



YES, RAHUL. THE MOLAI FOREST WHICH IS NAMED AFTER HIM IS NOW HOME TO BENGAL TIGERS, INDIAN RHINOCEROS, DEER, APES AND SEVERAL SPECIES OF BIRDS. HE WAS AWARDED THE PADMA SHRI-INDIA'S FOURTH HIGHEST CIVILIAN AWARD-FOR HIS CONTRIBUTION.



YES, RAHUL. BUT THE GOOD NEWS IS, DUE TO THE EFFORTS OF OUR GOVERNMENT AND ENVIRONMENTALISTS, BETWEEN 1990 AND 2005, INDIA HAS GAINED 5.9% OF ITS FOREST COVER.



YES, BUT INDIA HAS ONLY 24% OF FOREST LAND, WHILE IT SHOULD BE AT LEAST 33.33%.



IN THAT CASE, LET'S PLANT MORE TREES! I WANT TO COME TO THE FOREST EVERY YEAR ON THIS DAY AND PLANT TREES.



RAHUL, IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO PLANT TREES ONLY IN THE FORESTS. YOU CAN PLANT TREES IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD OR SCHOOL. AND YOU CAN DO IT ON ANY DAY!

DADAJI, WHO IS THIS?

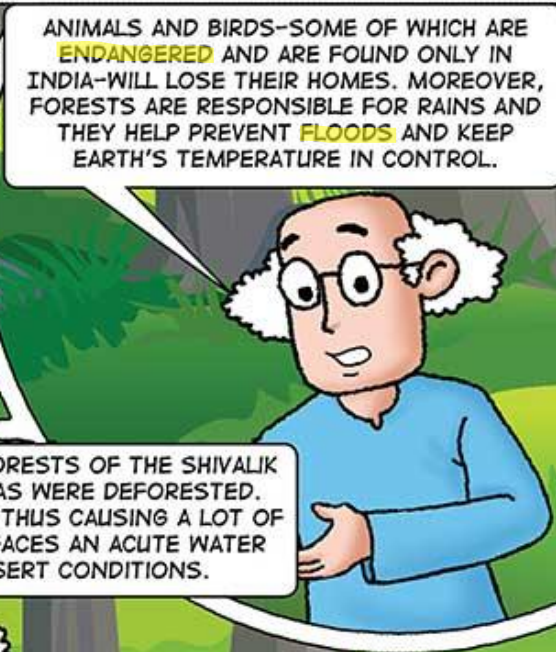


THAT IS BECAUSE OUR FORESTS NEED THEM MORE. EXCESSIVE CUTTING OF TREES, OVERGRAZING AND EXPLOITATION OF RESOURCES HAS CAUSED OUR FOREST COVER TO REDUCE OVER THE YEARS. THIS IS CALLED DEFORESTATION.



WHAT HAPPENS BECAUSE OF THAT?

ANIMALS AND BIRDS—SOME OF WHICH ARE ENDANGERED AND ARE FOUND ONLY IN INDIA—WILL LOSE THEIR HOMES. MOREOVER, FORESTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR RAINS AND THEY HELP PREVENT FLOODS AND KEEP EARTH'S TEMPERATURE IN CONTROL.



ARE THERE ANY FORESTS IN INDIA THAT HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY DEFORESTATION?



YES, THE ONCE LUSH GREEN FORESTS OF THE SHIVALIK HILLS CLOSE TO THE HIMALAYAS WERE DEFORESTED. THIS MADE THE SOIL UNSTABLE THUS CAUSING A LOT OF LANDSLIDES. THE AREA ALSO FACES AN ACUTE WATER SHORTAGE AND SEMI-DESERT CONDITIONS.



THAT IS VERY SAD! IS THIS GOING TO BE TRUE OF ALL OUR FORESTS IF WE DON'T PROTECT THEM?

