

International Relations-I

Final Mock

LMS ID: 39207

Part-II

Q4

Examine the issue of water security in South Asia, particularly in the context of recent hydroaggression and unilateral abrogation of the Indus Water Treaty. How do water conflicts between India and Pakistan affect the regional security and what steps could be taken to ensure stability?

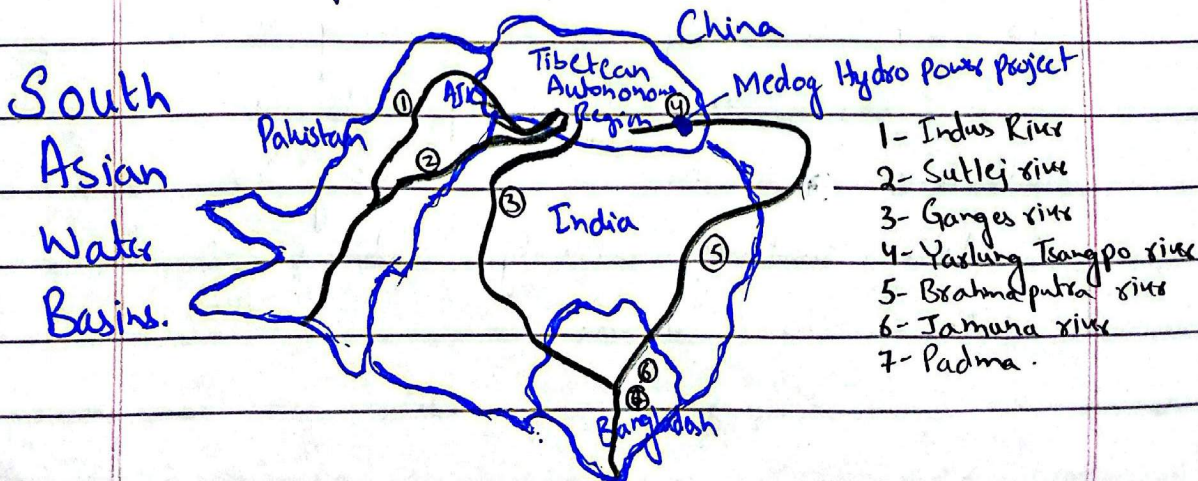
Introduction: Water Scarcity in South Asia

Highly populous South Asian region that contributes to approximately 1/4th of world's population is scarce in water resources.

Only about 6.8% of fresh water resources are present in the region that is lifeline of 1.7 Billion people. This naturally water scarce region and highly populated area collectively lead to conflicts among co-basin countries, threatening security and growth of the whole region.

Water Basins: Freshwater Sources of South Asia

All main rivers that supply fresh water to China and South Asian countries including Pakistan, India, Bhutan, Nepal and Bangladesh originates from Tibetan plateau. Indus river system originates from Himalayan Basin and pours into Arabian sea in Karachi, supplying parts of India and Pakistan along its course. In addition to Himalayan Basin, Ganges-Brahmaputra Meghna (GBM) gives rise to two other big rivers of South Asia, called Ganges and Brahmaputra rivers. Ganges river supply India and then Bangladesh where it joins Yamuna river and forms Padma river. Brahmaputra river originates from Tibetan Autonomous region where it is known as Yarlung Tsangpo river, then it flows to India and then it supply fresh water to Bangladesh where it is famously known as Jamuna and Tamuna.



Water Security Issues in South Asia:

As South Asia is overly populated and water scarce region, so it always become a source of conflict among South Asian countries. Water is basic necessity and any issue of it could directly threaten the life survival of masses and states. As multiple countries share transboundary rivers, unequal distribution of which could lead to conflict. India is largest country in South Asian region in terms of its population and land which pose asymmetrical threat to other small co-basin countries including Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh. In addition to it, India also unilaterally utilise water of common rivers without taking into account the needs of co-basin countries. India has been continuously projecting its hegemonic behaviour and serving its neo-realist interests of maximizing its own benefits at the cost of survival of co-basin countries. Unilateral abrogation of Indus water treaty is also manifestation of its neo-realist hegemonic behaviour.

India's Recent Hydroaggression:

After the Pahalgam attack, India not only blamed Pakistan for the attack but also illegally abrogated Indus water treaty unilaterally, threatening 251 Million people of Pakistan. It stopped mutual data sharing and inspection of power projects of one another country. Moreover, It has accelerated the hydropower project construction on western rivers which are rightfully rivers of Pakistan according to Indus Water Treaty 1960.

Unilateral Abrogation of IWT: Violation of International Law:

Unilateral abrogation of Indus Water Treaty on part of India is a clear violation of International treaty and law. Moreover, It also violated Article 7 of UN Convention which suggest "No harm rule" because it directly threatened low riparian state by unilateral abrogation of treaty. In addition to it, the accelerated construction of hydropower projects and water storage capacities is also violation of Article 5 of UN codified rules "Equitable utilization".

Hydroaggression and abrogation of IWT was clear violation of international law. Moreover, India also refused to participate in dispute resolution mechanisms.

This whole scenario showed the failure of wilsonian institutions in dispute resolution and realist hegemonic attitude projection on part of India to maximize its power and benefits. That shows how realist actors prefer benefit maximization over cooperation.

Water conflicts affecting regional Security.

Water is a basic necessity and commodity of daily life. Unavailability of water have potential to threat the survival of masses and states. In case of India-Pakistan, India is an upper-riparian state while Pakistan is a lower riparian state. India has leverage of controlling water to some extent that could threaten masses of Pakistan leading to conflict and war. As stated by Michael Kugelman, The issue of water scarcity may lead to potential conflict in subcontinent, it was seen after

Pahalgam terror attack. That India without any investigation started blaming Pakistan for attack and decided to unilaterally abrogate the treaty. Furthermore, the talks on Indian National Media were clearly showing interest of India for blaming Pakistan for terror attack. That whole scenario.

appears to be Propaganda initiation using media to construct ideas of people nationally and internationally. in order to serve national interests and hegemonic ideology of India. Therefore, India and Pakistan's conflict is inevitable if India continued violating IWT, threatening Pakistan. This could have serious impacts on regional security.

India Pakistan Water Conflicts leading to Military Confrontations

India and Pakistan are two most important countries in South Asian regions. Military confrontations as a result of conflict can have impact on neighbouring countries. Potentially impacting their air operations, flights resulting in a virtual blockade or long routes of flights, resulting in increased Ticket price and more fuel consumption. This poses serious risk to economic conditions.

India Pakistan Water Conflict impacting Trade:

Conflict between two countries could impact intraregional and interregional trade and trade routes, resulting in reduced economic activity, instability, potential food crisis. posing security threat to masses.

Conflict b/w India and Pakistan: Reduced Economic Growth

This conflict has potential to impact economic growth of region. This impact on economy of countries is a non-traditional security threat to countries.

Conflict Escalation leading to full fledged war:

If India-Pakistan conflict escalated, it could result in full fledged war, pushing whole region on red alert. This will not only reduce their economic activity but could also pose them at direct risk of terrorist attacks.

Conflict in any region provide conducive environment to terrorist organisations to do attacks and terrorist activities.