

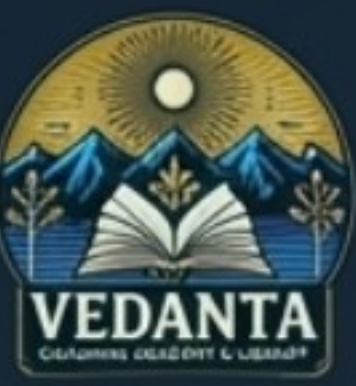


4th July

Current Affairs & Policy Briefing: Key **Strategic** Developments

AN EXECUTIVE DIGEST FOR GOVERNANCE, GEOPOLITICS, AND ECOLOGY

Ladakh to have customised self-governance framework



UT-level elected body will be established, say minutes of meeting between Centre and leaders of civil society groups; model of constitutional safeguards under Article 371 discussed in proposal

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

A customised *sui generis* model, which is most suitable for Ladakh, will be adopted under the provisions of Article 371 for the Union Territory (UT) of Ladakh, said the draft shared by a team from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) with leaders of civil society groups of the region on Friday.

Referring to the fifth meeting held on May 22 this year of the sub-committee of the High-Powered Committee (HPC) on Ladakh, the MHA team released the minutes of the meeting agreed upon by the Centre and the leaders of civil society groups of the Leh Apex Body (LAB) and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA).



Civil society groups in Ladakh have been consistently demanding Statehood for the Union Territory, FILE PHOTO

through a democratic institutional framework that provided a political voice. It was unanimously decided that while Statehood would remain the long-term aspiration of Ladakh, in the present situation, as a first step, an appropriate customised model of go-

sal covering the powers and functions – executive, financial and legislative – of this UT-level elected body in harmonious relations with the Panchayati Raj Institutions would be prepared for further discussion and fine-tuning.

The minutes of the

discussed. “There have been instances of invoking Article 37((A to J) and it was agreed that a customized model which is most suitable for Ladakh would be adopted,” it said.

Demand for Statehood

It is the first time that the MHA has made public a detailed presentation on the progress achieved through five rounds of meetings between the Centre and representatives of Ladakh. “The presentation also outlined the probable structure of self-governance in Ladakh. The representatives from Ladakh reiterated the demand for Statehood and Sixth schedule for Ladakh. They also reiterated the demand regarding Ladakh Administrative and Police Service and regarding withdrawal

Governance Update

- **Governance Shift:** Centre and Ladakh civil society (Leh Apex Body & Kargil Democratic Alliance) agree on a customized *sui generis* governance model.
- **Policy Mechanism:** To be adopted under Article 371 provisions.
- **Immediate Action:** MHA draft proposes establishing a UT-level elected body to provide a democratic political voice.
- **Long-Term Goal:** Statehood remains the long-term aspiration, but this elected body serves as the crucial first step.

Article No.	Subject-matter
371	Special provision with respect to the states of Maharashtra and Gujarat.
371 – A.	Special provision with respect to the state of Nagaland.
371 – B.	Special provision with respect to the Assam
371 – C.	Special provision with respect to the state of Manipur
371 – D.	Special provisions with respect to the state of Andhra Pradesh or the vialcurne state of Telangana
371 – E.	Establishment of Central University in Andhra Pradesh
371 – F.	Special provisions with respect to the state of Sikkim
371 – G.	Special provisions with respect to the state of Mizoram
371 – H.	Special provisions with respect to the state of Arunachal Pradesh
371 – I.	Special provisions with respect to the state of Goa
371 – J.	Special provisions with respect to the state of Karnataka

Constitutional Context

- **Constitutional Basis:** Part XXI of the Constitution (since Jan 26, 1950). Articles 371(A–J) were added via Article 368 amendments.
- **Scope:** Grants temporary, transitional, and special powers to 12 states.

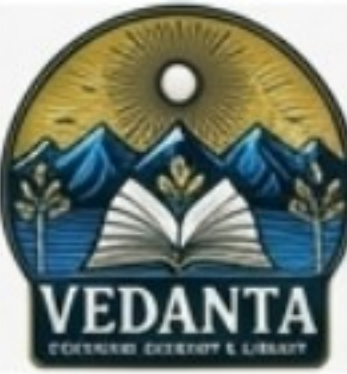
Key State Provisions:

- 371A (Nagaland): Protects Naga religion, customary law, and land rights.
- 371B (Assam) / 371C (Manipur): Committees of legislators from tribal/hill areas.

Contrast with 6th Schedule:

- 6th Schedule (Article 244(2)) establishes Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) specifically for tribal areas in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram.

India will consider 'all related developments' to Teesta project, says MEA



Kallol Bhattacharjee

NEW DELHI

Days after Bangladesh Prime Minister Tarique Rahman visited China where the two sides discussed the Teesta River Comprehensive Management and Restoration Project (TRCMRP), India on Friday said its development assistance to projects in Bangladesh work on the



Pristine waters: A view of the Teesta river at Sevok, some 20 km from Siliguri. AFP

dia's will substance: 'all related developments' the River administration's report on the Teesta project to commitment on Bangladesh in India. "Due to mutually related developments' to for-

dia's projects in Bangladesh assistance for projects in Bangladesh is based on a mutually agreed road map, which is regularly reviewed. Our project have been previously conveyed to the Bangladesh side. We will factor all related developments in our overall approach to the Teesta issue," said Mr. Jaiswal.

Officials later clarified

sure at Bangladesh's decision to go ahead with discussing the Teesta project with China as India-Bangladesh does stand on their own merit.

The sharing of the Teesta river water has been under discussion between India and Bangladesh for decades but since 2011, the two neighbours have remained in a deadlock with regards to an agreement.

- ♦ **Geopolitical Friction:** Discussions held between Bangladesh PM and China regarding the Teesta River Comprehensive Management and Restoration Project (TRCMRP).
- ♦ **India's Official Stance:** Development assistance in Bangladesh is based strictly on a mutually agreed roadman
- ♦ **Strategic Calculus:** MEA states India will factor in all related developments (including China's involvement) when formulating its overall approach.
- ♦ **Historical Context:** Teesta water sharing remains a heavily contentious, deadlocked issue between India and Bangladesh since 2011

The Ganges-Brahmaputra Basin



The Teesta Basin

- **Origin:** Himalayas near Chunthang, Sikkim.
- **Flow Path:** Flows south through West Bengal before crossing into Bangladesh.
- **Tributary Status:** Joins the Brahmaputra (known locally as the Jamuna in Bangladesh).
- **Historical Shift:** Changed course in 1787; previously emptied directly into the Padma River (main Ganga channel).
- **Infrastructure:** Teesta Barrage dam provides crucial irrigation for plains between the upper Padma and Jamuna.

DAC gives approval for military purchase worth ₹52,000 crore

Saurabh Trivedi

NEW DELHI

The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, on Friday accorded Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) for defence acquisition proposals worth nearly ₹52,000 crore aimed at enhancing the operational capabilities of the Army, Navy and Air Force.

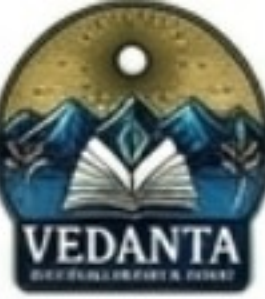
The Ministry of Defence stated that the DAC approved the procurement of Anti-Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Electronic Warfare System Akash Tarang, Man Portable Anti-Tank Guided Missile (MPATGM) systems, tetyem Systems for tanks and jet-based Kamikaze drone systems, for the Indian Army.

Akash Tarang is de-

protection against hostile drones, while the MPATGM will strengthen the infantry's capability to counter enemy armoured formations. The MRSAM system will enhance medium-range air defence against a range of aerial threats. The Kamikaze drone system will provide enhanced electronic warfare capability with greater lethality and cost-effectiveness.

For the Indian Navy, the Council approved the acquisition of Multi Influence Ground Mines (MIGM), Naval Shipborne Unmanned Aerial Systems (NSUAS) and the CATANISHI PIACU-Wing High Altitude Pseudo Satellites (FW-HAPS) and other proposals for the Indian Air Force. The FW-HAPS platform will be enhancing the Air Force's op-

- **The Approval:** Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), chaired by Rajnath Singh, approved ₹52,000 crore in operational enhancements.



- **Indian Army Upgrades:**

- Akash Tarang (Anti-UAV EW system).
- MPATGM (Man-Portable Anti-Tank Guided Missiles).
- MRSAM & Kamikaze drone systems.

- **Indian Navy Upgrades:**

- Multi Influence Ground Mines (MIGM).
- Naval Shipborne Unmanned Aerial Systems (NSUAS).

- **Indian Air Force Upgrades:**

- Fixed-Wing High Altitude Pseudo Satellites (FW-HAPS) for extended operational reach.

'No revival of Indus treaty if Pak. does not end terror'

Kallol Bhattacharjee

NEW DELHI

India on Friday said the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) will remain in "abeyance" till Pakistan "credibly and irrevocably" stops supporting cross-border terrorism. Official spokesperson of the External Affairs Ministry Randhir Jaiswal made the remark in the context of a recent international conference held in Pakistan where it called for the restoration of the treaty. The country is dealing with a severe beatwave. "The Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 will be held in abeyance with immediate effect, until Pakistan credi-



Point of contention: India's Cabinet Committee on Security had put the IWT in abeyance after the Pahalgam attack. PTI

as vital for "regional peace, stability and cooperation".

The Cabinet Committee on Security had put the treaty in abeyance a day after the Pahalgam terror attack on April 22, 2025, killed 26 civilians and in-

of cross-border terrorism for decades," Mr. Jaiswal had said on May 13, 2025.

On May 22 last year, Mr. Jaiswal had said that India was willing to discuss with Pakistan the modality to especutody of "noted ter-

- **The Catalyst:** Triggered by the Pahalgam terror attack (April 22, 2025) which killed 26 civilians.
- **Military Response:** India launched 'Operation Sindoor' strikes on terror targets inside Pakistan.
- **Diplomatic Reality:** MEA emphasizes that the treaty's preamble of goodwill and friendship is fundamentally violated by state-sponsored terrorism.
- **The Stance:** India puts the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) in **abeyance** until Pakistan credibly and irrevocably halts cross-border terrorism

The Indus Waters Treaty (IWT)

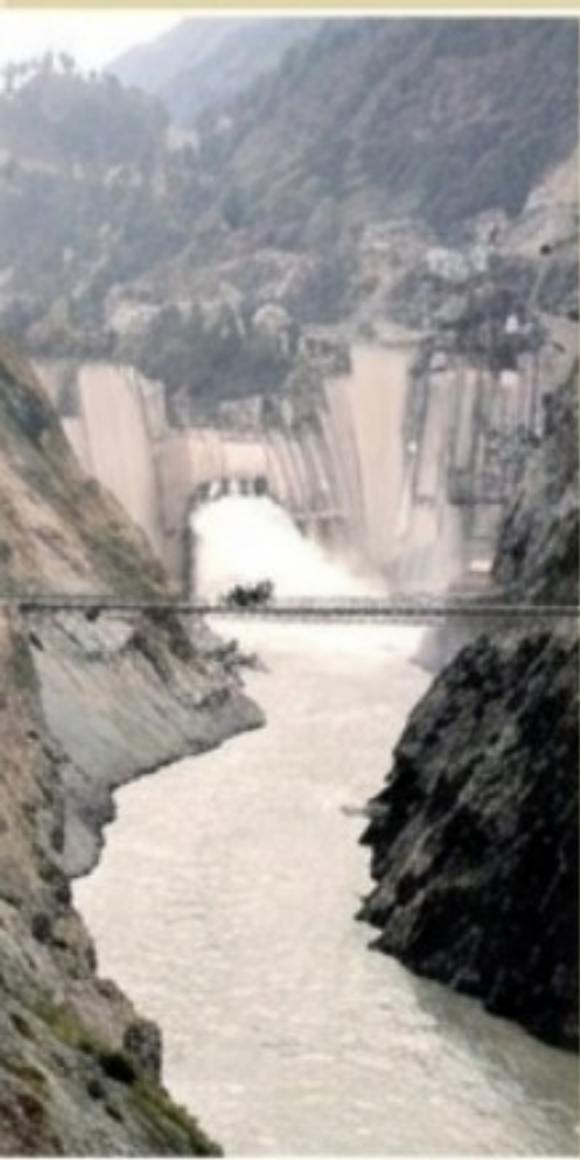
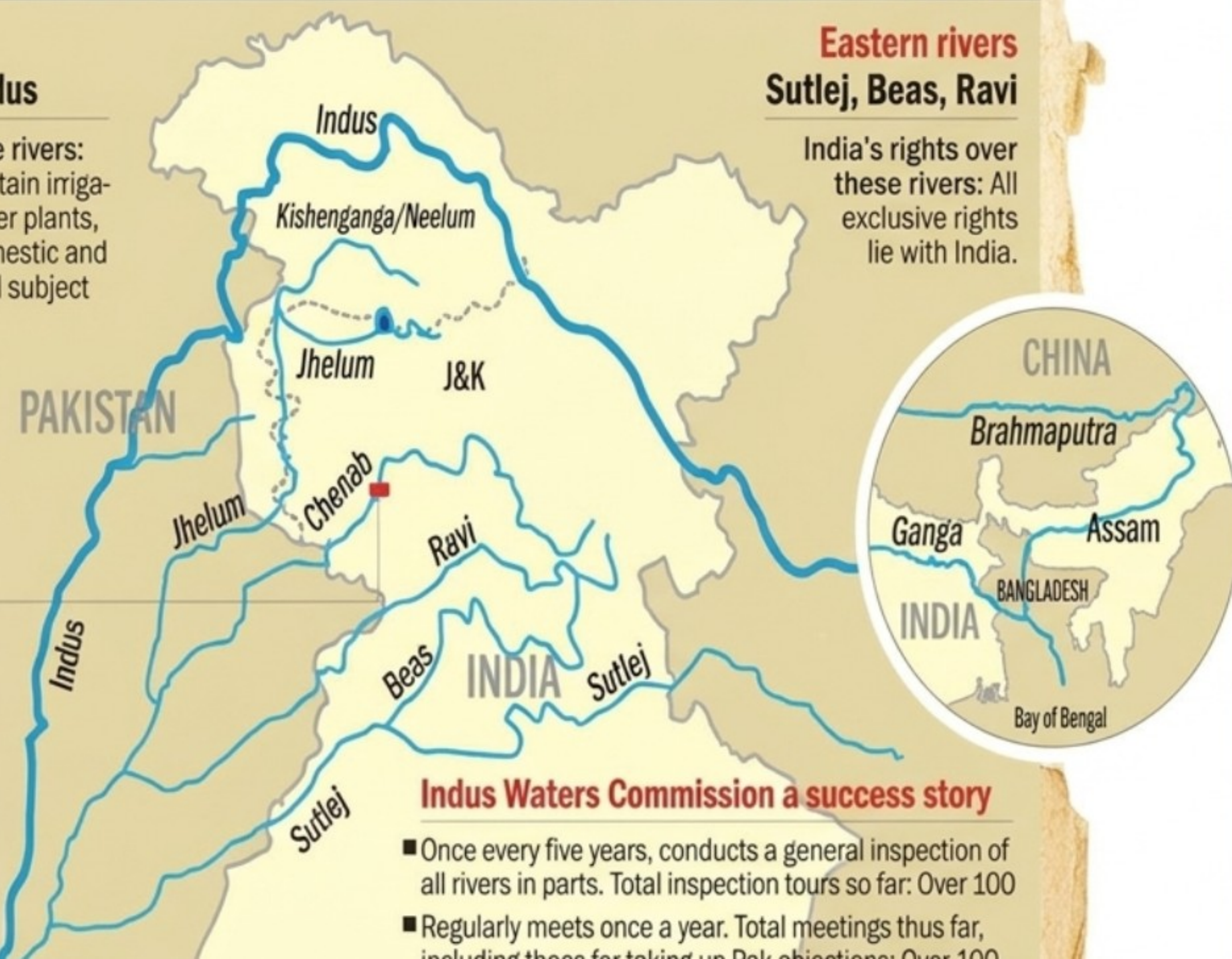
- The distribution of waters of the Indus and its tributaries between India and Pakistan is governed by the Indus Water Treaty (IWT).
- Was signed on Sept 19, 1960, between India, Pakistan and a representative of World Bank after eight years of negotiations.
- Partition of India cut across the Indus river basin, which has the Indus river, plus five of its main tributaries.

Western rivers Chenab, Jhelum, Indus

India's rights over these rivers: Limited — can set up certain irrigation, run of the river power plants, very limited storage, domestic and non-consumptive use, all subject to conditions

Eastern rivers Sutlej, Beas, Ravi

India's rights over these rivers: All exclusive rights lie with India.



Baglihar dam on Chenab

Indus Waters Commission a success story

- Once every five years, conducts a general inspection of all rivers in parts. Total inspection tours so far: Over 100
- Regularly meets once a year. Total meetings thus far, including those for taking up Pak objections: Over 100

Treaty Mechanics

- **Western Rivers (Chenab, Jhelum, Indus):**
 - Allocated to Pakistan.
 - India retains limited rights (run-of-the-river power, domestic use, non-consumptive use).
- **Eastern Rivers (Sutlej, Beas, Ravi):**
 - Allocated to India.
 - India holds all exclusive rights.
- **Treaty Oversight:**
 - Managed by the Indus Waters Commission, functioning since September 1960.

Pakistan:
Allocated 135
MAF Annually
From The
Western
Rivers — Indus,
Jhelum, and
Chenab

AFGHANISTAN

PAKISTAN

Indus

Indus

Jhelum

Chenab

Ravi

Sutlej

Ladakh

Srinagar

Poonch

Jammu

Beas

Sutlej

Leh

CHINA

Lake
Manasarovar

Uttarakhand

Haryana

Delhi

Rajasthan

Uttar Pradesh

The Leverage of Western Rivers

- **The Volume at Stake:** 135 Million Acre-Feet (MAF) of water annually allocated to Pakistan from Western Rivers.
- **Agricultural Impact:** Equivalent to irrigating 11–16 million hectares of rice (40% of India's rice fields).
- **Infrastructure Equivalent:** Enough volume to fill 23 Bhakra-Nangal Dams.
- **Resource Scale:** Represents a massive 8.6% of India's total freshwater resources.

*MAF (Million Acre-Feet) measures water volume, equaling 1 million acre-feet, where 1 acre-foot is water covering 1 acre to 1 foot deep.

Burning bright: tiger population quadruples at Assam's Nameri Tiger Reserve in 3 years

Rahul Karmakar
GUWAHATI

The population of tigers at the 344 square km Nameri Tiger Reserve in north-central Assam's Sonitpur district has quadrupled in three years, the State's Forest and Environment Minister Jayanta Mallabaruah said on Friday.

One of four tiger reserves in Assam, Nameri shares a boundary with the 1,276.95 sq. km Pakke Tiger Reserve in Arunachal Pradesh. The other three tiger

tiger reserves are the Jaintia Tiger Reserve in Meghalaya, the Dibru-Saikhowa Tiger Reserve in Assam, and the Sangu Tiger Reserve in Jharkhand. Nameri is a satellite core of the Sonai Rupai (satellite core) during the All India Tiger Estimation (AITE) of 2022.

Grew from 3 tigers (Grew from, at Nameri. This was a four-fold increase from three striped cats recorded during the All India Tiger Estimation (AITE) of 2022.

He attributed the "extraordinary results" to the forest conservation efforts under the guidance of Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma.

"From just 3 tigers in 2022 to 12 by the end of 2025, Nameri Tiger Reserve has scripted a remarkable conservation success," he said, also more consistent after 20-year at local extinction.

Tigers successfully returning to Sonai Rupai (satellite core) after 20-year conservation success," he said, also highlighting the return of tigers to the Sonai Rupai Wildlife Sanctuary after more than two decades.

The tiger went locally

meri's satellite core, in the early 2000s. "Scientific monitoring and long-term habitat protection are strengthening tiger conservation in the Nameri Sonai Rupai landscape," Mr. Mallabaruah said.

Kaziranga status

Better known for its one-horned rhinos, Kaziranga has one of the highest tiger densities – 13.44 per 100 sq. km – in India.

The 2022 AITE reported that Kaziranga had 104 tigers, one more than the



Nameri Tiger Reserve (Assam):

- Population **quadrupled** in just three years.
- Grew from **3 tigers** (2022 AITE) to **12 tigers** (2025-end estimation by WII).
- Tigers successfully returning to **Sonai Rupai** (satellite core) after 20-year local extinction.

Kaziranga Tiger Reserve:

- Boasts one of India's highest tiger densities: **13.44** per 100 sq. km.
- Current recorded population stands at **148 tigers** (2024 State Forest Dept report).

- Post-1945 US/Western dominance is dented by the **rise of China** and emerging middle powers, driven by technological control of strategic resources.

The Waning Unipolarity

The US-Iran Initial Deal (June 2026)

- Agreement to **reopen the Strait of Hormuz** and lift the US blockade.
- Involves a vague **\$300 billion reconstruction** plan (without direct US funds).

- Israel's attempts to inveigle the US into a West Asian conflict aimed at decimating Iran have strained relations, potentially altering power equations in the **Arab-Iranian-Israeli** sphere.

Israel-US Fracture

- **Israel's** attempts to **inveigle** the US into a West Asian conflict aimed at decimating Iran have all altering power equations in **Arab-Iranian-Israeli** sphere.

40%

Acute Urban Deficits: June monsoon deficit exceeded 40%.

70%

Delhi supply has plummeted to 70% of its 1,250 MGD demand.



11/15

Basin-Level Stress (CEEW Data): 11 out of 15 major Indian river basins are experiencing water stress (< 1,700 m³ per person).



< 1,000

Scarcity Thresholds: Krishna, Cauvery, Mahi, and Tapi basins are critically below the scarcity threshold (< 1,000 m³ per person).



4 Billion

Global Context (UNU-INWEH): Warnings of global water bankruptcy; 4 billion people currently face severe water scarcity for at least one month a year.



Policy Prescriptions:

4 Pillars of Water Security



- **Pillar 1: Climate-Proofing**

- Conduct granular risk assessments of infrastructure to prioritize investments in high-risk zones (e.g., coastal areas like Navsari).



- **Pillar 2: Urban Water Reuse**

- Shift from linear usage to a circular economy approach, prioritizing non-potable reuse to save freshwater.



- **Pillar 3: Micro-Irrigation**

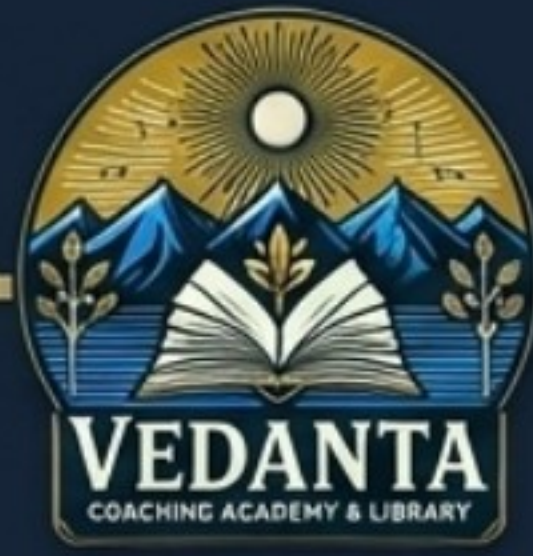
- Scale up high-efficiency drip and sprinkler technologies over traditional flood irrigation.



- **Pillar 4: Basin-Level Data**

- Bridge the data gap by tracking granular metrics on water withdrawals, system losses, and consumption at the basin scale.





GS 3 Mains Practice Question

Ensuring water security is indispensable for achieving food security, energy security and sustainable economic growth. Discuss the interlinkages and suggest policy measures for strengthening India's water resilience. (15 Marks, 250 Words)

जल सुरक्षा, खाद्य सुरक्षा, ऊर्जा सुरक्षा तथा सतत आर्थिक विकास की आधारशिला है। इन सभी के मध्य अंतर्संबंधों का विश्लेषण कीजिए तथा भारत की जल सहनशीलता (Water Resilience) को सुदृढ़ करने हेतु नीतिगत उपाय सुझाइए। (15 अंक, 250 शब्द)