

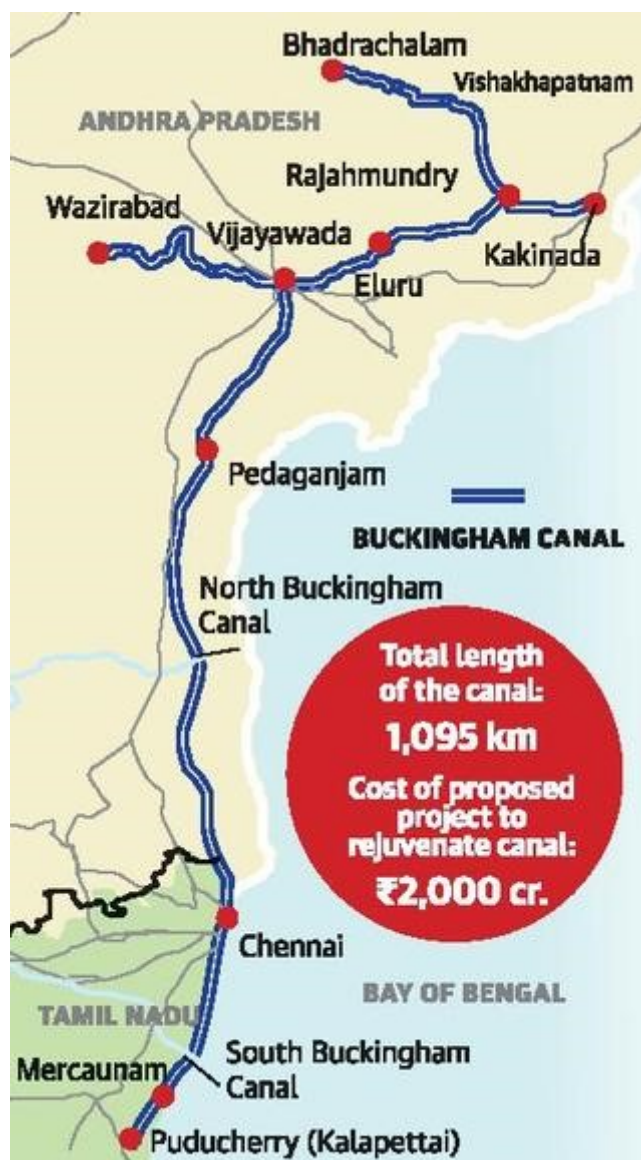
Buckingham Canal

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Why in News?

The Buckingham Canal is in focus due to a proposed plan to restore navigation in a 7.2-km central stretch in Chennai.

- The canal is also important for urban flood management, as a properly maintained canal can act as a flood carrier during heavy rainfall.



- Location** - Runs along the east coast through Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh.

- **Length** - About 450 km — 250 km in Andhra Pradesh and 200 km in Tamil Nadu.
- Together with the Krishna and Godavari canal systems, it once formed a navigable network of about 650 km.
- **Origin** - Constructed in 1806 by Basil Cochrane and initially called the Cochrane Canal.
- Taken over by the government in 1837 and later called the East Coast Canal.
- Acquired the name Buckingham Canal in 1878, after the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos.
- **Historical Importance**
 - It served as an important inland water transport route, carrying firewood, paddy and other goods.
 - It connected Chennai with several places in present-day Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. The canal once had 28 locks.
- The Navigation declined with the expansion of road and other transport systems.
- **Decline concerns** - These include
 - Sewage discharge
 - Industrial pollution
 - Reduced canal width
 - Encroachments and settlements
 - Lack of regular maintenance/desilting
 - MRTS structures along parts of the canal alignment have also reduced its width.
- **Restoration Efforts**
- Intensive desilting during 1996-2001 restored navigability in a 14-km southern stretch between Thoraipakkam and Muttukadu.
- In 2016, the Union government declared North Buckingham Canal (316 km), South Buckingham Canal (110 km) as parts of National Waterway-4.

Reference

[The Hindu| Buckingham Canal](#)