

The Suspension of IWT and its impacts on Pakistan?

## Suspension of Indus Waters Treaty:

### A Threat to Pakistan

Introduction: The Indus Waters Treaty is a bilateral agreement between the two rival states of India and Pakistan. It was beneficial to both of the states. The treaty is neither time specific nor regime specific. It is state specific. It is continued by both the states till recent conflict of may between both the states. The suspension or revocation of the treaty can impact both of the states in different aspects. For Pakistan, it could cause severity to food security, national security, economic stability and social cohesion along with environmental issues.

### Reasons for Suspension

Political Reasons: The frequently target attacks in Indian illegally held Kashmir (IIOK) could be a reason to use water as coercion tool. In recent Pahalgam Attack on 22-April-2025 in Indian Kashmir, India put the treaty in Abeyance, as India considers every attack is from Pakistan.

Unresolved Disputes: India and Pakistan, according to the Indus Waters Treaty have to meet and discuss the update to resolve the current problem and the water data to be prevented from the floods or other water related devastations.

but in recent years, India construct dams and approves hydro-power projects on western rivers is claimed by Pakistan. In response to this, India and Pakistan should visit a neutral expert for the solution of the issue.

In 2013, A neutral expert gave the decision on the India's Kishanganga dam that it is 33 feet more than the standard height given in IWT. Meanwhile, the recent ~~mis~~ raised in the states which leads to collapse of dispute-resolution mechanism of the IWT.

Climatic Reason: India The environment degradation, heavy rainfalls, droughts, floods, change weather patterns can be the reason of suspension of IWT.

India claims the climatic condition effect the river flow and favourable conditions. The IWT must be updated, if not then suspended.

Population Growth: The growing population of India which would be most populous - no 1<sup>st</sup> in the population of the world demands more control and usage of water of rivers. As more the people, they more they will need water. The more the people, the more the goods to be required.

Strategic Policy Shift: To pressurize the state of Pakistan, India put the treaty in abeyance. So that Pakistan government can take action against the terrorist groups and organization to alleviate terrorism from the region. As Indian stance is that Pakistan's land is used for terrorist attack in India.

## Possibility of Suspension

The Indus Waters Treaty can be suspended bilaterally on the ground reasons.

### Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties 1986.

"No treaty can unilaterally be suspended" (Article 62)

Moreover INT is a treaty. It is not an agreement. Agreement can be unilaterally suspended while treaty cannot be suspended unilaterally.

### Indus Waters Treaty 1960

"The provisions of this treaty may from time to time be modified by a duly ratified treaty concluded for that purpose between the two Governments".

(Article XII Paragraph 4)

This simply means that the any change to the INT's terms must be agreed upon by both India and Pakistan. So, its unilateral suspension is against the terms of INT.

## Technical Possibility

It is not possible for India to hold back the waters from flowing towards and Pakistan. As India does not possess the infrastructure to stop the flow of water by design.

The currently under way hydro projects on Indus would increase storage capacity of water but these projects completion timeline is 2032. While Hydroelectric dams hold back rivers temporarily and release water through turbines to generate electricity.

## Environmental Possibility:

The flow of rivers is natural. Holding them back or diverting them upstream would lead to the environmental degradation.

It can lead to unpredicted weather patterns such as rainfalls or droughts or may be extreme weather conditions.

So, the environment does not allow and favor the diversion of river flow of Indus basin as it requires massive inter-basin transfers, overcoming difficult topography. according to the ~~the~~ Article of I S I S...

Weaponizing Water: India's Abeyance of IINT and Its implications for 'South Asian Stability'.

## Political Possibility:

The suspension of the treaty if done unilaterally would weaken the Indian stance politically. It would bring international condemnation to India for provoking the war like situation in already instable region of South Asia. It also brings mistrust of the states towards India.

## Impacts of Suspension of IWT on Pakistan:

On Agriculture: Pakistan is an agricultural state. Its economy's 24% came from the agricultural sector.

Agriculture would stop or reduced if the India let flow on its own choice after suspending the treaty. As Pakistan's agriculture is wholly depend on Indus river which surrounds the Indus basin.

However, the sector also provides 37% of labor force or village employment. Not only to this loss, it may lead to famine in Pakistan.

**On Economy:** The economy of Pakistan is a developing one. It is funded by IMF and other aids. The national or domestic contribution to economy is through agriculture, energy (power generation) and industries. The

All these need water to work and produce the desired product. The agriculture through water's unusual supply collapse, it would shut down the industries such as of textiles which are water-intense industries.

The decline of the industries increase the number of unemployed in the state.

**On Energy generation:**

The state has majority of hydro-power projects which work with the help of turbines on the dams such as Tarbela, Mangla, etc. The unusual water supply to dams would cut the amount of electricity production.

**On Environment:** The reduced river flow would devastate the ecosystem of riverine, increase salinity and can cause the intrusion of sea water into Indus Delta. It would destroy the mangroves and fisheries.

Moreover, If the huge amount of water not thrown into sea on time, it would submerge the coastal areas. As already some parts

Thatta have subdued. Even, it is estimated in the research article of Pakistan's water management organization that.

"Thatta and Bardin would subdue totally in the 2060."

**On People:** The reduction of water supply would intensify the water scarcity. The groundwater aquifers are already over-exploited and would be more exploited.

The food security, environmental hazards due to reduced water supply would lead the mass migration.

**On Security:** The reduced river flow intensifies the already existing tensions between provinces such as Sindh and Pakistan Punjab. Moreover, the suspension act of India would be considered as an act of war as already warned by the Pakistan.

According to Former Law minister of Pakistan.

**Conclusions** The suspension of Indus Waters Treaty is illicit according Vienna Convention on the law of Treaties and articles of IWT. Its suspension, if done would bring Pakistan into drastic situation in all aspects of economic, agricultural & security. The furthermore, bilateral tensions would intensify the regional insecurity and mass-migration. Both the states need to address the issues of any kind-political, economic, environmental, security issues to maintain security and ensure national interests of both the states.