

Vishnugad Pipalkoti Hydro Electric Project (VPHEP)

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In news– An independent panel of the World Bank is considering a plea by residents of Haat village, Chamoli district, Uttarakhand to investigate environmental damage from the under-construction Vishnugad Pipalkoti Hydro Electric Project (VPHEP) in the district.

Vishnugad Pipalkoti Hydro Electric Project (VPHEP)-

- The **444-MW VPHEP is being built by the Tehri Hydropower Development Corporation (THDC)**, a partially State-owned enterprise.
- The project is **primarily funded by the World Bank and was sanctioned in 2011.**
- It is proposed **to be completed in June 2023.**
- **It is a 444 Megawatt (MW) run-of-the-river hydro generation project on the Alaknanda River**, which is a tributary of the Ganga.
- Residents in their complaint to the bank panel have said **muck dumping from the dam threatens the local Lakshmi Narayan Temple**, which is deemed to be of historical and cultural importance by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).
- Hydropower projects in Uttarakhand have been a controversial issue particularly since 2013 following the 2013 floods in Kedarnath that killed at least 4,000 and caused widespread destruction.
- Following complaints by local environmentalists, the Supreme Court ordered a review of hydropower electric projects and tasked a panel of experts with determining whether they were environmentally sustainable.