

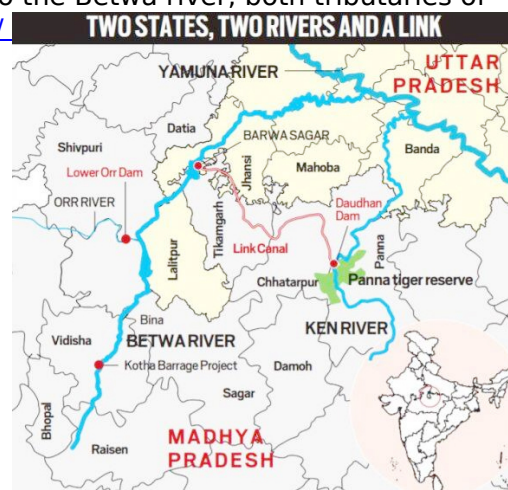


# Ken-Betwa Inter-Linking Project

## Why in News

Recently, the Union Cabinet has approved the funding and implementation of [Ken-Betwa inter-linking of rivers project](#).

- The project envisages transferring water from the Ken river to the Betwa river, both tributaries of the **Yamuna**. The project will be completed in eight years. //



## Key Points

- **About:** It is the first project under the [National Perspective Plan](#) for interlinking of rivers. The Ken-Betwa Link Canal will be 221 km long, including a 2-km long tunnel.

## Ken and Betwa Rivers

- Ken and Betwa rivers **originate in MP** and are the **tributaries of Yamuna**.
- **Ken meets with Yamuna in Banda** district of UP and with **Betwa in Hamirpur** district of UP.
- Rajghat, Paricha and Matatila dams are over Betwa river.
- Ken River passes through [Panna tiger reserve](#).
- **Background:** The idea of linking Ken with Betwa got a major push in August 2005, when a tripartite memorandum of understanding for preparation of a **Detailed Project Report (DPR)** was signed among the Centre and governments of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.
  - In **2008, the Centre declared KBLP a National Project**. Later, it was included as part of the **Prime Minister's package** for development of drought-prone Bundelkhand region.
  - In 2021, a memorandum of agreement was signed for implementation of this project among the Ministry of Jal Shakti and the two states.
- **Implementing Agency:**
  - A Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) called **Ken-Betwa Link Project Authority (KBLPA)** will be set up to implement the project.

- The [National Interlinking of Rivers Authority \(NIRA\)](#) has the powers to set up SPV for individual link projects.
- **Phases of the Project:** The project has two phases, with mainly four components.
  - **Phase-I** will involve one of the components — **Daudhan Dam complex** and its subsidiary units such as Low Level Tunnel, High Level Tunnel, Ken-Betwa Link Canal and power houses.
  - **Phase-II** will involve three components — **Lower Orr Dam, Bina Complex Project and Kotha Barrage.**
- **Benefits:** The project lies in Bundelkhand, a drought-prone region, which spreads across **13 districts of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.**
  - According to the Jal Shakti Ministry, the project will be of immense benefit to this **water-starved region.**
  - Further, **it will pave the way for more interlinking of river projects** to ensure that scarcity of water does not become an inhibitor for development in the country.
  - According to the Jal Shakti Ministry, the project is expected to provide **annual irrigation** of 10.62 lakh hectares, **supply drinking water** to about 62 lakh people, and generate 103 MW of **hydropower** and 27 MW of [solar power.](#)
- **Associated Challenges:**
  - **Submergence of Panna Tiger Reserve:** According to the National Water Development Agency, the reservoir of Daudhan dam will involve “a submergence of 9000 ha area, out of which 5803 ha comes under [Panna Tiger Reserve \(PTR\).](#)
    - To mitigate this, three Wildlife Sanctuaries (WLS), viz **Nauradehi, Rani Durgawati** of MP and **Ranipur WLS** of UP are planned to be **integrated with PTR.**
  - **Several Clearances Required:** Various types of clearances are required, such as:
    - **Techno-economic clearance:** To be given by the Central Water Commission;
    - **Forest clearance and environmental clearance:** To be given Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change
    - **Resettlement and rehabilitation plan of tribal population:** to be given by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

## History of Interlinking of Rivers in India

- **Colonial Idea:**
  - The idea was first mooted during the British Raj when **Sir Arthur Cotton**, a British general and irrigation engineer suggested **linking the [Ganga](#) and the Cauvery for navigational purposes.**
- **Projects undertaken by the British:**
  - In the past, several river linking projects have been taken up. For instance, **the Periyar Project**, under which transfer of water from **Periyar basin to Vaigai basin** was envisaged, was commissioned in 1895.
    - **Other projects** such as Parambikulam Aliyar, Kurnool Cuddapah Canal, Telugu Ganga Project, and Ravi-Beas-Sutlej too were undertaken.
- **National water Grid:**
  - In the **1970s**, the **idea of transferring surplus water from a river to a water-deficit area was mooted** by the then Union Irrigation Minister **Dr K L Rao.**
  - He suggested construction of a National Water Grid for transferring water from water-rich areas to water-deficit areas.
- **Garland Canal:**
  - Later, **Captain Dinshaw J Dastoor** proposed a **Garland Canal to redistribute the water from one area to another.** However, the government did not pursue these two ideas further.
- **National Perspective Plan:**
  - It was not until August 1980 that the **Ministry of Irrigation prepared a National Perspective Plan for water resources development** envisaging inter-basin water transfer.
  - The NPP comprised two components: **Himalayan Rivers Development**, and **Peninsular Rivers Development.**
  - Based on the NPP, the **National Water Development Agency (NWDA)** identified 30

- river links- 16 under the Peninsular component and 14 under Himalayan Component.
- The **Ken-Betwa Link Project is one of the 16 projects** under the peninsular component.

**[Source: IE](#)**

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