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MAGAZINE NOTES

Forest Law Amendment vs. The Paper Industry

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ENVIRONMENT

ECONOMY

GS3

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Forest Law Amendment vs. The Paper Industry



Down to Earth

Chapter 4 · 1 min read

Context

- An amendment to the **Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980** has triggered intense debate by potentially opening large tracts of forestland to commercial exploitation by the paper sector
- Reclassifies commercial plantations on forestland as “forestry activities” — risk of monoculture (eucalyptus, acacia)

India's Paper Industry Crisis

- India is the **third-largest paper producer** globally
- Domestic demand: **~11 million TPA**; wood availability: only **9 million TPA** (fibre shortage)
- 76% of raw material already comes from recycled paper; 20% from agroforestry
- Demand growing at **6-7% annually**

Critical Evaluation

- Policymakers must balance industrial need for raw materials with the critical necessity of protecting natural forests from commercial monoculture plantations
- Risk: converting biodiverse forests into single-species plantations destroys ecological integrity

UPSC Angle

- **GS3:** Environment, forest conservation, industrial policy



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FOREST LAW AMENDMENT:

Act amended: Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980

India's rank in paper production: 3rd globally

Domestic paper demand: ~11 million TPA

Wood availability: 9 million TPA (deficit of 2 million TPA)

Recycled paper share: 76%; agroforestry: 20%



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