

# India-Pakistan Water Dispute - An Alarming Issue

Thesis Statement: India-Pakistan Water Dispute confronts with multiple issues, ranging from social and environmental to Technological and Political issues. Moreover, Economical Issues and Security issues further escalated the situation.

## Outline

- 1) Introduction
- 2) An Overview
- 3) Why India-Pakistan Water Dispute is an Alarming Issue?
  - a) Social Issues of India-Pakistan Water Dispute
    - i) Public unrest due to water scarcity in Pakistan
    - ii) Increasing hatred between people of both nations
  - b) Environmental Issues of India-Pakistan Water Dispute
    - i) Agricultural loss in Pakistan
    - ii) Loss of Biodiversity and desertification
  - c) Technological Issues of India-Pakistan Water Dispute
    - i) Illegal Construction of Dams and hydropower projects on Pakistan's rivers
    - ii) Use of advanced engineering to control water flow
  - d) Political Issues of India-Pakistan Water Dispute
    - i) Loss of Trust in Bilateral Treaties and international guarantees
    - ii) Regional instability affecting SAARC and Peace in South Asia
  - e) Geographical Issues
    - i) Violation of Pakistan's territorial sovereignty through upstream control
    - ii) Creation of water dependency making Pakistan vulnerable
  - f) Moral and cultural Issues
    - i) Breach of ethical responsibility in handling

undermining of Indus water treaty as a symbol of cooperation

### 3) Economic Issues

i) Loss of agricultural productivity leading to food insecurity

ii) Decline in hydropower potential — worsening Pakistan's energy crisis

### b) Strategic and Security Issues

i) Threat of 'water war' between two nuclear powers

ii) Water as a new "weapon" in hybrid warfare.

### 4) Conclusion

In water Act of Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), water was mentioned as a fundamental human right. Since the inception of Pakistan and India, both countries have been indulged into the water dispute. Even though, Indus water Treaty was signed by both countries, in order to prevent water conflict. Somehow, the tension was cooled down for some decades, but after the recent Pongalgaon attack in Indian occupied Kashmir, India blames Pakistan for this <sup>and</sup> attack. The water dispute emerged once again. Pakistan refused the blame, and India is failed to provide any evidence against the recent attack. Moreover, India wanted to suspend the treaty and using it as a weapon. Hence, the India-Pakistan water dispute confronts with multiple issues, ranging from social and environmental to political and technological issues. Moreover, the economic, strategic and security issues further escalated the situation.

In Pakistan, due to water shortages, especially in Sindh and Punjab <sup>has</sup> increased public unrest. However, farmers protest and accuse India of 'water terrorism'. Water shortages increase fear ~~before~~ among people of food security and loss of crops.

Water dispute fuels hatred and patriotism, deepening hostility between ordinary citizens. In India, nationalist groups see water

control as a tool of pressure on Pakistan. Hence water scarcity forces rural families to move cities, creating urban slums.

90% of Pakistan's agriculture relies on Indus Basin. However, reduction in flow leads to wheat, rice, and cotton output falls. Already Pakistan ranked among top 10 water-stressed countries.

Illegal construction of dams, such as Baglihar dam on Chenab river; Kishangang dam on Jhelum river; Rattle project on Chenab river, reduce water during sowing season, divert water away from Pakistan and threaten Pakistan's irrigation needs.

India uses tunnel systems, gated spillways, and storage techniques to manipulate flows. On the other hand, Pakistan's weak infrastructure like no major dam since Tarbela (1976) leads to lagging in water management in Pakistan's 30% water losses due to seepage and outdated canals.

Pakistan distrusts any future agreements with India due to violation of Indus water treaty, which led to loss of trust.

water becomes a political weapon in disputes like Kashmir. However Pakistan appeals to World Bank, ICI, and UN, which makes issue global. Hence India Hints at "reconsidering the treaty".

after terrorist attack. His weaponization water in political disputes has led to weak regional cooperation (SAARC, SCO), due to India and Pakistan hostility.

India has been invading Pakistan's sovereignty, as India upstream country controls Pakistan's downstream water flows. Moreover illegal construction of dams on Pakistan occupied river is a sign of violation of sovereignty.

Pakistan can not access alternative water sources as its complete dependence on Indus Basin which is controlled by upstream country (India)

Indus river is cradle of Indus Valley Civilization; holds emotional and historical importance. However violation of Treaty, which was meant to promote cooperation, <sup>has</sup> led to cultural exchanges reductions.

Pakistan's economy is agro-based. Agriculture is responsible for 20% of GDP and 40% of employment. Moreover, cotton industry contributes <sup>in</sup> 60% exports which depends on irrigation. Heavy loss of crops leads to rising food imports and inflation.

Hydropower (Tarbela, Mangla) need steady river flow. Water shortage fuels electricity shortfall and reliance on costly imported fuels.

Pakistan's former officials call water "a bigger threat than terrorism". Both nations are nuclear, and water tensions can escalate into armed conflicts. However, results into weaponization of water.

The water dispute is more than a legal and technical issue - it is a matter of survival. It threatens Pakistan's food, energy and human security while increasing hostility between nuclear neighbours. If unresolved, it can trigger "water wars" in South Asia. However, it is imperative to modernize Indus Water Treaty, build new reservoirs in Pakistan, strengthen irrigation efficiency, promote regional water cooperation under SAARC or SCO and involve international mediators like World Bank and UN. Only cooperation over water can ensure peace, stability and prosperity in between both countries; conflict will destroy both nations.