



CONTENTS

Issue Focus

Our planet faces rising temperatures, water scarcity, and shrinking forests.

Healthcare & Education Dominance

Corporate spending in India has grown significantly, with healthcare and education continuing to capture the lion's share of funding. For instance, **ICICI Bank** recently committed **₹625 crore** toward cancer care facilities at the Tata Memorial Centre in Navi Mumbai.

Thought of the Month

"True CSR goes beyond compliance; it creates lasting impact for people, planet, and progress."

Geographical concentration

Fresh data indicates that only 30% of Indian districts receive consistent CSR funding, leaving heavy development gaps in rural areas.

Stricter Compliance & Penalties

Landmark legislation such as the proposed CSR Amendment Bill is introducing heavier financial penalties — reaching upwards of **₹20 crore** — to crack down on unspent fund non-compliance and reporting.

CSR NOBLE Communique

is a monthly publication by CSR Noble

Visit us at : www.csrnoble.com

July 2026

Disclaimer :

This publication is intended for private circulation only and contains a collection of articles on developments in the CSR area. While every effort has been made to source information from reliable channels, the publishers do not accept any responsibility for the correctness, completeness, or accuracy of the information provided. The contents should not be interpreted as the views of the publishers, nor as an invitation or offer for any financial transaction. Readers are advised to undertake their own due diligence and independently verify any information before relying upon or using it. The publishers and their associates shall not be liable for any direct, indirect, incidental, or consequential loss or damages arising from the use of this publication or the information contained herein.

World Environment Day 2026: Sowing the Seeds of a Greener Tomorrow



World Environment Day, observed annually on **5th June**, serves as a global reminder of our shared responsibility to protect, restore, and preserve the natural environment. As the world faces growing challenges such as climate change, deforestation, biodiversity loss, and environmental degradation, the need for collective action has never been greater.

Reinforcing this commitment, the Government of Maharashtra has launched the ambitious Green Maharashtra-300 Crore Tree Plantation Mission, aimed at significantly increasing the state's green cover and strengthening climate resilience. The mission seeks to increase Maharashtra's forest cover to **33%**, while promoting large-scale afforestation, biodiversity conservation, ecosystem restoration, and sustainable development. The initiative also aims to generate livelihood opportunities and encourage active participation from communities, institutions, NGOs, and corporates across the state.

In alignment with this vision, **Strugence Benevolent Foundation (SBF)** is undertaking a Seed Ball Plantation Drive on **11th and 12th July 2026**, bringing together volunteers, students, corporates, and community members to contribute towards environmental conservation. The initiative promotes the preparation and dispersal of seed balls containing native tree species in suitable locations, enabling natural regeneration and ecological restoration.

The campaign builds upon the success of the Seed Ball Creation Campaign conducted in Palghar District on **18th April 2026**, where enthusiastic participation from local communities and volunteers demonstrated the growing commitment towards environmental stewardship and sustainable development.

Seed ball offer a simple yet effective method of afforestation by protecting seed until favourable germination conditions arise. Through, this initiative, SBF aims to encourage public participation in tree plantation, support biodiversity conservation, and inspire individuals to become active contributors to a healthier environment.

As we continue to celebrate the spirit of World Environment Day, let us remember that every seed planted today has the potential to transform landscapes, enrich biodiversity, and create a lasting legacy. The Maharashtra Government's vision of planting 300 crore trees and increasing forest cover to **33%** reflects the scale of action required to address environmental challenges. Together, through collective effort and sustained commitment, we can build a cleaner, greener, and more sustainable future for generations to come.





MAXIMUM LOSS OF COVER IN PALGHAR, NANDURBAR

District-wise forest data			
Forest cover inside recorded forest area	Cover outside recorded forest area	Scrub land	
36,110.9	14,747.6	3,645.67	
All figures in sq km			
District	Total forest cover 2023	Percentage of cover	Change with respect to 2021
Mumbai city	4.42	2.82	-0.16
Mumbai suburban	150.64	33.78	1.42
Thane	1,432.7	31.25	82.84

What India State of Forest Report 2023 says

➤ Maharashtra's forest cover shrank 5,447 hectares from 2021 to 2023

➤ Most of the cover lost is in Palghar (86.97 sq km) and Nandurbar (64.49 sq km)

➤ Pune lost around 467 hectares of forests

➤ Ratnagiri and Thane on the other hand saw an increase

➤ Open forests comprise the largest portion of forest land



at 19,415 sq km while moderately dense forests 21,577 sq km

➤ Very dense forests constitute only 9,857 sq km

LOSS OF GREEN COVER

61,579 sq km
Forest land in Maharashtra

670 sq km

Forest land encroached in state

603 sq km
Total area of Mumbai

FIVE STATES THAT HAVE LOST MAXIMUM FOREST AREAS TO ENCROACHERS

- 1 Madhya Pradesh
- 2 Assam
- 3 Karnataka
- 4 Odisha
- 5 Maharashtra



Environmental Sustainability Gap in Maharashtra: Why CSR Support is Critical

Maharashtra is one of India's most industrialized and urbanized states, yet it faces significant environmental sustainability challenges. Rapid urban expansion, industrial growth, deforestation, water scarcity, biodiversity loss, and the increasing impacts of climate change have created a widening gap between economic development and environmental conservation.

Many districts, particularly tribal and rural regions such as Palghar, Nandurbar, Gadchiroli, Chandrapur, and parts of Marathwada and Vidarbha, continue to experience declining green cover, soil degradation, irregular rainfall patterns, and water stress. While government departments undertake large-scale afforestation and conservation programmes, the scale of environmental challenges often exceeds available resources and implementation capacity.

One of the most pressing concerns is the need to increase Maharashtra's forest and tree cover. Experts widely recognize that a higher percentage of green cover is essential for climate resilience, groundwater recharge, biodiversity protection, and improved air quality. Simultaneously, urban areas are facing rising temperatures, pollution, and shrinking natural ecosystems, making environmental restoration more urgent than ever.

Schools, local communities, tribal populations, and grassroots organizations are increasingly participating in environmental initiatives such as tree plantation drives, seedball campaigns, watershed development, and biodiversity conservation. However, many of these efforts face limitations due to inadequate funding, lack of technical support, insufficient maintenance resources, and limited access to quality planting material.

This is where Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) can play a transformative role. CSR support enables the implementation of large-scale environmental projects that deliver measurable and long-term impact. Investments in afforestation, native species plantation, water conservation structures, community nurseries, seedball initiatives, and environmental education programmes help create sustainable ecosystems while generating livelihoods and strengthening community participation.

Environmental sustainability is not solely a government responsibility. It requires collaboration among corporates, civil society organizations, educational institutions, local communities, and public authorities. Through strategic CSR investments, companies can contribute to climate action, biodiversity conservation, carbon sequestration, water security, and sustainable development while creating visible and measurable social impact. As Maharashtra continues its development journey, bridging the environmental sustainability gap is essential for ensuring a greener, healthier, and more resilient future. CSR support can serve as a powerful catalyst in achieving this goal by transforming environmental challenges into opportunities for sustainable growth and community empowerment.



Spending Trajectory & Sector Focus

Environmental and climate-related CSR spending is projected to reach an all-time high of ₹4,200 crore this fiscal year. Corporate capital is no longer just funding localized tree-plantation drives; it is actively targeting structural, high-yield ecological interventions:

Coastal and Marine Ecology: Rejuvenating mangroves and protecting coastal ecosystems to create natural barriers against climate-induced weather extremes.

Water Stewardship: Partnering with state governments for massive lake rejuvenation projects, deep-pond scaling, and the installation of solar-powered clean water ATMs in rural and urban-fringe areas.

Renewable Energy Infrastructure: Equipping government schools, rural healthcare centers, and public offices with self-sustaining solar micro-grids to reduce long-term public energy costs.



SOCIAL FORESTRY PROGRAMME

Greening Together for a Better Tomorrow



WHAT IS SOCIAL FORESTRY?

Social Forestry is a programme that involves people in growing and managing trees on community, private and public lands to meet their needs and protect the environment.



KEY FEATURES

- Involves local communities and voluntary participation
- Trees are planted on community lands, roadsides, canals, schools and village commons
- Helps in meeting the daily needs of people
- Encourages joint responsibility and care for trees
- Supports sustainable development and a better environment



ACTIVITIES INVOLVED



OBJECTIVES

- Increase tree cover and green spaces
- Meet the basic needs of local people for fuel, fodder, timber and small wood
- Protect soil, water and wildlife
- Improve environmental quality and public health
- Promote community participation and rural development



BENEFITS

- Provides essential resources to local people
- Reduces pressure on natural forests
- Helps in soil conservation and water management
- Improves climate and biodiversity
- Enhances rural livelihoods and quality of life



**More Trees, Better Environment, Stronger Communities.
Let's Grow a Greener Tomorrow!**



Social Forestry: Creating Livelihoods While Restoring Nature

India's environmental future depends not only on protecting forests but also on expanding tree cover beyond traditional forest areas. Social forestry has emerged as a practical and sustainable approach that integrates environmental conservation with community development.

In Maharashtra, many rural and tribal communities depend on natural resources for their livelihoods. Planting trees on community lands, roadsides, farms, and degraded areas can generate multiple benefits, including soil conservation, groundwater recharge, carbon sequestration, and income generation through fruits, timber, medicinal plants, and non-timber forest products.

Despite its immense potential, social forestry initiatives often face challenges related to funding, technical support, maintenance, and community mobilization. CSR support can help overcome these barriers by providing resources for plantation activities, nursery development, capacity building, and long-term monitoring.

Investing in social forestry is more than an environmental intervention—it is an investment in sustainable livelihoods, climate resilience, and rural development.



The Growing Environmental Sustainability Gap in India

Climate change, declining biodiversity, water stress, and shrinking green cover have become some of the most pressing challenges facing India today. Maharashtra, despite its leadership in economic growth, is not immune to these environmental pressures. Increasing temperatures, erratic rainfall patterns, and environmental degradation are impacting both urban and rural communities.

Government programmes alone cannot address the scale of the challenge. Environmental sustainability requires sustained investment, community participation, and long-term planning. This is where Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) becomes critically important.

CSR-funded initiatives such as large-scale afforestation, seedball campaigns, watershed development, biodiversity conservation, and community forestry projects can create measurable environmental impact. These projects also generate employment opportunities, strengthen local ecosystems, and improve the quality of life for future generations.

The need of the hour is a collaborative approach where corporates, government agencies, NGOs, educational institutions, and citizens work together to build a greener, healthier, and more sustainable Maharashtra. Every CSR investment in the environment is an investment in the future of our communities and our planet.



Indu Mehta
Chief Sustainability Officer
Bhilwara Energy Limited

Quote of the Interview:

"The future advantage will not come from reporting more. It will come from responding faster to what regulation and global markets are now able to measure."

Key Takeaways from the Interview: ESG Has Moved Beyond Storytelling

In an insightful interview with **Indu Mehta**, she emphasized that ESG and sustainability in India have evolved from being communication-led initiatives to becoming core business and operational priorities. According to her, sustainability today is driven by measurable performance, regulatory compliance, and market expectations rather than voluntary declarations.

Highlights from the Discussion

1. ESG is now an operating discipline

Indian companies are increasingly required to demonstrate measurable outcomes in areas such as energy efficiency, emissions reduction, water conservation, waste management, and governance. Sustainability is no longer a reporting exercise but a business function influencing competitiveness and market access.

2. Regulatory frameworks are driving accountability

The implementation of SEBI's BRSR Core framework has shifted corporate sustainability reporting from narrative disclosures to verifiable performance indicators. This is compelling companies to strengthen data systems, transparency, and value-chain accountability.

3. Decarbonisation is becoming a business imperative

Bhilwara Energy's sustainability strategy focuses on renewable energy, circular materials, recycled fibres, cleaner production systems, and resource efficiency. The company views decarbonisation as an integral part of operational decision-making rather than a separate ESG initiative.

4. Global markets are shaping ESG adoption

Export-oriented industries are increasingly facing sustainability requirements from international buyers. Factors such as product traceability, carbon footprint, responsible sourcing, and supplier transparency are becoming critical for maintaining market access and competitiveness.

5. Sustainability leadership requires long-term vision

Mehta highlighted the importance of emotional intelligence and leadership commitment in driving sustainability transformations. Successful ESG implementation depends on aligning people, processes, and long-term business objectives.

Relevance for CSR and Sustainability Professionals

The interview reinforces a critical message for corporates and CSR practitioners: sustainability is no longer an optional or philanthropic activity. It is becoming a strategic business necessity that influences investment decisions, stakeholder trust, operational efficiency, regulatory compliance, and long-term resilience. Organizations that integrate sustainability into their core operations today will be better positioned to meet future environmental, social, and governance expectations.

Our Ongoing Programmes

Healthcare

Kem Hospital they need below mention equipment's

1. Flat Panel Digital C ARM Unit

Upgrading to perform real-time diagnostic imaging during critical procedures.

2. Orthopedic operation table

State-of-the-art modular OTs will enhance surgical precision, hygiene, and outcomes.

3. Revision Hip Instruments

Advanced surgery instruments for procedures across specialties'.

Rajawadi Municipal Hospital they need below mention equipment's

1. Arterial Blood Gas Analyzer machine

2. Bera Test Machine and various Hearing assessment equipment's

3. Operation Theatre (OT) table hydraulic

4. Fully Automated Blood Sterile Body Fluid Culture System

Environment and Rural development

We are humbly working to uplift tribal communities in Palghar, Sindhudurg, Wada, Roha, and Dahanu through a life-changing initiative to distribute 1 Lakh fruit-bearing trees. We seek support to bring hope, dignity, and sustainable livelihoods to tribal families, helping them earn up to ₹2 lakh additional income while creating a greener future and protecting our environment for generations to come.

Education

With a deep commitment to social change, we are working to uplift the education standards of 30 ZP schools in Dahanu, Maharashtra, bringing better learning opportunities to children in rural and tribal communities. We are seeking CSR support to improve school infrastructure, digital learning, sanitation, and essential facilities—helping create brighter futures, stronger villages, and hope for the next generation.