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Q.1

India's Unilateral Suspension of the Indus Water Treaty (IWT) after the Pahalgam Attack- Impacts and Policy Options for Pakistan

1- Introduction

The Indus Waters Treaty was signed between Pakistan and India, brokered by World Bank, in 1960. It allocates three eastern rivers (Ravi, Beas, Sutlej) to India and three western rivers (Indus, Jhelum, Chenab) to Pakistan, which together provide nearly 80% of the Indus Basin's total flow (approximately 136 MAF)

India announced in April 2025 that it would hold the Indus Waters Treaty in abeyance following Pahalgam attacks, accusing Pakistan of cross-border terrorism. This unilateral suspension ended more than six decades of cooperation on water sharing between the two nuclear-armed neighbors. This challenges the stability of one of the world's most successful transboundary

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water agreements and poses serious consequences for Pakistan.

2- **Critical Evaluation of Impacts**

Legal Impact :-

a) India's suspension goes against international law and Article XII (3) of the IWT, which clearly stipulates that any modification or termination requires mutual consent. The Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA), through its rulings in June and August 2025, supported Pakistan's position and said that the IWT remains valid. India's non-recognition of these awards has weakened the institutional mechanism, and jeopardized data-sharing and notification procedures vital for river management.

Water and Agricultural Impact :-

b) Pakistan receives about 80% of its irrigation water from the western rivers (Indus, Jhelum, Chenab) which the treaty allocates to it.

It is technically impossible to completely stop the flow of western rivers in the near future. India's hydropower projects, such as Baglihar and Kishanganga, are run-of-the-river schemes with limited active storage. However, scheduling changes

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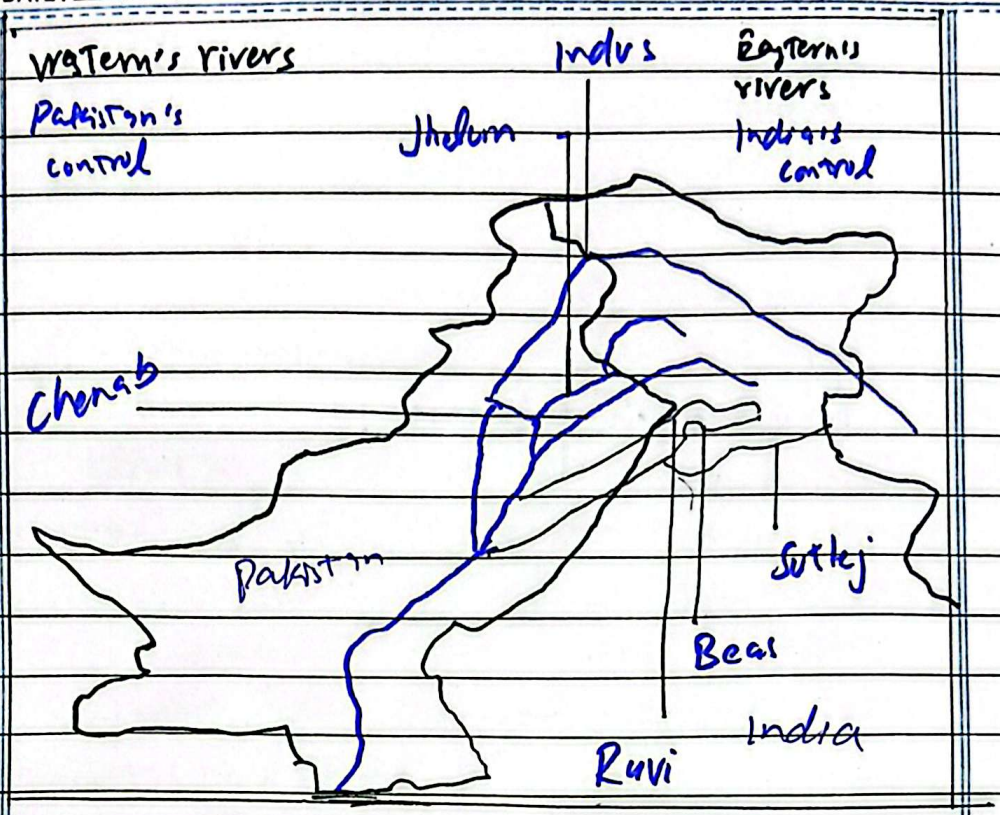

in releases can seriously disrupt Pakistan's irrigation cycles and energy output during the low-flow winter months.

In comparison to India's 70-day buffer, Pakistan's water storage capacity only covers 30 days of demand. Even minor upstream manipulations could result in severe downstream shortages, as the Mangla and Tarbela reservoirs are expected to reach dead levels in 2024-25.

Energy and Economic Impact :-

() Pakistan's hydropower generation, which contributes about one-third of national electricity, depends on steady inflows to Tarbela and Mangla dams. Any cut or delay in water supply

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reduces electricity generation and increases dependence on imported fuel, raising costs and inflation.
Industries linked with agriculture, like textiles and food processing, also face losses due to less water availability.

Environmental Impact :-

d) Reduced water flow to the Indus Delta will harm mangroves, increase sea water intrusion, and damage fisheries and coastal livelihoods.
The storage can also cause tensions between provinces, as seen in Sindh-Punjab water disputes, leading to internal instability.

Strategic Impact :-

e) Indias unilateral action undermines established transboundary water relations in South Asia. It could also backfire on India, which is a downstream riparian of Brahmaputra, this step will further weaken its position in disputes with Beijing.
For Pakistan, it increases the risk of water being weaponized as a political tool.

3 Policy Options for Islamabad

→ Approach the International Court of Justice

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or Permanent Court of Arbitration through the World Bank to challenge India's violation of Article XII.

→ Engage the United Nations and global water governance bodies, to highlight India's breach of international riparian norms.

→ As a guarantor, the World Bank must be urged to re-engage and ensure compliance with the IWT's dispute resolution framework. Pakistan should request the Bank to facilitate third-party monitoring and mediate confidence-building measures.

→ Pakistan should highlight this matter in diplomatic forms by ~~emphasizing~~ emphasizing that unilateral suspension endangers regional stability, SDG 6 (Clean water and Sanitation), and humanitarian security.

→ Build new small and medium dams, clear silt from Tarbela and Mangla, improve capacity from the current 30 days to at least two months.

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→ Modernize irrigation systems to reduce water losses through drip irrigation and sprinkler.

→ Promote crop diversification away from water-intensive crops (sugarcane, rice) to conserve water resources.

→ Use satellite and digital technology to track water flow from India and collect real-time data for early warning.

→ Utilize international trade forums to highlight the economic costs of water insecurity.

→ Collaborate with China and Central Asian states on transboundary water management to build collective diplomatic pressure and share expertise in water governance.

→ Propose joint flood forecasting, data sharing, and technical dialogues with India to rebuild some trust in the Indus Basin.

→ Engage Track-II diplomacy and research collaboration to keep communication open, even in times of tension.

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4- **Conclusion**

Modis unilateral suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty after the Pahalgam attack is a serious challenge to regional stability, legal norms, and Pakistans water security. While India cannot completely block the rivers, the greater danger lies in the loss of predictability that underpins Pakistans agricultural and energy systems.

Islamabad must respond through legal, diplomatic, and domestic reforms, turning this crisis into an opportunity to strengthen its internal water resilience and international standing.

Q.3

Pakistan's Repeated Floods: Causes and Policy Options

1- **Introduction**

Pakistan faces recurrent, devastating floods that expose its weak climate resilience and governance capacity. Despite the flood-assessment report in 2022 floods, the 2025 floods again caused massive destruction, revealing policy implementation gaps. Over 700 deaths, 4000 destroyed

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homes, and widespread displacement due to 2025 floods highlights that climate change and poor management jointly exacerabetes the crisis.

2- Main Reasons for Recurring Floods

a- Climate Change

Pakistan contributes less than 1% of global emissions but ranks among the most vulnerable countries. In 2025, floods in the north by glacial lake outbursts floods (GLOFs), such as the Shisper Glacier flood in Hunza 2025, and heavy rains in Sindh and KP, showed the growing link between rising temperatures and climate change.

b- Urbanisation and Poor planning

Unplanned expansion in cities like Karachi and Lahore, clogged stormwater drains (nullahs), illegal encroachments, and weak management systems cause urban flooding.

c- Deforestation and River Mismanagement

Deforestation and misuse of riverbanks reduce the land's ability to hold water. Without proper floodplain zoning, construction near rivers worsens the impact

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of floods downstream.

d- **Weak Structural Governance**

The 2025 national flood assessment report revealed that lessons from the 2022 flood report were not applied. Promises to build climate-resilient infrastructure, enforce building codes, and strengthen local disaster management were not fulfilled. Data collection remains fragmented, and coordination among institutions is poor.

e- **Lack of Climate Preparedness**

Early warning systems lack district-level data. Local disaster authorities remain underfunded and poorly trained, leaving local communities underprepared.

3- Policy Options for Pakistan

a- **Climate-Resilient Reconstruction and Financing**

- Follow the "build back better" principle, rebuild homes and infrastructure with materials that can withstand floods.
- Integrate climate risk screening into

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all development projects through the Planning Commission.

- Coordination between the Planning Commission, Climate Change Ministry, and NDMA should be made stronger.
- Establish climate finance for funds.

b- Urban Flood Management

- Upgrade drainage systems, remove illegal encroachments, and use green green infrastructure (permeable pavements, wetlands to absorb water.
- Enforce building codes in flood-prone zones.

c- Reforestation and River Management

- Launch reforestation drives and restore natural river flows.
- Implement flood plain zoning to restrict construction in high-risk areas.

d- Strengthen Early Warning System and Local Capacity

- Enhance forecasting accuracy and district-level preparedness.
- Train and equip district disaster authorities for rapid response.

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e- **Data-Driven and Community-Based Approaches**

- Collect district-level data for planning.
- Involve local communities in flood management and awareness programs.

4- **Conclusion**

Pakistans recurring floods are not merely natural catastrophe but a failure of climate governance and implementation. The gap between the 2022 and the 2025 flood assessments shows a failure to act on earlier lessons.

Climate-based planning, strong institutions, and community participation, are essential to turn flood recovery into long-term climate resilience.

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