

# Govt forms panel, SPV to implement Ken-Betwa project

New Delhi: Days after her budget presentation where finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman spoke about taking up implementation of the Ken-Betwa Link Project (KBLP) on priority, the Centre has set up a special purpose vehicle (SPV) and a 20-member steering committee to complete this 'national project' on inter-linking of rivers (ILRs), reports **Vishwa Mohan**.

The project, conceived as part of 30 such ILRs across the country in 2003, is expected to be implemented in eight years at an estimated cost of Rs 44,605 crore at 2020-21 price levels.

It will benefit the water-stressed region of Bundelkhand in Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. Implementation of KBLP will pave the way for more ILRs projects in India with five of them being taken up on priority. Headed by 'Jal Shakti' (water resources) ministry's secretary and comprised of four other secretaries of different ministries including environment, the 20-member steering committee will monitor implementation of the KBLP as per the tripartite memorandum of agreement (MoA) signed by the Centre and state governments of MP and UP in March last. The project will be implemented by the SPV-Ken-Betwa Link Project Authority.

The project will provide an annual irrigation of 10.62 lakh hectare, drinking water supply to a population of about 62 lakh and also generate 103MW of hydropower and 27MW solar power.