

# Bhadbhut Project

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**In News:** The Gujarat government recently awarded the contract for the Bhadbhut project in Bharuch, Gujarat.

## What is the Bhadbhut Project?



- It is planned to be a 1.7-km causeway-cum-weir barrage with 90 gates, across the river Narmada, 5 km from Bhadbhut village, and 25 km from the mouth of the river, where it flows into the Gulf of Khambhat.
- The barrage will stop most of the excess water flowing out of the Sardar Sarovar Dam from reaching the sea and thus create a “sweet water lake” of 600 mcm (million cubic metres) on the river.
- The barrage will also have a six-lane road that will connect the left and right banks of the river and provide shorten the land distance between two large industrial estates in Surat and Bharuch.
- The project also aims to prevent flooding in years when rainfall is higher than normal.
- Embankments 22 km long will be made and will extend upstream towards Bharuch, from either side of the river.
- The project is part of the larger Kalpasar Project,

which entails the construction of a 30-km dam across the Gulf of Khambhat between Bharuch and Bhavnagar districts.

- The reservoir is meant to tap the waters of the Narmada, Mahisagar and Sabarmati.

## **Impact**

- The barrage is expected to interfere with the migration and breeding cycle of hilsa, blocking their natural entry.
  - Hilsa is a marine fish which migrates upstream and arrives in the brackish water of the Narmada estuary near Bharuch for spawning usually during the monsoon months of July and August and continues doing so till November.
  - The reduced outflow of water from the dam, industrial effluents flowing into the river and salinity ingress are believed to be the major causes of the decline of hilsa.
- Part of Aliya Bet, an island in the delta of the Narmada and known for shrimp farming, is likely to get submerged.

## **Why are fishermen upset?**

- The barrage is expected to interfere with the migration and breeding cycle of hilsa.
- A marine fish, hilsa migrate upstream and arrives in the brackish water of the Narmada estuary near Bharuch for spawning usually during the monsoon months of July and August, and continue doing so till November.
- Once the barrage is built, it is expected to block its natural entry.

## **Sardar Sarovar Project**

- The Sardar Sarovar Project (SSP) is a gravity dam on the Narmada River crossing Gujarat in India.

- It involves a series of large irrigation and hydroelectric multi-purpose dams.
- The project took form in 1979 as part of a development scheme to increase irrigation and produce hydroelectricity.
- The hydroelectric power of the SSP is to be shared by the states of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh; the irrigation benefits would accrue to the states of Gujarat and Rajasthan.

