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4th September 2019

Topic: - Interstate Water Dispute.

News:- CM seeks fresh tribunal on river waters, writes to Modi

Says groundwater scarce, canals state's lifeline.

Context:-Punjab got temporary relief today when the Supreme Court gave four more months to Punjab, Haryana and the Centre to find an amicable solution to break the deadlock between the two states over the Sutlej-Yamuna Link Canal, the state government has made a fresh bid before the Centre for a reassessment of the volume of river waters.

The demand of Punjab Government:-

 Demanding that a tribunal be set up for a reassessment of river water in Punjab, including the Ravi-Beas basin,
 Punjab has stated that it has been 30 years since the assessment of Ravi-Beas waters was done by the Eradi Tribunal (set up in 1986).

The amount of water coming into the basin has fallen drastically, hence the need for its reassessment. Initially estimated at 17 MAF (million-acre feet), the Eradi Tribunal had put its estimates at 19 MAF. Now, the flow in the rivers has come down from17.17 MAF to 14.34 MAF.

What is Eradi Tribunal?

 The Ravi and Beas Waters Tribunal (also known as Eradi Tribunal after its chair V. Balakrishna Eradi) was constituted on 2 April 1986.

Consequences: -

- The state has stated that in case the canal was constructed, 10 lakh hectares of agricultural land in Punjab would turn into a desert. Total agricultural land in Punjab is 105 lakh acres, compared to 80 lakh acres in Haryana.
- Punjab argues that if Haryana stakes claim to water on the plea that it was also a part of Punjab before reorganisation in 1966, then Haryana should also share Yamuna waters. As Haryana draws 4.65 MAF through the Yamuna, 60 per cent of it should be shared with Punjab

(Source:-The Tribune)

Topic: - Environment

News:- Gharials at home in Beas Conservation Reserve.

Context:-Two years and two monsoons later, fighting all adversities, gharials have finally established themselves in the Beas Conservation Reserve, as per the latest surveys conducted by the Department of Forests and Wildlife Preservation, Punjab, and World Wildlife Fund-India in July 2019.

Buoyed by the success of the project, the department plans to introduce 50 more gharials in the river in the next two months.

From where these Gharials were introduced?

The gharial hatchlings were brought to Punjab from Morena, Madhya Pradesh, and a total of 47 gharials were reintroduced in the Beas in 2017, with one death reported due to respiratory failure. The 46 gharials are spread all across the river while one of them has ventured 120 km upstream from its release site to reach Talwara in Hoshiarpur district.

Latest Data: -

■ The latest surveys have spotted 22 gharials, of which 19 were spotted in Beas river upstream, two in Ferozepur feeder and one in Sutlej downstream of Harike headworks.

185-km stretch declared Beas Conservation Reserve

- The Congress government had in 2017 notified a 185-km stretch from the Harike headworks to Talwara as Beas Conservation Reserve.
- The Beas originates near the Rohtang Pass in Himachal and flows into Punjab. Its water is used to irrigate fields in more than four states.
- The river is home to rare aquatic wildlife, including Indus dolphin, smooth Indian otter, turtle species, 500 bird species, 90 fish and hundreds of plants.

What is the difference between community reserves and conservation reserves?

- Community reserves: On the land of private or community ownership, if a group of people are doing conservation work and Government gives it a legal recognition then it is called Community reserves.
- Whereas Conservation reserves are government-owned land. In both the cases conservation efforts are by local community only. Conservation reserves are usually found around the Protected Area Networks like National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries.
- Both of them are covered under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

(Source: - The Tribune)

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QUIZ: -

Question 1:- The Beas originates near the which Pass in Himachal and flows into Punjab?

- 1. Shipkila Pass
- 2. Shingo La Pass
- 3. Bara-Lacha La Pass
- 4. Rohtang Pass

Answer: -

- Q1:- 4

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