



Illegal Mining in Bihar

Why in News?

According to the sources, [Enforcement Directorate \(ED\)](#) has turned its attention towards the **mining mafia in Bihar**, where large syndicates are allegedly involved in [illegal sand mining](#), causing [environmental degradation](#) and huge losses to the state exchequer.

Key Points

- In the past eight months alone, ED has established that illegal sand mining has caused revenue loss worth ₹400 crore to the Bihar government.
- The first case under ED's scanner pertains to **Janata Dal-United (JD-U) MLC, Radha Charan Sah**, who was **arrested by the agency in September 2023**.
 - The second case pertains to a company, **Aditya Multicom Private Limited**, and its **directors Jag Narayan Singh and Satish Kumar Singh**.
- Earlier, ED has investigated illegal sand or coal mining cases in **West Bengal, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh**.

Sand Mining

- **About:**
 - It 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.
- **Initiatives to Prevent Sand Mining in India:**
 - **Mines and Mineral Development and Regulation Act, 1957 (MMDR Act):**
 - Sand is classified as a "minor mineral", under The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulations) Act, 1957 (MMDR Act) and administrative control over minor minerals vests with the State Governments.
 - The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2023 was recently passed by the Parliament to amend the MMDR Act, 1957.
 - **2006 Environment Impact Assessment (EIA):**
 - The Supreme Court of India mandated that approval is required for all sand mining collection activities, even in areas less than 5 hectares.
 - **Sustainable Sand Management Guidelines (SSMG) 2016:**
 - Issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change (MoEFCC), the main objectives of these guidelines include environmentally sustainable and socially responsible mining, conservation of the river equilibrium and its natural environment.
 - **Enforcement and Monitoring Guidelines for Sand Mining 2020:**
 - The guidelines provide a uniform protocol for monitoring sand mining across India.

Directorate of Enforcement (ED)

- ED is a multi-disciplinary organisation mandated with investigation of offences of money laundering and violations of foreign exchange laws.
 - It **functions under the Department of Revenue of the Ministry of Finance.**
- As a premier financial investigation agency of the Government of India, the ED functions in strict compliance with the Constitution and Laws of India.
- The Directorate of Enforcement was established in the year **1956** with its Headquarters at New Delhi.

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