

Q. How did the Indus Waters Treaty (1960) affect water distribution and relations b/w Pakistan and India.

Ans.

### Introduction:

Indus Water Treaty (IWT) <sup>was</sup> signed in 1960

between Pakistan and India, with World

Bank as broker. The treaty distributes the

water of Indus Basin ~~as~~ between these

two countries and a mechanism for conflict

resolution. IWT has survived 65 years between

rivals even in times of war, prevented war

by resolving disputes on Table and supported

economies by providing funds for infrastructure

development. However, India's share ~~as~~ in Pakistani

rivers has caused troubles multiple times.

the missing provisions on effects of climate change

and limit ~~of~~ on no. of dams has given rise

to ~~not~~ tension between Islamabad and Delhi

in recent years. It gave India a chance to

use it as a political tool. Nevertheless, the

treaty is significant in determining relationships

between both states.

## Effects of IWT on water distribution

### Background

Indus Rivers, one of the world's longest rivers,

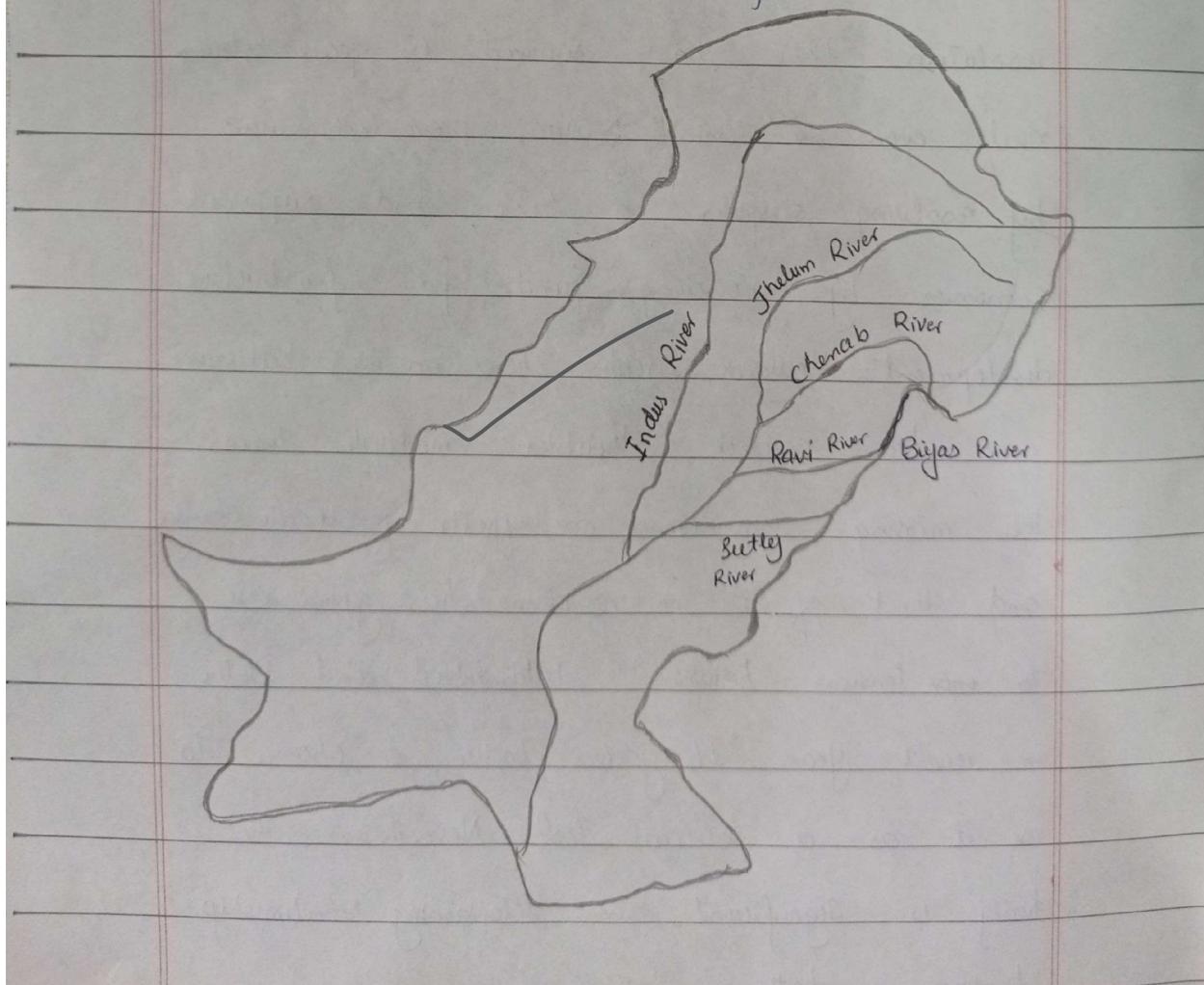
originate in India, and empty in Arabian

Sea. Right after partition, India cut off water

of the rivers, resulting in negatively impacting Pakistan's  
agriculture. Therefore, after years long negotiations

the treaty was signed between two states

in 1960, with World Bank as facilitator.



## River Distribution

Eastern rivers (Ravi, Sutlej and Bias) were given to India. Western rivers (Indus, Jhelum and Chenab) were given to Pakistan. However, India was allowed to use 10% of the water from Indus river, for electricity generation purposes, but was not allowed to consume water for agriculture or other use.

## Construction of Dams

For 20 years (1960-1980), India was not allowed to build any dams on western rivers, to give Pakistan time to build Dams and canals and to increase water utilization.

After 1980, India was allowed to build dams (use water for hydel generation), with following conditions:

- I - If water is in excess than Pakistani needs
- II - No diversion is allowed
- III - Designs of Dams / infrastructure built on

these rivers, will be reviewed by Pakistan, prior construction.

iv- Pakistan has right to object on height, size and location of project.

v- Pakistan is allowed to visit under construction projects, every 6 months.

Conflict Resolution  
Indus

Effects of Water Treaty on Pak-India Relationships

IWT had very diverse effects on bilateral relations of Delhi and Islamabad in last 65 years

POSITIVE IMPACTS

1- No water conflict, even in major wars

The treaty has been successful for many years and survived full-scale wars of 1965, 1971 and 1999 and various military stand offs

between two enemy/rival states. It depicts

a rare success story, where either conflicts did not arise or when arose were handled

properly and peacefully.

## II- Provider Robust Conflict Resolution System

Under the treaty, Indus Water Commission was established. It consists of members from both states, who meet and discuss structural or legal issues. Neutral observers can also be appointed under the treaty, if issue is not resolved by the commission.

In 2013, International court of Arbitration appointed a neutral observer <sup>to</sup> resolve issues on design of Kishanganga Project on Jhelum River, and the matter was successfully resolved.

## III- War Prevention

Owing to clear frameworks on distribution of water and strong conflict resolution, the treaty has been successful in preventing wars <sup>with</sup> between two countries.

## THE ONE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF TREATY

### I- Disputes over Indian Projects

IWT ~~did not~~ allowed Pakistan to object

only on dam's structural designs and did not allow to object the no. of dams or necessity of a Dam. As a result, India is building more and more dams, that limits water supply to Pakistan. For example, Baglihar, Dul Hasti, Kishenganga Rattle, Pakal Dul and Sawayanot dams, ~~are~~ all on Chenab river.

## II- India's control over Western Rivers

Since IWT gave right to India to build infrastructures on Pakistani rivers, this gave India great control over Pakistani water. According to World Bank report 2021, there is a cut off more than 50% in waters of Indus and Jhelum rivers, while more than 55% in water of Chenab river. This water scarcity, is rising tensions between two states as Pakistan's agricultural yields are decreasing, fertile lands are turning barren and forests are decreasing (e.g. 40% decrease in Mangrove Forest).

### III- Climate Changes and Abeyance of Treaty.

Signed at the time of relative water abundance.

~~IWT did not consider any climate effects- Prolonged droughts due to lesser rains and India building more and more dams is raising tensions between~~

~~the countries. India falsely blames climate for all of its activities based water shortage as well.~~

India's union Minister, Shekhawat has publicly

stated that IWT "can not be static"- One of the baselines of India's holding in abeyance of

Treaty, is said to be climate change which is increasing its water needs, from these rivers.

### IV- Political Tool

~~In recent years, IWT has become a tool of~~

~~political hegemony. Any conflict/tension in India is used as a base by their Govt. to threaten~~

Pakistan to deprive it of its waters, to get votes

in elections (by emotionally manipulating Indian nationals). Following Uri attack, Indian PM

said "water and blood can not flow

together"- Similarly, after Pahalgam attack

Day:

Similar statements have been given time to time. Indian PM ~~said~~ in 2014 said "we will stop our share of water" from flowing into Pakistan. India's weaponization of water can lead to severe consequences in near future, as <sup>Indian</sup> PM Modi has decided to divert water to supply it to people of J&K and Punjab and Pakistani Govt has declared any cut in water as "an act of war".

### Critical Analysis

The Indus Water Treaty has, undoubtedly, become an important factor in determining Pak-India relationships. More than 70% of Pakistan's agriculture depends on waters of Indus Rivers, while dependence of industries is 20% and for domestic use it is 25%. Indus rivers mean life to Pakistan. On the other hand, India is trying/planning to make sure Pakistan does not get "even a single drop". PM Modi's stance "water that belongs to India cannot be allowed to go to Pakistan" clearly shows their malicious intentions of

Taking advantage of being upper riparian of Indus rivers. Concerns of Pakistan on, IWT if not settled <sup>by India</sup> can lead to "water war" between two Nuclear states, and increasing water scarcity will make it worse.

### Conclusion

In short, Indus Water Treaty has been ~~successful~~ at distributing waters and ~~preventing~~ water conflicts for many decades. It has also ~~survived~~ and prevented wars. But climate

9/20

changes in recent years, resulted in water drought and scarcity ~~of~~ in both countries. The decreasing supplies and increasing demands are creating unrest in both countries, while IWT does not include to any provisions on water usage during crisis / shortage. As a result,

India is building more dams, while Pakistan being a low riparian country is facing economic and social impacts of ~~it~~ the water shortage. A commitment to mutual understanding, respect for shared resources and willingness to adapt to evolving challenges is needed to settle water management issues.