

How sand mining disrupts the web of life

(Yemuna Sunny)



Rampant Sand Mining along Narmada in Monsoon 2020

Policy outcomes

- **New policy** formulated in 2015 by government of MP - identified more sand mining areas - sand the first mineral to be e-auctioned.
- Large scale **illegal mining** dwarfing the legal ones.
- **Administrative silence** on illegal mining, insufficient staff in the mining department.
- **Sand mafia** aggressive on police constables, journalists, administrative officers.
- Several **cases filed** by Narmada Bachao Andolan and others.
- The National Green Tribunal has **banned mechanised sand mining** in the Narmada

Sand nesting birds



Red wattled lapwing breeds

March to August.



Bee eaters breed in the first week of April



White throated kingfishers breed with the onset of the monsoons.

Livelihoods...



...livelihoods

Livelihoods nourished by the river and the sand deposits:

- Sand farming
- Fishing
- Small scale sand mining

Water availability and sand deposit patterns

- Mining has altered the **landscape**, the **river flow**, water availability and sand deposit patterns.
- Streams **drying up** from January onwards..for example Shed and Shakkar in Narsingpur district, which used to hold water the year round.
- Tributary rivers of Narmada like Dhudi have dried up.
- Changes in river ecology brings **sand in to some farms** that disables farming.

Increased deprivations

- Reports show a decline in the situations of **ordinary people's** lives in the state as compared to 2010.
- Whereas in 1994 the **poverty rates** in MP was similar to the national average, it sees higher levels of poverty today with 24 million poor people.
- **Malnutrition** is widespread, with the National Family Health Survey IV, 2016 recording more than 45 lakh underweight and stunted children in MP.

Lives and livelihoods

- Landless people's access to common lands lost as powerful people through strong state- supported relations with nature occupy those spaces.
- Intricate relationships between the fishers, the small scale sand miners, the sand farmers, the birds and the trees, pertains not only to possibilities of developing sustainable ways of human life in an economic sense, but also the sustaining of all life forms and their relationships in nature
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Common people, common lands...

- Capital operates in ways that side-line sustainability, making ordinary people **poorer**, many of whom may be forced to **migrate**.
- They may be **disowned** from those places like happened in the contemporary pandemic of covid 19.
- Landless people lose not only common lands, but also a sense of **belonging** to any place on the earth

Thankyou!