

Mahadayi project

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In News: Mahadayi project cost skyrockets by 1,674% since inception.

Background

- The Karnataka State government on August 22, 2000 gave its administrative approval to the project which involves building across Kalasa and Banduri, two tributaries of the Mahadayi river to divert 7.56 TMC of water to the Malaprabha river, which supplies the drinking water needs of the said 3 districts, i.e., Dharwad, Belagavi and Gadag.
- The Supreme Court has asked the Union government to notify the Mahadayi Water Disputes Tribunal's award, the State is now looking to seek its notification, and forest approvals.
- Since it is a drinking water project, the Environment Impact Assessment requirement has been waived.
- According to government sources, the application to release 258 hectares of reserve forest area for the Kalasa project that falls under the reservoir's catchment area is pending before the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF).
- Similarly, an application to release 242.51 hectares of forest area for the Banduri project is also pending before the MoEF. "We expect approvals for these applications after the notification," sources said.



Karnataka side

- Mahadayi or Mandovi river is said to be the lifeline of Goa, about two-third of it flows in Goa. Two of its tributaries are Kalasa & Banduari nalas. Karnataka wants to construct dams across the Kalasa and banduri and divert water to Malprabha river which flows in the Belgaum District. This diversion of water will cater to the drinking water needs of villages and towns of Belgaum, Dharwad, Bagalkot and Gadag districts.

Goa

- This diversion has been opposed by Goa. Goa claims the transfer of water violates the National Water Policy, which does not allow transfer of water from a deficient basin. In their correspondence with the Union water resources ministry, Goa said its annual demand for water in 2050 would be 2,674 mcm, which is much more than the river's usable yield.
- Goa depends upon the flow of River Mahadayi for keeping its Zuari River navigable till the Mormugao harbor in Panaji.