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Neyyar River Water Dispute

Why in news?

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The Supreme Court has asked Tamil Nadu and Kerala to place their lists of witnesses on record in the Neyyar river water dispute case.

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What is Neyyar River Dispute?

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- Neyyar originates from the **Agastya hill in Kerala**, and has two tributaries - Karuppaiyar and a jungle stream.
- The water will help irrigate an area of 9,200 acres in Villavancode taluk in Kanyakumari district. The taluk was transferred to Tamil Nadu during the reorganization of states in 1956.
- In 2012, the TN government had filed a petition against Kerala govt **seeking uninterrupted water supply from Neyyar River.**
- Tamil Nadu contends that the Neyyar is an inter-state river recognized as such under the 1956 States' Reorganisation Act.
- In its petition, TN argued that a portion of the river's catchment area lay in territory of TN and hence, was entitled to receive 150 cusecs from the Neyyar Irrigation Project.
- The petition also said, TN has not received the said quantum of water since 2004 which has caused serious hardship to the farming community.
- Previously, Kerala, in 1999 took the stand that Neyyar was not an interstate river and that it would not be necessary to conclude an inter-

state agreement regarding sharing of its water.

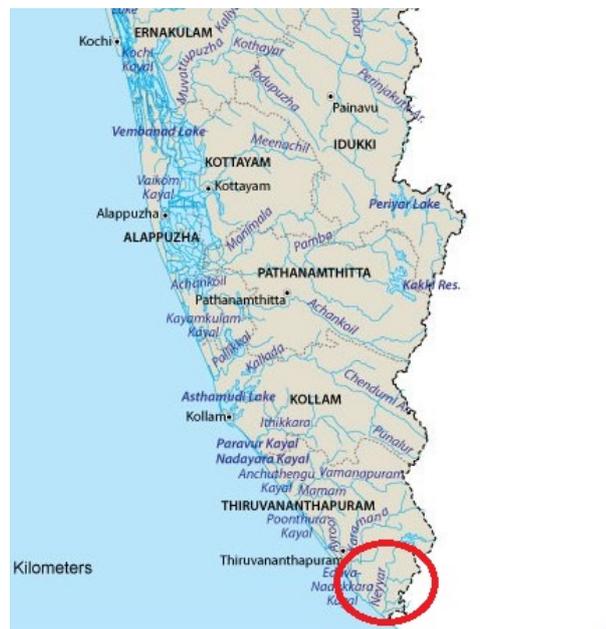
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- In its own draft agreement, Kerala informed Tamil Nadu in 2010 that the water shall be supplied subject to realization of water charges and payment of distribution charges and making the agreement valid for five years to be renewed by mutual consent.

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What happened now?

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- The Supreme Court, in November 2016, had framed the issues to be heard in the Neyyar dispute, including whether the river can be classified as an inter-State river.
- A SC Bench had also agreed to hear on several disputed issues, including whether the supply of water to Tamil Nadu by Kerala since 1965 was only a gesture of good will or a legal obligation imposed by Section 108 (2) of the State Re-organisation Act, 1956.

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- The SC recently asked both the States to file the lists of witnesses in the

original lawsuit.

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Source: The Hindu

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