

Farakka Water Sharing Treaty

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | International Relations.

Why in News?

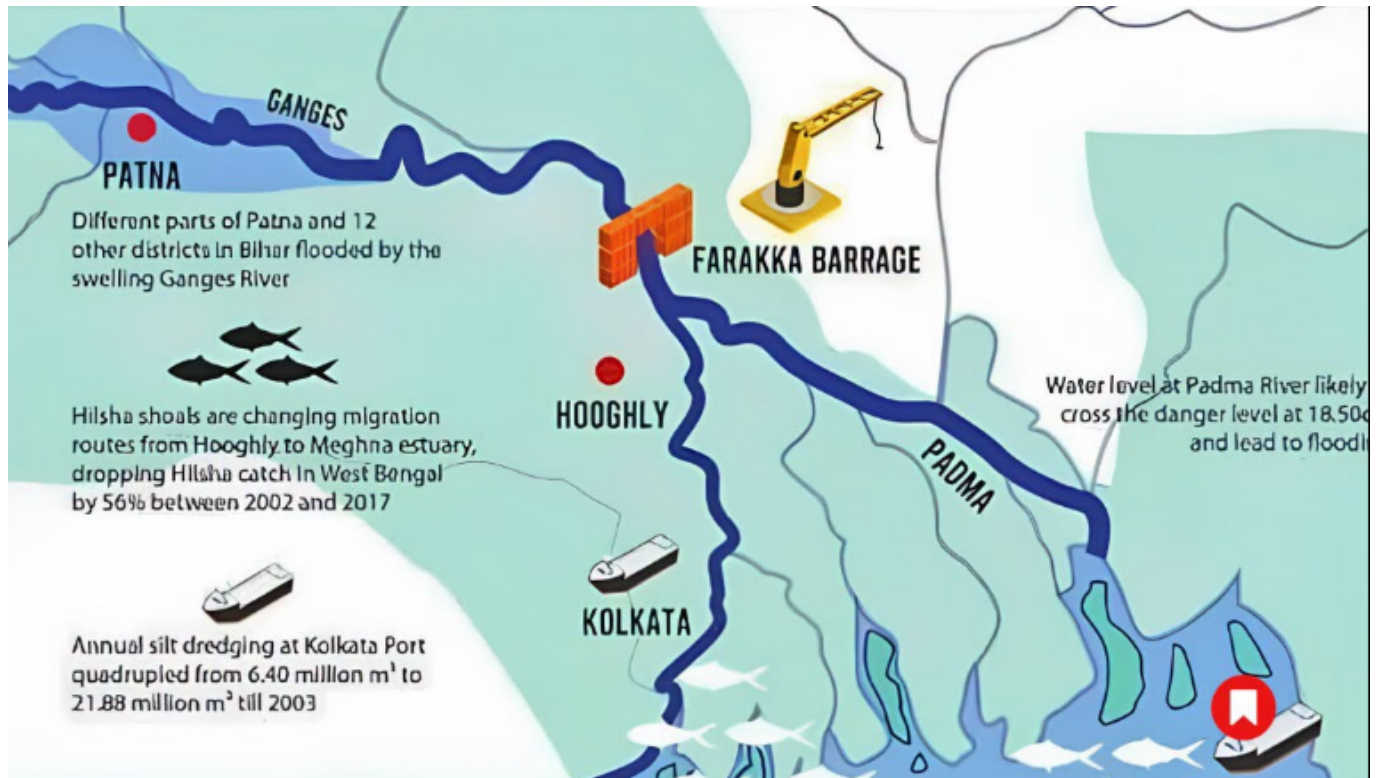
As the Ganga Water Sharing Treaty between India and Bangladesh going to expires soon, the Bihar government has urged the Central Government not to renew the agreement in its current form.

Key Concerns Raised by Bihar

- The Farakka Barrage has trapped massive volumes of silt, raising the Ganges riverbed upstream and reducing its natural carrying capacity.
- The elevated riverbed has caused a recurring "flood-and-parch" dynamic, leading to severe monsoon flooding and riverbank erosion across districts like Patna, Bhagalpur, and Buxar.
- Bihar projects a requirement of an additional **2,000 cusecs** of water by 2050 for industrialization, irrigation, and drinking needs, which current allocations fail to address.
- The state has demanded a comprehensive **National Silt Management Policy**, direct state representation in negotiations, and a scientific re-assessment of water needs for all upper riparian states.

About 1996 Ganga Water Sharing Treaty

- **Signed on - December 12, 1996**, between Indian Prime Minister H. D. Deve Gowda and Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for a binding **30-year period**.
- **Core Function** - Regulates the dry/lean season water distribution (**January 1 to May 31**) at the **Farakka Barrage** in Murshidabad district, West Bengal.
- **Objective** - Commissioned in 1975 to divert Ganga water into the Bhagirathi-Hooghly river system via a feeder canal to flush out silt and keep Kolkata Port navigable.
- **Sharing Mechanism** - Uses a 10-day rotation formula during the lean period:
 - **Flow > 75,000 cusecs** - India receives 75,000 cusecs; Bangladesh receives the remainder.
 - **Flow between 70,000 -75,000 cusecs**: Bangladesh receives 35,000 cusecs; India gets the balance.
 - **Flow <75,000 cusecs** - Shared equally (50:50).
 - **Emergency Provision**: If flow falls below 50,000 cusecs, immediate bilateral consultations are triggered.
- **Expiration Date** - December 12, 2026 (Subject to renewal by mutual consent).
- **Constitutional Provision** - Article 253 empowers Parliament to enact laws for implementing international treaties.



Reference

[The Indian Express | Why Bihar wants the Farakka treaty scrapped](#)



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