Kaleshwaram Multipurpose Lift Irrigation Project

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Why in news?

- The world's largest irrigation and drinking water system—Kaleshwaram Multipurpose Lift Irrigation Project—was inaugurated Friday by Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao.

Why is the Kaleshwaram irrigation project unique?

- This project is unique because Telangana will harness water at the confluence of two rivers(Wain Ganga + Wardha = Pranahita River) with Godavari by constructing a barrage at Medigadda and reverse pump the water into the main Godavari river and divert it through lifts and pumps into a huge and complex system of reservoirs, water tunnels, pipelines and canals.
- By the time the water reaches Kondapochamma Sagar, the last reservoir in the system about 227 kms away in Gajwel district, the Godavari water would have been lifted to a ***height of 618 metres from its source atMedigadda.***
- The total length of Kaleshwaram project is approximately 1,832 kms, of which 1,531 kms is gravity canals and 203 kms comprise water tunnels.

Why does a project have such a huge size?

- While the Godavari flows at 100 metres below Mean Sea Level, Telangana is located at 300 to 650 metres above MSL. → hence there is a requirement of pumping of water using gigantic pumps with mind boggling capacities
- On March 8, 2016, the Telangana government had entered

into an agreement with the Maharashtra State government, putting an end to the decades-old differences and objections over the issue. This agreement has paved the way for the construction of Kaleshwaram project at Medigadda in Jayashankar Bhupalpally district.

- The worlds biggest underground pump house with 20 pumps each of 139 MW capacities has been built by Mega Engineering Infrastructure Limited which has also constructed all the major pump houses and related infrastructure for power transmission for this mega project.
- About 141 to 180 TMC would be harnessed during the 90 flood days of Godavari from August to October.

What are the benefits?

- The project will provide water for drinking and irrigation purpose to about 45 lakh acres in 20 of the 31 districts in Telangana, apart from Hyderabad and Secunderabad. The cost of the project is Rs 80,000 crores but is expected to rise to Rs 1 lakh crore by the time it is completely constructed.
- Once the project reaches its full operational capacity, it is expected to make Telangana an economic power because farmers will be able to sow two crops, and thousands of crores worth of fishing industry would flourish in the freshwater in this project alongside tourism and water sports.