



Agatti Island of Lakshadweep

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Why in News

Recently, the southern bench of the **National Green Tribunal** (NGT) has granted an interim stay on felling of coconut trees on **Agatti Island** in Lakshadweep.

Key Points

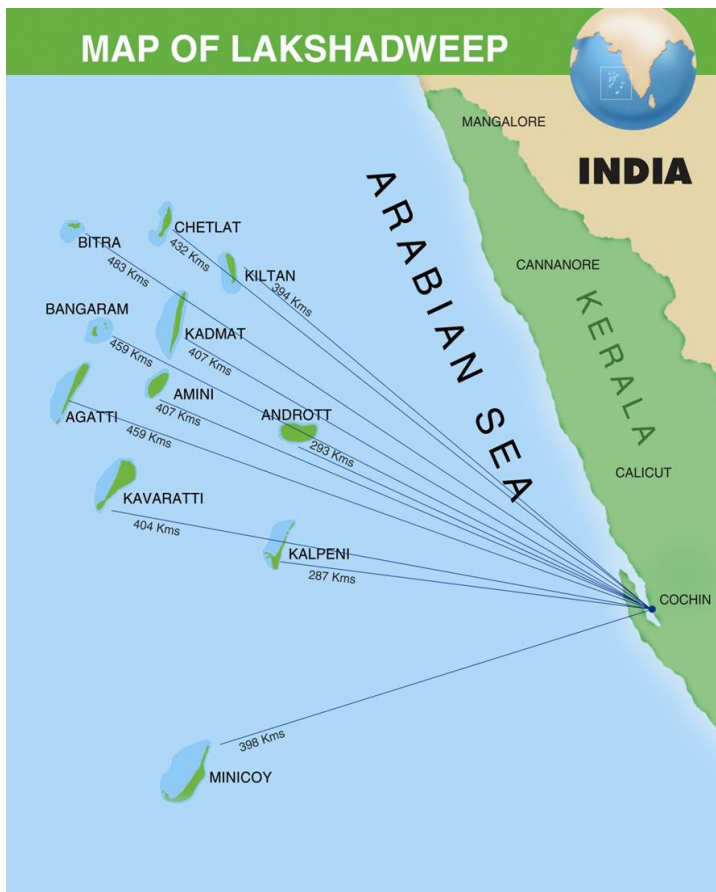
- **Background:**
 - Recently, a **petition was moved in the NGT** over **indiscriminate cutting of coconut trees** for a beach road.
 - The tree-felling was violating the Union Territory's (UT) **Integrated Island Management Plan (IIMP)**.
 - IIMP was formulated on the basis of a report submitted by the **Supreme Court**-appointed Expert Committee, headed by **Justice R.V. Raveendran**, a former judge of the SC.
 - IIMP includes holistic island development plans prepared by the **National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management (NCSCM)** for implementation by coastal States/ UTs.
 - The IIMP **undertakes scientific approaches**, coupled with **indigenous knowledge** for the better management of the islands and its resources.
- **Concerns:**
 - Due to the large scale cutting of the coconut trees, local residents are **affected by losing income** from the tree produces.
 - It also poses an **environmental challenge** because the trees on the coastline act as a **green belt** to protect the rest of the island during **cyclones** and other natural calamities.

Agatti Island

- It is at a **distance of 459 km** (248 nautical miles) from **Kochi (Kerala)** and is located to the **west of Kavaratti Island**.

Kavaratti is the capital of the UT of Lakshadweep.

- It has an **area of 3.84 sq km** and has a north-east, south-west trend with a long tail on the south.
- The **lagoon area of this island is 17.50 sq km** and there is plenty of **coral growth and multicoloured coral fishes** in the lagoons.
- **Fishing is the most important industry** of Agatti which is perhaps the only island besides Minicoy getting surplus fish. Next to fishing, **coir** (coconut fibre) and **copra** (dried meat or kernel of the coconut) are the main industries.



Source: TH