

THE IMPACT OF FARAKKA BARRAGE ON *HILSA ILISHA* (HAM.) FISHERY

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ABSTRACT : The *Hilsa ilisha* (Ham.) is a long distance migratory fish of the Indian waters of high economic and food value coming from the Bay of Bengal and migrating to the upper reaches of river Ganges. It is a rich source of protein, carbohydrate, vitamins, iron, calcium, mineral salt and occupy an important place in human food and nutrition. Once upon a time they are found in abundance at Varanasi, Allahabad, Kanpur, Haridwar and even at Patna. But now it has vanished completely from these centres. In other centres above Rajmahal the *Hilsa* fishery is almost nonexistent now. The construction of Farakka barrage on the river Ganges restricted the migration of *Hilsa ilisa* to this part of river. The barrage obviously acts as a physical barrier for the migration of all fishes. The barrage seems to have no functional fish ladder's or fish passages for the migration of fishes. The fishes run up to the barrage from sea and concentrate on the southern region and can not cross the barrage as the Fish ladder's or Fish passages are not working due to their defective construction. The denial of migration of *Hilsa ilisha* may result in permanent reduction of fish stock of this species leading to complete extermination. The farakka barrage has profoundly effected the fishery in the rivers of Nothern India and completely affected the *Hilsa* fishery of India. This clearly depicts the deplorable condition of *Hilsa* fishery in the river Ganges and the impact of Farakka barrage is quite evident.

Keywords : *Hilsa* fishery, Fish lader's, Farakka barrage.