



## Current Affairs of the Day

### Govt. moots changes to Forest Conservation Act

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THE HINDU

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The Government Ministry also proposes adding a clause to make offences under the modified Act punishable with simple imprisonment for a period which may extend to one year and make it cognisable and non-bailable. They also propose provisions for penal compensation to make good for the damage already done.

2. There is also a plan in the document to exempt land acquired before 1980 — before the FCA came into effect — by public sector bodies such as the Railways.
3. Currently, the document notes, there was "strong resentment" among several Ministries on how the Act was being interpreted over the right of way of railways, highways.
4. As of today, a landholding agency (Rail, NHAI, PWD, etc.) is required to take approval under the Act and pay stipulated compensatory levies such as Net Present Value (NPV), Compensatory Afforestation (CA), etc. for use of such land which was originally been acquired for non-forest purposes.

### Other changes:

1. The Environment Ministry also proposes adding a clause to make offences under the modified Act punishable with simple imprisonment for a period that may extend to one year and make it cognisable and non-bailable.
2. They also propose provisions for penal compensation to make good for the damage already done.
3. The document also proposes removing zoos, safaris, Forest Training infrastructures from the definition of "non-forestry" activities. The current definition restricts the way money collected as part of compensatory cess can be spent towards forest conservation purposes.



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## Controversial changes:

Previous attempts to amend acts linked to forest laws have been controversial. There was a plan to amend the Indian Forest Act, 1927, that deals with the rights of forest dwellers, in an attempt to address contemporary challenges to the country's forests.

## Drone-based vaccine delivery model launched

### i-Drone

- India launched the ICMR's drone response and outreach in the northeast (i-Drone). The delivery model is aimed at ensuring that life-saving vaccines reach everyone.
- This is for the first time that a 'Make in India' drone has been used in South Asia to transport COVID vaccine over an aerial distance of 15 km in 12-15 minutes from the Bishnupur district hospital to Loktak lake, Karang island in Manipur for administration at the primary health centre. The actual road distance between these locations is 36 km. Today, 10 beneficiaries will receive the first dose and eight will receive the second dose at the primary health centre," said the Minister.
- India is home to geographical diversities and drones can be used to deliver essentials to the last mile. We can use drones in delivering important life-saving medicines, collecting blood samples.
- The delivery model would serve remote areas and hard to reach terrains. Currently, the drone-based delivery project has been granted permission for implementation in Manipur and Nagaland, as well as the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

## Drone-based vaccine delivery model launched

'Technology may prove a game changer in addressing challenges in health care: Health Minister

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Health Minister Manoj Kumar Hazarika launched the i-Drone drone response and outreach in the north-east (i-Drone) here on Monday. The delivery model is aimed at ensuring that life-saving vaccines reach everyone.

"This is for the first time that a 'Make in India' drone has been used in South Asia to transport COVID vaccine over an aerial distance of 15 km in 12-15 minutes from the Bishnupur district hospital to Loktak lake, Karang island in Manipur for administration at the primary health centre. The actual road distance between these locations is 36 km. Today, 10 beneficiaries will receive the



Launched by the government, aerial vehicle used to make vaccine deliveries on Monday. —AP/PTI

first dose and eight will receive the second dose at the primary health centre," said the Minister.

"India is home to geographical diversities and drones can be used to deliver essentials to the last mile. We can use drones in delivering important life-saving medicines, collecting blood samples. This technology

can also be used in critical situations. It may prove a game changer in addressing the challenges in health care delivery, particularly health supplies, in difficult areas."

### Tough terrain

Launching the initiative which would facilitate vaccine delivery in tough and hard-to-reach terrains, the Health Minister said incorporating such technologies into the national programmes would help deliver other vaccines and medical supplies too as quickly as possible.

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granted permission for implementation in Manipur and Nagaland, as well as the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

The ICMR conducted an initial study in collaboration with the IIT Kharagpur to test the capacity of the drones to carry and transfer vaccines safely.

The study was conducted in Manipur, Nagaland and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

These studies provided promising results on the basis of which the Ministry of Civil Aviation, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation and other regulatory authorities have granted permission to fly drones beyond the visual line of sight.

## Net oil importer India left with few options as price surges

- As the world's third-largest oil importer and consumer, India is running out of options as the relentless surge in international oil prices make it imperative to pass them on to consumers, officials said.



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- India imports 85% of its crude oil needs and about half of its natural gas requirement. While crude oil is turned into fuels such as petrol and diesel, gas is used as CNG in automobiles and fuel in factories.
- International crude oil prices continue to remain high, providing no respite to major oil importers such as India. This has squeezed margins and forced passing on the rise to consumers in the form of a hike in petrol and diesel prices.

## U.S. duo win Nobel for work on temperature and touch


- They studied how heat and cold initiated nerve impulses. The groundbreaking discoveries... by this year's Nobel Prize laureates have allowed us to understand how heat, cold and mechanical forces can initiate the nerve impulses that allow us to perceive and adapt to the world.
- The pair's research is being used to develop treatments for a wide range of diseases and conditions, including chronic pain.
- Our ability to sense heat, cold and touch is essential for survival and underpins our interaction with the world around us.


**NOBEL PRIZE**

### Unlocking mysteries of senses

U.S. scientists **David Julius** and **Ardem Patapoutian** win Nobel Prize for medicine for discoveries on receptors in the skin that respond to heat and pressure

- Their discoveries have unlocked one of the secrets of nature by explaining the molecular basis for sensing heat, cold and mechanical force, which is fundamental to our ability to feel, interpret and interact with our internal and external environment






- **David Julius, 65**, was recognised for his research using capsaicin – a compound from chilli peppers that induces a burning sensation – to identify which nerve sensors in the skin respond to heat

- **Uses:** Their work is focused on the field of somatosensation, which explores the ability of organs such as eyes, ears and skin to see, hear and feel

- **Ardem Patapoutian, 54**, is credited for finding the cellular mechanism and the underlying gene that translates a mechanical force on our skin into an electric nerve signal



- The duo's research, conducted independently of each other in the late 1990s and 2000s, is being used to develop treatments for a wide range of diseases and conditions, including chronic pain

In our daily lives we take these sensations for granted, but how are nerve impulses initiated so that temperature and pressure can be perceived?... This question has been solved by this year's Nobel winners | NOBEL COMMITTEE



**MAINS  
DAWP**

*Q. The evidence for republics in ancient India has always been available in plain sight. Critically discuss.*

**Practice  
MCQ**

*Q. Which of the following is/are correctly matched?*

	<i>Treaty/Agreement</i>	<i>Purpose</i>
1	<i>Artemis Accord</i>	<i>Peaceful use of space</i>
2	<i>Abraham Accord</i>	<i>Peace in Middle-east</i>
3	<i>Atlantic Charter</i>	<i>Goals for the world after the end of World War I</i>

*Select the correct answer from the codes given Below*

- a. 1 and 2 only*
- b. 2 and 3 only*
- c. 1 and 3 only*
- d. 1, 2 and 3*