Illegal Mining on Yamuna Banks

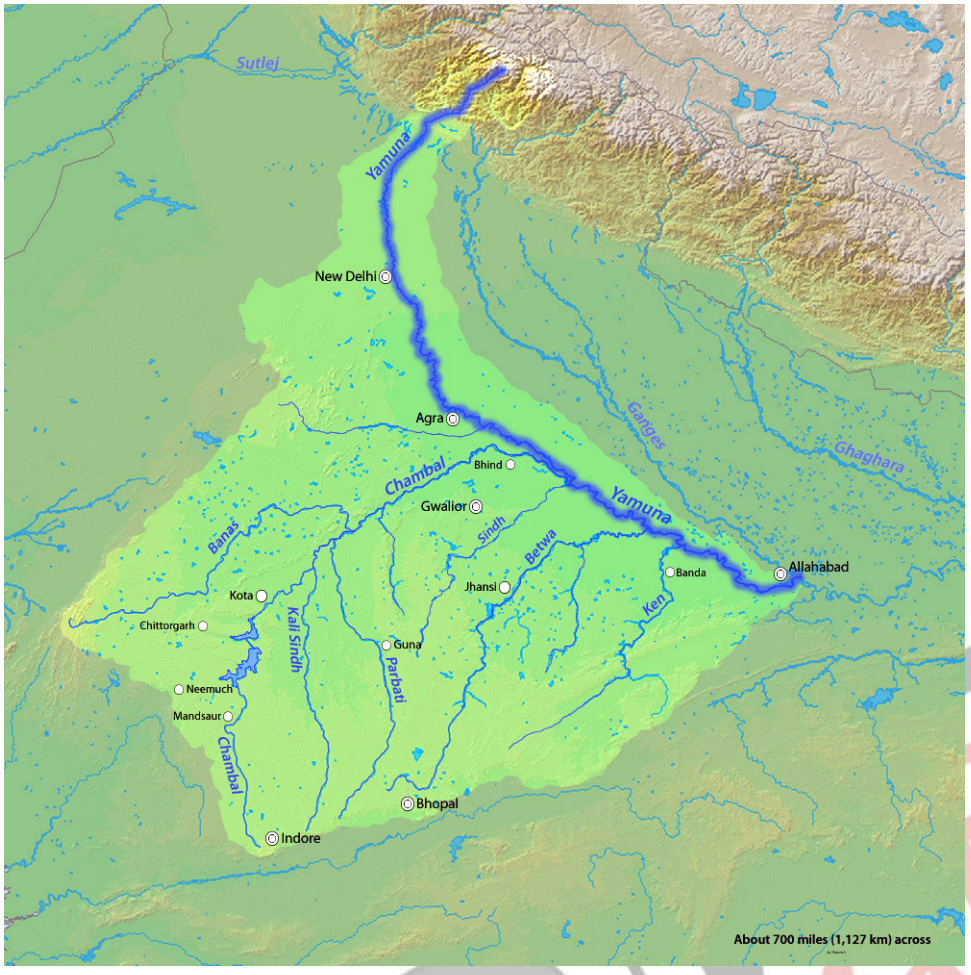
Why in News?

In a joint raid against **sand mining mafia** the mining department and Loni administration seized earthmovers, trucks, and trolleys from the **Yamuna banks** in Loni's Pachera.

Key Points

- A section of land spanning 15 kilometers in Loni along the Yamuna river, encompassing Pachaira, Badarpur, and Nauraspur villages, has been rented out for sand mining.
- The illegal sand mining was happening 1.5km away from the leased 48-acre land in Pachera, which has been rented for a 5-year term.
- To ensure sustainable river sand mining, it is vital to **refill the mine pits created** during **sand extraction through the natural process of replenishment** within an appropriate time frame.
    - Illegal deep excavations often occur in sensitive locations along the riverbank, resulting in the formation of deep pits.
- In 2023, flooding in the Loni area caused significant damage, partly due to the deep pits left by illegal sand mining activities along the Yamuna river.

Yamuna River



- **About**: The Yamuna River is one of the major tributaries of the Ganges in Northern India.
    - It forms an integral part of the **Yamuna-Ganga Plain**, one of the world's most extensive alluvial plains.
- **Source:** It has its source in the **Yamunotri Glacier at an elevation of 6,387 meters** on the southwestern sides of **Banderpooch crests** in the **lower Himalayan ranges.**
- **Basin**: It meets the **Ganges at the Sangam (where Kumbh mela is held)** in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh after flowing through **Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Delhi.**
- **Important Dam**: Lakhwar-Vyasi Dam (Uttarakhand), Tajewala Barrage Dam (Haryana) etc.
- **Important Tributaries**: Chambal, Sindh, Betwa and Ken.
- **Government Initiatives Related to Yamuna River:**
    - Yamuna Action Plan
    - Delhi Government’s Six-Point Action Plan to Clean Yamuna by February 2025

Sand Mining

- Sand mining is defined as the **removal of primary natural sand and sand resources** (mineral sands and aggregates) from the natural environment (terrestrial, riverine, coastal, or marine) for extracting valuable minerals, metals, crushed stone, sand and gravel for subsequent processing.
- This activity, driven by various factors, poses serious **threats to ecosystems and communities.**