

Indus River System, Tributaries, and Sindhu River Origin

Indus River System consists of Indus, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas, and Sutlej River.

The Indus River System is considered the birthplace of many civilizations mainly, the Indus Valley civilization. The Indus River originates in the Tibetan Plateau and ends to the Arabian Sea passing through South Asia. This river contains vast fertile plains, which have been very essential for agriculture and the development of societies. Over thousands of years, the Indus has supported diverse ecosystems and communities, playing an important role in shaping the region's culture and history. In this article, we are going to discuss in detail the system of the Indus River.

Indus River System

Indus River System is the One of the longest river systems in the Indian subcontinent. The Indus River also known as the Sindhu is 3180 km long, making it the longest river in the Indian subcontinent and the seventh-longest in Asia. This river system includes the Indus, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas, and Sutlej rivers, which are its main tributaries. The Indus Water Treaty was signed in 1960 to manage water sharing between India and Pakistan. According to this treaty, the Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab rivers are controlled by Pakistan, while the Ravi, Beas, and Sutlej rivers are controlled by India.

| Indus Water Treaty 1960 | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Indus+Jhelum+ Chenab | 80% by Pakistan |
| Ravi+Beas+Satluj | 80% by India |

Tributaries of Indus River

Left-bank Tributaries

- Zaskar River
- Suru River
- Soan River
- Ravi River
- Beas River
- Satluj River
- Panjnad River
- Jhelum River
- Chenab River

Right-bank Tributaries

- Shyok River
- Gilgit River
- Hunza River
- Tochi River
- Kabul River
- Swat River
- Kunnar River
- Kurram River
- Gomal River

Indus River Tributaries are mentioned below with their Place of origin, Projects, states etc.

| Rivers | Place of origin | Tributaries of Indus River System | Multipurpose Projects | States |
|--------------|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Indus | Bokhar Chu- Near Manasarovar lake, Tibet | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zaskar (Ladakh) • Astor Nanga Parbat • Chenab • Sutlej • Soan • Beas • Ravi • Dras • Suru (Indus) • Jhelum | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kishanganga Mangla Dam (Jhelum) • Tarbela Dam (Indus) • Ghazi Barotha Hydroelectric Project | J&K Distribution as per IWT, 1960 |



| | | | | |
|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kishanganga • R. Shyok • Gilgit | | |
| Jhelum | Verinag spring (Pir Panjal Range) | Kishanganga (Right) Neelum Kunhar Poonch | Mangla Dam Rasul Barrage | J&K |
| Chenab | Lahaul and Spiti district of Himachal Pradesh: Bara Lacha pass | Headward Tributaries: Chandra(Zozi La) Bhaga (Baracha La) R. Tavi | Salal Project, Dhulhasti Dam, Baglihar Dam, Trimmu Barrage | Himachal Pradesh, J&K |
| Ravi | Kullu hills, West to Rohtang Pass | R. Soul (Valley: Rich timber trees Garden of Chamba) R. Budhil R. Nai/Dhona Battle of the ten kings was fought | Thein (Ranjit Sagar) Dam | J&K |
| Beas | Near Rohtang Pass, Beas Kund-H.P (southern end at Pir Panjal) | Parbati – Created problems in Alexander’s invasion of India 2014 Beas River Tragedy: Flood gates of the Larji dam were opened | Beas Project, Pong Dam Pandoh Dam | Punjab and Haryana |
| Satluj | Manasarovar-Rakas Lakes Enters India through Shipki la Pass | T Spiti Proposal to build a 214- kilometer (133 mi) long heavy freight canal, to be known as the Sutlej-Yamuna Link (SYL) in India to connect the Sutlej and Yamuna rivers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bhakra Nangal Project • Harike • Sirhind • Gobind Ballabh Sagar • Karcham Wangtoo Hydroelectric Plant • Neptha Jhakhari Dam | Punjab, HP, North of the Vindhya Range, South of the Hindu Kush segment of the Himalayas, and East of the Central Sulaiman |

Indus River Origin

One of the earliest human civilizations, the **Indus Valley Civilization**, was named after the Indus River system. The Indus River starts near Mansarovar Lake in Tibet, China. In Sanskrit, the Indus River is known as the “Sindhu” river, and in Greek, it is called “Sinthos.” The exact source of the river is generally believed to be the Sênggê Kanbab (Sênggê Zangbo) or “Lion’s Mouth,” a spring near Mount Kailash. The Indus River flows through the Ladakh region of India, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Pakistan before reaching the Arabian Sea near Karachi. The Indus River System consists of six main rivers: the Indus, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Sutlej, and Beas. The name “India” comes from the word “Indus,” showing the river’s importance to the Indian subcontinent.

Indus River System Features

In India, the Indus exclusively runs through the Leh area of Jammu & Kashmir. A spring at Verinag, which is located at the base of the Pir Panjal in the southern portion of the Kashmir valley, gives rise to the Jhelum, a significant Indus tributary. It passes past Srinagar and the Wular Lake before entering Pakistan in a small, deep valley. Near Pakistan’s Jhang, it merges into the Chenab. The Chenab is the Indus River’s biggest tributary. It is created by two streams, the Chandra and the Bhaga, which converge in Himachal Pradesh near Keylong at Tandi. This leads to another name for it: Chandrabhaga. Some Significant Features of Indus River System are given below:

- The river travels 1,180 kilometres until it enters Pakistan. Another significant Indus tributary is the Ravi.
- It begins west of the Rohtang Pass in Himachal Pradesh’s Kullu Hills and runs through the Chamba Valley.



- It drains the region located between the southern Pir Panjal range and the Dhauladhar ranges before entering Pakistan and meets the Chenab near Sarai Sidhu.
- Another significant Indus tributary, the Beas, rises from the Beas Kund, which is about 4,000 metres above mean sea level and is close to the Rohtang Pass.
- The river creates canyons at Kati and Largi in the Dhaoladhar Mountain as it runs through the Kullu valley. When it reaches the Punjab plains, it merges with the Satluj close to Harike.

Tributaries of Indus in Detail

The Indus River System is one of the longest river systems in the Indian subcontinent about 2900 kilometers. It has a vast drainage area of approximately 1.165 million square kilometers, most of which is now in Pakistan. The Indus river system consists of Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas and Satluj. These rivers collectively form the Indus River system, flowing through the Himalayan Mountains, Hindu Kush, Karakoram Range, and the semiarid plains of Pakistan.

Indus River

The Indus River starts from the glaciers in the Kailash range at Mansarovar Lake. It is about 2880 kilometers long, with only 710 kilometers in the Indian Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. The rest of the river flows through Pakistan. The river begins from a glacier in Tibet's Bokhar Chu region near Manasarovar Lake.

Tributaries of Indus River

- **Zaskar (Ladakh)**
- **Astor (Nanga Parbat)**
- **Chenab, Sutlej, Soan, Beas, Ravi, Dras, Suru (Indus), Jhelum, Kishanganga, R. Shyok, Gilgit,**



- **Shigar/Sangar+Kabul+ Kurram Gomal – Tochi +Viboa- Originate in Sulaiman Ranges**
- **Harike Barrage, at the confluence of the Beas and Sutlej: Channels water into the Indira Gandhi**

Jhelum River

The Jhelum River also known as Vitasta in the Rigveda is an important river in the Indus river system. It starts from the Chashma Verinag glacier and travels about 720 km before joining the Chenab River in the Punjab Province of Pakistan. Jhelum in the valley of Kashmir is still in its youth stage and yet forms meander.

Jhelum River

- **Jhelum- Vitasa**
- **Origion- Verinag**
- **Confluence- In Chenab river near Jhang in Punjab Province of Pakistan**
- **Srinagar the Summer Capital is situated on its bank**

Chenab River

The Chenab River also called Askini is an important river in the Indus river system. It starts in the West Himalayan region of Himachal Pradesh where the Chandra and Bhaga rivers meet. The Chenab River flows through Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir before joining the Indus River. It is the largest tributary of the Indus River System.

Chenab River

- **Chenab- Askini**
- **Origion- Bara lacha pass**
- **Flow- Himachal pradesh–Jammu & Kashmir–Pakistan**
- **Confluence- Indus river in Pakistan**



- **Largest Tributery of Indus River**

Ravi River

The Ravi River also called Iravati or "The River of Lahore," is a tributary of the Indus river system. It starts near Rohtang Pass in the Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh. After traveling about 720 kilometers, it joins the Chenab River in Pakistan. The Ravi flows through two Indian states: Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir.

Ravi River

- **Ravi- Parushini**
- **Origion- Rohtang Pass**
- **Flow- Himachal Pradesh-Punjab-Pakistan**
- **Confluence- Chenab River in Pakistan**

Beas River

The Beas River is an important part of the Indus River system. It starts at Beas Kund in the Rohtang Pass located in Himachal Pradesh. The river flows 470 kilometers from Himachal Pradesh to Punjab, where it joins the Satluj River.

Beas River

- **Beas- Vipasa**
- **Orgion- Beas Kund(HP)**
- **Flow- Himachal and Punjab**
- **Confluence- Sutluj River in Punjab**

Satluj River



The Sutlej River also called the Satudri is the easternmost tributary of the Indus River. It starts at Lake Rakshastal in Tibet, near Mount Kailas. The Sutlej River shares a lot of water to the states of Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, and Rajasthan. The Sutlej River, also known as the Red River, stretches for a total length of 1450 kilometers. Of this length, 529 kilometers flow through Pakistan.

Satluj River

- **Satluj – Sutudri**
- **Origin- Rakas Lake near Mansarovar**
- **Flow- HP and Pujab meet in pakistan**
- **Confluence- Chenab River in Pakistan**
- **Longest tributary of Indus**



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