

Hasdeo forest

May 31, 2022

In news- Chhattisgarh government's decision to allow **coal mining** in the Hasdeo forest has attracted criticism.

More information-

- The forest falls under Korba, Sujapur and Sarguja districts with sizable tribal population.
- The Hasdeo river, a tributary of Mahanadi, flows through it.
- It is termed as the "largest un-fragmented forests in Central India consisting of pristine Sal (Shorea robusta) and teak".
- The Hasdeo Arand CoalField (HACF) is spread over nearly 1,880 sq km and comprises 23 coal blocks.
- In 2010, the Chhattisgarh government recommended forest clearance for diverting 1,898.328 hectares of forest land for Parsa East and Kente Basan (PEKB) coal fields, run by Adani Enterprises.
- In June 2011, the Forest Advisory Committee of the Environment ministry recommended against diverting the forest land for mining.
- In 2012, Forest Clearance was granted by the MoEF for mining in phase I of PEBK coal mines, which limited mining to 762 hectares and a reserve of 137 million tonnes.
- In March, 2022, Chhattisgarh gave permission to Rajasthan Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Nigam for coal mining in an area of 1,136 hectares under the second phase of PEBK coal block.
- As of May 2022, two studies by the ICFRE and Wildlife Institute of India (WII) have underlined the importance of biodiversity in the region that mining will affect.
- They also addressed the issue of human-elephant conflicts due to habitat loss or clearing of forests.

- The ICFRE also noted the loss of the natural environment and the serious impact on the community in the form of loss of livelihood, identity, and culture with regards to tribal people living in the area.