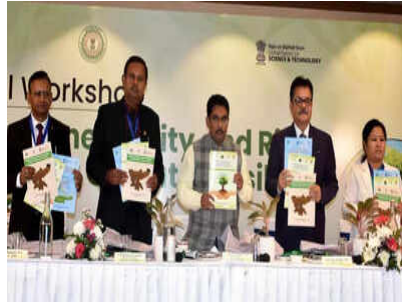


'Rapid desertification in state matter of concern'

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Ranchi: Stating that rapid desertification in Jharkhand was a matter of grave concern, Abubacker Siddiqui P, secretary of the department of forests, environment and climate change on Tuesday said the state govt was awaiting the approval of its new state action plan on climate change (SAPCC) to ensure climate conservation in Jharkhand.

"Even though the forest cover has increased in Jharkhand, rapid desertification is a big concern for us. We have finalised SAPCC, which will largely act as a framework for climate conservation, and awaiting its approval. But inclusive participation concerning every stakeholder, including local communities and all concerned govt

departments such as agriculture, energy, mining and labour, needs to be undertaken," Siddiqui said at a state level workshop titled 'Assessing Vulnerability and Risks: Strategies for Climate Resilient Jharkhand,' on Tuesday.

A study conducted by the ISRO, which was published in 2023, had stated that 68.98% of Jharkhand's total land had been degraded and turned deserted-like and suggested urgent measures including afforestation and soil-moisture conservation measures.

Senior forest official Ravi Ranjan said though a SAPCC was first formulated in 2014, not much happened on ground. "A new plan has been drafted and has been sent to the state steering committee, following which it will be sent for the Centre's approval," he said. Satyajit Singh, principal chief conservator of forest Jharkhand, said 19 crore saplings were planted across the state in the last five years.