

## GEOGRAPHY

PRE-CONTEXT

### KEN-BETWA RIVER INTERLINKING

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 8.

**News:** "Pushed through."

**Context:** At a budgeted cost of ₹44,605 crore, the project will draw supposedly "excess" water away from the Ken river basin towards the Betwa river basin and thereon to farmland and human settlements.

#### About Ken-Betwa river linking project:

- It is **expected to address drinking and irrigation water needs** of at least 10 districts of **Madhya Pradesh** and various districts of **Uttar Pradesh**.
- **Daudhan dam irrigation project (inside Panna Tiger Reserve)**, expected to address irrigation needs of 11 lakh hectares in the region.
- The project aims to generate over 100 MW of **hydropower** and 27 MW of **solar energy**.
- Madhya Pradesh has become the first State in the country with **two river-linking projects under way at the moment**.
  - **Parbati-Kalisindh-Chambal river-linking project** that spreads between Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.
  - **Ken Betwa river linking project**.
- KBLP was implemented due to efforts by the **Ministry of Jal Shakti** and cooperation from **Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh**.

#### Positives of River interlinking projects:

- **Enhanced irrigation and Agricultural Output:**
  - Interlinking could irrigate an additional 25 to 35 million hectares of land, potentially boosting food production, reduced crop failure — **NWDA report**.
- **Flood Mitigation:**
  - Diverting floodwaters from surplus basins (e.g., Brahmaputra, Ganga) to deficit basins can help moderate flood peaks, potentially reducing the impact of recurrent floods in states like Bihar, Assam, and Uttar Pradesh.
- **Hydropower Generation and Navigation:**
  - Dams/barrages along interlinked rivers can generate hydropower, helping India meet its renewable energy targets.
  - Improved Inland Navigation: Larger, navigable canals might enhance inland waterways, reducing transportation costs.
- **Boost to Rural Economy:**
  - Reliable water supply can promote agri-based industries, livestock rearing, and fishing.

#### Negatives:

- **Ecological Imbalance:** disrupt aquatic habitats, fish migration routes, and wetland ecosystems, groundwater recharge etc.
- **Deforestation & Habitat Loss:** Ken–Betwa link may submerge part of the Panna Tiger Reserve (Madhya Pradesh), threatening tiger habitat and other wildlife species.
- **Climate Change Variability:** make it uncertain whether basins once deemed "surplus" will remain so in the future.
- **Forced Relocation:** Sardar Sarovar Dam on the Narmada displaced tens of thousands, highlighting rehabilitation and resettlement challenges.
- **Inter-State Water Conflicts:** Water is a State subject, often lead to disputes in lean seasons Eg. Cauvery, Krishna-Godavari disputes.

#### About National River Linking Project (NRLP):

- It is an ambitious infrastructure initiative involving **30 major link projects— 14 in the Himalayan component and 16 in the Peninsular component**.
- NRLP aims to transfer water from surplus to deficit basins to address uneven water distribution and enhance water security.
- **National Water Development Agency (NWDA): Nodal agency** for river interlinking projects.

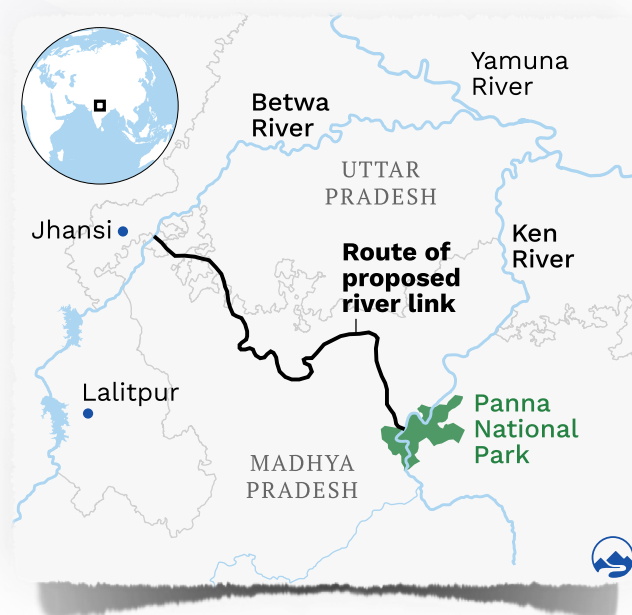
#### Central Water Commission:

- Functions under **Ministry of Jalshakti**.
- **Functional domains of CWC:**
  - **Appraisal of water resource projects:** pertaining to major inter-state project proposals.
  - **Basin planning and Management:** Responsible for coordination with states for establishing river basin organisations as per National Water Policy, examination of project reports etc.
  - **Flood Forecasting/ Hydrological observation:** CWC is responsible for Monitoring of Flood situation through Central Flood Control Room during monsoon period.
  - **Dam Safety & River Management.**

27 Dec 2024

#### PYQs

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





## POLITY

PRE-CONTEXT

### RIGHT TO DIE

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 10.

**News:** "Should assisted dying be legalised?"

**Context:** The U.K. House of Commons recently voted to legalise assisted dying, marking a significant shift. Supporters view it as compassionate, while opponents worry about vulnerable patients feeling pressured to end their lives.

#### About Right to Die:

- **Common Cause vs. Union of India (2018)**, the Supreme Court affirmed that "*right to die with dignity*" is integral to the right to life and personal liberty under **Art.21** of the Constitution.
- The **court also legalised "passive euthanasia,"** which involves the withdrawal of life support from terminally ill patients or those in a permanent vegetative state.
- The top court also issued **comprehensive guidelines to facilitate passive euthanasia.**
  - For instance, if a patient leaves behind a living will, it must be executed in the **presence of two witnesses and attested by a Judicial Magistrate.**

27 Dec 2024

## GEOGRAPHY

PRE-CONTEXT

### KAZAKHSTANS (RARE EARTHS)

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 8.

**News:** "Tapping into Kazakhstan's rare earths potential."

*Kazakhstan's President recently highlighted rare earths as the "new oil" for Kazakhstan's economy.*

#### About Rare Earth elements in Kazakhstan:

- The country hosts one of the world's three full-cycle **beryllium** and **scandium** factories, **crucial for telecommunications.**
- It is among the four global manufacturers of **tantalum** and **niobium**, **essential for nuclear reactors and clean energy.**
- Presence in emerging fields like lithium and heat-resistant alloys.
- Additionally, Kazakh metallurgical plants extract **bismuth, antimony, selenium, and tellurium.**
- Country had imported technologies to produce **gallium** from **alumina and indium from polymetallic ores.**

*Despite being the fifth-largest holder of rare earth elements, India relies heavily on China for imports as it lacks advanced technologies for extraction.*

#### India and Kazakhstan:

- **A close ally of India**, offers a viable alternative to meet India's rare earth demands.
- **India's Connect Central Asia' policy** and connectivity initiatives such as the **International North-South Transport Corridor, a rare earth partnership could unlock significant economic benefits for both nations.**
- **India's COP29 pledge to achieve 500 GW of renewable energy by 2030** highlights the importance of rare earth elements like dysprosium in advancing clean energy technologies.

27 Dec 2024

## GOVERNANCE

PRE-CONTEXT

### REGULATORY BODIES

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 15.

**News:** "RBI flags lenders' high attrition, use of dark patterns and top-up loans."

#### Unfair Trade Practices:

- **Dark Patterns:** *user design interfaces and tactics* used to trick users into desired behaviour.
- **Green washing:** Misleading **claims** by companies about their products' **environmental benefits** to appear more environmentally responsible.
- **Bait and Switch:** *Advertising a product at a low price to attract customers*, only to sell a different, often more expensive, product.
- **Price Fixing:** *Agreements between competitors* to set prices at a certain level, eliminating competition and maintaining artificially high prices.
- **Predatory Pricing:** *Setting prices extremely low* with the intent to eliminate competition, after which prices are increased.
- **Counterfeiting:** *Producing and selling fake products* that imitate genuine brands to deceive consumers.
- **Pyramid or Ponzi Schemes:** *Promising high returns* with little to no legitimate business activity.

#### Regulatory bodies & Acts to counter unfair trade practices

#### Competition Commission of India:

- **Statutory body** under **Competition Act 2007.**
- It is **responsible to enforce Competition Act 2002.**
- **Competition Act 2002** replaced **Monopolies and Restrictive trade Practices Act 1969.**
- **Chairperson and 6 members** are appointed by **Central Govt.**
- **Aim:** to regulate and **prevent anti-competitive practices** in markets.
- **Review and approve mergers and acquisitions** to ensure they don't violate anti-competitive laws.
- Eg. It **fined Rs.1300 crores on Google** for abusing its dominant position in Android mobile device Ecosystem.
- Imposed fine of Rs.50 crore on BCCI for abusing its dominant position.

#### Trademark Act, 1999:

- **Protects trademarks and prevents counterfeiting and misrepresentation** of brand identity.

27 Dec 2024

**Thank you!**