



## Devika River Project: J&K

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### Why in News

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Recently, the Minister of State for Development of North Eastern Region has asked for suggestions for the **Devika River project in Udhampur, J&K**.

This project is compared with the **Namami Gange Project**.

### Key Points

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- **About:**
  - This is a **Rs. 190 crore Project**.
  - The work on the project was **started in March 2019 under the National River Conservation Plan (NRCP)**.
  - Under the project, bathing “**ghats**” (places) on the banks of the Devika River will be **developed, encroachments will be removed, natural water bodies will be restored** and **catchment areas will be developed** along with **cremation ground**.
  - The project includes the **construction of three sewage treatment plants, sewerage network** of 129.27 km, development of two cremation ghats, protection fencing and landscaping, **small hydropower plants** and **three solar power plants**.
  - On completion of the project, the rivers will see **reduction in pollution and improvement in water quality**.
- **About Devika River:**
  - Devika river **originates from the hilly Suddha Mahadev temple in Udhampur district of Jammu and Kashmir** and flows down towards **western Punjab** (now in Pakistan) where it **merges with the Ravi river**.
  - The river holds **religious significance** as it is revered by Hindus as the **sister of river Ganga**.
  - In June 2020, **Devika Bridge** was inaugurated in Udhampur. Apart from taking care of traffic congestion, the Devika Bridge was also meant **to help smooth passage of Army convoys and vehicles**.

## National River Conservation Plan

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- **About:**
  - National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) is a **centrally funded scheme launched in 1995** aimed at **preventing the pollution of rivers**.
  - Programs for river conservation are being implemented under National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) and NGRBA (National Ganga River Basin Authority).
- **Activities under NRCP:**
  - Interception and Diversion works to capture the raw sewage flowing into the river through open drains and divert them for treatment.
  - Sewage Treatment Plants for treating the diverted sewage.
  - Low Cost Sanitation works to prevent open defecation on riverbanks.
  - Electric Crematoria and Improved Wood Crematoria to conserve the use of wood and help in ensuring proper cremation of bodies brought to the burning ghats.
  - River Front Development works such as improvement of bathing ghats.
  - Public awareness and public participation.
  - Human Resource Development (HRD), capacity building, training and research in the area of River Conservation.
  - Other miscellaneous works depend upon location specific conditions including the interface with human population.

**Source: PIB**