



Trees Cut Down for Proposed Kanwar Yatra Route | Uttar Pradesh | 13 Nov 2024

Why in News?

According to [the National Green Tribunal \(NGT\)](#), authorities have cut around 17,600 trees in Uttar Pradesh's **Ghaziabad, Meerut, and Muzaffarnagar districts** to make way for a new [Kanwar Yatra](#) route.

Key Points

- **Background:**
 - Earlier this year, the NGT took [suo motu cognizance](#) of a news report regarding the Uttar Pradesh government's plan to cut down 1,12,722 trees.
 - The purpose of this large-scale tree-cutting was to facilitate a proposed **Kanwar Yatra route between Muradnagar in Ghaziabad and Purkaji in Muzaffarnagar.**
- **Findings of the Interim Report:**
 - In August 2024, the NGT **established a joint panel to examine the environmental concerns** associated with this project.
 - The report, **based on data from the Irrigation Department**, highlighted that initial permission allowed for felling 1,12,722 trees, but the target was later reduced to 33,776 trees.
- The NGT instructed the Uttar Pradesh government to clarify if the calculation of trees to be cut follows the [U.P. Protection of Trees Act, 1976](#).
 - The government must also specify if **additional vegetation such as plants and bushes**, which may be removed for road construction, **fall under the Act's definition of trees.**

The Kanwar Yatra

- It is a **Hindu pilgrimage** in the **month of Shravana**, by **Lord Shiva devotees**.
- The devotees **travel to pilgrimage** places like [Haridwar](#), [Gaumukh](#), [Gangotri](#) in Uttarakhand, [Sultanganj](#) in Bihar, [Prayagraj](#), [Ayodhya](#), and [Varanasi](#) in Uttar Pradesh, and return by carrying [Ganga](#) water in kanwars to seek the blessings of Shiva.
 - The water is offered to Shiva temples, including the [12 Jyotirlingas](#) across India and other shrines like the Pura Mahadev Mandir and Augharnath in Uttar Pradesh, the famous [Kashi Vishwanath temple](#), and the [Baba Baidyanath Temple](#) in Deoghar, Jharkhand. The ritual is known as **Jal Abhishek**.

//

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
- 🕒 Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Cess Act, 1977
- 🕒 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



Drishti IAS

Full Motion Simulator Facility Inaugurated in Agra | Uttar Pradesh | 13 Nov 2024

Why in News?

Recently, the [Indian Air Force \(IAF\) C-295 Full Motion Simulator \(FMS\)](#) was inaugurated in **Air Force Station Agra**, Uttar Pradesh. It will allow a significant proportion of **pilot training to be**

undertaken in the simulator, thereby saving precious flying hours on the aircraft.

Key Points

- The simulator **offers pilots near-realistic training, replicating missions** such as tactical airlift, para-dropping, para-trooping, medical evacuation, and disaster relief.
 - It also **simulates critical scenarios, enhancing pilots' readiness for real-world operations** and improving their ability to make rapid, high-stakes decisions, which boosts the overall safety of military flights.
- The introduction of the **C-295 aircraft** into the IAF **strengthens the country's aerospace industry**, as it marks the beginning of "**Atmanirbhar Bharat**" in private-sector transport aircraft production.
- **C-295 Aircraft:**
 - It is a **transport aircraft of 5-10 tonne capacity** with contemporary technology.
 - Robust and reliable, it is a **versatile and efficient tactical transport aircraft** which can perform a number of different missions.
 - **Features:**
 - The aircraft, with a flight endurance of up to 11 hours, **can carry out multi-role operations under all weather conditions.**
 - It can routinely operate day as well as night combat missions from desert to maritime environments.
 - It has a **rear ramp door for quick reaction and para dropping of troops** and cargo. Short take-off/land from semi-prepared surfaces is another of its features.
 - **Replacement:**
 - It will **replace the Indian Air Force's ageing fleet of Avro-748 planes.**
 - The Avro-748 planes are a **British-origin twin-engine turboprop, military transport and freighter** with a 6-tonne freight capacity.

