



India-Bangladesh River Water Sharing MoU

Why in News?

Recently, India and Bangladesh have finalised the text of the **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on interim water sharing of the Kushiara river.**

What are the Key Highlights of the MoU?

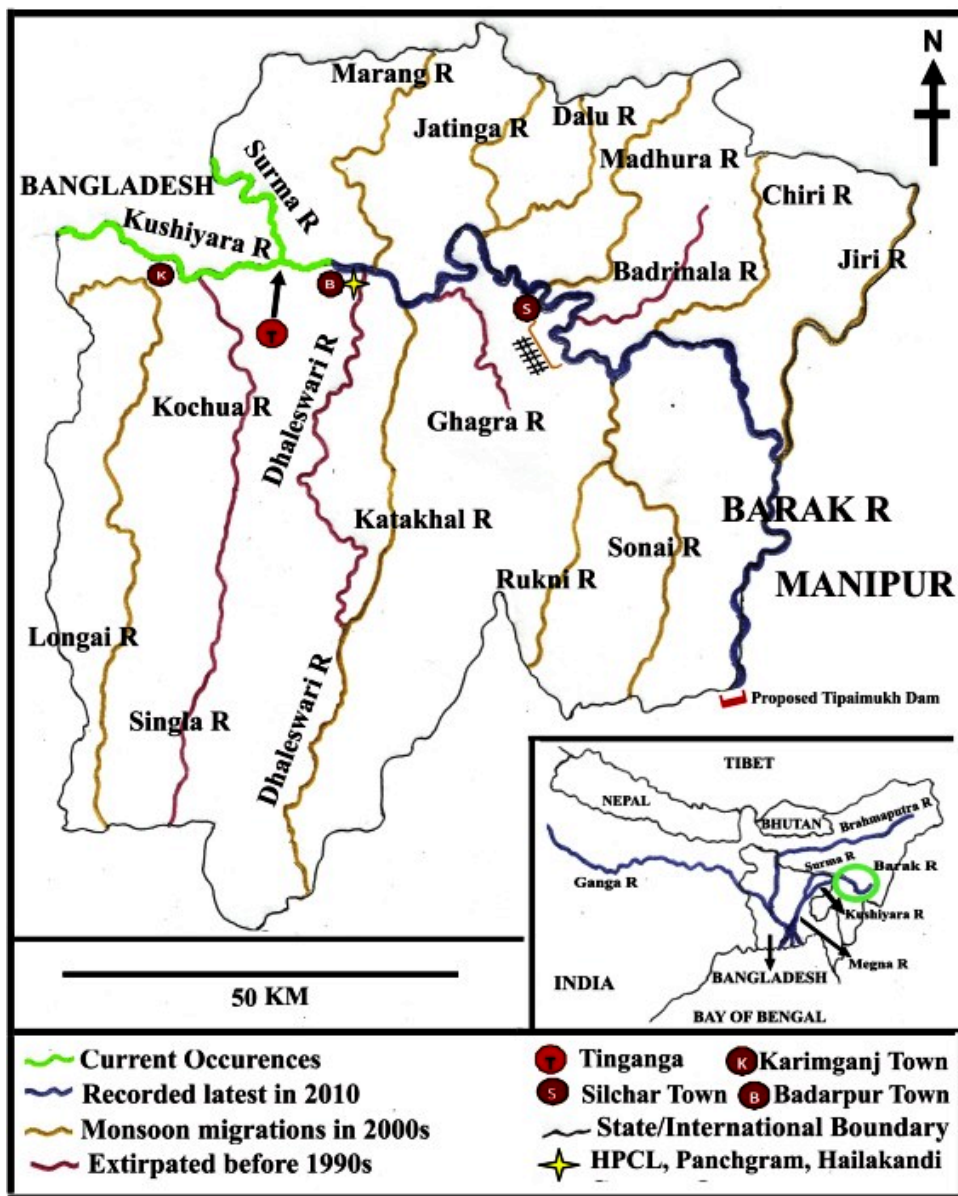
- It was finalised during the 38th meeting of the ministerial-level **Joint Rivers Commission (JRC)** of India and Bangladesh,
- It **welcomed the finalisation of the design and location of the water intake point on Feni River to meet the drinking water needs** of Sabroom town in Tripura as per the October 2019 India-Bangladesh MoU.
 - Further, the discussion was held on a number of ongoing bilateral issues of mutual interest, including **water-sharing of common rivers, sharing of flood data, addressing river pollution, conducting joint studies on sedimentation management, river bank protection works, etc.**

What is Joint Rivers Commission (JRC)?

- **About:**
 - The **Joint Rivers Commission** of India and Bangladesh was **constituted in the year 1972 as a bilateral mechanism to address issues of mutual interest on common / border / transboundary rivers.**
 - The JRC is headed by **Water Resources Ministers of both countries.**
- **Significance:**
 - It is **commencing after a long gap of twelve years**, although technical interactions under the framework of JRC have continued in the interim.
 - **As India and Bangladesh share 54 rivers**, of which seven have been identified earlier for developing the framework of water-sharing agreements on priority.
 - During the latest meeting, they **agreed to include eight more rivers for data exchange.**
- **Outcomes:**
 - It discussed the whole gamut of issues related to **common rivers between the two countries, especially the Ganges, Teesta, Manu, Muhuri, Khowai, Gumti, Dharla, Dudhkumar, and Kushiara.**
 - Apart from this, the exchange of **flood-related data and information, riverbank protection works, joint basin management**, and the Indian river interlinking project was discussed in detail.
 - It agreed to undertake some more common rivers for the exchange of data and information towards preparing the draft framework of the interim water sharing agreement.

What are the Key Points of Kushiara River?

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- The Kushiya River is a **tributary river in Bangladesh and Assam.**
 - It **forms on the India-Bangladesh border as a branch of the Barak River when the Barak separates into the Kushiya and Surma.**
- The waters of the Kushiya pick up **tributaries from Manipur, Mizoram, and Assam.**
- The Kushiya rejoins with the Surma at Markuli in Ajmiriganj upazila (Bangladesh) and flows south upto Bhairab Bazar (Bangladesh) receiving the name Kalni.
- The Kalni meets with the Dhanu (Bangladesh), a branch of the Surma and renamed as the Meghna.

What are the Key Facts About Feni River?

- The Feni River, also known as Feni Nodi in Bengali, forms part of the India-Bangladesh border.
- It originates in the South Tripura district, passes through Sabroom town on the Indian side, and meets the Bay of Bengal after it flows into Bangladesh
- It has great agricultural importance for the people living in the towns near to this river.
- This river is also the **source of their livelihood** through which they obtain a number of benefits like watering their crops with its water and also using the water for their regular use.
- **Maitri Setu, a 1.9km Long Bridge Over Feni River** is constructed in Tripura to link India-Bangladesh.

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q. With reference to river Teesta, consider the following statements: (2017)

1. The source of river Teesta is the same as that of Brahmaputra but it flows through Sikkim.
2. River Rangeet originates in Sikkim and it is a tributary of river Teesta.
3. River Teesta flows into Bay of Bengal on the border of India and Bangladesh.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 3 only
(b) 2 only
(c) 2 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (b)

Exp:

- River Teesta/Tista originates from the Tso Lhamo lake of North Sikkim Himalayas and the Brahmaputra originates in the Kailash ranges of Himalayas. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- Teesta runs downhill through Sikkim and Darjeeling hills and then meanders along the plains of West Bengal before entering into Bangladesh, where it flows into the river Brahmaputra at Fulchori. **Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**
- **Rangeet, the largest river in the State of Sikkim, is the main tributary of river Teesta** which originates in the Himalayan mountains of West Sikkim district. **Hence, statement 2 is correct. Therefore, option (b) is the correct answer.**

Source: IE

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