



Hirakud Dam Canal System Renovation

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Why in News?

The six-decade-old canal system connected to [Odisha's Hirakud Dam](#) is set for a major renovation.

- This initiative aims to modernise irrigation infrastructure, reduce water wastage, and enhance agricultural productivity, providing much-needed support to farmers in the region.

What are the Key Objectives of the Renovation?

- **Need for Renovation:** Many canal infrastructures, including the Bargarh and Sasan main canals, are in disrepair.
 - Existing **earthen canals** cause significant water loss, reducing irrigation efficiency.
 - **Water seepage** makes some farmland unsuitable for farming, complicating challenges for local farmers.
- **Key Features of the Renovation:** Conversion of all **earthen water courses to concrete paths** for improved water distribution and management.
 - The project will enhance water availability in tail-end areas for better farmer access.
- **Impact on Local Farmers:** Aims to reduce the gap between irrigation potential and actual usage. Enhanced irrigation capabilities will benefit farmers and increase crop yields.

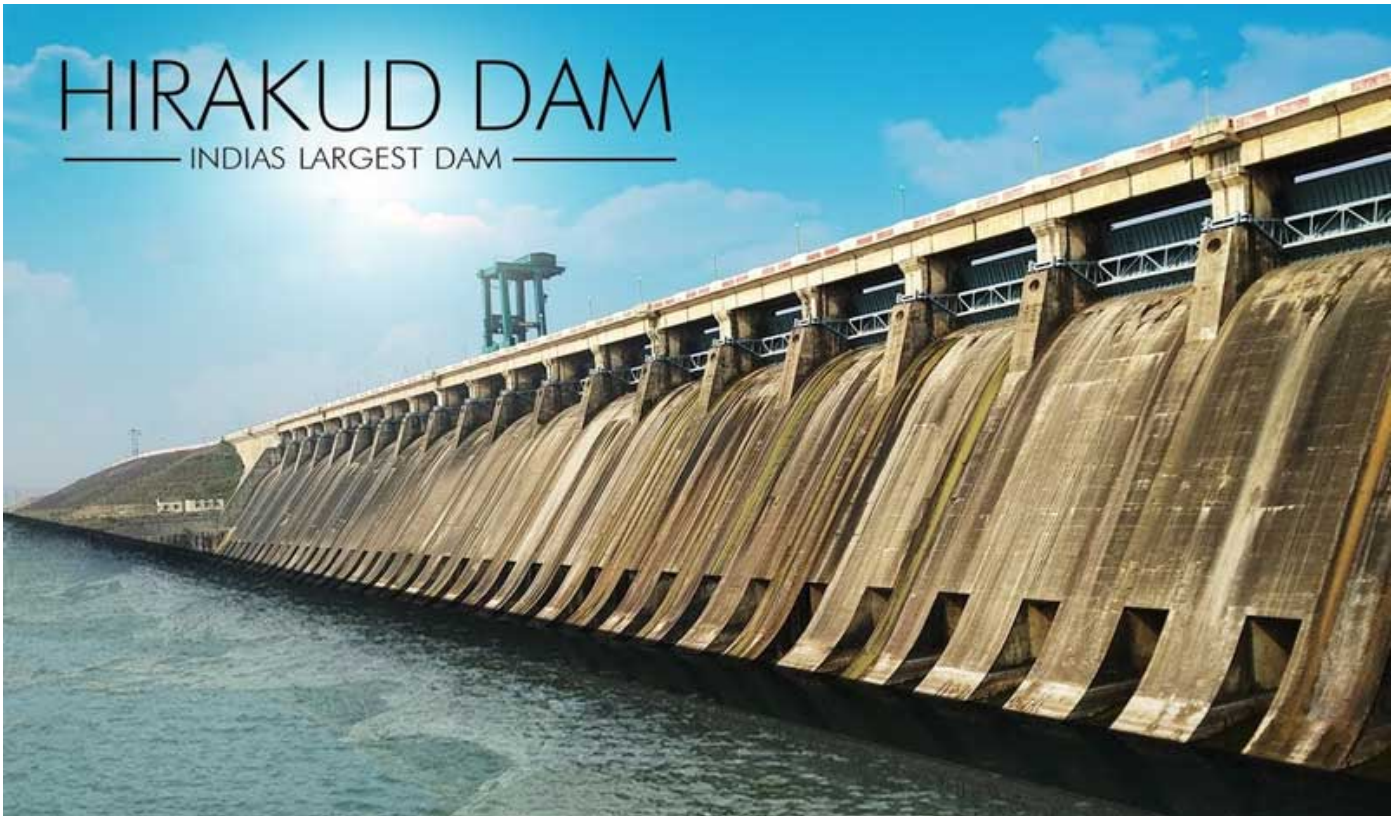
What are the Key Facts About the Hirakud Dam?

- **About:** It is a multipurpose scheme conceived by [Er. M. Visveswaraya in 1937](#), after a recurrence of devastating floods in the Mahanadi River.
 - Built around 1952-53, the Hirakud Dam is one of India's first major multipurpose river valley projects post-independence.
 - It holds the title for the **longest major earthen dam globally**, stretching 25.8 km across the [Mahanadi River](#).
 - It was inaugurated by the then Prime Minister **Jawaharlal Nehru** in 1957.
 - Hirakud Dam forms the Hirakud Reservoir, also known as **Hirakud Lake**, is one of the largest **artificial lakes** in Asia. Hirakud Reservoir was declared a [Ramsar site](#) in 2021.
- **Purpose and Benefits:** The dam has an installed capacity of 359.8 MW for [hydroelectric power generation](#), contributing to the region's energy supply.
 - The reservoir irrigates 436,000 hectares of land, benefiting farmers in the region.
- **Cattle Island:** It is located in one of the extreme points of Hirakud Reservoir. It is inhabited by a large herd of wild cattle.

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HIRAKUD DAM

INDIA'S LARGEST DAM



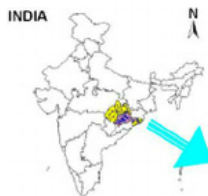
Mahanadi River

- **Origin:** The river originates from **Sihawa range of hills** in the Dhamtari district of Chhattisgarh.
- **Mouth:** It flows into the Bay of Bengal at False Point, Jagatsinghpur in Odisha.
- **Tributaries:**
 - **Left Bank:** Seonath, Mand, Ib, Hasdeo, and Kelo.
 - **Right Bank:** Ong, Parry, Jonk, and Telen.
- **Basin and Geography:** The Mahanadi basin extends over states of Chhattisgarh and Odisha and comparatively smaller portions of Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh.
 - It is bounded by the Central India hills on the north, by the **Eastern Ghats on the south** and east and by the **Maikala range on the west**.
 - The Mahanadi is one of the major rivers of the country and among the peninsular rivers, in water potential and flood producing capacity, it ranks second to the [Godavari](#).

Mahanadi River Basin

Legend

- River
- Gauge station
- Hirakud reservoir
- Middle reaches of Mahanadi basin
- Upper reaches and delta region of Mahanadi basin



0 50 100 200 Kilometers

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