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# 'Time for nature': Education and the environment

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s year's World Er

t we have reach

is the moment to act! In line with the theme, I am happy to share

es to showcase the Indian government's work on environment

er the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. India

has ranked for the first time among the top 10 countries in the Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI).

The annual increase in carbon stock is 21.3 million tons, which is equivalent to 78.2 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub>. As per the ISFR 2019 report, forest and tree cover have increased by 5,100 sq. km. I also congratulate my colleague Prakash Javadekar for his untiring efforts in achieving the above goals.

Prime Minister Modi, on the occasion of International Mother Earth Day, set the priorities regarding nature. He said, "We all express gratitude to our planet for the abundance of care and compassion. Let us pledge to work towards a cleaner, healthier and more prosperous planet."

the guiding spirit as to what values we want to impart to our  
ners in the Human Resource Development ministry. Education and  
ervation have a symbiotic relationship.

ed a society is, the more protective towards nature the society  
ith its rich cultural heritage, complemented by education, always  
; relationship with nature.

ervation has always been close to my heart.

and where the famous Chipko movement started. Chandi Prasad  
bahuguna and Gaura Devi have been my inspiration. When I was  
nister of Uttarakhand, I had the opportunity to launch the "'Van  
me", ensuring public participation in conserving forests. I  
n government to give a "green bonus" to hill states. I launched the  
paign to ensure that our national river Ganga stays unpolluted.

e role of HRD mi

e agenda. The Di

tion and knowledge systems that will enable students to develop  
lge on environmental awareness and conservation.

innovative curriculum in higher educational institutions shall  
ffering of credit-based courses and projects in the areas of  
environmental education. The same vision was enunciated by DG UNESCO, Audrey  
Azoulay, when she visited India. She emphatically articulated that environmental  
awareness should be a part of the curriculum.

The approach for environmental conservation cannot be straitjacketed but requires  
continual inquiry and reflection. Thus, multiple strategies have been adopted for  
integrating the environment with education. The HRD ministry has ensured that the  
teaching of Environmental Studies as EVS (science) and EVS (social studies) starts as  
early as the primary stage and is incorporated in classes above and even in higher  
education.

Several initiatives have been launched. I am glad that students are coming out in  
large numbers to participate. Jal Shakti Abhiyan (Samagra Shiksha-Jal Suraksha)  
conservation campaign has been launched wherein 10 crore students have

3,650 crore litres of water in one year and will save 36,500 crore  
0 years.

saplings have been planted by students across schools and higher  
tes under the "one student one tree" campaign. Further, an  
mme has been initiated on environmental hazards of electronic  
2. The AICTE has issued guidelines for the ban of plastic use in  
institutions.

remarkable efforts of higher education institutes towards green  
building a more sustainable and environmentally conscious

veloped SATAT—a Framework for Eco-Friendly and Sustainable  
ent, with various courses at the graduate and postgraduate level  
ronment conservation. A six-month core module syllabus for  
dies will be impl

ironment require  
their role and responsibility in working towards a sustainable  
et.

le Development Goals—Climate action (Goal 13), Life on land (Goal  
15), Life below water (Goal 14), and responsible consumption and production (Goal  
12) —are all interrelated and interdependent. Due to the onset of the pandemic, the  
gains in tackling poverty, hunger, health and education may suffer serious setbacks.

However, the setbacks may be aggravated if we collectively do not address threats  
to the environment. It is essential to strengthen education about the environment;  
this cannot be studied in isolation but requires multidisciplinary integration in the  
curriculum at all levels. This can only be possible if academicians, teachers and  
students come forth to adopt traditional practices and knowledge systems on  
environment conservation. Together we can act #ForNature.

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