

# Mining, industrial projects in tiger zone under scrutiny

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THE Ministry of Environment and Forest's committee for appraisal of proposals for mining and industrial projects in the buffer and corridor areas of tiger reserves is reaching here on Tuesday for a field study.

It will submit its report within a month after taking a critical look at whether the proposed projects will hurt tiger conservation.

The panel is led by National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) member P K Sen and has noted social activist and animal conservationist Prakash Amte, Samar Singh and Urmila Pingle as fellow members.

The panel will visit Tadoba and examine at least two proposals — the Majra coal block open cast mining and underground mining of

Gondwana Ispat Ltd and Brahmpuri coal block of Push Steels & Mining(P) Ltd.

The panel will return to New Delhi on June 27 after field visits in Nagpur on June 26. It will return to Nagpur on June 29 and will visit Pench and Kanha Tiger Reserves where it will look up several proposals in Chhindwara, Umaria and Katni and Balaghat districts, including one for a 1,320 MW thermal power plant in Umaria district near Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve.

The areas given to the panel for studying impact of projects are Tadoba-Andhari, Kanha and Bandhavgarh landscapes, besides Kanha-Pench and Satpuda-Pench corridors.

In all, it will study impact of 16 projects on tiger habitats and corridors in Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.