



Mining Activities Prohibited in Aravalli

Why in News?

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

- 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 [Great Nicobar Island project](#).
 - The case highlights potential violations of **the [Forest \(Conservation\) Act 1980](#)** 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 [Andaman and Nicobar islands](#)**.
- 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 [NITI Aayog](#) 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.

NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL

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

About

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

Structure

- ⌚ **Composition:** Chairperson, Judicial Members, and Expert Members
- ⌚ **Tenure:** Up to 5 years/until age 65 (no reappointment)
- ⌚ **Appointments:** Chairperson - Central Government (with the CJI's consultation)
 - 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

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

NGT deals with Civil Cases under

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



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