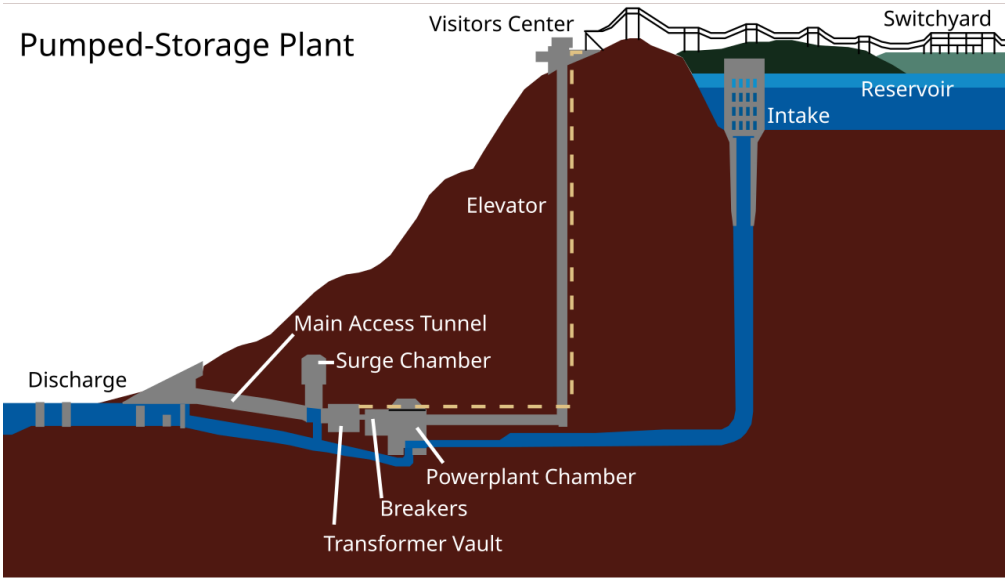
Sharavathi Hydroelectric Project

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Why in News?

The Karnataka High Court directed the State government to halt work on the Sharavathi Hydro Electric Project, following concerns raised by environmentalists.

- **Launched in –** 2017.
- **Location –** Sharavathi Lion-Tailed Macaque Wildlife Sanctuary, Shivamogga district of Karnataka.
- **Objective –** To generate 2,000 MW capacity and to integrate renewable energy sources like solar and wind.
- **Implementing Agency – Karnataka Power Corporation Limited** (KPCL), to meet peak-hour energy demands, which can touch 18,000 MW daily.
- **Type –** *Pumped Storage Hydropower* is a reliable and large-scale energy storage technology that acts as a "water battery."
- **Working Mechanism** – It uses two water reservoirs at different elevations, pumping water uphill during low-demand periods (surplus energy) and releasing it downhill through turbines to generate electricity during high-demand peaks, with 70–80% round-trip efficiency.



- **Environmental Concerns –** Initially 16,000 trees, reduced to 7,000–8,000 after the Wildlife Board's condition.

- Even with reduced tree cutting, the project poses grave risks to biodiversity (lion-tailed macaques & wet evergreen forests), forest integrity, and local safety, making its ecological cost far heavier than its proposed energy gains.

Sharavathi River

- **Origin –** Ambutirtha, Thirthahalli (Shivamogga district), Western Ghats of Karnataka.
- It is a *west-flowing river* which drains into the Arabian Sea at Honnavar (Uttara Kannada) and flows for about 130 km through the Western Ghats.
- **Dams & Waterfalls –** Linganamakki Dam, Gersoppa Dam, Hirebhaskara (old-submerged) & Jog Falls (plunge waterfall), one of India's highest waterfalls.
- The river is already the State's primary hydel power source, with four major power stations operating in its valley.

Quick Fact

Sharavathi Lion-Tailed Macaque Wildlife Sanctuary
• **Location –** In the Sharavathi River Valley of Sagar taluk in Shivamogga District. • **Establishment** – Originally established in 1972 as the Sharavathi Valley Wildlife Sanctuary (431.23 sq km), expanded and renamed in 2019 to ensure conservation of the lion-tailed macaque.

References

1. The Hindu | Sharavathi Hydroelectric Project
2. The Hindu | Sharavathi lion-tailed macaque Sanctuary

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