

Hirakud Dam

March 13, 2021

In News: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) issued notices to the Chief Secretaries of Odisha and Chhattisgarh over the action taken to alleviate the sufferings of people displaced by the construction of the Hirakud dam over the Mahanadi river about six decades ago.

Data People's Suffering

- About 111 villages were submerged,
- Around 22,000 families were affected,
- About 19,000 families were displaced.

Hirakud Dam

- Its first hydro power was commissioned in 1956.
- Also First river valley projects in India.
- Located in the Sambalpur district of Odisha, about 290 km from the city of Bhubaneswar
- Only 15 kms. north of Sambalpur, the longest earthen dam of the world across the river Mahanadi, which drains an area of 1,33,090 Sq.Kms., more than twice the area of Sri Lanka.
- The bulk of Hirakud dam contains earth, concrete and masonry materials sufficient to make a road 8 metres wide and pave it from Kanyakumari to Kashmir and Amritsar to Dibrugarh in Assam.
- From horizon to horizon the reservoir forms the largest artificial lake in Asia with an area of 746 Sq.Kms. and a shore line over 640 Kms.

Mahanadi River

- River basin extends over states of Chhattisgarh and Odisha and comparatively smaller portions of Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh.

- It has its source in the northern foothills of Dandakaranya in Raipur District of Chhattisgarh at an elevation of 442 m.
- At Sambalpur the Hirakud Dam (one of the largest dams in India) on the river has formed a man-made lake 35 miles (55 km) long.
- It enters the Odisha plains near Cuttack and enters the Bay of Bengal at False Point by several channels.
- Puri, at one of its mouths, is a famous pilgrimage site