



River Devika Project: Jammu and Kashmir

Why in News?

River Devika project, built at the cost of over Rs 190 crore, will be complete by June, 2022.

What is the River Devika 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 also 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**.

What is the importance of the 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**.

What is the National River Conservation Plan (NRCP)?

- 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 \(National Ganga River Basin Authority\)](#).
 - The National Ganga Council, also known as the National Council for Rejuvenation, Protection, and Management of River Ganga, has replaced the NGRBA.

Which Activities are covered 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

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