Background on the Ganges River and Surrounding Area

- The Ganges/ Brahmaputra system has the third largest discharge and largest sediment load in the world, 1,086,000 ft³/s and 1.84 billion tons a year respectively.

Negotiations Between India and Bangladesh

- India and Bangladesh were unable to reach a water agreement 1975.
- In 1976 Bangladesh failed to involve the United Nations.
- In 1977 a five year water sharing treaty was reached.
  - This treaty gave Bangladesh 80% of Ganges flow during the dry season.
  - This was followed by two memorandums of understanding lasting through 1988, these did not include a minimum flow into Bangladesh.
  - No further agreements were reached from 1988-1996.
  - India withdrew 40-45,000 ft³/s from the Ganges every dry season of this period.
  - In 1996 the two countries reached a 30 year treaty.
  - This treaty dictates that Bangladesh receive a minimum flow of 35,000 ft³/s from January to May.
  - The relationship created by the 1996 treaty resulted in further agreements between India and Bangladesh.

Areas dependent upon Ganges Flow according to (a) the Government of India and (b) the Government of Bangladesh.

Consequences of the Barrage

- On India:
  - Little silt was flushed from the Baghirathi-Hooghly River.
  - Calcutta has declined as a port city.

- On Bangladesh:
  - Increased salinity of soil and water.
  - Decline of soil quality and crop yields.
  - Shrinkin fish population.
  - Decline of fishing villages and loss of livelihoods.
  - Decline of mangrove forest.
  - Increased erosion rates and sedimentation.
  - More sever flooding during the monsoon season.
  - Direct damages are estimated to be three billion US dollars.

Works Cited

2. Bandyopadhyay, Jayanta, “Water Management,” pg 413