

Union Environment Minister interacts with Mid-Career Training Participants of Indian Forest Service; Highlights Conservation Achievements and Emerging Challenges

Move beyond Traditional Regulatory Functions and become Leaders, Innovators and Facilitators of Sustainable Development: Shri Bhupender Yadav urges IFS Officers

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Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change (EFCC), Shri Bhupender Yadav, interacted with participants of the Mid-Career Training (MCT) Phase-III (19) of the Indian Forest Service, today in New Delhi. Dignitaries present on the occasion included Secretary (MoEFCC), Shri Narendra Bhooshan; DG (Forests) and Special Secretary (MoEFCC), Shri Santosh Tiwari; ADG (Wildlife), MoEFCC, Shri Ramesh Pandey; Director, Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy (IGNFA), Shri Rajendra Prasad Khajuria, besides other senior officers of the Ministry.



Addressing the participating IFS officers from different State cadres, Shri Yadav acknowledged their contribution to safeguarding India's forests, wildlife and ecological heritage. He highlighted India's progress in wildlife conservation, increase in forest and tree cover, carbon sequestration, woodland/wetland conservation, and landscape restoration through citizen-engaging initiatives such as Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam, besides MISHTI, Aravalli Green Wall and Nagar Van Yojana. The Minister emphasised that the vision of 'Viksit Bharat@2047' must integrate economic development with ecological security. He identified human-wildlife conflict, forest fires, climate change and balancing development with conservation as major challenges requiring scientific approaches and community participation.

The Minister stated that India is lucky to have wide diversity of climate, ecosystems and biodiversity. He said that an IFS officer needs to adapt and efficiently take a leadership role at the ground level in forest and wildlife conservation. Bioresources are the most important and vital resources on this planet, hence the officers are being given cross-cutting Ministry level policy making exposure besides the field level implementation experience, he informed. The Minister encouraged the officers to think out of the box and find practical solutions to the challenges in their field.

Highlighting the evolving role of the Indian Forest Service, Shri Yadav urged officers to move beyond traditional regulatory functions and become leaders, innovators and facilitators of sustainable development. He stressed the importance of emerging technologies, including GIS, remote sensing and artificial intelligence, alongside continuous capacity building and community engagement by utilising traditional knowledge. The Minister called upon officers to strengthen institutions, adopt innovative approaches for efficient decision making and preparing forest management plans, and uphold their responsibility towards safeguarding India's ecological future.



MCT Programme 2026

The Mid-Career Training Phase-III (19) programme, being organised by the Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy (IGNFA) from 12th October to 6th November 2026, is designed for IFS officers with 7–9 years of service. The 68 participants from 18 cadres bring diverse field and policy experience, with professional interests spanning wildlife conservation governance, climate-resilient forestry, habitat restoration, landscape restoration and environmental policy implementation.

The programme has been structured to strengthen leadership, strategic policy execution and field-level forest governance, while integrating emerging technologies and contemporary approaches. As part of the programme, the *Line Ministry Module* would provide the officers exposure to key Central Ministries and organisations to enhance understanding of inter-sectoral linkages and policy frameworks. *Thematic visits* to Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh would focus on best practices in wildlife management, biodiversity conservation, ecotourism and community-based forest management.

The *Management Module* would be structured around leadership and decision-making, human resource and financial management, governance of forest commons, negotiation and conflict resolution, change management, communication and ethical leadership. Finally, the *Forestry Module* would address emerging issues including environmental conventions, AI in forestry, digital transformation, national wildlife leadership, biodiversity governance, climate finance, FRA issues, watershed management, recent FCA amendments and human-wildlife conflict.



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