



Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve

Why in News?

The [National Green Tribunal \(NGT\)](#) Central Zone Bench in Bhopal has reprimanded state authorities for granting permission for the **annual Darshan Yatra (to Bandhavgarh Fort)** in the [core area](#) of [Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve](#), a critical tiger habitat under [Project Tiger](#).

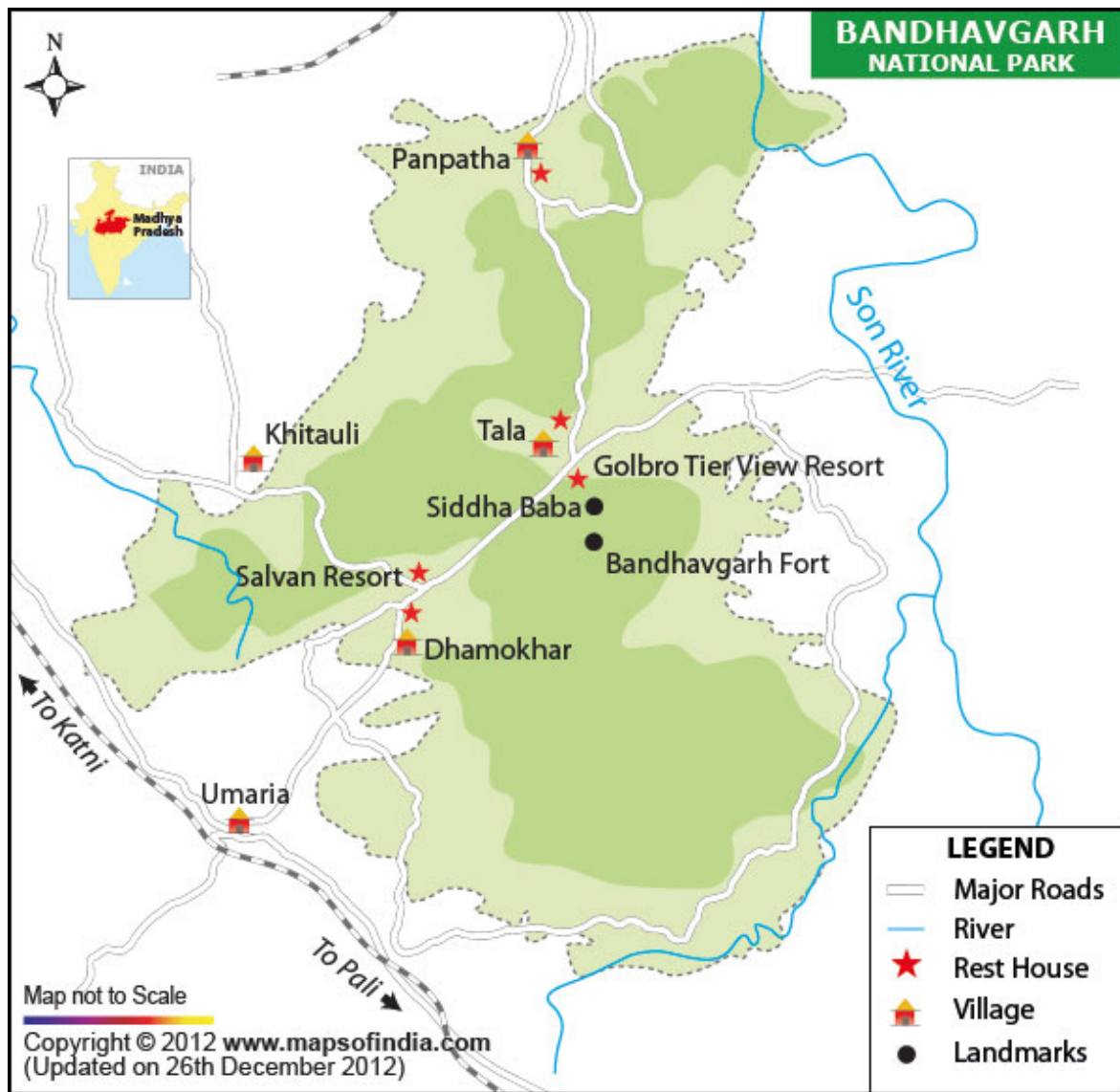
- The core area is the **most critical part of a protected area** where human activity is typically restricted to protect biodiversity and wildlife.

Key Points

- **About:** A green activist filed a plea highlighting the negative impact of **large-scale pilgrimages** on Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve's biodiversity, citing issues like bamboo cutting, unsanitary camping, river pollution, and wildlife disturbance, all violating the [Wildlife Protection Act \(1972\)](#), [Forest Conservation Act \(1980\)](#), and [Environment Protection Act \(1986\)](#).
- **Recommendations:** The Madhya Pradesh government has been directed to finalize a **Standard Operating Procedure (SoP)** for regulating yatras within three months, while ensuring **minimal disruption to wildlife** and adherence to the 2012 Project Tiger guidelines in the interim.
 - Citing a **carrying capacity** study by the [Wildlife Institute of India \(WII\)](#), Dehradun, the NGT recorded that while the terrain could theoretically handle **7,000-8,000 pilgrims**, the presence of tigers, elephants and other large animals **restricted safe capacity to only 4,000-5,000 visitors**.
 - The WII recommended entry through vehicles only, online registration a month in advance, and better crowd regulation.

Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve

- **Distinct Areas:** It is located between the [Vindhyan](#) and [Satpura ranges](#) of Madhya Pradesh.
 - The park includes Bandhavgarh National Park, Panpatha Wildlife Sanctuary (Core Area), and the adjoining Buffer Area, spread across the districts of **Umaria, Shahdol, and Katni**.
- **Majestic Wildlife:** It is famous for housing the Royal Bengal Tiger along with other wildlife like Leopards, Wild Dogs, and Gaur.
- **Diverse Habitat:** The reserve features **dense forests, bamboo vegetation**, vast grasslands, and perennial streams, offering a rich environment for various species, especially the solitary tiger.



NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) is a specialised body for swift resolution of environmental and natural resource cases.

About

- ⑤ **Establishment:** By National Green Tribunal Act 2010
- ⑤ **Objective:** Quick resolution of environmental & natural resource cases
- ⑤ **Case Resolution:** Within 6 months
- ⑤ **Places of Sitting:** New Delhi (Principal), Bhopal, Pune, Kolkata, and Chennai

Structure

- ⑤ **Composition:** Chairperson, Judicial Members, and Expert Members
- ⑤ **Tenure:** Up to 5 years/until age 65 (no reappointment)
- ⑤ **Appointments:** Chairperson - Central Government (with the CJI's consultation)
 - ⑤ 10-20 judicial members & 10-20 expert members - Selection Committee

India is the third country globally (after Australia and New Zealand) and the first developing nation to establish a specialised environmental tribunal like NGT.

Powers & Jurisdiction

- ⑤ **Jurisdiction:** Civil cases on environmental issues and rights
- ⑤ **Suo Motu Powers:** Granted since 2021
- ⑤ **Roles:** Adjudicatory, preventative, and remedial
- ⑤ **Procedures:** Follows Principles of natural justice
 - ⑤ Not bound by the CPC, 1908 or Indian Evidence Act, 1872
- ⑤ **Principles:** Sustainable Development; Precautionary; Polluter pays
- ⑤ **Orders:** Executable as civil court decrees; offers relief and compensation (**decisions are binding**)
- ⑤ **Appeals:** Tribunal can review its decisions.
 - ⑤ If decision fails - Appeal to the SC to be filed within 90 days

NGT deals with Civil Cases under

- ⑤ Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974
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- ⑤ Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980
- ⑤ Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981
- ⑤ Environment (Protection) Act, 1986
- ⑤ Public Liability Insurance Act, 1991
- ⑤ Biological Diversity Act, 2002



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