

## CURRENT AFFAIRS

### Topic: Weaponizing Water Resources

#### Question:

Discuss the weaponization of water resources in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century? How the increasing use of natural <sup>natural</sup> right is affecting the concept of warfare?

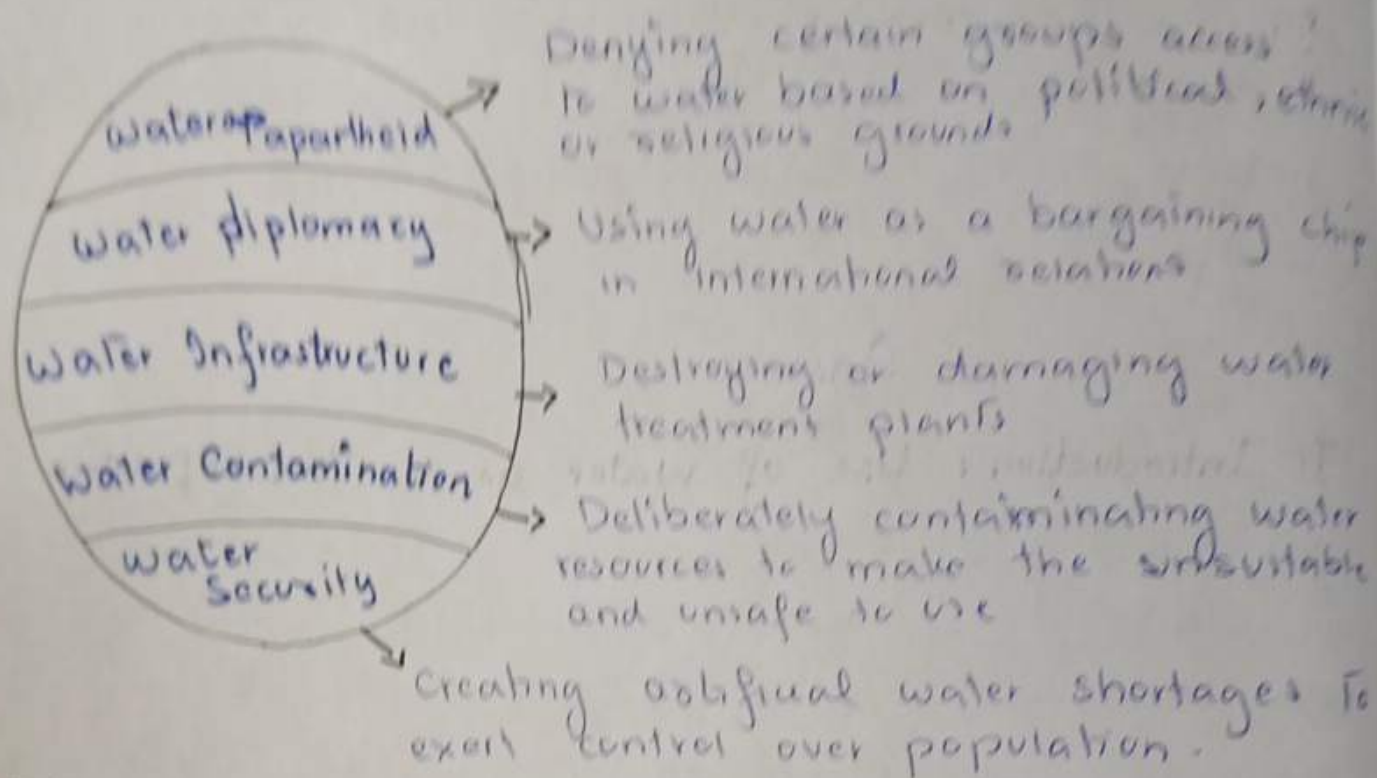
#### Answer

##### I: Introduction: Use of Water as a Tool of War

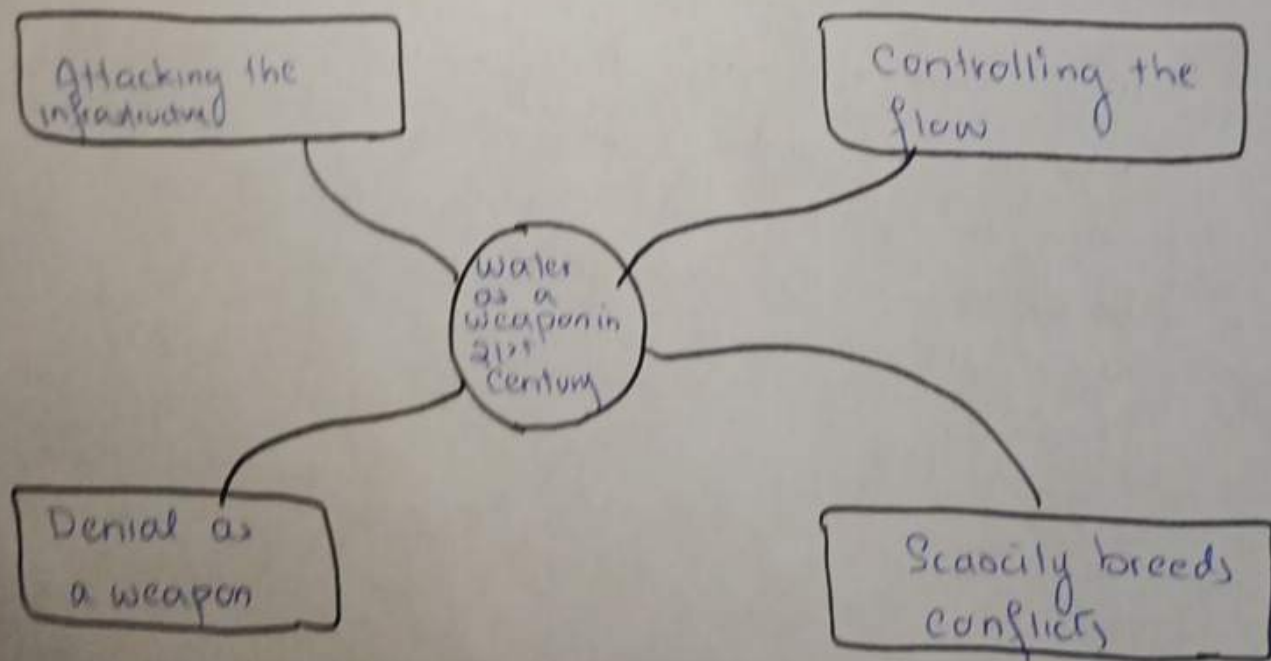
The weaponization of water refers to the use of water as a tool of war, political leverage, or coercion, depriving communities of their right to access clean water. This can take many forms including water scarcity, water pollution, water infrastructure attacks, water apartheid, and dam buster.

"The crisis of diminishing water resources is just as severe as any wartime crisis. Our survival is as much at stake as it was at the time of pearl harbor."

## II: Diverging Modes of Weaponization of Water:



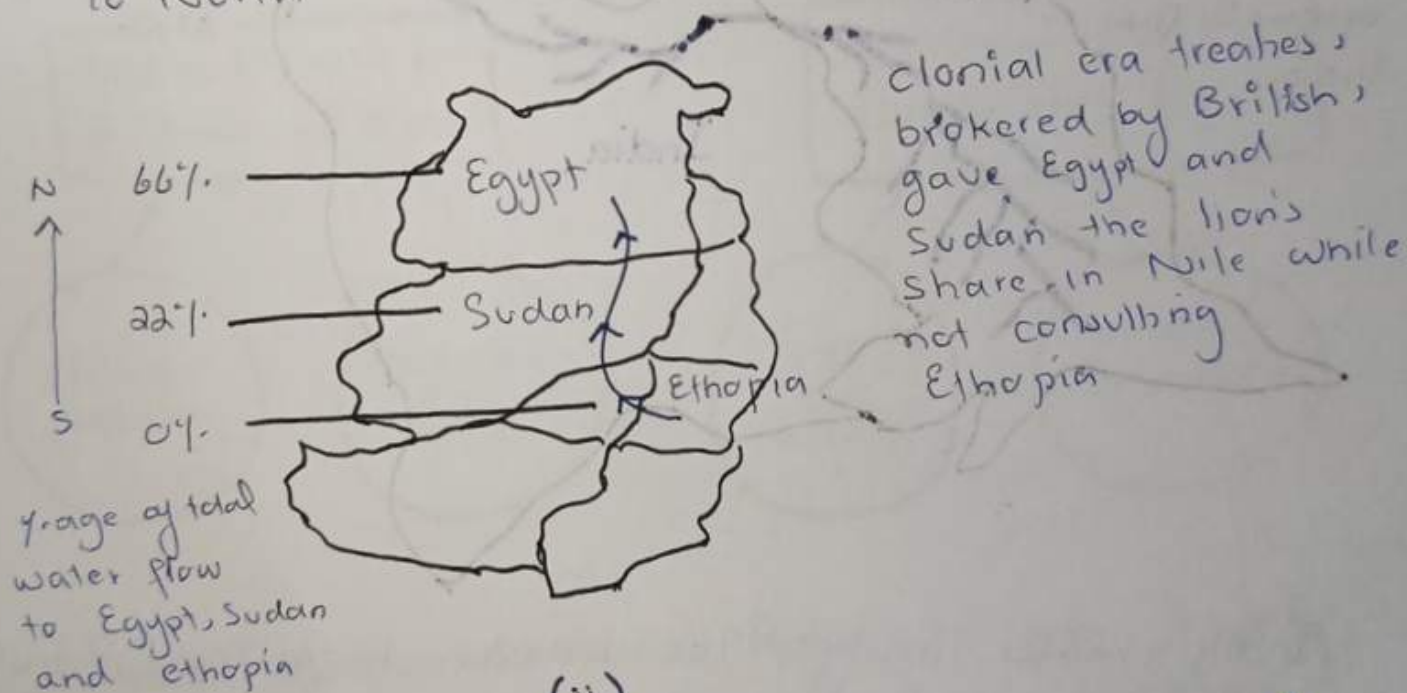
## III: Water Weaponization in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A Struggle Beyond Bullets:



## (i) Controlling the flow : Riparian State Pressure Lower-riparian states

One way to weaponize water resources is that the riparian (upper riparian) state, a country or state where the body of water originates from manipulates the flow of water towards the lower riparian state, a country or a state that receives water and create a significant increase or decrease in the flow of water

River Nile, originating in Ethiopia, moving to Sudan and then to Egypt flows from South to North



(ii)

## Water Infrastructure Attacks : Dams, reservoirs and canals being vulnerable to attacks.

This tactic disrupts the water supplies and causes economic damage

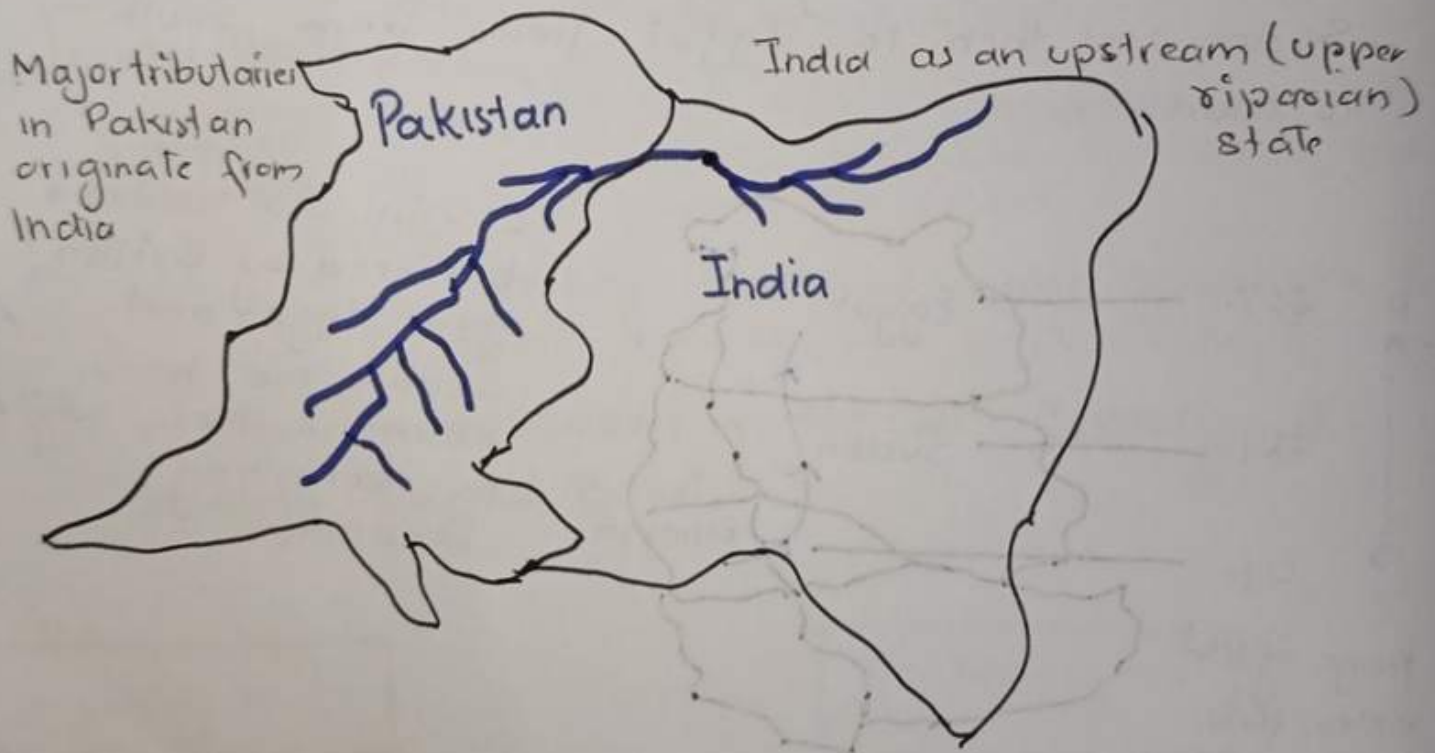
In 2021, a hacker gained access to a San Francisco water treatment plant's system through a compromised login. While no manipulation has occurred, the

incident highlighted the cybersecurity risks of water infrastructure.

(iii)

**Denial of Water as a Punishment: Access to clean water as an asset to control.**

By restricting access to clean water, a population is deliberately denied access to a basic necessity. This tactic has devastating humanitarian consequences, impacting health and sanitation.



Indus Water Treaty 1960 between India and Pakistan has prevented countless conflicts over water sharing. However, tensions still arise, particularly during drought, when accusations of exceeding water quotas fly between India and Pakistan.

(iv)

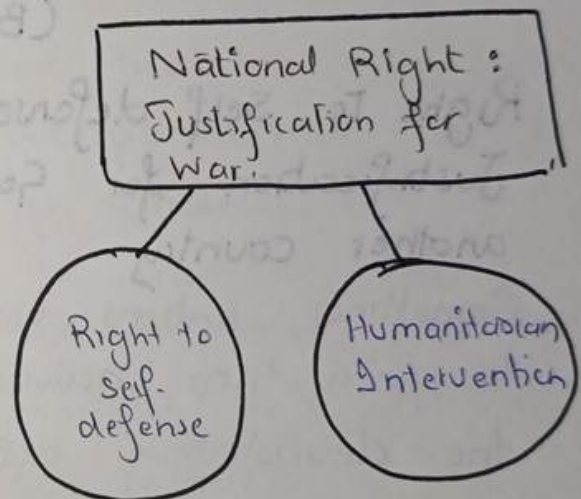
Scarcity Breeds Conflicts: The coming squeeze can exacerbate tensions, especially in fragile regions. Climate Change and population growth are placing immense pressure on freshwater resources. The unprecedented competition for this vital resource can become a source of instability and potential conflict.

#### IV: Increasing Usage of Natural Right Affecting the Concept of Warfare:

A.



B.



(A)

Civilian Protection: National Right to Life, Liberty, and security is a powerful tool for advocating for limitations on warfare:

Natural and national rights are the strong justification for advocating and even protesting for civilian protection from atrocities of warfare that can harm inherited resources.

(11)  
Particularity in force: Ensuring necessary force is carried out achieve military objectives, discouraging excessive use of force and minimizing Civilian harm.

Particularity in force refers to curbing non-military objectives, especially those that harm masses. military involvement, if carried out must be performed in a safe way mitigating human harm of brutalities of warfare and protect civilian natural right.

(B)

Right To Self defense: Can be used as a Justification for Going at war with another country.

Sometimes, nations plunge into war in order to gain their natural right while neglecting the devastating effects it may ponder upon others. They often register this as an excuse to justify their warfare in the name of their right to defend themselves from an imminent threat, sometimes self prescribed.

(11)

Humanitarian Intervention: A concept of Natural Right can be used to Justify Warfare.

Nations, sometimes for their national interests or often to gain advantage intervene in the political, economic or social affairs of other countries. Such states justify their warfare in the name of protection or promotion of humanitarian rights.

#### V. Conclusion: Hydrodiplomacy: A Glimmer of Hope

To Conclude, it is stated that the only solution to the severe hydro-weaponization is to avert future wars, through bilateral or multilateral aspects or to manage water resources in a way that it mitigates the devastating effects of water scarcity and minimizes conflicts (hydro-conflicts).

"Wars of future will not be fought over oil, but over the most precious source of all - water"  
(Kofi Annan).