long time now. *Department of Science and Technology informed that the Centre is working on a*

*sustainable plan to provide safe drinking water for all citizens in the light of a Supreme Court directive that all citizens must have access to the resource (Deccan Herald, Bangalore, 23 February).* Rajasthan Government planned to adopt Public - Private Participation to tackle water crisis. The Government planned to take up management of water resources through public-private partnership following the new water policy announced in the State (*The Hindu, 1 March*).

**Conserving Water:** Apart from adopting the techniques of rainwater harvesting, it is equally important to reduce the wastage of water. In view of this, the agriculture department of Haryana has undertaken an initiative to install underground pipeline systems in fields that can save up to 20-25% water used during irrigation (*Financial Express, 19 January*). For the capital, Delhi Jal Board approved critical changes in its revenue system with which consumers will be able to pay their water bills online. A sewage master plan for 2036 is also on the cards (*Times of India, The Hindu, 24 February*).

**Rainwater Harvesting:** Government stressed on the implementation of Rainwater harvesting schemes. Global drink "Giant Diageo" launched a new initiative to construct rainwater harvesting structures for replenishing groundwater. As reported by the newspaper, the project titled "water of life" supported by Delhi Jal Board, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi Development Authority and Central Ground water Board, will provide between 10,000-14,000 people with up to 40 million liters of clean water per year (*The Statesman, 14 March*).

**Wildlife management**

**Tiger conservation:** A dedicated tiger website [www.tigernet.nic.in](http://www.tigernet.nic.in) was launched to report on every big cat mortality within the 37 tiger reserves in 17 states or outside. It is an outcome of collaboration between the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) and NGO Traffic-India, WWF-India (*The Pioneer, Political & Business Daily, 1, 2 January*). In Ranthambhore National



Park at Sawai Madhopur, numbers of tigers had been reported to reach 40 and wildlife authorities planned to shift two more tigers to Sariska (*The Pioneer, 1 January*). The Maharashtra government officially notified the Sahyadri tiger reserve and combined the Chandoli National Park and Koyana Wildlife Sanctuary which lies along the crest of the Western Ghats, making it Maharashtra's fourth tiger reserve and the second biggest in the state after Melghat (*Hindustan Times, DNA, Times of India, Mumbai, 6, 7 January*). In March, Government declared the setting up four new reserves in Maharashtra (Sahyadri), Uttar Pradesh (Pilibhit), Madhya Pradesh (Ratapani) and Orissa (Sunabeda) for the endangered animal. (*Hindustan Times, Mumbai, Business Line, New Delhi, Assam Tribune, Guwahati, 3 March*).

17 tiger states in the country simultaneously launched a massive year-long, wildlife census exercise. Called 'Monitoring, tigers, co-predators, prey and their habitats', the exercise was reported to employ the line-transact and camera-trapping methods (*Indian Express, Mumbai, 7 January*). The Rajasthan state cabinet headed by Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot decided to set-up the tiger Protection Foundation in Ranthambhor and Sariska to protect the declining tiger population in Rajasthan. Each tiger reserve will have the protection foundation for effective tiger protection and bio-diversity planning (*Deccan Herald, 7 January*). As the weeklong Tiger census began on 22 January, 2010 in Karnataka state by the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) and the Karnataka Forest Department. Four protected areas were the focus of the weeklong census in the State - Nagarhole National Park, Bandipur National Park, BR Hills Wildlife Sanctuary and Bhadra Wildlife

Sanctuary (*The Hindu, Deccan Herald, The Pioneer, 22, 23 January*). The census carried out by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) puts the figures at 109 for the remaining tiger population at Dudhwa Tiger Reserve. An environmentalist and Padamashree Ranjit Bhargava, on the other hand claimed that there were not more than 40 striped cats left in Dudhwa (*The Pioneer, Lucknow, 12 February*). Arunachal Pradesh State government's forest department decided to review security at forest reserves, and investigate the tiger incident with the help of the police and the other forest officials (*Mid Day, 29 January*). The Assam government tied up with the Border Security Force (BSF) for providing manpower and intelligence assistance in protecting rhinos and tigers in the world-famous Kaziranga National Park, which has witnessed incidents of poaching (*Indian Express, 1 March*). India rejected a proposal by the European Union to modify an existing decision for China to phase out Chinese tiger farms. It made an intervention at the ongoing Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) Conference of Parties in Doha, after the European Union suggested that tiger-range countries adopt an EU reporting system for making a wildlife crime database (*Indian Express, 23 March*).

**Lion Relocation:** Moving from National Animal Tiger to the Forest King Lion, most of the Lion debates in this quarter were related to its relocation from Gujarat to Madhya Pradesh and fitting of GPS collar on Gir forest lions. In an attempt to prevent Lion poaching, 228 forest rangers were chosen from among 490 frontline forest department staff entrusted with the job of protecting the Asiatic lions in its last natural habitat in the Gir forest area of Gujarat. The three-week training sessions of the field staff was part of the MoU the Gujarat Government has signed with the Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) (*The Pioneer, 1 January*).



Despite Gujrat being in no mood to allow shifting of any of its

Asiatic lions, Madya Pradesh government spent over Rs. 14.53 Crore to relocate 1,543 families in the Kuno Palpur Wildlife Sanctuary being prepared as an alternative habitat for the Jungle King. As the Asiatic lions are found only in Gir forests in Gujarat, the Centre had plans to relocate some of them to this sanctuary to repopulate the endangered species there. There are around 800 lions in the Gir forests but experts feel that the concentration of the entire lion population at one place exposes it to the danger of being wiped out by disease or natural calamity. Kuno was identified as a best potential site by the Wildlife Institute of India (*The Hindu, 2 January*). Despite all these preparations, once again the Modi Govt says no to relocation of Gir lions to MP. Modi government raised as many as six objections before Supreme Court to the Centre's almost decade-old proposal to relocate some lions from Gir to a 300 sq km forest at Kunopalpur in Sheopur district of MP (*Times of India, Ahmadabad, DNA Mumbai, The Pioneer, New Delhi, 12 February*). The Gujarat Government has rejected the Centre's offer of some tigers from other states in exchange of Asiatic lions from Gir to be relocated in Kuno Palpur, Madhya Pradesh (*The Pioneer, The Statesman, The Hindu, New Delhi, Times of India, Ahmadabad, DNA Mumbai, 18 February*). The task force, appointed by the Gujarat state government to combat man-animal conflicts in Gir forest, suggested that 10 percent of the lions should be fitted with GPS collars. That means about 50 lions, out of the 359 Gir lions will be fitted with the Global Positioning System (GPS) collars (*Times of India, Ahmadabad, 5 January, The Hitavada, Nagpur, 16 February*).

**Bird conservation:** Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary is facing threat of losing its World Heritage Site status. The bird sanctuary receives over 300 species of birds, including the Siberian crane. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) had set a deadline of January 2010 to arrange adequate water for the park or else its status would be revoked (*The Tribune, 17 January*). **The Tamil Nadu Forest Department launched its first ever synchronized bird census in all**

**12 bird sanctuaries in the State in order to estimate the total number of birds, which had visited there in the season. Several rare species including pelicans, darters, cormorant, flamingos, white ibis and others were sighted in large numbers. Follow up actions including provision of waterholes, planting of perching trees favorable for breeding and nestling and others would be undertaken (The Hindu, 25 January).** Also an eight-day combined census covering carnivore signs, prey-base encounter rate, vegetation data and anthropogenic pressure on forest cover in this State began on February 6. All forest ranges, including tiger reserve areas were included. The Census was taken up by Forest Department officials the Wildlife Institute of India (WII). Under the first phase, the data collected was sent to the WII. As part of the second phase, the team of researchers from the WII visited the areas from where the data was collected to verify its veracity. The final phase of the census involved setting up of camera traps in the tiger reserves (*The Hindu, Chennai, 28 January*).

**Wildlife conservation:** Apart from Lion and Tiger, other animals that are being focused upon in this quarter by the government were Snow Leopard, Turtles and Hungul. Project Snow leopard was launched in Ladakh and is being undertaken in five Himalayan states including Jammu and Kashmir. The project spans 3500 sq kms including Hemis High Altitude National Park in Ladakh. The authorities plan to install special trap cameras in highly concentrated areas of the snow leopard. The Project includes developing grazing and management policies along with promotion of conservation and education awareness initiatives (*Greater Kashmir, Srinagar, 1 January*). *Already declared a Ramsar wetland site, the Bhitarkanika National Park with its rich biodiversity and unique eco-system was shortlisted as a World Heritage site.* It has the country's largest mangrove cover and internationally it is second only to Papua New Guinea (*The Hitavada, Nagpur, 2 February*) Recent meeting of the steering committee of project Elephant of the



Ministry of Environment and Forests, in New Delhi revealed that there is a steady growth in population of wild elephants. Two important decisions were taken at the meeting from an Elephant Task Force on the lines of Tiger Task Force; set up a rescue and rehabilitation centre for straying elephants, similar to the one functioning near the Vandalur zoo for tigers and lions rescue from circuses (*The Hindu, Chennai, 10 February*). The Jammu and Kashmir's wild life department planned to operate the endangered red deer Hangul Preservation centre at Shikargah Tral, funded and sponsored by the Central

Zoo Authority of India (CZA) (*DNA, Mumbai, 12 March, Kashmir Times, Jammu, 13 March*).

Some of the other wildlife news includes fitting of five satellite transmitters on Olive Ridley and Green Sea turtles on the south east coast of Sri Lanka under the Indo-Sri-Lankan collaborative sea turtle conservation project (*The Pioneer, 12 March*), translocation of African cheetahs by Government of India, wherein the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) and the Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) were asked to prepare a Digital



Project Report (DPR) in this regard (*The Statesman, 15 March*), Permanent night traffic ban imposed the national highway passing through Bandipur reserve forest (*Deccan Herald, Bangalore, 9 February*) and news about the workshop on wildlife crime management for IFS officials from various tiger reserves across the country. Gujarat Forensic Science University at Gandhinagar, along with Wildlife Institute of India (WII) at Dehradun and, Traffic India, kick-started this unique workshop which will focus on various aspects of wildlife crimes poaching, tactics used by poachers, crime scene management, legal position of law enforces, case studies and practical tools and techniques available to forest officials (*Times of India, Ahmadabad, 23 February*).

### Statistical representation of the total trend of Questions addressed in the Lok Sabha & Rajya Sabha during the 2009

Total no. of Questions addressed in the Lok Sabha 2009

| Ministry                                       | Starred | Unstarred | Total | Starred | Unstarred | Total | Starred | Unstarred | Total |
|------------------------------------------------|---------|-----------|-------|---------|-----------|-------|---------|-----------|-------|
| Agriculture                                    | 0       | 0         | 0     | 23      | 297       | 320   | 15      | 251       | 266   |
| Atomic Energy                                  | 0       | 5         | 5     | 3       | 17        | 20    | 1       | 23        | 24    |
| Chemical and Fertilizers                       | 3       | 20        | 23    | 11      | 80        | 91    | 10      | 90        | 100   |
| Civil Aviation                                 | 6       | 25        | 31    | 21      | 172       | 193   | 18      | 149       | 167   |
| Coal                                           | 5       | 15        | 20    | 6       | 62        | 68    | 7       | 52        | 59    |
| Commerce and Industry                          | 16      | 41        | 57    | 14      | 195       | 209   | 20      | 183       | 203   |
| Communication and Information Technology       | 0       | 0         | 0     | 13      | 105       | 118   | 19      | 125       | 144   |
| Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution | 0       | 0         | 0     | 19      | 124       | 143   | 16      | 123       | 139   |
| Corporate Affairs                              | 3       | 3         | 6     | 3       | 32        | 35    | 1       | 17        | 18    |
| Culture                                        | 1       | 17        | 18    | 3       | 34        | 37    | 0       | 74        | 74    |
| Defence                                        | 0       | 0         | 0     | 11      | 82        | 93    | 4       | 72        | 76    |
| Development of North Eastern Region            | 0       | 2         | 2     | 0       | 4         | 4     | 0       | 2         | 2     |
| Earth Sciences                                 | 1       | 6         | 7     | 3       | 10        | 13    | 1       | 12        | 13    |
| Environment and Forests                        | 5       | 31        | 36    | 15      | 145       | 160   | 19      | 153       | 172   |
| External Affairs                               | 0       | 29        | 29    | 7       | 85        | 92    | 6       | 116       | 122   |
| Finance                                        | 7       | 89        | 96    | 32      | 385       | 417   | 23      | 361       | 384   |
| Food Processing Industries                     | 1       | 7         | 8     | 5       | 31        | 36    | 5       | 28        | 33    |
| Health and Family Welfare                      | 11      | 68        | 79    | 27      | 264       | 291   | 28      | 314       | 342   |
| Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises        | 2       | 5         | 7     | 6       | 43        | 49    | 2       | 30        | 32    |
| Home Affairs                                   | 8       | 63        | 71    | 18      | 224       | 242   | 19      | 240       | 259   |
| Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation          | 3       | 4         | 7     | 4       | 41        | 45    | 3       | 18        | 21    |
| Human Resource Development                     | 7       | 67        | 74    | 22      | 207       | 229   | 25      | 234       | 259   |
| Information and Broadcasting                   | 2       | 16        | 18    | 6       | 73        | 79    | 7       | 75        | 82    |
| Labour and Employment                          | 0       | 0         | 0     | 9       | 108       | 117   | 8       | 110       | 118   |
| Law and Justice                                | 4       | 11        | 15    | 6       | 81        | 87    | 6       | 70        | 76    |
| Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises            | 4       | 13        | 17    | 6       | 54        | 60    | 3       | 38        | 41    |
| Mines                                          | 2       | 12        | 14    | 3       | 32        | 35    | 1       | 41        | 42    |
| Minority Affairs                               | 0       | 5         | 5     | 3       | 20        | 23    | 3       | 24        | 27    |
| New and Renewable Energy                       | 5       | 8         | 13    | 7       | 60        | 67    | 8       | 60        | 68    |
| Overseas Indian Affairs                        | 0       | 11        | 11    | 2       | 24        | 26    | 3       | 30        | 33    |

|                                           |            |            |             |            |             |             |            |             |             |
|-------------------------------------------|------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|
| Panchayati Raj                            | 1          | 5          | 6           | 6          | 23          | 29          | 1          | 12          | 13          |
| Parliamentary Affairs                     | 0          | 0          | 0           | 0          | 1           | 1           | 0          | 0           | 0           |
| Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions | 0          | 5          | 5           | 1          | 40          | 41          | 1          | 58          | 59          |
| Petroleum and Natural Gas                 | 9          | 34         | 43          | 27         | 166         | 193         | 23         | 201         | 224         |
| Planning                                  | 2          | 7          | 9           | 4          | 34          | 38          | 3          | 49          | 52          |
| Power                                     | 11         | 18         | 29          | 21         | 146         | 167         | 19         | 148         | 167         |
| Prime Minister                            | 0          | 0          | 0           | 0          | 1           | 1           | 0          | 0           | 0           |
| Railways                                  | 11         | 91         | 102         | 26         | 412         | 438         | 25         | 348         | 373         |
| Road Transport and Highways               | 0          | 0          | 0           | 20         | 189         | 209         | 5          | 97          | 102         |
| Rural Development                         | 7          | 18         | 25          | 26         | 109         | 135         | 19         | 145         | 164         |
| Science and Technology                    | 2          | 11         | 13          | 0          | 12          | 12          | 2          | 20          | 22          |
| Shipping                                  | 4          | 23         | 27          | 5          | 57          | 62          | 3          | 64          | 67          |
| Social Justice and Empowerment            | 2          | 16         | 18          | 6          | 53          | 59          | 6          | 66          | 72          |
| Space                                     | 0          | 6          | 6           | 0          | 6           | 6           | 2          | 11          | 13          |
| Statistics and Programme Implementation   | 0          | 1          | 1           | 1          | 14          | 15          | 2          | 14          | 16          |
| Steel                                     | 1          | 14         | 15          | 4          | 59          | 63          | 1          | 54          | 55          |
| Textiles                                  | 0          | 0          | 0           | 8          | 82          | 90          | 6          | 63          | 69          |
| Tourism                                   | 4          | 16         | 20          | 5          | 72          | 77          | 2          | 44          | 46          |
| Trivial Affairs                           | 1          | 12         | 13          | 3          | 34          | 37          | 6          | 49          | 55          |
| Urban Development                         | 4          | 33         | 37          | 10         | 109         | 119         | 4          | 98          | 102         |
| Water Resources                           | 0          | 0          | 0           | 8          | 74          | 82          | 8          | 74          | 82          |
| Women and Child Development               | 2          | 16         | 18          | 6          | 78          | 84          | 7          | 57          | 64          |
| Youth Affairs and Sports                  | 3          | 7          | 10          | 5          | 45          | 50          | 4          | 53          | 57          |
| <b>Total</b>                              | <b>160</b> | <b>906</b> | <b>1066</b> | <b>500</b> | <b>4907</b> | <b>5407</b> | <b>430</b> | <b>4840</b> | <b>5270</b> |

Total no. of Questions addressed in the Rajya Sabha 2009

| Ministry                                       | Starred | Budget Unstarred | Total | Starred | Monsoon Unstarred | Total | Starred | Winter Unstarred | Total |
|------------------------------------------------|---------|------------------|-------|---------|-------------------|-------|---------|------------------|-------|
| Agriculture                                    | 7       | 53               | 60    | 19      | 192               | 211   | 24      | 166              | 190   |
| Atomic Energy                                  | 0       | 3                | 3     | 5       | 26                | 31    | 2       | 31               | 33    |
| Chemical and Fertilizers                       | 4       | 15               | 19    | 10      | 60                | 70    | 2       | 49               | 51    |
| Civil Aviation                                 | 9       | 72               | 81    | 17      | 104               | 121   | 15      | 86               | 101   |
| Coal                                           | 2       | 8                | 10    | 8       | 41                | 49    | 10      | 68               | 78    |
| Commerce and Industry                          | 6       | 64               | 70    | 20      | 125               | 145   | 19      | 110              | 129   |
| Communication and Information Technology       | 3       | 35               | 38    | 17      | 128               | 145   | 20      | 110              | 130   |
| Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution | 6       | 34               | 40    | 21      | 127               | 148   | 10      | 119              | 129   |
| Corporate Affairs                              | 5       | 24               | 29    | 1       | 16                | 17    | 2       | 18               | 20    |
| Culture                                        | 1       | 27               | 28    | 2       | 33                | 35    | 5       | 34               | 39    |
| Defence                                        | 6       | 30               | 36    | 8       | 69                | 77    | 8       | 78               | 86    |
| Development of North Eastern Region            | 0       | 3                | 3     | 1       | 7                 | 8     | 0       | 11               | 11    |
| Earth Sciences                                 | 0       | 3                | 3     | 1       | 18                | 19    | 0       | 9                | 9     |
| Environment and Forests                        | 3       | 29               | 32    | 14      | 124               | 138   | 22      | 196              | 218   |
| External Affairs                               | 3       | 21               | 24    | 23      | 119               | 142   | 14      | 102              | 116   |
| Finance                                        | 15      | 75               | 90    | 35      | 255               | 290   | 26      | 169              | 195   |
| Food Processing Industries                     | 0       |                  | 0     | 1       | 16                | 17    | 1       | 16               | 17    |
| Health and Family Welfare                      | 13      | 83               | 96    | 32      | 266               | 298   | 17      | 179              | 196   |
| Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises        |         | 12               | 12    | 6       | 29                | 35    | 1       | 4                | 5     |
| Home Affairs                                   | 12      | 101              | 113   | 20      | 179               | 199   | 33      | 206              | 239   |
| Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation          | 0       | 6                | 6     | 5       | 45                | 50    | 6       | 42               | 48    |
| Human Resource Development                     | 0       | 0                | 0     | 25      | 241               | 266   | 29      | 197              | 226   |
| Information and Broadcasting                   | 4       | 14               | 18    | 4       | 37                | 41    | 13      | 58               | 71    |
| Labour and Employment                          | 5       | 36               | 41    | 9       | 63                | 72    | 5       | 74               | 79    |
| Law and Justice                                | 0       | 0                | 0     | 8       | 49                | 57    | 6       | 80               | 86    |
| Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises            | 2       | 6                | 8     | 7       | 27                | 34    | 4       | 30               | 34    |
| Mines                                          | 0       | 0                | 0     | 1       | 18                | 19    | 2       | 35               | 37    |
| Minority Affairs                               | 0       | 0                | 0     | 3       | 25                | 28    | 2       | 37               | 39    |
| New and Renewable Energy                       | 0       | 0                | 0     | 2       | 22                | 24    | 4       | 32               | 36    |
| Overseas Indian Affairs                        | 3       | 6                | 9     | 9       | 56                | 65    | 2       | 20               | 22    |
| Panchayati Raj                                 | 0       | 4                | 4     | 0       | 12                | 12    | 2       | 5                | 7     |

|                                           |            |             |             |            |             |             |            |             |             |
|-------------------------------------------|------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|
| Parliamentary Affairs                     | 0          | 0           | 0           | 0          | 2           | 2           | 1          | 1           | 2           |
| Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions | 1          | 7           | 8           | 10         | 36          | 46          | 5          | 48          | 53          |
| Petroleum and Natural Gas                 | 15         | 77          | 92          | 18         | 101         | 119         | 6          | 74          | 80          |
| Planning                                  | 1          | 12          | 13          | 8          | 58          | 66          | 12         | 57          | 69          |
| Power                                     | 0          | 0           | 0           | 10         | 96          | 106         | 22         | 121         | 143         |
| Railways                                  | 8          | 65          | 73          | 30         | 220         | 250         | 26         | 195         | 221         |
| Road Transport and Highways               | 0          | 0           | 0           | 16         | 142         | 158         | 12         | 114         | 126         |
| Rural Development                         | 5          | 42          | 47          | 11         | 101         | 112         | 11         | 86          | 97          |
| Science and Technology                    | 0          | 8           | 8           | 1          | 26          | 27          | 2          | 11          | 13          |
| Shipping                                  | 4          | 42          | 46          | 6          | 21          | 27          | 2          | 17          | 19          |
| Social Justice and Empowerment            | 0          | 0           | 0           | 4          | 46          | 50          | 6          | 48          | 54          |
| Space                                     | 0          | 3           | 3           | 1          | 3           | 4           | 1          | 20          | 21          |
| Statistics and Programme Implementation   | 0          | 2           | 2           | 1          | 7           | 8           | 1          | 14          | 15          |
| Steel                                     | 0          | 5           | 5           | 1          | 32          | 33          | 5          | 19          | 24          |
| Textiles                                  | 6          | 26          | 32          | 7          | 43          | 50          | 3          | 38          | 41          |
| Tourism                                   | 8          | 36          | 44          | 9          | 70          | 79          | 3          | 32          | 35          |
| Trivial Affairs                           | 0          | 0           | 0           | 2          | 18          | 20          | 3          | 17          | 20          |
| Urban Development                         | 1          | 25          | 26          | 13         | 82          | 95          | 11         | 60          | 71          |
| Water Resources                           | 2          | 37          | 39          | 9          | 104         | 113         | 7          | 77          | 84          |
| Women and Child Development               | 0          | 0           | 0           | 6          | 43          | 49          | 12         | 72          | 84          |
| Youth Affairs and Sports                  | 0          | 15          | 15          | 3          | 31          | 34          | 2          | 44          | 46          |
| <b>Total</b>                              | <b>160</b> | <b>1166</b> | <b>1326</b> | <b>500</b> | <b>3811</b> | <b>4311</b> | <b>459</b> | <b>3536</b> | <b>3995</b> |

□ Source of all this information has been prepared on the basis of the Questions/Answer & Statement published by the Parliament of India, Lok Saba & Rajya Sabha Secretariat separately during the year 2009

### Environmental events in the Country during January-March, 2010

**Title:** 22nd Kerala Science Congress  
**Date:** 28-31st January, 2010  
**Venue:** KFRI, Peechi  
**Organized by :** Dr.K.V Sankaran, Director, KFRI, General Convenor, Peechi, Thrissur - 680653, Phone :- 0487 2690110, Fax :- 0487 2690391, Email :- director@kfri.org

**Title:** State Level Seminar on Residue of Pesticide in Environment- A Global Challenge Towards Healthy Future of Mankind- 2nd year  
**Date:** 2nd to 3rd January, 2010  
**Venue:** Delip Kr Memorial High School, Baduria North 24 Pargana District, West-Bengal  
**Organized by :** Mr. Tilak Sutra Dhar, Secretary, Community for Social Work, (CSW), 84, Rabindrapally, Po. Shuam Nagar, Dist. 24 Pragan (North), West Bangal, Pin-743127

**Title:** Strategic Management of Energy, environment and Disaster for Sustainable Development (ICONSMEEDS- 2010)  
**Date:** 11th January, 2010 to 15th January, 2010  
**Venue:** Banaras hindu University, Varanasi  
**Organized by :** Dy. Registrar, Faculty of Management Studies, BHU, Varanasi, Department of Geography, BHU Varanasi, Global Strategic Management Incorporation, Michigan, USA, Varanasi - 221005

**Title:** International Conference on Materials For The Millennium (MATCON) 2010  
**Date:** 11th to 13th January, 2010  
**Venue:** Kochi, Kerala

**Organized by :** Dr. S. Prathapan, Convener Department of Applied Chemistry, Cochin University of Science and Technology, Kochi 682022, Kerala

**Title:** Seminar on Saving the Fragile Ecological Balance of Chilika Lake in Orissa  
**Date:** 15th January, 2010  
**Venue:** Panthaniabas, Barkul District- Khurda  
**Organized by :** Smt. Niharika Mishra, Secretary, Centre for Catalyzing Community (CCC), At- C-43, 2nd Floor, market Building, At/Po- Saheed Nagar, Bhubaneswar-751007 Dist-Khurda, Orissa

**Title:** Seminar on Tree Plantation for Environmental Balance and Soil Conservation  
**Date:** 15th -16th January, 2010  
**Venue:** Community Hal, Parbhani, Maharashtra  
**Organized by :** Adv. Ramesh Jadhav, President, Shrimant Maharaja Madhavrao Scindiaji Foundation, Parshawat Nagar, near Hanuman Mandir, Parbhani, 431401, Maharashtra

**Title:** "Seminar on Environmental Rules, Regulations & Implementation in rural area"  
**Date:** 26th to 27th January, 2010  
**Venue:** At. Baruiipur Science Fair Campus, P.O. Totanala, Purba Medinipur, West Bengal  
**Organized by :** Mrs. Sabita Patra, General Secretary, Contai Palpara Saradadevi Mahila Mondal, Saradadevi Sevashram, At.Baruiipur, P.O. Totanala, Block Patashpur -1 Taluk/Subdivision-Egra Dist- Purba Medinipur, West Bengal, Pin-721458

**Title:** National Level Seminar on Effect of Global Warming and Rapid Change in Oceanic line at Coastal Orissa and its Effect on Migratory Birds of Lake Chilika and Ecological Consequences.  
**Date:** 27th -28th January, 2010  
**Venue:** Auditorium of Khalikote Govt. Science College, Khalikote  
**Organized by :** Dr. Nilalohit Harichandan, Secretary, AABAHANA, Malyabanta, At/Po-Nachuni, Dist-Khurda (Orissa) Pin-752028

**Title:** International Conference on Green Technologies for Greener Environment  
**Date:** 27th to 30th January, 2010  
**Venue:** Department of Chemistry, Ch. Charan Singh University, Meerut  
**Organized by :** Dr. R.K. Soni, Convenor, Department of Chemistry, Ch. Charan Singh University, Meerut 250005, U.P.

**Title:** Workshop on Bio-diversity Conservation to Women & Panchayat Leaders  
**Date:** 1st to 2nd February, 2010  
**Venue:** Weds Training Hall, Dindigul  
**Organized by :** Mrs. Agnes Jebavathy, Secretary, Women's Education Development Society (WEDS), M-98, RM Colony, 7th Cross Dindigul -624001 Tamil Nadu

**Title:** International Conference on "Hydrology and Watershed Management" (ICHWAM - 2010) with a focal theme on Climate Change, Water, Food and Environmental Security  
**Date:** 3rd to 6th February, 2010  
**Venue:** UGC Academic Staff College, J N T University Hyderabad, Kukatpally, Hyderabad

Hyderabad 85  
**Organized by :** Smt. C. Sarala, Convener, Center for Water Resources, IST, J N T University Hyderabad, Kukatpally, Hyderabad 85, A.P.

**Title:** National Seminar on Air Pollution Management in Changing Global Environmental Scenario  
**Date:** 7th February, 2010  
**Venue:** C. C. Mehta Auditorium, M.S. University Vadodara  
**Organized by :** Prof. Arun Arya, Coordinator, Environment Science Programme Faculty of Science, The Maharaja Sayajirao. University of Baroda, Vododara - 390002, Gujarat

**Title:** 13th Punjab Science Congress, Climate Change: Concerns and Solutions  
**Date:** 7th to 9th Feb 2010  
**Venue:** Punjab University, Chnadigarh  
**Organized by :** Prof. A.S. Ahluwalia, Organising Secretary, Dept. of Botany, Panjab University, Chandigarh- 160

**Title:** Fourth International Conference on Plants and Environmental Pollution (ICPEP-4)  
**Date:** 7th to 10th February, 2010  
**Venue:** National Botanical Research Institute, Lucknow, U.P.  
**Organized by :** Dr. Rakesh Tuli, Director, National Botanical Research Institute, Lucknow, & International Society of Environmental Botanists, Rana Pratap Marg, Lucknow 226001, U.P.

**Title:** National Workshop on Aspects & Prospects of Plant Taxonomy Teaching and Research  
**Date:** 8th to 9th February, 2010  
**Venue:** Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala  
**Organized by :** Dr. E. P. Yesodharan, Vice President, Kerala State Council for Science Technology and Environment, Science & Technology Department, Sasthrabhavan, Pattom 695004, Kerala

**Title:** International Conference on Climate Change and Bioresources (ICCCB-2010)  
**Date:** 9th -12th February, 2010  
**Venue:** Bharathidasan University, TiruchiRappalli, Tamil Nadu  
**Organized by :** Prof. T. Ramaswamy, Registrar, Department of Biotechnology, School of Life Sciences, Bharathidasan University, TiruchiRappalli-620024, Tamil Nadu

**Title:** Access for Sustainable Development  
**Date:** 19th to 20th February, 2010  
**Venue:** Allahabad (U.P.)  
**Organized by :** Dr. Shivesh Sharma, Organizing Secretary, Motilal Nehru National Institute of Technology, Allahabad-211004, U.P.

**Title:** Impact of Trends in Climate Change on Bio-Diversity and Faunistic System"  
**Date:** 19th 21st February 2010  
**Venue:** Department of Zoology and Environmental Sciences, Gurukula Kangri University, Haridwar  
**Organized by :** Prof. B.D. Joshi, Co-coordinator & Director, Dept. of Zoology & Environmental Sciences, Gurukula Kangri University, Haridwar -249404

**Title:** Small Indigenous Species of Indian Freshwater Fish: Their Role in Poverty Alleviation, Food Security and Conservation of Biodiversity  
**Date:** 23rd to 25th February, 2010  
**Venue:** Kolkata, West Bengal  
**Organized by :** Mr. Chandrika Sharma, Executive Secretary, International Collective in Support of Fish workers (ICSF), Trust, No.27 College Road, Chennai-600006, Tamil Nadu

**Title:** International Conference on Urban forests & Biodiversity  
**Date:** 25th to 26th February, 2010  
**Venue:** Indian International Centre, New Delhi  
**Organized by :** Manoj Dabas Executive Director, Aravali Foundation for Education, Aravali House 431/D-22, Chhattarpur Hills, New Delhi 110 074

**Title:** National Conference on Diversity and Prospects of Microbial Resources (MiDiCon 2010)  
**Date:** 26th to 28th February, 2010  
**Venue:** University of North Bengal, Siliguri  
**Organized by :** Prof. P.K. Sarkar, Chairman, Department of Microbiology, University of North Bengal, Siliguri -734013, West Bengal

**Title:** Seminar on Problem of Management and Treatment of Bio-medical Wastes which is Imposing Serious Problems for Deteriorating Environmental Quality and Human Health.  
**Date:** 27th 28th February, 2010  
**Venue:** Bolangir  
**Organized by :** Mr. Bibhuti Bhusan Pattnaik, Secretary, JANSEVA, At- Saraswati Nagar, P.O-Rajendra Nagar, Dist-Bolangir -767002, Orissa

**Title:** Farmers Conference on Conservation of Medicinal Plants and their Sustainable Utilization  
**Date:** 3rd March, 2010  
**Venue:** Chithwari (Jaipur)  
**Organized by :** Mr. Deepak kumar Yogi, Secretary, Shri Shyam Sanskriti Sewa Samiti, Shastri Chithwari, Via-Moriji District- Jaipur (Rajasthan), Pin. 303805

**Title:** National Seminar on "Environmental Management in Metallurgical Industries"  
**Date:** 15th -16th March, 2010  
**Venue:** Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi

**Organized by :** Mr. R.C Gupta, Dept. of Metallurgical Engineering, Institute of Technology, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi-221005, (U.P)

**Title:** International Conference on Environmental Health and Technology  
**Date:** 15th -17th March, 2010  
**Venue:** Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur  
**Organized by :** Mr. Mukesh Sharma, Organizer, Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur -208016, U.P.

**Title:** Vermitechnology, Use of Biofertilizers and Solid Waste Recycling for Sustainable Rural Development.  
**Date:** 18th -19th March, 2010  
**Venue:** Gandhigram Rural Institute-Deemed university, Tamil Nadu  
**Organized by :** Dr.G. Muralidharan, Special Officer, Department of Biology, Gandhigram Rural Institution Deemed University, Gandhigram-624302, Tamil Nadu

**Title:** Awareness programme on Global warming and Climate Change  
**Date:** 18h -20th March, 2010  
**Venue:** Kongu Engineering College, Perundurai, Erode- 638 052  
**Organized by :** Prof. G. Murugesan, Department of Electronics & Communication Engineering School of Communication and Computer Sciences, Kongu Engineering College, Perundurai, Erode-638052 Tamil Nadu

**Title:** National Workshop on Eco Friendly Automated vehicles powering the green revolution  
**Date:** 19th -20th March, 2010  
**Venue:** Seminar Hall, Main building, K S Rangasamy College of Technology.  
**Organized by :** Dr. T. Karthikeyan, Director & Professor, K.S. Rangasamy College of Technology, Tiruchengode -637215, Namakkal (DT), Tamilnadu

**Title:** National Conference on Ecosystem Diversity and Carbon Sequestration Challenges and a way out for Ushering in a Sustainable Future  
**Date:** 20th March, 2010  
**Venue:** Panthaniwas, Bhubaneswar, Orissa  
**Organized by :** Mr. Bibhuti Bhusan Tripathy, President, Association for Development Initiative, 1820/2, 1st Floor, Gurudwara Road, Kotla Mubarakpur, New Delhi -110003

**Title:** Seminar on "Awareness about Air Pollution and Health Effect" in Deoria (U.P)  
**Date:** 21st to 22nd March, 2010  
**Venue:** Deoria (U.P.)  
**Organized by :** Mohd.Shakir Husain, President, Student Social Organisation, Vill-Rampu, Post- Gauri Bazar, Distt.- Deoria - 274202, U.P.