Polavaram-Banakacherla Link Project

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance*

Why in News?

The Supreme Court recently disposed of a writ petition filed by Telangana against the Union government and the state of Andhra Pradesh over the proposed expansion of the Polavaram-Banakacherla Link Project.

- It is a proposal to divert surplus ***Godavari River water*** via the Polavaram dam to the ***drought-prone Rayalaseema region*** through the Krishna and Penna basins.
- It is also known as Polavaram-Nallamalasagar Link Project.

  Godavari River originates in the Western Ghats, flows through Maharashtra, and drains into the Bay of Bengal.

- **Approved in** – 2009.
- **Aim** - To irrigate lands and provide drinking water.
- **Governed by -** The Godavari Water Disputes Tribunal (GWDT) Award.
- **Technical clearances issued by -** The Central Water Commission.
- **Legal Provision -** India's framework for resolving interstate river disputes is based on the ***Inter-State River Water Disputes Act, 1956.***
- Under this law, when states fail to resolve water sharing disagreements, the Union government can *constitute a tribunal,* whose award is final and binding, with the force of a SC decree.
- It was under this law that the *Krishna Water Disputes Tribunal (KWDT) and the Godavari Water Disputes Tribunal (GWDT)* were constituted in 1969.
- **Initial Permission -** Polavaram was initially permitted to divert 80 thousand million cubic feet (TMC) of water from the Godavari to the Krishna River.
- **Telangana's opposition** - It faces strong opposition from Telangana, which argues it violates water-sharing laws from the AP Reorganisation Act.
- Andhra Pradesh has maintained that the diversion involves only "flood" or

“surplus” waters of the Godavari.

Reference

[The Indian Express | Polavaram-Banakacherla Link Project]

