



Revival of Mandal Dam Project

Why in News?

The Jharkhand government has **approved the relocation of seven villages** situated in the submergence zone of the **Mandal Dam in the [Palamu Tiger Reserve \(PTR\)](#)**.

Key Points

- **About the Mandal Dam Project:** The Mandal Dam is located in the **PTR** covering parts of Garhwa, Latehar, and Palamu districts in Jharkhand on the North Koel River, a tributary of the [Sone River](#).
 - The project **was originally conceived decades ago but has remained non-functional** due to local opposition and lack of consensus on rehabilitation and environmental concerns.
 - A task force was also set up in 2015 to speed up the clearances.
 - The **project gained momentum when the Prime Minister laid its foundation** stone in January 2019.
 - PTR will benefit from the project as the vacated land will be submerged, forming a large water body that can help **reduce the persistent problem of [human-animal conflict](#) in the districts**.
- **Relocation of Villages:** Seven villages, including Kutku, Bhajna, Khura, Khaira, Saneya, Chemo, and Meral, will be relocated.
 - Each household will get one acre of land and Rs 15 lakh as compensation.
 - The relocated area will be developed as a **model cluster** to provide better living conditions for the villagers.

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Palamu Tiger Reserve (PTR)

- PTR is located on the [Chhotanagpur plateau](#) in western Latehar district, Jharkhand.
 - '[Betla National Park](#)' is situated within 226.32 sq km of the Palamu Tiger Reserve, which is spread over a total area of 1,129.93 sq km.
- The project area is **constituted mainly of Sal forests**, mixed deciduous forests and bamboo groves.
- The reserve zone is the **watershed area for 3 important rivers Koel, Burha and Auranga**.
- It was constituted in 1974 under [Project Tiger](#) and is one of the first nine tiger reserves established in the country at the inception of the project.
 - It was the **first sanctuary in the world to conduct a [tiger census](#)** using **pugmark counts**, done in 1932.
- The keystone species include [Tigers](#), [Elephants](#), [Leopards](#), [Grey Wolf](#), [Gaur](#), [Sloth Bear](#), Four-horned Antelope, Indian Ratel, Indian Otter and [Indian Pangolin](#).