

Amrabad Tiger Reserve

August 13, 2020

Why in news?

- The Centre has granted “in-principle” clearance for uranium exploration in Amrabad Tiger Reserve in Telangana.

About the tiger reserve:

- Amrabad Tiger Reserve is **India’s second-largest tiger reserve**, (first largest is Nagarjunasagar Srisailem Tiger Reserve (NSTR)).
- It was earlier part of NSTR but, post-bifurcation, the northern part of the reserve is vested with Telangana and renamed as Amrabad Tiger Reserve.
- **Together both reserves form India’s largest protected dry forest.**
- Amrabad Tiger Reserve **lies in the Nallamala hill** and is spread over Mahbubnagar and Nalgonda districts of Telangana.
- A **Telugu speaking food-gathering tribe** called **Chenchus** dominates Amrabad.
- These are the most under-privileged group in Telangana and are **considered the first habitants of mainland India.**

More information on Uranium exploration in the reserve:

- The Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Research (AMD), Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), had submitted a proposal to carry out survey and drilling of **boreholes in four blocks of the reserve.**
- The area proposed for mining falls under the Amrabad and Nudigal Reserved Forests of the ‘**core area**’ of the **tiger reserve.**
- The area lies along a patch where the **Nallavagu and**

Dindi rivers merge, forming a major tributary and catchment of the Krishna river.

Concerns:

- The drilling of 4,000 deep holes in proposed 20,500 acres, will disfigure the reserve, ruining the wildlife habitat.
- The exploration will expose and pollute surface water, groundwater and leech the minerals and dangerous chemicals into the Nagarjunasagar dam.
- The roads will fragment and degrade the dry forests, which may never recover after such a massive exercise.