

Ken-Betwa River Linking Project (KBLP)

What is KBLP?

- A project to transfer water from the Ken River to the Betwa River, both tributaries of the Yamuna.
- Includes a 221 km-long canal with a 2-km tunnel.
- Benefits:
 1. Irrigation for 10.62 lakh hectares (8.11 lakh ha in MP and 2.51 lakh ha in UP).
 2. Drinking water for 62 lakh people.
 3. Power generation: 103 MW hydro and 27 MW solar.

Key Details

- Launched by PM Modi: Foundation stone laid on December 25, 2024.
- Cost: ₹44,605 crore (2020-21 prices).
- Timeline: Expected completion in 8 years.
- Phases:
 1. Phase-I: Daudhan Dam, tunnels, and canals.
 2. Phase-II: Includes Lower Orr Dam, Bina Complex Project, and Kotha Barrage.
- Regions Benefitted:
 - Bundelkhand districts in Madhya Pradesh (e.g., Panna, Tikamgarh, Chhatarpur) and Uttar Pradesh (e.g., Jhansi, Lalitpur).

Environmental and Social Concerns

1. Impact on Panna Tiger Reserve:
 - Submerges 98 sq km of the park, affecting tiger and wildlife habitats.
 - Deforestation of 2-3 million trees.
2. es. Displacement:
 - Affects 5,228 families in Chhatarpur district and 1,400 families in Panna district.
 - Protests due to inadequate compensation.
3. Wildlife Risks:
 - Threatens gharial population in the Ken Gharial sanctuary.
 - Impacts vulture nesting sites.
4. Rainfall Deficit:
 - Studies suggest a 12% reduction in rainfall in September due to water transfer.
5. r. Economic Viability: Questions raised on alternative irrigation methods in the Ken basin.

Background

- Agreement Signed: March 22, 2021, between the Centre and governments of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.
- Conceptualization:
 1. Proposed in 2005, declared a National Project in 2008.
 2. A detailed project report (DPR) was completed in phases by 2018.
- First Project under the National Perspective Plan (1980) for river interlinking.

Significance

- Aims to address water scarcity in Bundelkhand and boost development in drought-prone areas.
- Sets a precedent for future river-linking projects in India.

UPSC Mains Question

Q. The Ken-Betwa River Linking Project is a landmark initiative aimed at addressing water scarcity and boosting development in drought-prone areas. However, it has sparked significant environmental and social concerns. Critically examine the potential benefits and challenges of the project. (250 words)

MCQ

Q. Which of the following statements about the Ken-Betwa River Linking Project (KBLP) is/are correct?

1. The project aims to transfer water from the Ken River to the Betwa River, both of which are tributaries of the Ganga.
2. The Daudhan Dam under KBLP will submerge parts of the Panna Tiger Reserve.
3. The project will generate both hydropower and solar power.

Options:

- A.** 1 and 2 only
- B.** 2 and 3 only
- C.** 1 and 3 only
- D.** 1, 2, and 3

Answer: B. 2 and 3 only

Explanation:

- Statement 1 is incorrect: Both Ken and Betwa are tributaries of the Yamuna, not

the
Ganga.

- Statement 2 is correct: The Daudhan Dam will submerge parts of the Panna Tiger Reserve.
- Statement 3 is correct: The project will generate 103 MW of hydropower and 27 MW of solar power.

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