

25/02/22 - FRIDAY (L. 10/10/2022)

- Q) The idea of river inter-linking projects can address the issue of water scarcity and food security in the country. Critically analyse.

Ans- Water forms an integral part of human livelihood and survival. Water is also a vital part for increasing cropping intensity and the yield of crops two to three times more than that rainfed areas. Without water life is unstable in this world for all creatures.

Reason for River Inter-linking Project:

- In the 19th century, Sir Arthur Cotton & K.L Rao initially proposed to link the rivers to mitigate water scarcity regions like Peninsular area, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu & Gujarat, Rajasthan and Maharashtra Area.
- Recent budget 2022-23 announced by finance minister that Ken-Betwa river linking project can irrigate 9.08 hectares of land area and 62 lakh people will be benefitted for safe drinking water.
- Safe water drinking scheme is a vital part of the government for food security.
- Ken-Betwa River Project can serve the people of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh of Bundelkhand Region by which 13 districts will be benefitted.
- Evidences that augmented river-linking project in early days.
 - In 1980, under National Perspective Plan, National Water Development Authority planned to

Interlink 14 Himalayan rivers and 16 Peninsular rivers to mitigate flood situation and water scarcity in Ganga - Brahmaputra - Meghna basin and Peninsular States respectively.

Effects on Food Security:

- By 2050, 450 million tonnes of food is required for 1.5 billion people in India as per National Commission for Integrated Water Resource Development, it is only to be achieved only linking the rivers to save the waste water to move scarce region.
- Food security will be hampered if safe water is not available. Tamil Nadu is worst affected state.

It is pertinent to mention that the inter-linking initiative is highly recommended job by the central government despite its effect the environment up to some extent. Nearly 2 lakh people dying every year due to lack of safe drinking water so river interlinking may be a boon for those water scarce region.