

UPSC & STATE PCS CURRENT AFFAIRS · UJIYARI.COM**DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS**

Madras HC Orders Eradication of Prosopis Juliflora — Tamil Nadu's Invasive Species Battle

22 March 2026

CURATED & WRITTEN BY

**Bharat Choudhary**

UPSC Educator & Content Creator

[linkedin.com/in/epicbharat](https://www.linkedin.com/in/epicbharat)**ALSO FROM THE CREATOR****BharatNotes**Free UPSC notes, MCQs, PYQ analysis. **100% Free.**bharatnotes.com →**ADVERTISE****Advertise with Ujiyari**

Reach thousands of UPSC aspirants daily.

epicbharat@gmail.com

Madras HC Orders Eradication of Prosopis Juliflora – Tamil Nadu's Invasive Species Battle

22 March 2026 · 3 min read · 1 tag

WHY IN NEWS

The Madras High Court on March 18, 2026, issued 34 directions for the eradication of the invasive species *Prosopis juliflora* (locally known as seemai karuvelam) from Tamil Nadu, directing that property owners willing to plant native saplings be provided them free of cost.

The Invasive Tree That Took Over Tamil Nadu

What Is *Prosopis Juliflora*?

Prosopis juliflora is a **thorny, fast-growing tree** native to Central and South America. It was introduced in India (Tamil Nadu) in **1959** to:

- Combat **firewood shortage** in the drier southern regions
- Provide **shade and soil stabilisation** in arid areas
- Serve as a **drought-resistant fuelwood** source

However, the species has become one of India's most aggressive **invasive alien species**, spreading uncontrollably across Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, and Karnataka.

Why It Became a Problem

ISSUE	IMPACT
Groundwater depletion	Deep taproots (up to 50 m) drain groundwater at rates far exceeding native species
Biodiversity loss	Forms dense monocultures, displacing native flora and reducing habitat for wildlife
Agricultural land invasion	Spreads into farmland, making it uncultivable
Health hazards	Thorns cause injuries; pollen aggravates allergies
Wetland destruction	Has invaded critical wetlands including Pulicat Lake and Kaliveli wetland

Regeneration Challenge

Prosopis juliflora is exceptionally difficult to eradicate:

- **Seeds are tough and long-lasting** — remain viable in soil for years
- **Spread through livestock dung** — cattle eat pods, seeds pass through undigested and germinate
- **Cutting leads to stronger regrowth** — the tree coppices vigorously from stumps
- Even chemical treatment must be repeated over multiple seasons

Madras High Court Directions

The court issued **34 specific directions**, including:

- ❶ Property owners willing to plant native saplings to be provided them **free of cost** by the forest department
- ❷ State agencies to prepare a **phased eradication plan** with clear timelines
- ❸ Tamil Nadu Forest Department to coordinate with district administrations for removal from public lands
- ❹ **Awareness campaigns** in affected districts on the ecological harm caused by the species

National Context: Invasive Species in India

India faces multiple invasive species threats:

SPECIES	REGION	IMPACT
Prosopis juliflora	TN, Rajasthan, Gujarat	Groundwater depletion, biodiversity loss
Lantana camara	Pan-India forests	Forest degradation, blocks regeneration
Water hyacinth	Wetlands across India	Chokes water bodies, depletes oxygen
Parthenium	Agricultural lands	Crop yield loss, health issues
Mikania micrantha	NE India, Western Ghats	Smothers native vegetation

India's **Biological Diversity Act, 2002** and the **National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)** address invasive species management, though enforcement remains patchy.

UPSC RELEVANCE

Prosopis juliflora origin, invasive species examples, Biological Diversity Act 2002, NBA.

MAINS GS-3:

Environmental conservation — invasive species management, biodiversity threats, judicial activism in environmental protection.

MAINS GS-2:

Role of judiciary in environmental governance.

★ FACTS CORNER — KNOWLEDGEPEDIA

PROSOPIS JULIFLORA:

Family: Fabaceae (Leguminosae)

Native to: Central and South America (Mexico, Peru, Argentina)

Introduced in Tamil Nadu: 1959

Local name: Seemai Karuvelam (Tamil), Vilayati Babool (Hindi)

Taproot depth: Up to 50 metres

IUCN status: Listed among “100 of the World’s Worst Invasive Alien Species”

MADRAS HC DIRECTIONS (MARCH 18, 2026):

34 directions issued for eradication

Free native saplings for willing property owners

Phased eradication plan required

Forest department to coordinate removal from public lands

INVASIVE SPECIES IN INDIA:

Lantana camara: Pan-India, forest degradation

Water hyacinth (Eichhornia crassipes): Wetlands, oxygen depletion

Parthenium hysterophorus: Agricultural lands, “Congress grass”

Mikania micrantha: NE India, “Mile-a-minute weed”

OTHER RELEVANT FACTS:

Biological Diversity Act: 2002 (India)

National Biodiversity Authority (NBA): Chennai (est. 2003)

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD): India is a party (ratified 1994)

IUCN Invasive Species Specialist Group (ISSG): Maintains Global Invasive Species Database

Wildlife Institute of India (WII): Dehradun — conducts invasive species research

90% of TN’s rural population uses Prosopis as firewood and charcoal source

Sources: [The Hindu](#), [GS Times](#), [Mongabay India](#), [SPC Tamil Nadu](#)

RELATED EDITORIALS

DOWN TO EARTH

[NBA Internship Programme — Reviving India's Biodiversity Governance Architecture](#)

26 Mar

THE HINDU

[Rein in Chemical Industry Pollution — Regulatory Gaps and Enforcement Failures](#)

26 Mar

DOWN TO EARTH

[EIA Amendment 2026 — Streamlining Delays or Bypassing Environmental Scrutiny?](#)

25 Mar

THE HINDU

[The Judicial Push for Environmental CSR — From Charity to Constitutional Duty](#)

25 Mar



CURATED & WRITTEN BY

Bharat Choudhary

UPSC Educator & Content Creator

[linkedin.com/in/epicbharat](https://www.linkedin.com/in/epicbharat)[Read Full Article on Ujiyari →](#)<https://ujiyari.com/daily/2026/03/22/prosopis-juliflora-tamil-nadu/>

ALSO FROM THE CREATOR

BharatNotes

Free UPSC study platform — subject-wise notes across all 4 GS papers, Prelims MCQs, Mains answer frameworks, PYQ analysis & progress tracking. **100% Free • No Login Required.**

[Start Preparing → bharatnotes.com](http://bharatnotes.com)

📌 OPPORTUNITY

Advertise with Ujiyari

Reach **thousands of serious UPSC & State PCS aspirants** daily through our PDFs, website, and social channels.

Ideal for: Coaching institutes • EdTech platforms • Book publishers • Exam prep apps

[✉ epicbharat@gmail.com](mailto:epicbharat@gmail.com)

Write to us for rates & media kit

Free UPSC & State PCS Current Affairs · ujiyari.com · bharatnotes.com