# Inter-Basin Indus Water Transfer Plan

## Why in News?

India has begun work on a major **inter-basin water transfer plan** to fully use its share of **Indus waters** . A feasibility study is underway for a **113-km canal linking the Chenab to the Ravi-Beas-Sutlej system** to **divert surplus water** from Jammu & Kashmir to Punjab, Haryana, and Rajasthan.

## Key Points

- **Objective of the Project:** To optimally use both eastern (Ravi, Beas, Sutlej) and western (Indus, Jhelum, Chenab) rivers, thereby reducing excess water flowing into Pakistan under the **Indus Waters Treaty framework.**
- **Canal Integration Plan:** The proposed 113-km canal will link the Chenab with the Ravi-Beas-Sutlej system.
    - This **canal network will integrate with 13 existing canal systems** across Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Haryana, and Rajasthan, and will eventually feed into the **Indira Gandhi Canal** (longest canal in the country), ensuring regional water redistribution.
    - This internal reallocation will also enhance India's water resilience amid growing climate variability and changing rainfall patterns.
- **Supporting Infrastructure Developments:** Under the Canal Integration Plan Centre is considering doubling the length of the Ranbir canal, and the long-pending **Ujh multipurpose project in Kathua** district is being revived.
    - The second Ravi-Beas link, previously planned to prevent excess Ravi water from flowing into Pakistan, will now become part of the broader canal network. This project involves constructing a barrage and a tunnel to transfer water from the Ujh (a Ravi tributary) to the Beas basin.
- **Ongoing Short-Term Measures:** India continues to **desilt Baglihar and Salal hydroelectric reservoirs on the Chenab** to improve water storage and usage.
    - India is accelerating work on key hydroelectric projects like Pakal Dul on a tributary Marusadar River (1,000 Megawatts (MW)), **Ratle (850 MW)**, Kiru (624 MW), and Kwar (540 MW) on Chenab river to enhance Indus basin water utilisation.

### Indus River


- **Source:**
  - The Indus (In Tibetan called Sengge Chu/'Lion River'), a major river in South Asia, **originates in Tibet** near Mansarovar Lake in the Trans-Himalaya.
  - The river flows through **Tibet, India and Pakistan** and about 200 million people live in the area of its drainage basin.
- **Course and Major Tributaries:**
  - It enters India through Ladakh and flows through Jammu and Kashmir before reaching Pakistan's Gilgit-Baltistan region.
  - The major **left-bank tributaries** of the Indus River are the Zaskar, Suru, Soan, **Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas, Satluj**, and Panjnad rivers.
  - The major **right-bank tributaries are Shyok, Gilgit, Hunza, Swat, Kunnar, Kurram, Gomal, and Kabul rivers.**

    - The Indus River **empties into the Arabian Sea** near the city of Karachi in southern Pakistan.
- **Indus Water Treaty (IWT):** The IWT signed in 1960, between **India and Pakistan** and was brokered by the **World Bank.**
    - The treaty sets out a **mechanism for cooperation and information exchange** between the two sides on the use of the water of the **Indus River** and its five tributaries **Sutlej, Beas, Ravi, Jhelum, and Chenab.**
    - **India has suspended the IWT** until Pakistan ceases its support for cross-border terrorism. It reflects a shift in India's strategic calculus, using **hydrological leverage** as a pressure tool.

## Chenab River

- **Source:**
    - The river is formed by the confluence of the **Chandra and Bhaga rivers** at Tandi in the **upper Himalayas**, located in the **Lahaul and Spiti district of Himachal Pradesh.**
    - The Chandra and the Bhaga originate from the south-west and north-west faces of Barelacha pass respectively in the Himalayan canton of Lahul and Spiti valley in Himachal Pradesh.
- **Flows Through:** It flows through the Jammu region of Jammu and Kashmir into the plains of Punjab, Pakistan, before flowing into the Indus River.