

## **1. Five River Linking Projects Announced in Union Budget**

**Prelims Syllabus: Rivers**

**Mains Syllabus: GS-I Important Geophysical Phenomena such as earthquakes, Tsunami, Volcanic Activity, Cyclone etc., Geographical Features and their location - changes in Critical Geographical features (including water bodies and ice-caps) and in flora and fauna and the effects of such changes.**

### **Why in News?**

- Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has proposed a project to link five rivers in India in her Budget Speech.

### **About the News:**

- Five identified rivers are Godavari-Krishna, Krishna-Pennar and Pennar-Cauvery, Damanganga-Pinjal and Par-Tapi-Narmada.

### **About the Identified Rivers:**

- Krishna, the fourth largest river in India, originates in Mahabaleshwar in Maharashtra and flows through Maharashtra, Karnataka, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.
- Cauvery originates in Kodagu and flows through Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.
- Penna originates in Chikkaballapura and flows through Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh.
- Godavari which is the third largest river in India originates in Nashik and flows through Maharashtra, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Orissa.
- The Damanganga-Pinjal river linking aims to divert surplus water from the Damanganga basin to provide domestic water for Mumbai city.
- The Par-Tapi-Narmada project proposes to provide water to drought-prone regions of Kutch and Saurashtra by diverting excess water from seven reservoirs in the Western Ghats in North Maharashtra and south Gujarat.

### **Constitutional Provisions Involved:**

- Article 262(1) of the constitution deals with the adjudication of interstate water disputes.
- Article 262(2) holds that neither Supreme Court nor any other court shall exercise jurisdiction in respect of interstate water disputes.
- Water being a state subject requires a mutual water sharing arrangement between two riparian states.

### **What are the Benefits of Interlinking?**

- Enhances Water and Food Security.
- Proper Utilisation of water.
- Boost to Agriculture.
- Disaster Mitigation.
- Boost to Transportation.

### **Issues and Concerns:**

- Interlinking of rivers is a very expensive proposal. It will adversely affect land, forests, biodiversity, rivers and the Livelihood of Millions of People.
- Interlinking of rivers will lead to Destruction of forests, wetlands and local water bodies, which are major Groundwater Recharge Mechanisms.
- It causes massive Displacement of people. Huge burden on the government to deal with the issue of rehabilitation of displaced people.
- Due to interlinking of rivers, there will be decrease in the amount of fresh water entering seas and this will cause a serious threat to the Marine Life.