

## **Cabinet approves Ken-Betwa River linking project at cost of Rs 44,605 cr**

The Indian Express, Thursday, December 09, 2021

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

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the funding and implementation of Ken-Betwa inter-linking of rivers project with a total cost of Rs 44,605 crore. The project has a deadline of eight years.

A proposal of this effect was approved in the meeting of the Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

According to an official statement issued after the Cabinet meeting, a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) called Ken-Betwa Link Project Authority (KBLPA) will be set up to implement the project.

"The total cost of Ken-Betwa link project has been assessed at Rs.44,605 crore at 2020-21 price levels. The Union Cabinet has approved central support of Rs 39,317 crore for the project, covering grant of Rs 36,290 crore and loan of Rs 3,027 crore," the statement said.

"The project will pave the way for more interlinking of river projects in India and also showcase to the world our ingenuity and vision," the statement said.

Under the Ken-Betwa link project, water will be transferred from Ken to Betwa river through the construction of Daudhan Dam and a canal linking the two rivers.

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

The statement said that the project is proposed to be implemented in 8 years with "state of the art technology."

"The project will be of immense benefit to the water-starved Bundelkhand region, spread across the states of MP and UP. This project will provide enormous benefits to the districts of Panna, Tikamgarh, Chhatarpur, Sagar, Damoh, Datia, Vidisha, Shivpuri and Raisen of Madhya Pradesh and Banda, Mahoba, Jhansi & Lalitpur of Uttar Pradesh," the statement said.

"The project is expected to boost socio-economic prosperity in the backward Bundelkhand region on account of increased agricultural activities and employment generation. It would also help in arresting distress migration from this region," it said.

"This project also comprehensively provides for environment management and safeguards. For this purpose a comprehensive landscape management plan is under finalization by Wildlife Institute of India," it added.

Earlier this year, on March 22, an agreement was signed between the Centre and two states – Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh – to implement the Ken-Betwa river linking project, which is the first major centrally-driven river interlinking project in the country.

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