

## An Overview of Fishermen Cooperatives in West Bengal with Special Reference to Murshidabad District

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### Abstract:

Fishery and aquaculture have immense potential in our country. This sector can play a vital role in boosting the economy as well as ensuring food security for the growing population. Fishermen cooperatives can be utilized for increased productivity in the fishery sector. The effective operation of the primary fishermen cooperatives can improve the socio-economic profile of the poor fishermen. West Bengal is endowed with rich fishery resources and formed nearly one thousand fisherman cooperatives. Murshidabad district has a large number of fishermen cooperatives among the districts of West Bengal. This district also has huge fishery resources. The secondary data shows that fish production is declining in Murshidabad and there is a deficit of production which is unable to fulfil the growing demand. Studies on the performance of fishermen cooperatives in various parts of the country showed that these can be utilized as effective tools for increased productivity and improved economy. In view of the above, the present study deals with the objective of a thorough understanding of the functioning of fishermen cooperatives in the district and searching for suitable remedial measures for their improvement. The study may have a large impact on the rural development of the district, particularly the development of the poor fishers, mostly belonging to the socially and economically backward scheduled caste category.

### Introduction:

Fishery sector occupies a very important place in the socio-economic development of the country for its contribution to economic growth and food security. This sector is recognized as a powerful income and employment generator for the poor people of rural areas. Fishery and aquaculture potentially contributed to the national income, nutritional security, employment opportunities, social objectives and export earnings (Dhara et al., 2016; Mallick, 2017; Eseroghene & Ikechukwu, 2018). In India, this sector showed an impressive transformation from a traditional subsistence activity to a well-developed diversified commercial enterprise with vast untapped potential.

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Cooperative society is an organization of a group of people with collective responsibilities and thoughts for the development of the needy, especially the underprivileged. Cooperatives helped in the development of agriculture, banking, credit, agro-processing, storage, marketing, dairy, fishing, and housing. Its network covers 85% of rural households. It occupies a key position in agricultural development with support in resource and input use, harvesting of water resources, marketing channels, storage facilities, distribution channels, value addition, market information, and a regular monitoring network system. Cooperatives are also engaged in economic activities like disbursement of credit and distribution of agricultural inputs like seeds, fertilizers and agro-chemicals etc. cooperative have inherent advantages in tackling the problems of poverty alleviation, food security and employment generations (Dubey et al., 2009).

As the fishermen generally come from weaker sections of society, they lack necessary monetary resources, knowledge of technological advancements and organizational capacity required for better fish production, storage, processing and marketing. Due to low income, they usually borrow money from fish merchants at high rates of interest. Thus, there is a vicious circle of indebtedness fostering exploitation. Formation of a fishermen cooperative society can solve all these problems and fishermen in different countries have adopted the cooperative system of working to improve their fisheries all around as well as develop their socio-economic conditions (Mishra, 1997).

### **Fishermen Cooperatives in West Bengal:**

West Bengal was the 2<sup>nd</sup> State in India, which formed fishermen cooperatives in 1918. Since then, a large number of fishermen cooperatives have been formed in West Bengal involving about one lakh fishers who mostly belong to socially, educationally and economically backward communities.

The following table shows the number of fishermen co-operative societies (Inland and Ornamental) in West Bengal as of 31.03.2016.

### **Table 1: Statistics on Fishermen Cooperatives in West Bengal (Inland)\*.**

SI No.	District	CFCS	PFCS			Total	Effective water area (in ha)	Total number of members
			Category					
			A	B	C			
1	Darjeeling	0	1	0	2	3	3	400
2	Jalpaiguri	1	0	15	0	15	431	4000
3	Cooch Bihar	1	37	12	15	64	3414	14073
4	Uttar Dinajpur	1	0	0	22	22	134	5000
5	Dakshin Dinajpur	1	12	0	0	12	156	5796
6	Malda	1	75	13	5	93	3188	14671
<b>7</b>	<b>Murshidabad</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>21425</b>	<b>19312</b>
8	Nadia	1	39	31	27	97	7760	13056
9	Birbhum	1	11	3	24	38	619	814
10	Bardwan	1	22	8	28	58	222	4611
11	North 24 Parganas	1	44	14	14	72	1727	8526
12	South 24 Parganas	1	36	28	38	102	966	3512
13	Hooghly	1	15	7	14	36	202	2115
14	Howrah	1	13	0	0	13	121	738
15	Purulia	1	0	0	49	49	6527	5919
16	Bankura	2	4	6	11	21	43	2630
17	Purba Medinipur	1	32	26	11	69	2070	2477
18	Paschim Medinipur	1	19	6	4	29	93	4997
	<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>906</b>	<b>49101</b>	<b>112647</b>

\*Source: Hand Book of Fisheries Statistics 2015-16, Govt. of WB.

In Marine Sector Fishermen co-operative societies in West Bengal as of 31.03.2016 are as follows:

**Table 2: Statistics on Fishermen Cooperatives in West Bengal (Marine)\*.**

SI No.	District	CFCS	PFCS			Total	Effective water area (in ha)	Total number of members
			Category					
			A	B	C			
1	South 24 Parganas	1	16	0	0	16	5730	
2	Purba Medinipur	1	7	6	52	66	4135	
	Total	2	23	6	52	82	9865	

\*Source: Hand Book of Fisheries Statistics 2015-16, Govt. of WB.

### Fishermen Cooperatives in Murshidabad:

The Murshidabad district has the highest number (113 Nos.) of Primary Fishermen Cooperative societies in West Bengal involving 19,312 members who are engaged in fish production covering an area of 21,425 ha. The number of ornamental fish production units in Murshidabad is 12. The number of water bodies with an area of five acres and above under the

control of PFCS in Murshidabad is 118, having a total water area of 7316.73 ha (Statistical Handbook on fisheries 2015-16, Govt. of WB). However, the data found in the record of the Fishery Department of Murshidabad is somewhat different. The Record shows 101 registered Primary Fishermen Cooperative Societies (PFCS) in Murshidabad. The PFCS is categorized as per Audit gradation into 3 categories viz. Category A, B and C. As per the statistical Hand Book (2015-16) of Govt. of W.B., there are 24 A, 13 B and 76 C category PFCS in Murshidabad.

The Murshidabad District of West Bengal is also highly rich in freshwater resources. Among the district-wise impounded freshwater area, Murshidabad, with 28,348 ha, is the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest in West Bengal, after South 24 Parganas, with 49,237 ha and Burdwan, with 31,180 ha. A number of rivers in the district are 14 covering a total length of 912 KM and a number of canals is 914 which covers an area of 2,138 KM. Total number of water bodies with an area of five acres and above in the district is 122 which covers an area of 7,751 ha. Total fish cultivable area in the district is 20,599 ha. In Murshidabad, the Number of fishing villages is 109, where 21,673 families live. The total fisher folk population of the district is 3,53,174; most of whom belong to socially, educationally and economically backward scheduled caste category. Murshidabad district has the highest number of fisher folk population in SC category in West Bengal. Instead of the presence of these vast resources, fishery production in the state is declining from 2011-12 to 2014-15 and there is a deficit of production, unable to meet the demand of the district (Statistical Hand Book of Fisheries, Govt. of West Bengal, 2015-16). These huge fishery resources can be properly utilized for increased productivity by making the effective operation and management of the fishermen cooperatives of the district. So, there is a need to study the fishermen co-operatives for developing mechanisms for effective utilization of the freshwater resources and the large number of semi-skilled fishermen of the district to meet the growing demand for fish as well as improvement of socio-economic condition of the fishers.

**Table 3: Statistics on PFCS in Murshidabad District\*.**

SI No.	Block	Name of the PFCS	Registration No. & Date	Full Postal Address	No. of members	1 <sup>st</sup> AGM held on	Last AGM held on	Statutory Audit completed up to	Water area (in hectare)	Category
1	Berhampore	Balarampur FCS Ltd.	No.43 dt. 27/11/1974	Vill+ P.O- Balarampur, Berhampore	85	-	29/6/2013	2011-12	3.68	B
2	Berhampore	Beel Bishnupur Agragami FCS Ltd.	No.D/F 27 dt. 09/11/1987	Vill- Bishnupur, P.O- Cossimbazar, Berhampore	103	-	3/4/2012	2011-12	30	A
3	Berhampore	Bhakuri MMSLtd.	No.69 dt. 14/11/1955	Vill-Bhakuri, P.O- Chaltia, Berhampore	92		28/5/2014	2011-12	30	A
4	Berhampore	Cossimbazar Manindranga FCS Ltd.	No.16 dt. 30/04/1956	Vill+ P.o- Cossimbazar, Berhampore	162		27/6/2014	2011-12	30	A
5	Berhampore	Gandhi colony FCS Ltd.	No. D/F 47 dt. 02/03/1989	Vill- Gandhi Colony , P.o- Berhampore	163		20/03/1996	2001-02	Nil	C
6	Berhampore	Kharsadanga FCS Ltd.	No. 19 dt 11/04/1972	Vill- Kharsadanga, p.o- Boaliadanga, Berhampore	78		3/11/2011	2011-12	4	C
7	Berhampore	Krishnamati FCS Ltd.		Vill- Krishnamati, P.o- Berhampore	300		29/10/2010	2010-11	6.57 & 5 Km river	B
8	Berhampore	Kunjaghata FCS Ltd.	No. 65 dt. 08/10/1955	Vill- Kunjaghata, P.O- Khagra, Berhampore	147		25/04/2003	1999-2000	1 Km river	C

9	Berhampore	Rangamati Chandpara FCS Ltd.	No. 2 dt 15/04/1954	Vill- Chiruti,P.O- Kodla, Berhampore	153		3/5/2013	2010 -11	50	A
10	Berhampore	Satui Chaourigachha FCS Ltd.	No. 16 dt 14/02/1955	Vill+P.O- Satui, Berhampore	671		22/06/20 12	2010 -11	36.4	A
11	Berhampore	Paharpur FCS Ltd.	No. 58 dt 14/12/1958	Vill- Paharpur, P.O- Bali Ratanpur, Berhampore	167		21/06/20 12	2011 -12	150	B
12	Berhampore	Srirampur FCS Ltd.	No.15 dt 15/11/1973	Vill- Srirampur P.O- Nowda Panur, Berhampore	141		1/6/2012	2011 -12	22	B
13	Beldanga-I	Andiron FCS Ltd.	No.7 dt 02/07/1952	Vill- Andiron, P.O- Hareknagar,	263		4/4/2014	2010 -11	56.1 3 acre	A
14	Beldanga-I	Benadaha FCS Ltd.		Vill- Benadaha P.O- Mudda	239		2/7/2007	2006 -07	35.2	B
15	Beldanga-I	Bhanderdaha FCS Ltd.	No.1 dt 18/09/1978	Vill- Pilkhana, P.O- Maniknagar	139		19/06/20 13	2010 -11	600	A
16	Beldanga-I	Mahula FCS Ltd.	No.55 dt 05/08/1955	Vill+P.O- Mahula	242		12/3/201 4	2008 -11		B
17	Beldanga-I	Sujapur Union FCS Ltd.	No.64 dt 07/10/1955	Vill+P.O- Sujapur	160		15/09/20 10	2010 -11	20	A
18	Beldanga-II	Shaktipur Rampara FCS Ltd.	No.63 dt 03/10/1955	Vill+P.O- Shaktipur	652		22/05/20 14	2011 -12	196	A
19	Hariharpara	Beharia FCS Ltd.		Vill+P.O- Beharia			18/05/20 10	2009 -10	35	A
20	Hariharpara	Kaludiar Ramkrishnapur FCS Ltd.		Vill- Ramkrishnapu r, P.O- Tantipur	170					C

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21	Hariharpara	Kharia Kumradaha FCS Ltd.	No. 66 dt19/10/1955	Vill-Kumradaha, P.O- Rajdharpara	154		10/1/2012	2011-12	60	B
22	Hariharpara	Sirpur FCS Ltd.	No.09 dt 23/07/1962	Vill- Sirpur, P.O- Rainda	42		4/5/2013	2012-13	10	B
23	Nabagram	Gopegram FCS Ltd.		Vill- Gopegram, P.O- Rainda	67		23/04/2009	2008-09		B
24	Nabagram	Gura Singer FCS Ltd.	No.54 dt 05/08/1955	Vill- Gopegram, P.O- Choan	74		21/08/2012	2011-12		A
25	Nabagram	Panchgram FCS Ltd.		Vill+p.O- Panchgram	79		10/2/2009	2008-09	6.8	B
26	Nabagram	Rasulpur Hazbibidanga FCS Ltd.		Vill- Saiyadpur, P.O- Rasulpur	101		16/03/2010	2008-09		B
27	Nabagram	Telkar Dafarpur FCS Ltd.	No.138/64 dt 22/12/1964	Vill-Dafarpur, P.O- Telkar	96		25/01/2013	2011-12	15	B
28	Nabagram	Daspara FCS Ltd.	No.71 dt 03/01/1963	Vill-Daspara, P.O- Mahirul Anantapur						C
29	Nowda	Baliratanpur Sanyasidanga FCS Ltd.	No.53 dt 03/08/1955	Vill-Ratanpur, P.O- Tungi	256		30/06/2011	2011-12	60	B
30	Nowda	Goghata FCS Ltd.	No.17 dt 09/05/1956	Vill+ P.O- Goghata	270		8/11/2013	2011-12	95	B
31	Nowda	Nabindoba Ramnachandpur FCS Ltd.	No.52 dt 20/01/1975	Vill+ P.O- Kedarchandpur	493		28/07/2012	2011-12	50	B
32	Nowda	Sarbangapur FCS Ltd.	No.21 dt 16/05/1956	Vill+ P.O- Sarbangapur	235		30/12/2013	2011-12	30	C
33	Nowda	Tungi FCS Ltd.	No.04 dt 12/11/1961	Vill+ P.O- Tungi	125		22/04/2012	2011-12	112	C

34	Nowda	Sabdarnagar FCS Ltd.	No.46 dt 18/04/1962	Vill+ P.O- Trimohini	129		30/12/2013	2011-12	110	C
35	Domkol	Ambarpur Madhurkul FCS Ltd.	No.77 dt 15/12/1960	Vill- Ambarpur, P.O- Madhurkul	261		10/1/2014	2012-13	270	C
36	Domkol	Bhagirathpur Haldarpara FCS Ltd.		Vill+ P.O- Bhagirathpur	265					B
37	Domkol	Daserchak MSS Ltd.	No.28 dt 17/12/2004	Vill- Daserchak, P.O- Paikmary	96		28/11/2013	2012-13	271	A
38	Jalangi	Chanderpara FCS Ltd.	No.1 dt 20/07/1972	Vill- Chanderpara, P.O- Sahebrampur	162		25/03/2014	2012-12	35	B
39	Jalangi	Jalangi FCS Ltd.		Vill+ P.O- Jalangi	357					B
40	Jalangi	Kaliganj FCS Ltd.	No.12 dt 05/01/1963	Vill+ P.O- Kaliganj	130		10/3/2012	2011-12	103	A
41	Jalangi	Kazipara FCS Ltd.	No.70 dt 24/05/1975	Vill+ P.O- Kazipara	156		31/04/2012	2011-12	9.4	A
42	Jalangi	Khairamari FCS Ltd.	No.11 dt 22/03/1956	Vill+ P.O- Kkairamari	528		3/9/2011	2011-12	286	A
43	Jalangi	Sagarpara Mangalbari FCS Ltd.	No.17 dt 15/10/2004	Vill+ P.O- Sagarpara	62		30/03/2012	2011-12	40	A
44	Farakka	Nayansukh FCS Ltd.	No.26 dt 23/06/1972	Vill+ P.O- Nayansukh	1077		13/06/2012	2011-12	143	B
45	Raghunathganj-I	Gankar FCS Ltd.	No.56 dt 30/03/1949	Vill+ P.O- Gankar	160		9/12/2011	2010-11	15	B
46	Raghunathganj-I	Pragatisil MSS Ltd.	No.DF/3 of 98-99 dt 30/07/1998	Vill- Pratappur colony, P.O- Raghunathganj	25		28/06/2014			A



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47	Raghunathg anj-I	Raghunathga nj FCS Ltd.		Vill+ P.O- Raghunathg- anj	630					B
48	Raghunathg anj-II	Krishnasail Mahalderpar a FCS Ltd.	No.12 dt 17/04/1973	Vill+ P.O- Krishnasail	44		28/06/20 12	2011 -12	15	B
49	Raghunathg anj-II	Giria FCS Ltd.	No.18 dt 09/11/1945	Vill-Giria, P.O- Maithipur	390		13/01/20 14	2011 -12		B
50	Raghunathg anj-II	Brahmamtuli Piyarpur Bhagirathi FCS Ltd.	No.DE/55 of 2006-07 dt 16/10/2006		57		2/1/2012	2011 -12		B
51	Sagardighi	Manigram Anchal MSS Ltd.		Vill+ P.O- Manigram	63				2.5	B
52	Sagardighi	Singeswari FCS Ltd.	No.15 dt10/02/198 6	Vill- Singeswari, P.O- Dasturhat	161		13/09/20 06	2006 -07		B
53	Sagardighi	Ultadanga Dogachi Damos FCS Ltd.	No.DF/59 dt 13/06/1989	Vill- Ultadanga, P.O- Pilki	149		25/07/20 05		6.96	B
54	Samsorganj	Dhulian MSS Ltd.		Vill+P.O- Dhulian	152					C
55	Samsorganj	Gangapathp ur Padmandi Bonafied FCS Ltd.		Vill- Dhusaripara, P.O- Nimtita	1610		4/4/2010	2009 -10	Pad ma Rive r part	B
56	Suti-I	Ramkantapu r FCS Ltd.		Vill+P.O- Ramkantapur	75					C
57	Suti-I	Aluani FCS Ltd.		Vill-Aluani, P.O- Bansabati	103				100	C
58	Suti-I	Bahutali FCS Ltd.	No.53 dt 02/04/1974	Vill+P.O- Bahutali	153		21/03/20 04	2011 -12		B

59	Suti-I	Nazipur FCS Ltd.	No.48 dt 21/03/1978	Vill- Nazipur, P.O- Chhabghati	190		15/04/20 11	2011 -12	10	C
60	Suti-I	Ahiran Deshbandhu FCS Ltd.		Vill+ P.O- Ahiran	249				70	C
61	Suti-I	Azgarpara FCS Ltd.		Vill+ P.O- Agarpara	24					B
62	Suti-I	Hilora FCS Ltd.		Vill+ P.O- Hilora	25					C
63	Suti-I	Mahisal FCS Ltd.		Vill+ P.O- Mahisal	84					C
64	Suti-II	Chhabghati FCS Ltd.	No.55 dt 20/03/1961	Vill- Malopara, P.O- Chhabghati	100		6/2/2010	2009 -10	10	B
65	Suti-II	Jagtai Ganga FCS Ltd.	No.75 dt 19/02/1997	Vill+P.O- Jagtai	408		28/03/20 10	2010 -11	river	B
66	Bharatpur-I	Bharatpur GP FCS Ltd.	No.DF 94 dt 14/06/1991	Vill+P.O- Bharatpur	53		2/6/2011	2010 -11	14.4	B
67	Bharatpur-I	Sijgram GP FCS Ltd.	No.ADF/1 of 2014-15 dt 17/07/2014	Vill- Samunsurpur, P.O-Sahapur	26					
68	Bharatpur-I	Amlai Gram Panchyat FCS Ltd.	No.DF3 of 2011-12 dt 29/12/2011	Vill- Bhaluipara, P.O-Amlai	48		7/5/2012	2011 -12	53.4	A
69	Bharatpur-II	Talibpur GP FCS Ltd.		Vill+P.O- Talibpur	36					C
70	Burwan	Karun Narun Anchal FCS Ltd.	No.6 dt 04/1/2/1972	Vill+P.O- Rajhat	161		20/09/20 01	2003		B
71	Burwan	Sundarpur FCS Ltd.		Vill+P.O- Sundarpur	20					C

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72	Burwan	Beel Langolhata FCS Ltd.		Vill- Langolhata, P.O- Dakbanglo	93					B
73	Burwan	Durgi Matsojibi Samabai Samiti		Vill+P.O- Rajhat						C
74	Kandi	Amitya FCS Ltd.	No.14 dt 13/08/1976	Vill- Amitya,P.O- Natungram	151		20/02/2008	2011-12	part of Babla river	B
75	Kandi	Chandnagar FCS Ltd.	No.59 dt 18/09/1955	Vill- Chandnagar,P.O-Mahadia	444		28/06/2012	2011-12	30	A
76	Kandi	Gatla FCS Ltd.		Vill+P.O- Gatla	94			2009-10	6.00 & 3.00 Km	A
77	Kandi	Gobarhati FCS Ltd.	No.1 dt 06/01/1950	Vill+P.O- Gobarhati	100		15/04/2012	2011-12		A
78	Kandi	Jibanti FCS Ltd.	No.8 dt 23/07/1962	Vill+P.O- Jibanti	109		17/09/2012	2011-12	10	A
79	Kandi	Kandi FCS Ltd.	No.59 dt 05/12/1958	Vill+P.O- Kandi	22		15/02/2010	2011-12	12	A
80	Kandi	Nowpara Tapsil FCS Ltd.		Vill- Nowpara, P.O-Kumar Sandhya	69		5/3/2012	2011-12		A
81	Kandi	Paschim Bahara FCS Ltd.	No. 140/93 dt 22/03/1993	Vill- Bahara P.O-Kandi	69		5/3/2012	2011-12		A
82	Kandi	Patendra FCS Ltd.	No. 12 dt 29/04/1970	Vill- Patendra P.O-Gobarhati	118		11/7/2010	2010-11		A
83	Kandi	Ruppur FCS Ltd.	No.03 dt 25/03/1971	Vill- Ruuppur, P.O-Jemo Kandi	50		2/1/2011	2011-12	3.1	A

84	Khargram	Beel Patan FCS Ltd.		Vill+P.O-Garutilla	289		26/06/2011	2006-07		B
85	Khargram	Nagar Dhibar FCS Ltd.	No.3 dt 20/01/1951	Vill+P.O-Nagar	307		27/03/2012	2011-12		B
86	Khargram	Sujapur MSS Ltd.	No.135 dt 29/09/1964	Vill- Sujapur, P.O-Gokarna	210		5/3/2001	2000-01		B
87	Bhagwangola-I	Adarsha Birendranagar FCS Ltd.		Vill+ P.O-Birendranagar Colony	100					C
88	Bhagwangola-I	Arizpur FCS Ltd.		Vil- Arizpur, P.O-Sitesh Nagar	149					B
89	Bhagwangola-I	Dangapara FCS Ltd.	No.22 dt 05/12/1972	Vil- Dangapara, P.O-Mahisasthali	209		15/11/2011	2011-12	10	A
90	Bhagwangola-II	Akhariganj FCS Ltd.	No.1049H dt 17/07/1945	Vill+P.O-Akhariganj	217					C
91	Lalgola	Lalgola Padma FCS Ltd.	No. 57 dt 30/03/1949	Vill- Krishnapur, P.O-Lalgola	1292		14/08/2011	2011-12	2 bigha river Padma part	A
92	Lalgola	Natun Singha FCS Ltd.	No. 44 dt 27/06/1985	Vill- Natun Singha, P.O-Sadar Nasipur	1147		17/05/2014	2010-11	50	A
93	Lalgola	Chakmaharam GKS MSS Ltd.	No. DF/3 of 12-13 dt 21/06/2012	Vill- Chakmaharam, P.O-Rajarampur	12		9/5/2014		12.79 acre	A
94	Msd-Jiaganj	Kashiganj Basmathuhara FCS Ltd.	No. 52 dt 01/03/1949	Vill- Kashiganj, P.O-Jiaganj	427		22/05/2013	2012-13	20	A
95	Msd-Jiaganj	Lalbagh FCS Ltd.	No.71 dt 21/11/1960	Vill+P.O-Lalbagh	113		23/06/2012	2004-05		B

96	Msd-Jiaganj	Nowda FCS Ltd.	No.972 dt 26/03/1945	Vill- Nowda, P.O- Bangapara	199		15/06/20 12	1987 -88		C
97	Msd-Jiaganj	Prasadpur Mahadevtala MSS Ltd.	No.68 dt 10/12/1995	Vill- Prasadpur, P.O- Haribhanga	367		17/11/20 11	2010 -11		A
98	Raninagar-II	Char Rajapur MSS Ltd.	No.DF/8 of 2012-13 dt 02/11/2012	Vill+P.O-Char Rajapur	70	2/1/ 2013	30/06/20 15	2014 -15	20- 25 Km chan nel	C
99	Raninagar-I	Chakjama FCS Ltd.	No.973 dt 26/03/1945	Vill- Chakjama, P.O-Islampur	71		31/01/20 03	2004 -05		C
100	Raninagar-I	Gopinathpur FCS Ltd.	No.41 dt 07/03/1962	Vill+P.O- Gopinathpur	225		27/11/20 09	2006 -07		A
101	Sagardighi	Sagardighi Fishermen's Cooperative Society Ltd.	No.01/MSD/ 2017-18 dt 07/12/2017	Vill-Teghari Koyelpara, P.O-Kabilpur	35				12.8	C

\*Source: Record of Fishery Department, Murshidabad, West Bengal, 2017.

## Conclusion

In West Bengal, fishery is a sunrise sector and ample scopes are there for its improvement. Nearly one thousand fishermen cooperative societies with over one lakh fishermen as members can play a vital role in the production, processing and marketing of fish and other economically important aquatic organisms. The District Murshidabad with its huge water resources, large number of fishermen population and large number of fishermen cooperatives has the potential to reap maximum economic benefit by using proper management and modern technology in this field.

The secondary data received from various sources indicate that although fishery resources are huge in West Bengal, still there is the deficit in fulfilling the demand of the people of the State. Same phenomenon is also true in the case of Murshidabad district. The District has the 3rd largest water resource in West Bengal, but the production is below the demand level.

As various studies in different parts of India indicated that the Fishermen Cooperatives are very much helpful for enhancement of fish production and socio-economic development of fishers, efforts can be taken to strengthen these institutions. From the literature Survey, it is found that no serious studies have been conducted on the fishermen cooperatives in Murshidabad as well as in West Bengal in the recent past. There are variations in the statistical data related to

fishermen cooperatives in the FISHCOPFED survey report, Statistical Handbook of Govt. of West Bengal and Record of fishery department of Murshidabad. The data related to fish production, profits, constraints, use of modern technology and socio-economic profile of the fishers under the cooperatives of Murshidabad are unavailable.

Hence, it is necessary to assess the present status of the fishermen Cooperatives in Murshidabad where the highest number of fishermen cooperatives has been formed in West Bengal and also to find out the scopes and prospects of these institutions.

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