



Ken-Betwa River Link Project

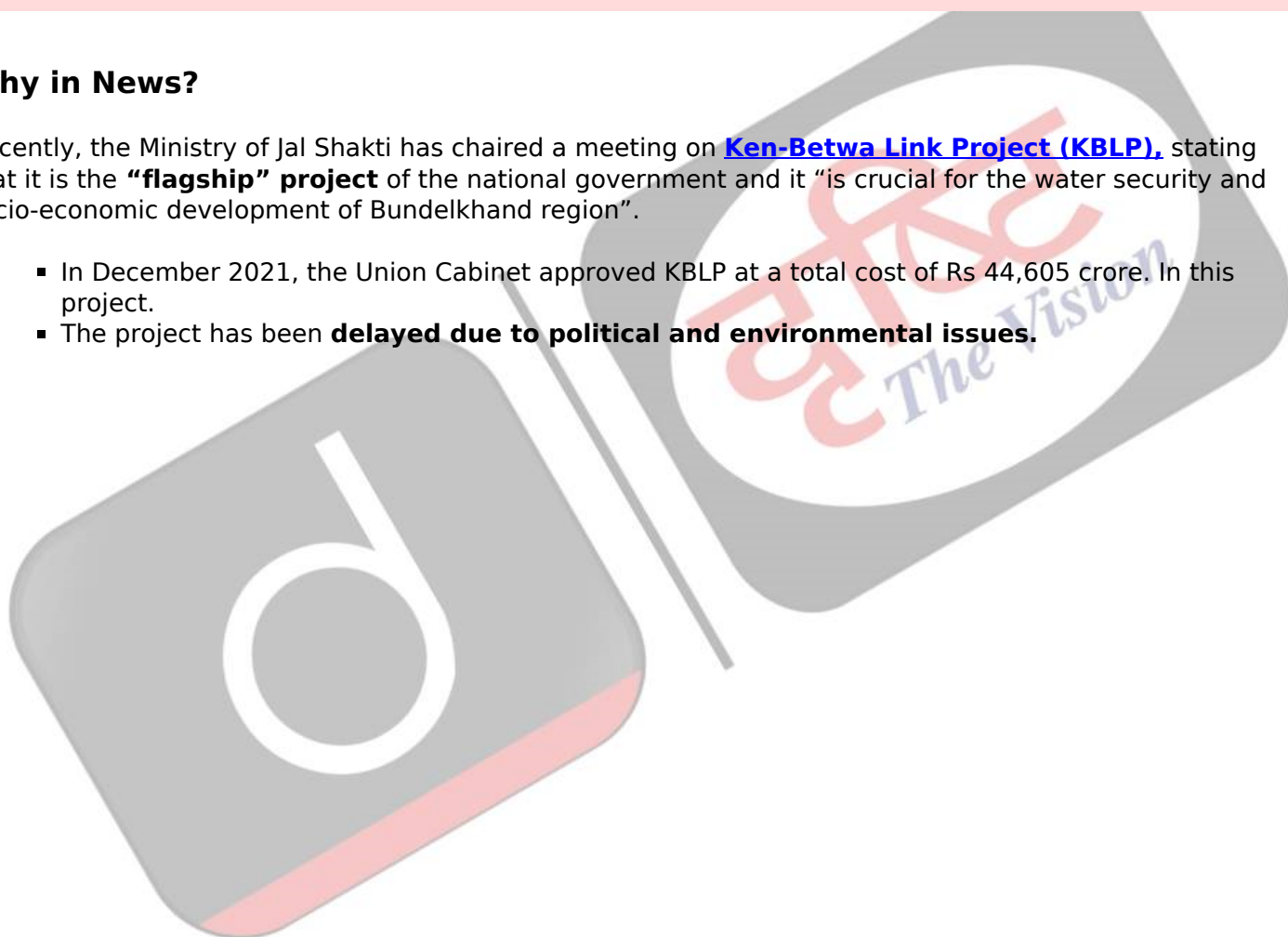
Prelims: Ken-Betwa River Link project, Panna Tiger Reserve, NGT, National Perspective Plan.

Mains: Ken-Betwa River Link project and associated issues.

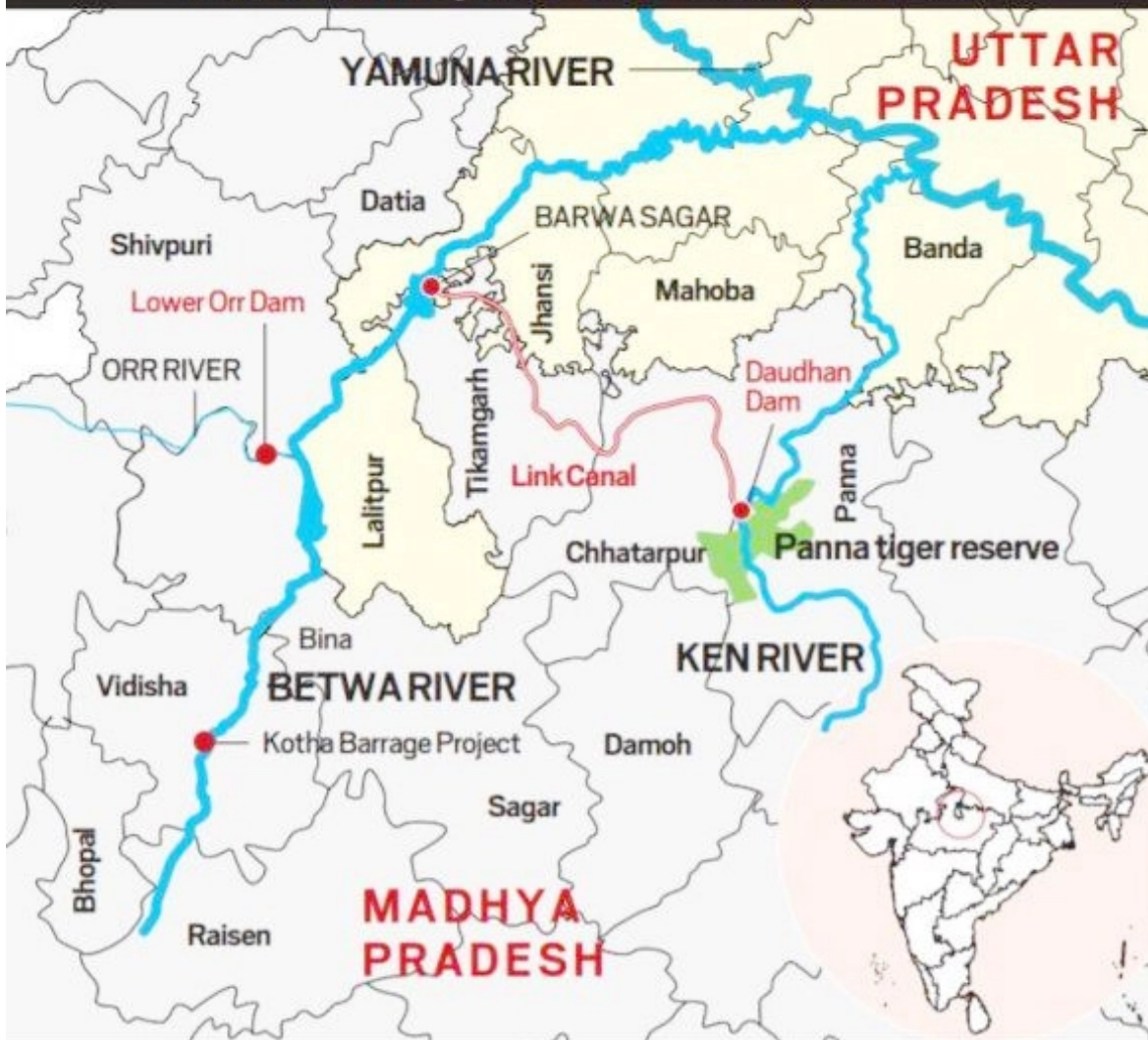
Why in News?

Recently, the Ministry of Jal Shakti has chaired a meeting on [Ken-Betwa Link Project \(KBLP\)](#), stating that it is the **“flagship” project** of the national government and it “is crucial for the water security and socio-economic development of Bundelkhand region”.

- In December 2021, the Union Cabinet approved KBLP at a total cost of Rs 44,605 crore. In this project.
- The project has been **delayed due to political and environmental issues.**



TWO STATES, TWO RIVERS AND A LINK



What is the Ken-Betwa Link?

▪ About:

- The **Ken-Betwa Link Project (KBLP)** is the river interlinking project that aims to transfer surplus water from the Ken River in Madhya Pradesh (MP) to Betwa in Uttar Pradesh (UP) to irrigate the **drought-prone Bundelkhand region**.
 - The region spread across the districts of two states mainly Jhansi, Banda, Lalitpur and Mahoba districts of UP and Tikamgarh, Panna and Chhatarpur districts of MP.
- The project involves building a **77-metre tall and a 2-km wide Dhaudhan dam (to be built within [Panna Tiger Reserve](#))** and a 230-km canal.
- Ken-Betwa is **one of the 30 river interlinking projects** conceived across the country.

▪ Significance:

- It will not only accelerate the water conservation by construction of a multipurpose dam but will also produce 103 MW of hydropower and will supply drinking water to 62 lakh people.

What are the Concerns Related to the Project?

▪ Environmental:

- Because of certain environmental and wildlife conservation concerns like passing of the project through **critical tiger habitat of panna tiger reserve**, the project is stuck in for the approval from **[National Green Tribunal \(NGT\)](#)**, and other higher authorities.

▪ Economic:

- There is a huge **economic cost attached with the project implementation** and

maintenance, which has been rising due to delays in project implementation.

▪ **Social:**

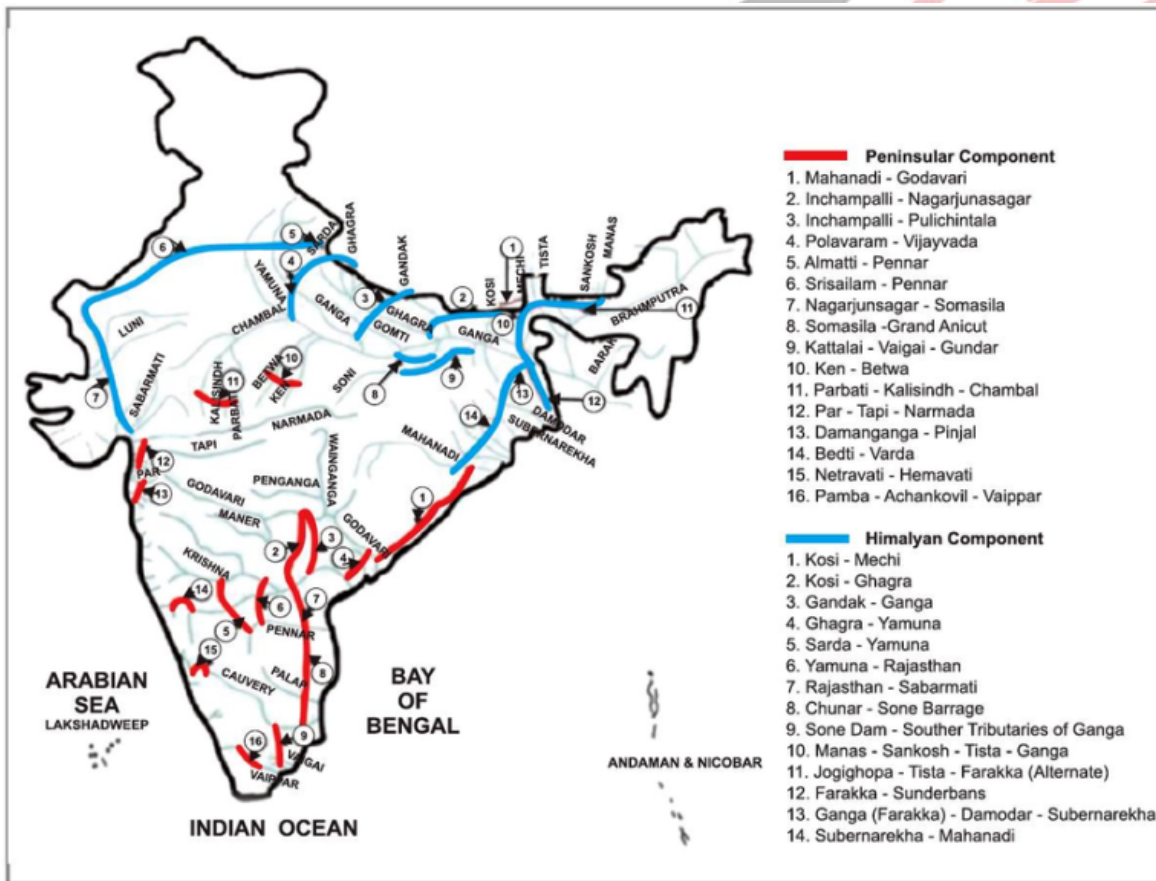
- Reconstruction and rehabilitation caused due to **displacement resulting from the implementation of the project** will involve social cost as well.
- They are also concerned that the **project will endanger the water security of Panna.**

▪ **Legal:**

- There are also **significant legal problems** with the approval granted to the KBLP.
- Approval by the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wildlife to the Ken-Betwa link Project has **not been proved to be necessary for the improvement and better management** of the wildlife therein as provided in Section 35(6) of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

What is the National Perspective Plan for Interlinking of Rivers?

- **The National River Linking Project (NRLP)** formally known as the [National Perspective Plan](#), envisages the transfer of water from water ‘surplus’ basins where there is flooding, to water ‘deficit’ basins where there is drought/scarcity, through inter-basin water transfer projects.
- **Under the National Perspective Plan (NPP)**, the National Water Development Agency (NWDA), has identified 30 links (16 under the Peninsular Component and 14 under the Himalayan Component) for the preparation of feasibility reports (FRs).
- The NPP for transferring water from water-surplus basins to water-deficit basins was prepared in August 1980.



What are 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.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Q. The interlinking of rivers can provide viable solutions to the multi-dimensional inter-related problems of droughts, floods, and interrupted navigation. Critically examine. **(2020)**

Source: [TH](#)

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