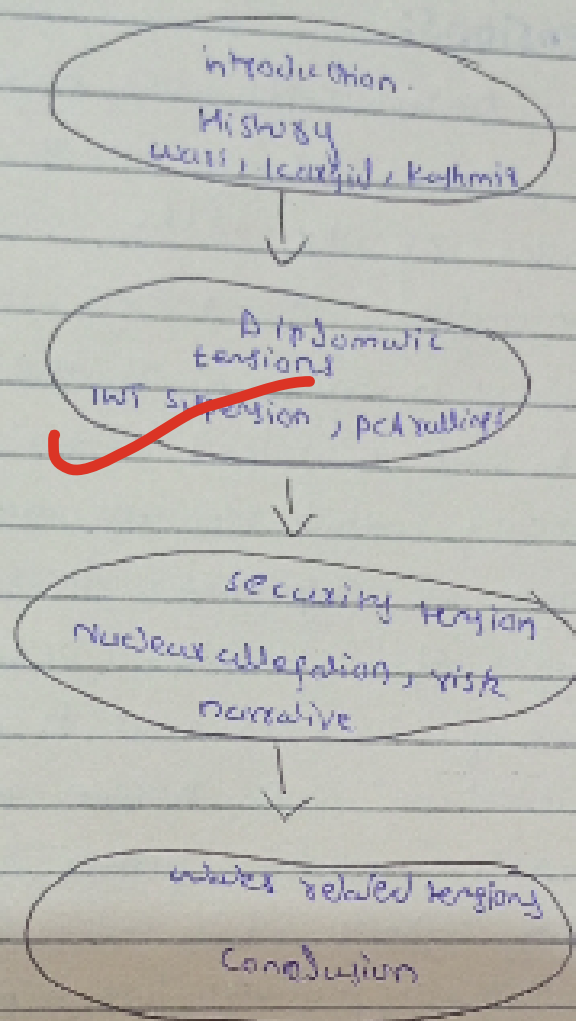


Q:- Deep mistrust defines Pakistan-India relations. Discuss with reference to recent diplomatic, security, and water related tensions?

Introduction:

Relations between Pakistan and India remain marred by deep mistrust, with the two nuclear-armed neighbours locked in a cycle of hostility for over seven decades. In August 2025, tensions escalated further after India's unilateral suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) and renewed accusations about Pakistan's nuclear security. This combination of diplomatic isolation attempts, security-related accusations, and water disputes has brought bilateral relations to one of their lowest points in recent years. As former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon once remarked, "water can be a source of conflict, but it can also be a catalyst for cooperation." Unfortunately, for Pakistan and India, the former is proving more accurate in the current context.

Flow chart:



History:

Since the partition of British India in 1947, the two states have fought three major wars (1948, 1965, and 1971) and one limited conflict (Kargil, 1999), along with multiple military standoffs such as the 2001-02 Twin peaks crisis and the 2019 Pulwama-Balakot confrontation. Diplomatic relations have often oscillated between cautious dialogue and complete breakdown, with ~~most~~ deficits rooted in territorial disputes, particularly over Jammu and Kashmir. The Indus water treaty, brokered by the World Bank in 1960, stood out as one of the few durable agreements between the two nations, surviving even during water wars. However, recent developments have tested its resilience, signalling a dangerous shift from water sharing cooperation to water weaponization.

Detailed Analysis:

use specific and self-explanatory headings.

1) Diplomatic Tensions:

Diplomatically, ties have deteriorated sharply since 2016, following the Uri attack and India's subsequent suspension of the SAARC summit. The August 2025 situation was intensified the rupture when India announced the "holding in abeyance" of the LWT after the Patalgum attack. Such unilateral action violates Article XIII (3) of the treaty, which requires mutual consent for any modification or suspension. According to the June 2025 permanent court of Arbitration (PCA) ruling, India cannot halt the flow of western rivers to Pakistan, reaffirming Pakistan's "unrestricted use" rights. Despite this, New Delhi dismissed the court's authority, further eroding diplomatic trust. This volatility reflects what India scholar Kanti Bajpai calls a "security-driven foreign policy lens", where domestic politics dictate hardline stances over bilateral cooperation.

2) Security Tensions:

Security tensions are compounded by India's portrayal of Pakistan as a nuclear risk. Following unverified media reports about remarks allegedly made by Pakistan's army chief in Washington, India's Ministry of External Affairs accused Pakistan of "nuclear sabre-rattling" and suggested extremists could influence its nuclear decision-making. Pakistan's foreign office rejected these claims as "distorted and irresponsible", while such narratives have existed since the U.Q. Khan proliferation scandal (2004), their revival in the current climate is dangerous, especially considering both countries' possession of over 150 nuclear warheads each (SIPRI 2024 report). The stakes are high, as former US president Bill Clinton warned in 2001, "the most dangerous place in the world today is the Indian subcontinent".

3) Water - related Tensions:

The water dimension is particularly sensitive due to Pakistan's heavy dependence of the Indus basin, where 90% of its agricultural output relies on river irrigation. The IWT allocated the three western rivers (Indus, Jhelum, Chenab) to Pakistan and three eastern rivers (Ravi, Beas, Sutlej) to India. By suspending the treaty, India risks destabilising Pakistan's water security, which could have devastating socio-economic effects for a country already facing climate-induced water stress. The PCA's latest Aug 2025 award once again sided with Pakistan, reinforcing the view that India's unilateral action is inconsistent with international law. Yet India's refusal to comply suggests that water, once a rare cooperative domain, is now part of strategic leverage in bilateral disputes.

Conclusion:

The current convergence of diplomatic hostility, security mistrust, and water disputes mark a new low in Pak-India relations. The August 2025 developments illustrate how one crisis can spill over into multiple domains, deepening the trust deficit. International rulings, such as those from the PCA, present an opportunity to restore some dialogue, but without political will on both sides, they remain symbolic. In the short-term, reducing inflammatory rhetoric and respecting existing agreements is essential to prevent escalation. In the long term, both countries must recognise that sustainable peace will require separating political disputes from cooperative mechanisms like water sharing, otherwise history warns, mistrust will only burden into permanent hostility.

add more arguments.

a 20 marks answer should have around 15 arguments and be on 7-9 pages.