No Green Consciousness

What is the issue?

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- The environment does not find any mention in Finance Minister Arun Jaitley’s Budget speech.
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- While the allocation for the Ministry has actually increased in this year’s Budget key schemes have seen their allocations reduced.
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What are the affected programmes?

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- **Project Tiger** outlay has fallen from Rs.365 crore in the revised estimates to Rs.345 crore for 2017-18.
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- **Coastal zone management and clean energy funds** have been increased, but funds for prevention of water pollution and climate adaptation are meagre.
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- The **Climate Change Action Plan**, incidentally, has received a princely sum of around Rs.40 crore.
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What is the contradiction?

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- The silence of both the Budget and the Economic Survey 2016-17 is at odds with India’s commitments in the Paris agreement.
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- A reduction in the emissions intensity of the GDP cannot be achieved

through a renewables drive alone.
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- It is estimated that just one of the targets of adding additional carbon sinks of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of CO2-equivalent — would need investments of Rs.1lakh crore annually for afforestation.
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- There is no reflection of this commitment in the Budget.
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- Despite the country being lambasted on all fronts for rising air pollution, the Government has failed to conduct comprehensive impact studies.
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- Two-year-old guidelines on air pollution control are yet to be implemented and no additional allocations have been made for the same.
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- The more worrying fact is the relaxation of environmental laws & regulations, the under-utilisation of funds despite needs and the lack of transparent approval process. Therefore they have to be adequately addressed.
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