



CURRENT AFFAIRS



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Date -31 October 2023

NORTH KOEL RESERVOIR PROJECT

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details "North Koel Reservoir Project". This topic has relevance in the section of the UPSC CSE exam.

GS 3: Environment

Why in the news?

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has granted approval for the revised project cost, aiming to revive the stalled North Koel Reservoir Project situated in both Jharkhand and Bihar.

North Koel Reservoir Project:

- **Inter-State Major Irrigation Project:** The North Koel Reservoir Project is a significant inter-state irrigation project with its command area spanning across the states of Bihar and Jharkhand.
- **Project Components:** The project includes a dam built on the North Koel River near Kutku Village in Latehar District, Jharkhand. Additionally, it features a barrage situated 96 km downstream of the dam, located in Palamu district, Jharkhand. The project comprises a Right Main Canal and a Left Main Canal that divert water from the barrage for various purposes.
- **Historical Background:** The proposal for the dam dates back to 1927, and construction commenced in 1972. However, concerns emerged that the dam's water could potentially pose a threat to the Betla National Park and the Palamu Tiger Reserve.

North Koel River:

- **River Origin:** The North Koel River is the second-largest right bank tributary of the River Sone. It originates in the Ranchi Plateau and enters the Palamau division, located below Netarhat near Rud.
- **Confluence:** The North Koel River meets the Sone River in Haidargarh, Palamu district, Jharkhand.
- **Tributaries:** Notable tributaries of the North Koel River include the Auranga, Amanat, and Burha Rivers.
- **Wildlife and Conservation:** The North Koel River serves as the northern boundary of the Betla National Park, contributing to the conservation of the region's biodiversity.

Betla National Park:

- **Jharkhand's Sole National Park:** Betla National Park is the only national park within the state of Jharkhand, India.
- **Geographical Location:** Situated on the western part of the Chhotanagpur plateau, Betla National Park showcases diverse landscapes and natural beauty.

- A section of Betla National Park was designated as the Palamu Tiger Reserve, which was one of the first nine Tiger Reserves declared in 1974. This reserve remains the sole Tiger Reserve in Jharkhand.
- The northern region of Betla National Park is traversed by the River Koel and its tributaries, enhancing the park's ecological significance.
- **Flora:** The national park features a rich flora, including tropical wet evergreen forests in lower regions, mixed deciduous forests in the middle, and temperate alpine forests in higher altitudes. Sal and bamboo forests dominate a significant part of the park's landscape.
- **Fauna:** Betla National Park is home to a diverse range of wildlife, such as elephants, leopards, panthers, monkeys, Indian civets, chital, bison, sloth bears, sambhar, nilgai, langurs, mouse deer, porcupines, and chinkara.
- **Indian Grey Wolf:** Notably, Betla National Park and Palamu Tiger Reserve are dedicated to the conservation of the Indian Grey Wolf, with a thriving population. It is the only wildlife sanctuary with a specific focus on the Indian Grey Wolf.
- **Historical Significance:** The first-ever tiger census through pug mark counting was conducted within these forests in 1934, contributing to India's wildlife conservation efforts.
- **Netarhat Hill Station:** The famous hill station of Netarhat is located on the southern fringes of Betla National Park/Palamu Tiger Reserve.

Palamu Tiger Reserve:

- **Chero Dynasty Forts:** Within the Palamu Tiger Reserve, there are forts built by the Chero dynasty. The Cheros, also known as the Chyavana dynasty, ruled over regions encompassing Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Jharkhand from the 12th to the 19th century.

SOURCE:

[Reservoir Project: Centre Clears Funds To Restart North Koel Dam | Ranchi News – Times of India \(indiatimes.com\)](#)

Q.1 Consider the following statements regarding the Koel River:

1. The Koel River is the largest left bank tributary of the River Sone.
2. It originates in the Ranchi Plateau.
3. Notable tributaries of the North Koel River include the Auranga, Amanat, and Burha Rivers.

How many of the above statement/s is/are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

ANSWER: B

Q.2 Consider the following statements about Betla National Park:

1. Betla National Park is situated in the state of Assam, India.
2. Betla National Park is renowned for its population of Asiatic lions.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

ANSWER: D

Q.3 Discuss the significance and impact of hydropower projects. Analyze the measures required to mitigate adverse effects and promote sustainable hydropower projects in the context of a country's energy strategy and environmental conservation.

Rishabh

UNITED NATIONS INTERIM FORCE IN LEBANON (UNIFIL)

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details "United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)". This topic has relevance in the "International Relations" section of the UPSC CSE exam.

For Prelims:

What is United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)?

What is UN Peacekeeping Force?

For Mains:

GS2: International Relations

Why in the news?

According to recent news reports, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) reported that one of its personnel was injured following shelling near the border between Israel and Lebanon.

United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)

- UNIFIL is a Peacekeeping Force established in March 1978 by the United Nations Security Council to serve as a buffer between Lebanon and Israel along the Blue Line.
- Its primary objectives were to confirm the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon, restore international peace and security, and assist the Lebanese government in regaining control of the area.
- UNIFIL's mandate has evolved in response to changing circumstances, with adjustments in 1982 and 2000 and further enhancements following the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah War.
- UNIFIL is funded through a separate account approved annually by the United Nations General Assembly.

Blue Line

- - The Blue Line, established by the United Nations on June 7, 2000, serves as a demarcation line between Lebanon and Israel, as well as Lebanon and the Golan Heights.
 - Its primary purpose was to assess the complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon.
 - This demarcation has been characterised as "temporary" and not a formal border but a "line of withdrawal."

Current Mandate:

- Monitoring the cessation of hostilities.
- Supporting the deployment of the Lebanese armed forces in southern Lebanon.
- Helping ensure humanitarian access to civilian populations.
- Facilitating the voluntary and safe return of displaced persons.

Role and Impact

- **Promoting Stability:** The mission is crucial in promoting stability and security in Lebanon.
- **Monitoring Efforts:** Through its monitoring efforts, the organisation helps maintain the cessation of hostilities and prevent conflicts.
- **Support for Lebanese Armed Forces:** UNIFIL supports the deployment and capacity-building of the Lebanese armed forces in southern Lebanon, enhancing the country's security.
- **Humanitarian Access:** By ensuring humanitarian access to civilian populations, the organisation helps address the needs of vulnerable communities in the region.
- **Displaced Persons:** UNIFIL's role in facilitating the voluntary and safe return of displaced persons contributes to restoring normalcy and stability in the area.

United Nations Peacekeeping Operations

- UN peacekeeping missions play a critical role in providing security and offering political and peacebuilding support to assist nations in navigating the challenging transition from conflict to peace. Currently, there are 12 UN peacekeeping operations active worldwide.
- These operations operate based on fundamental principles:
 - **Consent of the Parties:** UN Peacekeeping operations require the consent of all involved parties to operate effectively.
 - **Impartiality:** Peacekeepers are committed to maintaining impartiality in their activities and interactions.
 - **Non-Use of Force:** UN Peacekeeping forces utilise force solely in self-defence or to uphold their designated mandates.
- UN peacekeeping operations are typically **authorised by the UN Security Council**, which sets out the mission's mandate and provides the necessary resources.
- Recognising its contributions to global peace and security, UN Peacekeeping has been honoured with the Nobel Peace Prize.

India's contribution to UN peacekeeping and UNIFIL:

- India contributes the **second highest troops to the UNIFIL. It is one of the largest contributors to UN peacekeeping**, with around 5,900 Indian troops deployed in 12 missions.
- India has established a centre for UN Peacekeeping in New Delhi and provides training to more than 12,000 troops every year.
- India contributes troops, police personnel, staff officers, and experts to all 12 active UN peacekeeping missions.
- India has the highest contribution of troops in regions including the Central African Republic, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, Lebanon, Abyei, and Cyprus, among others.

Sources:

[Amid Israel-Hezbollah clashes, a look at UN peacekeeping force in Lebanon & India's contribution \(theprint.in\)](#)

Q1. With reference to United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), consider the following statements:

1. The UNIFIL has been serving as a buffer between Lebanon and Syria along the Blue Line.
2. The Blue Line is also a demarcation line between Lebanon and the Golan Heights.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (d)

Q2. Consider the following:

1. UN peacekeeping missions provide security, political support, and peacebuilding assistance during the transition from conflict to peace in nations.
2. UN Peacekeeping operations do not require the consent of all involved parties to operate.
3. The UN Security Council typically authorises UN peacekeeping operations.

How many of the abovementioned statements are correct ?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Answer: (b)

Q3. Discuss the role and significance of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and India's substantial contribution to UN peacekeeping efforts.

Gaurav