

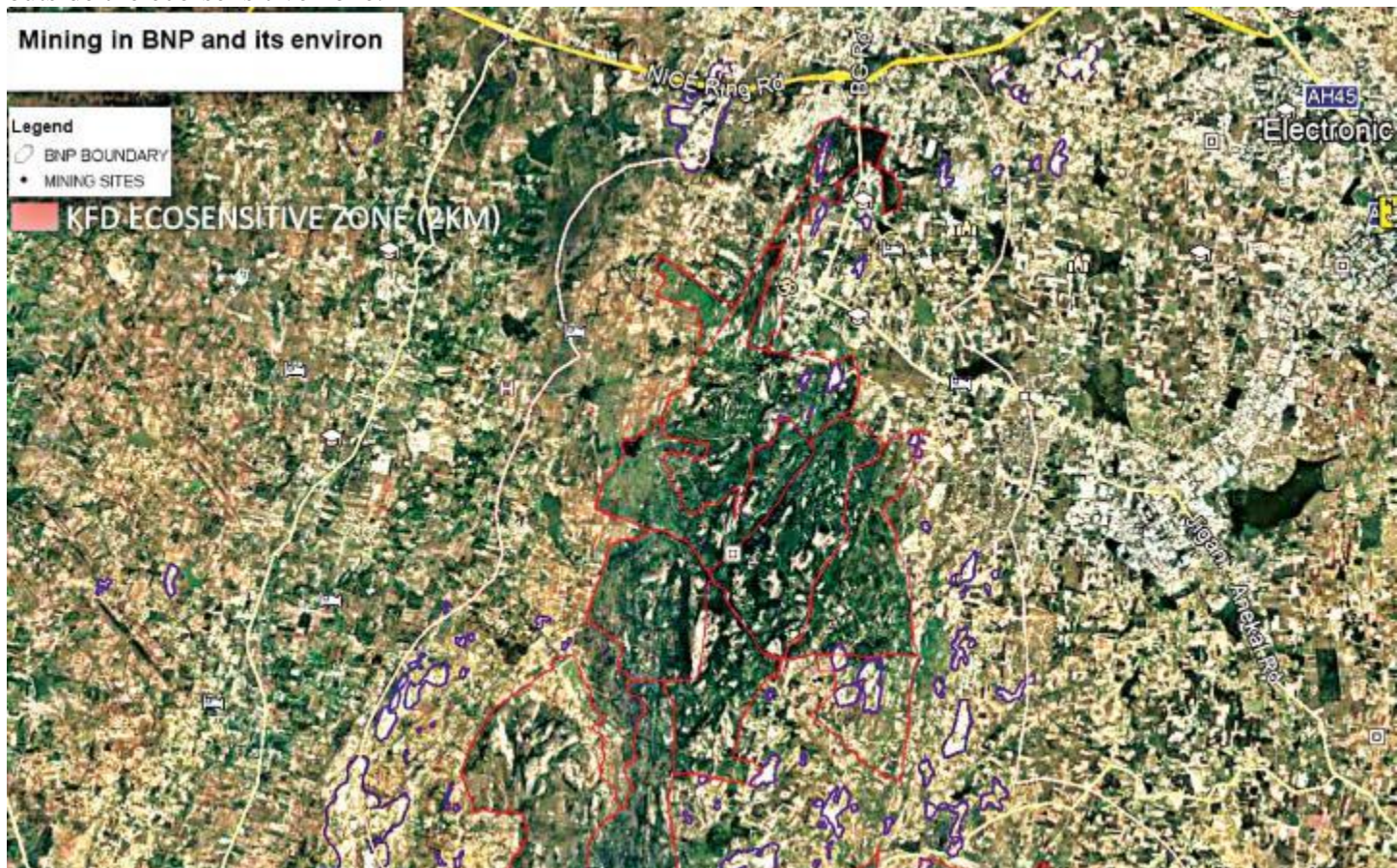
Bengaluru: IISc lead scientist confirms DC report on mining with SAT image

DECCAN CHRONICLE. | [AKSHEEV THAKUR](#)

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A satellite image of the mining taking place in the eco-sensitive zone of BNP sent by IISc lead scientist Dr T.V. Ramachandra to Deccan Chronicle

BENGALURU: Confirming our March 21 report on alleged illegal mining in the eco-sensitive zone of the Bannerghatta National Park (BNP), India's premier institute, Indian Institute of Science's (IISc) lead scientist Dr T.V. Ramachandra has sent two satellite images of the mining taking place in the eco-sensitive zone of the BNP, to Deccan Chronicle.

"I am surprised at the forest department official's statement that the stone quarrying is taking place outside the eco-sensitive zone. The images cannot lie and it clearly depicts the mining taking place within one kilometre of the park which is eco-sensitive zone," the scientist added.

In a startling revelation, Additional Chief Principal Conservator of Forest, BNP, C. Jayaram said the area where the stone quarrying was taking place not only falls outside the eco-sensitive zone, but the land belongs to the revenue department.

"How can the forest department take any action when the land does not belong to us and Mines and Geology Department has given the permission to carry out the mining to the respective quarry owners?" Jayaram added.

He further revealed that at present there is no eco-sensitive zone around the park, since the draft proposal sent to the government has lapsed and the proposal will again be sent within a couple of days.

In 1991, the state government had declared the one-kilometre area outside the BNP as Safe Zone for the protection of wildlife and the law specific to the national park had banned mining activities in the zone. The declaration of the safe zone around the park was declared before the declaration of an eco-sensitive zone.

"I visited the site and the mining is outside the zone. No release of pictures can challenge the fact that the mining is not within the one kilometre of the safe zone," Jayaram explained.

A poster accusing Chief Minister Siddaramaiah for being complicit in the alleged ecological disaster is being circulated by the BJP on social media.