

Mining Activities Prohibited in Aravalli

Why in News?

The <u>National Green Tribunal (NGT)</u> has issued a show-cause notice to the **Haryana Government** and the <u>Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change</u> over alleged mining on protected <u>Aravalli forest land</u>.

 It also directed the state to halt all mining and stone-crushing activities until 7th August 2025.

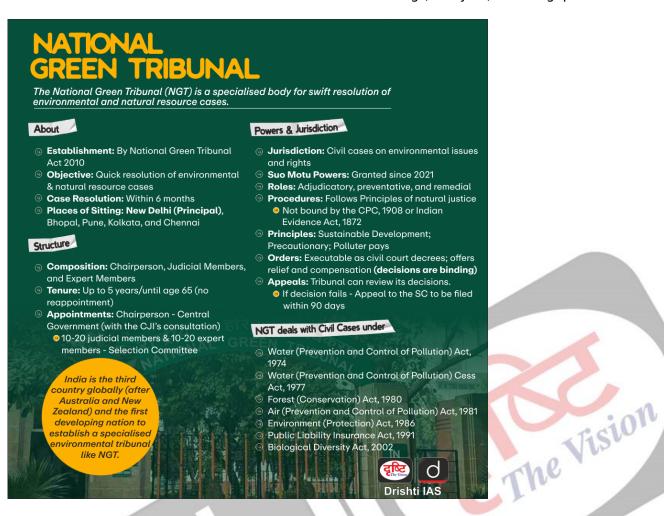
Key Points

- About the Issue:
 - It was alleged that the Haryana Government auctioned 25% of 506.33 acres of notified protected forest land to stone crushing units.
 - This land had been declared a protected forest as part of compensatory afforestation for the <u>Great Nicobar Island project.</u>
 - The case highlights potential violations of the <u>Forest (Conservation) Act 1980</u> and questions the legality of the auction process.
 - Petitioners and environmentalists pointed out that mining and stone crushing have severely impacted the local water table, flora, and fauna.
 - They also stressed that while the country is losing dense forests in Great Nicobar, the 'Nicobar swap' land meant to restore the Aravallis is being sabotaged by illegal mining.
 - About Aravallis:
 - The Aravalli Range extends from Gujarat to Delhi through Rajasthan, 692 km in length and varies between 10 to 120 km in width.
 - The range acts as a natural green wall, with 80% located in Rajasthan and 20% in Haryana, Delhi, and Gujarat.
 - The Aravalli mountains are divided into two main ranges the Sambhar Sirohi
 Range and the Sambhar Khetri Range in Rajasthan, where their extension is
 about 560 km.
 - It serves as an ecotone between the Thar Desert and the Gangetic Plain.
 - Ecotones are areas where two or more ecosystems, biological communities, or biotic regions meet.
 - **Gurusikhar (Rajasthan)**, the highest peak in the range, reaches an elevation of 1,722 meters.

Great Nicobar Island Project

- The Great Nicobar Island (GNI) project, **launched in 2021**, is a mega project **to be implemented** at the southern end of the <u>Andaman and Nicobar islands</u>.
- It involves developing a trans-shipment port, an international airport, township development, and a 450 MVA gas and solar-based power plant on the island.
- The project was implemented after a report by <u>NITI Aayog</u> which identified the potential to utilise the advantageous position of the island, which is approximately equidistant from

Colombo in Sri Lanka to the southwest and Port Klang (Malaysia) and Singapore to the southeast.



PDF Reference URL: https://www.drishtiias.com/printpdf/mining-activities-prohibited-in-aravalli