

Q no. 2:

India unilaterally held IWT in abeyance after Pahalgam attack. Critically evaluate its impacts. What policy options Islamabad must adopt to stop Indian violations?

Introduction:

The Indus water treaty, brokered by the World Bank on Sep 19, 1960, is a decade-long water-sharing agreement between India and Pakistan. However, after Pahalgam attack on April 22 this year, leaving around 33 Indians dead, this treaty was held in abeyance by India. This act has various impacts on Pakistan, including decline in river flow especially in winter, lack of Pakistan's inspection on Indian water projects being built on Western rivers, floods due to absence of data-sharing by India regarding ^{excessive} water release into Pakistan, and India's building of more

illegal dams on Pakistani rivers and construction of canals, barrages and diversions and massive agriculture and economic loss to Pakistan. Policy options for Pakistan to control Indian's violations include proactive water diplomacy, legal channels, leverage China's power to force India and domestic water reforms.

Impacts of India's holding of IWT in abeyance on Pakistan

1- Decline in river flows- causing massive water scarcity in Pakistan

Pakistan relies heavily on Indus river system for its survival. Holding treaty in abeyance means India can disrupt the river flow into Pakistan by controlling headworks. This limited water supply can lead Pakistan to face crop losses in winter especially when water supply is already lesser compared to

Summer season, causing Pakistan to becoming a water-scarce country.

2- Lack of data sharing by India regarding its water projects on Pakistani rivers

Before IWT abeyance, regular checks were maintained by Pakistan on Indian water projects being built on western rivers. Kishanganga dam was also found of crossing legal thresholds with 33 feet more height. This lack of inspection would allow India to violate technical terms regarding water projects, depriving Pakistan of its rightful share in water.

3- Massive floods in Pakistan due to absence of ^{warning regarding of} ~~pre~~-release of excessive water into Pakistan by India

India usually releases its excessive water in summer into dry beds of Ravi.

This water release is often preceded by ^{releasing} flood warnings to Pakistan, allowing it to take pre-emptive measure to minimise flood-related damage. Due to absence of communication channels between both of ^{the} countries may cause massive damage to Pakistan in case of floods.

4- India's construction of illegal dams, canals, barrages on western rivers — limiting Pakistan's water share

India has constructed various illegal dams on Pakistani rivers, including Chenab, Indus and ~~Jhelum~~ ^{Jhelum}. These dams and illegal constructions include Baglihar dam on Chenab Wuller barrage on Wuller lake, the main source of water to Jhelum river. Holding treaty in abeyance would further allow India to violate treaty rules of building illegal water infrastructure on western rivers

YOUSAF PAPER

5- Massive agricultural and economic loss to Pakistan due to its heavy reliance on Indus river system

Indus river system is the life line of Pakistan - Agriculture dependence on this is around 70%. Similarly, 20% of industrial sector's ~~reliance~~ and 25% of total water consumption ~~by~~ for domestic purposes highlights its importance. Water decline in Pakistan would severely damage the crops and in turn exports of the country, leading to economic downturn and food scarcity.

Policy recommendations for Islamabad to stop Indian violations of IWT

1- Leveraging legal course - asserting India's violation of IWT terms

India's unilateral withdrawal from the IWT is the clear violation of article XII

of the IWT that ^{prohibits} ~~violates~~ the treaty's members to unilaterally amend or terminate the treaty. Moreover, India's holding of treaty in abeyance also violates the Vienna convention on the law of treaties that forbids bilateral agreements to be broken unilaterally.

2- Proactive water diplomacy - engaging with international community and China to pressurize India against IWT's violation

China is upper riparian country and has strategic interests in the region.

It can leverage its position to pressurize India against unilateral withdrawal of IWT. Moreover, the international community should be mobilized to use their influence to get India back to the IWT terms.

3- Building massive water storage infrastructure and domestic water reforms - securing water sustainability

One of the reasons stated to India to amend the IWT in 2023 and 2024 was Pakistan's excessive wastage of water into Arabian Sea. Building more dams would not only allow Pakistan to increase its water sustainability but also help to defer India's baseless stance. Similarly, there is also a need to revamp old irrigation practices and employ waste water treatment mechanisms to reduce reliance on Indus river system.

Conclusion:

India's unilateral withdrawal from the IWT leaves various impacts on Pakistan in long run, including decline in water flow in Pakistan. These impacts can be tackled by adopting various

measure such as employing legal
and proactive water diplomacy and
building new water storage dams
to achieve water sustainability and
minimise drastic impacts on Pakistan.

x —————> x