

Kanwar Lake

Why in News?

Once a haven for migratory birds, Asia's largest freshwater oxbow lake and Bihar's only Ramsar site, Kanwar is gradually disappearing.

Key Points

- An oxbow lake is a curved lake formed alongside a winding river as a result of erosion and sediment deposition over time.
 - Oxbow lakes are typically crescent-shaped and are common features in floodplains and lowlying areas near rivers.
- Kanwar lake, which used to be a popular tourist spot, has fallen victim to encroachments and is now battling for its existence.
 - The uncontrolled expansion of land and building of embankments along the nearby **Burhi** <u>Gandak river</u> has blocked the main water entry point to the <u>wetland</u>.
- There is a shared belief that with governmental initiatives to restore the lake, it has the
 potential to reclaim its past grandeur and transform into a significant tourist destination, offering
 new job prospects for residents.

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RIVER LANDFORMS

Different types of landforms formed at different courses of a river - Upper, Middle & Lower

UPPER (MOUNTAIN) COURSE

- Starts at source of river (usually a
- mountain range) Very fast speed of river due to steep slope
- Main action of river is vertical corrasion
- Landforms –
 >V-shaped Valleys (formed due to vertical corrasion)
 - 🛚 Lao Valley, Hawaii
 - »Interlocking Spurs * West Liddar valley above Pahalgam, Kashmir
- » Gorges (formed where rocks are too hard and resistant)
- Indus Gorge, Kashmir
- » Canyons (formed where rainfall is very low) * Bryce Canyon, US
- » Rapids and Waterfalls
- * Lava Falls Rapid, US and Niagara Falls, Canada

Corrasion (or abrasion) is the erosion of a rock surface by rock fragments transported over it by water, wind, or ice

MIDDLE (VALLEY) COURSE

- Here, lateral corassion overtakes vertical • Confluence of tributaries → More volume of water → More loaded river
- Transportation main event in the region
- Interlocking spurs also formed on both sides of the valley

* Owens River, SE California, US »River Cliffs and Slip-off slope * White Cliffs of Dover, UK

Landforms -

»Meanders





Kanwar Lake

- It is also known as Kabartal jheel.
- It is a residual oxbow lake, formed due to the meandering of Gandak river, a tributary of Ganga.
- It is covering the majority of the Indo-Gangetic plains in northern Bihar.
- The Wetland is an important stopover along the Central Asian Flyway, with 58 migratory waterbirds using it to rest and refuel.
- It is also a valuable site for fish biodiversity with over 50 species documented.
- Five critically endangered species inhabit the site, including three vultures the

red-headed vulture (Sarcogyps calvus), white-rumped vulture (Gyps bengalensis) and Indian vulture (Gyps indicus) – and two waterbirds, the sociable lapwing (Vanellus gregarius) and Baer's pochard (Aythya baeri).

The Vision

• **Threats:** Major threats to the site include water management activities such as drainage, water abstraction, damming and canalization.

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