



Chhattisgarh Tops in Forest and Tree Cover Growth: ISFR | Chhattisgarh | 23 Dec 2024

Why in News?

Recently, **Chhattisgarh** has emerged as the **top state in combined forest and tree cover growth** according to the [Indian Forest Survey Report \(ISFR\) 2023](#).

Key Points

- **Chhattisgarh's Forest and Tree Cover Growth:**
- Chhattisgarh has emerged as the **top state in combined forest and tree cover growth** according to the **Indian Forest Survey Report (ISFR) 2023**.
- Chhattisgarh saw an increase of **94.75 sq km** in **forest cover**, bringing its total forest area to **55,811.75 sq km**.
- The state recorded a total increase of **684 sq km** in **forest and tree cover**, the highest among all Indian states.
- Chhattisgarh's **combined forest and tree cover (55,812 sq km)** is the **third-largest** in the country after **Madhya Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh**, with a significant increase in both forest and tree areas.

Key Findings from ISFR 2023

- **Total Forest and Tree Cover:**
 - India's total forest and tree cover stands at **8,27,357 sq km**, which is **25.17% of the country's geographical area**.
 - The total forest and tree cover in India includes **7,15,343 sq km** of **forest cover** (21.76% of the total geographical area) and **1,12,014 sq km** of **tree cover** (3.41% of the total geographical area).
 - **Top States in Forest and Tree Cover Growth:**
 - **Chhattisgarh:** Increased forest and tree cover by **684 sq km**.
 - **Uttar Pradesh:** Increased cover by **559 sq km**.
 - **Odisha:** Increased cover by **559 sq km**.
 - **Rajasthan:** Increased cover by **394 sq km**.
 - **States with Largest Forest and Tree Cover:**
 - **Madhya Pradesh:** Largest total cover at **85,724 sq km**.
 - **Arunachal Pradesh:** Second-largest cover at **67,083 sq km**.
 - **Maharashtra:** Third-largest cover at **65,383 sq km**.
 - **States with Largest Forest Cover:**
 - **Madhya Pradesh:** **77,073 sq km**.
 - **Arunachal Pradesh:** **65,882 sq km**.
 - **Chhattisgarh:** **55,812 sq km**.
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Ayodhya Overtakes Taj Mahal as UP's Top Tourist Destination (2024) | Uttar Pradesh | 23 Dec 2024

Why in News?

Recently, [Ayodhya](#) overtook **Agra (Taj Mahal)** to become the **most visited destination** in **Uttar Pradesh** for 2024.

Key Points

- **Ayodhya Becomes Top Destination**
 - **Ayodhya** attracted **135.5 million domestic tourists** and **3,153 international visitors** between January and September 2024.
 - This spike in tourism is mainly driven by the **inauguration of the Ram Temple**, positioning the city as the **epicenter of spiritual tourism** in India.
 - Ayodhya has seen a 70% increase in religious tour bookings, with the [Pran Pratishtha](#) ceremony at the Ram Temple drawing large crowds and expected to grow further during its anniversary celebrations in January 2025.
- **Agra (Taj Mahal)**
 - **Agra**, home to the iconic [Taj Mahal](#), recorded **125.1 million visitors** in 2024, with **115.9 million domestic** and **924,000 international tourists**.
 - **Taj Mahal** continues to be a major draw for **international tourists**, with **foreign arrivals** increasing from **2.684 million** in **2022-23** to **27.7 million** in **2023-24**.
 - However, **domestic visitor numbers** to the Taj Mahal have slightly decreased by **193,000**.
- **Tourism Growth in Uttar Pradesh**
 - **Uttar Pradesh** has seen a remarkable surge in tourism in 2024, with **476.1 million tourists** visiting the state from **January to September 2024**.
 - The state's tourism performance in 2024 is on track to surpass the **480 million** tourists recorded in **2023**.
 - Apart from **Ayodhya**, other spiritual destinations in Uttar Pradesh, including **Varanasi** (62 million domestic, 184,000 international), **Mathura** (68 million, 87,229 foreigners), **Prayagraj** (48 million), and **Mirzapur** (11.8 million), have also experienced significant growth in 2024.
 - The [Buddhist Circuit in Kushinagar](#) saw 1.62 million visitors, including 153,000 international tourists, reflecting Uttar Pradesh's efforts to diversify its tourism beyond Ayodhya's spiritual appeal.

India's First Zero-Waste Airport | Madhya Pradesh | 23 Dec 2024

Why in News?

Recently, the **Devi Ahilyabai Holkar Airport** in **Indore** became [India's first zero-waste airport](#) with the inauguration of a **3000 sq ft material recovery facility**.

- **Waste Management System:**
 - The new [Material Recovery Facility](#) features a **comprehensive waste management system** to segregate and recycle waste from both the airport and aircraft.
 - **Wet waste** will be converted into **fertilizer**, aligning with the airport's zero-waste

initiative based on the [4R principle: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Restore](#).

▪ **Expansion Plans:**

- Also, the **Union Minister of Civil Aviation** announced the **capacity of Indore Airport** will be increased from **40 lakh passengers** to **90 lakh passengers annually** in the next **3 years**.
- Discussions are ongoing with airlines to enhance connectivity to **international destinations**, including **Thailand** and the **US**.

▪ **Infrastructure Development:**

- The **new air traffic control tower** at the airport, built at a cost of **Rs 55 crore**, was also inaugurated by the Union Minister of Civil Aviation.

Women's Kabaddi World Cup 2025 to be Held in Bihar | Bihar | 23 Dec 2024

Why in News?

Bihar will host the **Women's Kabaddi World Cup**, in the indoor hall of the **Rajgir Sports Academy** in **March 2025**.

Key Points

- A total of **14 countries**, including India, China, Japan, South Korea, Nepal, Pakistan, Iran, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Poland, Argentina, and South Africa, are expected to participate.
- **Bihar** will host the **Women's Kabaddi World Cup** for the **second time**, after previously hosting the event in **2012** at the **Patliputra Sports Complex in Patna**.

Women's Kabaddi World Cup

- The **Women's Kabaddi World Cup** is an international kabaddi competition for women's teams.
- It is organized by the **International Kabaddi Federation (IKF)**.
- The tournament features top kabaddi teams from around the world, competing for the title.
- The **first Women's Kabaddi World Cup** was held in **2012** in **Patna, Bihar**.

Haryana Govt's Notification on MSP Procurement | Haryana | 23 Dec 2024

Why in News?

Recently, the **Haryana government** has notified the procurement of **24 crops** at **Minimum Support Price (MSP)**, expanding the list from 14 crops to 24.

Key Points

- In addition to the crops that were already being procured, including paddy, bajra, kharif moong, urd, arhar, wheat and mustard, **10 more crops** approved for MSP are **ragi, soybean, nigerseed, safflower, barley, maize, jowar, jute, copra, and summer moong**.
- **Existing crops** under MSP include: **paddy, bajra, kharif moong, urd, arhar, wheat, and mustard**.

Minimum Support Price

- **MSP** is the **minimum price** at which the government guarantees to purchase certain crops from farmers to prevent distress sales and ensure fair prices.
- **MSP** is based on the recommendations of the **Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP)**, which considers various factors such as cost of production, demand and supply, market price trends, inter-crop price parity, etc.
 - CACP is an attached office of the [Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare](#). It came into existence in January 1965.
- The [Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs \(CCEA\)](#) chaired by the Prime Minister of India takes the final decision (approve) on the level of MSPs.
- The MSP is aimed at ensuring remunerative prices to growers for their produce and encouraging [Crop Diversification](#).

Uttarakhand's Wine Tourism Initiative | Uttarakhand | 23 Dec 2024

Why in News?

Recently, the Uttarakhand government inaugurated its **first [wine production unit](#)** in **Kotdwar** as part of its **[new excise policy](#)** to promote **wine tourism**.

Key Points

- **Wine Tourism Initiative:**
 - The initiative aims to offer **wine enthusiasts the opportunity to tour** the wine production units, learn about the **history of wine**, understand the **production process**, and **taste different varieties** of wine.
 - **Guest houses** are being developed around wine units to enhance the tourism experience, allowing visitors to **relax and enjoy the region's scenic beauty**.
- **Uttarakhand's Agricultural Resources:**
 - Uttarakhand is rich in fruits such as **malta, apples, buransh flowers, pears, and galgal**, which can be utilized for wine production.
 - These local resources will help create a unique appeal for **wine tourism**.
- **Expansion Plans:**
 - A private wine unit in **Kotdwar** was established two months ago, producing wine continuously with approval from the excise department.
 - New wine production plants are planned for **Bageshwar and Champawat**.
- **Economic and Employment Objectives:**
 - The government seeks to ensure the excise policy **increases revenue** and creates **[employment opportunities](#)**.
 - **Small and medium wine production units** will be encouraged in **hilly regions**, using **local fruits** to create jobs and business opportunities for local populations

