



Illegal Mining in Orchha Wildlife Sanctuary | Madhya Pradesh | 14 May 2024

Why in News?

Recently, the [National Green Tribunal \(NGT\)](#) formed a committee to look into the complaint of the illegal operation of stone crushers and mining quarries in an [Eco-Sensitive Zone of Orchha Wildlife Sanctuary](#).

Key Points

- According to the NGT, **immediate action is required** for the **disposal of 337 tonnes of chemical waste**, addressing [groundwater contamination](#), shortage of piped water, and monitoring **iron, manganese and nitrate concentrations** exceeding the permissible limit.
- **Orchha Wildlife Sanctuary** was established in **1994** and is located within a large forest area.
 - It is **situated near the Betwa River** (a tributary of the Yamuna), in the **border region between Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh**, contributing to its unique ecosystem and biodiversity.

Eco Sensitive Zones

- The **National Wildlife Action Plan (2002-2016)** of the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)** stipulated that state governments should declare land falling **within 10 km of the boundaries of national parks and wildlife sanctuaries** as eco-fragile zones or **Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs)** under the **Environmental (Protection) Act, 1986**.
- While the **10-km rule** is implemented as a general principle, the extent of its application can vary. Areas beyond 10 km can also be **notified by the Union government as ESZs**, if they hold larger ecologically important **“sensitive corridors”**.